

# ***St. Stephen Lutheran Church***

***West & East Bay, Central Valley, and Southern California***

Member congregations of the Church of the Lutheran Confession (clclutheran.org)

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St. Stephen Lutheran School Staff: Isaac & Mikkela Schmitt (Teachers),  
Julia Bernthal (Administrator), Pastor Luke Bernthal (Principal)

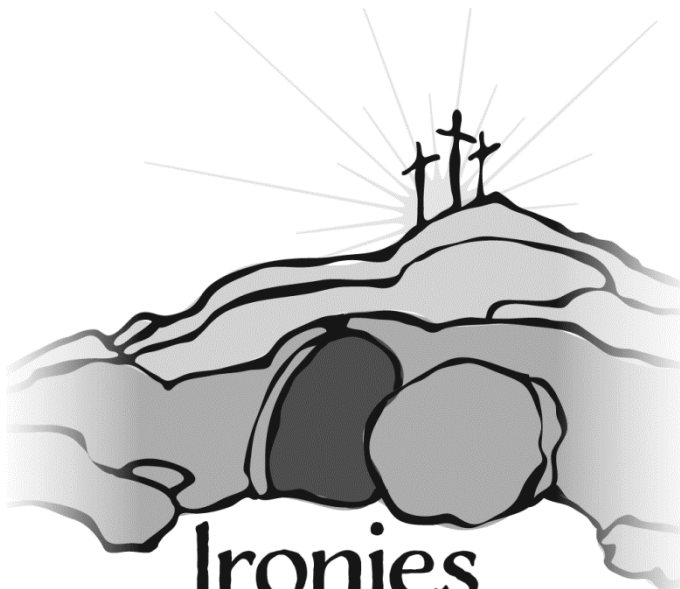
**School Office: (650) 961-2071**

**School Website: ssls.org**



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**Third Sunday in Lent – March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024**



**Ironies  
of the Passion**

✠ Preparation for Worship: Read Psalm 25 (Lutheran Service Book or Pew Bible) ✠

**Opening Hymn: 429** (tune of LSB 425) ***We Sing the Praise of Him Who Died***

- 1** *We sing the praise of Him who died, Of Him who died upon the cross.  
The sinner's hope let all deride; For this we count the world but loss.*
- 2** *Inscribed upon the cross we see In shining letters, "God is love."  
He bears our sins upon the tree; He brings us mercy from above.*
- 3** *The cross! It takes our guilt away; It holds the fainting spirit up;  
It cheers with hope the gloomy day And sweetens ev'ry bitter cup.*
- 4** *It makes the coward spirit brave And nerves the feeble arm for fight;  
It takes the terror from the grave And gilds the bed of death with light;*
- 5** *The balm of life, the cure of woe, The measure and the pledge of love,  
The sinner's refuge here below, The angels' theme in heav'n above.*
- 6** *To Christ, who won for sinners grace By bitter grief and anguish sore,  
Be praise from all the ransomed race Forever and forevermore.*

Text (sts. 1–5): Thomas Kelly, 1769–1855; (st. 6): Hymns Ancient and Modern, 1861  
Text: Public domain

**THE INVOCATION**

*We invoke ("call upon") the name of the one true God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.  
(TLH, page 15)*

- P** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**G** Amen.

**THE CONFESSION OF SINS**

*We come before our Holy God recognizing that we are sinful and daily need His forgiveness.*

- P** Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God, our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

**P** Our help is in the name of the Lord.

**C** Who made heaven and earth.

**P** I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord.

**C** And Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.

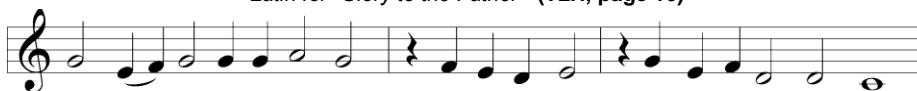
**C** O almighty God, merciful Father, I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto Thee all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended Thee and justly deserved Thy temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray Thee of Thy boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Thy beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.

**P** Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and by the authority and command of our Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

### **THE GLORIA PATRI**

*Latin for "Glory to the Father" (TLH, page 16)*



**C** Glo - ry be to the Fa - ther and to the Son and to the Ho - ly Ghost;



as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now, and ev - er shall be, world with - out end. A - men.

### **THE SALUTATION** *(Greeting)*

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** And with thy spirit.

## **THE COLLECT FOR THE DAY**

*The main thoughts for the day are "collected" together in this prayer.*

**P** O God, compassionate Father and Friend, remember not our sins but rather remember your love and mercy. Relieve our distress and satisfy us with eternal peace through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** **Amen.**

### **Scripture Reading**

### **THE PASSION HISTORY OF CHRIST - Part 4**

But the Jews were the more fierce, saying, "He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee to this place."

When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked if the Man were a Galilean. And as soon as he knew that He belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time. Now when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad; for he had desired for a long time to see Him, because he had heard many things about Him, and he hoped to see some miracle done by Him. Then he questioned Him with many words, but He answered him nothing. And the chief priests and the scribes stood there and vehemently accused Him.

Then Herod with his men of war treated Him with contempt and mocked Him, arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe and sent Him back to Pilate. That very day Pilate and Herod became friends with each other, for before that they had been at enmity with each other.

Then Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people, said to them, "You have brought this Man to me as one who misleads the people; and, indeed, having examined Him in your presence, I have found no fault in this Man concerning those things of which you accuse Him. No, neither did Herod; for I sent you back to him, and, indeed, nothing worthy of death has been done by Him. I will, therefore, chastise Him and release Him.

Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release to the multitude one prisoner whom they wished, whomever they requested. And they had then a notorious prisoner called Barabbas, who was chained with his fellow-insurrectionists. He had been thrown into prison for a certain insurrection made in the city, and for murder. And the multitude cried aloud and began to ask Pilate to do just as he had always done for them. For it was necessary for him to release one to them at the feast.

Therefore, when they had gathered together, the governor, Pilate, answered them, saying, "You have a custom, that I should release someone to you at the Passover. Whom do you want me to release to You? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ? Do you, therefore,

want me to release to you the King of the Jews?" For he knew that the chief priests had handed Him over because of envy.

While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, "Have nothing to do with that just Man; for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him."

But the chief priests and elders stirred up the crowd and persuaded the multitudes that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. The governor answered and said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?"

Then they all cried out at once, saying, "Not this Man, but Barabbas. Away with this Man, and release to us Barabbas." Now Barabbas was a robber.

Pilate therefore, wishing to release Jesus, again called out to them. He said to them, "What, then, do you want me to do with Jesus, who is called Christ, Him whom you call the King of the Jews?"

And they all shouted, "Let Him be crucified!" They cried out again, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"

Then the governor said to them the third time, "Why, what evil has He done? I have found no reason for death in Him. I will therefore chastise Him and let Him go."

But they were insistent. They cried out more exceedingly, demanding with loud voices that He be crucified. "Let Him be crucified! Crucify Him!" And the voices of these men and of the chief priests prevailed. When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather that a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see to it."

And all the people answered and said, "His blood be on us and on our children."

And wanting to gratify the crowd, Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they requested. And he released Barabbas to them.

**L** Here ends our Passion History reading.

**C All we like sheep have gone astray,  
and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.  
By his wounds we are healed.**

### **THE NICENE CREED**

*We boldly confess what we believe. (TLH, p. 22)*

**C I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.**

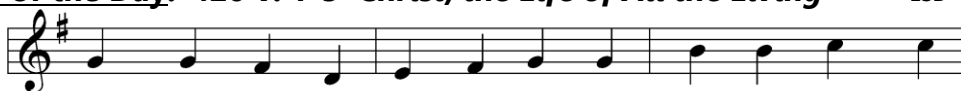
*(Creed continues on next page ->)*

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, Begotten not made, Being of one substance with the Father, By whom all things were made; Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary And was made man; And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried; And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures; And ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of the Father; And He shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead; Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, The Lord and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets. And I believe one holy Christian and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, And I look for the resurrection of the dead, And the life of the world to come. Amen.

### Hymn of the Day: 420 v. 1-5 *Christ, the Life of All the Living*

LSB 420 v. 1-5




1 Christ, the life of all the liv - ing, Christ, the death of  
 2 Thou, ah! Thou, hast tak - en on Thee Bonds and stripes, a  
 3 Thou hast borne the smit - ing on - ly That my wounds might  
 4 Heart - less scof - fers did sur-round Thee, Treat - ing Thee with  
 5 Thou hast suf - fered men to bruise Thee, That from pain I



death, our foe, Who, Thy - self for me once giv - ing  
 cru - el rod; Pain and scorn were heaped up - on Thee,  
 all be whole; Thou hast suf - fered, sad and lone - ly,  
 shame-ful scorn And with pierc - ing thorns they crowned Thee.  
 might be free; False - ly did Thy foes ac - cuse Thee:



To the dark - est depths of woe: Through Thy suf - f'rings,  
 O Thou sin - less Son of God! Thus didst Thou my  
 Rest to give my wea - ry soul; Yea, the curse of  
 All dis - grace Thou, Lord, hast borne, That as Thine Thou  
 Thence I gain se - cu - ri - ty; Com - fort - less Thy



death, and mer - it I e - ter - nal life in - her - it.  
soul de - liv - er From the bonds of sin for - ev - er.  
God en - dur - ing, Bless - ing un - to me se - cur - ing.  
might - est own me And with heav'n - ly glo - ry crown me.  
soul did lan - guish Me to com - fort in my an - guish.

Thou-sand, thou - sand thanks shall be, Dear - est Je - sus, un - to Thee.  
Thou-sand, thou - sand thanks shall be, Dear - est Je - sus, un - to Thee.  
Thou-sand, thou - sand thanks shall be, Dear - est Je - sus, un - to Thee.  
Thou-sand, thou - sand thanks shall be, Dear - est Je - sus, un - to Thee.  
Thou-sand, thou - sand thanks shall be, Dear - est Je - sus, un - to Thee.

Text: Ernst Christoph Homburg, 1605–81; (sts. 1–2, 5): tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, alt.;  
(sts. 3–4): tr. Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-Book, 1912, St. Louis  
Tune: Das grosse Cantional, 1687, Darmstadt  
Text and tune: Public domain

## THE SERMON

### Luke 23:6-12 (EHV)

<sup>6</sup> When Pilate heard this, he asked if the man was a Galilean. <sup>7</sup> When he learned that he was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem during those days. <sup>8</sup> When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad. For a long time, he had wanted to see him, because he had heard many things about him. He hoped to see some miracle performed by him. <sup>9</sup> He questioned him with many words, but Jesus gave him no answer. <sup>10</sup> The chief priests and the experts in the law stood there, vehemently accusing him. <sup>11</sup> Herod, along with his soldiers, treated him with contempt and ridiculed him. Dressing him in bright clothing, he sent him back to Pilate. <sup>12</sup> Herod and Pilate became friends with each other on that day. Before this they had been enemies of each other.

### Sermon Theme: Ironies of the Passion – "He Had Been Wanting to See Jesus"

- ✠ *irony* = "a set of circumstances or a result that is the opposite of what might be expected."
- ✠ What is the tragic irony of Herod wanting to see Jesus? (**v. 8**)
- ✠ How can Herod's attitude and actions serve as a lesson for us in our lives?

## **THE OFFERTORY**

(TLH, p. 22-23)



♩ Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -  
new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -  
way from Thy pres - ence, and take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it  
from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of Thy sal - va -  
tion, and up - hold me with Thy free spir - it. A - men.

## **THE OFFERING OF THANKFUL HEARTS**

*In tangible evidence of our gratitude, we offer the Lord the gift of our money, remembering that He has first given to us that we might have to give to Him.*

## **THE GENERAL PRAYER**

(Pastor)



# Sermon Hymn: 451 *Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted*

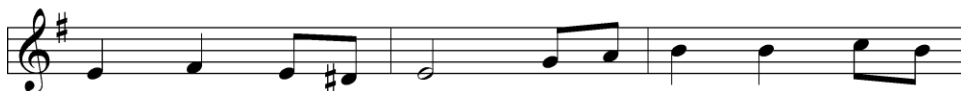
LSB 451



1 Strick-en, smit-ten, and af - flict - ed, See Him dy - ing on the  
2 Tell me, ye who hear Him groan-ing, Was there ev - er grief like  
3 Ye who think of sin but light - ly Nor sup - pose the e - vil  
4 Here we have a firm foun - da - tion, Here the ref - uge of the



tree! 'Tis the Christ, by man re - ject - ed; Yes, my  
His? Friends through fear His cause dis - own - ing, Foes in -  
great Here may view its na - ture right - ly, Here its  
lost: Christ, the Rock of our sal - va - tion, Is the



soul, 'tis He, 'tis He! 'Tis the long - ex - pect - ed  
sult - ing His dis - tress; Man - y hands were raised to  
guilt may es - ti - mate. Mark the sac - ri - fice ap -  
name of which we boast; Lamb of God, for sin - ners



Prop - et, Da - vid's Son, yet Da - vid's Lord; Proofs I  
wound Him, None would in - ter - vene to save; But the  
point - ed, See who bears the aw - ful load; 'Tis the  
wound - ed, Sac - ri - fice to can - cel guilt! None shall



see suf - fi - cient of it: 'Tis the true and faith - ful Word.  
deep - est stroke that pierced Him Was the stroke that jus - tice gave.  
Word, the Lord's a - noint - ed, Son of Man and Son of God.  
ev - er be con - found - ed Who on Him their hope have built.

Text: Thomas Kelly, 1769–1855, alt. Tune: Geistliche Volkslieder, 1850, Paderborn  
Text and tune: Public domain

## **THE PREFACE/ PROPER PREFACE**

*Now we approach the Sacrament, the Lord's Supper, in which the Lord comes to bless us with His very body and blood.  
We move toward the Sacrament with prayers of thanksgiving and songs of adoration. (TLH, p. 24-25)*

**P** The Lord be with you.



**P** Lift up your hearts.



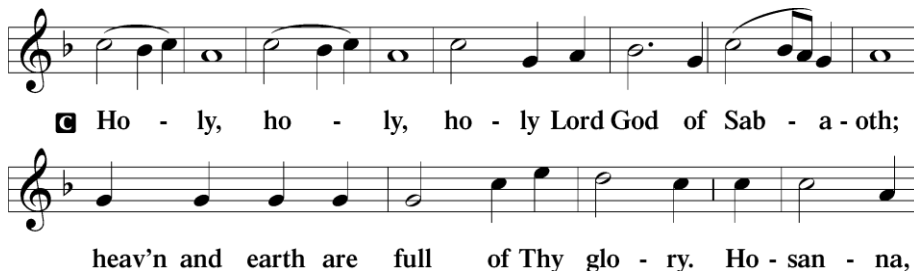
**P** Let us give thanks unto the Lord, our God.




**P** It is truly good, right, and spiritually beneficial that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Who brought the gift of salvation to all people by His death on the tree of the cross, so that the devil, who overcame us by a tree, would in turn, by a tree be overcome. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and singing:

## **THE SANCTUS**

*Latin: "Holy." We join our voices to the angels who sing, "Holy, Holy, Holy" round about His throne and we welcome Him with the Palm Sunday multitude who sang, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the Highest!" (TLH, p. 26)*





ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is He,  
 bless-ed is He, bless - ed is He that com-eth in the name of the Lord.  
 Ho-san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

### **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

- C** Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come;  
 Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread;  
 And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
 And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil.  
 For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory  
 forever and ever. Amen.

### **THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

**(Pastor)**

*The words spoken by Jesus the night He instituted the Lord's Supper by which our Lord assured to His Church the real presence of His sacramental body and blood for all time.*

- P** The peace of the Lord be with you always!



**C** A - men.

## **THE AGNUS DEI**

Latin: "Lamb of God." As we approach the Table of Forgiveness, we want to think only of that Lamb of God who was sacrificed for us on Calvary's cross. (TLH, page 28)

**Q** O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the  
world, have mer-cy up - on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that  
tak-est a-way the sin of the world, have mer-cy up - on us.  
O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak - est a-way the sin of the  
world, grant us Thy peace. A - men.

## **THE DISTRIBUTION**

Note to our Guests: We are so glad you are worshiping with us today!

The Word of God treats the Lord's Supper with great care. The Word of God considers the Lord's Supper to be a wonderful Means of Grace – a way in which Christ forgives and blesses. It is also considered an opportunity for congregations to express unity and oneness (1 Corinthians 10:16-17) – that is, to say to the world "This is what we believe!" But God's Word also warns against taking the Sacrament to our judgment (1 Corinthians 11:27-30). For these reasons our congregation asks that you fully understand our teachings before partaking. We respectfully ask that those who have joined this congregation through public confession of faith, or who are members of another congregation of the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC) approach the altar at the usher's direction. Speak to our pastor anytime and he will be glad to provide the information you would need – and want. We look forward to communing together, Lord willing, in the future.

## **THE NUNC DIMITTIS**

*Latin: "Now Dismiss." Simeon's words after seeing the Christ Child. (Luke 2:29-32)*  
(TLH, p. 29)



**C** Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant de - part in peace ac-  
cord-ing to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,  
which Thou hast pre - pared be - fore the face of all people,  
a light to light - en the Gen - tiles and the glo - ry of Thy  
peo-ple Is - ra - el. Glo - ry be to the Father and  
to the Son and to the Ho-ly Ghost; as it was in the beginning,  
is now, and ev - er shall be, world without end. A - men.

## **THE BENEDICTION**

*The blessing given by God for the blessing of His people (Numbers 6:24-26).*

- P** The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you.  
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.



**C** A - men, a - men, a - men.

## **Closing Hymn: 420 v. 6-7 *Thou Hast Suffered Great Affliction* (please stand)**



6 Thou hast suf - fered great af - flic - tion And hast borne it  
7 Then, for all that wrought my par - don, For Thy sor - rows

pa - tient - ly, E - ven death by cru - ci - fix - ion,  
deep and sore, For Thine an - guish in the Gar - den,

Ful - ly to a - tone for me; Thou didst choose to  
I will thank Thee ev - er - more, Thank Thee for Thy

be tor - ment - ed That my doom should be pre - vent - ed.  
groan - ing, sigh - ing, For Thy bleed - ing and Thy dy - ing,

Thou - sand, thou - sand thanks shall be, Dear - est Je - sus, un - to Thee.  
For that last tri - um - phant cry, And shall praise Thee, Lord, on high.

Text: Ernst Christoph Homburg, 1605–81; (st. 6): tr. Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-Book, 1912, St. Louis; (st. 7): tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, alt.  
Tune: Das grosse Cantional, 1687, Darmstadt  
Text and tune: Public domain

### **Acknowledgments** - Adapted from the Lutheran Service Book.



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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today:

**St. Stephen – West (Mt. View): Bible Class – 9am**

**Worship w/ communion – 10am**

**Choir – 11am**

**St. Stephen – East Bay (Hayward): Worship w/ communion – 1pm**

**Bible Class – 2pm**

Wednesday - **Bible Instruction Class** (Fenton) (Mt. View) – **12:15pm**

**Confirmation Class** (Lang) (Mt. View) – **4pm**

Saturday Night - ⌚ **Daylight Saving Time Begins – “Spring Forward” 1hr** ⌚

Next Sunday:

**St. Stephen – West (Mt. View): Bible Class – 9am**

3/10/24

**Worship – 10am**

**Choir – 11am**

**St. Stephen – East Bay (Hayward): Worship – 1pm**

**Bible Class – 2pm**

**Online Worship Services - <https://www.sslcwest.org/worship.html>**

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*The  
Season  
of  
Lent*



**May our Savior Jesus richly bless your worship and personal meditations on His Word during this season of Lent. Please continue to join us as we remember Christ’s suffering and death for our sins in our Sunday worship services.**

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**In Your Mailboxes and in the Church Entry** – St. Stephen Church Calendar – *March*

**CLC News** – Teacher Matthew Thurow of Berea Lutheran in Inver Grove Heights, MN *has accepted the call* to be a professor at Immanuel Lutheran High School and College in Eau Claire, WI. This is to fill the position currently held by Professor Mark Kranz who is retiring at the end of this school year.

## CLC World Missions Prayer List – February/March 2024

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...pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified...

2 Thessalonians 3:1

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**Mexico** – Pastor Olvera and his family have been plagued by covid and other various illnesses for the past couple of months. They are recovering and slowly getting back to regular work and ministry activities. Thank the Lord for healing and ask for continued strength and recovery for this family. Pray also that the Lord would open doors of opportunity for their planned outreach efforts.

**The Philippines** (Southeast Asia) – Pastor Andrew Schaller, the Board of Doctrine Secretary for the CLC, and Missionary Ohlmann have recently returned from a visit to the Philippines to conduct the face-to-face portion of the doctrinal colloquy. This meeting is the result of more than three years of correspondence, one initial visit in early 2023, and a written doctrinal colloquy via email. Pastor Jordan Palangyos, representing the Lutheran Autonomous Mission of the Philippines (LAMP), sat with Pastor Schaller and Missionary Ohlmann for two full days to review the colloquy questions in depth. This process revealed that there is unity of doctrine between the CLC and LAMP. President Mike Wilke declared fellowship with Pastor Palangyos and the LAMP on February 23<sup>rd</sup>. Praise the Lord for these great blessings of unity of faith and teaching and the opportunity to work together in a God-pleasing way to help spread the Good News of Jesus in the Philippines! Pray that the Lord will provide Pastor Jordan with opportunities and everything he needs to continue proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ.

**Myanmar** (South Asia) – Pastor Kham recently reported that the Myanmar military has continued to indiscriminately bomb portions of the city of Kalaymyo, where the CLC-Myanmar headquarters and orphanage are located. Bombs have destroyed much of the main street that goes through town, less than a kilometer from the CLC-Myanmar (CLCM) church or orphanage. Kham reports that the military is constantly patrolling with machine guns and regularly fires on any gathering of civilians. While we are thankful that there were no injuries to CLCM, three more people were recently killed near the church, and many others have been seriously injured. February 1st marked the third anniversary of the military takeover and, thus, three years of civil war. The people of Myanmar and our brothers and sisters in Christ continue to suffer. Please pray for the innocent bystanders caught in this conflict, especially our brothers and sisters in Christ of the CLC-Myanmar. Ask that God's will be done as this conflict continues and that peace may prevail.

**Kenya and Uganda** (East Africa) – Missionary Bruce Naumann and CLC Bd of Missions Chairman Joel Krafft recently visited our brothers and sisters in Kenya and Uganda. Unfortunately, Kinship Committee chairman Ted Quade was not able to make the trip due to health issues. While in Kenya they visited and discussed the needs of the two elementary schools that are partially supported by Kinship donations. They also met with the leaders of the Kenya-CLC to discuss the



necessary steps for more consistent Bible instruction in the schools. While in Uganda they visited the orphanage that receives support from Kinship to discuss their ongoing needs. Thank the Lord of their safe travels and productive time among our brothers and sisters in Christ.

**Tanzania** (East Africa) – Missionary Naumann reports that all students are now present for the new semester of classes at the seminary. Pastor Nolting spent a couple of weeks in mid-January serving as a guest/substitute instructor at the seminary while Missionary Naumann was visiting Kenya and Uganda. Pray for God's continued blessings on these efforts to train and send out faithful preachers and teachers of God's saving word in East Africa. You can follow Missionary Naumann's blog at [clc-tz.blogspot.com](http://clc-tz.blogspot.com).

**Pakistan** – Pastor Tim Daub continues correspondence and instruction classes with the recently established Lutheran congregation members in Faisalabad. The Board of Missions has authorized Missionary Ohlmann to join Pastor Daub on a visit to further encourage and instruct this congregation. They are tentatively planning a visit for mid-to-late April. With the recent elections in Pakistan, they are waiting for the newly elected leadership to be in place before they make final arrangements. Pray for the Lord's guidance and wisdom as plans take shape. Ask the Lord to continue to bless the preaching and teaching of His saving word among this new congregation of believers.

**Nepal** (South Asia) – Pastor Raju is undergoing voice therapy to treat lesions or nodes on his vocal cords. He recently reported that his doctor is pleased with the progress, and he has started public speaking again. The start of the Himalayan Bible Institute (HBI) classes was postponed until he was able to regain his voice. Currently, they are reviewing applications for a new cohort of HBI students, which is scheduled to begin in April. Give thanks to the Lord for the healing of Raju's vocal cords, which has allowed him to continue spreading God's word and training faithful workers for His kingdom in Nepal.

**Bangladesh** (South Asia) – Pastor Monotosh continues to seek the Lord's blessings in raising funds for constructing a BLCM headquarters, Bible Institute, dormitory, and worship facility on land purchased last year. Pray for the Lord's provision of resources needed for this important building project. Ask for the Lord's continued blessings on the preaching and teaching of His word.

**Liberia** (West Africa) – While Pastor Kwiwalazu was disappointed that Missionary Ohlmann and Bd of Missions Chairman Joel Krafft were unable to visit in January as planned due to issues with obtaining the necessary visas, he reports that meetings with a group of independent pastors who have separated from the Methodist church of Liberia went well. He is eager for the visit to be rescheduled and is hopeful that Pastor John Hein's health improves so that he, too, will be able to visit. Pray for the blessings and provision for the work of spreading the Gospel in Liberia and also for the developing opportunities in Guinea. Ask the Lord to bless the cancer treatments that John Hein is receiving so that he may resume his work in Liberia.

**India** (South Asia) – The BELC continues to grow with more than 750 pastors serving congregations, teaching on-going monthly pastoral training seminars in twenty-seven districts, and training 25 men at the Martin Luther Bible School. The CLCI is still active in outreach despite the real and constant threat of persecution. The CLCI also continues its work with the orphanage and the seminary, with seventeen men graduating and being ordained as pastors each year. It has been a few years since the CLC has been to visit our brothers and sisters in India. With Missionaries Evensen and Ohlmann no longer able to enter India because their visas were revoked, the Bd of Missions is looking at different options for future CLC visitations. Pray that the Lord continues to bless the efforts of the BELC and CLCI as they boldly proclaim the Good News of Jesus. Ask for our Savior's guidance as the Bd of Missions looks for ways to visit India again.

**Missionary Peter Evensen** (Togo, West Africa) – Missionary Evensen continues the work of translating Online Theological Studies courses into French for use in training pastors and church leaders in Togo and other French-speaking African countries. Ask for the Lord's continued blessings on this work and pray that the Lord will continue to provide good health and all that is necessary for the spread of the Gospel in Togo.

**Missionary Bruce Naumann** (Tanzania-East Africa) – Missionary Bruce Naumann returned to Tanzania in early January for the start of the new semester at Wittenberg Lutheran Theological Seminary. His wife Paula returned to Tanzania in early February. Thank the Lord for providing safe travel for Bruce and Paula. Ask for our Savior's blessings for these two faithful servants of our Lord. Pray they will be kept safe and healthy as they serve in our Savior's East Africa harvest fields. Follow their blog at [clc-tz.blogspot.com](http://clc-tz.blogspot.com).

**Missionary Todd Ohlmann** – Missionary Ohlmann departed for a short visit to Nigeria on February 27<sup>th</sup>. He will make a short stop-over in Togo to visit Missionary Evensen and Pastor Blewu. While in Nigeria, he will attend, preach, and present at the Nigeria-CLC pastoral conference in Efa. He will also visit and preach at a newly established NCLC congregation in Badagry. He is tentatively scheduled to visit Pakistan and Zambia in April and May. Pray for the Lord's guidance and blessings on his travel plans and for wisdom, humility, patience, and boldness as he proclaims God's word. Continue to pray for his wife Beth as she cares for her elderly father as he longs for his heavenly home. You can read reports and see pictures here: [missionaryohlmann.blogspot.com](http://missionaryohlmann.blogspot.com)

**Ongoing Opportunities** – **please continue to pray** for all of our brothers and sisters in Christ around the world, who, by God's grace, are dedicated to proclaiming the truths of God's saving word for the salvation of souls as they trust the promise of our Savior that His Word will not return to Him void but will accomplish that for which He sent it.

That Your way may be known on earth,  
Your salvation among all nations. Psalm 67:2

