



Victory in Christ Lutheran Church

August
2025



A Word from Pastor Schielke

Where is “The Church”?

Isn't the answer to the question in the title, 508 Main St. in Newark? In English, we use the word 'church' in a variety of ways. A church certainly is a building, a building where churchy things happen. This is probably the most common understanding by the public; when you speak about going to church, you mean a building. We may refer to “the church” as all those throughout the world and even throughout time, who confess Jesus as their Savior. The Old Testament church consists of all the patriarchs, prophets, and people who had faith in the promises of God. The New Testament also describes the entire church as the bride of Christ (e.g. Eph. 5:25-27, 32), or the body of Christ (e.g. 1 Cor. 12:27), as well as imagery like the family of God, God's flock, a vineyard, or God's kingdom.

However, we also use the word church to refer to a local congregation of Christians. We might say, “Victory in Christ is my church,” and by that we mean all the people who claim Victory in Christ as their church home. The word in the New Testament typically translated as 'church' is 'ecclesia.' It literally means

assembly. Of course, the earliest Christians didn't have a building that they would call church. The early church worshipped in the Jewish synagogues and even in the temple for a while. A little later it was more common to meet in the homes of the parishioners. These small house-churches may even be referred to by the name of the people in whose home they met as for example in 1 Corinthians 16:19, “Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord.”

St. Paul often uses the word church in the plural as for example in the book of Galatians, in which he addresses the letter to “the churches of Galatia,” since the region of Galatia had several groups of Christians, local congregations, meeting in different places. The key point here is that the church is an assembly, an assembly of believers in Christ. The notion that you would be part of the church without meeting together with other Christians is unknown in the New Testament.

The Lutheran Confessions specifically address the question of where the Church is found. The

Augsburg Confession states, “The Church is the congregation of saints, in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments are rightly administered.” Notice here that the definition is referring to a local 'congregation.' But not any gathering of people qualifies as the church. It is a gathering of believers where the Word of God is properly taught, and the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper are properly administered.

So, you are all members of the body of Christ, the church. You are a part of the universal church, that collection of all believers in Christ from all over the world from all times. You are members of a particular local congregation, also called church. Our local congregation, Victory in Christ, meets in a particular church building located in Newark, Texas.

Next month we will consider what it means to be a member of a local congregation.

"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 Epitome of the Formula of Concord in our newsletter. It's good for all of us to have at least some familiarity with this important doctrinal statement.

Preface

1 Since Pope Paul III convoked a Council last year, to assemble at Mantua about Whitsuntide, and afterwards transferred it from Mantua, so that it is not yet known where he will or can fix it, and we on our part either had to expect that we would be summoned also to the Council or [to fear that we would] be condemned unsummoned, I was directed to compile and collect the articles of our doctrine [in order that it might be plain] in case of deliberation as to what and how far we would be both willing and able to yield to the Papists, and in what points we intended to persevere and abide to the end.

2 I have accordingly compiled these articles and presented them to our side. They have also been accepted and unanimously confessed by our side, and it has been resolved that, in case the Pope with his adherents should ever be so bold as seriously and in good faith, without lying and cheating, to hold a truly free [legitimate] Christian Council (as, indeed, he would be in duty bound to do), they be publicly delivered in order to set forth the Confession of our Faith.

3 But though the Romish court is so dreadfully afraid of a free Christian Council, and shuns the light so shamefully, that it has [entirely] removed, even from those who are on its side, the hope that it will ever permit a free Council, much less that it will itself hold one, whereat, as is just, they [many Papists] are greatly offended and have no little trouble on that account [are disgusted with this negligence of the Pope], since they notice thereby that the Pope would rather see all Christendom perish and all souls damned than suffer either himself or his adherents to be reformed even a little, and his [their] tyranny to be limited, nevertheless I have determined meanwhile to publish these articles in plain print, so that, should I die before there would be a Council (as I fully expect and hope, because the knaves who flee the light and shun the day take such wretched pains to delay and hinder the Council), those who live and remain after me may have my testimony and confession to produce, in addition to the Confession which I have issued previously, whereby up to this time I have abided, and, by God's grace, will abide.

4 For what shall I say? How shall I complain? I am still living, writing, preaching, and lecturing daily; [and] yet there are found such spiteful men, not only among the adversaries, but also false brethren that profess to be on our side, as dare to cite my writings and doctrine directly against myself, and let me look on and listen, although they know well that I teach otherwise, and as wish to adorn their venom with my labor, and under my name to [deceive and] mislead the poor people. [Good God!] Alas! what first will happen when I am dead?

5 Indeed, I ought to reply to everything while I am still living. But, again, how can I alone stop all the mouths of the devil? especially of those (as they all are poisoned) who will not hear or notice what we write, but solely exercise themselves with all diligence how they may most shamefully pervert and corrupt our word in every letter. These I let the devil answer, or at last God's wrath, as they deserve. 6 I often think of the good Gerson, who doubts whether anything good should be [written and] published. If it is not done, many souls are neglected who could be delivered; but if it is done, the devil is there with malignant, villainous tongues without number which envenom and pervert everything, so that nevertheless the fruit [the usefulness of the writings] is prevented. 7 Yet what they gain thereby is manifest. For while they have lied so shamefully against us and by means of lies wished to retain the people, God has constantly advanced His work, and been making their following ever smaller and ours greater, and by their lies has caused and still causes them to be brought to shame.

8 I must tell a story. There was a doctor sent here to Wittenberg from France, who said publicly before us that his king was sure and more than sure, that among us there is no church, no magistrate, no married life, but all live promiscuously as cattle, and each one does as he pleases. 9 Imagine now, how will those who by their writings have instilled such gross lies into the king and other countries as the pure truth, look at us on that day before the judgment-seat of Christ? Christ, the Lord and Judge of us all, knows well that they lie and have [always] lied, His sentence they in turn, must hear; that I know certainly. God convert to repentance those who can be converted! Regarding the rest it will be said, Woe, and, alas! eternally.

10 But to return to the subject. I verily desire to see a truly Christian Council [assembled some time], in order that many matters and persons might be helped. Not that we need it, for our churches are now, through God's grace, so enlightened and equipped with the pure Word and right use of the Sacraments, with knowledge of the various callings and of right works, that we on our part ask for no Council, and on such points have nothing better to hope or expect from a Council. But we see in the bishoprics everywhere so many parishes vacant and desolate that one's heart would break, and yet neither the bishops nor canons care how the poor people live or die, for whom nevertheless Christ has died, and who are not permitted to hear Him speak with them as the true Shepherd with His sheep. 11 This causes me to shudder and fear that at some time He may send a council of angels upon Germany utterly destroying us, like Sodom and Gomorrah, because we so wantonly mock Him with the Council.

12 Besides such necessary ecclesiastical affairs, there would be also in the political estate innumerable matters of great importance to improve. There is the disagreement between the princes and the states; usury and avarice have burst in like a flood, and have become lawful [are defended with a show of right]; wantonness, lewdness, extravagance in dress, gluttony, gambling, idle display, with all kinds of bad habits and wickedness, insubordination of subjects, of domestics and laborers, of every trade, also the exactions [and most exorbitant selling prices] of the peasants (and who can enumerate all?) have so increased that they cannot be rectified by ten Councils and twenty Diets. 13 If such chief matters of the spiritual and worldly estates as are contrary to God would be considered in the Council, they would have all hands so full that the child's play and absurdity of long gowns [official insignia], large tonsures, broad cinctures [or sashes], bishops' or cardinals' hats or maces, and like jugglery would in the mean time be forgotten. If we first had performed God's command and order in the spiritual and secular estate, we would find time enough to reform food, clothing, tonsures, and surplices. But if we want to swallow such

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 Men's Bible Study 8:30 a.m.
3 Divine Service 10 a.m Bible Study / Sunday School 11 a.m. Lunch noon Nomination Committee	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 Divine Service 10 a.m Bible Study / Sunday School 11 a.m. Lunch noon	11	12 Women's Bible Study 1:00 p.m.	13	14	15	16 Men's Bible Study 8:30 a.m.
17 Divine Service 10 a.m Bible Study / Sunday School 11 a.m. Lunch noon	18	19 Women's Bible Study 1:00 p.m.	20	21	22	23
24 Divine Service 10 a.m Bible Study / Sunday School 11 a.m. Lunch noon Nomination Committee	25	26 Women's Bible Study 1:00 p.m.	27	28	29	30
31 Divine Service 10 a.m Bible Study / Sunday School 11 a.m. Lunch at Pastor's House						

Future Events:

Sunday, Aug. 31 Lunch/Pool Party at the Schielke residence

Tuesday, Sept. 2 First Day of School - Chapel at 8:30 a.m.

Thursday, Sept. 4 Spirit Night at Chick-fil-A at 2401 N. Tarrant Pkwy. from 3-9 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 20 Advanced Giving and Estate Issues Financial Seminar 10 a.m.

Sunday, Oct. 5 15th Anniversary Service and Dinner 4 p.m.

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August Birthdays:

11 Philip Schielke
11 Johnny Schober
20 James Richardson
21 Gracelynn Elledge
21 Haevynn Elledge
23 Crystal Higby
24 Doug Rohloff
30 Kyle Rohloff



August Anniversaries:

7 Brad and Lori Rohloff
18 Doug and Ruth Rohloff
21 Johnny and Donna Schober

Future Church Cleanings:

Aug. 2 Haney and Knox
Aug. 16 Hill
Aug. 30 Kroeger, McClain,
Wilson, and Schwiesow
Sept. 13 Brad Rohloff
Sept. 27 Schielke

The Bible readings for August and part of September are listed below.

Aug. 1: Isa. 18-22	Aug. 15: Jer. 10-13	Aug. 29: Lam. 3-5
Aug. 2: Isa. 23-27	Aug. 16: Jer. 14-17	Aug. 30: Ezek. 1-4
Aug. 3: Isa. 28-30	Aug. 17: Jer. 18-22	Aug. 31: Ezek. 5-8
Aug. 4: Isa. 31-35	Aug. 18: Jer. 23-25	Sept. 1: Ezek. 9-12
Aug. 5: Isa. 36-41	Aug. 19: Jer. 26-29	Sept. 2: Ezek. 13-15
Aug. 6: Isa. 42-44	Aug. 20: Jer. 30-31	Sept. 3: Ezek. 16-17
Aug. 7: Isa. 45-48	Aug. 21: Jer. 32-34	Sept. 4: Ezek. 18-20
Aug. 8: Isa. 49-53	Aug. 22: Jer. 35-37	Sept. 5: Ezek. 21-22
Aug. 9: Isa. 54-58	Aug. 23: Jer. 38-41	Sept. 6: Ezek. 23-24
Aug. 10: Isa. 59-63	Aug. 24: Jer. 42-45	Sept. 7: Ezek. 25-27
Aug. 11: Isa. 64-66	Aug. 25: Jer. 46-48	Sept. 8: Ezek. 28-30
Aug. 12: Jer. 1-3	Aug. 26: Jer. 49-50	Sept. 9: Ezek. 31-33
Aug. 13: Jer. 4-6	Aug. 27: Jer. 51-52	Sept. 10: Ezek. 34-36
Aug. 14: Jer. 7-9	Aug. 28: Lam. 1-2	Sept. 11: Ezek. 37-39

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The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

LCMS Stewardship Ministry – lcms.org/stewardship

Newsletter Article – August 2025

Jesus' transforming presence

"But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, 'Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.' Jesus said to him, 'Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost'" (Luke 19:8-10 NIV).

Who knew, all those kids sitting in Sunday school were getting a lesson in stewardship! Generations of children have very often heard lessons based on the familiar account of Zacchaeus. The diminutive tax collector's curiosity surrounding the person and ministry of Jesus is what the Holy Spirit used to set him on a collision course for a total stewardship transformation. This transformation, according to the text of Luke 19, is not just about this life. This stewardship transformation is about eternity as well!

Remember the story: Zacchaeus was a tax collector. Do not think of friendly neighborhood IRS agents. This was more like a toll booth operator, but the governing authorities did not set the toll. They would contract men to staff roadside booths and tax the commerce that was passing along the road. This was an enterprise full of greed and graft. The tax collectors would take as much as they could and only pass on a portion to the government. The rest did not go into the community chest either! It went into the pocket of the tax collector.

This is why the people had such disdain for Jewish tax collectors. They were seen as both crooks and traitors. They were crooks in that they extorted their compatriots and others in the toll process. But worse, they were seen as traitors because their efforts supported the occupying Roman authorities. That is the real reason that the people would not make way so that short Zacchaeus could see Jesus.

For this reason, he runs ahead and climbs a tree. He had heard all the stories. He wanted to see this Jesus with his own eyes. Mercy is on display. This hated crook and traitor gets a direct audience with Jesus — at Jesus' own request! Jesus invites Himself to Zacchaeus' house. This is where the transformation is about to take place!

Notice how Jesus does it. He does not preach a three-week sermon series, nor does He ask Zacchaeus to make a pledge. There is nothing programmatic about Jesus' approach. But Zacchaeus is completely transformed! The transforming force is the very presence of Jesus! Direct time with Jesus takes a crooked, selfish, criminal and makes him the most faithful steward.

This new life of stewardship is marked by the promises made. First, he gives half of his ill-gotten gains to the poor. These are people whom he would not have defrauded at all! Yet, after spending time with Jesus, they are His first concern. Only after this does he double the requirement of the Levitical law on fraud. And what does Jesus say is the result? Salvation!

Doing the acts of stewardship does not save. Rather, the faith in Jesus that is created by the Holy Spirit is what saves! This is critical for us to confess. Failed stewardship can and will cut you off from God. The only antidote for failed stewardship is the presence of Jesus.

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We do not need to run ahead and climb a tree for this presence of Jesus. He makes Himself available to us every week in the Divine Service. He speaks His Word of invitation to us in the pages of Holy Scripture. This, and this alone, transforms us from sinner to saint, from owner to steward of all that belongs to the Lord.

Do you want to become a more faithful steward? Spend more time with Jesus. Make the Divine Service a weekly priority. Feast on Christ's body and blood weekly! This is the great gift that brings salvation from God's House to yours!

(Continued Smalcald Articles from page 2)

camels, and, instead, strain at gnats, let the beams stand and judge the motes, we also might indeed be satisfied with the Council.

14 Therefore I have presented few articles; for we have without this so many commands of God to observe in the Church, the state, and the family that we can never fulfil them. What, then, is the use, or what does it profit that many decrees and statutes thereon are made in the Council, especially when these chief matters commanded of God are neither regarded nor observed? Just as though He were bound to honor our jugglery as a reward of our treading His solemn commandments under foot. But our sins weigh upon us and cause God not to be gracious to us; for we do not repent, and, besides, wish to defend every abomination.

15 O Lord Jesus Christ, do Thou Thyself convoke a Council, and deliver Thy servants by Thy glorious advent! The Pope and his adherents are done for; they will have none of Thee. Do Thou, then, help us, who are poor and needy, who sigh to Thee, and beseech Thee earnestly, according to the grace which Thou hast given us, through Thy Holy Ghost, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Father, blessed forever. Amen.



Save the Date

OCTOBER 5, 2025

Thanks be to God! Victory in Christ
Lutheran Church and School is celebrating
15 years of God's grace!

INVITATION TO FOLLOW

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