

### April 2020

**Proverbs 27:17 - Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another.**

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#### PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Men of LCMC,

2020 is here and spring is quickly approaching - Punxsutawney Phil Says So! It's a new year with new challenges. The first challenge facing us will be in March when we kick off the campaign month for the Buck-A-Month Club. This is one thing that virtually every man in LCMC can be part of. Just think of what we could accomplish if all the men in LCMC sent in \$12.00. The good that could be done would be immeasurable...so I challenge all men to help make that happen.

In our first newsletter following the Gathering, I stated one goal...that of averaging 25 men per congregation donating to Buck-A-Month. We can do that, but in reality, we can do much better.

Last year we had one congregation that had 100% of the men donating, so it can be done. Sadly, that one congregation was a major percent of all donations. \$12.00 is a couple of dinners at McDonalds...very affordable for all. WE CAN DO BETTER!

Please send in information on anything your men's group is doing, has done or plans to do so I can let other men's group know what is going on around the country. This will also let other groups know there may be a place to pick up some "lessons learned" in case they are planning a similar activity.

Our ultimate goal is to get more men involved in the work of the church. Let's all do our part!

Blessings,

Chuck

## NEWS FROM LCMC HQ

### LCMC ASSESSMENT

LCMC has canceled almost all of the in-person meetings for the summer, but some are going to be held via video conferencing. They are still planning on the Annual Gathering and Convention to be held in person in October, but they are thinking about how to do some other fashion if in-person events are still being discouraged—but for now it is still on.



The District/Fellowship Coordinator’s meeting scheduled for June has been moved to August, but if the in-person meeting still can’t be held, it will be held via video.

### KEY UPCOMING DATES

**FACE TO FACE MEETINGS HAVE BEEN CALLED OFF UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.**

**The meetings below are still scheduled, but adjustments may have to be made as we move through the coronavirus pandemic.**

**DISTRICT/FELLOWSHIP COORDINATOR’S MEETING**-August 10-11-St Charles, IL

**LCMC 20th ANNUAL GATHERING** - October 4-7, 2020 – Arden Hills, MN



## MEN

### APPROVED GIFT

Just recently, our award's board approved \$598.00 for Rejoice Community Church in Atlanta. They were in desperate need of a printer/copier. This is another great example of how Lutheran Men can help small, mission congregations to become established and to grow.

There are more congregations out there that need help, and we have money that we would love to give away. This money does no good sitting in the bank. Help us pass the word.

*You can also help by donating. The more money we have, the more congregations we can help.*

**The point man for all of our activities is the Congregational "Key Man."** This is simply a man in the congregation we can contact, and who can provide information to the men of the church. It doesn't entail a great deal of time. Sadly, although we have 765 congregations across the US, we only have 174 key men. There is no requirement to head up the men's organization in the church, simply to be our point of contact. I'm asking each pastor to help us find a man in their congregation who can serve as our Key Man.

**One of my goals for 2020 is to get a key man in every congregation.**



One of the great lessons I learned in the Army was the value of after-action reports and lessons learned. If you want to do something, I'll bet someone else has done it. Why not learn from their experience, so please send me information on events you plan to do or those you have done. Include pictures. Those help make the newsletter much more interesting. Working together, we can make Lutheran Men a great resource in each congregation and across LCMC.



## A SPECIAL PRAYER FOR MEN WHO MAY BE UNEMPLOYED

O God, You have been my help in past days, and in the same way I ask You not to turn away from me in this present day as I walk the streets, discouraged and disheartened, seeking work. Lead me and direct me to find suitable work.

O Lord, my sins are ever before me. In my yesterdays I have not always served You; too often I have ignored Your goodness and Your mercy. Forgive me, and let me find peace for my soul in You. Take all resentment, bitterness, and rebellion out of my heart and spirit. Make me hopeful, cheerful, courageous, patient and confident.

You have promised to be with me in the day of trouble. Open Your hands and satisfy my needs. Teach me to face the day confident of Your goodness. O Lord, let me not doubt Your promises. Hear the cry of my distressed heart and disturbed mind. Have mercy upon me, for Jesus sake. Amen



## MEN'S PROGRAMS

There are no requirements for a congregation to have a men's "club" or to do any specific men's programs. If you are interested in either of these, however, we can help.

Pr. Wilson Metz is our pastoral advisor, and he has about 40 years of experience in men's ministry. He is always available via e-mail or



phone to pass on that experience and help with your men's ministry or programs. Phone: 402-521-0046; Email: [Pastor@LCMC-LM.net](mailto:Pastor@LCMC-LM.net)

Men's Ministry Ideas - Provide opportunities for spiritual growth for your men -  
Recreational activities ought to be exciting and also offer Christian value formation -  
Give the members the opportunity make use of their particular natural skills and gifts to impact those they come in contact with - Serve your local community.

We have two primary goals in Lutheran Men...first, to get men involved in the work of the church and also to praise God through the loan fund and the gift fund. Those two funds are ways the men of the church can help congregations across the church to grow and flourish. The loan fund provides no interest loans to mission congregations for building purposes. If you have ever been involved in planting or growing a new church, this is always one of the major challenges. It is funded by the Buck-A-Month Club...\$1.00 per month or \$12.00 per year...something virtually every man in LCMC can afford. Unfortunately, during 2019, only **65 individuals** and **7 churches** contributed.

**100**  
Committee of 100



**WE WANT YOU!**  
**TO BE A KEY MAN**

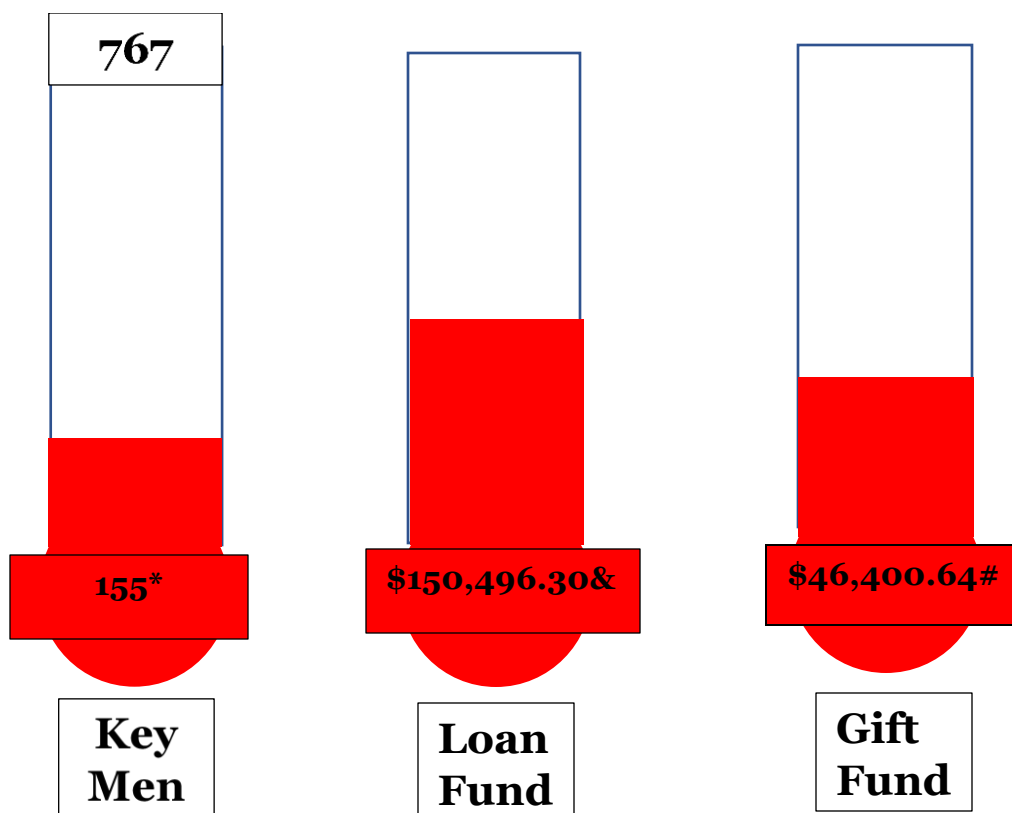
## Health of Lutheran Men

As we look at Lutheran Men as an organization, we can determine the health of the organization by looking at several metrics.

Our most basic need is to have a Key Man in every congregation. Currently, we have 746 congregations across the United States, but only 155 Key men, so we are in need of approximately 612 Key Men.

Our goal is to help small and mission congregations to be planted, and once planted to grow. We do that through our two special funds, the Loan Fund, supported by the Buck-A-Month Club and the Gift Fund, supported by the Committee of 100.

The thermometers below indicate our current "health."



### HELP US MAKE THEM GROW!

**\*No change from our previous newsletter**

**#Up \$1,045.74...20 contributions**

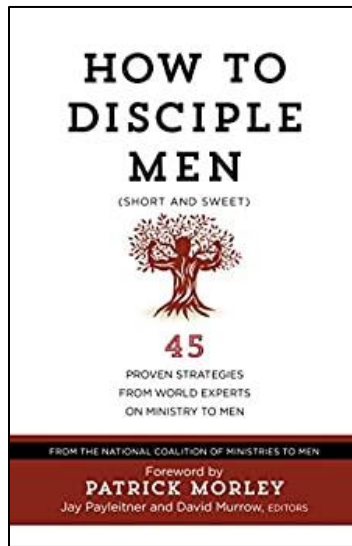
**& Up \$2.194.97...20 contributions**

**20 contributions from all of LCMC...guys we can do much better than that!**

## HOW TO DISCIPLE MEN

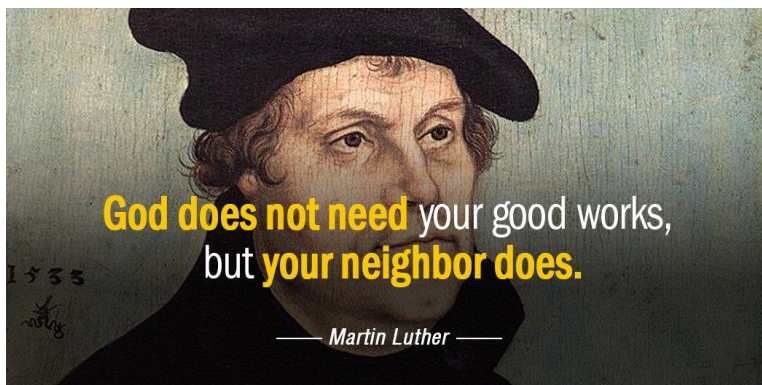
Got 15 minutes? Sharpen your ministry to men.

Each brief chapter is packed with practical advice from leaders who have dedicated their lives to helping men become more like Jesus. Hear their stories. Learn from their mistakes. Profit from their experience. Discover how to:



- Teach and reach the male mind.
- Build and strengthen your men's group through missions, road trips, outdoor activities, and marketplace ministry.
- Plan, market, produce, and follow up on men's events....
- Minister to men who have lost their job, confess an addiction, or feel like they're not even welcome at church
- Create a team of prayer warriors
- Mentor effectively and set up practical, authentic accountability
- Engage millennials, and reach across racial lines
- Become a valued partner with your senior pastor
- Ensure your own family takes priority over your ministry
- Gain practical wisdom from Kenny Luck, Josh McDowell, David Murrow, Jim Grassi of Men's Ministry Catalyst, Brian Doyle of Iron Sharpens Iron, and many more.

Collectively, contributors to this handbook have more than a thousand years of experience ministering to men.



**Ever planted a new church???**

**Money is usually a major priority.**

**We can help!!!**

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

Let me know what is going on with the men of your congregation. One of the major benefits of having a men's organization is the sharing of information, events and the invitation to events with other congregations. Together we get strength to grow in our individual congregations and to grow Lutheran Men across the country.



St Paul Lutheran Seminary has a weekly **online lectionary study** led by Dr. James Nestingen. He works through the texts for the coming Sunday, offering insights for Gospel preaching. CROSS Talk meets live on Tuesdays at 3:00 pm (Central Time). Recordings of the live sessions are also sent to all participants. Over 500 people are currently taking advantage of this program. This is a great vehicle to help you get prepped for a Bible Study or if you have the opportunity to serve in the pulpit to prepare your sermon. If you are interested in taking part, contact Pastor Jon Jensen. [jjensengm@gmail.com](mailto:jjensengm@gmail.com)

## THEOLOGICAL CONFERENCE-A WINTER AWAKENING

**DATE: January 18-20, 2021**

**SPONSORED BY: St Paul Lutheran Seminary and the SEC Fellowship**

**It's not too early to make plans!**

**This will be the 5<sup>th</sup> year for our conference, and each year it has gotten better. It serves as both a theological conference and retreat for pastors, spouses, and laity, so you won't want to miss this event. So, mark your calendars now.**

**COME – HEAR - LEARN – UNDERSTAND – CONVERSE – FELLOWSHIP  
– ENJOY**





## **WHY SHOULD YOU ATTEND THE THEOLOGICAL CONFERENCE?**

Attendees will have their biblical knowledge expanded with the presentations of seminary professors.

Attendees will have their faith strengthened by being in the presence of other believers and leaders of the church.

Attendees will develop a stronger sense of compassion and care for their congregational members.

Attendees will be uplifted in prayer as well as their churches.

Attendees will learn additional coping and leadership skills.

Attendees will learn how to be better listeners.

Attendees will be exposed to additional resources for learning and teaching.

Men are vitally important to all congregations. Why not learn some new information and pick up some new skills that will make you an even more valuable member of your congregation's leadership team.

Come, bring a friend or another man from your congregation...bring your pastor. You will not regret it.

## **COVID-19 Resources for Congregations - Join the Conversation**

In light of the recent coronavirus pandemic that has swept our nation and the world, we have put together a thread on our Facebook Page where LCMC pastors, leaders, and congregation members may share what they are doing in response to COVID-19 and offer any resources that they might have available to other congregations.



As we adapt to this time of social distancing in order to help prevent the spread of the virus, please consider sharing what your congregation is doing in response to COVID-19, and if applicable, links to any resources that you have available in the comments below our "COVID-19 Megathread" post.

By containing this information to a single thread, we hope to create one centralized location where anyone in need of ideas, information, support, or home-based worship resources can find what they are looking for.

We plan to keep this post pinned to the top of our page for the next few weeks to help make this information as easily accessible as possible for anyone who might need it.

For more information on COVID-19, please visit [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).

## Coronavirus Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, this is a very different time, not only for our local community, state and country, but also for the entire world.

Jesus, You are the great Healer. You traveled through towns and villages “curing every disease and illness.” At Your command, the sick were made well. Come to our aid now, in the midst of the global spread of the coronavirus, that we may experience Your healing power.

Heal those who are sick with the virus. May they regain their strength and health through quality medical care.

Heal us from our fear, which prevents us from working together and neighbors from helping one another. Lessen our pride when we think we are safe from a disease that knows no borders.

Be with those who have already died from the virus. May they be at rest with You in Your eternal peace. Be with the families of those who have died and of those who have caught the virus. May they experience Your love and support.

Be with the doctors, nurses, researchers and all medical professionals who seek to heal and help those affected and who put themselves at risk in the process. May they all know Your protection and peace.

Be with the leaders of all nations. Keep us supportive and thankful for all their efforts that show true concern for the well-being of the people they have been called to serve. May they all continue to work together to defeat this invisible world-wide enemy.

Jesus, remain with us as we endure and mourn, persist and prepare. In place of our anxiety, calm us with Your love, peace, and healing powers...not our will but yours be done.

In Your precious Name we pray. Amen

Thanks to Pastor Andy Krey



NEVER  
DOUBT THE  
POWER  
OF PRAYER



I hope you will enjoy poem called **How the Virus Stole Easter** by Kristi Bothur

Tw'as late in '19 when the virus began  
Bringing chaos and fear to all people, each land

People were sick, hospitals full,  
Doctors overwhelmed, no one in school.

As winter gave way to the promise of spring,  
The virus raged on, touching peasant and king.

People hid in their homes from the enemy unseen.  
They YouTubed and Zoomed, social-distanced, and cleaned.

April approached and churches were closed.  
"There won't be an Easter," the world supposed.

"There won't be church services, and egg hunts are out.  
No reason for new dresses when we can't go about."

Holy Week started, as bleak as the rest.  
The world was focused on masks and on tests.

"Easter can't happen this year," it proclaimed.  
"Online and at home, it just won't be the same."

Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, the days came and went.  
The virus pressed on; it just would not relent.

The world woke Sunday and nothing had changed.  
The virus still menaced, the people, estranged.

"Pooh pooh to the saints," the world was grumbling.  
"They're finding out now that no Easter is coming."

"They're just waking up! We know just what they'll do!  
Their mouths will hang open a minute or two,  
And then all the saints will all cry boo-hoo.

"That noise," said the world, "will be something to hear."  
So it paused and the world put a hand to its ear.

And it did hear a sound coming through all the skies.  
It started down low, then it started to rise.

But the sound wasn't depressed.  
Why, this sound was triumphant!

It couldn't be so!  
But it grew with abundance!

The world stared around, popping its eyes.  
Then it shook! What it saw was a shocking surprise!

Every saint in every nation, the tall and the small,  
Was celebrating Jesus in spite of it all!

It hadn't stopped Easter from coming! It came!  
Somehow or other, it came just the same!

And the world with its life quite stuck in quarantine  
Stood puzzling and puzzling.  
"Just how can it be?"

"It came without bonnets, it came without bunnies,  
It came without egg hunts, cantatas, or money."

Then the world thought of something it hadn't before.  
"Maybe Easter," it thought, "doesn't come from a store.  
Maybe Easter, perhaps, means a little bit more."

And what happened then?  
Well....the story's not done.  
What will YOU do?  
Will you share with that one  
Or two or more people needing hope in this night?  
Will you share the source of your life in this fight?

The churches are empty - but so is the tomb,  
And Jesus is victor over death, doom, and gloom.

So this year at Easter, let this be our prayer,  
As the virus still rages all around, everywhere.

May the world see hope when it looks at God's people.  
May the world see the church is not a building or steeple.  
May the world find Faith in Jesus' death and resurrection,  
May the world find Joy in a time of dejection.  
May 2020 be known as the year of survival,  
But not only that - **Let it start a revival.**



## Is God Angry With Us?

Many Christians are walking on eggshells, living as if we are sinners in the hands of an angry God. Which begs the question: Is he? Is God angry with us?

"Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" is one of the more popular sermons in American history. British Colonial Christian Theologian Jonathan Edwards, painted the picture of a God with an itchy trigger finger, constantly at the ready to dispense justice on wicked sinners. The God that Edwards describes is so angry at sin, and those that live in it, that he is doling out bits and pieces of Hell to the wicked, that they might understand what their future holds should they continue down the path they are currently on.

This picture of God being angry at sinners, of God bringing punishment upon those that sin is a pretty common theme in modern evangelical America. How many times have I heard that God would smite the United States because of our current abortion laws? When a natural disaster strikes certain parts of our country or certain areas of the world, I often hear a soft undercurrent in Christian circles about how God was punishing those affected for the sin that they have ignored or accepted. From this perspective, what does COVID-19 tell us about God's thoughts on the world as a whole? Is he so angry with the sin that runs rampant in our world that he is smiting us for it? Punishing us for it? That he is giving us a taste of hell, venting some of his rage so that we might be scared back into submission? Is this God's way of letting us know we've toed the line one too many times and now we're getting put in the penalty box for a time out?

Many Christians live with the understanding that if we do something wrong, God will punish us. And so, we must do everything, or at bare minimum as much as we can, right. We must continue to live within God's laws, we must continue to live lives that are pleasing to God. If we don't, we risk sickness, or disease, or being laid off, or any number of punishments that God may come up with. Many Christians are walking on eggshells, living as if we are sinners in the hands of an angry God.

Which begs the question: Is he? Is God angry with us?

There are many reasons that I love Easter. Holy Week is by far my favorite week of the year. Because during this week I am informed of God's feelings about me. This is the week that Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey, victoriously submitting himself to God's plan. This is the week that there is a dinner in an upper room in which Jesus institutes the Lord's Supper, which I now get to celebrate while I rest and rejoice in the forgiveness poured out over me by God. And it is during this week that I read about Jesus in the garden asking God to take the cup from him. The cup of wrath. This is the cup of God's anger at sin. This is the cup of God's punishment, his divine retribution. Jesus is innocent. He is perfect and pure and blameless. There is no need for him to suffer the wrath of God, and yet: "Not my will but yours be done," says the voice of my Savior. And from this cup of wrath, Jesus drinks fully. And so on Jesus God's wrath was poured out perfectly. He did not save a couple of drops to pour out on me for when I cheated on a test. He did not save the swill at the bottom for when I was vulgar in my thought and speech, that he might hit me with some wrath to keep me in line.

## Is God Angry With Us? (CONT)

No, Jesus drank from the cup fully, drained every last drop. All of God's anger over my sin directed completely at Jesus. Through faith in Christ, through the faith that has been given me, I am not the recipient of God's wrath, only Jesus is. And that wrath manifested itself this week when Jesus went to the cross. There he hung, abandoned by God, the cup of wrath was fully poured out, and having finished the drink, he declared: "It is finished." God's wrath is spent. The cup is empty. There is nothing left, no drop, for me to lay claim to. And then my Savior, my substitute, died, alone and abandoned.

And it is this week, Sunday morning, Easter, we celebrate Jesus rising again. We celebrate how he defeated sin and conquered death. We celebrate a relationship with God restored on account of Christ's work on our behalf. We celebrate the outpouring of God's love for us. His love, not his wrath.

So Christian, are you a sinner in the hands of an angry God? You're a sinner, yes. But is God angry at you? No. God's wrath was poured out on Jesus, totally and completely. Rest in the truth that God looks on you with love and favor on account of Jesus. Live in the comfort that when we fail there is forgiveness, not the itchy trigger finger of a ticked off God. Rejoice in the complete work of Christ on the cross.

"Surely he has borne our griefs  
and carried our sorrows;  
yet we esteemed him stricken,  
smitten by God, and afflicted.

But he was pierced for our transgressions;  
he was crushed for our iniquities;  
upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,  
and with his wounds we are healed.

All we like sheep have gone astray;  
we have turned—every one—to his own way;  
and the Lord has laid on him  
the iniquity of us all." (Isaiah 53:4-6)

**1517.**  
*the*LEGACY  
PROJECT

# 1517

To declare and defend the Good News that we are forgiven and free on account of Christ alone.

6 Proofs of Christ's Resurrection  
Re. Dr. Steve Brown  
Reformed Theological Seminary  
Orlando, FL



How can we possibly believe in the actual resurrection of Christ? How do we know it even happened at all? The implications, either way, are earth shattering.

If Christ's resurrection is not an absolute, space-time fact, if Christ is still dead in a grave somewhere, then the whole Christian faith is nonsense. If Jesus got up out of the grave (and he did), it means that everything he said is true, the teaching he gave is practical, and the life he lived and lives can make your life different. And if the dead man—Jesus—got up and walked away from death, you can too.

The whole superstructure of the Christian faith is built upon the evidences for the resurrection. I want to give you a series of six questions whose answers lead to only one conclusion...an empty tomb.

1. If Jesus remained dead, how can you explain the testimony of the disciples?

If you had lived in the first century and had taken the time to look, you would have seen tears in the disciples' eyes at the crucifixion. Everything for which they had worked, prayed and slaved over had died. If Jesus had not come back from the dead, Matthew would have gone back to his tax tables, Peter back to his fishing. The disciples would have been sadder-but-wiser men. Later on, gathering in the Upper Room, they were scared. After all, if Jesus was crucified, dying a horrible death, it could also happen to them. However, just 40 days later, you hear their voices throughout the whole land with shouts of excitement and joy: "We've seen a dead man walking! We've been with him and touched him." What changed them?

2. If Jesus remained dead, how can you explain the faithfulness of the disciples to the testimony of the resurrection even in the face of their own deaths?

Something happened to the disciples. Peter was crucified upside down on a cross because he didn't want to die the way Jesus had died. Peter could have easily escaped death had he said, "Look, I made it up. It didn't really happen." The reason Peter didn't say that was because he really did see a dead man walking.

Peter wasn't the only one. James was run through with a sword; Bartholomew was hacked to pieces; later on Paul had his head chopped off outside the wall of Rome; Stephen was stoned to death. Of the original 12 disciples, only one died of old age—John—and he was exiled to the island of Patmos.

"Unless the disciples were telling the truth, they were fools."

Instead of growing old in the wisdom and honor of days, these men died as martyrs with the story on their lips that they had been with Jesus after he died. Unless the disciples were telling the truth, they were fools.

3. If Jesus remained dead, why did 500 people say they saw him alive?

Take a look at 1 Corinthians 15:6. 500 people said they saw Jesus alive after he died. It wasn't insanity, a joke or a conspiracy. It just couldn't be explained away. With such a large number of supposed witnesses, one would at least go down and check out the coffin. That is what happened.

4. If Jesus remained dead, how can you explain the credibility of the witnesses?

We're so sophisticated. We think we're the only ones in the world to ask a question, to even wonder about a dead man getting up from the grave. In the first century, though, they questioned just as much as we do, but with an important advantage. They could go and ask the witnesses. If the witnesses' account proved to be accurate, the Christian faith would have grown to be the greatest religion in the history of the world. That is what happened. Their story checked out.

5. If Jesus remained dead, how can you explain the inability of the first century skeptics to deal with the resurrection with an alternative explanation?

“There was no corpse. That corpse got up and ruled at the right hand of God the Father.”

All the power of Rome and of the religious establishment in Jerusalem was geared to stop the Christian faith. All they had to do was dig up the grave, get out the corpse and present it. No one did. There was no corpse. That corpse got up and ruled at the right hand of God the Father.

6. If Jesus remained dead, how can you explain the reality of the Christian Church and its phenomenal growth in the first three centuries of the Christian era?

Christ's Church covered the Western World by the fourth century. Do you seriously think that a religious movement built on a lie could accomplish that much?

Can you now at least grant the possibility of the resurrection of Jesus Christ? The truth is, the fact of the resurrection, if established, is important in so far as you draw implications from that fact. You can be forgiven. You can experience God's power. You can understand the meaning. You can live forever.





## PRESENTATION OF THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION

All Lutherans know the Reformation occurred on October 31, 1517. We celebrate Reformation Day every year. Lutherans are also aware of the Augsburg Confession and the Book of Concord. In fact, LCMC is an association of congregations who are free in Christ, accountable to one another and rooted in the scriptures **and the Lutheran Confessions**.

Many Lutherans are not as aware of the presentation of the Augsburg Confession and how that impacted the church. June 25, 1530 is just as important a day as October 31, 1517, because on that day the Augsburg Confession was presented to Emperor Charles V and other representatives of the Diet of Augsburg. Many regard June 25, 1530 as the “birthday of the Lutheran Church”



Throughout the 1520's, the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V was deeply frustrated by the rise of the Lutheran Reformation. Although he wished to put an end to the various Protestant movements that had grown up in the empire, he nevertheless found it very difficult to do so in light of a variety of wars he was engaged in with the Ottoman Turks and the League of Cognac. For this reason, Charles was effectively forced to allow the Reformation to spread largely unchecked throughout the 1520's.

Nevertheless, by 1530, Charles had either defeated or made temporary peace with his enemies. Hence, he was finally able to turn his full attention to the religious issue that had plagued Germany since the Diet of Worms in 1521. Therefore, in January of 1530, the Emperor called an imperial Diet to meet in the German city of Augsburg in April of that year to decide the religious question.

As part of this imperial meeting, the Lutheran princes were asked to present their religious teachings. Wishing to present a unified front at the Diet, Luther, Melanchthon, and several other Wittenberg reformers met at Torgau in March of the 1530 and drafted a confessional document which came to be known as the “Torgau Articles.” Since Luther was still officially an outlaw under imperial law, he could not travel on to Augsburg to present these articles before the Emperor and the imperial Diet. Instead, a delegation led by Philipp Melanchthon traveled to Augsburg to present the confession of faith before the Emperor, while Luther remained at Coburg Castle. Once there, Melanchthon revised the articles drafted earlier at Torgau under the advice of a number of theologians and political leaders. The final draft was complete on June 23 and came to be known as the “Augsburg Confession.” Luther was sent drafts of the revised document as it was composed and approved the revisions and the final draft as well. Although the petition of the Lutheran princes to have the document publicly read was initially refused, the Emperor finally agreed. As a result, Melanchthon read the confession in the presence of the Emperor on June 25, 1530.

## **PRESENTATION OF THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION (cont)**

The Augsburg Confession is comprised twenty-eight articles. Of these articles, twenty-one represent a positive presentation of the Christian faith as taught in the Lutheran Churches while the last seven articles cover suggested reforms of certain practices of the medieval Church. Although the ultimate aim of the Augsburg Confession was to summarize the main teachings of the Bible, Melancthon also wished emphasize the “catholic” (that is, meaning “universal,” not “Roman Catholic”) nature of Lutheran teaching. Throughout the confession, Melancthon quotes or makes reference to the theologians and councils of the ancient Church to demonstrate the Lutheran Church’s continuity with early Christian teaching.

Showing the catholicity of Lutheran belief was important, because many Roman Catholic theologians had claimed that the Lutherans had broken with the traditional theology of the Church going all the way back to Christ and the apostles. Contrary to this charge, the Lutherans sought to show that their faith was not only drawn from Scripture, but had been the basic teachings of the Christian Church throughout the ages. It was only later that the medieval Church had corrupted the true faith through unbiblical and uncatholic innovations. This argument also carries over into the last seven articles that deal with reforms. With a few exceptions, most of the reforms proposed by Melancthon involve rolling back changes that had been made to Church teaching and practice in the eleventh century by Pope Gregory the VII and his followers during a period often called the “Gregorian Revolution” by Church historians.

Although it is highly unlikely that modern Christians will ever be called upon to give an account of their faith in quite the same manner as the Wittenberg reformers did at Augsburg, the presentation of the Augsburg Confession may still serve as an important model to the Christian life of faith. Paul teaches us: “If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” (Rom. 10:9). For this reason (although Christians do not earn their salvation by confessing Christ publicly), faith necessarily gives rise to a public confession of faith through words and actions. If we believe in Jesus and the salvation he offers, we will confess that faith publicly, knowing that whatever the negative social, political, or personal consequences, the forces of this world do not have the power to control our ultimate fate. Christ has already overcome the world (Jn. 16:33) and we need not fear confessing the faith boldly.

**Why not use this as a meeting presentation during June to tell the story of the presentation of the Augsburg Confession. It is a key date in the history of the Lutheran Church.**

## RECOMMENDED READING LIST



**Most Certainly True, Lutheran History at a Glance**  
Edited by Mark A. Granquist

**Where is History Going?** by John Warwick Montgomery

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Roll up your sleeves and get involved.  
And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Then I said, **“Here I am! Send me.”**



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