



**JULY  
2019**

Page 1-3 Pastor's Msg.  
Page 3 Stewardship,  
Thank you, 65 Years  
Page 4 LWML

## What We Believe—Augsburg Confession

### **Article II—Original Sin**

*Note: Sin is much more than thinking, saying, and doing things that are wrong. It is a terminal disease. We are all conceived and born in sin; we inherit it from our first parents, Adam and Eve. The disease of sin can be overcome, but only by one medicine: the cleansing, healing, and forgiving blood of God's own Son. By rejecting Pelagian errors in Article II, the Augsburg Confession subtly refers to the Roman view of sin. The Roman Church taught and still teaches that concupiscence (the inborn inclination to sin) is not actually sin. By misdiagnosing our fatal illness, Rome leads people to believe they are able to cooperate with God's grace for salvation. Lutheranism rejects all teachings that imply we are responsible for or contribute to our salvation. (See also Ap II; SA III I; FC Ep I and SD I.)*

Our churches read that since the fall of Adam [Romans 5:12], all who are naturally born are born with sin [Psalm 51:5], that is, without the fear of God, without trust in God, and with the inclination to sin, called concupiscence. Concupiscence is a disease and original vice that is truly sin. It damns and brings eternal death on those who are not born anew through Baptism and the Holy Spirit [John 3:5].

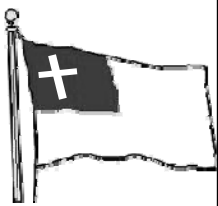
Our churches condemn the Pelagians and others who deny that original depravity is sin, thus obscuring the glory of Christ's merit and benefits. Pelagians argue that a person can be justified before God by his own strength and reason.

### **From the Pastor**

**“[Jesus said,] ‘Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.’” Matthew 11:28-30**

The Third Commandment tells us to remember the Sabbath and keep it holy. But what we must remember is that the Sabbath was made for us, we were not made for the Sabbath. God instituted the Sabbath in order to relieve our suffering and to take away our burden of sin. The Sabbath means rest, and rest means forgiveness. Forgiveness of sins is a lighter burden by far, in fact, it is no burden at all. ... And in Jesus we find our Sabbath rest. That is what He is telling us right here in our text. Jesus is our rest because He is the one who replaces the yoke of the Law with the yoke of the Gospel. He is the one who takes away the burden of sin and death and eternal damnation and replaces it with forgiveness and resurrection and life eternal.

The Third Commandment tells us to remember the Sabbath so that we might not despise preaching or God's Word, but that we would hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it. And we do this because God's Word is the only way in which we can be relieved from our hard yoke and difficult burden. In God's Word we are given the yoke of the



Law which crushes us to the point of despair and drives us to the only place that we can receive reprieve and comfort. In God's Word we are given the Gospel of Jesus, Him crucified for you; His body broken, His blood shed, and it is all for you. In short, in God's Word we receive Jesus.

A yoke ties you to something. Think of a farmer in the field and two oxen yoked together to plow the dirt. They are tied to each other and can do nothing that the other doesn't do. This is what Jesus is talking about when He uses this word "yoke" in our text for today. Initially we are tied to the yoke of the Law which demands perfection. And if we are tied to a yoke that demands perfection then we are tied to the consequences of our imperfection; we are tied to sin and must go where sin leads us, and sin leads us to death.

But in Jesus there is life. In the Gospel of the cross and Christ crucified for the forgiveness of sins there is a burden so light it is really no burden at all. And that is because we are, you are, yoked to Jesus. ... You have been baptized into Christ, and therefore you have been yoked to Him, tied to Him, made to be one with Him. In your baptism, Jesus has taken the yoke of the Law from you, the demand for your perfection and He has replaced it with His perfect righteousness. Around your neck no longer hangs the heavy burden of your sin, but the light and burdenless burden of the forgiveness of sins.

That is the easy yoke of Jesus. Not that everything in life would be peachy and perfect; not that if you only had more faith your life would be easier; not that if you only believed more and prayed harder you would have everything that your heart desired; but instead that you are forgiven. The cross means forgiveness of sins. Jesus means forgiveness of sins and life and salvation. And you are yoked to Christ, tied together with Him. What is His is yours and what was once yours He has taken upon Himself and nailed to the cross. You are one with Him and He is one with you. And because you are yoked with Christ, you know the Father and (better yet) are known by the Father. He gives you everything that is the Son's and all things have been handed over to the Son (victory over sin, death, and the devil). And because they are His, they are yours. They are yours in your baptism, they are yours in Christ, they are yours forever. ... Sins forgiven, eternal life, and salvation: What easier yoke, what lighter burden, could there ever be? ... In the name of Jesus. Amen.

*Rev. Elisha Lietzau*

### **For Further Personal Study**

Meditations on Divine Mercy: A Classical Treasury of Devotional Prayers

By: Johann Gerhard. Translated by: Matthew C. Harrison

### **THE SERIOUSNESS OF ORIGINAL SIN**

O Holy God, just Judge, I know that I am conceived and born in sin (Psalm 51:7). I know that I was formed from unclean seed in my mother's womb (Job 14:4). The poison of sin has so corrupted and spoiled my entire nature that no power of my soul is free from its infection. The holy gift of the divine image entrusted to me by the first parent of our race has perished in me. I now have no ability to initiate a saving recognition, fear, trust, and love of You. I have no ability to obey Your commandments. My will is turned away from the Law. The law of sin in my members is opposed to the law of my mind so my entire nature is corrupt and perverted (Romans 7:23). I am wretched and miserable I feel the assault of sin clinging tenaciously to every part of me. I feel the yoke of perverse desire weighing heavily on me. Although I have been regenerated and renewed in the washing of Baptism through the Spirit of grace (Titus 3:5), I am not totally free from the yoke and captivity of sin. That bitter root lurking in me always strives to shoot forth (Hebrews 12:15). The law of sin that rages in my flesh fights to capture me. I am full of doubt and distrust. I desire my own honor. From my heart come depraved thoughts that defile me in Your sight (Matthew 15:19). From a poisoned spring flow poison streams.

O Lord, do not enter into judgment with Your servant (Psalm 143:2). Instead, be gracious to me according to Your great mercy (Psalm 51:3). The depth of my wretchedness calls out for help to the depth of Your mercy (Psalm 42:8). I place before You the holy conception of Your Son in place of my foul, unclean nature. He was born for me, and He also was conceived for me (Isaiah 9:6). Your Son was made sanctification and righteousness for me (I Corinthians 1:30), and He also was made my purification and purity. Because of Your Son and through Your Son, have mercy on me, O Most High. Do not place the hidden, evil corruption of my nature in the light of Your face (Psalm 90:8). Look to Your beloved Son, my mediator. May His most holy and unpolluted conception be the remedy for my miserable conception. AMEN.

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### **STEWARDSHIP TODAY:**

A stewardship untruth is: My gifts are not important enough to share. This is a lie that the devil wants each steward to believe. Some stewards can sing better than others. Some have gifts of leadership. Some are blessed materially and can be more financially generous than others. Others help in a variety of areas within the church. This is the real truth. Stewards are created to use their gifts for the Gospel.

(from StewardCAST – LCMS)

*Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. (2 Corinthians 9:7 ESV)*

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### **THANK YOU!!!**

*Thank you, Wheat Ridge Lutheran Church. There have been so many members of this church who have helped us to settle here in Wheat Ridge and we thank all of you for your help in moving our boxes in, cleaning our house, supplying us with meals, doing our laundry, and so much more. Thank you also for taking care of our moving expenses. All of this granted to us was a wonderful way to help us feel welcomed.*

—Rev. Eli & Joy Lietzau

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### **For Sixty-Five years**

**God has richly blessed His family of believers at Wheat Ridge Lutheran Church**

**January 1954:**

#### **A MONTH OF BEGINNINGS**

**January 3 – Pastor Charles E. Wedig was installed as the first pastor of the newly formed congregation at 8600 W. 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Wheat Ridge. The installation service was held at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Lakewood.**

**January 10 – The first “official” worship service was held in the “chicken coop” that had been renovated and converted into the first sanctuary. The “chicken coop” served as the sanctuary until the third Sunday in November, when a new building was consecrated.**

**January 24 – The congregation voted to adopt the name “Wheat Ridge Lutheran Church”, making this date the actual anniversary of the church.**

**Wheat Ridge Evangelical Lutheran Church officially became a member of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod at the signing of the Synodical Constitution by Mr. Ralph Besel, our delegate to the Colorado District Convention during the week of August 23, 1954. At the time, worship services were still being held in the “chicken coop” while work continued on the first sanctuary.**



## **“BOLD IN CHRIST”**

Since we have such a hope, we are very bold.  
2 Corinthians 3:12

### **ROCKY MOUNTAIN DISTRICT LWML MITE UPDATE**

**\$44,514 is the amount that has been applied toward our \$82,314 Rocky Mountain District Mission.**

#### **Lutheran Books for Missionaries around the World - \$5,000**

Lutheran Heritage Foundation (LHF) supports the mission of the LCMS – bringing Christ to the lost. We know that in addition to Bibles, pastors use other resources, e.g. Luther’s Catechism, hymnals, and devotionals, to teach the Gospel. Just one example of this is having a translation of A Child’s Garden of Bible Stories. Who doesn’t remember learning some of our Bible stories with this book? And so it is for those who speak another language. Having the opportunity to have books like this in their hands, in their own languages, is invaluable in learning the Gospel. This grant would help LHF supply our missionaries with these Lutheran books translated in the languages of the people they serve.

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### **Mite Sunday, July 14**

**Bring your mites to place in the Mite Box provided to help fund the Mission Grants. We ask for your continued prayers and contributions to the Mite Box. Thank you!**



**Lutheran Women in Mission is for all women. We focus on our mission to assist each woman of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod in affirming her relationship with the Triune God.**

**Members of the Ladies Guild LWML will have an important planning meeting on Saturday, July 13 starting at 9:00 am.** All members and women of the congregation are encouraged to be present.

Also that day we will be hosting the Rocky Mountain District LWML Executive Committee for their meeting. There will be lots of LWML women around, so come and see and hear all the exciting mission work being accomplished.