

# Faith & Fellowship

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Scripture Alone



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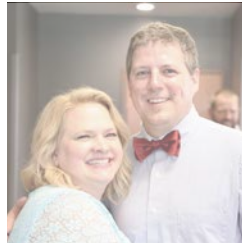
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**FAITH & FELLOWSHIP**  
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**Editor In Chief/  
Graphic Designer:** Troy Tysdal  
*ttysdal@clba.org*

**Editor:** Brent Juliot  
*bjuliot@clba.org*

**Copy Editor:** Aaron Juliot  
*ajuliot@clba.org*

**Cover Photo:** mikdam/iStock

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## Quiet Moments

Email prayer requests to: [pray@clba.org](mailto:pray@clba.org)

# The Center Point

MARTIN LUTHER

When Moses lifted up the snake on a pole, many Israelites disapproved of God’s command to look at it because it wasn’t pleasant. Only believing Israelites—and no one else—understood and were healed because of their faith in the Word. Who else but our Lord could have used this story to point to Christ? I never would have been so bold to interpret this story the way Christ did. He explains it by pointing to himself and saying “That is the bronze snake. But I am the Son of Man. The Israelites had to look at the snake with their eyes. But you must look at me with the eyes of faith. They were cured of a physical poison. But through me, you will be redeemed from an eternal poison.



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Looking at the snake means believing in me. Their bodies were healed. But I will give eternal life to those who believe in me.” These are strange statements and an extraordinary teaching.

With these words, the Lord gives us the proper way to interpret Scripture. He helps us understand that the writers and

prophets point to him with their stories and illustrations. Christ shows us that he is the center point from which the entire circle is drawn. Everyone looks toward him. Whoever follows Christ belongs in that same circle. All the stories in Holy Scripture, if they are interpreted correctly, point toward Christ.

*Dr. Martin Luther was born on November 10, 1483 and died on February 18, 1546 at the age of 62. He was Doctor of Bible at the University of Wittenberg. Luther, Martin, By Faith Alone. Iowa Falls, IA: World Bible Publishers, 1998.*

# God's Testimony

TROY TYSDAL

As Vikki watched, I struggled to load the old reclining chair into my Nissan Murano. My wife had placed the chair on the side of the road with a sign that read, “For Sale, \$15.” Vikki had chewed me down to \$10, and now wanted free delivery. She didn’t live far away, so I agreed without a fight—believing it would be a nice break from my yard work.

I followed Vikki across town. When we reached her home, she parked on the street and motioned for me to back my Murano up to her garage. As I did so, Vikki opened the garage door, and I saw that it was packed tight—side to side, top to bottom. There was no way the old reclining chair was going to fit, and even Vikki seemed to realize that. She asked me to leave the chair in her driveway and vowed to make room for it later.

As I unloaded the old chair, Vikki began to tell me about her life. She joyfully reminisced about teaching at a college, traveling the world, and pampering her nieces and nephews (she never had children of her own). But soon her joy turned to sorrow as the conversation moved to her rapidly progressing cancer. It turned out, the doctors believed that Vikki didn’t have long to live.

As our conversation continued, the reclining chair unloaded and my yard work waiting for me at home, I wondered out loud why Vikki was buying a chair in the first place. She confessed that she did not know why—while gesturing toward the garage as if to say she did not know why she had bought any of it. As Vikki spoke, I waited for the right opportunity to ask her about Jesus Christ. When that moment came, I watched Vikki’s somber mood quickly shift from vulnerable back to the feisty, fiercely independent, personality I’d met earlier in the day.

Vikki verbally attacked the *Bible*—and the ignorance and arrogance of Christians for believing they had found the way. She went on to explain that she was far



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too educated to believe the myths found in *Scripture*. We debated deep into the afternoon. I put forward my best case for the resurrection of Christ—and the historical evidence to support it—but Vikki was not buying it. Convinced that the conversation was going nowhere, I finally excused myself and returned home to my yard work.

The encounter with Vikki consumed my thoughts the rest of the afternoon and into the evening. That night I prayed for her, “Lord, she doesn’t have much time. Peel back the heavens and reveal Jesus Christ to her in a way that she cannot deny.” As I finished my prayer, my mind went to the conclusion of Christ’s story about *The Rich Man and Lazarus*. In the story, the Rich Man finds himself in Hades—while Lazarus finds himself at the side of Abraham in the paradise of God.

## LUKE 16:27-31

The Rich Man in Hades said to Abraham, “I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.” Abraham replied, “They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.” “No, father Abraham,” he said, “but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.” But Abraham said to him, “If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.”

We do not need to witness miracles to believe in Jesus Christ—we have

been given something far greater and much more reliable—the testimony of a God who does not lie. The Apostle Paul writes that faith comes from hearing the message about Christ (Romans 10:17). Similarly, the Apostle Peter, when recalling his experience on the Mount of Transfiguration—where he saw Jesus’ face shine as the sun and his garments white as light—concluded by stating, “we have the prophetic word *more fully confirmed*, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place” (2 Peter 1:19, ESV).

Vikki had read Moses and the Prophets, but she had hardened her heart against the Word of God. As her final hour drew near she filled her life with tables and chairs—perishable things—hoping they would bring her comfort. But all the while she rejected the truth that *Scripture alone* could supply.

None of us know when our final hour will come. Is your heart hard, and your garage full? Are you trying to find fulfillment in the idols of this world? If so, you are searching in the wrong place. Search the *Scriptures*, and you will find the story of a Savior—crucified for you at great expense—but delivered to you free of charge. Trust in him, and when the hour comes, he will deliver you to the paradise of God.

*Rev. Troy Tysdal is Director of Communications and Prayer for the Church of the Lutheran Brethren and serves as editor in chief of Faith & Fellowship magazine.*



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# *Scripture Alone*

## A Hallmark of Lutheran Identity

ALVIN J. SCHMIDT

**M**ost Lutherans have heard of the Lutheran concept of “*sola Scriptura*,” the Latin term Martin Luther used to assert that Christian teachings can only be based on or derived from the divinely inspired Holy Bible. But whether most Lutherans know why Luther so firmly held to this position is less obvious.

As indicated in my recent book, *Hallmarks of Lutheran Identity* (2017), Luther had compelling reasons why he tenaciously held to the concept of *sola Scriptura*. He had discovered that although some church councils—for instance, the first four ecumenical councils—rightly defended fundamental Christian teachings that preserved the gospel of Jesus Christ, some later councils often erred and even contradicted themselves. Decisions by popes were

no better, for many papal proclamations and actions were riddled with false, antibiblical teachings. Thus, Luther declared, “As for the pope’s decretal on indulgences, I say that neither the Church nor pope can establish articles of faith. These must come from Scripture. For the sake of Scripture, we should reject pope and councils” [Roland H. Bainton, *Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1950), 90].

Luther derived the doctrine of *sola Scriptura* from his knowing that the Holy Scriptures were the inspired words of God, written by the prophets in the Old Testament and by Christ’s hand-picked apostles in the New Testament and by two coworkers (Mark and Luke) of the apostles who wrote under the apostles’ guidance. Luther took the words Jesus spoke to his Father in his High Priestly

Prayer at face value: “For I gave them [Jesus’ disciples] the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me” (John 17:8). Similarly, Luther also knew that Jesus had told his disciples, “All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you” (John 14:25-26). Luke, the author of his Gospel, says the apostles were “eyewitnesses and servants of the word” (Luke 1:2). And in a similar vein, Christ (after his resurrection) told Saul (later named Paul) on his way to Damascus, “Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen and will see of me” (Acts 26:16).

# Hallmarks of Lutheran Identity



Ever since Luther nailed his Ninety-Five Theses to the church door in Wittenberg centuries ago, Lutheran theology has had to overcome political, religious, and societal pressures that challenged its foundational teachings. But do Lutherans

today understand their theological heritage well enough to maintain and defend their unique beliefs when outside pressures dismiss them as irrelevant to modern-day Christianity?

Hallmarks of Lutheran Identity sets forth more than twenty important practices, doctrines, and beliefs that distinguish the Lutheran Church from all other denominations.

Available at: [www.CPH.org](http://www.CPH.org)

And Luther also knew that “all Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Despite these foundational words of Holy Scripture, the Bible in Luther’s day was not permitted in Christian homes. In 1233, five hundred years before Luther uttered the concept of *sola Scriptura*, the Synod of Tarragona (in Spain) banned lay Christians from possessing any books of the Old or New Testament. And in 1407, the archbishop of London outlawed translating the Bible into English and condemned to death anyone caught reading a Wycliffe Bible. Given the withholding of the Bible from lay people, some historians say Luther did not see a Bible until about age fourteen while in school in Magdeburg; some other historians think he first saw a Bible at the University of Erlangen probably at age eighteen or nineteen.

It is not known for certain when Luther first came to see the importance of *sola Scriptura*. But Ernest G. Schwiebert, a Lutheran historian, thinks it was between 1508 and 1509 that *sola Scriptura* became a part of his theological thinking while teaching part-time at Wittenberg. Schwiebert further states, “So many pagan streams had emptied their sullied waters into the river of medieval theology, [that] no traditional interpretation of the Schoolmen, or even of the Western Fathers, was reliable” [Ernest G. Schwiebert, *Luther and His Times: The Reformation from a New Perspective* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House,

1950), 158]. Thus, Luther concluded that Scripture was the sole, reliable source and fountain of truth.

A decade later (October 1518), when Cardinal Cajetan tried to get Luther to recant in a private meeting in Augsburg, he boldly defended himself, asserting, “I teach nothing save what is in Scripture” [Bainton, op. cit., 74]. And three years later, he leaned on *sola Scriptura* at the Diet of Worms in 1521, when he declared, “Unless I am convinced by the testimonies of Holy Scriptures or evident reason... my conscience has been taken captive by the Word of God... God help me. Amen” [Schwiebert, op. cit., 504-505]. Then, in 1533, when Luther rejected Rome’s private masses and the consecration of priests, a practice it defended because it resembled the practice of some church fathers, he declared, “For we cannot trust or build on the lives and works of the fathers, but on God’s word alone” [Martin Luther, “The Private Mass and the Consecration of Priests,” trans. Martin E. Lehmann, *Luther’s Works*, eds. Martin E. Lehmann and Helmut T. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), 159].

Luther saw *sola Scriptura* as the only source and norm of Christian doctrine, as conservative Lutherans also see it today. It is also important to note that *sola Scriptura* serves as a means of Scripture interpreting itself. This principle essentially comes from Luther, and it is especially useful in understanding difficult passages in the Bible. Thus, Lutherans seek to understand such passages in the light of other biblical passages that are clear and unambiguous.

This approach also means that the New Testament interprets the Old Testament, indicating that the Old Testament has been fulfilled in the life and deeds of Jesus Christ. As St. Augustine (d. 430) once stated, “The New is in the Old concealed, and the Old is in the New revealed.”

## CONCLUSION

The Lutheran Reformation is known for proclaiming *solus Christus* (Christ alone), *sola gratia* (by grace alone), and *sola fide* (by faith alone). Let us thank God for these biblically derived slogans, for nowhere else are these three gems of the Reformation more clearly enunciated and espoused than in the fourth gem, *sola Scriptura*. It is here where we are assured, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life” (John 6:68).

*Dr. Alvin J. Schmidt is professor of sociology emeritus at Illinois College in Jacksonville, Illinois, and a fellow of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion. He is the author of numerous books, including the award-winning Fraternal Organizations (1980), The Menace of Multiculturalism (1997), and How Christianity Changed the World (2004).*

# *Scripture Alone*

## **Guilt, Shame, and Doughnuts**

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DEAN ROSTAD

**T**he sun was just setting on our confirmation retreat as four local pastors swapped stories about life as a parish pastor. From the stories, one could conclude that the church as a whole is facing challenging times: downright depressing attendance trends, young adults leaving the church and not returning to church once they have children, an ever-growing secularization of society, and the sad list goes on. I myself shared my honest frustration with responding to parishioners who were slipping away from a vital connection to the body of Christ—those who at one time had attended weekly and were involved in various ministries, but now are seen only a handful of times a year, or not at all.

Since all four of us were from smaller centers, we all had experienced bumping into these MIA (missing in action) parishioners in our communities. What is the best approach to help invigorate their faith and connection to the body of Christ? When we see them at the grocery store, do we try to win them over with niceness? At the school assembly, do we

tell them that we are praying for them? At the community event, do we straight out ask them what is going on in their faith? At the sporting event, do we invite them to a new program that the church is offering? It is hard to know what to do. We laughed at the witty remark of one pastor: “Yeah, we don’t have many tools left beyond *guilt, shame and doughnuts*.”

The world, the flesh, and the devil bombard us, the Church, with messages to abandon the body of Christ, to live life however seems best to us. As a result, too many of us embrace a “me-centered, consumer knows best” approach to life. The lie that comes with this way of thinking is that it is the responsibility of the local church to come up with bigger and better programs, productions or personalities to keep believers engaged. A strong focus on designing ministries to attract and retain consumer Christians is exhausting to pastors and parishioners, requiring loads of bucks and mega hours to maintain.

Recently, the Spirit broke through my thick head to try a different approach with a young guy named Mackenzie (he

knows I am writing this article). Our church baptized him a year ago, but we hadn’t seen much of him since. After one of those random chats with him in a store (that left me once again frustrated), I sent him an invitation via text, “It was good to see you yesterday. I would like to meet with you to do a Bible study together. It could be the two of us, or others could join us. What are your thoughts?” This was a sheep of my fold that I feared was drifting away and could use a feast on God’s Word. To my delight, his reply was, “Sure, why not?”

How is this for cutting edge ministry? Two guys, sitting at a table reading through 1 Peter verse by verse. Radical stuff. After 45 minutes in the Bible, Mackenzie was open to meeting again the following week. I didn’t even have to bribe him with doughnuts! God amazed me once again in how he works through his Word. Rather than trying to convince Mackenzie of the benefits of returning to church, I watched God work through the first chapter of 1 Peter. God told Mackenzie that he is chosen, elect, sanctified through the Spirit and given



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an inheritance that will never fade (way better than doughnuts). When we came to 1 Peter 1:13, God encouraged him to live life with his hope set on the grace of Jesus. God reminded us both that the struggles in our lives help us relate to those Gentile believers who were scattered through the Roman Empire.

The experience of watching God gently call one of us his own to once again embrace his identity as a living stone, precious to Jesus, one called out of darkness into his wonderful light (1 Peter 2:4-9)—it has brought me back again to the power of God's Word. God loves to work through his Word. As I write this, we are four weeks into our study, God has brought Mackenzie back to re-engage with the body of Christ, and just last week he asked for a Bible to share with one of his

friends that is seeking truth in their life. Go, God, go!

Guilt, shame and doughnuts: tools yielding temporary results. God's Word: eternal and life-giving results. Hmm, which one should be our go-to tool? Well, Church (that includes you and me), we are facing challenging times. Yes, it is less challenging than what the original recipients of the letter of 1 Peter faced, but these are still unsettling times for today's North American Church. We are in desperate need of the transformation that God brings through *Scripture alone*. Be prepared to be amazed!

"As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to

it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it" (Isaiah 55:9–11).

*Rev. Dean Rostad has served as pastor at Resurrection Lutheran Brethren Church in Camrose, Alberta since 2006. This summer he will be transitioning to his new position as President of the Canadian Lutheran Bible Institute (CLBI), located in Camrose, Alberta.*

*To learn more about CLBI visit: [www.CLBI.edu](http://www.CLBI.edu)*

# *Scripture Alone*

## Peace that Surpasses All Understanding

TARA KRANZ

**F**ear has never been more real and present in my life than during my first year of motherhood. I spent many nights lying awake, watching the silver light from the moon creep across my ceiling, worrying about the safety of my son. When he was an infant, I counted his breaths in the dead of night, desperately trying to rid my mind of any thoughts of infant loss. When he was getting teeth, I worried about the lumps on the back of his neck, which the doctor told me were nothing to worry about. When he began to crawl, I worried he would find a penny on the floor and think it was food.

Paul certainly offers some incredible advice to new and frazzled parents when he says in Philippians 4:6, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.”

Even though this verse had been hanging on my bathroom mirror for years, it offered little comfort to me as a

new mom. I was afraid, plain and simple. The enemy had identified my weakness and had led me to believe I had much to fear. God’s protection became a distant memory as I took the burden upon my own shoulders of keeping my son safe. I eventually stopped watching the news and tried to avoid social media, but no matter how hard I tried to hide from the reminders that our children are never safe, I couldn’t keep myself from the constant barrage of stories involving freak accidents and mysterious illnesses in children.

Unfortunately, this fear goes well beyond the new and vulnerable parent. Everyone, no matter what stage of life, must constantly face this epidemic of fear. Today’s culture not only encourages us to be afraid, it seems to leave us no other option. There are reminders everywhere that this world is indeed falling apart. Worse yet, today’s secular culture does not provide the slightest ray of hope as it exaggerates and manipulates

each political or social event for its own benefit.

This culture of fear insinuates to parents of all ages that we can somehow prevent any sort of sickness or injury in our children if we just do everything by the book. Society trains us to believe we must rely upon ourselves to stay safe—that if we just eat right, watch our kids closely, earn enough money, pass enough laws, we will be safe.

This is a lie. No one can deny the reality that the enemy is among us. He is sneaky, and he wants each one of us to be afraid. He identifies our weaknesses and whispers lies accordingly. This verse is just one of many warnings we receive about the presence of Satan: “Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8).

I remember the moment Satan’s power over me as a vulnerable mother began to dissipate. It was a few minutes before worship one Sunday, when my son was





nearly a year old. I was rambling to a more experienced mother about my sleepless nights and constant watch of my son. She listened in love, then said some of the most liberating words I've ever heard, "Tara, *you* cannot keep him safe." It was with these words that I was finally able to let the Lord take control of my parenting and the safety of my son. I finally began to accept that my son is not my own. He belongs to the Lord.

Now a few years have passed since that first year of constant anxiety. As a mother of two, I can confidently say I have nothing to fear, although God does need to remind me of this quite often. His reminder comes in this promise to me and all believers in his Word: "We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed" (2 Corinthians 4:8-9).

Despite my Christian faith, I had lost sight of God's promises of protection. We

all have weaknesses, and we certainly all have fears. The reality of life on earth is that, without God, there is much to fear. However, Psalm 118:8 says, "It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in humans." These words remind Christians that we are not to succumb to the desires and fears of this world, but instead to trust in our loving Father.

The effects of a radical atmosphere of fear in North America and beyond is evidenced by violence, protests, racism, anxiety, depression, paranoia, and an increased level of self-interest, as each and every person focuses on self-preservation. If our only hope is in this world, then we certainly do have much to fear. This, however, is not where our hope is to reside.

Because of Jesus Christ, these earthly battles are already fought and already won. As we scramble to protect our children, our livelihood, and our earnings, Jesus Christ asks us to seek peace and protection in him.

God's holy and living Word serves as a constant reminder that we are perfectly protected in the arms of Christ—that we should fear God rather than people. It is important for us to be hopeful and to continue to pray that today's culture of fear will cause unbelievers to seek safety and solid ground in Jesus Christ. There is nothing more liberating than the knowledge that our lives are not our own; we and everything we love belongs to God, so we are to live out our earthly lives exuding this peace—a peace that surpasses all understanding (Philippians 4:7).

*Tara Kranz is a member of Grace Lutheran Brethren Church in Bismarck, North Dakota.*

# Scripture Alone

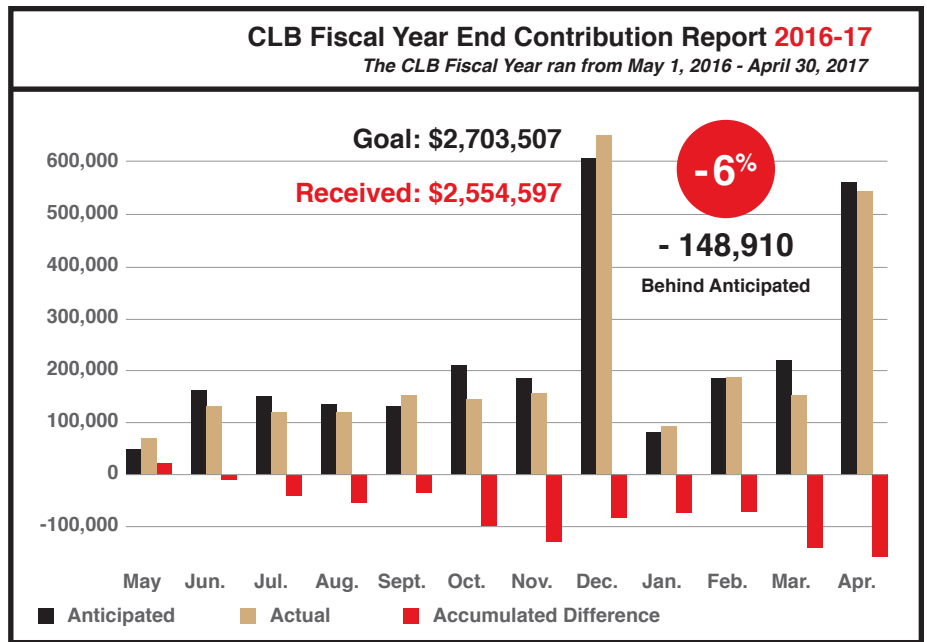
ROY HEGGLAND

There are many areas of Scripture where we are tempted to add to or subtract from what the Word tells us. *Justification by faith alone*, for example. This truth has been plagued through the centuries by those who would add to Scripture when it comes to our salvation. In parallel with that thinking is the theology on the nature of humans. We naturally want to think there is something good within us that attracts God to us and which can cooperate with God in salvation. Our old nature is offended by God's pronouncement that we are by nature "children of wrath" and that "there is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one" (Romans 3:10-12).

The difficult thing for us to come to grips with is that our old nature is alive every morning. Our fight against ourselves, the world, and the devil is a constant one. This battlefield within each of us is part of the cross we bear. As Jesus said, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me" (Matthew 16:24).

Stewardship is also not immune from our natural bent toward changing what Scripture says or using faulty hermeneutics to arrive at a theology of stewardship that fits more comfortably with our Old Adam's way of thinking. If stewardship were something we must do or should do to please God, then there is something that we can do to attract God's favor. If the Old Testament law of the tithe is still binding, then words like "must" or "should" are appropriate. But is that how Holy Scripture instructs us?

There are churches that will tell you how much you should give. Some will even request that you provide your annual



earnings so they can tell you what you "owe"—like dues in a club. How does the Bible address this issue? Paul wrote, "Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7). Here is our problem: our old nature doesn't want to give anything. It will only give if there is a penalty for not giving or an earthly reward for giving. We are by nature not interested in giving away the most important object of our security, power, and freedom—our money. So what is the solution from Scripture for our unwillingness to be good stewards of the things entrusted to us by God?

Romans 12:2 says, "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will." Our minds are so influenced by the world and our own flesh that they need to be

constantly renewed so that our thinking is transformed. That is what happened to the Macedonian believers who gave far more to the church in Jerusalem than they could afford. Paul says the reason that they were so generous in their giving was that "they gave themselves first of all to the Lord" (2 Corinthians 8:5). In what sense did they give themselves to the Lord? Through the work of the Holy Spirit as they meditated upon God's Word, their thinking was transformed to actually believe that God could be completely trusted to take care of their needs. Then they were free to meet the needs of the saints in Jerusalem.

May we too be transformed in our thinking so that our giving comes from joyful and generous hearts that are dependent upon a loving Father who graciously supplies all of our needs!

*Roy Hegglund is Associate for Biblical Stewardship for the Church of the Lutheran Brethren.*



## Solutions for Scripture-Avoidance

CHERYL OLSEN

**W**e look forward to summer vacations! Breaks in routine are great for refreshment and renewal. But sometimes changes in schedule wreak havoc with an established devotional time. How do we keep our study of Scripture fresh and free from avoidance (and the resulting guilty feelings) in the midst of our time-crunched busy lives? Some women shared personal solutions...

- One popped immediately into my head. Change of location... Grab your coffee/tea, Bible and/or devotional and head outside into the sunshine. I love doing my Bible study in the SUN!
- Technology has actually helped me so much in my personal Bible study and prayer time. I started the Reformation Reading Plan on the You Version Bible phone app, and even if I miss a day, it's easy to catch up (and I always have it with me!). This keeps me focused on the "full meal" of reading right through the Bible, rather than depending on the "snacks" of a verse here and there. CLB daily prayer notes by phone are great reminders too.
- Use a devotional "app" such as *First 5*; *She Reads Truth*; *The CLB App*, *Daily Prayer Notes*, etc. Podcasts are my favorite, like Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth's *Revive our Hearts*. I play it every morning while I get ready for work. I read Scotty Smith on the Gospel Coalition website as often as possible. He posts a prayer every day.
- The first thing that comes to my mind, living now with a full house that has brought much change to my life, is to keep your Bible, devotional, or app on computer or phone, readily available and visible—like on your dresser, the kitchen table, somewhere you often are. Take advantage of spare moments.



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- I agree that summer schedules and breaks present a challenge to each of us. Bible study/prayer meeting on Wednesday night helps me throughout the week. I also found a couple of old devotionals that I will peruse during the summer. Most recently I bought a coloring book that focuses on spending time with God. It's actually a devotional and then you can doodle and color the picture along with the devotional. I find that very peaceful and enjoyable.
- I make it something I do with the kids—they never forget when you tell them you're going to do something! Since I'm that "mean mom" who makes them read every day, I sit down and do my reading as well. Get an accountability person... or several. Give yourself grace when it doesn't get done. Think of people you haven't encouraged for awhile and send them a verse—refreshing for both parties.
- Time in the Word? I put it on my daily to-do list, but catch myself making it "the next thing, after I finish this thing I'm doing right now." I've found the best way for me to have daily devotions is simple.

Take it any way I can get it, whenever the opportunity presents itself: reading a blog, a daily devotional text message, moments in my car before my daughter's game, during lunch, or before bed. My favorite is with a cup of coffee sitting in the cool morning sun. I'll take those days when I can get them, though they are rare. The one thing I can tell you is I feel better after spending time in the Word. God doesn't fail. He puts the words in front of me that I need to hear, when I need to hear them.

*Cheryl Olsen is the Faith & Fellowship correspondent for Women's Ministries of the Church of the Lutheran Brethren.*



Visit: [www.WMCLB.com](http://www.WMCLB.com)



L to R: Dr. David Veum, Dr. Gaylan Mathiesen, Jordan Herrick, Kristian Anderson, Christopher Hartley, Daniel Stenberg, Ben Bigaouette, Alan Johnson, Kevin Clinton, Dr. Brad Pribbenow, Dr. Eugene Boe, and Professor Nathan Oldenkamp.

# LBS Class of 2017



## LUTHERAN BRETHERN SEMINARY

### KRISTIAN ANDERSON

Kristian grew up in Brooklyn, New York. He moved to Sayville, NY during his junior year of high school and graduated from Sayville High School. He went on to study History and Political Science at Wagner College, and then Biblical Theology and Youth Ministry at Nyack College. He came to faith in Christ in his early twenties at 59th Street Lutheran Brethren Church in Brooklyn, where he later became the Pastor for Youth.

While at 59th Street, he and his wife Mary felt a call to consider

### BEN BIGAOUETTE

Ben Bigaouette grew up outside of Henderson, Minnesota. He graduated from Belle Plaine High School in 2007 and earned a B.A. in Social Science Education, with minors in History and Coaching, from North Dakota State University in Fargo, North Dakota. After graduating in 2011, Ben worked three years as a social studies teacher and basketball coach at Maranatha Christian Academy in Brooklyn Park, Minnesota.

Although Ben did not intend to become a pastor, God's call

### KEVIN CLINTON

Kevin Clinton grew up in Rancho Cucamonga, California attending Victoria Community Church. He graduated from Etiwanda High School, and earned a B.S. in Philosophy from Ball State University in Indiana. Returning to California, Kevin worked and volunteered at V.C.C. for years.

Following in faith, Kevin attended LBS in the fall of 2015 and wrestled with the call God placed on him while working full-time and going to school full-time. In his second year, Kevin

church planting, so they moved to Fergus Falls, Minnesota to attend Lutheran Brethren Seminary. During his time at seminary Kristian took the position of Lead Pastor at Living Faith Church.

After his graduation from LBS with a Master of Divinity, Kristian transitioned to Moorhead, Minnesota where he began a new position at Triumph Lutheran Brethren Church as the East Campus Congregational Life Pastor.

on his life had been setting up this reality for some time. Ben was involved in several teaching ministries in his local church growing up, spent four summers working at Inspiration Point Bible Camp, and was a youth intern at Triumph LBC, Moorhead, Minnesota. He graduates LBS with a Master of Divinity.

Ben is married to Jenilee and they have two children: Luke (2) and Madison (4 months). They live in Bloomington, Minnesota where Ben serves as Associate Pastor at Oak Hill Church.

was confirmed in his call when he was able to work at Hillcrest Lutheran Academy as a cook in the kitchen and volunteer with the youth group of Messiah Lutheran Church, Underwood, Minnesota.

Kevin graduated from LBS with a Certificate of Theological Studies. He will continue to grow in the ministerial gifts with which God has blessed him and to serve God in the communities where he's been placed.

## CHRISTOPHER HARTLEY

Chris grew up in Eastern Iowa and graduated from Bennett Community High School in 2000. He then graduated with a B.A. in Art Education from the University of Northern Iowa and later a Master of Education from Graceland University. From 2006 to 2014 he was an art teacher in Iowa.

After serving on the Elder Board at Emmaus Road Church, DeWitt, Iowa, Chris felt God calling him into full-time ministry. During his second year at seminary he received a call from Lutheran Brethren Fellowship Church of Williston, North Dakota, to serve as Pastor of Congregational Life. He completed his third year of seminary on-line. He graduates from LBS with a Master of Divinity degree and will continue in his present call.

Chris and Lyssa have been married since 2003 and they have two children: Isabelle (13) and Grant (10).

## JORDAN HERRICK

Jordan grew up in Colfax, Wisconsin. He graduated from Colfax High School and worked in his father's construction business for 12 years. He then graduated from Chippewa Valley Technical College with a medical background. After graduation Jordan began to teach the Central Service Technician program.

After starting seminary at LBS in 2012, Jordan began working as the Youth Ministry Director at Bethany LBC in Colfax, in addition to his role for the Colfax School District working with the elementary and high school special education classes.

Jordan graduates LBS with a Certificate of Theological Studies. He continues to serve Bethany LBC as Associate Pastor. He is married to Gretchen. They have two children: Spencer (17) and Sydney (14).

## ALAN JOHNSON

Alan Johnson grew up attending Maple Park Lutheran Brethren Church in Lynnwood, Washington. Alan felt called into ministry at age 15 when he had an opportunity to share a gospel message at the Christian high school he attended. Alan graduated high school in 2006. He earned his Associate's degree in 2009, and graduated from the University of Washington in 2012 with a Bachelor of Arts in Culture, Literature and the Arts.

In 2011, Alan was called to Maple Park as the Director of Youth Ministries, which he continued during his seminary training. He graduates from LBS with a Master of Divinity.

Alan is married to Cheryl and they have a daughter named Elsie. Alan and Cheryl are excited to see what is next for them as they continue to pursue God's call on their lives.

## DANIEL STENBERG

Daniel was born in Seattle, Washington, but grew up in Hagen, Saskatchewan. He graduated from Hillcrest Lutheran Academy in 2001, and after that spent nine months on a Servant Team in Chandler, Arizona. Daniel moved to Olympia, WA in 2002 where he attended South Puget Sound Community College. He graduated from LBS with a Diploma in Christian Ministry.

Growing up the son of a pastor, he never thought he would end up behind a pulpit, but God called Daniel into ministry in a variety of ways. From Hillcrest, to Servant Teams, to a post-hardcore band, God led Daniel to seminary.

Daniel is married to Karen and they have five children: Judah, Asher, Caleb, Silas and Elijah. Daniel has accepted a call to serve as pastor at Calvary Lutheran Church in Bergenfield, NJ.



Alan Johnson receiving his graduation hood from LBS faculty on May 13, 2017.



Rev. David Overland addressing the graduates.



Above: The 2017 graduating class of Lutheran Brethren Seminary.  
Below: The attendees joined in fellowship after the ceremony.





# I Could Have Done So Much More

ETHAN CHRISTOFFERSON

**T**he Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C. documents the atrocity of six million Jews murdered in Germany during World War II. One beam of light chronicled there is the story of Oskar Schindler, a German industrialist. Schindler is credited with saving the lives of 1,200 Jews, sparing them from the brutality and evil of concentration camps by hiring them to work in his munitions factory. At the end of the war, when Schindler realized more clearly the gravity of what had happened, he was filled with regret and remorse knowing that with a bit more intentionality and sacrifice on his part,

he could have saved the lives of so many more Jews. He is reported to have grieved deeply, saying, “I could have done more... I could have done so much more.”

I was reminded of Schindler’s story at a time when I was in the process of setting new goals for our ministry to the unreached in Taiwan. I found myself switching Schindler’s words a bit—“I could do more... I could do so much more”—and then thinking carefully about the gravity of the situation that was before me and what my response was going to be.

You see, another atrocity is being

played out as you read these words. People in Taiwan and all over the world are going to their graves without really having a chance to hear and engage the gospel. These unreached people wake up and go to bed every day, slaves to sin, unknowingly shaped by a world in rebellion to God. They are grinding out their lives in conflict with God’s design and, in the resulting mess, are turning to all the wrong places for help. The eternal consequences are grave—a Christless eternity is in store for each of them.

When Christians see the suffering and oppression in these places where God is not known, some respond with great

***For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.***

***Ephesians 2:10***

compassion. They want to find ways to relieve the pain and agony of the unreached. They engage in ministries of mercy: caring for the sick, feeding the poor, educating those who lack learning opportunities, rescuing the oppressed, giving voice to the voiceless, opposing selfish power and privilege... They desire to do something concrete and significant to help meet these urgent needs.

These Christians give themselves to mercy ministries not only to address compelling social, physical, and emotional needs, but also with the hope that their loving actions will provide a platform for evangelism. They know that helping people come to faith is important. Their acts of love are first steps; they anticipate these first steps will lead to opportunities to share the gospel. Their expectation is that, as unreached people experience the goodness of Christian love, these lost people will want to learn more about what is behind that love.

One of the realities that collides with this expectation is what social scientists call "confirmation bias"—the tendency to interpret new evidence in ways that confirm one's existing beliefs or theories. Most likely, the unreached will interpret our good deeds in ways that fit with their perspective on the world. In Taiwan for example, some people do good in order to gain a better standing in the next life or to indebt someone to them. So the goodness of a Christian, rather than calling attention to what is behind it, will likely be interpreted as something done to gain a personal benefit. The unreached require much more than our goodness and compassion... so much more.

What the unreached really need is God's Word. The Bible is given to us to enable us to relate rightly to God, to ourselves, and to the world he created. This Word is living and active. It challenges, shapes, and empowers us—a powerful tool that enables us to see our sin and to turn to him.

One reason that people are unreached is that there is a distance between them and the Word. Geography, language differences, and social barriers can prevent them from physically hearing God's Word. Cultural understandings or habits can lead many of the unreached to consider the Scriptures irrelevant or unnecessary for them. These obstacles can prevent the unreached from really hearing or engaging the Bible.

The unreached also need Christians to bring the Word closer to them. They need Christians who will prayerfully come and live in their world and listen to their stories... those who can isolate and then work to address the obstacles keeping them from hearing the Word... those who will work to understand their thoughts, feelings, and actions deeply and pinpoint deviations from God's design... those who can appropriately, clearly, and accurately relate God's law and his gospel to these deviations. Since laborers with these kinds of skills are not plentiful, the unreached also need churches and individuals who are willing and able to raise up and send out these kinds of Christians.

Has God been raising you up, giving you talents, training, hardships, experiences, resources, relationships, etc., in order to prepare you to join his "reaching the

unreached" team? Does God want you, in the face of such an urgent need, to be a good steward of the unique gifts he has given you, by joining those working to responsibly bring the Word closer to the unreached that live around you and at the ends of the earth? Don't let the seeming impossibility of the task hold you back. This endeavor is important enough that ways to break down the challenges into doable bites MUST be found.

We sin against God when we have the means to help the unreached, yet fail to intentionally and sacrificially involve ourselves in bringing the Word closer to them. When we confess that sin, the One who loves the unreached unconditionally loves us too and offers us forgiveness. Knowing that Jesus' death and resurrection means we can be totally forgiven and PERFECT team members in God's "reaching the unreached" team makes me, well... want to do more... want to do so much more.

*Dr. Ethan Christofferson and his wife Sandy serve the Church of the Lutheran Brethren as missionaries to the unreached Hakka people of Taiwan.*



*Is God calling you to mission work?  
Contact: LBIM@CLBA.org*



The Hoganson Family: Shea, Brad, Traci, and Camden.

# New HLA President



## INTERVIEW WITH BRAD HOGANSON

*In May, Hillcrest Lutheran Academy announced Rev. Brad Hoganson as its new president. A few weeks later, Faith & Fellowship had the opportunity to interview Rev. Hoganson and hear his passion for the ministry of HLA.*

**F&F:** Tell us about yourself, your family, and your employment history.

**Brad:** My family might be the best thing about me! I am married to my beautiful and talented wife of 22 years, Traci. Together we have two amazing children. Our daughter Shea (19) attends Kean University, where she is pursuing a Teaching Children With Disabilities

major with a minor in History. Our son Camden (16) will be a junior at Hillcrest Lutheran Academy in the fall.

I am a graduate of Hillcrest Lutheran Academy (1984), Lutheran Brethren Bible College (1988) and Lutheran Brethren Seminary (2003). I have been fortunate to work in ministry most of my life: at Tuscarora Inn, Mount Bethel, Pennsylvania (both summer work and full-time staff); later in youth ministry in Olympia and Everett, Washington, then Mount Bethel, PA and finally Marysville, WA. In Marysville I also served as associate pastor and later as lead pastor. I most recently served as associate pastor at my home church, Hillside LBC in

Succasunna, New Jersey. I have served in various roles in the CLB over the years—on the Synodical Council and the Council of Directors, served as chair on the boards of Youth Ministry and North American Mission, and am currently chair of Fifth Act Church Planting, an affiliate ministry of the CLB that exists to plant Lutheran Brethren churches in global cities of North America.

I love to keep busy with home and do-it-yourself projects. I love to laugh with my family and friends, and I live for Taco Tuesdays (which will be a continuing tradition in Fergus Falls!).

**F&F:** Tell us about your mentors. What



*The mission of Hillcrest Academy is to equip students in a Christ-centered, Bible-based environment for a life of eternal significance.*

**HLA Mission Statement**

have you learned about leadership from them?

**Brad:** While I don't think I have ever been in a "formal" mentoring relationship with any of them, I am grateful to have had a host of people in my life who taught me about leadership from my earliest days.

I learned about servant leadership and team-leading from Allen Aase and from Herb and Helen Jacobsen while working alongside others at Tuscarora Inn. Reidar Senum taught me humility with a twinkle in his eye as he showed me how to take ministry seriously while not taking myself too seriously! While at Bible College, Don Brue helped nurture in me a love for the Word of God and Jim Bjork showed me how to do incarnational ministry among students. Later, as a young pastor I learned from Joel Egge about shepherding a church with a love for the life-giving gospel and love for the Church. I have had capable and godly elder boards who prayed with me and for me, who offered biblical counsel and support and showed me the value of teamwork. Stephen and Sandi Bickler helped instill in me and foster a love for people in distant lands, which I think will play a large part in my leadership at Hillcrest with their international students.

**F&F:** What excites you about your new position as President of HLA?

**Brad:** A lot! I just returned home from the graduation weekend and my heart is full with anticipation to get to work as President of HLA. There are many things that energize me as I view this new chapter: I'm looking forward to working together with a remarkable team of administrators, faculty and staff! It was a real joy to watch them serve together over grad weekend and I look forward to being part of the team. From support staff, resident life staff, faculty and administrators—I want everyone in the CLB to know what a gift this group of

people is to our school! I love students and I love to see them grow and flourish in the gospel and in love for each other. I am really looking forward to speaking into their lives, so that they in turn can serve Christ.

I'm looking forward to working in collaboration with the greater CLB. I love to work together to achieve common goals and want to explore ways that Hillcrest and the CLB can work together. We have a gift in our rich theology and our mission heart for the world. Hillcrest is a great place to instill this in our students while providing them opportunities to serve locally and globally.

**F&F:** Why is Hillcrest's ministry important to you, and why should it be important to us?

**Brad:** Hillcrest's mission statement says it all: "The mission of Hillcrest Academy is to equip students in a Christ-centered, Bible-based environment for a life of eternal significance." This is what I have been working toward in my life of ministry within the local church. Local churches want this to be true of the students in their youth ministry programs. The people of our churches invest in our students with youth groups, and with opportunities to go to camps and retreats, desiring to see our students come to faith and flourish in the gospel.

This ministry is important to me because I see Hillcrest and the CLB churches working in concert with each other toward a shared goal. Hillcrest is uniquely positioned to do this while providing a distinctly Christian education. Discipleship opportunities are built into the daily life experience of the school in the dorms and classrooms.

Additionally, the heartbeat of the CLB from its earliest days has been that we are a missionary Church. Hillcrest shares that heart for global mission: students from Hillcrest have opportunity to go on annual cross-cultural mission trips to the Dominican Republic and Guatemala, and

students from other cultures all over the world come to attend school at Hillcrest.

**F&F:** Are there any particular goals you have for your first 100 days in office?

**Brad:** In my first 100 days as President of Hillcrest, I plan to change my presidential Twitter name to @realBradHoganson, but I will do my best to keep my tweets to a dull roar!

Seriously though, I am humbled and honored to serve in this role as President of Hillcrest. I believe my first few months will be spent listening and learning the ropes of the job, while building relationships with the faculty, staff and students.

Isaac Newton famously said, "If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants." The role of the HLA president encompasses many components. Among them is helping shape a vision for the future of the school. As I work together with the Board of Directors, I am well aware of those who have gone before and I plan to build on the foundations that are already in place. I am excited to work together with CLB President Paul Larson and the CLB Council of Directors, helping to foster deepening partnerships with the congregations of the CLB, while working together with alumni and friends who support the work at Hillcrest to find the best ways to communicate our vision and mission.

*Rev. Brad Hoganson is President of Hillcrest Lutheran Academy in Fergus Falls, Minnesota.*

*Visit HLA online at: [www.ffhillcrest.org](http://www.ffhillcrest.org)*



# Graduation Weekend Recap

**WAYNE STENDER**

**H**illcrest Lutheran Academy of Fergus Falls, Minnesota celebrated a milestone in 2017—the 100th year of the Church of the Lutheran Brethren’s high school department. The graduation weekend, a culmination to the celebration of what God has done over the past 100 years, cast a strong vision for honoring and serving the Lord in the coming years at Hillcrest Lutheran Academy.

The centennial weekend began Thursday, May 25 with a banquet initiating the Athletics Hall of Fame at Hillcrest. William Colbeck, Jody (Christenson) Brasel, Scott Colbeck, Jesse Keller, Nick Hansen, Jared Schultz, and Jorgen Greve formed the Hall of Fame inaugural class. Paul Levang recounted stories from the early days of Hillcrest’s sports program as the late William Colbeck was honored for his work in establishing competition with area high schools, and helping Hillcrest join the Minnesota State High School League. Jody Brasel was honored by friends sharing stories and memories of her standout athletic career, highlighting Jody as a caring friend. Coaches Richard Risbrudt and Gregg Preston reminisced on the play of Comet standouts Scott Colbeck, Jesse Keller, and Nick Hansen. They set a high standard of character and integrity to which all Hillcrest athletes may now aspire. Accolades were secondary as Scott Colbeck and Nick Hansen spoke of character-building experiences as part of Hillcrest athletics.

The all-school concert was held at Bethel Lutheran Church on Friday, May 26 where Hillcrest’s choir was recognized for their discipline and attention to honoring Christ in their year of choral training. Their closing song, *Praise to the Lord*, caused the room to stand in gratitude for the choir’s work in directing attention to the Lord. Hillcrest’s interim president Joel Egge fought tears as he closed the concert, his hand holding tightly to his Bible as he thanked the choir with hugs following the benediction.

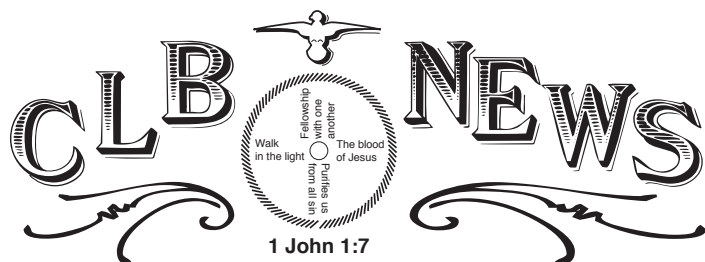
Over 300 alumni gathered at the all-school reunion festivities on Saturday, May 27 at Hillcrest’s alumni brunch in the Student Activities Center and at the all-school reception in the newly

created Student Union. The brunch announced the status of the John Luckey endowment, created by the class of 1967, with over \$70,000 raised. Luckey died in a tragic accident before he was able to graduate from Hillcrest with the class of 1967. The class of 2017 also lost a class member months before graduation after Hayley Filippini passed away following a battle with cancer. The class of 2017 also created a named endowment, in honor of Hayley. The Hayley Midland Filippini endowment currently has over \$10,000 after the graduating class of 2017 devoted much of their school year to fundraising for the account.

David Veum and Crystal (Overland) Veum were announced as Hillcrest’s 2017 Alumni of the Year as part of the alumni brunch. The crowd of alumni then gathered in Hillcrest’s chapel for the dedication of the J.H. Levang gallery, followed by the ribbon cutting in the main hall. After that, Hillcrest, Bible School, and Seminary alumni toured the Hillcrest castle to discover the ways God is continuing to use Hillcrest Lutheran Academy to train young people. Following tours, groups gathered in the Hillcrest Student Union for refreshments and an all-school gathering where artifacts were on display from Hillcrest’s 100 years of ministry.

The high point of the Centennial weekend was the Baccalaureate Service and Commencement exercise. Hillcrest welcomed many to the stage to honor the class, including Freddy Ovalle from the Santa Fe school in the Dominican Republic and Hillcrest Lutheran Academy’s new president Brad Hoganson. Following the closing exercises, the class of 2017 followed tradition in gathering on the front steps to sing their class song (*In Christ Alone*) and toss their hats. Then they ventured to the Student Union for the President’s reception where Brad and Tracy Hoganson greeted students, parents, friends, and alumni.

*Wayne Stender serves Hillcrest Lutheran Academy as its Director of Enrollment and Marketing.*



## Pribbenow Earns Ph.D.



The Pribbenow Family (L to R): Emily, Elias, Elise, Melissa, Elliot, and Brad.

On May 19, 2017, Rev. Brad Pribbenow graduated with a Ph.D. in Biblical Studies from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Dr. Pribbenow serves Lutheran Brethren Seminary as Professor of Old Testament.

## Nilsen Earns D.Min.



The Nilsen Family (L to R): Clara, Ryan, Owan, Kjirsti, Annie, and Elsie.

On May 13, 2017, Rev. Ryan Nilsen graduated with a D.Min. in Church and Parachurch Executive Leadership from Denver Seminary. Dr. Nilsen serves as pastor at Praise Christian Fellowship in Barkhamsted, Connecticut.

## Berge Called to LBS



The Berge Family serving at Immanuel LBC in Eugene, Oregon.

The Board of LBS is pleased to announce that Dr. Daniel Berge, Ph.D. has accepted the call to serve on the faculty of LBS as Professor of New Testament. Please remember Dr. Berge and his wife Meghan in prayer as they make the transition from the ministry in Eugene to this role at LBS. Pray also for the congregation of Immanuel LBC in Eugene, Oregon, and the call of a pastor to continue in that work.

## Boerner Retires



Rev. Jerry Boerner and his wife Colleen at Calvary Lutheran Church.

On May 21, 2017, there were over 100 in attendance as Calvary Lutheran Church in Bergenfield, New Jersey honored Jerry and Colleen Boerner for their twenty-six years of ministry. Rev. Boerner retired from the pastorate in June. During his career he served congregations in Miles City, Montana; Williston, North Dakota; Maddock, North Dakota; and Bergenfield, New Jersey.

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# When You Sense Something's Missing

It was the last day for our adult Sunday School class. We'd been studying a Christian worldview in contrast with other worldviews over the past school year. As the session was ending, one person remarked, "This has been very good. But as we consider a new topic for the fall, how about having a good old-fashioned Bible study?" Several others concurred. It was an expression of longing to be filled with the Word of God. Even though we'd been focused on biblical thinking, we hadn't been in the Word.

Suppose you witness a civil wedding. Something's glaringly missing. The Word. Or you attend a memorial service, rather than a church funeral. If the Word is absent, it becomes a celebration of a life that conveys no ultimate hope in the face of death.

Once you have tasted the salvation in Christ that God's Word alone brings to us, you become very aware of the Word in its absence. You long for it. In the most significant or crucial moments of life, you know God has something to say—maybe it's a blessing, maybe it's comfort, maybe it's wisdom. He should be heard.

Imagine a baptism without the Word! When we receive the sacraments, it is never without the Word. They depend on the Word, because they are meaningless without Jesus. But the Word connected with baptism and the Lord's Supper always turns our focus to Jesus.

The Apostle Peter wrote, "...like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord" (1 Peter 2:2-3, NASB). The context makes it crystal clear that Peter is appealing to Christians—not just little children or new believers or immature Christians—but *all* Christians. We should long for the Word, just as much as a newborn baby desires milk.

Within the pages of this issue, Dr. Schmidt demonstrates that the Word of God alone is foundational for our faith. Dean relates how it wasn't the church's appeals or programs; rather it was the Word alone that drew a brother back toward the fellowship. Cheryl shares thoughts from CLB women on remaining in the Word. Ethan reveals that mercy ministries are good, but ultimately ineffective without the Word. Tara finds within the pages of Scripture the only antidote to paralyzing fear. Roy points to the Word as the source of true freedom.

Collectively, this adds up to a call to us to forsake the "junk foods" of distraction, which leave our souls empty, and have our fill of *Scripture alone*.

Rev. Brent Juliot serves as pastor of Oak Ridge Lutheran Brethren Church in Menomonie, Wisconsin.

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