



AUGUST 2020

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What We Believe

What We Believe—Augsburg Confession

Article XII—Repentance

Note: The Roman teaching about repentance was the spark that ignited the Lutheran Reformation. When Luther learned his congregational members were buying indulgences, hoping to avert God's punishment for sins by paying money, he was incensed. Repentance is not about "paying off" God or making some satisfaction for our sin. Repentance is recognizing the reality of our sin and turning to God in faith for His mercy. God reveals our sin through His Law; He forgives our sin and restores us to a right relationship with Himself through His Gospel. While we affirm there is fruit of repentance, the focus of the Gospel must be clear: our sins are forgiven only because of Christ. Our lives in Christ are lives of repentance, retuning again and again to the fount and source of all mercy, our Savior. Notice that this article rejects any teaching that implies our works of satisfaction are part of true repentance. Article XII strikes a fatal blow at the very heart of the Roman sacramental system. (See also Ap XII; SA III III; Appendix B, Brief Exhortation to Confession.)

Our churches teach that there is forgiveness of sins for those who have fallen after Baptism whenever they are converted. The Church ought to impart Absolution to those who return in repentance [Jeremiah 3:12]. Now, strictly speaking, repentance consists of two parts. One part is contrition, that is, terrors striking the conscience through the knowledge of sin. The other part is faith, which is born of the Gospel [Romans 10:17] or the Absolution and believes that for Christ's sake, sins are forgiven. It comforts the conscience and delivers it from terror. Then good works are bound to follow, which are the fruit of repentance [Galatians 5:22-23].

Our churches condemn the Anabaptists, who deny that those who have once been justified can lose the Holy Spirit. They also condemn those who argue that some may reach such a state of perfection in this life that they cannot sin.

The Novatians also are condemned, who would not absolve those who had fallen after Baptism, though they returned to repentance.

Our churches also reject those who do not teach that forgiveness of sins comes through faith, but command us to merit grace through satisfaction of our own.

They also reject those who teach that it is necessary to perform works of satisfaction, commanded by Church law, in order to remit eternal punishment of the punishment of purgatory.

For Further Personal Study

The Screwtape Letters—C. S. Lewis

My dear Wormwood,

Whichever he adopts, your main task will be the same. Let him begin by treating the Patriotism or the Pacifism as a part of his religion. Then let him, under the influence of partisan spirit, come to regard it as the most important part. Then quietly and gradually nurse him on to the stage at which the religion become merely part of the ‘cause,’ in which Christianity is valued chiefly because of the excellent arguments it can produce in favor of the British war-effort or of Pacifism. The attitude which you want to guard against is that in which temporal affairs are treated primarily as material for obedience. Once you have made the World an end, and faith a means, you have almost won your man, and it makes very little difference what kind of world end he is pursuing. Provided that meetings, pamphlets, policies, movements, causes, and crusades, matter more to him than prayers and sacraments and charity, he is ours—and the more ‘religious’ (on those terms) the more securely ours. I could show you a pretty cageful down here.

Your affectionate uncle
SCREWTAPE

From the Pastor

“The devil made me do it!” this is a saying that we are all familiar with. We know it is a cop-out. It doesn’t fly when our children try to use it; nor should it. We all understand that this is no excuse. And yet we all agree with it to one extent or another. We all believe it to be true, whether we realize it or not. The devil tempts; but he cannot force me to do anything.

The devil’s chief purpose in temptation isn’t to get me to sin. Sure, he puts those things in front of me that are not good. Of course he encourages me to lust and steal and lie and scheme. But I’m pretty good at that all by myself. My sinful eyes are quite competent in finding things that aren’t good for me. My sinful feet are quite good at walking over to those very things. And my sinful hands are quite practiced in picking up those sinful things and engaging in them. ... I don’t really need the devil for this. I am great at it all by myself.

And the devil isn’t really all that concerned about getting me to hate my neighbor and lash out with envy and violence. Again, my sinful flesh is very good at that and so is the world. The world is wonderful at offending me to the point that I am tempted to fall into (and often times do fall into) hate and envy and hostility and violence and vengeance and cursing and slander and pride and everything else I love to do but would deny until the grave.

Yes, the devil tempts me with these things, but he is more than some cartoon in tights sitting on my shoulder. Instead, he is chiefly concerned with the Gospel; or should I say hiding the Gospel. Satan tempts me to despair, not so much that I am a sinner (the Law does that) but that there is no Jesus for me, no forgiveness, no salvation. This is the temptation of the devil: he tries to hide away Jesus.

And this is the danger of his temptation because this temptation can drag us to hell. When the Gospel is hidden then forgiveness is lost and when forgiveness is lost then faith, hope, and love are worthless, Jesus is imaginary, and I am doomed. This is indeed a very real and dangerous temptation and we as Christians should not become apathetic to it.

That is why our Lord teaches us to pray against all of these temptations in the 6th petition of His Prayer. And each Christian would do well to pray this with all sincerity and diligence each and every single day of his life. Not that our prayer would indeed move our Lord toward doing something, but instead to assure us of the promise of God that He will very much lead us away from temptation. We pray with the assurance that what we pray for is already ours. We pray for what our Lord commanded us to pray. We pray for what He already gives us, so that we might know for certain that it is ours.

“So there is no help or comfort except to run here, take hold of the Lord’s Prayer, and speak to God from the heart like this: ‘Dear Father, You have asked me to pray. Don’t let me fall because of temptations.’ Then you will see that the temptations must stop and finally confess themselves conquered. If you try to help yourself by your own thoughts and counsel, you will only make the matter worse and give the devil more space. For he has a serpent’s head [Revelation 12:9]. If it finds an opening into which it can slip, the whole body will follow without stopping. But prayer can prevent him and drive him back.” (Large Catechism: The Lord’s Prayer/The Sixth Petition) Why? Because the Lord has promised to give us all good things. What is more, nothing and no one (Satan included) can snatch us away from His hand.

In the Name of Jesus,
Rev. Eli



Lutheran Women in Mission

“Bold in Christ”

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

Welcome to all women of the congregation!

LWML Mission Statement

The mission of the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League is to assist each woman of the Lutheran Church -

In Mission - Any woman of the church can be a part of LWML. If she is in the Word and in service, she is already practicing the goals of the LWML.

To Women - The LWML provides opportunities for personal spiritual growth, a richer prayer life, and retreating into the Word of God.

And Through Women - Women are challenged in the LWML through Bible study and enrichment training and opportunities to use their God-given talents and gifts.

Serving in Joy - In the LWML, women are encouraged to seek out and serve the people of their communities - and the world.

LWML PLANNING MEETING

Saturday, August 8 at 9:00 am.

Join the LWML members as we make plans for our coming year 2020-2021. All ladies are invited to attend, and help take part in “Serving the Lord with Gladness.”

Mite Offerings During the Pandemic

During the first half of the 2019-2021 biennium, supporters of Lutheran Women’s Missionary League (LWML) gave graciously. As of May 30, 2020, offerings of \$1,245,103.37 were received with \$854,896.63 remaining to meet the LWML mission goal of \$2.1 million by March 31, 2021.

With the cancellations of group activities, zone gatherings, and district conventions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, LWML anticipated a possible decline in mite offerings and devotions. They have dropped from \$91,139 in February to \$58,367 in May. By the grace of God, the LWML will continue making a difference in the lives of many who are touched by our mission grants. Wheat Ridge Women in Mission will continue to collect mites one Sunday each month or you can bring any time and place your mites in the Mite Box in the narthex. Thank you for sharing your blessings with others.

You Can Help Meet this Goal MITE SUNDAY - August 16

Voter's Meeting - Update

At the most recent Voter's Meeting held on November 24, 2019, a question was fielded regarding budget line item 430 for "Missions" within the Stewardship Budget. Specifically, this question was seeking information as follows: *"Of the \$12,000 that Wheat Ridge Evangelical Lutheran Church provides to the Rocky Mountain District each year, how is that money used? And specifically, how is that money used for mission work?"*

Just before the end of the calendar year, we posed that question to the district office and received the following response in its entirety and verbatim. Although the values provided in the response are for 2019 District-wide receipts, you can apply them in proportion to the contributions made by our Congregation.

From: Monique Hjalmsquist <Monique@rm.lcms.org>
Date: 1/2/20 10:36 AM (GMT-07:00)
To: dmaag
Subject: Info RM District Contributions

Good morning,

In general, 2019 congregational contributions received were allocated by the District Board of Directors as follows:

\$ 40,000 Ysleta/San Pablo Mission support
\$ 45,000 Support Campus Ministry/ University Lutheran Chapel- Boulder
\$ 8,000 Pakistani Ministry
\$ 65,000 Cordero de Dios/Hispanic Ministry
\$ 10K- 50K RMD Church Worker Support/In crisis
\$ 189,000 Mission Offerings to Synod (21%)
\$ 155,000 General operations (equipment, vehicles, travel, insurance, building maintenance, utilities, postage, legal services, supplies, etc)

3 Full-time workers; District President, Congregational Services Executive, and an Administrative Assistant (travel, salary & benefits for each)(please note that two full-time positions, potential vehicle purchase, insurance and moving are yet to be filled, but were in the 2019 budget)

I pray this information is helpful. If you would like something not provided above, please send an email to Pastor Albers at: Paul.albers@rm.lcms.org as he is best able to add to the information he provided above.

A blessed New Year!

Monique Hjalmsquist

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