

## A Word from Pastor Schielke

"Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. 9 For the commandments, 'You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,' and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' 10 Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." (Romans 13:8-10).

Valentine's Day is a celebration of "love," but what does that love actually look like? Today, slogans like "Love is Love" or "Love wins" are everywhere in our culture. But what is Biblical love?

Love begins with and is defined by God, for "God is love" (1 John 4:8). This does not mean our own perceptions of love define God; rather, God defines what love truly is. First and foremost, love is personified in Jesus Christ. As the hymn reminds us, "Love was born at Christmas" (LW 36).

Jesus is love, and He demonstrates it by dying for our sins: "Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for

his friends" (John 15:13). In His great love, He was unwilling to leave us to wallow in our sin which is a path that leads to eternal death. Instead, He died to redeem us.

Our love for one another ought to reflect that divine love. True love does not leave others to perish in their sin. If someone were in physical danger, say from an approaching wildfire, the loving thing to do would be to warn them. Likewise, when someone we care about puts their soul in danger through ungodly behavior, the loving response is to speak up. Everyone needs to hear the call to repentance and the promise of forgiveness in Christ. As St. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 13:6, "[Love] does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth."

Since God is love and His Law reflects His nature, His commandments must shape our understanding of love. Our love should be "commandment-shaped." Paul notes that "love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom 13:10). Therefore, violating a commandment in the name of "love" is not love at all. If someone commits a sexual sin because they are "in

love," it is not actually loving when the sixth commandment is broken. If someone kills another person who is suffering, even at the sufferer's request, they violate the Fifth Commandment; it is not an act of love. If I choose "me time" on Sunday morning as an act of "self-love" instead of attending church, I am not truly loving myself. In reality, receiving Jesus' gifts in keeping with the Third Commandment is the greatest act of self-love possible.

We cannot pit worldly concepts of love against the Ten Commandments. Jesus' death atones for all our sins, and as the faithful, we are called to rejoice in that gift by living lives of love toward God and neighbor, a love shaped by God Himself as revealed in His Word. May our interactions with one another be a reflection of the great love God has shown us in Christ.



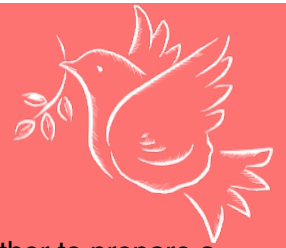
Transfiguration Sunday

**Transfiguration Sunday** - February 1 is Transfiguration Sunday, the Last Sunday of Epiphany before the beginning of the Lenten season. It commemorates when Jesus Christ went up on the mount to meet with Moses and Elijah, and His glory was shown to Peter, James, and John.

**Ash Wednesday** - Lent begins on Wednesday, February 18, with Ash Wednesday. During the Lenten season, we focus on our sins and repent of them as we look towards Jesus' trial, punishment, and death for our sins as the Lamb of God who was sacrificed for us.

"But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."  
**1 Corinthians 15:57**

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**The Smalcald Articles** - On December 11, 1536, John Frederick commissioned Martin Luther to prepare a statement of faith in the form of confessional articles, The Smalcald Articles (SA), for presentation to a meeting of Lutheran theologians and lay leaders on February 7, 1537, in Smalcald, Germany. While working on the SA, on December 18, Luther became seriously ill and was convinced he was near death. The SA were considered Luther's "last will and testament." Over the next months, you will find the articles of the Smalcald Articles in our newsletter. It's good for all of us to have at least some familiarity with this important doctrinal statement.

#### Article IV: Of the Papacy - Part 1

<sup>8</sup> For since men would have to be subject to this head, not from God's command, but from their personal good pleasure, it would easily and in a short time be despised, and at last retain no member; neither would it have to be forever confined to Rome or any other place, but it might be wherever and in whatever church God would grant a man fit for the [taking upon him such a great] office. Oh, the complicated and confused state of affairs [perplexity] that would result!

<sup>9</sup> Therefore the Church can never be better governed and preserved than if we all live under one head, Christ, and all the bishops equal in office (although they be unequal in gifts), be diligently joined in unity of doctrine, faith, Sacraments, prayer, and works of love, etc., as St. Jerome writes that the priests at Alexandria together and in common governed the churches, as did also the apostles, and afterwards all bishops throughout all Christendom, until the Pope raised his head above all.

<sup>10</sup> This teaching shows forcefully that the Pope is the very Antichrist, who has exalted himself above, and opposed himself against Christ because he will not permit Christians to be saved without his power, which, nevertheless, is nothing, and is neither ordained nor commanded by God. <sup>11</sup> This is, properly speaking to *exalt himself above all that is called God* as Paul says, 2 Thess. 2:4. Even the Turks or the Tartars, great enemies of Christians as they are, do not do this, but they allow whoever wishes to believe in Christ, and take bodily tribute and obedience from Christians.

<sup>12</sup> The Pope, however, prohibits this faith, saying that to be saved a person must obey him. This we are unwilling to do, even though on this account we must die in God's name. <sup>13</sup> This all proceeds from the fact that the Pope has wished to be called the supreme head of the Christian Church by divine right. Accordingly he had to make himself equal and superior to Christ, and had to cause himself to be proclaimed the head and then the lord of the Church, and finally of the whole world, and simply God on earth, until he has dared to issue commands even to the angels in heaven. <sup>14</sup> And when we distinguish the Pope's teaching from, or measure and hold it against, Holy Scripture, it is found [it appears plainly] that the Pope's teaching, where it is best, has been taken from the imperial and heathen law, and treats of political matters and decisions or rights, as the Decretals show; furthermore, it teaches of ceremonies concerning churches, garments, food, persons and [similar] puerile, theatrical and comical things without measure, but in all these things nothing at all of Christ, faith, and the commandments of God. Lastly, it is nothing else than the devil himself, because above and against God he urges [and disseminates] his [papal] falsehoods concerning masses, purgatory, the monastic life, one's own works and [fictitious] divine worship (for this is the very Papacy [upon each of which the Papacy is altogether founded and is standing]), and condemns, murders and tortures all Christians who do not exalt and honor these abominations [of the Pope] above all things. Therefore, just as little as we can worship the devil himself as Lord and God, we can endure his apostle, the Pope, or Antichrist, in his rule as head or lord. For to lie and to kill, and to destroy body and soul eternally, that is wherein his papal government really consists, as I have very clearly shown in many books.

<sup>15</sup> In these four articles they will have enough to condemn in the Council. For they cannot and will not concede us even the least point in one of these articles. Of this we should be certain, and animate ourselves with [be forewarned and made firm in] the hope that Christ, our Lord, has attacked His adversary, and he will press the attack home [pursue and destroy him] both by His Spirit and coming. Amen.

<sup>16</sup> For in the Council we will stand not before the Emperor or the political magistrate, as at Augsburg (where the Emperor published a most gracious edict, and caused matters to be heard kindly [and dispassionately]), but [we will appear] before the Pope and devil himself, who intends to listen to nothing, but merely [when the case has been publicly announced] to condemn, to murder and to force us to idolatry. Therefore we ought not here to kiss his feet, or to say: "Thou art my gracious lord", but as the angel in Zechariah 3:2 said to Satan: *The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan.*

Victory in Christ Lutheran Church  
February 2026

"But thanks be to God, who gives us the  
victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."  
1 Corinthians 15:57



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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Divine Service 10 a.m. Bible Study / Sunday School 11 a.m. Lunch noon Youth Confirmation 12:30 p.m. Voters' Meeting 12:45 p.m.	2 The Purification of Mary and the Presentation of Our Lord	3 Women's Bible Study 1:00 p.m.	4	5	6	7
8 Divine Service 10 a.m. Bible Study / Sunday School 11 a.m. Lunch noon Youth Confirmation 12:30 p.m.	9	10 Women's Bible Study 1:00 p.m.	11	12	13	14 Valentine's Day  Men's Bible Study 8:30 a.m.
15 Divine Service 10 a.m. Bible Study / Sunday School 11 a.m. Lunch noon Youth Confirmation 12:30 p.m.	16 Presidents' Day No School	17	18 Women's Bible Study 4:30 p.m. Lenten Dinner 6:00 p.m. Ash Wednesday Service 7:00 p.m.	19	20	21
22 Divine Service 10 a.m. Bible Study / Sunday School 11 a.m. Lunch noon Youth Confirmation 12:30 p.m. Special Voters' Meeting 12:45 p.m.	23	24 St. Matthias, Apostle	25 Women's Bible Study 4:30 p.m. Lenten Dinner 6:00 p.m. Lenten Wednesday Service 7:00 p.m.	26	27	28 Men's Bible Study 8:30 a.m.

## VIC Happenings

**Lenten Services** - Ash Wednesday and Lent begin on February 18. We will be having a meal at 6:00 p.m. followed by worship services at 7:00 p.m. *Renewed in Faith, Hope, and Grace*: Luther's Small Catechism outlines the basics of our Christian faith. Lent is a time of returning to the basics, if you will—confession, absolution, the cross of Jesus. The first three parts of the Catechism teach us the "what" of the Christian faith: what we are, who God is, and what He has done. The last three of the six chief parts teach us the "how" and "where" of the faith—how God works salvation in us, and where we can find His grace and mercy. Our Lenten journey this year is a journey through the Small Catechism. May we find renewed hope and faith in the essentials of what it means to be God's children.

- \* 2/18 Ash Wednesday - The 10 commandments
- \* 2/25 - Creed
- \* 3/4 - The Lord's Prayer
- \* 3/11 - Baptism
- \* 3/18 - Confession and Absolution
- \* 3/25 - The Sacrament of the Altar
- \* 4/2 Maundy Thursday – Christian Questions and Answers
- \* 4/3 Good Friday – Law and Gospel Meet

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**February Birthdays:**

1 Ashton Rodgers

2 Brad Rohloff

2 Jared Rohloff

3 Zoey Richardson

11 Jenny Jones

11 Dave Underwood



14 Angi Haney

16 Tim Schmidt

18 Hailey Richardson

22 Burgandy Knox

24 Suzanne Richardson

**Future Church Cleanings:**

Feb. 14 Hill and Kroeger Families

Mar. 14 Brad Rohloff Family

Feb. 28 Wilson, Schwiesow, and Underwood Families

Mar. 27 -28 Spring Cleanining

**The Bible readings for February and part of March are listed below.**

Feb. 1: Leviticus 1-4

Feb. 15: Numbers 8-10

March 1: Deuteronomy 5-7

Feb. 2: Leviticus 5-7

Feb. 16: Numbers 11-13

March 2: Deuteronomy 8-10

Feb. 3: Leviticus 8-10

Feb. 17: Numbers 14-15

March 3: Deuteronomy 11-13

Feb. 4: Leviticus 11-13

Feb. 18: Numbers 16-17

March 4: Deuteronomy 14-16

Feb. 5: Leviticus 14-15

Feb. 19: Numbers 18-20

March 5: Deuteronomy 17-20

Feb. 6: Leviticus 16-18

Feb. 20: Numbers 21-22

March 6: Deuteronomy 21-23

Feb. 7: Leviticus 19-21

Feb. 21: Numbers 23-25

March 7: Deuteronomy 24-27

Feb. 8: Leviticus 22-23

Feb. 22: Numbers 26-27

March 8: Deuteronomy 28-29

Feb. 9: Leviticus 24-25

Feb. 23: Numbers 28-30

March 9: Deuteronomy 30-31

Feb. 10: Leviticus 26-27

Feb. 24: Numbers 31-32

March 10: Deuteronomy 32-34

Feb. 11: Numbers 1-2

Feb. 25: Numbers 33-34

March 11: Joshua 1-4

Feb. 12: Numbers 3-4

Feb. 26: Numbers 35-36

March 12: Joshua 5-8

Feb. 13: Numbers 5-6

Feb. 27: Deuteronomy 1-2

March 13: Joshua 9-11

Feb. 14: Numbers 7

Feb. 28: Deuteronomy 3-4

March 14: Joshua 12-15

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## LCMS Stewardship Ministry

### Table of Duties: The Forgotten Stewardship Tool

Luther's Small Catechism is a magnificent tool. Joined with a well-used copy of the Holy Scriptures and an orthodox hymnal, and the Christian is well equipped to live a life of faithfulness to the Lord and service to the neighbor. First in German and now in English and just about any language known to man, this handy masterpiece has introduced generations of people to the central doctrine of justification by grace, through faith, on account of Jesus Christ. The Six Chief Parts have proven to be a faithful framework for a clear confession of the truth of the Gospel for nearly five hundred years!

But more than a textbook, the Small Catechism also serves well as a handbook for Christian living. As a part of its treasure, there is an element that teaches an extraordinarily strong message of stewardship. That hidden treasure that needs to be rediscovered is called the Table of Duties.

The Table of Duties is really nothing more than a categorized gathering of Bible verses. These verses are set apart for "various holy orders and positions, admonishing them about their duties and responsibilities." Addressing pastors and people, government and citizens, husbands, wives, children, youth, workers and so many more, it very clearly lays out what faithful stewardship looks like. Even better, these assembled passages teach one important truth: we are stewards of one another!

The Table is much more than a "how-to" tool; it also lays out the interconnectedness that exists within the body of Christ. Pastors are described by what they are to be as stewards of the Word. 1 Timothy 3 highlights the characteristics of a faithful pastor. Even more, Titus 1 highlights the need for the pastor to be faithful for the sake of those under his care.

Those who hear the faithful preaching of the pastor are stewards of the pastor as well. 1 Corinthians 9 talks about the need for the people to support the livelihood of the pastor. Galatians 6 talks about how the hearers share in the good things that the pastor teaches. 1 Timothy 6 talks about the honor that is owed to the pastor, not because of WHO he is, but rather WHAT he is teaching! Hebrews 13 shows the impact of this stewardship on the pastor, that they perform their duties with joy. Joyful pastors and people are always going to be better stewards of the Gospel!

Outside the church this interdependent stewardship is on display as well. Romans 13 highlights the respect necessary for the governing authorities. As citizens, the faithful steward is called to pay taxes (Matthew 22), pray for their leaders (1 Timothy 2) and that they should be ready to serve in the civil realm (Titus 3), because they are in these positions by God's direction (1 Peter 2).

These steward duties are in the home too! 1 Peter 3 and Colossians 3 shape the husband steward. Ephesians 5 and 1 Peter 3 shape the wife steward. Ephesians 6 form parental stewards and child stewards.

The Table of Duties is a wonderful place for the individual steward to learn how much our stewardship is more than just a "me and Jesus thing!" In fact, it ends with these words: "Let each his lesson learn with care, and all the household well share fare." This is interdependent stewardship on clear display. As each learns stewardship in this way, the more faithful we will be as a family, congregations, communities and the church at large.

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