

# RESURRECTION NEWS



February 2025

## Pastor's Letter

### February 2025

Brothers and sisters in Christ,

Beyond the very words of Holy Scripture, there are few words more comforting in times of difficulty or loss than those of the great Lutheran hymns. Though these hymns are long by our standards, they confess Christ and offer the comfort of the Gospel in ways that more recent hymns rarely do. I would like to commend an old Lutheran hymn, written by Paul Gerhardt, for your devotional use. Unfortunately, it did not make the cut for our Lutheran Service Book, so you may not know it. It is sung to the same tune as "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded" (LSB 450).

#### COMMIT WHATEVER GRIEVES THEE (*The Lutheran Hymnal #520*)

1. Commit whatever grieves thee  
    Into the gracious hands  
Of Him who never leaves thee,  
    Who heav'n and earth commands.  
Who points the clouds their courses,  
    Whom winds and waves obey,  
He will direct thy footsteps  
    And find for thee a way.
2. On Him place thy reliance  
    If thou wouldst be secure;  
His work thou must consider  
    If thine is to endure.  
By anxious sighs and grieving  
    And self-tormenting care  
God is not moved to giving;  
    All must be gained by prayer.
3. Thy truth and grace, O Father,  
    Most surely see and know  
Both what is good and evil  
    For mortal man below.  
According to Thy counsel  
    Thou wilt Thy work pursue;  
And what Thy wisdom chooseth  
    Thy might will always do.
4. Thy hand is never shortened,  
    All things must serve Thy might;  
Thine every act is blessing,  
    Thy path is purest light.  
Thy work no man can hinder,  
    Thy purpose none can stay,  
Since Thou to bless Thy children  
    Wilt always find a way.
5. Though all the powers of evil  
    The will of God oppose,  
His purpose will not falter,  
    His pleasure onward goes.  
Whate'er God's will resolveth,  
    Whatever He intends,  
Will always be accomplished  
    True to His aims and ends.
6. Then hope, my feeble spirit,  
    And be thou undismayed;  
God helps in every trial  
    And makes thee unafraid.  
Await His time with patience,  
    Then shall thine eyes behold  
The sun of joy and gladness  
    His brightest beams unfold.
7. Arise, my soul, and banish  
    Thy anguish and thy care.  
Away with thoughts that sadden  
    And heart and mind ensnare!  
Thou art not lord and master  
    Of thine own destiny;  
Enthroned in highest heaven,  
    God rules in equity.
8. Leave all to His direction;  
    In wisdom He doth reign,  
And in a way most wondrous  
    His course He will maintain.  
Soon He, His promise keeping,  
    With wonder-working skill  
Shall put away the sorrows  
    That now thy spirit fill.
9. A while His consolation  
    He may to thee deny,  
And seem as though in trial  
    He far from thee would fly;  
A while distress and anguish  
    May compass thee around,  
Nor to thy supplication  
    An answering voice be found.
10. But if thou perseverest,  
    Thou shalt deliverance find.  
Behold, all unexpected  
    He will thy soul unbind  
And from the heavy burden  
    Thy heart will soon set free;  
And thou wilt see the blessing  
    He had in mind for thee.
11. O faithful child of heaven,  
    How blessèd shalt thou be!  
With songs of glad thanksgiving  
    A crown awaiteth thee.  
Into thy hand thy Maker  
    Will give the victor's palm,  
And thou to thy Deliverer  
    Shalt sing a joyous psalm.
12. Give, Lord, this consummation  
    To all our heart's distress;  
Our hands, our feet, e'er strengthen,  
    In death our spirits bless.  
Thy truth and Thy protection  
    Grant evermore, we pray,  
And in celestial glory  
    Shall end our destined way.

May our Lord keep you in His gracious care always.

In Christ,  
Pastor Akers

## *Notes from your Deaconess*

Dear Brothers and Sisters of LCR,

The month of February holds two commemorations for early martyrs of the Christian Church. The dates for observing all these commemorations correspond to the time of their deaths—which may seem a bit odd until we consider that a death date indicates the date of moving from this broken life into the full life in Christ—even though they and we still await the resurrection of the body.

- February 14, we remember St. Valentine's martyrdom. We don't have many reliable records of this saint's life and death, but as the church has long remembered him on this day we have some stories about him. Valentine died in Rome under Emperor Claudius II around AD 270. Some traditions note that he was a doctor and priest. One story which may explain our custom of sending notes on this date involves Valentine writing a note of encouragement on the day which he was to face his martyrdom. The daughter of his jailer was distraught about his impending death, but he wrote to comfort her reminding her that Christ's death and resurrection had defeated death's power.
- February 23, we remember St. Polycarp of Smyrna, a pastor, bishop and martyr. We know more about Polycarp than Valentine even though he was born a century earlier—around AD 69, and died in AD 155. We understand from various documents that he was a disciple of John the apostle. We have a letter which he wrote to the Philippian church urging them to follow more completely the Gospel. We also have a document which describes his martyrdom, and how he refused to offer incense to the emperor. For that stalwart refusal, he was burned at the stake, stabbed with a spear, and then his body mutilated. His disciples and friends didn't even get to bury his remains. This work describing his death was the first to use the title of martyr to refer to a Christian who had died for the faith.

I have been using a couple of resources to learn about these individuals. [Celebrating the Saints](#), a useful book by William C. Weedon (from CPH) has historical and devotional writings for the various feasts, festivals, and commemorations of our liturgical calendar. We also have a new set of reference books in our church library—[Encyclopedia of Ancient Christianity](#) (from IVP), which has numerous entries about people, places, terms, controversies, councils, and documents.

I plan to hold Saturday women's Bible studies on February 1 and 15. During the first meeting, we will finish up Romans. I've had requests to study The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which Pastor is leading for an entirely different group at the Thursday Bible study time, so we will commence that at the second meeting. I have been, and continue to attend those studies, so I hopefully can bring some of the insights to the Saturday group. We meet in room 103 downstairs (entering in the back door). I send an email during the week prior to each Bible study meeting including a Zoom link if you'd prefer to join us that way. We begin around 8:30 a.m. with our time of fellowship, Bible study, and sharing of prayer concerns, and try to wrap up around 10. We'd love to have you join us!

Under his mercy,  
Sharon M. Conover

*These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.*

Hebrews 11:13

**Men’s Breakfast**

The next Men’s breakfast is scheduled for **February 15** at 8 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. We will be studying Daniel chapter 9.

**LWML**

The next LWML meeting is scheduled for February 27 at 9:30 a.m.

Proceeds from the 2024 Craft Fair will be distributed in January 2025 as follows:

The Garuna Foundation	\$360
LWML-NED (10% of proceeds)	\$190
Capstone Ministries	\$150
Maine Children’s Cancer Program (gas vouchers)	\$150
The Lighthouse	\$200
Maine Children’s Home	\$150
LCMS/Thrivent (Disaster Response - S. CA wildfires)	\$300
New England District Support for Schools	\$400

**Thank You’s**

Greetings to you from the seminary in Fort Wayne. I pray this finds you well and I pray a blessed Epiphany to you. I wanted to send a quick note to thank you for your recent gift to the seminary. Gifts like yours mean so much to our students and for them I say to you thank you. I would love a chance to come to your church to thank you in person for all your support. Please feel free to reach out to me if this would be possible.

Blessings on your day,  
Matthew Montgomery

On behalf of the Mid-Maine Homeless Shelter & Services, I extend our deepest gratitude to you. Your support is invaluable and plays a crucial role in enabling us to fulfill our mission and make a positive impact in our community.

Thank you,  
Tanya Fossett  
Development & Communications Director

## February Stewardship

	<u>February 2</u>	<u>February 9</u>	<u>February 16</u>	<u>February 23</u>
<u>Acolyte</u>	Callum Goldsmith	Elizabeth Akers	Hayley Farr	Matthew Akers
<u>Subdeacon</u>	Charlie MacPherson	Jared Goldsmith	Fernando Gouvêa	Steve Farr
<u>Usher</u>	Mo Cote	Glenn Carlson Jr.	Steve Applebee	Jeff Sammons
<u>Greeters</u>	Avis Grant & Sharon Klipp	Gail Maestas & Dorthy McAllister	Rick & Marie Kubeck	Chris & Yvonne Batson
<u>Altar Care</u>	Avis Grant	Amber Akers	Sharon Conover	Amanda Goldsmith
<u>Flowers</u>	The Goldsmiths	The Goldsmiths	The Mayers	The Mayers
<u>Fellowship</u>	The Cotes	Sharon Klipp	Amanda Goldsmith Avis Grant Katie Huesers	Open

## Defending the Faith

### *Sometimes the Best Defense is a Good Defense*

Who's that knocking at my door? Why, it's Jehovah's Witnesses!

The Jehovah's Witnesses were formed by Charles Russell in 1870. In 1879, Russell began publishing his magazine, Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence. And a few years later the Zion Watch Tower Tract Society was organized.<sup>1</sup> Their aim was to restore Christian practices that they believe were lost after the death of the Apostles.

Russell was intensely focused on the end times and the return of Jesus Christ. As a result, his publication, The Watchtower, predicted the end of the world in 1878, 1881, 1914, 1918, 1925 and 1975 and suggested 2000. This was in spite of Jesus' own comments on when the end of time would occur, (Matthew 24:36).

The Jehovah's Witnesses (JW's) are famous for door-knocking and proselytizing.

Let's talk about how their beliefs and practices compare to orthodox Christianity. (Orthodox meaning "normal" or "traditionally accepted", not necessarily Eastern Orthodox or Russian Orthodox).

JWs do not believe in engaging in politics, whether by seeking office or by voting. They refuse to salute the flag of any nation. They refuse military service. They do not celebrate Christmas, Easter or even their own birthdays.<sup>2</sup>

To be clear, JWs consider themselves Christian, but their beliefs put them well outside of the bounds of orthodox Christianity. They are in fact a heretical sect. That's a strong accusation but read on and you'll understand.

They believe in God as we would refer to the First Person of the Trinity and are insistent that God's proper name is Jehovah. However, they believe that Jesus, while being their savior and Son of God, **is not divine** and that "there is no Scriptural basis for the Trinity doctrine". They believe that God the Father is the God of Abraham, Moses and Jesus."<sup>3</sup>

They believe that the only proper name of God the Father is Jehovah. For your own education and amusement, I recommend going to YouTube.com and searching on "Lutheran Satire" – a hilarious channel by LCMS Pastor Hans Feine. He made a very funny video on this topic. It's well worth the time to watch it.

They believe that the Holy Spirit is not the third person of the Godhead as orthodox Christians do. Rather, they believe that the Holy Spirit is God's "active force" or power that He uses to accomplish His purposes.<sup>4</sup>

Their version of the (mis-translated) Bible called the "New World Bible", (used only by the JWs) states in John 1:1 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the word was a God."<sup>5</sup> The word "a" is an addition that is not found in any other Bible. It thrusts the JWs straight into polytheism, hence my label of "heretical".

JWs are credibly, in my opinion, accused of being a cult. One symptom of that is that they consider their version of the Bible to be the only "true" translation.

JWs do not believe in Hell. At the resurrection, "those who refuse to learn God's ways are destroyed forever, with no hope of a resurrection". This is the theory of "annihilation", meaning that the unfaithful soul is not eternal, but is simply destroyed.

JWs believe that only a literal 144,000 (the "anointed class") will enter Heaven to rule with Christ. The rest of the faithful JWs will be resurrected to live on Earth in a restored Paradise after Armageddon.<sup>6</sup>

JWs refuse transfusion of blood and many blood products, such as red cells, white cells, plasma and platelets, even when physicians deem it to be necessary. This complicates their care and leads to death in many cases. Some will accept certain "blood fractions", such as stem cells and purified derivatives like albumin.<sup>7</sup>

JWs believe that Jesus is Michael the Archangel (chief messenger) in His pre-human condition<sup>8</sup> and that His life began in Heaven. This means that in their view, Jesus was created, not an eternal part of the triune Godhead. This again is clearly heretical.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://biblereasons.com/christianity-vs-jehovah-witness/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Jehovahs-Witnesses/Beliefs-and-practices>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.jw.org/en/jehovahs-witnesses/faq/jehovah-witness-beliefs>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.christianity.com/church/denominations/10-things-everyone-should-know-about-jehovah-s-witnesses-and-their-beliefs.html>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.jw.org/en/library/bible/study-bible/books/john/1/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.christianity.com/church/denominations/10-things-everyone-should-know-about-jehovah-s-witnesses-and-their-beliefs.html>

<sup>7</sup> <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7941485/>

<sup>8</sup> Zion's Watch Tower, June 1883, inter pp. 2-3;

Jesus, they claim, did not die on two wooden beams placed at right angles to each other; rather, He was nailed with His arms over His head to a single, upright piece of wood that Watchtower publications refer to as the “torture stake.” They further believe that the use of a cross or crucifix in worship is an offense to God.<sup>9</sup>

They fail to recognize that in using a cross or crucifix, we are focused not on the instrument of His murder, but on the amazing sacrifice made by Jesus and what it means for us. The cross is a tangible, visual reminder that the creator of the Universe willingly went to His death to pay the price for our sins. That sacrifice and our resultant salvation is what we celebrate, not the murder weapon.

So are JW’s Christian? Despite their claims, no. Their beliefs are too far outside the realm of classical Christianity.

Are they saved? Thankfully, that’s not my call to make. They do trust in Christ for their salvation, but their version of Christ is very different than the Christ found in (the real) Sacred Scripture.

As always, I’m open for suggestions, comments and especially criticisms at [charles.j.macpherson@gmail.com](mailto:charles.j.macpherson@gmail.com).

Defending the Faith

Charlie MacPherson, SDG

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.catholic.com/magazine/print-edition/the-top-ten-errors-of-jehovahs-witnesses>



## **Monthly Worship**

February 2

Purification of Mary

Prophecy: Malachi 3:1-4

Epistle: Hebrews 2:14-18

Holy Gospel: Luke 2:22-32

February 9

The Transfiguration of Our Lord

Prophecy: Exodus 34:29-35

Epistle: 2 Peter 1:16-21

Holy Gospel: Matthew 17:1-9

February 16

Septuagesima

Prophecy: Daniel 9:2-10

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 9:24-10:4

Holy Gospel: Matthew 20:1-16

February 23

Sexagesima

Prophecy: Isaiah 55:10-13

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 11:19-12:9

Holy Gospel: Luke 8:4-15

## **BIBLE QUIZ**

- 1. When was the Sabbath first instituted, and by whom was it observed?**
  - A. By Noah, after the flood
  - B. By God, after creation
  - C. By Adam, in the garden of Eden
  - D. By Moses, at the giving of the ten commandments
- 2. Who made the first confession to the Lord, as recorded in the Bible?**
  - A. Abram
  - B. Jacob
  - C. Adam
  - D. Moses
- 3. Who delivered Israel by killing 600 Philistines with an ox goad?**
  - A. David
  - B. Jonathan
  - C. Shamgar
  - D. Samson
- 4. Who was the first recorded person raised from death to life?**
  - A. Tabitha
  - B. Jesus
  - C. Lazarus
  - D. The son of Zarephath's daughter
- 5. Who partook of a meal prepared by an angel, and was sustained forty days and nights while in the mountain?**
  - A. Manoah
  - B. Joseph
  - C. Elijah
  - D. Moses
- 6. What is the whole duty of man, according to the Scriptures?**
  - A. Be fruitful and multiply
  - B. Love enemies
  - C. Take care of the earth
  - D. Fear God and keep his commandments



- 2/5 Darryll Zahner
- 2/9 Kemp Anderson
- 2/10 Elizabeth Reed
- 2/11 Steve Farr  
Chester Gilbert
- 2/12 Rachel Anderson
- 2/20 Brad Fitzpatrick  
Jenifer MacPherson



- 2/1 Caden Fitzpatrick
- 2/7 Jo Schiebel
- 2/13 Becky Cote
- 2/24 Andrew Farr
- 2/25 Lee Anne Larsen

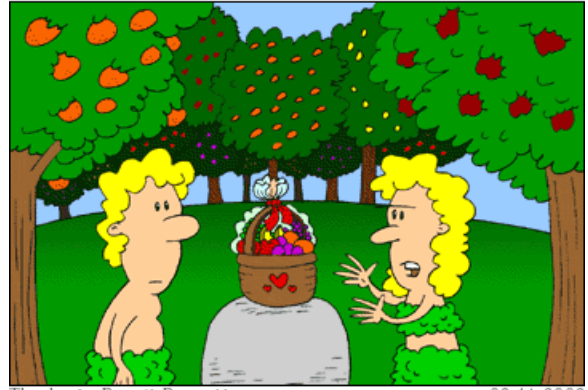


- 2/7 Fernando Gouvêa  
Mari Gouvêa
- 2/20 Elizabeth Reed  
Taylan Thomas

**BIBLE QUIZ ANSWERS**

- 1. B (Genesis 1:2-3)
- 2. B. (Genesis 32:9)
- 3. C. (Judges 3:31)
- 4. D. (1 Kings 17:21)
- 5. C. (1 Kings 19:8-9)
- 6. D. (Ecclesiastes 12:13)

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Thanks to Benoit Paquette 02-14-2002

REALLY ADAM ... A VALENTINE'S DAY  
FRUIT BASKET ... IN THE GARDEN OF  
EDEN?!?

\*\*\*\*\*

**Top 10 reasons God made Eve**

- 1. God was worried that Adam would frequently become lost in the garden because he would not ask for directions.
- 2. God knew that one day Adam would require someone to locate and hand him the remote.
- 3. God knew Adam would never go out and buy himself a new fig leaf when his wore out and would therefore need Eve to buy one for him.
- 4. God knew Adam would never be able to make a doctor, dentist or haircut appointment for himself.
- 5. God knew Adam would never remember which night to put the garbage on the curb.
- 6. God knew if the world was to be populated, men would never be able to handle the pain and discomfort of childbearing.
- 7. As the Keeper of the Garden, since he didn't have metal sheds or greenhouses, Adam would never remember where he left his tools.
- 8. Apparently, Adam needed someone to blame his troubles on when God caught him hiding in the garden.
- 9. As the Bible says, "It is not good for man to be alone!"
- 10. When God finished the creation of Adam, He stepped back, scratched His head and said, "I can do much better than that!"

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The hospital nurse was filling out the paperwork to admit an 87-year-old Lutheran churchgoer who had taken ill. "Has your diet changed?" she asked.

"Yes," the woman said. "For Lent, I gave up whipped cream on my Jell-O, hard candy, and my two beers a night." She paused, then added with a sigh, "And look where it's gotten me!"