

Grace Lutheran Church & School



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Fridley, MN 55432

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Home Page: www.FridleyLutheran.org

Member: *CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION*



Pastor: John Hein (Cell 612-408-1635)

Phone: 763-784-8784

School Phone: 763-784-6340

Grades: Kindergarten-8th

Church Year: Pentecost 4

Date: June 20, 2021

✠ WORSHIP INFORMATION ✠

Hymns:

TLH 40: The God of Abraham Praise

TLH 625: Oh, Blest the House, Whate'er Befall

TLH 467:1,4-7: Built on the Rock

Break Forth in Joyous Song (see insert)

Listening assistance is available. Please ask an usher.

Worship Prep:

Psalms 92, TLH p. 143

Liturgy:

WS, p. 1 (Projected)

WS, p. 42, Psalm 121

Scripture Readings:

2 Corinthians 5:1-10

Mark 4:26-34

Sermon: Genesis 17:1-9

¹ When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless." ² "And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly." ³ Then Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying: ⁴ "As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations." ⁵ "No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations." ⁶ "I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you." ⁷ "And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you." ⁸ "Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God." ⁹ And God said to Abraham: "As for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations." (NKJVTM)

A NECESSARY NAME CHANGE

✝ ***THE ANNOUNCEMENTS*** ✝

COVID-19 Pre-Cautions: If anyone is high risk, vulnerable, recently exposed to a COVID-19 patient, or has symptoms of illness (esp. high temp. and cough), the individual along with any others in that person's household are urged to stay home for one's own well-being and the well-being of others. Online worship is still available at FridleyLutheran.org. Face coverings are optional. Thank you for being mindful of your fellow Christians, understanding that there are differing sensitivities about the pandemic.

➔ **Fathers Day:** A child of Abraham is one who has the faith of Abraham, faith in the LORD who makes an everlasting covenant of grace with His children. As such, we look to the LORD as our heavenly Father. A Christian earthly father sets this tone for his children, directing them to the Word of God which testifies to how our heavenly Father has rectified our sin problem by sending His Son, Jesus Christ. Included in our bulletin is an insert about "fatherhood" from a unique point of view that fits our sermon. Please consider reading this edifying sermon from Prof. Egbert Schaller from 1970. A blessed Father's Day to the fathers of our congregation.



➔ **Among Us:** This weekend Keith Radichel experienced a heart attack. He was taken to the U of MN to clear blockage and put in a stent. The doctor reports that Keith is doing well. Barb Crandall is now walking with assistance, receiving therapy at Interlude Restorative Suites. Beth Fleischer, daughter-in-law to Dan and Barb Fleischer, continues to be hospitalized in Eau Claire, WI, for COVID. She has been in serious condition but seems to be gradually recovering. This past week Pastor Joseph Kwiwalzu was in a vehicle which had a severe accident. He had a head injury that needed stitches. He has also been experiencing blood pressure issues. Yesterday was Frank and Ann Radichel's 50th wedding anniversary. Also, Benno and Barb Sydow also recently celebrated their 50th anniversary on June 11.

➔ **Vacation Bible School:** On July 19-23, 9:00-11:30 am, we will be having our VBS. This includes children age 4 years, to children going into eighth grade. Please register your children on the sheet by the guest book. In preparing for VBS, we will need to put together a staff, including teachers and coordinators for crafts and music. Please consider this labor of love and let Pastor know of your willingness.



- ➔ **CLC Convention:** The CLC Convention Communion service will be held at Messiah, Eau Claire on Sat., June 26, 7 pm. The service will be live streamed. To view, go to www.eauclairemessiah.com and click on the "Live Stream" button (lower left). The Convention itself, while in session, will also be live streamed. To view, search for "ilcvideos" on www.youtube.com. The Convention schedule is printed in the Convention Prospectus, beginning on page 6. The Prospectus is available online at tinyurl.com/clcprosp-21.
- ➔ **Black Hills Family Bible Camp:** All ages are welcome, children will need to be accompanied by a chaperon or family. There will be many outdoor activities. The camp is July 16- 20. The cost is \$75 for ages 13 and up, \$55 for ages 5-12, children ages 2-4 are \$15 and kids 1 and under are free. To sign up or for more info., contact Pastor Aaron Ude (605-393-1311/aaronude@gmail.com). (NOTE: please be aware that this is during Grace's VBS).
- ➔ **Ordination/Installation:** By God's grace and with joyful thanksgiving to the Lord of the Church, seminary graduate Drew Naumann will be ordained and installed at Trinity Lutheran Church, Spokane, WA, July 4, 3 pm. The members of Trinity invite you to join with them in giving thanks to the Lord for providing His under-shepherd to this flock. Guests are welcome to attend the ordination/installation service and also to join in a time of fellowship and refreshment following the service.
- ➔ **CLC News:** Pastor Mark Tiefel of Redemption Lutheran in Lynwood, WA, has returned the call to Redeemer Lutheran in Sister Lakes, MI. Redeemer has now called Pastor Stefan Sonnenfeld of Faith Lutheran in Manchester, MO (St. Louis area). † Pastor Tom Naumann of Mt. Zion Lutheran in Detroit, MI, has returned the call to Living Savior Lutheran in Eden Prairie, MN. † Paul and Courtney Agenten, members at Our Redeemer's Lutheran in Red Wing, MN, have accepted the roles of boys' and girls' dormitory supervisors at Immanuel Lutheran High School, College, and Seminary in Eau Claire, WI. † Pastor Tim Daub of Prince of Peace Lutheran in Hecla, SD, has received the call to Redeemer Lutheran in Cheyenne, WY. † Mrs. Vanessa Wales, member of Holy Trinity Lutheran in West Columbia, SC, has returned the call to be 2nd-6th grade Teacher at Grace Lutheran in Valentine, NE. † Last week it was announced that Rachel Naumann, Pastor Joe Naumann's wife from Mankato, had her water break. On Monday morning Rachel gave birth to Adelaide Hope Naumann, born at 23 weeks 3 days. She is receiving care at the U of MN.

✝ TODAY AT GRACE ✝

Organist: **Janelle Hein**

Elder: **Dale Enns**

Ushers: **Brian Eichstadt; Alex Baker; Kevin Baker; Dan Degnan; Ryan Oman; Eli Wales**

Counting Team 1: **Dale Enns; Larry Nelson; Ryan Oman; Pat Paplow; Phil Radichel**

Church Cleaners: **Ochsner**

✝ NEXT WEEK AT GRACE ✝

Ushers: **Brian Eichstadt; Alex Baker; Kevin Baker; Dan Degnan; Ryan Oman; Eli Wales**

Counting Team 2: **Gary Gunther; Rick Nelson; Bill Rust; Bob Vandever; Clint Welker**

Church Cleaners: **Sandhoefner**

✝ OUR SCHEDULE ✝

Sun., June 20: 9:00 am – Worship Service (Pentecost 4)

June 24-27: CLC Convention (Eau Claire, WI)

Sat., June 26: 7:00 pm – CLC Convention Worship (Messiah Lutheran)

Sun., June 27: 9:00 am – Worship Service (Pentecost 5)

July 19-23: 9:00-11:30 am – Vacation Bible School

Sun., Aug. 22: 3:00 pm – Immanuel Opening Service

Mon., Aug. 30: Opening Day of Grace School

Last Week's Stats: June 13, 2021 Sun.: 75

Sun. Offering:	Grace:	\$1,988	CLC:	\$410
Weekly Need:	Grace:	4,125	CLC:	1,000
-Under / +Over:	Grace:	-2,137	CLC:	-590
Year-to-Date Offering:	Grace:	\$107,980	CLC:	\$27,384
Year-to-Date Need:	Grace:	99,000	CLC:	24,000
Year-to-Date (+/-)	Grace:	+8,980	CLC:	+3,384
GLC Other: 150	Living Faith: 0	Tuition Aid: 50		
SAF Endowment: 0	MDF: 0	Kinship: 60		
ILC Student Aid: 0	ILC Bldg. 0	IIF: 0	CEF: 0	
Current Balances:	Tuition Aid: \$999			



For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. - Ephesians 2:8-9

Break Forth in Joyous Song

Marilyn Biery

MARION
Arthur H. Messiter, 1834-1916

Optional Introduction:

Break forth in joyous song; Let heaven and earth resound.

Sing praise with joyful melody, Glad noise and trumpet sound.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing!



All:	1. Break forth in joy - ous song; Let
* Women:	2. We know God's stead - fast love And
Men:	3. Let sea with tem - pest roar; Let
All:	4. God fills our hearts with joy; God's



heav'n and earth re - sound. Sing praise with joy - ful
faith - ful - ness is true. All ends of earth, ring
all the world clap hands. The hills re - joice and
grace and love a - bound. God heals all earth - ly



mel - o - dy, Glad noise and trum - pet sound.
out your joy, Each day your song re - new.
sing as one: All crea - tures in all lands.
bro - ken - ness; Let praise to God re - sound!



Re - joice! Re - joice! Re - joice, give thanks, and sing!
Re - joice! Re - joice! Re - joice, give thanks, and sing!
Re - joice! Re - joice! Re - joice, give thanks, and sing!
Re - joice! Re - joice! Re - joice, give thanks, and sing!

*Children may join Women for singing Stanza 2.

Council Meeting Notes – June 13, 2021

Meeting opened with prayer. May Council meeting minutes read and approved. May Treasurer's report was approved.

Pastor's Report

- Confirmation was on Sunday, May 23. Motion passed to recommend to the Voters to ratify as communicants each of the confirmands: Alexandra Baker, Sienna Boe, and Naomi Story.
- Motion passed to transfer the membership of Ed and Verona Lentz to Living Savior in Eden Prairie, MN, per their request.
- MN Delegate Conference was on Sat., June 5 in Mankato. The conference resolved to make a motion to reject the Joint Statement on the first day of the upcoming Convention (June 24th-27th). With the final day of Convention being on a Sunday, Pastor Fleischer has been scheduled to preach at Grace.
- VBS is scheduled for July 19-23. Volunteers are still needed to staff this.
- Pastor Terrell Kesterson is being considered to serve as a guest preacher for Mission Festival tentatively scheduled for Oct. 10.
- Pastor has been dealing with some an inner ear issues and is working with doctors on treatment options.

Board of Elders Report

- The Elders are recommending the return to passing the collection plate during services, likely next month. Another recommendation is to have a limit of 10 communicants for the Lord's Supper.

Board of Ed Report

- School has wrapped up for the year. The last day was Friday, May 28.
- Two non-member children (Snyder) recently were approved for enrollment. Total enrollment is now 24 total, 10 lower grades & 14 upper grades.
- A Grace-only field day on Friday, May 14 went well.

Board of Trustees Report

- Bathroom doors have been cleaned and bathroom stall walls repainted.
- The church entry is now handicap accessible with a motorized opening and closing door. Children may need to be reminded that the switch is not a toy.
- A contractor is being sought to replace the caulking in the seams between the church's outer wall panels. 2 exterior school doors also need replacing.
- Gutters will be installed on the South side of the parsonage. Once done, a heat tape will be installed to prevent ice buildup in the winter.
- New plastic lids were installed on the garbage dumpster because squirrels had chewed holes in the existing ones. Metal lids are being sought.

Other Business

- The Organ Committee has been holding meetings and has been in contact with other CLC congregations. Features and costs are coming into focus. Some discussion followed. Motion approved to have a trial organ setup in the church in July per the Organ Committee's recommendation.
- Church Keys – List of people in the handbook. Trustees will discuss updates.
- A question on the metal cart in Fellowship Hall. The cart is a good cart but might not be the best fit for use of moving Bibles around.

Adapted from minutes submitted by Secretary William Rust

CLC Financial Report - May

CLC Financial Report Operating Funds	Balance 7/1/2020	YTD Revenue	YTD Disbursed	Budget 11 Months	Balance 5/31/2021
General Fund	0	882,795	956,712	1,005,950	– 73,917
ILC Operations (incl. CLC subsidy)	0	1,251,961	1,196,371	1,263,295	55,590
Auxiliary Funds					
ILC Improvement Fund (IIF)	201,448	35,634	126,949		110,133
ILC Building Projects	14,542	2,169,861	1,094,046		1,090,357
Mission Development Fund (MDF)	84,054	214,337	185,398		112,993
Kinship	86,093	184,723	119,916		150,900
Church Extension Fund (CEF)	1,914,371	2,068,712	478,177		3,504,906
Student Aid Fund (SAF)	84,280	137,944	109,939		112,285
Reserve Fund	294,092	4,575	0		298,667
Total	\$2,678,880	\$4,815,786	\$2,114,425		\$5,380,241

General Fund – May offerings: \$75,475 vs disbursements: \$93,875, resulted in a net shortfall for the month of \$18,400, increasing the General Fund deficit to –\$73,917. Offerings to date are short of our CBP estimated revenue by \$123,155, but YTD disbursements are \$49,238 less than estimated expenses. The four Boards (Missions, Trustees, Regents, & Ed Pub) appear to be on track to close the fiscal year under budget. And we have been blessed with a Reserve from previous years of the Lord's abundant blessings.

ILC Operations – May revenue: \$91,658 (incl \$49,500 subsidy) vs disbursements: \$116,151, but still maintaining a substantial balance of \$55,590 in this last month of the fiscal year ending June 30. YTD ILC disbursements are \$66,924 less than YTD budgeted expenses.

ILC Building Projects – May offerings: \$1,660 vs disbursements of \$10,847 for the design fees & drawings for the proposed new gym. May earnings (Div/Int) were \$1,463 (YTD \$61,057). The 2021 Convention Prospectus (pp 93-105) contains footprints & renderings of the multi-level facility.

CEF – May revenue: \$21,546 (\$40 offerings, \$21,506 CEF loan payments) vs disbursements: \$15,873 (incl \$12,000 note repayment). The Trustees have funded CEF loans to 2 congregations this fiscal year, totaling \$200,000, and approved CEF building loans for 2 others totaling \$1.58 million.

MDF – May offerings: \$7,540 vs disbursements: \$37,585, which includes \$24,620 for new building construction & church building improvement grants.

SAF – May receipts: \$6,496 (SAF loan payments/gifts) vs disbursed: \$4,659 (May STU loans/grants).

ILC PMPG – Public Ministry Prep Grants: YTD earnings: \$46,483. grants this school year: \$32,400. (Note: Since unrealized capital gains can fluctuate (+ or -) each month, those portfolio gains & balances will be reported periodically & separately from the realized earnings from dividends & interest reported each month.)

Kinship – Sponsors/Offerings: \$7,540 vs disbursements: \$19,790 (Orphans & Sem students).

Investment Accounts Growth since 7/1/20: ILC Bldg Projects: \$79,459 to \$1,108,717. SAF Endowment (PMP, SAF, Scholarship Fund): \$159,818 to \$3,538,434. Investment Pool (CEF,CLC Foundation, IIF, Reserve Fund): \$1,461,796 to \$3,792,314. Growth of these accounts is mainly from unrealized capital gains, earnings (dividends & interest), & revenue from CEF & SAF loan repayments, less disbursements for new loans from the CEF & SAF, and realized earnings for the purposes of each fund. *“Bring ye in all the tithes and offerings... and I shall pour you out a blessing...”*

James E. Sandeen, CLC Treasurer / Thomas J. Lentz, Chairman, CLC Board of Trustees

CLC E-Devotion – August 19, 2013

Genesis 15:1-6 After this, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward."

FAITH'S STRENGTH

In Romans 4 the Apostle Paul calls Abraham the father of all believers. In Hebrews 11, the inspired author demonstrates how Abraham showed himself to be a man of faith. In Genesis 14 we see Abraham confessing his faith in a variety of ways.

When Abraham's nephew Lot -- along with many others and much booty -- is carried off by marauding invaders, Abraham, with 300+ of his own cattle drovers, ranges far to the north to effect a daring rescue. The patriarch clearly trusts that the Lord will protect him and bless his righteous efforts on behalf of the oppressed.

As rescued and rescuer make their way back home, Abraham confesses his faith in two more striking incidents. First, he makes a generous offering to Melchizedek, a priest who blessed him in the name of the one true God, then when the king of Sodom offers him all the booty that has been recovered from the marauders, Abraham turns it all down, saying, "With raised hand I have sworn an oath to the Lord, God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth, that I will accept nothing belonging to you, not even a thread or the strap of a sandal, so that you will never be able to say, 'I made Abram rich.'"

Yet shortly after this God came to Abraham in a vision in order to encourage him as he struggled with anxiety and doubt. Faith does not guarantee the believer a trouble-free life or a temptation-free path. In fact, Scripture tells us just the opposite. "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22).

Believers are not immune to temptation and trouble, tribulation and affliction. Better by far than immunity is the fact that the great Physician knows when our heart is afflicted and our faith is under fire. The LORD who came to Abraham with words of comfort, encouragement, and strength comes to us as well. He who creates faith in Christ in human hearts knows best how to strengthen it.

A TIME OF SELF-EXAMINATION FOR LUTHER'S CHILDREN

Sermon by Prof. Egbert Schaller, Journal of Theology Vol. 10, Num. 4, Oct. 1970

REFORMATION THOUGHTS--Text: "They answered and said to Him, 'Abraham is our father.' Jesus said to them, 'If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this.'" (John 8:39-40)

"If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:31-32)

So spake the Lord Jesus to the Jews which believed on Him. Mindful of these words, we celebrate a festival of the Reformation by which God through Martin Luther gave to His militant Church a new day of freedom; freedom from error and tyranny of conscience through a restoration of the rule of truth and light, namely of God's Word.

It is very clear, to those who know the facts, that Luther was a tremendous gift of the Lord to the Church and to the world. What this Reformer did is history. But not all people know the history. Many never learn it, and some do not want to learn it. Even many Lutherans are not as familiar with the details of Luther's work as they ought to be. And the enemy of the truth, the old evil foe, has taken advantage of this. History can be misrepresented and falsified. This has been done. Those who reject the pure Gospel which Luther proclaimed have often sought to put Luther in a false light and discredit his work.

What can we do about this? We cannot stop others from perverting the truth. We are not all able to write books to set the record straight. And after all, such books would be read by comparatively few people. What we need is a Lutheran church that holds fast to what God gave us through Luther and lives according to it. Are we doing this? That is a question which deserves serious consideration in this season, and by none more so than by those who have ventured to call themselves a "Church of the Lutheran Confession." Those who thus claim the mark of the Reformation ought to be setting the festival apart as...

A Time of Self-examination for Luther's Children

I. If we call ourselves "Lutherans," as we do, and if that is to mean anything significant, as it certainly should, then we are making a very strong claim that needs to be confirmed in action. Otherwise it would be dishonest to keep the name. In this respect we have something in common with the Pharisees of Jesus' day. Our hope and prayer should be that we may not have too much in common with them. In our text we find some of them engaged in a bitter quarrel with the Savior. They are standing up to Him with angry hearts because He offered to make them free from sin and ignorance. This they would not have; for they prided themselves on an old inheritance.

"They answered and said to Him, Abraham is our father." Now if this was a proud claim, it was certainly also a wonderful one, and there was reason to be proud of it, if genuine. The name of Abraham will be glorious as long as the earth stands. For he was famous among the great believers of the Old Testament as the man hand-picked by the Lord, so to speak, out of all the inhabitants of the earth to be the bearer of the promise of salvation. God centered His plans for the future of mankind in him. By Abraham the Gospel was revived in a world that after the Flood had again reverted to spiritual ruin. What a privilege to the able to say: I belong to Abraham's family. This the Jews declared. Not only were they of Abraham's blood according to the flesh, but spoke of him also as their spiritual father, which was a much higher prerogative.

The name "Lutheran" ought to mean very much the same thing today. Into the silence of ignorance and evil in the Middle Ages came that voice proclaiming the sweet Gospel once more. Through Luther Jesus Christ and His saving truth became, as it were, reborn in the world. Luther was a man of faith more outstanding than any other since the days of Paul the Apostle. And when he stood before the world with the open Bible in his hand, our spiritual heritage was confirmed. What does it mean when we say: "We are Lutheran"? It means, among other things, that the pope is not our spiritual father, and that Calvin is not our spiritual father. We spring from the faith which Luther restored; we were laid into the cradle of Luther's Catechism; we are nourished by the pure milk of the Word.

That is Lutheranism in its highest endowment. There is nothing like it on earth. We remind ourselves of its two chief treasures. The best is, of course, that mightiest of all possessions: the firm and certain knowledge that our salvation is both complete and sure because mankind is justified before God, thanks to the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ and the power of His resurrection. This justification is apprehended by faith alone and without any merit of works, deeds or attitude on our part. The second treasure without price is the enjoyment of the Sacrament of Christ's body and blood as our Lord instituted it, wherein we are especially assured of the forgiveness of our sins and strengthened with might in the inner man. In no other confession is this Sacrament thus accepted and trusted. Because by his labors it was restored to our use, we rightfully regard Luther as our father in the faith.

From the very first it was not widely regarded as an honor to be Luther's children. The world as such never has and never will appreciate the Gospel which Luther preached. The true children of Abraham have always been a minority race on earth, too. Yet we thank our God for our Reformation heritage. Or do we only say so? Do we truly appreciate it? This is a time for self-examination in this respect. God granted us our place in the Lutheran church. Should we not ask ourselves: What is the Lord's judgment upon us as Luther's children?

II. Jesus gave the Jews an answer to their claim against which they found it impossible to argue. Since they declared: "'Abraham is our father,' Jesus said unto them, 'If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.'" We observe at once the weakness in the position of the Jews. They were so busy looking at Abraham that they forgot to look at themselves. They thought of Abraham, gloried—and said: There is the father of us all. Jesus answers: Yes, but what about YOU? Are you his children? Abraham cannot decide that; only you yourselves can. If you were his children, you would resemble your father and do as he did.

Are we prepared to meet that same test? Let us consider what it is that the Lord would expect to find in us. Do we know the Luther whom we claim as spiritual father? Are we familiar with his story? With the sensitive conscience of the man, for instance? Hundreds of thousands of other men in his day lay in the same blindness and ignorance. But they were satisfied to follow the stream and let others do their thinking. Not so Luther. He had lived in torment of fear because of his sins and found no rest until he searched the Scripture and found therein his very own personal Savior. The true mature Lutheran is a person very much concerned about his relationship with God. Therefore he does not blindly follow leaders or doctrines, but searches out the Truth in a study of the Word. The terrible power of his sin troubles him deeply. He longs for the peace with God that is found in the wounds of Jesus.

While most of the world followed after the wisdom and authority of men, Luther went to the Bible. There he found everything he needed so desperately; and therefore the Bible became everything to him. He would have scorned with devastating contempt a charge of "bibliolatry," any accusation that he was making of the Bible a paper god. His outstanding theological mark was his great and intense loyalty to every word of inspired Scripture. He would rather have lost his life than to surrender a single statement found there. Indeed, his declaration to pope and emperor that his conscience was bound in the Word of God became the symbol of his fame among men. They might sentence him to death, excommunicate and cut him down—but "the Word they still shall let remain." This spirit has ever marked true Lutheranism and will continue to do so.

If ye were Luther's children, ye would do the works of Luther. We may well hear this paraphrase of the words of the text addressed to all who claim the name. And we cannot escape the truth of it. When now our Savior looks down upon us, what does He find? We do well to recall with a shudder the indictment with which He dismissed the Pharisees: "But now ye seek to kill Me, a Man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God. This did not Abraham."

How vain and empty, after all, had been the pretension of the Jews. Yes, how blasphemous; for their works were the very opposite of Abraham's. They claimed his name and planned to put to death Abraham's most illustrious Son, the very seed of Abraham and the heart of Abraham's faith.

Such would be the situation today where Lutherans permit the Gospel, for which Luther lived and died, to slip from their hands either by surrender to an encroaching liberal theology or through sheer neglect of the Word. Do we see signs of such neglect? Certain it is that there is among us something less than a brightly glowing fervor toward the very truths for which Luther so fiercely contended. Many hated him because he insisted upon sound doctrine and would not compromise with error in any form. It was a life-and-death struggle with him. Do we, against the very same enemies, sometimes take our responsibility for the preservation of sound doctrine rather lightly? Need there be some concern lest our Savior look upon a worldly atmosphere in our homes or a too feeble attendance upon the preaching and teaching of the Word in our churches and schools, and ask: Are you trying to kill me?

Where there is neglect of the Word, there is also a lessening of the force which once made Luther a blessing to the world. Where is the Lutheran influence of Gospel power to be found today? Is it perhaps to be sought within the misnamed "Lutheran World Federation," which in its fifth assembly during August last crassly deleted the word "Missions" from its official vocabulary by voting to rename its Commission for World Missions the "Commission for Church Cooperation"? Which revised Luther's Scriptural distinction between God's kingdom of power and His kingdom of grace? Which declared the Lutheran Confessions to be "obsolete" in their denunciation of error? Is it this federation of churches, claiming to represent some 95% of world Lutherans and yet unable in fact to represent a single genuine Lutheran confessor, that shall determine the features of the Lutheran image for our day?

Or shall it rather be OUR TESTIMONY which is heard and discerned as a valid voice of the Reformation? If so, let us not allow our witness to be muted by a sense of futility, or perhaps by some vague fear that forthright confession, though made in love toward the lost or the erring, might somehow alienate the "uninformed" or seem to be "unecumenical." As much as we pray for and seek out the fellowship and cooperation of all who like ourselves are committed to the uncorrupted message of God's Word, we must with equal sincerity refuse to permit a modification of sound Lutheran doctrine and practice in the interest of forging a broad conservative front. The only fellowship gained by such tactics would be that of sharing in a renunciation of Luther's name and cause.

May we rather be given grace and stout faith to continue in the open-hearted warmth of Luther's concern for the salvation of all sinners, as well as in his firmness in the truth. Thus will we truly bear the banner of the very Gospel which he preached to us, and effectively invite men to find shelter and peace in the shadow of its love.

