



Jewels

MARCH 2020

A publication of Crown of Life Lutheran Church, Sun City West, AZ

Our Lenten Schedule

Midweek Services

Wednesday 4:00 PM

March 4, 11, 18, 25, April 1

Maundy Thursday

April 9

4:00 PM

Good Friday

April 10

4:00 & 7:00 PM

Easter Celebrations

April 11 & 12

Saturday – 4:00 PM

Easter Sunrise – 6:00 AM

Sunday – 8:00 & 10:30 AM

Easter Sunday Fellowship

Please join us in the Parish Hall on Easter morning—

- Following the 6 AM Sunrise service for coffee and pastries
- Between the 8 AM and 10:30 AM services for a continental breakfast

Everyone is welcome! (free-will offering)

1529 by Pastor Phill, Sr. Pastor

1529 was a big year. It began on a Friday, according to the Julian calendar then in use. The world was a little different then, the cell phone and internet being a few years in the future – but human nature was the same as it had always been, and is today. A couple of 1529 examples of that:

- Suleiman the Magnificent and his army lay siege to Vienna, as event in the Second Islamic Expansion;
- Henry VIII fired the powerful Cardinal Wolsey, and would have beheaded him had Wolsey not died of natural causes the next year;
- Martin Luther wrote and published the Small Catechism.

Of these, which do you suppose has had lasting effect?

Luther wrote the catechism because he realized there existed no simple resource for the layman to teach his children about the Christian faith and as he discovered, most pastors were ill-equipped as well. Here is a portion of his introduction to that early publication:

Martin Luther to All Faithful and Godly Pastors and Preachers:

Grace, Mercy, and Peace in Jesus Christ, our Lord.

The deplorable, miserable condition which I discovered lately when I, too, was a visitor, has forced and urged me to prepare this Catechism, or Christian doctrine, in this small, plain, simple form. Mercy! Good God! what manifold misery I beheld! The common people, especially in the villages, have no knowledge whatever of Christian doctrine, and, alas! many pastors are altogether incapable and incompetent to teach [so much so, that one is ashamed to speak of it].

continued on back

ATTENTION ... EVERYONE!!!

Don't forget the 6th annual Health Fair on Friday, March 13 from 9:00 AM to Noon. We have lots of exhibitors, free food, and two speakers—an audiologist on the importance of hearing (this affects your mentation, balance, and other health issues); and a lady from Dignity Health talking about the dangers of head injury. You won't want to miss all the new presentations, even if you've come before! I look forward to seeing you there!

Nurse Carol

President's Message

As we enter the Lenten Season let us remember the cross as we attend midweek worship services on Wednesdays, March 4, 11, 18, 25 and April 1 at 4:00 PM. We will find that there is no road to life in this world apart from Jesus. He is the way and the truth. On the cross, He who is life brought life's truth. On the cross, He who is life brought life. In His death is the death of sin and death. Take a look at Isaiah 25:6-9.

I thank the Lord for giving this congregation the ability to keep COL financially strong during 2019. May we continue with this opportunity to say thank you Lord throughout 2020.

Many of us take a "shot in the arm" to protect us during the flu season. Consider taking an additional "shot in the arm" by attending one of several Bible classes offered at COL. It could prevent an infectious invasion of our bodies and soul by the devil.

May the Lord always walk with you and yours. Trust in the Lord, "For He will hide me in His shelter in the day of trouble; He will conceal me under the cover of His tent; He will lift me high upon a rock."

Jay Nelson

Around Crown of Life

The Church Council has authorized formation of a Task Force to examine our near future, to include staffing, technology, outreach, etc. The Task Force was introduced at the November Voters' Assembly, and will report its conversations at the April Voters' Assembly and again in November 2020.

The Gospel of Mark, a live presentation of the entire book, will take place here Saturday, April 25, beginning at 3:00 PM. Make plans to attend that day, in lieu of our regular Saturday service.

The Kenya Project by Gene Kuebler, Chairman, Board for Missions

The Mission Board has identified and taken on a new support project for this year. After spending time last year with our LCMS Mission representative Mike Fisher, our board was able to learn more about what our church is doing for children throughout the world. This project caught our attention and we felt that this was a program that is truly making a difference in the lives of children.

The following information is taken directly from the LCMS Mission website and will give you a better understanding of what is being provided.

Christ's Care for Children: Kenya is a sponsorship program that matches donors in the U.S. with children who are living in one of the boarding facilities in Kenya, managed by the LCMS' partner church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Kenya. The cost to sponsor a child is \$90 per month or \$1,080 for the whole year. Sponsors receive an initial packet of information on their child, as well as updates throughout the year on his or her welfare, spiritual engagement and school grades.

"There's something different about Christ's Care for Children: Kenya compared with similar programs," said Britt Odemba, an LCMS missionary in Kenya who oversees the program. "I've seen how well the children are taught and what God is doing in their lives. It's exciting for me to be part of this program and to link people together across the world."

More than just food and shelter

The Christ's Care for Children: Kenya program offers more than just food and shelter. It is also designed to equip children with everything necessary for success in life. The children learn to plant, harvest, cook, tend to livestock, clean the compounds and care for their personal space.

The children begin and end each day with devotions. Choir practice, Bible study and catechesis occurs throughout the week, too. The children are full, contributing members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Kenya (a partner church of the LCMS) and some teach Sunday school classes for the younger students.

Your Mission Board is providing \$5,000 for this project which will provide support for five children this year. If you want to learn more about this program, I have provided the link to their website. We will also be putting information on this and our other projects on our bulletin board.

<https://www.lcms.org/make-a-gift/christs-care-for-children-kenya>

Joining the Church Triumphant

Crown of Life members who recently were called home to Heaven are:

Walter Sullivan – February 2
Charles Wasem – January 29

We celebrate the victory won for all the faithful dead, but we grieve for our beloved as well, knowing that God honors our tears.

God, a Very Present Help in Trouble *by Kathe Schmidt,*

Prayer Team Member

When a new event, the most difficult of trials, suddenly becomes reality in our life, the shock of it renders us numb. A family member says, it can't be true, you must be mistaken. But it is true, even though we wish it weren't so. The day we find out turns into a night of fitful sleep, but morning does not change the reality of it. Dear God, what do you want us to learn from this? What is your purpose behind this awful thing? Help us understand.

We are told to praise God in all circumstances. Job stated in Chapter 2:10b "Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?" We let that sink in for a moment, because it is found right there in God's Word. And so we take stock, showing evidence by our reactions to it what makes us different from the world. Some of our family members and friends consider us too religious. They are not interested in talking or hearing about matters of faith. It makes them uncomfortable, but they still give us a token of respect. These same ones now watch us and wonder how we will handle this new calamity.

Attending church, spending time in God's presence, speaking to Him as we open our hearts to Him in prayer, has prepared us to know and trust our Creator. In this our most critical time we hang on even tighter to our Lord Immanuel "God with us." We recall the words of Jesus in John 14, "I will not leave you as orphans... I am in My Father, and you are in Me, and I am in you." We remember the comforting words in Psalm 46:1 "God is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble." God is not some distant, future rescuer. He is here and involved now. He is the rock where we can find shelter, stability, and strength. Nothing happens to us without His knowing about it. Thank you, Lord God, for Your great love! Strengthen our faith.

New Card Ministry forms *by Cathy Meyer, Coordinator*

A new Card Ministry has started here at Crown of Life. Members are creating handmade birthday and anniversary cards for the Elders to send to Crown of Life members. If you are creative, enjoy crafts, or make your own cards, come join us for some creativity and fellowship! We meet at 9:00 AM on the second Tuesday of each month. If you have questions, please call Cathy Meyer (253-939-0212; or email Cathy at seabeetle@outlook.com).

Perfumes and Church

Please remember ... some of our members have allergic reactions to the chemicals used in perfumes and colognes. We ask that you please refrain from using perfumes, colognes and after-shave lotions when you come to church. Thank you for your understanding and sensitivity to this request.

So What Exactly Does a Parish Nurse Do?

by Carol Steficek, Parish Nurse

If you are new to the congregation or as yet haven't utilized my services, here are some of the things you'll need to know about the Parish Nurse Ministry among you.

The parish nurse:

- 1) Is available for counseling/providing information for medical questions and concerns.
- 2) Checks blood pressures once a month after church services or anytime during office hours.
- 3) Visits our homebound and hospitalized members.
- 4) Has worked 30 years in the valley so is a good resource for any community information.
- 5) Will schedule speakers on topics of interest as requested.
- 6) Teaches health/spiritual education classes.
- 7) Schedules a Health Fair once a year to provide information for the congregation/community.
- 8) Keeps the congregation informed on pertinent health topics via the bulletin board and Health Bits.
- 9) Keeps the first aid kits and AED machine updated.
- 10) Prays for all of you on a daily basis.

"When you talk, choose the very same words that you would use if Jesus were looking over your shoulder. Because He is!"

Coming Soon!

by Judith Axelson, Assimilation Committee

AZ Broadway Theater Matinee
Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat

- Thursday, June 25
- \$65.00/person

Let's Rally Our Troups

by Rita Grover, President, LWML

Recently, Trish Aamoth the LWML Florida-Georgia District President 2016-2020 made the following statement, "Perhaps if we come together as zones in the true meaning of 'rally,' many will be encouraged, engaged and energized! Especially if we consider these definitions: 'to bring together for a common purpose; to revive; to come in order to help.'

That's LWML, is it not? Coming together to assist our women to minister to others wherever they are? It is my sincere prayer that as we gather for a common purpose, we will help others, so all will be revived in joy, rejoicing in the Lord always!"

Our LWML (Women in Mission) March meeting, will be absolutely coming together for a common purpose. The supplies will all be purchased through Thrivent Grants and what we need is lots of helping hands to put together Easter baskets for Phoenix Rescue Mission. We have committed our group to making 50 baskets. These baskets will go to children from low-income families from across the Phoenix area. Please come and help to spread the "Joy of Easter" as the children who receive the baskets will be celebrating the triumph of our Savior, Jesus Christ. We will be meeting in the Chapel at Crown of Life on Tuesday, March 10 at 1:00 PM. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend.

June 5-7, 2020 - LWML Pacific Southwest District Convention Palm Springs, CA (visit www.psdlwml.org for information and registration)

Go and serve the Lord with gladness.

Voters gather in April

Grab your calendar and mark it for ...

Sunday, April 26
9:15 AM
Spring Voter's Meeting

Walking with Jesus through Times of Pain and Struggle

by Christine Escobar, GriefCare Coordinator

This year we observe Lent from February 26 through April 11. We observe Lent with prayerful and penitential reflection on God's great love for us *in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.* (Romans 5:8) Throughout Jesus' life He modeled spiritual discipline, prayer, trusting God in all matters, and holding to His commands in all situations.

As we reflect on the immense sacrifice Christ made for our salvation, we can visualize Jesus walking by our side loving us, strengthening us and inspiring us at all times.

If during this Lenten season you are grieving the loss of your spouse and feel alone in your grief, please join us on Tuesday, March 17 from 9:30 to 11:30 AM in the Chapel for our "Loss of a Spouse Seminar." At this encouraging seminar you will gain insight into:

- How to handle overwhelming emotions
- Where to find the strength to go on
- What to expect in the days to come
- How to grieve in a way that's healthy and suited to you
- Biblical principles that help you deal with your grief

Our 13-week GriefCare program "Your Journey from Mourning to Joy," will start Wednesday April 8. This program will provide on-going support to those who are grieving the loss of a loved one. Each week we will cover a different aspect of grief Christian experts deem essential to address in order to fully heal and move forward. *There is no requirement to share. Those who do not wish to share can benefit greatly from listening to others in the group.*

You will receive workbooks in both the Loss of a Spouse Seminar and our 13-week session that will help you place your life into perspective and determine priorities as you work through this difficult, overwhelming and often disorienting time.

For more information and to register for these sessions, please call Christine Escobar at 623.218.6793 or email griefcare@colchurch.com.

May God's Peace and Love strengthen you this Lenten Season.

It is not faith in Christ that saves you (though faith is the instrument); it is Christ's blood and merits.

Treasurer's Report for 2019 Year End

by Arlin Bates, Treasurer

	<u>December 2019</u>			<u>Year-Ending 2019</u>	
	BUDGET	ACTUAL		BUDGET	ACTUAL
Receipts	\$104,886	\$133,689	Receipts	\$828,500	\$877,465
Expenses	\$ 68,908	\$ 65,817	Expenses	\$828,500	\$799,064

Christ Caring for People through People

by Ken Grover, Stephen Ministry Publicity Coordinator

“Encourage one another and build each other up as in fact you are doing.”
1 Thessalonians 5:11

Stephen Ministers provide spiritual and emotional, one to one, Christian care to those that are undergoing a wide variety of challenges or difficulties. A crisis can throw all of us into a tail spin. The coping mechanisms that are normally implemented, don't always work. No one should have to suffer alone. YOU DON'T HAVE TO!!! People in a crisis can benefit from a Stephen Minister's care. Crown of Life is a Stephen Ministry Congregation. Stephen Ministers meet privately with their care receiver, of the same gender, on a regular basis. Stephen ministers are Christian men and women who have an important role in the overall plan of care. A Stephen Minister will encourage, listen, pray, be dependable, and trustworthy in their caregiving. Personal information, shared by and with their care receiver, is kept confidential. Stephen Ministers receive 50 hours of training followed by on-going guidance and continuing education. Stephen Ministers meet twice a month for encouragement and support from the Pastors, Stephen Leaders, and their fellow Stephen Ministers.

Congratulations to the following Crown of Life members: Charles Crover, Kari Johnson, Bonnie Kimble, and Norma Miller. They have successfully completed the fifty (50) hours of initial training. They will be commissioned as Stephen Ministers at the 10:30 AM service on March 15.

“In his heart a man plans his course but the Lord determines his steps.”
Proverbs 16:9

For information about Stephen Ministry, contact Pastor Gary at 623-546-6228 or John Obradovich at 623-975-1255. May God continue to bless, protect and keep you in His amazing Grace.

“This is the day the Lord has made, rejoice and be glad in it.”
Psalm 118:24

Treasurer's Report by Arlin Bates, Treasurer

	<u>January 2020</u>			<u>Year-to-date 2020</u>	
	BUDGET	ACTUAL		BUDGET	ACTUAL
Receipts	\$74,647	\$76,227	Receipts	\$833,145	\$76,227
Expenses	\$69,429	\$86,785	Expenses	\$833,145	\$86,785

Flower Committee Update

by Florella Denzin, Committee Chairperson

In March the world's society emphasizes "LUCK". As believers, many of us do not like or use that word. I like to say BLESSED instead.

Green is the main general color. That is symbolic for us "GROWING" in the Lenten Season now.

Watch for details about ordering our Easter flowers for the Sanctuary to honor our Risen Lord.

Altar Flowers

- 7-8 Louise Fountain, in celebration of her 96th birthday
- 7-8 Hilde Gebert, in loving memory of husband Wolfgang
- 14-15 Duane & Cookie Rawson, in celebration of their 61st wedding anniversary
- 14-15 Jerry Sandmann, in loving memory of his mother, Florence's 3rd year in Heaven
- 21-22 Lowell & Donna Koelling, in celebration of their 60th wedding anniversary
- 21-22 Bill & Joyce Nance, in celebration of their 60th wedding anniversary

It is not faith in Christ that saves you (though faith is the instrument); it is Christ's blood and merits.

Reminder Regarding Hospitalizations

Please contact Sue Stuempfig in the church office if you are in the hospital and would like us to be aware of your situation. If you are not able to do this yourself, you may ask the hospital staff, chaplain or a friend to call for you. We hope to be able to meet your needs the best we can but we have to know!

Food Bank Collections is the first weekend of each month. Look for the large gray tub located in the Courtyard.

Electronic Giving is available to you. Contact Sue Stuempfig in the church office if you would like more information.

What's Happening...

Around the Synod

Concordia University Portland (Oregon) has announced that it will close permanently at the end of the current academic year. Founded in 1905, the financial stresses of operating a small, modern university have led to this sad event. This follows the closure of Concordia College, Selma (Alabama) in 2018 for the same reasons.

Reverend Doctor Dale Meyer, President of Concordia Seminary/ St. Louis, has announced his retirement at the end of this academic year, having served as President for 15 years, and faculty there since 1980. He led the Seminary's campus modernization and the remarkable growth of the Seminary's endowment.

Around the Pacific Southwest District

A new staff position – Mission and Ministry Services - has been created and filled by Rev. Dominic Rivkin. He will be responsible for mission planting in our District; he served as pastor at Temecula, California, and coordinator of LINC/LA.

Around Circuit 24

Pastor Don Schoenbach, Christ the Redeemer Lutheran Church in Phoenix, has announced his retirement effective 2022, after many years' service in that parish.

Summit Community Church, an LCMS parish in Buckeye, completed and has occupied its new church building, and has seen attendance grow by 50%.

If you'll only trust and believe
in His Word, you'll stand
in God's kingdom
and not be ashamed.

Thoughts from Pastor Gary

During a stormy night in 1860, two vessels, one a freighter and the other a passenger ship, collided on Lake Michigan. The latter ship, called the Lady Elgin, carried several hundred passengers. When the ship sank, the people jumped into the water, clinging to whatever came their way – lifeboats, floating timbers, even the large bass drum from the ship's orchestra.

As the survivors struggled toward the Illinois shore, people from the land waded out into the water to extend a helping hand. Participating in the rescue mission was a university student by the name of Edward Spencer, an expert swimmer. During the early morning hours and through the day young Spencer succeeded in rescuing 17 persons from the watery grave. But so great was the strain that he lost his health and spent the rest of his life in a wheelchair.

In later years, this hero-for-a-day was asked what he remembered most about that tragic day. He replied, "I recall the fact that not one of the 17 rescued persons thanked me for saving their lives."

Jesus Christ sacrificed His life to rescue us from sin and death. Have we thanked Him? Is our thanksgiving by words accompanied by thanks-living? And do we live our thanks by giving ourselves for others? The apostle Paul tells the Philippians, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your request to God. And the God of peace, which transcends all understandings will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4: 6-7).

Have you taken time today to thank Jesus who saved your life?

Preventing Bites and Stings Around the House

by Carol Steficek, Parish Nurse

Spring and warm weather is coming. There are lots of insects and other creatures who love the Arizona sunshine as much as we do. You need to be aware of how to prevent problems from snakes, scorpions, spiders, ants, bees and wasps.

- Remove litter and debris from your yard.
- Wear heavy work gloves when working around the yard.
- Be care reaching under bushes and other places you can't see clearly.
- Keep doors and windows fitted with weather stripping.
- Fill all cracks around the foundation of your house.
- Check for nests and swarms that an expert may need to remove.
- Don't leave shoes and clothing items outdoors.
- Wear shoes outdoors especially around the pool

Thank you to my prayer warriors!

I just wanted to thank everyone who has been praying for me. I have been going through a lot since my back surgery with complications. The back surgery was almost two years ago this August. This past Christmas Eve it all came to a head. Besides the pain, I was also dealing with severe depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress. Life has not been easy for me. God has said in His word, we will all have troubles here on earth because of original sin. But because of all of your prayers, God led me to the right doctors. God was in control and He only knew what was best for me. I thank God for all my wonderful prayer warrior friends here at COL. May He bless you all!

Debbie Gosseck

March Servants

Senior Pastor Rev. Phill Robbins
 Assisting Pastor Rev. Gary Smith
 Pastoral Assistants
 Rev. Ron Luedemann,
 Rev. Vern Ermeling, Rev. Ray Mirly

ELDERS

(4:00) Lowell Janssen, Al Stoudemire,
 Duane Rawson
 (8:00) Chris Beck, Lowell Janssen,
 Harry Bernhardt, Paul Brown,
 Ed Kristof, Tom Leshney,
 Ed Michel
 (10:30) Tom Mertins, Henry
 Munzinger,
 Christ Beck, Paul Brown,
 Duane Rawson

TRUSTEES

(4:00) Larry Lienemann
 (8:00) Myron Holen
 (10:30) Myron Holen

ALTAR GUILD

(4:00) Kathy Beilstein, Ginger Stribling
 (8:00) Lee Gregoire, Chris Roberts
 (10:30) Gloria Anderson, Karen Murphy

GREETERS

(4:00) Joan Byrd, Kathleen Johnson,
 Susie Tomaszewski
 (8:00) Cheryl Bernhardt, Martha
 Plapp, Shirley & Leonard
 Gadeken
 (10:30) Dee Harries, Richard & Vione
 Rydeen, Steve & Terri Worster

GUEST BOOK

(4:00) Pat Coyle
 (8:00) Gretchen McCaslin
 (10:30) Jeanne Breese

FLOWERS

Florella Denzin, Jan Drake,
 Vicki Jolin, Sheila Mecham,
 Karen Murphy, Darlene McAfee,
 Denise Tevarrow, Jan Tvinnereim,
 Cora Weiss

SOUND TECHNICIANS

Paul Stuempfig, Coordinator
 (Sat) Joe Jellison, Dave Sawyer
 (Sun) Bruce Borchert, Dave Brodzeller,
 Gerry Harpt, Mike Krischler,
 Tom Mertins, Ron Schumann,
 Paul Stuempfig

SCREENS - Tom Mertins, Coordinator

TELLERS - Duane & Orv Neal,
 Don Koepke, Howard Ludden,
 Wiley McAfee, Sheila Mecham
 Sub - Ken Grover

VIDEO TECHNICIANS

Darlene & Wiley McAfee,
 Susan Schaffer

Happy Birthday

1 John Lindley
 3 Carol Dupras
 3 Gretchen McCaslin
 4 Bud Redburn
 4 Betty Wohlfeil
 4 Terri Worster
 5 Marge Heinrichs
 5 Paul Naumann
 6 Judy Koelsch
 6 Lewis Leibbrandt
 7 Kathryn Houck
 8 Marilyn Engelken
 8 Louis Fountain
 8 Fay Sieving
 9 Herb Wolf
 10 Dick Andersen
 10 Patti Vaughn
 11 Laurel Coffman
 11 LeeAnn Michaelis
 11 Judi Schmidt
 12 Mary Bonrud
 12 Jacquelyn Leavitt
 13 Sue Stuempfig
 13 Janna Thiel
 14 Shirley Swartz
 15 Gene Kuebler
 16 Larry Maass
 16 Joan Rall
 17 Ilene Borgman
 17 Ralph Colrud
 17 Femmie Gratian
 17 Dennis Wolf
 18 Scott Michael
 19 Nora Mara
 20 Chuck Blakley
 21 Otto Kelly
 22 Nancy Gothard
 22 Yvonne Stone
 23 Mark Adam
 23 Gail Lindley

23 Joan Thiese
 23 Reg Trevisan
 24 Byron Blackmore
 25 Gordy Rieck
 25 Sue Thomas
 25 Barbara Wagner
 26 Gordon Adams
 26 Margaret Irwin
 26 Kristina Van Niel
 27 Gail Holmes
 27 Jeffrey Holmes
 27 Eleanor Horen
 27 Richard Rydeen
 28 Evelyn Bangert
 28 Lynn Bates
 28 Tenna Brauer
 28 Sallie Jehn
 29 Paula Duffey
 29 Ernie Schmidt
 29 Ron Schumann
 30 Greg Harwood
 30 John Houck

Happy Anniversary

1 Ed & Mary Pisacich
 3 Larry & Sue Senne
 10 Ron & Jean Majka
 11 Joe & Carol Natale
 12 Sonny & Barbara Carns
 13 Fred & Elaine Treftz
 14 David & Judy Koelsch
 14 Duane & Cookie Rawson
 16 Dave & Mary Matakó
 17 Eddie & Kristina Van Niel
 20 Lowell & Donna Koelling
 20 Bill & Joyce Nance
 22 Bob & Diane Hammann
 24 Gary & Karyl Brandvold
 25 Chuck & Janet Blakley
 26 Dick & Gloria Andersen
 29 Byron & Gisela Brown

USHERS

(4:00) Don & Marlie Abrahamson, Ron & Nora Mara
 (8:00) Merv Tvinnereim team & service Captain; Lowell Janssen, Ginett Janssen,
 Cathy Meyer, Norma J. Miller, Paul Plapp, Jan Tvinnereim, Carolyn Ziegler
 (10:30) Paul Brown, service captain; Gene Axelson, Jerry Denzin, Carol
 Kleinschmidt, Iris Ringhofer, Ray Russell, Bill Schulzetenberg, Roger Wehrli

Crown of Life Lutheran Church

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CURRENT RESIDENT OR . . .

March 2020

1529 *continued from cover*

Never one to mince words, Dr. Luther... And so we have the Small Catechism, running to 30 pages in the editions I have before me. Mind you, the latest version has much more explanation added in modern times, and those original 30 pages have become over 400. The Catechism has lost nothing of its usefulness over the centuries, and since human nature is after all the same as it has always been, the need for the teaching of this little book is if anything greater today.

Do you remember the Six Chief Parts the Catechism elucidates?

- The Ten Commandments;
- The Apostles' Creed;
- The Lord's Prayer;
- The Sacrament of Holy Baptism;
- The Sacrament of Holy Communion;
- Confession.

If the Christian can recite and understand the first three, experience once and understand the fourth, partake regularly and understand the fifth, and daily practice and understand the sixth, he is well prepared in the basics of Christian life, in Luther's day and ours.

Many of us have a copy (or two) at home – but not everyone. They are easy to get: CPH.org has the latest “with Explanation” edition for \$20. I have a few copies of the 30-page version without explanation that I will give you; ask me for one. Good Lenten reading and reminder. May God bless your review of the basics of what is, after all, a simple faith.

Pastor Phill