



# BULLETIN

BRINGING GOD'S MESSAGE OF LOVE IN CHRIST JESUS TO ALL THE WORLD

## The Lutheran Church – International

*and the*

## Lutheran World Parish

ADVENT 2023

Dear Brothers and Sisters of the LC-I family

As we move forward toward the Advent Season and the joyous celebration of the remembrance of Christ's birth at Bethlehem, we have many reasons to be grateful for God's grace to us all. We in the LC-I are especially grateful to God for the call given us to bring the light of the Gospel to all nations through the faithful heritage of the evangelical catholic faith in the Lutheran understanding.

In these days of political unrest and turmoil, we firmly stand upon the rock of our faith as it has been delivered to us from Christ's teaching through the historic apostolic ministries. Despite the onslaughts of those who fill the social media with attacks against religious belief, we in the LC-I can be sure of our role in making the light of Christ known to all the nations of the world.

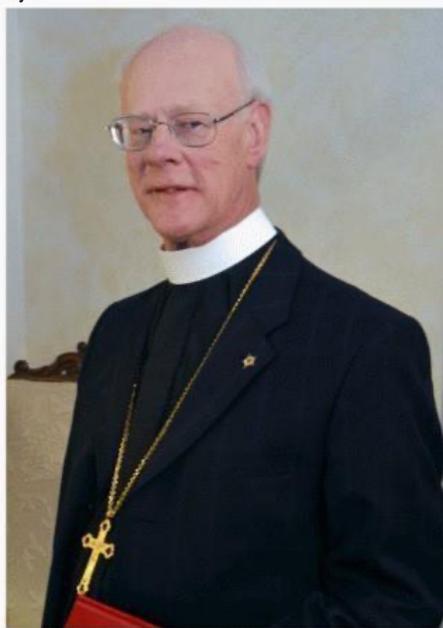
We are clearly in a time of renewed persecution of Christian faith and values. As we all know, persecution is nothing new to the history of the Christian church. Currently, anti-Christian persecution is especially intense in Asia. While there is open resistance to the Good News of Christ in many countries in Asia, Europe and North America continue to plunge into the abyss of a false idolization of self interest.

In the United States we find ourselves bombarded by forces that strive to frame Christian values in a negative light. The internet is full of lists purporting to show that religion is obsolete and that it should play no role in the lives of tritely "woke" individuals. Young people in particular are targets of this misinformation.

The message that religion is evil or not important is factually wrong and intentionally destructive. On a secular level, attacks on the understanding that human beings need interpersonal connections and a sense

of purpose beyond themselves are clearly aimed at destabilizing society. However, our Christian faith and our evangelical catholic Lutheran heritage go far beyond providing us with human benefits. Through worship in the beauty of our liturgical heritage we join in the heavenly praise that transcends earthly life. Christ's Kingdom starts here.

Lutheran Church – International members who live in Europe and the United States are being challenged in the expression of our faith in Christ. Yet we are comforted by the gifts of the heritage of the universal (catholic) church and we realize that in many parts of the world Christians are being persecuted and hindered in the expression of their faith, as already mentioned. This is particularly true for our brothers and sisters in India at this time. Please keep them in your prayers.



++Robert W. Hotes, Archbishop  
Lutheran Church International

During this holy season of joy may we be thankful for the blessings that come to us through our membership in this unique part of Christ's universal church. These blessings bring responsibilities for ministry to a suffering world. As lay and clerical members of the LC-I we are responsible for ministry, caring not only for ourselves but for those who so intensely need the truth of Christ's good news.

This season brings opportunities for reflection as well as joy. We end the period of Ordinary Time with remembrance of those who have gone before us in the faith in the celebration of All Saints. With the arrival of the season of Advent, we begin a new church year with renewed hope as we recall the blessings we have received with the birth of our Savior. During Advent we are also reminded that our loving Savior will come again to call us unto himself. Take advantage of the worship opportunities and the various ways believers give expression to the hope and joy that is ours to

come. In all the bustle and business of the season it is important to emphasize worship, prayer, and reflection on who we are as God's Christian people.

This season is also a time to renew our commitment to the ministry of the Lutheran Church – International. As a church body we have opportunities to work together for the advancement of Christ's Kingdom all year long. To do this we must communicate and accept our responsibilities as members of this unique segment of Christ's universal catholic church. Prayerfully consider how you might help us grow as a Synod and as God's people. There are many ways we can accomplish great things, starting with communication.

We can renew our connections through our bishops or through the archbishop's office. It is essential to keep in touch for coordination of our ministries. This time of anticipation, joy and gratitude to God for His blessings and mercies can strengthen us not only in parochial service but also in prayer and good example that reflects well on our membership in the LC-I.

We can make sure that we share the good news of salvation. Talk about the work and ministries of the LC-I. Show interested individuals copies of this BULLETIN. Give them the opportunity to join our email list to receive their own copies.

All these activities and many more are in line with objectives proposed at our 24th Annual Synod held last June in Frederick County, Maryland. While the objectives focus on various aspects of the life in Christ within the LC-I community, the major thrust for all of them is on communication of the identity of the LC-I and the graces that God have given us as His disciples in our unique ministry. We plan to publish a list of those objectives and plans for meeting the goals developed from them in an upcoming BULLETIN. Your input will be invaluable.

This is a critical time in the history of the church and of the world. I am firmly convinced that the LC-I has an important role to play in God's plan. We can communicate our gifts to others not only through hope, faith, and prayer, but also through action and communication, as already mentioned. May we join together in faith to do this work. It is important that we all own our identity as members of the Lutheran Church –International, both lay and clerical.

With confidence in our ministry, and with God's blessing, we go forward in grace and peace.

May God keep us all in His loving care.

++ **Robert**  
**Archbishop**

## **Also from Our Archbishop's Desk** **Additional Prayer Requests and Needs**

- Special prayers are requested for those in the Lutheran Church – International who are in special need of healing, especially Bishop Aubrey Bougher, Dean Rodney Eberhardt, Delegate Ute Horn and Bishop Richard Horn, Archbishop Robert and Delegate Lynn Hotes, Bishop Jeffery Bischoff, Bishop Juan Cepero, Shelly Tribbett, and many others who are in need of prayer.
- Please also keep in your prayers the Reverend John R. Schilling who is seriously ill and has entered hospice care.
- Please pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ, the people of St. Paul's in Sacramento.
- Please pray for Holy Cross ministries in Sacramento and for the ministries of Pastor Bruce Hackman of San Pedro.

## **BULLETIN Newsletter Deadlines Set**

At the last meeting of the Executive Board, the following dates were established as the official deadlines for submission of and articles. You are encouraged to submit information, pictures, and stories about the great fellowship and mission activities of your congregation. Help us make the BULLETIN more and more interesting with each issue.

Advent/Christmas/Epiphany: November, 2023

Lent: January 15, 2024

Eastertide: March 18, 2024

Pentecost and Ordinary time: May 6, 2024

### **2024 DUES – A REMINDER**

Dues in support of the mission and ministry of the Lutheran Church – International are payable at the start of each calendar year. A form for submitting your contribution is included on the last page of this issue. Your response during the Advent season would be greatly appreciated!



## SPECIAL PRAYER REQUESTS

These prayers have been requested through communication to the Archbishop's office. Please include them in your personal prayers and in the prayers of your congregation. Prayers, thoughts, and joyful remembrances may be sent to the Archbishop: [dbldoc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dbldoc@sbcglobal.net)

- For the work of the LC-I Institute for Ministerial Formation, under the guidance of Dean Rodney Eberhardt.
- For Pastor Rajendra Tanuku Prasad and all the Saints in India and other Christian missions and ministries suffering persecution in Asia.
- For persecuted Christians throughout the world.
- For those suffering from war and turmoil in Ukraine, Israel, and Gaza.
- For peace with justice throughout the world.
- For the Latin-focused ministries of the Lutheran Church – International in South and Latin America, Brazil, and the United States.
- For all deacons, pastors, and bishops of the LC-I.
- For all members of the Lutheran World Parish.
- For the good people of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Christ, Rosedale Queens as they continue their search for a new called pastor, and for Pastor Tom Robson who is serving so well as their Interim Pastor.
- For the special ministries of Deacons Christine Watts, Anna Haye, Sam Sooppersaud, Sevika Sooppersaud, Eric Frank, Norbert Mayer, and Helena Morris.
- For all of the members of the LC-I family who are in special need of the comfort of God's grace as well as healing and improved health.

- For special prayers for all those suffering in mind, body or spirit.
- For the Lutheran Deaconess Association, collaborators in ministry with the LC-I, especially Lisa Polito, Executive Director of the LDA as she encounters new ministries in her retirement.
- For the ministries of LC-I Deaconess Christine Stephenson.
- For those traveling during the Thanksgiving season. May God guide them and keep them safe in His care.
- For all the Saints at First Church in Lyons.
- For Pastor Art Hebbeler and his ministry in curating the LC-I Facebook page and for the many new friends of the LC-I that are added each month through his efforts.
- For all the faithful who have been absent from worship due to fear or neglect due to COVID or other illnesses, that they may once again hear the healing Word and receive the Blessed Sacrament.
- For all the Saints of the Christian church on earth and in heaven.

“No one can believe how powerful prayer is and what it can effect, except those who have learned it by experience. Whenever I have prayed earnestly, I have been heard and have obtained more than I prayed for. God sometimes delays, but He always comes.”

**Martin Luther**

### To Our Readers

The Editors of the LC-I and Lutheran World Parish BULLETIN are always eager to receive news of interest to the friends, members, and ministries of the LC-I. Articles in this BULLETIN reflect the opinions of their authors and are not to be understood as official statements by the LC-I. All items must have relevance to the identity and mission of the LC-I as expressed in our Constitution. A copy of the Constitution is available on the LC-I website. The LC-I reserves the right to approve all content as well as the right to copyright any material published with permission of the author(s).

# 2023-2024 LC-I OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE BOARD

*(Terms end as indicated.)*

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## Bulletin

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The people, clergy, and bishops  
of the LC-I Contributing

To gather with God's people in united adoration of the  
Father is as necessary to the Christian life as prayer.

Martin Luther

## 25th Annual Synod Meeting

### St. Meinrad Archabbey

### June 17-19, 2024

### Mark Your Calendars Now!

After its last meeting, the Synod Assembly Venue  
Committee made a recommendation for the 25th  
Annual Synod that was approved by the Synod's  
Executive Committee.

Mitzi Eberhardt  
LC-I Vice President



St. Meinrad, IN 47577

2024 Annual Synod XXV  
Monday – Wednesday (Afternoon)  
June 17 – 19, 2024

### Nearest airports:

Louisville, Kentucky and Evansville, Indiana.  
One person, lodging and meals is \$243.00;  
Two persons, lodging and meals is \$362.80.

Mark your calendars now to attend the Annual  
Synod Assembly in St. Meinrad, Indiana. Registra-  
tion forms will be available in the Lenten Bulletin.



## An Advent Reflection

In this world torn by war, lawlessness, anger, increasing religious persecution and strife, it is difficult to think of Christmas and its message of salvation for all who believe in our Lord Jesus Christ. The Christmas message is difficult for us to understand because it teaches that God loves each one of us as though each of us is his favorite. The Holy Scriptures tell us that we were created “in His own image.” (*Genesis 1:27*) If we believe the Holy Scriptures are “the rule and norm for our faith and life,” then by these words we must believe that each of us is a child of God, in and through our baptism. In times like these it is good to remember blessed Dr. Martin Luther’s advice when experiencing fear and doubt. He said we should make the sign of the Cross and repeat the words, “But I am baptized.” This is an excellent way to remember who we are and *whose* we are.

God could have chosen other ways to spread the news of his love but he chose to do it in the way that we could be reached best. So, the Father sent his Son into the world for you and me. Why? Because he wanted his love to have a human face. St. Paul understood how deeply he was affected by Christ’s presence in his life. He expressed it with these words: “It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.” (*Galatians 2:20*)

Even if you find it difficult to understand this mystery, pause for a while and meditate on it daily. Advent is the time to do just that. This special season calls us to remember that God took on human flesh in the form of a newborn child, born to a humble family to be as close to us as possible. Advent also reminds us that he will come again to take us to himself, as he has promised. Take time each day to accept his love in faith. Block out all those things that crowd out the joy that God’s love gives us.

Meticulous party planning, crowded societal schedules, and special gift purchases last only from one season to the next, but the love of God in Christ Jesus never ends. That truth alone is enough to make us pause.

It is often said that Christmas is the time of giving, and so it is in many ways. But Advent is truly the time of receiving and growing in faith to better understand the blessing of Christmas, now and forever. Be a receiver of the hope and quiet joy that Advent affords. If you do, I’m confident you’ll find the joy that is Christmas to be deeper than you have experienced before.

– Reverend Gary V. Ettlemyer

## The Advent Wreath

The Advent wreath originated several hundred years ago among the Lutherans of eastern Germany, and was probably suggested by the many light symbols which were used in folklore during November and December. At that time of the year, pre-Christian cultures fearing the winter solstice (the shortest day of the year), celebrated the month of Yule (December) placing lighted candles in a wheel, praying the god of light to turn the wheel of the earth toward the sun and lengthen the days

The Christians in medieval times kept and Christianized many of these light and fire symbols. The evergreens (originally simply placed near the hearth) symbolized the everlasting life found in Christ. Bending the branches to form a circle further symbolized life without end. The candles signified God’s Son as the light of the world, and there are four candles for the four weeks of Advent. Traditionally, a specific meaning has been attached to each candle: the Prophecy Candle; the Bethlehem Candle; the Shepherd’s Candle; and the Angels’ Candle.

Gradually, the Advent wreath became a traditional symbol reminding the faithful of the Old Testament, when humanity was “sitting in darkness and the shadow of death (Lk 2:79) when the prophets, illumined by God, announced the coming of the Redeemer; and when the hearts of humans glowed with the desire for the Messiah. The wreath itself came to symbolize the fulfillment of time – the coming of Christ and the glory of His birth.

– Article originally appeared in *About Being Lutheran*, c.1969 by Lutheran Liturgical Renewal, Inc. as it appeared in the *Bride of Christ*, a publication of LLR. Reproduced by permission from its editor, The Rt. Rev. Dr. Aubrey N. Bougher, Bishop, Northeastern Diocese, Lutheran Church – International.

## First Lutheran – Lyons, New York Makes a Lot of Dough!

First Lutheran Church has a wonderful ministry that makes a lot of dough – fried dough, that is. The good people of First Lutheran supports ministries within Lyons and beyond through selling fried dough in the Lyons Farmers Market. This special outreach has been conducted by the congregation in the community for fifty years! We rejoice that they have had great success using their talents to support others in this special way. Congratulations First Lyons for you ongoing ministry of outreach to the community!



A mouth watering sample of fried dough sold on Saturdays



Fried Dough Volunteers on break from making and selling fried dough on Saturday Morning



**Fried Dough volunteers at their Annual Pizza Party**



**Pastor Wigmore (*He's on the right!*) says, "Orange Frog loves fried dough and continues to share his happiness message in Lyons."**



**Humans aren't the only ones enjoying fried dough in Lyons, New York!**

## EMPTY CHURCHES AND THE “NONES”

– The Reverend John C. McBride  
West Lawn, PA

Why are large churches that once held sizeable congregations of members now closing their doors and standing vacant? Columbus, Ohio is one of many cities where this is taking place. Over 50 years ago, I lived in Columbus as a college student and later as a seminarian. It was a large, spread-out city that was filled with friendly people. Many had migrated north from Appalachia to find work. Even though it was a large state capitol, in many places I found warm, hospitable people as one would find in smaller towns. The churches also were active, and they, too, radiated that harmonious welcome to visitors who chose to worship there. That was then.

Today a new picture of Columbus churches appears. For many who maintained large congregations back in the late 1960's and early 1970's, they are now closed and up for sale. A close friend who lives in the Columbus area recently called this to my attention and, to say the least, I was shocked! Whatever became of the people who were active, and worshipped in these churches? True, this was a generation or two ago, but they had sons and daughters as well as grandchildren, for the population of Ohio's capitol city remains about the same now as it was when I lived there. Then I realized, what took place in Columbus was not very different than anywhere else in America. The so-called post-Christian era that engulfed Europe after World War II had finally reached our shores and was replacing Christianity with a very cold and calculating form of secularism.

One person who exposed this was the newsman Bill O'Reilly several years ago on his nightly television show. He did a lot of research, then when he had enough facts to back up his findings, he reported that there was a war on Christmas, and that a strong move was made to literally remove Christ from the holiday. He told how clerks were advised not to greet their customers with Merry Christmas, but instead to use secular regards such as Happy Holidays, Season's Greetings and Happy Winter's Solstice.

Yet Christmas is not the only concern secularists are trying to remove, it is Christianity in general, hence the term the post-Christian era. In his book, *The Rise of the Nones*, James Emery White takes a candid look at the fastest growing secularism we see

all around us. He points out that the fastest religious group in America are those who, when asked if they have a religious affiliation, answer with the word “none.”

A recent study by Pew Forum reported that nearly one in five Americans (19.3%) now claim no religious identity and the National Study of Youth and Religion points out a full one-third of Americans under the age of 30 claim no religious affiliation. Unless there is a desire in the Community of Believers to return to the basics of what our faith teaches and to make an effort to share it with this rising secular population, the United States will reach a level like that of Europe who willfully admit they live in the post-Christian era where only 5% of the population attends worship services on Sunday. However, I am convinced that there are enough of us whose lives continue to be touched by “justification by faith” who can witness to this growing non-Christian element. All that we need is a plan and a desire to share our faith with others as the Holy Spirit leads us as was done in the Book of Acts. Such a plan would involve doing absolutely nothing or we could bow our heads in prayer and ask the Lord to help us find a solution to this problem.

The closed churches and ever-increasing number of “nones” tells us that someone somewhere did not do an adequate job in the care of souls. Cities, like Columbus (whose motto is “The All-American City”) have now become a mission field and are begging to hear the message of the cross—Jesus died, was buried, and has risen so that the sins of humanity might be forgiven and that all of us would have eternal life. Right now, before our very eyes our Lord is beseeching us “...behold I say unto you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.” (John 4:35b, Authorized Version (A.V.)) At the same time, we consider the plight of the closed houses of worship and the growing number of the “nones” which causes us to ponder “are these two factors related, and if so, were they the result of human sin?” The answer is a resounding “yes”!

It goes like this: for the past 50 to 60 years, young people have been attending secular schools of higher education where religion, in general, and Christianity, in particular, are not held in the highest esteem by many faculty members who would let their views be known. Those students whose faith was profound would let what was being taught go in one ear and out the other while those whose faith was

*(Empty Churches (Cont'd.))*

shallow would give in and this last group tended to be the majority. Later, after graduation, these students found careers in communities far away from where they grew up, married non-Christian spouses, and when a census was taken, under the question denoting religious preference, they usually wrote "none." Yet the question remains, how could students who more than likely grew up in a church refer to themselves as "nones"? More than likely, the clergy who pastored the congregations they grew up in were theological liberals, and when anti-religious professors taught them, there was not very much faith in them to challenge what they heard in class.

Author Ronald Nash defines Protestant liberalism as "a religion without a personal God, without a divine Savior, without an inspired Bible, and without a life transforming conversion." (YouTube lecture series Liberty in Our Time - Morality & Freedom) I myself can bear witness to Nash's personal conclusion, as for 23 years before my retirement in 2006, I served congregations in what is perhaps America's most liberal denomination, the United Church of Christ. I remained true to my Lutheran background and training while I always gave an evangelical Bible-based sermon. Once when I preached on the Great Commission (Matt. 28:16-20), I received two very unusual responses. One was from the chairman of the congregation who replied, "I don't see anything great in being a Christian" and an elder who said, "If you want to see this church grow, you have to offer the visitors a beer and a ham sandwich."

As a Lutheran who believes that we should be telling the good news of God's unconditional love made manifest in the message of the cross, I feel that we have a vast mission field at our doorstep. We can fill our congregations to full capacity with those who are eager for Word and Sacrament while at the same time be disciplined into a faith involving both law and gospel. We, living in a post-Christian world must be like the Good Shepherd and go out and search for lost sheep, for the days of keeping our church doors open and hoping they will find their own way in are over. A good example of this is my home congregation, Emmanuel Lutheran Church (LC-MS) in Kettering, Ohio.

Kettering in the 1960's and 1970's was a booming area with new housing developments, new strip malls, schools and houses of worship. Thus, when Emmanuel was begun in 1967 as a new church

start, it was safe to say that the Holy Spirit put the right church in the right place at the right time. The members were able to find out the names of Lutheran families who moved into the area and invite them to attend worship on the following Sunday. In its early days, Emmanuel consisted of a large building with a spacious multi-purpose room (which was where worship took place) and below it, Sunday School classrooms. Pastoral services, until they could afford one of their own, were provided by other churches in nearby Dayton. In its infancy, the new congregation voted to divide itself into four sections with each one under the care of a church elder who served as a lay minister, and when a pastor was called each one would keep him informed of any personal or spiritual needs in their particular jurisdiction. Elders would also attend workshops and retreats involving pastoral care. One would assist the pastor during the worship service. After worship, an elder would remain in the sanctuary for prayer, spiritual counsel or ministry while those who were in need of these evangelical consultations waited for their turn in the pew. All serious matters would be shared with the pastoral staff with the parishioner's permission, and they would take over from there.

A growing church needed a good evangelism program to bring those who were outside into the fold of the Good Shepherd. The evangelism committee looked at several methods of witnessing, and voted to use Evangelism Explosion, a program devised and used at Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida by the Senior Pastor, Dr. D. James Kennedy. Thus, Emmanuel's new pastor, The Reverend William Bliese, and the evangelism committee's chairman went to Florida, received extensive training, and were so successful that in a few years (1977) Emmanuel became one of many congregations that Evangelism Explosion (or E.E. as it was often referred to) would be able to host training sessions for clergy and lay leaders who were interested in sharing the good news to non-Christians. I, myself, took part in that initial session, and when needed, E.E. has always been helpful in my ministry for sharing the message of salvation.

Emmanuel also had other teams involved in outreach. A gospel singing group called "Echoes of Praise" and a dramatics group called "Creation INC (In the Name of Christ)" would travel throughout Ohio and its neighboring states. This was founded

*(Empty Churches (Cont'd.))*

by a son of Pastor Bliese and like Echoes of Praise consisted of young adults. Concerts were held in the large multi-purpose room which served as a concert hall for contemporary Christian singers, and audiences would travel great distances for uplifting entertainment.

Today Emmanuel is as strong as ever due to its profound Christian identity and strong lay leadership. It offers its members and other interested Christians vast resources on discipleship, how to avoid humanistic philosophy, how to put on the whole armor of God (as Paul describes in Ephesians 6) and other tools needed for individual, as well as congregational spiritual growth. And yet, we are still faced with the problem of empty churches that are falling apart from years of neglect and multitudes of people who refer to themselves as “nones” that serve as a reminder that we live in post-Christian America. Can anything be done to prevent more churches from closing their doors and reverse the number of people who are called “nones”?

Unfortunately, such a situation as this was decades in the making and common sense tells us that the situation will get far worse before it can even begin to improve. This is a huge problem that is spiritual in its origin that was begun by an enemy whom scripture declares to be the “prince of this world,” who will claim himself the victor in the end. The truth of the matter is that he was defeated once and for all when God the Son shed His precious blood on Golgotha’s cross 2,000 years ago. Yet, he looks at his handiwork and feels that he is victorious with innumerable houses of worship closed and lost souls that are now his choice.

A deeper look at our nation reveals anti-Christian politicians who favor issues such as abortion and anarchy on our streets. St. Paul sums up our situation this way: “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. (Ephesian 6:12 A.V.) There is a spiritual war that is taking place and it must be fought not only on the streets, or some battlefield, but also on spiritual levels. Evangelical Christians must retreat to their prayer closets and pray collectively before the face of the Lord, for it is sincere prayer, (Prayer from the gut, that is!) which causes the hand of God to act. Congregations need to live up to their reputations as being houses of prayer, and devote special time for their sanctuaries to remain open for

the faithful to spend long hours in prayer. God tells us very plainly, “[I]f my people which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” (II Chronicles 7:14 A.V.) In order to get started, we need to get out of denial that a spiritual crisis is taking place in our great nation, and pray to our heavenly Father for discernment on what to do.

In February, I learned that at Asbury University in Wilmore, Kentucky, a large renewal of faith had broken out among the student body and was going nonstop for several days. Students from other colleges and universities were curious as to what was taking place. They came and they, too, were caught up in what was taking place. Thousands of young people repented of their sins, dedicated their lives to Christ, and promised to take this renewal of faith to other schools of higher learning. Only time will tell as to whether or not we have a Third Great Awakening taking place in our nation or not. Some taking part told C.B.N. reporters who interviewed them that it was “Pentecost.” We see this happening all over again in our present world.

Three thousand young people surrendered their lives to Christ. Is that an adequate description of the Asbury phenomenon? Only time will tell, but one thing is for sure, Christians today need to follow St. Peter’s injunction, “be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.” (I Peter 3:15b A.V.) The best of all good news is the glorious gospel, “so then faith, by hearing, and hearing the word of God.” (Romans 10-17 A.V.)

I hope and pray that after reading this wakeup call that we are no longer like the small country church that was stagnant and still is. It just was not a vital force in the surrounding community. One dark night defective wiring caused a fire to break out and the townspeople and members alike arrived just in time to watch the small place of worship burn to the ground.

“I never saw you here before,” said a church member to a fellow citizen from the community. “That’s because the church was never on fire,” came the reply.

“Every week I preach justification by faith to my people, because every week they forget it.”

Martin Luther



*First Lutheran Church, Lyons, New York  
LC-I Headquarters Church and Archbishop's Office*

### Reminder – 2024 Dues

FOR CONTINUING SUPPORT OF THE LIFE AND MISSION OF THE LC – I  
Clergy and Lay Minister Membership Dues: \$75.00 U.S.D.  
Congregations / Communities of Faith Membership Dues: \$150.00 U.S.D.

Please maintain your good standing and credentialing! The dues are required for ordained and lay members and communities of faith who have been received and included on the official ministerial roster of the LC-I. All additional contributions, gifts, and bequests are gratefully received.

*SPECIAL NOTE: Unable to meet your responsibility for 2024 dues? Contact your bishop as soon as possible.*

**2024**                      **LUTHERAN CHURCH – INTERNATIONAL**                      **2024**

#### 2024 MEMBERSHIP DUES AND CONTRIBUTIONS

\_\_\_\_\_ 2024 Dues for Ministerial Members: \$75

\_\_\_\_\_ 2024 Dues for Congregations and Communities of Faith: \$150

\_\_\_\_\_ Gift                      \_\_\_\_\_ Bequest (Amount) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ In Memory                      \_\_\_\_\_ In Thankfulness

For \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_\_ or Electronic Funds Transfer: \_\_\_\_\_

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**SEND TO:**    The Rev. William Wigmore, Treasurer  
                  15 High Street  
                  Lyons NY 14489

