



### The Augsburg Confessions: The True Biblical Teachings of Christianity

The month of June is a significant month for the life of our congregation at St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church and for Lutherans around the world. This past month of June marked the one hundred and sixteenth anniversary since the founding of this congregation in Stacy, MN. Also, last month on June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020, marked the 490<sup>th</sup> anniversary since the publishing of the Augsburg Confessions.

For many of you reading this article, many may be asking, "The Augsburg what?". If you are and have no clue what the Augsburg Confessions are, do not feel bad. For many years, especially from the 1980's until recently, many Lutheran Pastors have done a poor job, if not totally abandoned, teaching the Augsburg Confessions in their congregations. Some have been faithful in teaching according to the Augsburg Confessions but have not taught them to their congregations so they can properly understand what we confess to be the true and accurate teachings of Christianity according to the Bible. In this article, I will give a brief explanation on what these great teachings are in the Augsburg Confessions, who wrote them, and why they matter today.

On June 25, 1530, the Augsburg Confessions were written in German and Latin by Martin Luther's right hand man, Philip Melancthon. They were presented to Charles V, the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, who wanted a statement of what Lutherans believe in order to determine if they were to be legalized as a Church body in Germany. The twenty eight articles of the Augsburg Confessions stated what the true Christian Church should confess according to God's Holy Scripture, the Bible, compared to the confessions of faith of Romanism (The Roman Catholic Church), and the other groups like the reformed, anabaptist and other radical groups that formed after the start of the reformation. Luther was fully capable of writing such confessions on his own, but by having Philip Melancthon, an accomplished respected scholar and theologian of his day, provided a sense of extra star power and credibility to them and showed that this is not just confessions of a radical group lead by Martin Luther, but this was a movement lead by the Holy Spirit that was unleashing God's Word to the world.

The twenty-eight articles of the Augsburg Confessions are the statements on what we believe the Bible teaches us on the topic of 1. God, 2. Original Sin, 3. The Son of God, 4. Justification, 5. The Ministry, 6. New Obedience, 7. The Church, 8. What the Church is, 9. Baptism, 10. The Lord's Supper, 11. Confession, 12. Repentance, 13. The Use of Sacraments, 14. Order in the Church, 15. Church Ceremonies, 16. Civil Government, 17. Christ's Return for Judgement, 18. Free Will, 19. The Cause of Sin, 20. Good Works, 21. Worship of Saints, 22. Both Kinds in the Sacraments, 23. Marriage for Priests, 24. The Mass, 25. Confession, 26. Distinction of Meats, 27. Monastic Vows and 28. Church Authority.

*Article continued...*

Why was this important to our Church in 1530 and is still important today? It is important because what we confess as Christians in a congregation and in our daily lives matters. Jesus cares about what we say about Him and how we are saved because it could affect us eternally. In 2020, we have just as many false teachers in our world today, if not more than in 1530 in the days of Martin Luther. Jesus warned us of this in Matthew 7:15 to “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.”

Throughout the entire Bible, God speaks of discerning, gives warning, tells us to judge or says to beware of false doctrine and if one who lives morally counter to the faith they claim to have in Christ is a result of bad teaching. God cares about what we confess in the walls of our church because it affects how we live our daily lives, how we worship, and how we treat our neighbors.

As St. Paul tells St. Timothy in his letter to him in 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 1:3-11, “<sup>3</sup>As I urged you when I was going to Macedonia, remain at Ephesus so that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine, <sup>4</sup>nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies, which promote speculations rather than the stewardship from God that is by faith. <sup>5</sup>The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. <sup>6</sup>Certain persons, by swerving from these, have wandered away into vain discussion, <sup>7</sup>desiring to be teachers of the law, without understanding either what they are saying or the things about which they make confident assertions. <sup>8</sup>Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully, <sup>9</sup>understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, <sup>10</sup>the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine, <sup>11</sup>in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted.” St. Paul warns that bad morality is a result of bad doctrine.

It is offensive to confess that there is only one true teaching of Christianity and all other teaching counter to the true teaching is dangerous for our souls. It is uncomfortable and dangerous when we need to tell someone that what they are teaching is wrong. If we truly love our neighbors as Christ wants us to, we must be bold as St. Paul, Martin Luther, Philip Melancthon, St. Agatha (a 14 year old Christian girl who sang the Psalms while being burned at the stake for not denying her faith in Christ) and many great Christians before us and speak the truth in love when someone is teaching falsehoods about Christ. Doctrine matters and what denominations teach matters because it matters to Jesus Christ. So let us confess boldly our confession of Faith in the Words of the Augsburg Confessions because they are confessions that as Layman Gregory Bruck, the Elector who delivered them to The Holy Roman Emperor Charles V said, “The Augsburg Confessions are a Confession that will prevail against the gates of hell, with the help and grace of God!”

In an ever-changing world, it is more important than ever with tyranny growing in government throughout the United States and false teachers rampant on television and in our daily lives to reject false teachings of Christianity. Let us reclaim these wonderful confessions in the Augsburg Confessions, clinging to their teachings of Christ so that we, by His grace, live a life worthy of the Gospel.

Peace to you in Christ Jesus our Lord and Savior,  
Pastor Ben Hollingsead

## St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church – LCMC

## Church Council Minutes

**Date:** 5/18/2020

**Present:** Vickey Nelson, Harvey Berg (in for Roxann Berg), Derek Fitcher, Pastor Ben, Jim Johnson, Bethany Hardy, Nicole Anderson, Linda Welch, Sue Lein, Paul Dahlstrom, Hal Satter

**Absent:** Patha Vue

Meeting held via Skype & called to order at 7:05 PM by Linda Welch.

Pastor Ben opened with prayer and devotion.

**Minutes Approved**

Harvey motioned to approve the minutes from 4/20/20, Jim seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**Financial Report**

April 2020 Financial Report was reviewed. Discussion about why the gas and electricity were so high even though we have limited use of the church. We pay 30 days after service so there is a delay and we will see a change in future billing.

We are receiving offerings through the online donation process from many people.

**Pastor's Report**

Continuing with online platforms for services, devotions, catechism studies, and hymnal studies.

Two recent deaths: Dale Negen passed away about 2 weeks ago, and Lynell Frenning

Memorial Day service at the cemetery, at Stacy-Lent cemetery at 9:00

Many calls for help, Pastor Ben has been able to his pastoral discretionary fund to help those in need during this time.

A new Christ candle holder is being made for the church that will match the rest of the altar. Funds had been set aside a while ago for this to cover the cost.

**New Business**

- Property

Roofers were here today but did not get to work long due to the high winds.

- Paycheck Protection Program Loan

Loan is for \$14,160 and will go primarily towards salaries for office staff and LAP staff, not Pastor Ben. Need to fill 40 hours per week at \$15 per hour to ensure that the loan will be forgiven. This can be done through multiple people. The rest will be able to be used for gas, electric, water, internet, phone, etc.

- Church positions to fill

Secretary

Need to hire a secretary due to Rachel being let go last month.

Lisa Loso has expressed interest in the position and would make a great candidate.

Jim Johnson motioned to hire Lisa Loso as Secretary, Sue Lein seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Lisa will be hired for 30 hrs. for the first 6 weeks, the duration of the PPP loan, then 15-20 hours afterward at \$18/hour.

Pastor Ben will be her direct supervisor.

## Church Council Minutes Continued...

- Church positions to fill (continued)

## Janitor

An ad has been put out for the janitor position. Some candidates have applied and Ben will contact them for potential interviews.

\$12/hour for 10-15 hours

- Little Angel Preschool

With the PPP loan teachers are providing families with distance learning lessons, videos, and parent communications.

Since we can not have graduation the teachers are doing a drop off for each student with an end of the year gift and final wave goodbye.

- Reopening of church

Derek motioned to reopen service starting May 31st with an opening plan of one service per week at 9:00 am with the reopen plan as stated below, Hal seconded. Motion carried.

**Reopen Date:** One service each Sunday at 9:00 starting May 31st.

**Social Distancing Plan:**

Rope off every other pews, post signs to instruct families sit near the ends to social distance within the pews.

Tables will be removed and rearranged in the fellowship area for those that do not fit in the sanctuary.

**Cleaning Plan Between Services:**

Pew cushions will be removed.

Pews used will be rotated each week the virus lives for 4 days on wood.

Bathrooms will be cleaned.

Fellowship table clothes will be removed.

Fellowship tables will be cleaned.

CDC cleaning protocols will be reviewed and followed.

**Communion Distribution:**

Took a vote for communion distribution at services. The majority vote was yes.

A few scenarios are being sorted out and will be voted on by the council via email.

- Positions of council

All positions will be held until we are able to have a semi-annual meeting.

- Auto-deposit

Online giving is going well and an update will be provided in the next Voice.

Bethany motioned to adjourn at 8:34 pm, Vickey seconded, motion carried.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by,

Bethany Hardy, Council Secretary

St John's Lutheran Church Financial Report  
May 2020

Budget Offerings ( 5 Sundays)	\$17,589.70
Actual Offerings Received	\$10,503.00
<i>Offering Budget Shortage</i>	(\$7,086.70)
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Postage	\$300.00
Phone	\$80.00
Advertising/Evangelism	\$28.00
Worship Supplies	\$40.00
Pastor's Discretion Exp. Acct	\$343.00
Computer Operations	\$125.00
Payroll Service Fees	\$32.00
<b>Administrative Expenses</b>	<b>\$948.00</b>
Excel Electric	\$562.00
Gas	\$0.00
City Water & Trash	\$62.00
Custodial Supplies-Misc	\$30.00
Building Repair&Maint.	\$37.00
<b>Building Expenses</b>	<b>\$691.00</b>
<i>Employee Salaries</i>	<i>\$6,990.00</i>
<i>Visiting Pastors</i>	<i>\$0.00</i>
<i>Work comp Ins</i>	<i>\$0.00</i>
<b>Total Salaries</b>	<b>\$6,990.00</b>
<b>Christian Outreach</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$8,629.00</b>
End of Month Total	\$1,874.00
(offerings minus expenses)	
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Check Book Balance	\$99,032.00
Liabilities	(\$14,150.00)
<i>Actual Cash Balance</i>	<i>\$84,882.00</i>
Dedicated accounts balance:	\$93,576.00
Church Account Balance:	(\$8,694.00)
North Branch Sch. Rental Balance:	\$8,100.00 (included in check book balance)
General Offering Balance: Year to Date:	(\$11,903.00)

If you have any question regarding this report, please call  
Patha Vue Treasurer at (651) 313-3165

## **\*\*ATTENTION MEMBERS\*\***

### **Semi-Annual Congregation Meeting**

**Sunday, July 26, 2020 at 10:30 AM.**

#### Some changes at Little Angel Preschool

Little Angel Preschool would like to thank Makayla Wahlberg for her dedication and hard work as the director of our school. Makayla will be leaving our school effective June 30th as she has been offered a job opportunity that is ideal for her educational background and family. Although she is leaving us, we are excited for her to make a positive impact on children experiencing trauma and other adversities. Makayla has been a blessing to our school and will be greatly missed.



Little Angel Preschool

As some of you may know, I am the coordinator for the Forest Lake Area Schools Early Childhood Programs. With the challenging times ahead with planning the return to school while abiding by state and district guidelines, I have some very challenging and stressful days ahead of me. With this in mind, I have made the tough decision to leave the school board, effective June 30th, so that I do not spread myself too thin. I have enjoyed my time serving as the LAP Chairperson and am sad to leave. Both of these positions will be filled as we are able.

Bethany Hardy  
School Board Chairperson  
Little Angel Preschool

### **Christian Outreach**

Will be having a short meeting July 13, 2020 at 6:00 PM to get back in touch with each other.

If you have any questions, please call Barb Peterson.

### **Viking Vittles**

#### **Summer Distribution**

Started June 10th



**When:** Wednesday 3– 6 PM (or until gone)

**Where:** \* Trinity Lutheran Church

\* Countryside Mobile Home Park

\* Stacy Loins Park

**Just stop by one of the above location and pick up bags of food for you children.**

For more information on volunteering or donating, please contact Harvey Berg.



# July 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4 INDEPENDENCE DAY
5 Service 9:00 AM	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 Service 9:00 AM	13 Christian Outreach—6:30 PM	14 School Board 6:30 PM	15	16	17	18
19 Service 9:00 AM	20 Council Meeting 7:00PM	21	22	23	24	25
26 Service 9:00 AM Semi-Annual Meeting—10:30 AM	27	28	29	30	31	



Little Angel Preschool

The School Board is in need of new membership to properly serve the families enrolled in our preschool program. All voices are welcome on the school board, you do not need to have educational experience to serve on the board. School board members can be parents, people in the community, or congregation. Your voice helps us to ensure quality programming is offered to families and to spread the word in the community about Little Angel Preschool.

If you are interested in learning more please, email

[lapchairperson@gmail.com](mailto:lapchairperson@gmail.com) or call the church office at 651-462-5115 and you will be put in touch with someone.

## Sunday Service

**Reminder: we are holding Sunday Service at 9:00 AM.**

**We have masks available if you would like one.**

• *Calendar*

◆ *Announcements*

◆ *Financial Report*

◆ *Council Minutes*

◆ *Pastor's Article*

*Inside This Issue:*

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*Pastor Ben Hollingshead*

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**St John's Evangelical Lutheran Church**

**The Voice of St. John's**

Non-Profit Organization

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