



Connecting people to Jesus

The *Good News*

MARCH 2020

Our Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hawaii

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NEWSLETTER DEVOTION

Confession and absolution are powerful gifts that Christ has given to the church. Sometimes the practice of our churches change over time, so that in some cases, it moves away from the practice of private confession and absolution.

I remember many of the older members at Zion Lutheran Church in Brighton, would ask to meet with the pastor for private time for confession, or to declare that they wished to receive the Eucharist the Saturday before they would come to the Lord's supper.

That process had gone out of use there, probably sometime in the 1940's or 1950's. Now members are asked to fill out a card with their intent of receiving the Lord's gifts.

Luther himself valued the blessing of being able to confess his sins and receive absolution. It's a very powerful thing to know that someone has heard your sins and applies the proper scriptures to all the person has confessed with the knowledge that God's grace covers every sin. I know that I was taught confession in my confirmation classes. But how often did I meet with the pastor and confess my sins, allowing God's loving hand to remind me of His work in my life.

That is why I am going back to our roots. I plan to offer times for each member to come and confess their sins and receive absolution. This is a personal choice and heartfelt decision. No one should be compelled to come, just because it is being offered. But if your heart is burdened and you struggle to know what our God's plan is for you, then please, by all means, **feel free to join me on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 6:30 pm (or after Lenten services during lent) and the 2nd and 4th Saturdays at 9:30 am.**

I know it's been a while since we've reviewed the writings of Luther on these matters so here is a quick reminder of this blessing to the church.

Pastor Christian

What is the Office of the Keys?

It is the peculiar power which Christ has given to His Church on earth to forgive the sins of penitent sinners, but to retain the sins of the impenitent as long as they do not repent. . . .

What do you believe according to these words?

. . . when they absolve those who repent of their sins and are willing to amend, this is as valid and certain, in heaven also, as if Christ, our dear Lord, dealt with us Himself.

What is Confession?

Confession embraces two parts. One is that we confess our sins; the other, that we receive absolution, or forgiveness, from the pastor as from God Himself, and in no wise doubt, but firmly believe, that by it our sins are forgiven before God in heaven. (*Small Catechism*, 1529, 18-19)

Since Absolution or the Power of the Keys is also an aid and consolation against sin and a bad conscience, ordained by Christ [Himself] in the Gospel, Confession or Absolution ought by no means to be abolished in the Church, especially on account of [tender and] timid consciences and on account of the untrained [and capricious] young people, in order that they may be examined, and instructed in the Christian doctrine. (*Smalcald Articles*, 1537; Part III, Article III: Confession, section 1)

I wish him [the pope] to keep his hands off the confession and not make of it a compulsion or command, which he has not the power to do. Nevertheless I will allow no man to take private confession away from me, and I would not give it up for all the treasures in the world, since I know what comfort and strength it has given me. No one knows what it can do for him except one who has struggled often and long with the devil. Yea, the devil would have slain me long ago, if the confession had not sustained me . . .

Therefore, no man shall forbid the confession nor keep or draw any one away from it. And if any one is wrestling with his sins and wants to be rid of them and desires a sure word on the matter, let him go and confess to another in secret, and accept what he says to him as if God himself had spoken it through the mouth of this person. However, one who has a strong, firm faith that his sins are forgiven may let this confession go and confess to God alone. But how many have such a strong faith? Therefore, as I have said, I will not let this private confession be taken from me. But I will not have anybody forced to it, but left to each one's free will.

For our God, the God we have, is not so niggardly that he has left us with only one comfort or strengthening for our conscience, or only one absolution, but we have many absolutions in the gospel and we are richly showered with many absolution's. For instance, we have this in the gospel: "If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you" [Matt. 6:14]. Another comfort we have in the Lord's Prayer: "Forgive us our trespasses," etc. [Matt. 6:12]. A third is our baptism, when I reason thus: See, my Lord, I have been baptized in thy name so that I may be assured of thy grace and mercy. Then we have private confession, when I go and receive a sure absolution as if God himself spoke it, so that I may be assured that my sins are forgiven. Finally, I take to myself the blessed sacrament, when I eat his body and drink his blood as a sign that I am rid of my sins and God has freed me from all my frailties; and in order to make me sure of this, he gives me his body to eat and his blood to drink, so that I shall not and cannot doubt that I have a gracious God.

Thus you see that confession must not be despised, but that it is a comforting thing. (Sermon of 16 March 1522; LW, Vol. 51, 97-98)

Luther referred to absolution as a "sacrament" in a short appendix to the *Small Catechism*, in its first Wittenberg Edition (1529):

[the penitent in confession] Therefore, I beseech you that in God's stead you will declare forgiveness to me and comfort me with God's Word.

Another Form of Confession.

I confess before God and you, that I am a miserable sinner and full of all sin, of unbelief, and of blasphemy. I also feel that God's Word is not bringing forth fruit in me. I hear it, but I do not receive it earnestly. I do not show the works of love toward my neighbor; I am incensed, full of hate and envy toward him. I am impatient, avaricious, and inclined to everything that is evil. Therefore my heart and conscience are heavy and I would gladly be freed of the sins. I plead, please strengthen my little faith and comfort my weak conscience by means of the Divine Word and promise.

Why dost thou desire to receive the Sacrament?

Because I desire to strengthen my soul with God's word and tokens and to obtain grace.

But in this Office thou dost obtain forgiveness of sin.

And why not? But I want to add God's token also to the Word; and to seek God's Word frequently is much the better. (*A Short Method of Confessing to the Priest, For the Use of Simple Folk*, PE, Vol. VI, 215-216)

As to the current practice of private confession, I am heartily in favor of it, even though it cannot be proved from the Scriptures. It is useful, even necessary, and I would not have it abolished. Indeed, I rejoice that it exists in the church of Christ, for it is a cure without equal for distressed consciences. For when we have laid bare our conscience to our brother and privately made known to him the evil that lurked within, we receive from our brother's lips the word of comfort spoken by God himself.

. . . I have no doubt but that every one is absolved from his secret sins when he has made confession, privately before any brother, either of his own accord or after being rebuked . . . (*The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, 1520, in *Three Treatises*, 212, 214)

The *Apology for the Augsburg Confession*, written by Luther's close friend Philip Melanchthon in 1531, and binding on Lutherans, describes absolution as a sacrament:

3) If we call Sacraments rites which have the command of God, and to which the promise of grace has been added, it is easy to decide what are properly Sacraments. For rites instituted by men will not in this way be Sacraments properly so called. For it does not belong to human authority to promise grace. Therefore signs instituted without God's command are not sure signs of grace, even though they perhaps instruct the rude [children or the uncultivated], or admonish as to something [as a painted cross].

4) Therefore Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and Absolution, which is the Sacrament of Repentance, are truly Sacraments. For these rites have God's command and the promise of grace, which is peculiar to the New Testament. For when we are baptized, when we eat the Lord's body, when we are absolved, our hearts must be firmly assured that God truly forgives us . . . (Article XIII [VII]: Of the Number and Use of the Sacraments; from *Triglot Concordia: The Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church: German-Latin-English*, translated by F. Bente and W.H.T. Dau, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921)

Bibliography of Sources

Luther's Works (LW), American edition, edited by Jaroslav Pelikan (volumes 1-30) and Helmut T. Lehmann (volumes 31-55), St. Louis: Concordia Pub. House (volumes 1-30); Philadelphia: Fortress Press (volumes 31-55), 1955.

Smalcald Articles, 1537, from *Triglot Concordia: The Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church: German-Latin-English*, translated by F. Bente and W.H.T. Dau, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921. **Available online.**

Small Catechism, 1529, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1943.

Three Treatises [from 1520], Philadelphia: Fortress Press, revised edition, 1970 (derived from *Luther's Works* [LW])

READINGS FOR MARCH 2020

March 1	Genesis 3:1-21	Romans 5:12-19	Matthew 4:1-11
March 8	Genesis 12:1-9	Romans 4:1-8, 13-17	John 3:1-17
March 15	Exodus 17:1-7	Romans 5:1-8	John 4:5-30, 39-42
March 22	Isaiah 42:14-21	Ephesians 5:8-14	John 9:1-41
March 29	Ezekiel 37:1-14	Romans 8:1-11	John 11:1-45

PRAYERS FOR THE MONTH

We pray for the sick, injured, those undergoing and recovering from surgical procedures and those facing long term illness: Cal, Jane, Katy, Bill, Peggy, Samuel, Gabi, Karen, Stuart, Rick, Joyce, Linda, Trudy, Owen, Lorine, Bill, Kimo, Scarlett, Tom, Colbert, Laurie, Vivian, Audrey, Monica, Dan, Linda, Heather, Troy, Peter, Parker, Annie, Summy.

BIRTHDAYS FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH



- | | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Scott Walls | David Rockemann |
| Alena Casey | Martha Peace |
| Tynan Kuhn | Tom Windsor |
| Lester Pelletier | Juliette Brege |
| Eleanor Mau | |

ANNIVERSARY FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH

Scott and Lauren Walls

Happy Anniversary!

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

The ladies of Our Redeemer and a few gentlemen enjoyed a wonderful Valentine's lunch at Our Redeemer for the month of February.

On March 12th, the second Thursday of the month, the ladies and gentlemen of Our Redeemer will gather at the Old Spaghetti Factory located at the Aloha Tower Marketplace, 3 Aloha Tower Drive, Suite 1106. As always food, fun and fellowship will be enjoyed by all. Come join us! Let Nelda know that you'll be attending or call the church office.



Now Is the Time to Volunteer!

Our first week of hosting families for Family Promise begins **Easter Sunday, April 12**. What this means is that on Easter Sunday evening we will serve the first meal for our guests. By that time we should have all of our hosts for the week assigned to their individual nights, have had their background checks completed, and have been through orientation, which will be done **Sunday, March 29, Noon**, at the church.

Those volunteering to be overnight hosts are asked to register with Family Promise so that a brief background check may be conducted. Keeping in mind that this volunteer work involves staying overnight at the church where parents with children will also be spending the night one can certainly understand the request for a background check. In order to have the check conducted go to:

<https://familypromisehawaii.org/getinvolved/volunteer/>

Fill out the brief form and you are finished. Simple as that. Any volunteers who have a current background check may submit their paperwork instead of having another one.

We also want to have the seven days of chefs and sous chefs assigned. Don't be bashful. It will not be that difficult. Just think of what it would take to prepare a meal for six and multiply that by three. See how easy that is! There is a signup sheet in the Aloha Room. Let your culinary skills shine. People have been working to organize our kitchen so that it is as equipped as possible for serving supper. Dinners can also be prepared at home and brought to church for serving. We have two large ovens for baking or warming. We also have microwaves in several locations on the property. There is also a large rice cooker available. Ruth Crockett is ready to answer any questions about kitchen and cooking supplies.

Thank you to all who have provided sheets. We have reached our goal on sheets, but would also like light blankets, twin size (not full or queen). If you can purchase blankets, please launder them prior to making the donation. Thank you.

Let's set a goal of March 15 to have everyone sign the volunteer sheets. Evening hosts may be single individuals or a couple. Ideally chefs will have two sous chefs per meal, but that is up to the individuals volunteering. When we have all the chefs signed up we can talk about menus so the families are not served the same meal seven days in a row.

Any further questions, please speak to any member of our Family Promise Committee: Max Hardoby (Chair), Keith Novak (Contact Person), Ruth Crockett, Frank Lutz, and Dayna Owskey.

Karl D. Bachman, President
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church



Architecture Class Visits Our Redeemer

Sunday morning, March 8, at 10:30 we will have a potluck brunch and welcome about fifteen students and their professor from the Architecture School at UH Manoa. They will come and share their ideas with us on how to air-condition our worship space, improve the flow of traffic and people on our property, and make our facility more useful for our purposes of socialization, learning, and interaction with the community. This is a great opportunity to show hospitality to university students, make new friends, and be inspired about the possibilities for our church and grounds. There will be models and numerous design ideas presented by the students on “the big screen”. You don’t want to miss this event. Bring your camera. Bring a dish to share and keep in mind that we will have hungry students as our guests.

Karl D. Bachman, President
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church



Time For an Anniversary Celebration

In 2021 we will celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church. On August 12, 1945 a group of Lutherans voted to organize a Lutheran congregation. There were fifty-three people present at the meeting. As the months passed by a constitution was written and application was made to the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and other States for membership in what would later be known as the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. By June 3 of 1946 the congregation received approval of its application for a Charter of Incorporation from the Territory of Hawaii.

The Board of Directors recently approved the establishment of two committees: a seventy-fifth anniversary committee, and a church renovation committee. There will be a **Town Hall Meeting on Sunday, April 19, at 10:30** for the purpose of talking about what we would like to have happen in the anniversary year as well as what we would like to see in the way of renovation of our facility, specifically our worship space. Be sure to attend the visit of the architecture students on March 8 to get some inspiration about what we might do for our facility, then come to the Town Hall and share your ideas. Also think about what you may like to do to help us celebrate and come prepared to offer your thoughts and enthusiasm.

Thank you to Doreen Chang for sharing an album from her family archive from which the above photo was taken. It is a view of the front of the church from University Avenue.

Karl D. Bachman, President
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church

March is National Developmental Disabilities Awareness month

At Bethesda Lutheran Communities, we work at Connecting People of All Abilities. Our goal is to enhance the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities by giving them the opportunity to live their lives to the fullest. We seek to be a champion of change by supporting independence and community inclusion. Our mission encapsulates this goal:

**Enhance the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities
through services that share the good news of Jesus Christ.**

Bethesda serves over 1500 adults with disabilities in California, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, Oregon, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin. The services provided include Residential support programs in over 300 sites in those 13 states. Also provided are Day programs, Integrated employment, and Faith support, along with Bethesda College of Applied Learning through Concordia University Wisconsin.

The month of March is observed as National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. More information is available at www.BethesdaLC.org. Bethesda's NEW disability awareness materials, *Face 2 Face*, are just now available as a FREE download on Bethesda's website. Further Bethesda information is available in a monthly newsletter entitled *Faith in Action* available on the internet at <https://bethesdalc.org/connect-with-us/subscription-center/#.XjXNi2i6NPY>

Additionally, there exists the opportunity for you to learn more of the challenge to assist Bethesda's programs in a personal presentation. On the Hawaiian Islands, you can contact Rev. Lloyd Willweber who serves as Bethesda's Ambassador. He will gladly share Bethesda's message with your parish or any of its groups. He can be contacted at lloyd@willweber.net or by phone / text at 559-310-9092.



We will continue to worship **each Wednesday throughout Lent** as we make our way to the cross of Calvary.

Midweek services will be at 7:00pm with a light soup supper before each service at 6:00 pm in the Aloha Room.

Please join us on March 4th for a Chili Cook-off at 6:00 pm in the Aloha Room.

***May God bless our journey to the cross of Calvary
and the empty tomb of Easter morning!***

Worship Assistants Schedule for the month of MARCH

Worship Care – Sharon Shinno and Nelda Peterson

March 1, 2020 – First Sunday in Lent

Assistant: Phillip Rappe
Lectors: Jim Shaw, Phillip Rappe
Ushers: Lester Pelletier, Carl Weinsteger

March 8, 2020 – Second Sunday in Lent

Assistant: Joseph Krakowiak
Lectors: Bonnie Jo Alle, Joseph Krakowiak
Ushers: Anne Krakowiak, Matthew Schlechte

March 15, 2020 – Third Sunday in Lent

Assistant: Stuart Peace
Lectors: Marcy Reginelli, Stuart Peace
Ushers: Henry Kuhn II, Marcy Reginelli

March 22, 2020 – Fourth Sunday in Lent

Assistant: Henry Kuhn II
Lectors: Tom Windsor, Henry Kuhn II
Ushers: Stuart Peace, Tom Windsor

March 29, 2020 – Fifth Sunday in Lent

Assistant: Maxwell Hardoby
Lectors: Dayna Owskey, Maxwell Hardoby
Ushers: Matthew Schlechte, Carl Weinsteger

KEIKI CHURCH VOLUNTEERS

March 1	Lorine Pelletier
March 8	Bonnie Jo Alle
March 15	Ruth Crockett
March 22	Lorine Pelletier
March 29	Bonnie Jo Alle



March

2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:00 Divine Service 10:15 Fellowship 10:45 Bible Study	2 6:30 Board of Finance	3 5:00 Family Promise	4 10:00 Bible Study 6:00 Soup Supper 7:00 Lenten Service	5	6	7 8:00 Fellowship Breakfast – Zippy’s Kahala 10:00 Board of Community Life
8 9:00 Divine Service 10:15 Fellowship 10:30 Special Presentation UH Architecture class Potluck to follow	9 6:30 Board of Spiritual Life	10 10:00 Board of Property	11 10:00 Bible Study 6:00 Soup Supper 7:00 Lenten Service	12 9-1 Work Day	13	14 8:00 Fellowship Breakfast – Zippy’s Kahala
15 9:00 Divine Service 10:15 Fellowship 10:45 Bible Study	16	17	18 10:00 Bible Study 6:00 Soup Supper 7:00 Lenten Service	19	20	21 8:00 Fellowship Breakfast – Zippy’s Kahala
22 9:00 Divine Service 10:15 Fellowship 10:45 Bible Study 12:00 Bd of Directors	23	24	25 10:00 Bible Study 6:00 Soup Supper 7:00 Lenten Service	26 9-1 Work Day	27	28 8:00 Fellowship Breakfast – Zippy’s Kahala
29 9:00 Divine Service 10:15 Fellowship 10:45 Bible Study	30	31				



Our Redeemer Lutheran Church

Pastor Christian Rasmussen

Administrative Assistant
Director of Music
Trumpet

Sharon Shinno
Karl Bachman
Roger Koopman
Jillian Madanay

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

President
Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer
Board of Spiritual Life Director
Board of Community Life Director
Board of Finance Management Director
Board of Property Management Director

Karl Bachman
Stephanie Spangler
Bonnie Jo Alle
Roger Koopman
Jerry Groth
Stephen Okumura
Henry Kuhn II
Michael Riess

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