

BEAUTIFUL SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH

Epiphany

FEBRUARY 2017

Epiphany

WORD AND WORSHIP

FAITH SHOWS ITSELF IN LOVE

***“Love each other. This is what I’m commanding you to do.”
(John 15:17)***

“In this passage, Christ repeats the command to love each other. By love, believers are held together, and love is the mark of true believers. Jesus emphasized this command because he knew how many false Christians would arise—how many would praise faith with elegant words and a great show but wouldn’t back up their words. Just as God’s holy name is dishonored and used for evil, and just as Christianity, the church, and everything that is holy is misused, so also the names of faith, love, and good works will also be used for a false show and mask. For the devil doesn’t want to be as dark as he is painted, but he wants to shine in the fine clothes of God’s Word, the Christian church, faith, and love.

So Christ teaches us that it’s not enough to praise faith and Christ, but we also need to produce Christian fruit. For where these fruits aren’t evident, or where the opposite appears, Christ is certainly not present. In that case, only a false name exists. That’s why we must say to these types of people, “I hear that beautiful and glorious name, which is noble and worthy of honor. But what about you?” Similarly, the evil spirit said to the sons of Sceva, “I know Jesus, and I’m acquainted with Paul, but who are you?” (Acts 19-15).

But some may object, “Doesn’t faith justify and save us without works?” Yes, that’s true. But where’s your faith? How does it show itself? Faith must never be useless, deaf, dead, or in a state of decay. But it must be a living tree that bursts forth with fruit. That’s the difference between genuine faith and false faith. Where there’s true faith, it will show itself in a person’s life.”

Martin Luther Through Faith Alone:
365 Devotional Readings
From Martin Luther, Copyright: 1999
Concordia Publishing House



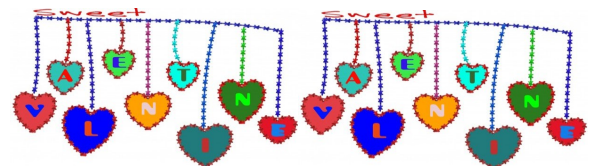
BIBLE CLASS OPPORTUNITIES

“Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life” (John 6:68)

‘THE APOSTLE PETER’
(led by Pastor Bretscher)
Sunday @ 9:15 am in Fellowship Hall

LADIES’ BIBLE CLASS
Sundays at 9:15 am in
“Leviticus”

**WEDNESDAY MORNING
BIBLE CLASS**
*Exploring the
Lectionary*
10:00 AM; ROOM A



***Offering envelopes &
END OF YEAR
statements are
available for pickup in
the atrium.***

TAKE IT TO THE LORD IN PRAYER



For the spreading of the Gospel of Jesus Christ
-here, there, and everywhere-
through the words and deeds of
ALL God's people.



PRAYERS FOR STRENGTH AND HEALING

Joe Mercurio– health concerns
Rev. Michael Piper– hospitalized with a stroke
Ed Belter– health concerns
Sandy Willson - recovering from surgery
Mila Thomas - health concerns
Harley Knopp - health concerns
Virginia Sims– relative of the **Sims'** family, health concerns
Kimberly Siemons–neighbor of the **Woodcock's**, additional health concerns
Deanna Bell– **Frances Bell's** daughter, health concerns
Pat Wolfe– friend of **Valeda Woehr**, cancer
Bud DeFrancesco, friend of the **Woodcock's**; pancreatic cancer
Sarah Hanks– **Dave Hanks'** sister, health concerns
Ron– cousin of **Valeda Woehr**, cancer
Sherry Schwab - friend of **Marie Woodcock's**, cancer
Patsy Williams - mother of **Gail Pitts**, health concerns
Charlotte - friend of **Cher Niehaus**, hospitalized

OUR ADOPTED MILITARY:

Jacob & Nick Beagley (Bretscher), Anthony Brooks (Muraski), Brad McNatt (Freeman)

CONTINUING HEALTH ISSUES:

El Vera Biedenstein, Naoma Keppler, LeRoy Etting, Dennis & Mary Bartels, Kathi Meier, Bob & Liz Vance, David Singleton, Jim Thomas

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS:

For the homeless in the Bridgeton area. For our missionaries who serve the Lord in foreign lands. For persecuted Christians around the world. For innocent civilians trying to survive in war-torn areas. Those who serve in our nation's armed forces and our Government leaders. For God's grace that we may have the desire to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us.

The Gateway Pantry has helped 40 families during Jan.& some of our shelves are nearly empty. The items most needed are: Laundry/dishwashing detergent Bleach, Cleansers/liquid cleaners Always remember the Dollar Tree products are perfect.

LENTEN SOUP SUPPERS

March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 & April 5th
Sign up sheets will be in the atrium,
don't forget when your donation of
soup or dessert is due.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS– JANUARY 3, 2017

Those in attendance: Pastor Bretscher, Pastor Thomas, Marie Woodcock, Christine Foelsing, Margaret Washburn-Freeman, John Folkerts, Ken Green, Lynn Withrow, Regi Grodie, Tim Decker, Mila Thomas and Al Winkler.

Lynn Withrow called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. and John Folkerts led the devotions and opening prayer. Christine Foelsing noted a correction to the December BOD minutes under Youth and Family Ministry report concerning the date of the upcoming youth gathering (From December 21 to January 21, 2017). A motion was made by Al Winkler and seconded by Mila Thomas to accept the minutes as corrected from the December 6, 2016 BOD meeting. Minutes were accepted.

Pastors' Report--Pastor Bretscher and Pastor Thomas

Official Acts: (since last meeting):

Current Membership: Baptized 251; Confirmed 191

CHRIST-IAN CARE: (since last meeting)

Pastoral Visits –David Bretscher

Shut-in/Elderly/sick/hospital/etc.: Marie Woodcock (hosp.), Stole Funeral, Bob Engelken and Teresa Ritz, Naoma Keppler (attempt), Frank - friend of Ken Green (attempt), and "Crystal" Rawlins (Teresa Ritz' step-mother).

Misc./Other:

Special Worship: Life Sunday 1/18/17

Holiday Attendance: Thanksgiving-36; Advent #1-27; Advent #1-31; Advent #3-29; Christmas Eve-119; Christmas Day-64

Adult Confirmation (David and Stephanie Wilson, Teresa Ritz and Mia Thomas (soon)

Pastoral Visits –James Thomas (since last meeting)

Shut-in/Elderly/sick/hospital/etc.: Alf and Barbara Stole (Home visit and family visit at church in regards to Memorial Service), Teresa Ritz (office visit); Margaret Freeman, Marlene Muraski, Melissa Thomas, Tim Decker, Bob Mullins (Sunday School Development); El Vera Biedenstein, Jim and Mila Thomas, Dennis Bartels (home visit), Judy Taylor (Office Visit) and Marie Woodcock (hospital).

Misc./Other:

Christian Education - There are currently two individual and fully staffed Sunday school classes taking place every Sunday between services and a third for younger kids if the opportunity presents itself.

Youth – There is a joint youth event planned for January 21st at 4:00p.m. with Zion Lutheran on Dorsett. We will meet at 3:00p.m. at church for a devotion, head to Demolition Zone Lazer Tag arena and then enjoy dinner at Fazoli's on First Capital Drive following the event.

The men's group had 20 people in attendance at their last meeting on November 14. They sponsored the Christmas Lights Bus Tour December 9, 2016 with about 45 people in attendance. Game Night Friday, January 13 at 7:00 p.m. Upcoming Men's Club meeting will be January 9, 2017.

The Movie Night normally scheduled the last Friday every other month was cancelled for December. Plan to attend the startup again in January or February. A youth movie night is also in the planning stages.

There is a new bible study being developed by Dennis Bartels and a few others here at church; the study is intended for members of Beautiful Savior in the beginning stages and eventually to the community outside the church over the next few months. Its working title is "Christians Caring for Cancer" and its goal is to provide unique insights, both into the disease of cancer itself and into God's Word as it relates to those who give and receive care. The purpose of this new study is to equip people with these insights, and to help them cultivate and carry the hope of Jesus Christ for which so many are longing.

Wednesday morning Bible Study – "Exploring the Lectionary" to resume on January 11 at 10:00a.m.

We will be starting an Israel Video lecture series in January 2017 entitled "The Holy Land Revealed", which will be open to the entire congregation. It is scheduled to begin January 12, from 6-8p.m. in the Fellowship Hall and continue for 6-8 weeks.

Special Worship: None.

ELDERS' ZONE CONTACTS: (in person, phone, email – (last month)

Zone 1: Everyone in zone.

Zone 2 : June Mueller, Leroy Etting, Betts, Morgans, Barb Stole, Darlene Neil, Jimmy Hahn, Jeff Hahn, Hahns, Joan Bernard, Sharon Leriche, Middendorfs, Sundermeyers, Greg Meaux, Regi Grodie.

Zone 8: Esther Pfeiffer, Coxs, Fales, Carolyn Green, Hanns, Kirby Keller, Kathy Leonard, Moyes, Chris Niebrugge, Carol Sandvoss, Bob and Laura Singleton, Judy Taylor, Betty Wagner, David Singleton.

Beautiful Savior's Visits of our Worship Guests: (since last meeting) (none)

Directors' Reports

Elder's Reports, Bob Engelken (not in attendance)

No report.

Vice President's/Past President's Report, Kirby Keller (not in attendance)

No report.

Christian Education, Margaret Washburn-Freeman

Joint Youth event scheduled for January 21, 2017. Meet at church at 3:00p.m., attend Lazer Tag and dinner at Fazoli's. Cost - \$10-\$15. Minimum age - 7.

Stewardship, Joe Mercurio (not in attendance)

No report.

Social Ministry, Regi Grodie

No Room at the Inn this week. We were asked if they had volunteers, would they be able to use our facility? Applicants must call Catholic Charities to get into the program. Margaret Freeman will get the phone number. We are still looking for volunteers within our church to assist in the Room at the Inn effort.

CHM items will be delivered tomorrow. February movie night. Funeral luncheon, headed by Sally Lane was well done and the congregation came through.

Youth and Family Ministry, Tim Decker

No report.

Evangelism/Outreach, John Folkerts

No report.

Property and Maintenance, Al Winkler

The telephone in elevator to be repaired and re-inspected.

Financial Secretary, Mila Thomas

Offering envelopes are on the table in the atrium and 2016 statements are being prepared.

Treasurer's Report, Ken Green, and Christine Foelsing

Revenues are \$5,000 ahead of schedule. We are still behind in covering our expenses for \$12,000.

Recording Secretary, Marie Woodcock

No report.

President's Report, Lynn Withrow

Old Business

None

New Business

A congregational meeting between services will be held January 15, 2017 to provide clarity to all members about a meeting that took place with the President of the Missouri District on December 6, 2016. An intense discussion by the Board followed.

Calendar

Next meeting - Tuesday, February 7, 2017. February devotions volunteer will be Mila Thomas.

Motion by Regi Grodie seconded by Christine Foelsing to adjourn at 8:40 p.m. carried. Pastor Bretscher closed the meeting with the Lord's prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Marie Woodcock, Recording Secretary

SPECIAL VOTERS MEETING - JANUARY 22, 2017

Attendance: Over 60 members.

The original meeting scheduled for 1/15/2017 was rescheduled for today due to inclement weather and limited attendance. Lynn Withrow opened the meeting at 9:15 a.m. Both Pastors provided devotions. Pastors James and Bretscher led the congregation in confessing their sin in violation of the 8th commandment and stated there will always be issues in the church. The purpose of this meeting is to provide clarity concerning the December 6, 2016 meeting with District President Hagan. A previously selected committee met with him to ensure that Pastor James Thomas was still on the Districts call list and, as we are midway through the call period, to assist in his next career move.

Several possibilities were discussed, including positions with the Lutheran Witness publication and Lutheran Senior Services. Unfortunately, due to the busy holiday season, etc. communication prior to the January Board of Directors and Elders meetings was overlooked resulting in a misunderstanding. There was no intent to terminate the previously extended call to Pastor Thomas and have been blessed with the opportunity to experience two pastors. An apology was extended to the congregation for this oversight and method of handling.

Pastor James Thomas will complete his call at Beautiful Savior in October of this year. Should a call be extended to him, the congregation will need to vote on his release. Pastors led us in the Lord's Prayer. Motion made by Sally Lane to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 a.m. and seconded by Sandy Wilson carried. We closed by singing Hymn 79 in the Redbook, "Beautiful Savior".

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Woodcock
Recording Secretary

Special Board of Directors Meeting - January 25, 2017

Those in attendance: Pastor Bretscher, Pastor Thomas, Marie Woodcock, Christine Foelsing, John Folkerts, Lynn Withrow, Regi Grodie, Tim Decker, Bob Engelken and Al Winkler.

Lynn Withrow called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. Pastor Bretscher led the devotions (Psalm 23) and opening prayer.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the Holy Trinity Lutheran Church request for Pastor Thomas to serve as vacancy pastor during their search for a new Pastor. It involves Pastor Thomas working for them part time (Wednesdays and 2 Sundays per month), while they deal with the Call Process. He would need to provide another Pastor to fill in for him the other two Sundays at his expense. We need to determine how we can assist our sister congregation through this period.

Pastor Thomas would continue to fulfill his obligations to Beautiful Savior while assisting Holy Trinity in their ministry. With the Lenten season fast approaching, he would need to drive from St. Clair (one hour from his home in Creve Coeur) and commute to Bridgeton on Wednesday evenings to attend the Lenten services. The contract states: *"In cases where, as the Vacancy Pastor, he is unable to perform these responsibilities, he agrees to find a suitable replacement for the listed responsibilities at the expense of his salary from Holy Trinity."*

As Wednesday is one of the required workdays, the Wednesday morning bible study would either change or cease unless someone in the congregation would volunteer to lead the study. When working Sundays at Holy Trinity, Pastor James would not be available to assist with Sunday School or work with the Christian Education folks, as well as youth activities taking place on Sunday afternoons.

After further discussion, a motion was made by Bob Engelken and seconded by Christine Foelsing to allow Pastor Thomas the authority to accept this vacancy position. By the Board voting "no" to the motion, any possibility of Pastor James accepting the position at Holy Trinity was removed.

At 6:50 p.m. a motion was made by Regi Grodie and seconded by Christine Foelsing to adjourn. Motion carried.
Lynn Withrow closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Marie Woodcock
Recording Secretary

WORSHIP SCHEDULE — FEBRUARY 2017

<p style="text-align: center;">Serving: February 5th</p> <p>ACOLYTES: Wilson Decker; Belle Muraski ALTAR FLOWERS: David & Stephane Wilson, in celebration of their anniversary ALTAR GUILD: Sharon Leriche; Bonnie Miller ELDERS: John Hamilton; Bill Kipp COUNTERS: Dan & Marie Woodcock FELLOWSHIP TIME HOST (ESS): June Hahn FOOD TRANSPORT: Regi Grodie MUSICIANS: Ruth Reiger GREETERS: Ken & Carolyn Green; Joan Bernard READERS: June Hahn; Bill Crichton SOUND & LIGHTS: Roy Anders; Bob Mullins USHERS: 1E; 1L WELCOMERS: Dan & Marie Woodcock; John Folkerts</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Serving: February 12th</p> <p>ACOLYTES: Wilson Decker; Bell Muraski ALTAR FLOWERS: Pauline Tulloch, to the glory of God ALTAR GUILD: Robyn Simmons ELDERS: John Hamilton; Bill Kipp COUNTERS: Jo & Abbey Sundermeyer FELLOWSHIP TIME HOST (ESS): Lynn Withrow MUSICIANS: Ruth Rieger GREETERS: Darlene Neil; Bob Engelken READERS: liturgist; liturgist SOUND & LIGHTS: Roy Anders; Bob Mullins USHERS: 2E; 2L WELCOMERS: Ken & Carolyn Green; Vicki McCoy</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Serving: February 19th</p> <p>ACOLYTES: Wilson Decker; Belle Muraski ALTAR FLOWERS: Beautiful Savior ALTAR GUILD: June Hahn; Linda Watts ELDERS: Darin Gittus; Bob Mullins COUNTERS: Sally Lane & Judy Taylor FELLOWSHIP TIME HOST (ESS): Regi Grodie MUSICIANS: Fran Ettling GREETERS: Lynn Withrow; Sandy Wilson READERS: Joe Mercurio; liturgist SOUND & LIGHTS: Roy Anders; Tim Decker USHERS: 3E; 3L WELCOMERS: Al Winkler; Fern Harmon & Joe Mercurio</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Serving: February 26th</p> <p>ACOLYTES: Wilson Decker; Belle Muraski ALTAR FLOWERS: from Marilyn Sims, in memory of Ron ALTAR GUILD: Linda Wehmeyer ELDERS: Darin Gittus; Bob Mullins COUNTERS: Christine Foelsing FELLOWSHIP TIME HOST (ESS): Dennis Niehaus MUSICIANS: flute/guitar GREETERS: Dan Woodcock; Jack & Bonnie Miller READERS: liturgist; Art Wehmeyer SOUND & LIGHTS: Roy Anders USHERS: 4E; 4L WELCOMERS: Valeda Woehr; Harry Grodie</p>

COSTUME PARADE & TEA

March 5, 2017 @ 2:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall of Beautiful Savior Church.

The St. Louis Chordinals present a parade of costumes from the Repertory Theatre of St. Louis.

Tickets: \$12.00.

Contact June Hahn 314-291-6346
 or 314-761-5259



CALENDAR OF EVENTS—FEBRUARY 2017

1	W	FEED THE HUNGRY BIBLE STUDY 10.00am Rm. A Youth Confirmation 5:00 pm	20	M	(Church office closed) GLOW EXERCISE 9:00 am Line Dancing 1:00 pm
2	TH	Narcotics Anonymous 11:30 am-1:30 pm	21	T	Narcotics Anonymous 11:30 am-1:30 pm CHORDINALS - 7:00 PM
3	F	NO GLOW EXERCISE Korean Church (Bible class) 7:00-9:00 pm	22	W	GLOW EXERCISE- 9:00 am BIBLE STUDY 10:00 am YOUTH CONFIRMATION 5:00pm CHOIR AND CHIMES 6:30 pm/ 7:30 pm
4	S	Korean Church (Worship/Lunch)9:30am-2:30 pm Narcotics Anonymous 7:00 pm	23	TH	Narcotics Anonymous 11:30 am-1:30 pm
5	SUN	<u>SUNDAY WORSHIP 8:00am & 10:30 am</u> Bible Class & Sunday School 9:15 am Fellowship Time-Host/ess: June Hahn	24	F	GLOW EXERCISE 9:00 am Korean Church (Bible class) 7:00-9:00 pm
6	M	(Church office closed) NO GLOW EXERCISE Line Dancing 1:00 pm	25	S	Korean Church (Worship/Lunch)9:30am-2:30 pm Narcotics Anonymous 7:00 pm
7	T	Narcotics Anonymous 11:30 am-1:30 pm <u>BOARD OF DIRECTORS - 7:00 pm</u> CHORDINALS 7:00 pm	26	SUN	<u>SUNDAY WORSHIP 8:00am & 10:30 am</u> FELLOWSHIP HOUR - 9:15 am Fellowship Time-Host/ess: Dennis Niehaus
8	W	GLOW EXERCISE - 9 am BIBLE STUDY 10.00 am Rm. A Youth Confirmation 5:00 pm CHIMES /CHOIR 6:30 pm / 7:30 pm	27	M	(Church office closed) GLOW EXERCISE- 9:00 am Line Dancing 1:00 pm ELDERS MEETING 7:00 pm
9	TH	Narcotics Anonymous 11:30 am-1:30 pm	28	T	Narcotics Anonymous 11:30 am-1:30 pm CHORDINALS- 7:00 pm
10	F	GLOW EXERCISE— 9:00 am Korean Church (Bible class) 7:00-9:00 pm			
11	S	Korean Church (Worship/Lunch)9:30am-2:30 pm Narcotics Anonymous 7:00 pm			
12	SUN	<u>SUNDAY WORSHIP 8:00am & 10:30 am</u> Bible Class & Sunday School 9:15 am Fellowship Time-Host/ess: Lynn Withrow			
13	M	(Church office closed) GLOW EXERCISE- 9:00 am Line Dancing 1:00 pm			
14	T	Narcotics Anonymous 11:30 am-1:30 pm CHORDINALS 7:00pm			
15	W	GLOW EXERCISE- 9:00 am BIBLE STUDY 10.00 am Rm. A Youth Confirmation 5:00 pm CHIMES /CHOIR 6:30 pm/7:30 pm			
16	TH	Narcotics Anonymous 11:30 am-1:30 pm			
17	F	GLOW EXERCISE- 9:00 am Korean Church (Bible class) 7:00-9:00 pm			
18	S	Korean Church (Worship/Lunch)9:30am-2:30 pm Narcotics Anonymous 7:00 pm			
19	SUN	<u>SUNDAY WORSHIP 8:00am & 10:30 am</u> Bible Class & Sunday School 9:15 am Fellowship Time-Host/ess: Regi Grodie			



CONGRATS TO BEAUTIFUL SAVIOR MEMBERS ON THEIR SPECIAL DAY

FEBRUARY BAPTISM REMEMBRANCES

Sarah Cox	02/04
Stefani Grodie	02/08
Cole Ray	02/10
Jo Sundermeyer	02/11
Gregory Williams	02/11
Amanda Grodie	02/12
Pauline Tulloch	02/12
Kathi Meier	02/14
Dave Meier	02/16
Jackie Mann	02/17
Frances Bell	02/18
Wilson Decker	02/19
Skyler Rogers	02/25



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCES

Dominick Ault	02/02
Betty Wagner	02/04
Rylan Cox	02/05
Jeff Luer	02/05
Diane Stokes	02/05
JoAnn Hopkins	02/06
Andrew Morales	02/06
Nancy Barry	02/08
Maggie Holm	02/09
Herb Fiehler	02/10
Cole Ray	02/10
John Rogers	02/11
Randy Moore	02/12
Pauline Tulloch	02/12
Skyler Rodgers	02/13
Katie Thomas	02/13
Ken Green	02/14
Mia Thomas	02/22

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARY REMEMBRANCES

Dave & Kathi Meier	02/23/63 54 years
Bill & Mary Crichton	02/14/70 47 years
David & Stephanie Wilson	02/09/80 37 years
Dan & Marie Woodcock	02/24/89 28 years



Happy Birthday





A letter from the president of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod; Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison

How well prepared are you to stand firm in the one true faith when others push you to bend to their will - when some even demand that you abandon your beliefs or your rights of conscience?

Our nation is full of moral conflict, personal attacks, political and spiritual warfare. Our culture and even government openly show hostility to what God's Word teaches and toward what Christians believe and confess.

Lately, efforts to pressure people of faith - like you and me - to break with their consciences and the clear teachings of Scripture became the new normal. No longer are Christians in a "someday maybe" situation. Individuals, churches and schools are singled out and targeted simply **for what they believe.**

Judge Ruth Neely (a member of Our Savior Lutheran Church, an LCMS congregation in Pinedale, Wyo.) is facing removal from office simply because she believes what God says in His Word about marriage.

Trinity Lutheran Church and preschool in Columbia, Mo., was disqualified from a state program that provides free shredded tires for school playgrounds only because the school is operated by a church.

Officials in two other states are trying to force churches to comply with SOGI (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity) laws that give transgendered individuals free access to any restroom of their choice - including those in churches which invite non-members to their worship services and activities - or face stiff state penalties.

True stories like these are why your support of the new Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty is so vital.

The LCMS is working to establish the Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty (LCRL) as a permanent presence in Washington, D.C. - one that will advocate with others on three important issues facing the Church: the sanctity of all life (from conception to natural death), the biblical view of marriage as the God-given union of one man and one woman, and the safeguarding of our religious liberties as citizens. And it will equip you and your fellow believers to take informed, effective action. But to have the kind of impact today's culture and our Synod require, the Center must turn to you for help.

Our hearts ache when government oversteps its reach and tells the Church what it can and cannot do, what it can and cannot teach, and that freedom of religion really only means the freedom to worship inside its walls on Sunday. **We know you pray hard when you see the morals, values and biblical truths you treasure being assaulted and torn apart. You ask, "What can I do?"**

With your gift, the new LCRL will help all of us stand up for our rights as citizens and act in ways consistent with God's Word. This new Center will work alongside several experienced, like-minded advocacy organizations in our nation's capital.

I boldly ask you to join in supporting this urgent and vital effort. Even when government administrations change and change is being discussed, the pressure to single out Christians does not go away.

Will you pray and boldly stand up to growing hostility and challenges to both Christians and the Church through a firm defense of our faith? Pray for our nation, her leaders, for Christ's Church and its servants and for all those who

want to silence the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Speak up for all who cannot speak for themselves. Give joyfully in proportion to what God has given freely to us: Forgiveness of sins and life eternal in Jesus. Learn more about your rights as a citizen to live in accordance with your Christ-centered beliefs.

This is your opportunity! Now is your time to defend the Christian faith and stand firm in the public square. Now is your time to defend biblical marriage, all human life and our constitutional freedoms as citizens - especially for the generations that will follow us.

I want to leave you with the greatest news of all. **FEAR NOT!**

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:37-39, ESV).

You are marching in a victory that is already won! Our true hope and future are found in our Savior, Jesus Christ. So keep marching by faith. Stand firm and speak the truth in love about our Savior Jesus as revealed in God's certain Word. And remember that truth and your conscience are given to you by God, not by governments.

Under the Cross,

Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison
President
The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod

Contributions may be made online at LCMS.ORG/GIVENOW/LCRL. If mailing a check, make payable to The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (and write "LCRL" on the memo line) and mail to The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122

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