

Trinity Te Deum

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Sunday School and Bible Study 9:15 AM – Divine Service 10:30 AM
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Wolf Brand Chili and Nutella Got It Right

You think it's been around for a long time, but it hasn't. The slogan of Wolf Brand Chili, "Neighbor, how long has it been since you've had a big, thick, steaming bowl of Wolf Brand Chili? (Pause) "Well, that's too long!" wasn't trademarked till 1987. But though not dated, it is right. There are some things that you can go too long without having. Wolf Brand Chili isn't one of them. Holy Communion is. Least that's what we confess in our Small Catechism.

The Preface to the Small Catechism of Martin Luther is part of our official confession of faith. Strangely since 1991 his Preface has been in the back of our catechism. This is an improvement of the 1965 to 1991 one editions which didn't have the Preface at all. In this Preface, we confess "that if anyone does not seek or desire the Lord's Supper at the very least four times a year, it is to be feared that he despises the Sacrament and is not Christian..."

A couple of things: note Luther even gives the "out" to those who not only seek but even just desire the Lord's Supper. I can't see what people may or may not be desiring in their hearts. So, I assume that the member who absents himself for long periods of time is either going to a confessional Lutheran church elsewhere or desiring to be

here. Therefore, I only remove a person from the active to the not-active list and off the Communion roster after an entire year of someone absents themselves from the Lord's Table without explanation. Even then, it is not hard to get back on the Active or Communion Roster. Simply speaking with me can lead to that.

My main means of shepherding the sheep is the Communion Roster. That's why it's important that you check your name off when communing. If you come to church after prolonged absence and find your name not on the list, this means you are to speak to me before coming up to the Lord's Table. A year is too long for a sheep to go without the Bread of Life. Sure, you could have been desiring it the whole time you were away, but I can't know that apart from talking about you.

This seems like a reasonable standard of spiritual care. I know from listening to this legal show that when a doctor faces malpractice his main defense will be that he followed a reasonable standard of medical care. The doctors who provide me with prescription medicine, require me to come and see them regularly. The general practitioner requires me to see her once a year. The gastroenterologist requires I see him every two years. To me, this is reasonable. I can't expect them to provide me with prescription medicine without giving them regular opportunities to check my physical health.

I will be called to give an account to the Lord Jesus of the spiritual care I provided you. To do that honestly and accurately, I have to see you regularly. Furthermore, you expect me to give you the Medicine of Immortality that if taken wrongly could make you weak, sick, or dead. I don't think it's asking too much for you to record when you're taking the Medicine, and when you have gone a long time without it to talk to me first.

Not only is Wolf Brand Chili right, so is Nutella. At the end of last year, they notified the Food and Drug Administration that they were not just for dessert anymore. I was doubly surprised. Whoever thought Nutella was food and whoever ate it for dessert?

Bible Class is not dessert. It's the same food for your soul – and much more of it – than is found in Divine Service. I have specifically invited people to this banquet of the Bread of Life. In response, some have quit coming to Divine Service altogether. That I don't get. It would be like eating Nutella for dessert and stop eating it when you were told it wasn't just for dessert. Others tried it for at the most several Sundays, and then quit.

This doesn't offend me, it saddens me. They have judged themselves unworthy of these particular Words of eternal life proclaimed in the Bible Class setting. The best construction would be what Hebrews says.

They are not yet able to digest the meat of Christianity, so they must partake of only the milk. But there comes a point where the rest of Hebrews 5:12, 13 applies. Something is wrong when a person is unable or unwilling to pass from the milk to the meat. This is true in both the material and spiritual realm.

The main takeaway here is that both the chili company and the strange paste company are right: you can go too long without something and if you regard a food as dessert you're missing it as part of your regular diet.

NISI PER VERBUM

Gregory P. Schulz

A long time ago, in a cosmos far away in space and time, Heracleitus of Ephesus discovered a principle – the ultimate first principle of all created things, in fact. He named this arch-principle the Logos in his Greek tongue.

Half a millennium after this discovery, a Jewish man personally beloved by God Himself, wrote by verbal inspiration, “The Logos became flesh and tabernacled for a while among us, and we have seen His weightiness, the weightiness of the Only-Begotten.” This apostle, John, is believed to have written down these words in the town of Ephesus.

In our own day, two and one-half millennia after Heracleitus and two millennia after John, there came a French philosopher who wrote many, many books arguing that language is meaningless and urg-

ing us latter-day heirs of Heracleitus and John to deconstruct, that is, in his idiosyncratic terminology, utterly to dismiss, the Logos.

This anti-logical French philosopher is Jacques Derrida (1930-2004). The postmodernism that erupts in his program to convince us Westerners (and apparently everyone else, to boot) to dismiss the Logos is what I call “the Shingles Virus of Western culture”. I teach philosophy students at my university that Socrates, Plato and Aristotle founded Western philosophy in large part to provide an antidote to postmodern relativism, the “man is the measure of all things” relativism initially articulated by Protagoras (c. 490 - c. 420 B.C.), a contemporary of Heracleitus (c. 540 – 480 B.C.) and of Socrates (d. 399 B.C.).

In these latter days, the Shingles Virus of postmodernism is erupting within the body of Christ. For example, James K.A. Smith from Calvin College has been publishing books with titles urging the church not to be afraid of postmodernism, but instead to welcome the help that Derrida and other postmodernist philosophers can provide to assist in the emergence of a reformed Reformed 21st-century church. Smith believes that the church as such has much to learn about being the church from a philosopher such as Derrida, whose published agenda was to oppose the Messiah of the Bible and to eradicate the divine, biblical mandate of marriage from the world.

Lutheran authors too have begun to exhibit a compromised immune system, siding with the postmodernists’ depredation of language per se, and exhibiting the symptoms of a funda-

mental shift away from confessional Lutheran understandings of Word and Sacraments in favor of a new-fangled semiotic “interpretation” of God’s words to us in the biblical text. For example, James Voelz from Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis, maintains in his book, *What Does This Mean?: Principles of Biblical Interpretation in the Post-Modern World* that meaning emanates “from several levels of signifiers”. What does this notion of linguistic meaning mean, except that the inspired words of God are not inherently meaningful, but are mere signs to be decoded at will, to the extent possible?

My argument in NISI PER VERBUM is this: First, we ought to approach the words of sacred Scripture with fear and trembling as the very words of God that they are. This alchemic brewing of a semiotic philosophy of language simmering in the cynical suspension of postmodernist “thinking” is as anti-Logos (see John 1 and 1 John) as it is illogical. Second, we confessional Lutherans ought to reaffirm the normativity and the biblical fidelity of what amounts to the first principle of biblical hermeneutics, namely, “But God cannot be treated with, God cannot be apprehended nisi per Verbum, except through the Word” (Article 4, Apology of the Augsburg Confession, On Justification). Third, taking as a given that there are only two options for our view of Scripture, namely, the views that Philip Cary has identified as expressivist semiotics, the view that the biblical text is nothing but signs to be decoded, that what really counts is what God is doing in one’s soul or mind, and external efficacious means of grace, the view that

the biblical text is itself meaningful, a means in which God speaks to us in His own words – taking these as the two options, we ought to insist, on pain of pastoral and ecclesial unfaithfulness, that our pastors and our professors will preach, teach and confess the efficacious external means of grace model, while eschewing every expressivist semiotics hermeneutic as what it invariably is, namely, anti-Logos, anti-Christ, anti-biblical-text postmodernism.

Reverend Doctor Gregory P. Schulz
Concordia University Wisconsin
4 May 2017

Look at All the Needy People

(A 9-part Sermon Series on the 3rd Chief Part of Luther's Small Catechism – The Lord's Prayer)

One of my favorite Beatles' songs is the 1966 song "Eleanor Rigby" it begins with the haunting, captivating line "Ah, look at all the lonely people." What does that have to do with the Lord's Prayer?

For decades now, I have wondered why I don't think, speak, or use prayer in general the way the New Testament speaks of it and the Lord's Prayer the way Luther did. My goal every four years is that we would come away from the sermon series on the Lord's Prayer more a people of prayer than we go in. Perhaps that's true for some. The Lord be praised if it is. However, by and large I think I have failed.

Then I read this from Luther. "The Lord's Prayer, which most completely contains all our tribulations and is through the cross most replete." And he didn't originate this view. The early church father Cyprian (d. 258 A.D) said that the petitions are "seven announcements of our misery and indigence through which a person led to self-recognition may see what a treacherous and miserable life he leads here on earth." Luther never backed away from this thesis that the Lord's Prayer "desires to open our eyes to the abyss in which normally we carelessly and foolishly live from day to day." The term "need" is inculcated in each individual petition. "In seven successive articles or petitions, all the needs are comprehended that continually beset us, each one so great that it should impel us to keep praying about it all our lives" (Large Catechism, III. 34). "The Lord's Prayer wants to open our eyes not primarily for our human needs, but for the necessity of God with us" See Large Catechism, III, 68 (Peters, *Lord's Prayer*, 9, 10).

Here is where the scales fell off my eyes. Here is the reason I have always resonated to the joke I tell when teaching the Lord's Prayer. The punchline is from the telephone lineman (Millennials and younger will have to Google this.) that he found he prayed best not at home, not at church, but when hanging upside down from a telephone pole by his safety belt.

Yes, my "great" prayer times have always come in times of great need. My problem was that I didn't see that I was constantly in need. "Needy people" is a pejorative phrase in our society. No one wants to be that! But that's what we are over against God

in the face of the devil, the fallen world, and our own sinful flesh.

So, come to church on Wednesday's during Advent and Lent to "Look at All the Needy People." Services start at 7:30 and with the exception of Ash Wednesday if you don't stop to visit you can be on your way to the parking lot by about 8:15.

Look at All the Needy People

(A 9-part Sermon Series on the 3rd Chief Part of Luther's Small Catechism – The Lord's Prayer)

- Nov. 29 -
Needy People Need a Father in Heaven
- Dec. 06 -
Needy People Need a God on Earth
- Dec. 13 -
Needy People Need a Light at the End of the Tunnel
- Ash Wed.-
Needy People Need to be Acted on Not to Act
- Feb. 21 -
Needy People Need more than Bread for Today
- Feb. 28 -
Needy People Need Continual Forgiveness
- Mar. 07 -
Needy People Need to be Lead out of *Anfechtung*

Mar. 14 -
Needy People Need to be De-
livered from Evil

Mar. 21 -
Needy People Need Double
Amens

In Preparation for the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation

I have seen much from Synod, Inc. headquarters encouraging you to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation or of Luther nailing the 95 Theses to the Wittenberg church door. I am glad about this over against the Reformed styling this as the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. Princes who supported the reforms of Luther and Zwingli were indeed the first to be labeled “Protestant” because they protested at the Diet of Speyer in 1529 (MacCulloch, D., The Reformation, xviii). However, Lutheranism as distinct from Protestantism was the flashpoint for the Reformation.

This being said, no one is preparing laymen for the onslaught that is sure to come against Martin Luther in particular and Lutheranism to a certain extent in general. First, we don’t believe, teach, confess or support everything Martin Luther ever said, taught, wrote, or preached. Our Confession of Faith is the Book of Concord of 1580. Second, because of two World Wars, WW II and Hitler in particular, all connected to the birthplace

of Lutheranism, these subjects are often conflated.

*What follows are two excerpts from the 1960 book **The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich**. Please read them, and know that this how many see Luther and how they relate him to the horrors of Nazi Germany and the triumph of the individual. Both pedigrees I would deny. What you read on blogs, social media, and magazine articles often comes from this book which popularized this particular view. Pastor Harris*

“To the lack of political and dynastic unity was added, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the disaster of religious differences which followed the Reformation. There is not space in this book to recount adequately the immense influence that Martin Luther, the Saxon peasant who became an Augustinian monk and launched the German Reformation, had on the Germans and their subsequent history. But it may be said, in passing, that this towering but erratic genius, this savage anti-Semite and hater of Rome, who combined in his tempestuous character so many of the best and the worst qualities of the German – the coarseness, the boisterousness, the fanaticism, the intolerance, the violence, but also the honesty, the simplicity, the self-scrutiny, the passion for learning and for music and for poetry and for righteousness in the eyes of God – left a mark on the life of the Germans, for both good and bad, more indelible, more fateful, than was wrought by any other single individual before or since. Through his sermons and his magnificent translation of the Bible, Luther created the modern German language, aroused in the people not only a new Protestant vision of Christianity but a fervent

German nationalism and taught them, at least in religion, the supremacy of the individual conscience. But tragically for them, Luther’s siding with the princes in the peasant risings, which he had largely inspired, and his passion for political autocracy ensured a mindless and provincial political absolutism which reduced the vast majority of the German people to poverty, to a horrible torpor and a demeaning subservience. Even worse perhaps, it helped to perpetuate and indeed to sharpen the hopeless divisions not only between classes but also between the various dynastic and political groupings of the German people. It doomed for centuries the possibility of the unification of Germany” (83).

“It is difficult to understand the behavior of most German Protestants in the first Nazi years unless one is aware of two things: their history and the influence of Martin Luther. The great founder of Protestantism was both a passionate anti-Semite and a ferocious believer in absolute obedience to political authority. He wanted Germany rid of the Jews and when they were sent away he advised that they be deprived of “all their cash and jewels and silver and gold” and, furthermore, “that their synagogues or schools be set on fire, that their houses be broken up and destroyed . . . and they be put under a roof or stable, like the gypsies . . . in misery and captivity as they incessantly lament and complain to God about us” – advice that was literally followed four centuries later by Hitler, Goering and Himmler. In what was perhaps the only popular revolt in German history, the peasant uprising of 1525, Luther advised the

princes to adopt the most ruthless measures against the” mad dogs,” as he called the desperate, down-trodden peasants. Here, as in his utterances about the Jews, Luther employed a coarseness and brutality of language unequalled in German history until the Nazi time. The influence of this towering figure extended down the generations in Germany, especially among the Protestants. Among other results was the ease with which German Protestantism became the instrument of royal and princely absolutism from the sixteenth century until the kings and princes were overthrown in 1918. The hereditary monarchs and petty rulers became the supreme bishops of the Protestant Church in their lands. Thus in Prussia the Hohenzollern King was the head of the Church. In no country with the exception of Czarist Russia did the clergy become by tradition so completely servile to the political authority of the State” (209-210).

Junior Confirmation to Begin Monday, September 12, 5-6:30 PM

We have a 3-year program, usually 6th, 7th, and 8th grades. The course is 25 classes. The original constitution of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod said that “where possible a hundred hours should be used to instruct confirmands” (*Pastoral Theology*, 188). Twenty-five 1.5 hour classes yeild 37.5 hours a year. Mulitply that by 3 and you get 112.5 hours.

There have been 3 distinct “batches” of kids in my time here

at Trinity. From 1999-2008 when my own children were in the class. The group that started in 2009-2016. And now a fresh batch starts. This is the first batch where the expectation will be tested that the children have memorized the portions of the Catechism I require them to BEFORE the first class.

I have prepared a booklet *Confirmation Memory Assignments* to facilitate parents teaching their kids the memory work at home. After all, each of the Six Chief Parts of our Catechism begin with these words: “As the head of the family should teach it in a simple way to his household.”

Science, Math, and Worldviews

Darwinism heads toward senility

By Marvin Olasky

World Magazine, March 8, 2017, p. 40

In 1985 biologist Michael Denton noted – in *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis* – that Darwinism was cruising for a bruising. Now he’s back with *Evolution: Still a Theory in Crisis*, which shows – with three decades of new research that Darwin’s theory needs hip replacements, for “there is now a growing chorus of dissent within mainstream evolutionary biology.”

He’s right. Darwin himself wrote, “If it could be demonstrated that any complex organ existed which could not possibly have been formed by numerous successive slight modifications, my theory would absolutely break down.” It has broken down, as advances in paleontology, genomics, and developmental biology show.

For example, mainstream researcher Douglas Erwin and Eric Davidson have noted that “classic evolutionary theory, based on selection of small incremental changes,” is clearly inadequate. Günter Wagner in *Homology, Genes, and Evolutionary Innovation* writes, “Adaptive modifications often involve only the modification of existing cis-regulatory elements,” but truly new developments “require large-scale reorganizations of the gene regulatory network.

A generation ago Harvard’s Stephen Gould acknowledged that the lack of transitional forms was “the trade secret of paleontology.” He wrote, “Can we invent a reasonable sequence of intermediate forms – that is, viable, functional organisms – between ancestors and descendants in major structural transitions? ... The answer is no.” Gould compared Darwin’s writing to Rudyard Kipling’s *Just So Stories*, such as “*How the Leopard Got His Spots.*”

Darwinists continue to scoff at scientists who point out the implausibility of materialism, but can the scoffers take ridicule? Tom Wolfe, at age 86 still America’s best and funniest nonfiction writer, is ready to push Darwin off his pedestal. He follows Gould in comparing Darwin to Kipling, but notes: “Kipling’s intention from the outset was to entertain children. Darwin’s intention, on the other hand, was dead serious. Neither had any evidence to back up his tale.”

Gould proposed big jumps, not little ones: “punctuated equilibrium,” now called “punk eek” -but his theory also lacks evidence. Research

in recent years has pointed out a key Darwinian flaw that Dutch botanist Hugo de Vries noted even in 1904: “Natural selection may explain the *survival* of the fittest, but it cannot explain the *arrival* of the fittest.” In the beginning, when there was little to reorganize, how could things have begun, apart from God? Douglas Axe, author of *Undeniable*, writes, “The scientific facts are in complete harmony with the universal design intuition.”

Fred Hoyle, a late 20th-century astronomer and mathematician, but not a religious person, calculated the probability of randomly drawing a specific atom from the entire universe is 1 in 10 with only 80 zeros. By comparison, the probability of enzymes producing a single amoeba is 1 in 10 followed by 40,000 zeros. Other scholars have confirmed that math. Another comparison: Poland’s Michal Chaberek says the odds of winning the Polish national lottery are 1 in 14 million, and the odds of originating the enzymes in the simplest cell are the same as winning the lottery 6,000 time in a row.

Some desperate scientists are now pushing the notion of billions of universes, because that’s the only way that one of those universes, ours, could have generated something out of nothing. We shouldn’t rule that out, but multiverse proponents should acknowledge that they have no evidence and are merely engaged in a desperate attempt to avoid admitting that the existence of a Creator is the most likely explanation for the existence of the universe, life, and human life. Since science is an attempt to

learn more about the nature of reality, they should also not rule out anything that might contribute to our understanding – including the possibility of a Creator.

Categorical Imperative?

On December 15, 2016, New York City issued the nation’s first public “intersex” birth certificate to Sara Kelly Keenan, 55, who was born with male XY chromosomes but with female genitals and mixed male and female internal organs. About 1 in 80,000 babies is born with this condition, called Swyer syndrome.... Intersex is an umbrella term that can refer to several rare conditions where a baby is born without defining physical features of one sex or another (an older term is hermaphrodite). ... Keenan herself has supported blurring the line between the intersex condition and self-imposed gender identity – she was the second person to obtain the gender status of “non-binary” in California, where she lives. ... Intersex Society of North America (ISNA). ... says, “Many intersex people are perfectly comfortable adopting either a male or female gender identity and are not seeking a genderless society or to label themselves as a member of a third gender class. ... Assigning an ‘intersex’ gender would unnecessarily traumatize the child.”

Some pastors think the cases should be evaluated individually, since there is so much variety in physical issues. “This birth certificate effort will...erase the line between intersex and transgender, making folks consider them both under the same umbrella term,” says Reformed Presbyterian pastor Sam Andreades, author of a theology book on gender,

enGendered: “Yes, we should acknowledge these medical conditions, but not on birth certificates.”

...Denny Burk, a Biblical studies professor at Boyce College and a Baptist pastor. ... suggests parents should focus on chromosomes and not push for surgery to make their children’s anatomy “fit in with the norm.” Burk refers to research about intersex children who have grown up and struggled with their parents’ surgical decisions. He thinks Matthew 19:12, where Jesus refers to “eunuchs who have been so from birth,” might refer to children with intersex conditions.

“The existence of intersex conditions doesn’t mean that we no longer believe in the male and female binary” Burk says. “We live in a fallen world. Just like you have all manners of physical malady and disorders that afflict the human bodies, intersex conditions fall into that category. ... Jesus isn’t saying that they can’t be His followers or His disciples if they’re in that ambiguous situation.

Excerpted from Emily Belz, *World Magazine*, February 18, 2017, pp 59-60.

Times Differences

The baby boomers (born from 1946 to 1964) were born to parents raised during the Depression. Divorce was rare, so most children grew up with a mom and a dad. More moms stayed home, and families had fewer conveniences than they do today: black-and-white TV, no AC, one car, bigger families, smaller houses, hand-stitched clothes, rare restaurant meals. Times were turbulent: Cold War

threats, Vietnam, race riots, political assassinations, sexual revolution, and drugs. College was cheaper – and as adults, boomers benefited from the thriving 80's and 90's economy. Their children – Generation Xers (1965 to 1976) and millennials (1977 to 1994) grew up in material plenty with more choices of every kind, but not all for the better.

Generation Xers came of age in an era of cultural decline: They were more likely than ever to grow up with divorced parents, a working mom, and one-child households. Burned by political scandals such as Clinton-Lewinsky, they're suspicious of the government but not apathetic. They were the guinea pigs for racial integration, the first to come of age with MTV, the highest educated generation in America. As youth they watched conservative Christians coalesce into a formidable voting bloc and then dissolve.

Millennials were born into the debris of a cultural war already lost to liberals: Supposedly, abortion is an undeniable right, evolution is proven science, homosexual love is love is love. Identifying as a Christian – or worse, a conservative Christian – is not just uncool but despised, a synonym for a bigot. The America they know is increasingly less white, less religious, less homogenous – and particularly for those flocking to cities, it's less apple pie, more carnitas tacos and lamb gyros; fewer Sunday Christians, more yogis and therapists. Even those growing up in Middle America acculturated to a diverse, postmodern America through pop culture, col-

lege, and social media. That means the basic concept for a “great America” means something else to different generations.

Sophie Lee, *World Magazine*, February 18, 2017 p. 38

Mothers Don't Let Your Babies Grow up to be Presbyterians

Posted on May 4, 2017
by Rev. Paul R. Harris

So sang Willie and Waylon about cowboys, but you can be a Confessional Lutheran and be a cowboy. The same can't be said of being a Presbyterian. Never the twain shall meet. The thing conservative Presbyterians are closest to meeting is Unitarianism. I say this after visiting Redeemer Presbyterian, Austin, Texas.

In 2000, I met with a member of this church who had just come back from a conference between conservative Presbyterians and the LCMS. He was ecstatic over the meeting. That summer Dr. David Scaer was in Austin teaching a class. He too had been at that meeting. He said he went to bed each night with a headache. He came away convinced “we worship a different God than they do.” They worship a God who is present only by His Spirit. Didn't Luther say, “You have a different Spirit?” I don't recall him saying anything like that about Roman Catholicism.

The last time I was in a conservative Presbyterian church was over 30 years ago, so I don't remember if I what I saw and heard here is consistent with that, but what

I saw was an attempt to bridge the gap between the God they know is subjectively present in their faith and His objective presence in reality which they hint at but don't confess. Their worship is the very best that man can do to build a tower that reaches unto heaven, not to make a name for themselves at the Babel builders wanted, but to reach the God they can't confess is really among them. And the worship was a hodgepodge of Lutheran and Reformed elements.

There was no visible cross or crucifix. The minister stood front and center always facing the congregation. He preached from above the table with the Communion elements on it. This pulpit is higher than the lectern from which the Word of God was read. Dr. Kurt Marquart said in 2001 that Lutherans only put their pulpits above the altar during the Age of Rationalism. *

The minister was dressed in a Geneva gown yet he wore a stole with the appropriate liturgical color. The only liturgical gesture he made was to lift up his hands at the benediction. The only one I saw the people make was to stretch out their hands from their side to receive that blessing. They had a Corporate Confession of Sin which they sat during. They had what they labeled in the bulletin as a Declaration of Absolution, but it was no absolution. It was a Declaration of Pardon or Announcement of Pardon that Reformed churches usually have.

While being liturgical they struck the contemporary note enough times to make those with that itch feel

scratched. The choir sang an anthem which I think they thought since it came from an opera based on a short story by Tolstoy it had to be liturgical. They were wrong. It had five verbs stating what we do (we call, we seek, we know, we breathe, we trust) and one verb stating what God does (“you hear our prayer”) betraying the anthropocentrism of the contemporary.

Continuing the mishmash. They said the Our Father which means as Augustine said they will be our brothers as long as they do. Yet they separated it from their Lord’s Supper which is something the ancient liturgies didn’t do and makes you wonder why they do. They do have the Pax Domini but it is not connected to the Body and Blood of Christ on the altar as it is in Confessional Lutheran Churches but sandwiched in between the Nicene Creed and the Tithes and Offerings. This is fitting since no Body and Blood of Jesus is on their table nothing can flow from it. And peace can flow from the Corporate Confession of Faith even as oil down Aaron’s beard (Psalm 133).

As for Communion, they make a point of the Fracture as the Reformed do which is why Confessional Lutherans don’t. They actually had a chalice, but only the minister drank from it. This was strange. After a sermon where we were exhorted that we were all ministers, they retained the symbol of pre-Vatican II Catholicism which distinguished between priest and laity. They also had the *sine qua non* of the modern ecumenical movement: open

Communion. They are in fellowship with all baptized Christians who want to be in fellowship with them which means they are communing “Christians” who believe gays should marry, babies should be aborted, and men have evolved from apes.

The attempt to bridge the roiled waters between the Reformed and Confessional Lutherans continued in a one line *Agnus Dei* in which the minister actually chanted “Behold the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.” Curiously enough – actually the entire service was a curiosity – this came between the eating of the bread and drinking of the wine/juice. Like other Protestant churches I’ve attended, they made a big deal of everyone eating and drinking at the same time. Having denied the Real Presence, they won’t argue about a moment of presence [neither will confessional Lutherans], but they want to be sure everyone is present in the same moment.

How about the Gospel? It was in some of the hymns, but it was MIA in the sermon. Actually, it was an also ran there. It came at the end of the message in the line “And the blood of Jesus covers our sins.” This really isn’t either the active or passive obedience of Jesus which are constituent parts of the Gospel. This a fruit of them.

The whole service was designed to instill and/or impart a sense of the divine. This makes sense. When a person isn’t present you try to create a sense of their being there somehow, someway. So, moms don’t let your babies grow up to be Presbyterians where they will forever be trying to make a connection with God. May they be Confessional Lutherans

centered on the Christ who is really present in things that have touched them, do touch them, and that they can eat and drink.

*This is my recollection of what Dr. Marquart said. Since he is in the Church Triumphant, he is not able to defend himself or justify my recollection. Reading the information below, you will see that the statement I recollect him as saying is not accurate. That would be unlike him. Perhaps I am remembering what he said incorrectly. Could he have said the practice only became popular in the Age of Rationalism? In any event, you should know that he was responding to the question of what he thought of the design of Our Savior, Houston. Here’s the correction a reader sent me.

The first Lutheran *kanzelaltar* is located in the chapel of Wilhelmsburg Castle in Schmalkalden (today Thuringia), and was built under the Hessian Landgrave Wilhelm IV in 1585-90, considerably before the Age of Rationalism (1700-1775). https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/e/ea/Dorfkirche_Sch%C3%B6nwalde-Glien_010.JPG/450px-Dorfkirche_Sch%C3%B6nwalde-Glien_010.JPG). More *kanzelaltars* were then built in the 17th and 18th centuries. The *kanzelaltar* is discussed further in Rev. Laurence White’s book, *To the Glory of God and the Salvation of Man* (Published by Our Savior Lutheran Church Houston, Texas, First Edition – 2000, Second Expanded Edition – 2015) (<http://www.osl.cc/editoruploads/fil>

es/OSL%20Sanctuary%20Book.pdf). Rev. White states (pp. 13-14):

Evangelical Lutheranism's commitment to maintain and express the centrality of the Means of Grace in the design of its churches came to be expressed most creatively and effectively in the development of the Lutheran "Kanzelaltar" (Pulpit/Altar). A pulpit/altar is a structure in which the altar and the pulpit are joined together in such a way that the pulpit is placed above and behind the altar. Typically the font is then located in front of the altar

combining all three architectural representations of the Means of Grace most prominently at the central axis of the sanctuary. This combination becomes the dominant feature of the physical environment for the Divine Service. The pulpit altar is considered by many scholars to be the single most important contribution of Lutheran theology to the history of Church architecture.

In his definitive study *Die Evangelische Kanzelaltar*, Hartmut Mai argues that the evangelical pulpit/altar offers a unique opportunity for structuring a liturgical center in

such a way as to give decisive architectural express to the focus of the worship of the Lutheran Church upon the Means of Grace as the one center around which the congregation gathers to worship God. At the same time, he contends that the pulpit/altar expressed the essential unity and equality of Word and Sacrament in Biblically defined worship.

(Hartmut Mai, *Die Evangelische Kanzelaltar*, p. 201, <https://www.amazon.com/Evangelische-Kanzelaltar-Geschichte-Bedeutung/dp/B0000BSGS9>).

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August 2017

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
		VBS 10 AM – 1 PM	VBS 10 AM – 1 PM 7:15 Romans	VBS 10 AM – 1 PM		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Mid-Summer Dinner Noon			7:15 Romans			
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Adult Class 12:30 Jr. Confirmation Memory Test			7:15 Romans			
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Adult Class 12:30 Jr. Confirmation Memory Test			7:15 Romans			
27	28	29	30	31		
Adult Class 12:30 Jr. Confirmation Memory Test	ACELC Conference Omaha, Nebraska					

September 2017

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
			7:15 Romans			
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	Jr. Confirmation 5 PM	Voters Meeting 7 PM	7:15 Romans			
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	Jr. Confirmation 5 PM	Elders Meeting 6:30 PM	7:15 Romans			
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	Jr. Confirmation 5 PM		7:15 Romans			