



Victory in Christ Lutheran Church

September
2025



A Word from Pastor Schielke

Church Membership, Part 1

Last month we considered the different meanings of the word “church.” The word can indicate the whole collection of God’s people for all times and in all places. It can specify a particular building where worship services are being held. It may refer to an entire church body or denomination, like the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod. Finally, it can mean the people of God who gather to meet at a particular place to receive God’s gifts of Word and Sacrament, that is, a local congregation.

We often speak about ‘membership’ in a local congregation. Historically, Christians have chosen to be associated with one particular Christian congregation, typically somewhere reasonably close to where they live. That is, they become a *member* of that church. If you moved out of the area, you would transfer your membership to a new congregation. Some modern-day megachurches aren’t as interested in who their members are but simply how many people come to their services on a Sunday morning, but for us that connection to a particular congregation is vitally important.

We don’t keep track of membership simply for record-keeping or demographic purposes but so we know which persons the congregation and pastor is to be serving.

The word *membership* has many shades of meaning. Family members belong to a family. A Sam’s Club member pays dues in order to shop there. Someone may be a member of a golf club or a frequent flyer program, receiving certain privileges based on membership level. To be a member of any group or organization is to belong, to be identified with it, and to share in both its benefits and responsibilities.

Church membership shares these features but also goes further. To be a member of a congregation means more than being listed on a roll. It means identifying with the people of that congregation, committing to worship and life together, supporting the ministry with your offerings, gifts, and time. It also means placing yourself under the pastoral care, counsel, and spiritual oversight of the

congregation’s pastor and elders and even the other church members. That local congregation becomes your spiritual family. But above all, membership in a congregation means that you agree with what that church teaches and confesses. When you seek a congregation — especially if you move to a new area — the key question is not, “Is the atmosphere friendly? Will there be programs for me or my children? Will there be opportunities for me to be involved?” Those are secondary concerns. The first and most important question is: “Does this congregation faithfully preach Christ and administer His sacraments according to His Word?” All the other blessings of church life — fellowship, friendship, activities — lose their value if God’s Word is not at the center. Next month we will continue looking at what membership in a local congregation means.

"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.

Part I

Treats of the Sublime Articles Concerning the Divine Majesty, as:

- ¹I. That Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three distinct persons in one divine essence and nature, are one God, who has created heaven and earth.
- ²II. That the Father is begotten of no one; the Son of the Father; the Holy Ghost proceeds from Father and Son.
- ³III. That not the Father nor the Holy Ghost but the Son became man.
- ⁴IV. That the Son became man in this manner, that He was conceived, without the cooperation of man, by the Holy Ghost, and was born of the pure, holy [and always] Virgin Mary. Afterwards He suffered, died, was buried, descended to hell, rose from the dead, ascended to heaven, sits at the right hand of God, will come to judge the quick and the dead, etc., as the Creed of the Apostles, as well as that of St. Athanasius, and the Catechism in common use for children, teach.
- ⁵Concerning these articles there is no contention or dispute, since we on both sides confess them. Therefore it is not necessary now to treat further of them.

Part II

Treats of the Articles which Refer to the Office and Work of Jesus Christ, or Our Redemption.

- I. The First and Chief Article
- II. Of the Mass
- Of the Invocation of Saints
- III. Of Chapters and Cloisters
- IV. Of the Papacy

Article I: The First and Chief Article

- ¹That Jesus Christ, our God and Lord, died for our sins, and was raised again for our justification, [Rom. 4:25](#).
- ²And He alone is the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world, [John 1:29](#); and God has laid upon Him the iniquities of us all, [Is. 53:6](#).
- ³Likewise: All have sinned and are justified without merit [freely, and without their own works or merits] by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, in His blood, [Rom. 3:23f](#)
- ⁴Now, since it is necessary to believe this, and it cannot be otherwise acquired or apprehended by any work, law, or merit, it is clear and certain that this faith alone justifies us as St. Paul says, [Rom. 3:28](#): For we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the Law. Likewise 3:26: That He might be just, and the Justifier of him which believeth in Christ.
- ⁵Of this article nothing can be yielded or surrendered [nor can anything be granted or permitted contrary to the same], even though heaven and earth, and whatever will not abide, should sink to ruin. For there is none other name under heaven, given among men whereby we must be saved, says Peter, [Acts 4:12](#). And with His stripes we are healed, [Is. 53:5](#). And upon this article all things depend which we teach and practice in opposition to the Pope, the devil, and the [whole] world. Therefore, we must be sure concerning this doctrine, and not doubt; for otherwise all is lost, and the Pope and devil and all things gain the victory and suit over us.

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 Academy Breakfast 8:30 a.m. Chapel 9 a.m. Women's Bible Study 1:00 p.m.	3	4 Academy Fund Raiser Chick-fil-A 3:00 - 9:00 p.m.	5	6 Men's Bible Study 8:30 a.m.
7 Divine Service 10 a.m Bible Study / Sunday School 11 a.m. Lunch noon Youth Confirmation 12:30 p.m.	8	9 Women's Bible Study 1:00 p.m.	10	11	12	13
14 Divine Service 10 a.m Bible Study / Sunday School 11 a.m. Lunch noon Youth Confirmation 12:30 p.m.	15	16 Women's Bible Study 1:00 p.m.	17	18	19	20 Advanced Giving and Estate Issues Financial Seminar 10 a.m.
21 Divine Service 10 a.m Bible Study / Sunday School 11 a.m. Lunch noon Youth Confirmation 12:30 p.m.	22	23 Women's Bible Study 1:00 p.m.	24	25	26	27
28 Divine Service 10 a.m Bible Study / Sunday School 11 a.m. Lunch noon Youth Confirmation 12:30 p.m. Council Meeting 12:45 p.m.	29	30 Women's Bible Study 1:00 p.m.				

VIC Happenings

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, Sept. 28 Council Meeting

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

Sunday, Oct. 19 Voters' Meeting

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Future Church Cleanings:

Sept. 13 Schielke

Sept. 27 Brad Rohloff

Oct. 11 Schimdt

Oct. 25 Schober



September Birthdays:

2 Dana McClain

3 Scott Rohloff

12 Ruth Rohloff

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

Sept. 1: Ezekiel 9-12

Sept. 2: Ezekiel 13-15

Sept. 3: Ezekiel 16-17

Sept. 4: Ezekiel 18-20

Sept. 5: Ezekiel 21-22

Sept. 6: Ezekiel 23-24

Sept. 7: Ezekiel 25-27

Sept. 8: Ezekiel 28-30

Sept. 9: Ezekiel 31-33

Sept. 10: Ezekiel 34-36

Sept. 11: Ezekiel 37-39

Sept. 12: Ezekiel 40-42

Sept. 13: Ezekiel 43-45

Sept. 14: Ezekiel 46-48

Sept. 15: Daniel 1-3

Sept. 16: Daniel 4-6

Sept. 17: Daniel 7-9

Sept. 18: Daniel 10-12

Sept. 19: Hosea 1-7

Sept. 20: Hosea 8-14

Sept. 21: Joel

Sept. 22: Amos 1-5

Sept. 23: Amos 6-9

Sept. 24: Obadiah & Jonah

Sept. 25: Micah

Sept. 26: Nahum

Sept. 27: Habakkuk &
Zephaniah

Sept. 28: Haggai

Sept. 29: Zechariah 1-7

Sept. 30: Zechariah 8-14

Oct. 1: Malachi

Oct. 2: Matthew 1-4

Oct. 3: Matthew 5-6

Oct. 4: Matthew 7-8

Oct. 5: Matthew 9-10

Oct. 6: Matthew 11-12

Oct. 7: Matthew 13-14

Oct. 8: Matthew 15-17

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The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

LCMS Stewardship Ministry — lcms.org/stewardship

Newsletter Article — September 2025

Work and Keep

“The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it” (Genesis 2:15).

Genesis chapters one and two are familiar to us. We know them best as the Creation Account. Chapter one is where we hear the familiar, “let there be...and there was” directives. Chapter two gives us the account of Adam (the man) being formed from the “Adamah” (the dust) and becoming a living being when he receives the breath of life in his nostrils. Because of this, it would be quite easy to simply lump these two chapters into the category of creation accounts.

But do not be too hasty in this! While these two chapters do faithfully relate to us the account of creation, they also give us the creation of the “office” of steward. The man, created in the image of God in Genesis 1 and formed from the dust in Genesis 2, is created for a distinct purpose. He is created to be a steward of the perfect and beautiful creation that the Lord has made! In fact, this is THE reason that man was made. He — and we — were created in the image of God to be stewards of God’s creation.

This purpose is spelled out in verse 15 of Genesis 2. The steward has one job, with two purposes. It is fitting that in the month that our nation marks Labor Day, we consider the task of steward. The first purpose of the job of steward is to work. The steward is the caretaker of the Garden. Being a steward is work! Before the fall into sin, this was not an onerous task. But it was an active thing.

Imagine being a farmer in the Garden of Eden! Work would be only harvest. No plowing. No planting. No cultivating. No weeding. The perfect garden that the Lord had made would simply produce automatically to provide for man, woman, and all living beings!

But there is a second task in verse fifteen. The word “keep” is not just a synonym for work. This second task is related to defending. This garden, holy by virtue of its being called into existence by a holy God, needed to be defended. Here is where the vocation of steward becomes priestly. The steward was to defend the perfect and holy garden from that which was unholy. Later in the Old Testament, this was the task of the priests in the tabernacle and temple. They were to defend with their lives the Holy of Holies. This too is the labor of stewardship. It is a labor that calls the steward to be willing to put the garden before life!

Stewardship was always work. It only got burdensome after the original steward, Adam, failed to defend the garden from the alien word of the serpent. But this was not a failure of harvest. It was a failure to defend the garden! As a result, all work that followed that failure became burdensome.

The steward failed but was never fired. That is why we have such an issue with stewardship to this day. We continue to live out a pre-fall vocation in a fallen world as failed stewards. That is why we in the church need to be reminded of our vocational call to be stewards. We so easily forget that this world is not ours to do with as we please. Nothing is ours. We are but stewards entrusted with managing the creation for the glory of God and the benefit of the neighbor.

It is a daunting task. But it is the one to which we have been called. We cannot do it on our own. Apart from the grace of God shared with us through Jesus, we would be burdened to the point of temporal and eternal death. But the Holy Spirit calls us by the Gospel! This Gospel connects us to the fertile garden of Christ’s Work on our behalf. Now we are stewards of that grace! The Holy Spirit works this in and through us today and every day.

This is the work of the church. It is also the work of the individual steward. The Lord has placed us in the “garden” with the same twofold purpose: work and keep! Enjoy your labor. For in the Lord, our labor is never in vain!

Estate Planning/Charitable Giving Seminar

Charitable giving and your financial strategy

Whether you have a passion to help a specific charity, or you're beginning to think about leaving a legacy — please join us for the Charitable Giving and Your Financial Strategy presentation.

We hope you and a guest will join us. Let us know by 09/05/2025 if you plan to join us so that we can plan for lunch.

Travis Weaver, Attorney, will provide you and your family with deep legal knowledge and strong personal commitment to meeting your individual needs.

You're invited!
Food will be served.

Date
September 20th
10:00 a.m.

At Victory in Christ Lutheran Church



Victory in Christ Lutheran Church's
15TH ANNIVERSARY

SUN | OCT 5 | 4 PM

Anniversary service at 4 pm
Followed by a hymn sing and German meal

RSVP by Sept. 21 at
VICLC.ORG/15

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