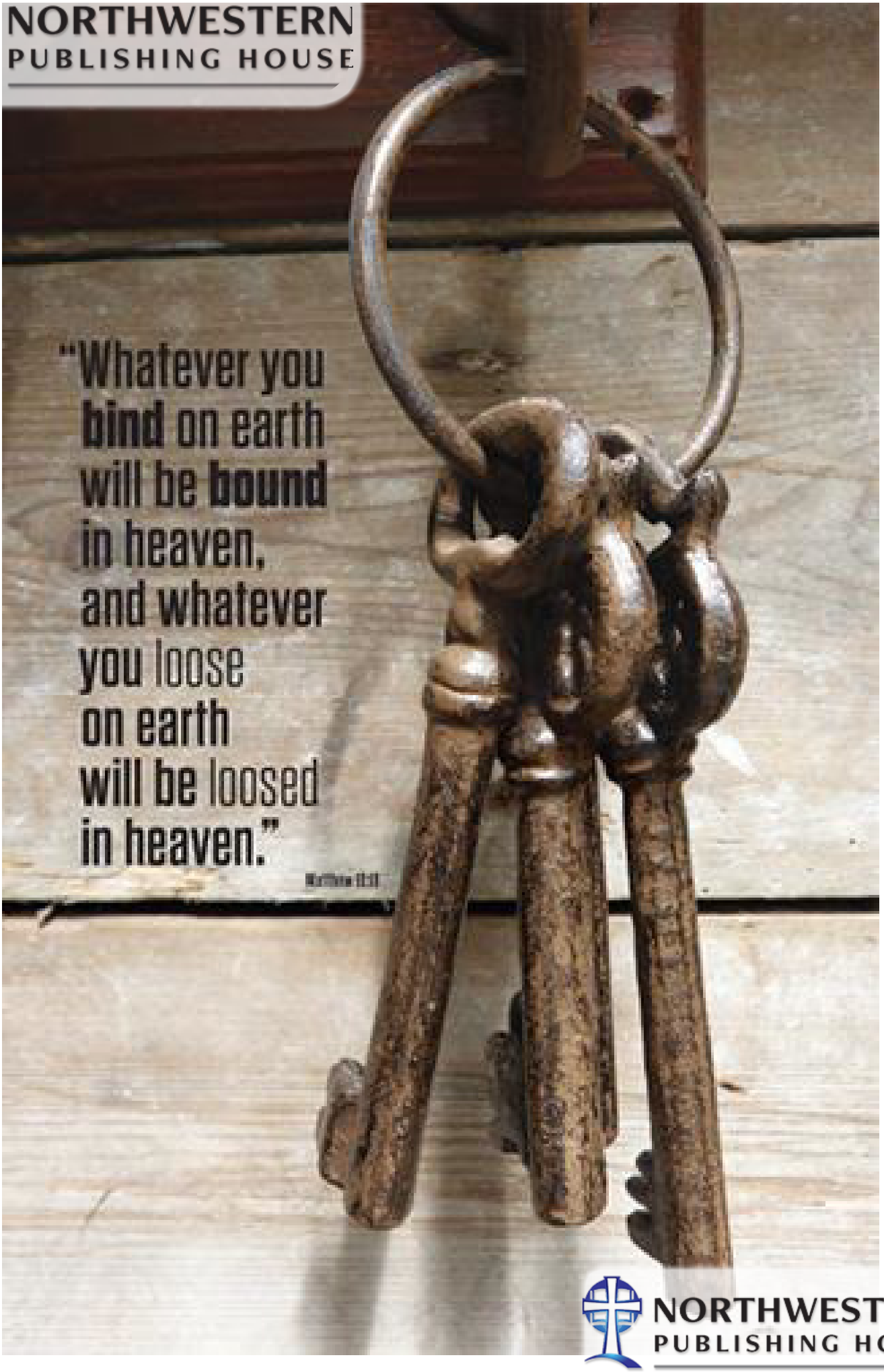
NORTHWESTERN
PUBLISHING HOUSE



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PUBLISHING HOUSE

Star of Bethlehem Lutheran Church

4465 South Blosser Road
Santa Maria, CA 93455
Office: 805-937-0339
www.starlutheran.org
Pastor Michael Foley

Worship Service

Sunday, September 6th, 2026 10:00 a.m.

Fifteenth Sunday after PENTECOST

Theme of the day: The Church fulfills her role as her brother's keeper. The keys of the kingdom have been placed into our hands. It is our privilege and responsibility to bind and to loose — to carry out the task Christ has appointed us to on his behalf. We reach out with Law and Gospel for the sake of those whom Jesus redeemed.

WELCOME

A warm welcome to our friends and visitors! Star of Bethlehem Lutheran Church is eager to share with you the blessings of its Christ-centered ministry. If you are a new or long-time resident of the Central Coast looking for a church home, we invite you to meet with us at the close of this worship service or at your convenience. All are welcome to stay for refreshments in the fellowship hall.

Families are encouraged to worship together. If you need to step out with your children, the service can be seen and heard in the fellowship hall or narthex area. Feel free to enter and return at any time.

OUR MISSION

Our congregation exists for the purpose of "HOLDING OUT THE WORD OF LIFE." This is accomplished by faithfully preserving and proclaiming all of God's inerrant word, and administering the Sacraments as they were instituted by Christ.

OPENING HYMN: # 839 **"Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me"**

♫ **Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee;**
let the water and the blood,
from thy riven side which flowed,
be of sin the double cure:
cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r.

Not the labors of my hands can fulfill thy law's demands;
could my zeal no respite know,
could my tears forever flow,
all for sin could not atone;
thou must save and thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling;
naked, come to thee for dress,
helpless, look to thee for grace;
foul, I to the fountain fly;
wash me, Savior, or I die.

Please stand for last verse:

While I draw this fleeting breath,
when mine eyelids close in death,
when I soar to worlds unknown,
see thee on thy judgment throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
let me hide myself in thee.

Minister: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

Congregation: And also with you. *(spoken)*

M: God invites us to come into his presence to worship him with humble and penitent hearts. Therefore, let us acknowledge our sinfulness and ask him to forgive us.

C: Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful, and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.

M: God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given his only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

M: For all that we need in life and for the wisdom to use all your gifts with gratitude and joy, hear our prayer, O Lord.

C: ♫ Lord, have mercy.

M: For the steadfast assurance that nothing can separate us from your love and for the courage to stand firm against the assaults of Satan and every evil, hear our prayer, O Christ.

C: ♫ Christ, have mercy.

M: For the well-being of your holy Church in all the world and for those who offer here their worship and praise, hear our prayer, O Lord.

C: ♫ Lord, have mercy.

M: Merciful God, maker and preserver of life, uphold us by your power and keep us in your tender care:

C: ♫ Amen.

M: The works of the Lord are great and glorious; his name is worthy of praise.

♫ O Lord, our Lord, how glorious is your name in all the earth.
Almighty God, merciful Father,
you crown our life with your love.
You take away our sin; you comfort our spirit;
you make us pure and holy in your sight.
You did not spare your only Son, but gave him up for us all.
O Lord, our Lord, how glorious is your name in all the earth.
O Son of God, eternal Word of the Father,
you came to live with us;
you made your Father known;
you washed us from our sins in your own blood.
You are the King of glory; you are the Lord!
O Lord, our Lord,
how glorious is your name in all the earth.

M: O Lord Jesus Christ, preserve the congregation of believers with your never-failing mercy. Help us avoid whatever is wicked and harmful, and guide us in the way that leads to our salvation; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: ♫ Amen.

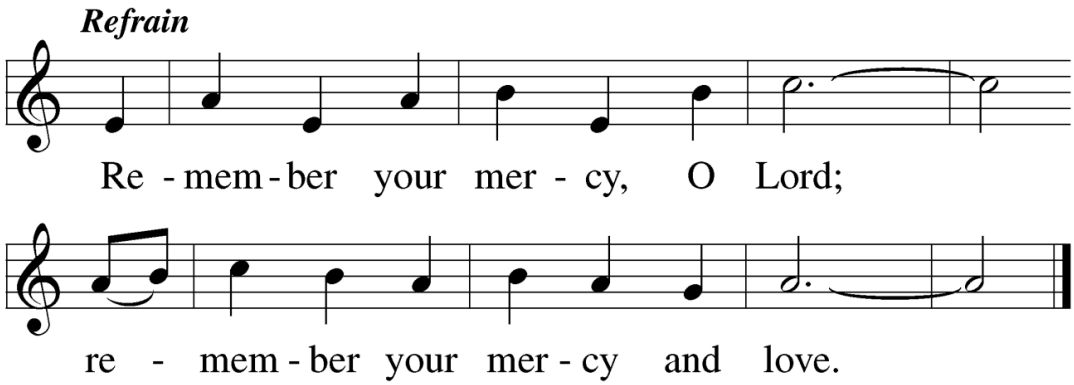
Please be seated.

FIRST LESSON: Galatians 2:11-16

[11]But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he was clearly wrong. [12]For before some people came from James, he ate with the Gentiles. But when those people came, he drew back and separated himself, because he feared those from the circumcision group. [13]And the rest of the Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy. [14]But when I saw that they were not acting according to the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in front of all of them, "If you, a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, why do you compel the Gentiles to live like the Jews?"

[15]"We are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners. [16]We know that a person is not justified by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ. So we also believed in Christ Jesus that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law, because no one will be justified by the works of the law.

PSALM of the Day: Psalm 32



**Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven,*
whose sins are covered.**

**When I kept silent, your hand was heavy upon me;*
my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer.**

**Then I acknowledged my sin to you*
and did not cover up my iniquity.**

**I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,"*
and you forgave the guilt of my sin.**

Refrain

**You are my hiding place;*
you will protect me from trouble.**

**Many are the woes of the wicked,*
but the LORD'S unfailing love surrounds those who trust in him.**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son*
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,*
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Refrain

M: Alleluia. God our Savior wants all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. Alleluia. *(1 Timothy 2:4)*

C: ♫ Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
These words are written that we may believe
that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

GOSPEL LESSON: Matthew 18:15-20

[15]"If your brother sins against you, go and show him his sin just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have regained your brother. [16]But if he will not listen, take one or two others along with you, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' [17]If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And, if he refuses to listen even to the church, then treat him as an unbeliever or a tax collector. [18]Amen I tell you: Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. [19]Amen I tell you again: If two of you on earth agree to ask for anything, it will be done for them by my Father who is in heaven. [20]In fact where two or three have gathered together in my name, there I am among them."

HYMN: #654:1,2,4,5 **"Jesus Sinners Does Receive"**

♫ **Jesus sinners does receive;**
oh, may all this saying ponder
who in sin's delusions live
and from God and heaven wander.
Here is hope for all who grieve: Jesus sinners does receive.

We deserve but grief and shame,
yet his words, rich grace revealing,
pardon, peace, and life proclaim;
here their ills have perfect healing
who with humble hearts believe: Jesus sinners does receive.

I, a sinner, come to you
with a penitent confession.
Savior, show me mercy, too;
grant for all my sins remission.
Let these words my soul relieve: Jesus sinners does receive.

Oh, how blest it is to know,
were as scarlet my transgression,
it shall be as white as snow
by your blood and bitter passion,
for these words I do believe: Jesus sinners does receive.

SERMON: Ezekiel 33:7-11

7 But I have appointed you, son of man, to be a watchman for the house of Israel. So whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you are to warn them from me. 8When I say to a wicked man, "Wicked man, you shall surely die," if you do not speak to warn the wicked man against his way, that wicked man will die because of his guilt, but I will also hold you responsible for his blood. 9But if you do warn the wicked man to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, he will die because of his guilt, but you will have saved your life.

10So you, son of man, say the following to the house of Israel.

This is what you people are saying: "Certainly our rebellion and our sins weigh us down, and because of them we are rotting away. How then can we live?"
11Say to them, "As I live, declares the LORD God, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from their way and live. Turn back, turn back from your evil ways, for why should you die, O house of Israel?"

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and became fully human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

OFFERING

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

LORD'S PRAYER

C: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Holy Communion, will be celebrated in today's service. The Bible teaches us that Jesus offers us his body and blood for the forgiveness of our sins in the Lord's Supper. The Bible also instructs us that receiving the Lord's Supper together is a public expression of our complete "oneness," or unity of faith.

Because the Lord's Supper is an expression of our unity in faith, we invite to the Lord's Supper only those who have expressed that unity with us through membership in our congregation or one of our sister congregations in the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS), or our sister church body, the ELS.

If you are a guest from another Christian church, we kindly ask that you simply refrain from participation in our celebration of the Lord's Supper today. We don't want to be presumptuous and put you in the position of declaring your agreement with our beliefs before you have had a chance to learn more.

THE HOLY SACRAMENT

M: The Lord be with you.

C: ♫ And also with you.

M: Lift up your hearts.

C: ♫ We lift them up to the Lord.

M: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: ♫ It is right to give him thanks and praise.

M: Praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! He sends the Holy Spirit to testify that we are his children and to strengthen us when we are weak.

Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ. To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and thanks and honor and glory forever and ever.

♫ **Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.**
The whole earth is full of your glory.
You are my God, and I will exalt you.
I will give you thanks, for you have become my salvation.
Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.
The whole earth is full of your glory.

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

M: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: ♫ Amen.

♫ **O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.**
O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us your peace. Amen.

COMMUNION HYMN: # 559 "If Your Beloved Son, O God"

♫ **If your beloved Son, O God, had not to earth descended**
and in our mortal flesh and blood had not sin's power ended,
then this poor, wretched soul of mine
in hell eternally would pine
because of my transgression.

But now I find sweet peace and rest;
despair no more reigns o'er me.
No more am I by sin oppressed,
for Christ has borne sin for me.
Upon the cross for me he died that, reconciled, I might abide with you, my God, forever.

I trust in him with all my heart; now all my sorrow ceases.
His words abiding peace impart; his blood from guilt releases.
Free grace thro' him I now obtain;
he washes me from ev'ry stain,
and pure I stand before him.

All righteousness by works is vain;
the law brings condemnation.
True righteousness by faith I gain;
Christ's work is my salvation.
His death, that perfect sacrifice,
has paid the all-sufficient price;
in him my hope is anchored.

My guilt, O Father, you have laid
on Christ, your Son, my Savior.
Lord Jesus, you my debt have paid
and gained for me God's favor.
O Holy Spirit, fount of grace, the good in me to you I trace;
in faith and hope preserve me.

THANKSGIVING

Please stand.

♫ **Thank the Lord and sing his praise.**
Tell ev'ryone what he has done.
Let all who seek the Lord rejoice
and proudly bear his name.
He renews his promises and leads
his people forth in joy
With shouts of thanksgiving.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

M: Hear the prayer of your people, O Lord, that the lips which have praised you here may glorify you in the world, that the eyes which have seen the coming of your Son may long for his coming again, and that all who have received in his true body and blood the pledge of your forgiveness may be restored to live a new and holy life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: ♫ Amen.

M: Brothers and sisters, go in peace.
Live in harmony with one another.
Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

C: ♫ Amen. Amen. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: # 402 **"Glory Be to Jesus"**

♫ Glory be to Jesus,
who in bitter pains
poured for me the lifeblood
from his sacred veins.

Grace and life eternal
in that blood I find;
blest be his compassion,
infinitely kind.

Blest through endless ages
be the precious stream
which from endless torment
did the world redeem.

Abel's blood for vengeance
pleaded to the skies,
but the blood of Jesus
for our pardon cries.

Oft as earth exulting
lifts its praise on high,
angel hosts rejoicing
make their glad reply.

Lift we, then, our voices,
swell the mighty flood;
louder still and louder
praise the precious blood!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ALTAR FLOWERS are given to the glory of God by Chris and Terry on the occasion of their 55th anniversary.

PRAYERS: Remember to pray for: little Elias, Dennis Douglas, George Caravana, Molly Webb, Kathy Jones, Art Amarillas, Melinda Brown, Alice Taubman, Monica, Rylan Downs, Jeff Brown, Aaron Taubman, Marlene Washburn, Helen Cummings, Delores Bass, Rick Stovall, Suzy Garvin, Linda Wilkinson, Kathie Stillwater, Louise Perry, Phil Schaaf, and Ilene Trevarrow.

COMING UP: ESL Open House and Fiesta, Tuesday, September 15th, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

THIS WEEK

Tuesday	**ESL** (English as a Second Language), **6:00 p.m.**
Thursday	**Bible Class, 10:00 a.m.**
	ESL, 6:00-7:30 p.m.
Sunday	**Bible Class & Sunday School, 9:00 a.m.**
	Worship, 10:00 a.m.
	Fellowship Luncheon after

I have appointed you …

… to be a watchman.

Christian Questions

prepared by Dr. Martin Luther for those who intend to go to the Sacrament

1. Do you believe that you are a sinner? Yes, I believe it. I am a sinner.

2. How do you know this?
From the Ten Commandments, which I have not kept.

3. Are you sorry for your sins?
Yes, I am sorry that I have sinned against God.

4. What have you deserved from God because of your sins?
His wrath and displeasure, temporal death, and eternal damnation.
See Romans 6:21, 23.

5. Do you hope to be saved? Yes, that is my hope.

6. In whom then do you trust? In my dear Lord Jesus Christ.

7. Who is Christ? The Son of God, true God and man.

8. How many Gods are there?
Only one, but there are three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

9. What has Christ done for you that you trust in Him?
He died for me and shed His blood for me on the cross for the forgiveness of sins.

10. Did the Father also die for you?
He did not. The Father is God only, as is the Holy Spirit; but the Son is both true God and true man. He died for me and shed His blood for me.

11. How do you know this?
From the holy Gospel, from the words instituting the Sacrament, and by His body and blood given me as a pledge in the Sacrament.

12. What are the words of institution?
Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."
In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

13. Do you believe, then, that the true body and blood of Christ are in the Sacrament? Yes, I believe it.

14. What convinces you to believe this?
The word of Christ: Take, eat, this is My body; drink of it, all of you, this is My blood.

15. What should we do when we eat His body and drink His blood, and in this way receive His pledge?

We should remember and proclaim His death and the shedding of His blood, as He taught us: This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.

16. Why should we remember and proclaim His death?

First, so that we may learn to believe that no creature could make satisfaction for our sins. Only Christ, true God and man, could do that.

Second, so we may learn to be horrified by our sins, and to regard them as very serious.

Third, so we may find joy and comfort in Christ alone, and through faith in Him be saved.

17. What motivated Christ to die and make full payment for your sins?

His great love for His Father and for me and other sinners, as it is written in John 14; Romans 5; Galatians 2; and Ephesians 5.

18. Finally, why do you wish to go to the Sacrament?

That I may learn to believe that Christ, out of great love, died for my sin, and also learn from Him to love God and my neighbor.

19. What should admonish and encourage a Christian to receive the Sacrament frequently?

First, both the command and the promise of Christ the Lord. Second, his own pressing need, because of which the command, encouragement, and promise are given.

20. But what should you do if you are not aware of this need and have no hunger and thirst for the Sacrament?

To such a person no better advice can be given than this: first, he should touch his body to see if he still has flesh and blood. Then he should believe what the Scriptures say of it in Galatians 5 and Romans 7.

Second, he should look around to see whether he is still in the world, and remember that there will be no lack of sin and trouble, as the Scriptures say in John 15–16 and in 1 John 2 and 5.

Third, he will certainly have the devil also around him, who with his lying and murdering day and night will let him have no peace, within or without, as the Scriptures picture him in John 8 and 16; 1 Peter 5; Ephesians 6; and 2 Timothy 2.

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