



The Lutheran Church - International and World Lutheran Parish **BULLETIN - LENT, 2021**



***"And [Jesus] healed many who were sick with various diseases,
and cast out many demons."***

Mark 1: 29-39

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ in the LC-I Family,

One of the most remarkable features of Jesus' role as the Messiah is His healing power. We read in the Gospels that the Jewish authorities in the temple at Jerusalem were amazed at the authority that Christ showed in casting out demons. Christ showed that He taught with authority from His Father in Heaven. His teaching was not something abstract, but powerful and full of healing grace. The time leading up to the Feast of the Resurrection gives us special opportunities to reflect on Christ's healing power as He brings us to salvation.

in Jesus' day, disease was often thought to be the result of possession by evil spirits or demons. The idea behind this line of thinking was that being sick meant that you were possessed by something that you could not control. Popular culture then, as now, tended to put a face to those demons, but essentially the idea behind the word demon is a power that possesses the individual and prevents him or her from doing what the person would otherwise be inclined to do.

In popular culture demons are often pictured as having personalities apart from the persons they possess. The demon or powerful spirit is in control, not the person they inhabit. Now we have the God-given gift of modern medical knowledge that lets us understand more fully. But there is no denying that evil exists.

The chief demon is, of course, the Devil himself. If you are old enough you may remember a popular comedian whose routine included the phrase "the Devil made me do it." That is a way to shift the blame and avoid personal responsibility. Many years ago (1970) cartoonist Walt Kelly, author of the comic strip Pogo, put these words into the mouth of one of his characters:

"We have met the enemy and he is us."

There is probably quite a bit of truth to that.

Even today there are theologians and preachers who like to focus on what is called "demonology" or the study of demons. That may be well and good, but perhaps it misses the point of Christ's ultimate power to cure the disease of souls that is called sin.

This season of reflection that we call Lent allows us an opportunity to get control of the demons of our own human nature. That we must struggle to control those demons that result from sin derives from the fact that we are saved but remain sinful human beings. As we retrace Christ's steps on the road to Calvary, we have an opportunity to reflect and humbly ask forgiveness as we promise to change, by God's grace alone.

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This Lent, amid all the stress and problems that we must endure, it seems to be a great opportunity to refocus on our efforts to do God’s work through the LC-I as we travel through sorrow to the glory of the Resurrection.

Whether we have been able to participate in the traditional imposition of ashes or not, we can make this time of Lent one of serious reflection on our ministries, present and future.

May God bless you and keep you in His care now and forever.

++ Robert

Archbishop, Lutheran Church - International

+++ CALLED ... TO SERVE +++

The following article by The Rev. Sarah Lewis, Pastor of Piedmont Presbyterian Church, Portland Oregon was graciously shared with us and is used by permission.



Lt. Abbie Sweetwine
“Angel of Platform 6”

A few weeks ago I came across this sketch while browsing through a collection of art images illustrating the scripture lessons for that week. A little more research called up the story behind the picture, and an intriguing portrait of Maj. Abbie Sweetwine. Maj. Sweetwine served as a nurse in both the army and the air force, traveling the world and seeing duty in 3 wars: World War II, Korea and Vietnam. In 1952, a horrific train collision at a station in England killed over 100 people and injured 300. 2nd Lt. Sweetwine was among the medical personnel [with the US Army Air Force 494th Medical Group, based at RAF Northolt] from the nearby air force base who responded. When they arrived, they found that all the available ambulances were already transporting the patients who were easiest to reach to the hospital, leaving the more critically injured in the interior of the wreck. They quickly set up on the platform, treating and stabilizing patients until they could be transported. Lt. Sweetwine focused on managing the process to help get treatment to those who needed it most and try to make the field operation as efficient as possible. She used her lipstick to mark patients as they were treated, marking “M” on their forehead if they had received morphine, “X” for those who had

received treatment. Her quick action, based on her training in the battlefield, averted the danger of overdoses and duplication as patients were treated and transported. Even while she sorted, she also dispensed tea, cigarettes and encouraging words to the victims.

Her “everywhere at once” approach combined with her calm compassion captured the imagination of the public and changed the paradigm of emergency medical response overnight. While triage in the field had become second nature in military medicine, it had not yet been implemented in civilian life. Previously ambulances had simply been the means to take people to the hospital, and treatment was only at the hospital. Lt. Sweetwine and the other military medical personnel showed that there could be better outcomes if treatment was started as soon as possible, and triage decisions were made immediately when there were multiple injuries.

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Our Gospel reading in [Mark 1:29-39](#) features Jesus' healing ministry. Visiting the home of Simon and Andrew, his newly called disciples, he discovers that Simon's mother-in-law is sick in bed with a fever. Going to her, he takes her hand and lifts her up, and the fever leaves her. [Debie Thomas](#) [<https://www.journeywithjesus.net/lectionary-essays/current-essay?id=2897>] points out that this healing takes place within the walls of a home, not in the public square, church or hospital. Jesus makes her home the holy place. Lt. Sweetwine and her medical team members made a train station platform, in the midst of a horrific wreck, a holy place of healing. The Spirit is not limited to the spaces that we designate as holy and set apart, but can move in to wherever we are - it can make the home, the cellblock, the accident site, the corner of a chance encounter a sacred place where healing happens.

Mark doesn't actually say that Simon's mother-in-law was "healed," though being lifted up by Jesus is synonymous with healing in the New Testament. Instead he leaves us to our own conclusions by describing what happens next: she "began to serve." The word used for serving here is the same that is used to describe the angels ministering to Jesus in the wilderness. It is the root word for "deacon" - making her the first minister in Mark after the angels, and obedient to Jesus' command to serve others, before he has even spoken it. This is the only mention of her in the Bible, but one imagines that she went on ministering throughout her life. After her brief encounter with celebrity, Maj. Sweetwine continued to serve in the military until her retirement two decades later; she never featured in any further news except for a couple of commemorations of her service on platform 6 decades later. Her obituary when she died at 87 did not even mention her fame, but rather spoke of her faithful service throughout the years, and her strong ties to her sisters and role as a loving aunt. In our miracle hungry world, it's easy to overlook these daily miracles of love and care, sustained over a lifetime. Though they may never make the headlines, this daily obedience of service is what shines in the light of God.

When Simon's mother is healed, "the whole city" takes notice. They want that miracle for themselves. They bring "all who are sick or possessed by demons" to the door, and he heals "many."

Just as Abbie Sweetwine spread herself out across the whole platform, Jesus spread himself out among the people who came to him. He does not choose a subset, and say it's only healing day for those with a particular illness or need. Paul says in our 1 Corinthians 9:16-23 text that "I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some." Abbie doled out tea and cigarettes along with morphine and treatment marks. She supported with encouragement and kindness even in the cases when she had no medical means of care. Our scripture lessons invite us to see every person who we encounter as being somebody who we are called to serve, and encourages to use creativity and empathy to meet people where they are at.



Maj. Abbie Sweetwine
May 7, 1921 - March 28, 2009

It is somewhat daunting to think that we may be called to minister anywhere, at any time, to any one, and that our tasks of ministry will call from us a creativity, love and discipline we are unable to martial by ourselves. Our text Isaiah 41:21-31 reminds us: "He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless... those who wait for the Lord will renew their strength."

The peace, love and joy of Jesus Christ be with you,

Pastor Sarah

The Rev. Sarah Lewis, Pastor, Piedmont Presbyterian Church, Portland OR (used by permission)



CHURCH BULLETINS

Many years ago, a pastor asked his parishioners to bring him church bulletins from other congregations. His collection provided a variety of resources for his ministry. Perhaps not coincidentally, this request encouraged the church members to share in worship when on vacation or away from home, and to still remember their church family.

For most people, the first contact with a congregation is visual: the appearance of the church building, grounds and environment, entrance and people. But the church bulletin is the first tangible resource they encounter and take with them. They come to worship for a first time, seeking some support or relationship of faith and nurture. Is that bulletin attractive, inviting, informative, helpful? Or is the bulletin dull, business-like, obviously directed to those who already know its content or format? Here are some ideas for you to consider:

First: the church bulletin is a liturgical / educational tool:

- is it liturgically accurate?
- what are we doing in the liturgy?
- how do the parts relate to other parts of the liturgy?
- where is it found (which hymnal, what pages, etc.)?
- which one of the choices are we using?
- what are the hymns (and verses) we are singing?
- what does the liturgy say or mean?

Second: the church bulletin is an evangelism tool:

- is it written for the visitor as much as for the regular member?
- who and what is this congregation?
- what does the church believe?
- how am I able to participate (especially if it is a Communion service)?
- how does the congregation relate to other congregations?

Third: the church bulletin is an inspirational tool:

- what can I do? [*Note that I did not say “what should I do?”*]
- how am I being encouraged as a Christian and, specifically, as a Lutheran Christian?
- how can I share in support of the congregation and/or its ministries?
- are the graphics inspirational and not just educational?

Fourth: the church bulletin is a communication tool:

- what Good News message is the focus for today or for this week?
- what is happening in the congregation in the near future?
- who are the people involved (especially guest preachers, staff, etc.)?
- how can I participate or communicate with the congregation, the pastor, or the LC-I?

The person preparing the church bulletin has a tremendous and ongoing responsibility!

Here are a few additional ideas:

- the church bulletin should be complete for its purpose, but not cluttered.
- simple graphics and occasional colors give attentive highlights and variety.
- mailed to shut-ins, past visitors, etc., the church bulletin can keep people involved.
- the congregation’s newsletter is an extension of the church bulletin, not separate from it!

Bishop Richard W. Horn, Secretary, Lutheran Church - International





Recent Deaths in the LC-I

Blessed are the dead who die in the LORD, that they rest from their labors.

The Rev. Harvey W. Von Harten, III, an ordained pastor of the Lutheran Church - International and a rostered pastor in the ELCA, died on December 30th, 2020. Since 1993, Pastor Von Harten served as pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church (ELCA) in Coney Island, Brooklyn, New York City. He was ordained by the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod in 1969, and served as an assistant pastor at St. John the Evangelist, Brooklyn, where Fr. Richard John Neuhaus was then pastor. He also served a mission in Georgia and then as an assistant at Grace Lutheran Church, Malverne, NY until his call to Coney Island. Pastor Von Harten was received into the ILF/LC-I by Affirmation of Ordination in 2006 and celebrated his golden jubilee of ordained ministry at St. Paul's in 2019. In addition to his pastoral ministry, he was instrumental in the formation of the Society of the Holy Trinity (STS) in the 1990s and served as Adjunct Chaplain at Christ Lutheran School, Rosedale, NY from 2001 to 2011.

Deaconess Anthonia E. Ataud served for several years as lay Vice-President of the LC-I and its predecessor, the International Lutheran Fellowship (ILF). Deaconess Anthonia, a native of Nigeria living for many years in New York, was a member of Christ, Rosedale, NY and was its delegate to numerous synods. She was very active in evangelism and healing ministries. She had also been a member of the Lutheran Church in Nigeria, and returned to Nigeria in 2014. Her death in Nigeria was within the last few months.

Evelyn Jasodra Latchman, the mother of Deacon Sevika Sooppersaud (husband Deacon Sam Sooppersaud), died on January 24th, 2020 at home in Massapequa, NY at the age of 91. In addition to her 6 children, she was a grandmother of 18, great-grandmother of 16 and a great-great-grandmother of 3 and a large family of siblings, nieces and nephews. She formerly lived in East Canje, Burbice, Guyana before moving to New York.

Our sympathies and prayers are extended to the families, friends and fellow members of these saints of the Church Militant who have now entered the life of the Church Triumphant.

LENT 2021

“As disciples of the Lord Jesus we are called to struggle against everything that leads us away from love of God and neighbor. Repentance, fasting, prayer, and works of love – the discipline of Lent – help us to wage our spiritual warfare.”

Liturgy for Ash Wednesday, LBW

Your Contributions to the LC-I:

Your contributions to the Lutheran Church – International are both needed and appreciated. If you made contributions to the LC-I and/or paid dues for your active membership, a statement for 2020 may be needed for your U.S tax preparation. If you have not yet received your statement and need one, please contact the Treasurer at Treasurer@LutheranChurchInternational.org.

DON'T FORGET 2021 DUES! for Bishops, Pastors, Deacons: **\$75**; for Congregations: **\$150**





OUR PRAYERS

- ❖ For God’s comfort and care as we thank Him in remembrance of those who died and as we lift up in prayer all those who continue the love and service now left behind. Those we especially remember are Pastor Harvey Von Harten, Deaconess Anthonia Ataud, Jasodra Latchman, Police Officer Brian Sicknick, Officer Howard Liebengood, Officer Jeffery Smith, Pastoral Missionary Harry Robert Moyer, Helen Poust, Patricia Hendricks, Karl Rudloff.
- ❖ For Deacon Anna Hayes as she continues in ministries for St. Paul’s, Coney Island NY.
- ❖ For The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Christ, Rosedale NY, their congregation, deacons and leadership, their Call Committee, Interim Pastor and Bishop seeking to fill their pastoral vacancy.
- ❖ For the LC-I faithful in India during these times of trial with COVID-19.
- ❖ For those throughout the world who bring comfort, care and inoculations against COVID-19.
- ❖ For those suffering from natural disasters, from the ravages of war, and from acts of bias with racial, political and social prejudice and injustice.
- ❖ In thanksgiving for new opportunities and growth of ministries in Africa, Brazil and Canada.
- ❖ For Holy Cross Mission and Pastor James Townsend in Sacramento CA and for Pastor Bruce Hackman and his ministries in the San Pedro CA area.
- ❖ In thanksgiving for the ministries of Deacon Helena Morris and Deacon Norbert Mayer.
- ❖ For the LC-I Southern Diocese and for the ministries of Pastor William Babbitt, Pastor William Gies, and Pastor Arthur Hebbeler.
- ❖ For the Lutheran Deaconess Association, partners with us in ministry.
- ❖ For safety and joy for Pastor Gene Fortune as he travels.
- ❖ For Bishop Troy Harris and his congregations in Australia.
- ❖ For Bishop Douglas Pieper; for Father Dan Funk and the ministry of Holy Family Anglican Parish.
- ❖ For all those who are connected in ministries through the World Lutheran Parish of the LC-I.
- ❖ For health, strength and mercy for those known to us and to God.

Our LC-I Website:

The official website of the LC-I has a lot of interesting features, including the current and past issues of the **BULLETIN**, the LC-I Constitution, photos of various ministries and people, and lots more. Pastor William H. Wigmore is the webmaster: <http://www.lutheranchurchinternational.org/our-church-1.html>

LC-I on Facebook:

LC-I Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=120687811346672&ref=br_rs
World Lutheran Parish: <https://www.facebook.com/Lutheran-World-Parish-348944365237640/>

May God continue to bless + all of you and your ministries.

++ Robert W. Hotes,
Archbishop, Lutheran Church - International

Do you know of individuals interested in receiving this **BULLETIN**?
Please forward a copy AND send the names and email addresses to the Archbishop:
Archbishop@LutheranChurchInternational.org

