



THE FEAST OF ST. MICHAEL &  
ALL HOLY ANGELS  
(SEPTEMBER 29)  
THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY  
AFTER TRINITY

Concordia Evangelical Lutheran Church  
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**WELCOME TO ALL!** We are pleased you are here! **GUESTS** – if you are participating in the live stream during this time, welcome to our Divine Service! If we can assist you in any way with questions about our confession of faith, spiritual struggles, understanding our liturgical service, or any other need, please let us know. It is our prayer that the Gospel of Jesus Christ will strengthen and comfort you.

† In the Name of Jesus †

Prayer before Worship: I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that you have graciously kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray You to protect me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings in life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.

*The Divine Service: Rite Three*  
*Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary: p. 88*

The Office of Preparation

Hymn of Invocation: 547, *Jesus, Brightness of the Father*

**C: Jesus, Brightness of the Father, Life and Strength of all who live,  
For creating guardian angels Glory to Thy name we give  
And Thy wondrous praise rehearse, Singing in harmonious verse.**

SEPTEMBER 26, 2021 † 9:00 A. M.

**Blessed Lord, by their protection Shelter us from harm this day;  
Keep us pure in flesh and spirit, Save us from the Foe, we pray,  
And vouchsafe us by Thy grace In Thy Paradise a place.**

**Glory to th'almighty Father Sing we with the heav'nly host;  
Glory to the great Redeemer, Glory to the Holy Ghost;  
Three in One and One in Three, Throughout all eternity!**

Invocation & Confession of Sin: p. 88

**P:** In the name of the Father and of the Son † and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

**P:** Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins;

**C: His mercy endures forever.**

**P:** Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love You and worthily magnify Your holy name.

**C: Amen.**

**P:** Let us confess our sins:

**C: Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of the world: We confess that we have sinned against Your divine majesty by thought, word and deed, provoking Your wrath against us. We earnestly repent and are heartily sorry for our sins. We grieve to think of them. Their burden is intolerable. Have mercy upon us, gracious Father! Forgive us our sins for the sake of Your Son Jesus Christ. Grant that we may serve You in newness of life, to the honor and glory of Your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**P:** Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy upon us and has given His only-begotten Son to die for us, and for His sake forgives us all our sins. To all who believe on His name He gives power to become the children of God, and has promised them His Holy Spirit. He who believes and is baptized shall be saved.

**C:** Grant this unto us, O Lord. Amen.

## The Liturgy of the Word

### Introit

Tone 1



Antiphon (**Pastor**) Bless the LORD, you His angels, who `excel in strength:/ That do His commandments, hearkening unto the `voice of His word.

Bless the LORD, `all you His hosts:/ You ministers of His, that `do His pleasure.

Psalm (All) Bless the Lord, `O my *soul*:/ And all that is within me, bless `His holy name!  
For as the heavens are high `above the earth:/ So great is His mercy toward `those who fear Him;

As far as the east `is from the west:/ So far has He removed our trans`gressions from us.

As a father pi`ties his children:/ So the Lord pities `those who fear Him.

Gloria Patri (All) Glory be to the Father `and to the Son:/ and to `the Holy Ghost.

As it was in the be`ginning, is now:/ and ever shall be, forever`more. Amen.

Antiphon (All) Bless the LORD, you His angels, who `excel in strength:/ That do His commandments, hearkening unto the `voice of His word.

Bless the LORD, `all you His hosts:/ You ministers of His, that `do His pleasure.

The Kyrie Eleison: p. 89

C: Lord, have mercy on us.

Kyrie eleison.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Christe eleison.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Kyrie eleison.

Gloria in Excelsis: pp. 90-92

C: Glory to God in the highest, and peace to His people on earth.

Lord God, heav`nly King, almighty God and Father,

we worship You, we give You thanks, we praise You for Your glory.

Lord, Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,

Lord God, Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world. Have mercy on us;

You are seated at the right hand of God the Father: receive our prayer.

For You alone are the Holy One, You alone are the Lord.

You alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit  
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Collect for the Day: p. 66

**P:** O everlasting God, You have ordained and constituted the services of angels and men in a wonderful order: Mercifully grant that, as Your holy angels always serve You in heaven, so by Your appointment they may also help and defend us here on earth; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one true God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Collect for the Seventeenth Sunday After Trinity

**P:** Lord, we beseech You, grant Your people strength to withstand the temptations of the devil, and with pure hearts and minds to follow You, the only God; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one true God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Old Testament: *Daniel 12:1-3*

**P:** *In those days Daniel prophesied:* At that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, every one who is found written in the book. And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever.

**P:** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C:** **Thanks be to God.**

Gradual: p. 92-93

Tone 1



**P:** God has given His angels `charge over thee:/ To keep you `in all your ways.  
Bless the `LORD, O my soul:/ And all that is within me, bless `His holy name!

**C:**     **The Word of our God stands forever.**  
          **Blessed be God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.**  
          **The Word of our God stands forever.**

Chief Hymn: 545, *Lord God, We All to Thee Give Praise*, sts. 1-6

**C:**     **Lord God, we all to Thee give praise, Thank off' rings meet to Thee we raise**  
          **That Thou didst angel hosts create Around Thy glorious throne to wait.**

**They glow with light and heav'nly grace And constantly behold Thy face;  
Obedience to Thy voice they yield, And are with godly wisdom filled.**

**They never rest nor sleep, as we; Their whole delight is but to be  
Forever near Thee, gracious Lord, Thy little flock to watch and guard.**

**The foul old dragon and dread foe With envy, hate, and wrath doth glow;  
It always is his aim and pride Thy Christian people to divide.**

**As he hath troubled earth of old He keeps e'en now his deathly hold,  
Chafes madly to annihilate All virtue, honor, Church, and State.**

**Therefore, no halt nor rest he knows; A roaring lion round he goes,  
Or lies in wait with baneful snare To drive the Christians to despair.**

Epistle: *Revelation 12:7-12*

**P:** And war broke out in heaven; Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. Therefore rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time."

**P:** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

Chief Hymn: *545, Lord God, We All to Thee Give Praise, sts. 7-9*

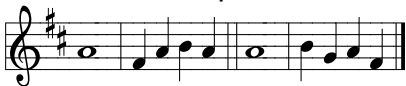
**C: But watchful is the angel band That follows Christ on ev'ry hand  
To guard His people where they go And break the counsel of the foe.**

**From Daniel this may well be seen When he sat in the lion's den,  
And likewise angels rescued Lot, That the ungodly harmed him not.**

**When, too, those faithful three were cast Into the fiery furnace blast,  
No pow'r had fiercest flames to harm Against the rescuing angel's arm.**

Alleluia Verse: p. 93

Tone 1



**P:** Alleluia! Alleluia! And one cried to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts: The whole earth is full of His glory!” Alleluia!

**C:** **Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

**Your Word is truth. Sanctify us in Your truth.**

**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

Holy Gospel: *St. Matthew 18:1-11 (spoken responses)*

**P:** The Holy Gospel according to † St. Matthew, the 18<sup>th</sup> chapter:

**C:** **Glory be to You, O Lord.**

**P:** *At that time* the disciples came to Jesus saying, “Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me. But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe to the world because of offenses! For offenses must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes! If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire. Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven. For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost.

**P:** This is the † Holy Gospel.

**C:** **Praise be to You, O Christ.**

Apostles’ Creed: p. 94

**P:** Let us confess our holy faith in the words of the Apostles’ Creed:

**C:** **I believe in God the Father Almighty,**

**Maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ,**

**His only Son, our Lord;  
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified,  
died and was buried.**

**He descended into hell;  
The third day He rose again from the dead;  
He ascended into heavenly  
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;  
From there He shall come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Christian Church,  
the Communion of Saints,  
the Forgiveness of sins,  
the Resurrection of the body,  
and the Life everlasting.  
Amen.**

*Chief Hymn: 545, Lord God, We All to Thee Give Praise, sts. 10-16*

**C: And thus our God, still at this day, From harm and many an evil way  
Keeps us by His dear angel guard, Placed over us as watch and ward.**

**They joy when but one sinner turns; Their zeal for Jesus ever burns;  
They serve His people day and night To bring us to the realms of light.**

**The little ones, awake, asleep, Yea, ev'ry child of His, they keep;  
O'er all His kingdom, far and near, They give their kind and loving care.**

**When death approaches, then they come To soothe mid pain and guide us home;  
When from our flesh departs our soul, They bear us to our heav'nly goal.**

**For this, now and eternally, Our praise shall rise, O God, to Thee,  
Whom all the angel hosts adore With joy now and forevermore.**

**Give us, O Lord, the grace and pow'r To serve Thee well each day and hour;  
Grant us the zeal and fervent love To serve as angels serve above.**

**We also pray Thee to defend By them unto the latter end,  
Thy fold, that little flock, O Lord, That holds in honor Thy blest Word.**

## Sermon

The Prayer of the Church: pp. 96-97

**P:** Let us pray for the Church and for all people according to their needs.

**P:** Almighty God and Father, we thank You for all Your goodness and tender mercies, especially for the gift of Your dear Son, through whom You have revealed Your grace. We pray that You would plant Your Word in our hearts that we may cling to it in faith and bear much fruit in well doing.

**C: O God, in the multitude of Your mercy, hear us in the truth of Your salvation.**

**P:** Strengthen and defend Your Church, that by Your Word and Sacraments faith may grow and love toward all increase. Guide and protect all who spread abroad the light of Your truth throughout the world. Bless the schools, colleges, and seminaries of the Church that they may send forth laborers to serve You in the ministry of Your Word, in the ministry of mercy, and in all godly walks of life. Let the light of Your Word shine continually in our homes. Keep the children of the Church in the grace of their Baptism, and grant that all entrusted with their care may bring them up in true faith and obedience to Your will.

**C: Let all rejoice who trust in You, let them shout for joy because You defend them.**

**P:** Guide and bless all lawful authority, especially our President, the Congress, and the Governor and legislators of this state. Give them wisdom and sound judgment, that justice may prevail and wickedness be hindered and punished.

**C: Hear, O Lord, and have mercy! Lord be our Helper!**

**P:** We commend to Your care all who are in trouble, want, sickness or any other adversity, especially those who are suffering for Your name and Your truth. Comfort them, O God, with Your Holy Spirit, that in all their afflictions they may acknowledge Your fatherly will and rejoice in Your gracious and speedy deliverance.

**C: O Lord, be with all in trouble. Hear their prayers to the honor of Your name.**

**P:** Let Your blessing rest on seed time and harvest, on commerce and industry, on medicine and science; sanctify the arts and culture, the rest and leisure of Your people. Protect all who travel, and care for all whose labor is difficult or dangerous. Bless all who in their daily calling endeavor to do Your will, and give them the assurance that their work is pleasing in Your sight.

**C: Blessed are You, O Lord, for You have not turned away from our prayer!**



**P:** Protect our bodies and souls from all harm and danger; support us in our last hour with Your mercy; and finally admit us into Your eternal joy, to love and serve You in the blessed company of Your saints and angels forevermore; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one true God, now and forever. Amen.

**C: The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit. The righteous cry out and the Lord hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles.**

**P:** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.

Hymn: (Te Deum): *44, Thee, God, We Praise, Thy Name We Bless*

**C: Thee, God, we praise, Thy name we bless, Thee, Lord, of all we do confess;  
The whole creation worships Thee, The Father of eternity.**

**To Thee aloud all angels cry, The heav'ns and all the pow'rs on high,  
The cherubs and the seraphs join, And thus they hymn Thy praise divine.**

**O holy, holy, holy Lord, Thou, God, of hosts, by all adored;  
Earth and the heav'ns are full of Thee, Thy light, Thy pow'r, Thy majesty.**

**Th'apostles join the glorious throng, The prophets swell th'immortal song,  
The white-robed hosts of martyrs bright All serve and praise Thee day and night.**

**The holy Church in ev'ry place Throughout the world exalts Thy praise,  
And ever doth acknowledge Thee, Father of boundless majesty.**

**O God eternal, mighty King, We unto Thee our praises bring;  
And to Thy true and only Son, And Holy Spirit, Three in One.**

**O King of glory, Christ the Lord, God's everlasting Son-the Word,  
To rescue mankind from its doom, Thou didst our very flesh assume.**

**Thou overcamest death's sharp sting, Believers unto heav'n to bring;  
At God's right hand, exalted there, Thou dost the Father's glory share.**

The Collect of Thanks: pp. 105

**P:** Let us give thanks and pray:

**C: We thank You, Lord God the Father, that You have given us Your only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.**

**We thank You, Lord Jesus Christ, that You have borne in Your sacred body all our sins, and by Your blood have blotted out all our transgressions.**

**We thank You, Lord the Holy Spirit, that You have created in our hearts true faith, that we know of nothing to trust for our salvation, except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.**

**O God, grant us Your grace, that we may perfectly believe that all our sins are forgiven for the sake of the passion and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, and so enlighten us by Your Holy Spirit, that in the power of our Redeemer's death, we may day by day put off sin, and never forsake the Lord Jesus Christ, until we see Him face to face in life eternal. We ask it all in Christ's name. Amen.**

**Our Father...**

The Benediction: pp. 104

**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: Amen, amen, amen.**

Dismissal Hymn: (Te Deum): *44, Thee, God, We Praise, Thy Name We Bless*

**C: And we believe Thou wilt descend To be our judge, when comes the end;  
Thy servants help, whom Thou, O God, Hast ransomed with Thy precious blood.**

**Among Thy saints let us be found With glory everlasting crowned;  
Thy people save from age to age, And bless Thy chosen heritage.**

**O guide them, lift them up for aye: We magnify Thee day by day,  
Thy name we worship and adore, World without end, for evermore.**

**Vouchsafe, O Lord, we humbly pray, To keep us safe from sin this day:  
O Lord, have mercy on us all, Have mercy on us when we call.**

**Thy mercy, Lord, to us extend, As on Thy mercy we depend:  
Lord, I have put my trust in Thee, Confounded let me never be.**

# ***Our Life Together***

**Bible Studies:** Today we finish up chapter 12 in Hebrews and get into chapter 13. We are wrapping up our study of Hebrews in the next 2-3 weeks. The plan after Hebrews is to take two weeks to watch a video of world-famous Lutheran Apologist and defender of the Christian faith, Dr. John Warwick Montgomery. The video is entitled *A Lawyer's Defense of Christianity*. Dr. Montgomery demonstrates how the claims of Christianity can in fact be proven “beyond a reasonable doubt” based on overwhelming evidence. After that, we will survey the remainder of the New Testament Epistles after Hebrews: James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1, 2 & 3 John, and Jude. In our Thursday Bible study we are moving on to John 13-17, which are the “End Times” chapters in John’s Gospel. *Bible studies are open to the entire parish, either in person at Bethany, or online through google hangouts.*

**Hope Medical Clinic’s Walk for Hope** is on Saturday! Thank you to those who have pledged so far. Your donation is appreciated. There is still time to pledge and even being a walker. For more information and/or help signing up, please talk to our Hope liaison, Kristen Lawson. Also, check out the website: <https://givebutter.com/walkforhope2021>.

**Literature:** If you didn’t get these last Sunday, please pick up a copy of the most recent *Lutheran Sentinel* and *Mission News*. Both are available on the literature table in the Narthex.

**ELS General Pastors Conference:** Next week (Oct. 5-8), Pastor will be in the Twin Cities, MN for our ELS General Pastors Conference. The following week (Oct. 13-15) he will be at the WELS/ELS Pastors & Teachers conference held this year in Leavenworth, WA.

**October Calendars** are available on the literature table in the Narthex.

**ELS Center for Apologetics & Worldview:** Pick up a copy or two (or three) of the October article from our Synod’s *Apologetics & Worldview center* available in the Narthex. The title this month is *Did Moses Really Write the Pentateuch?* Written by ELS Pastor Christian Eisenbeis, this article briefly explores the evidence for the historic truth that the author of the first five books of the Bible is in fact Moses. Genesis through Deuteronomy are not later products of a hodge-podge of “other sources,” but are the work of the greatest of the Old Testament prophets.

## Feasts, Commemorations, and Events

**Matins live streamed for the Parish: Tuesday-Saturday, 8am**

**Monday:** Pastor's Day Off

**Tuesday:** Pastor at Bethany

**Wednesday:** FEAST OF ST. MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS Pastor at Concordia, 9:30-5

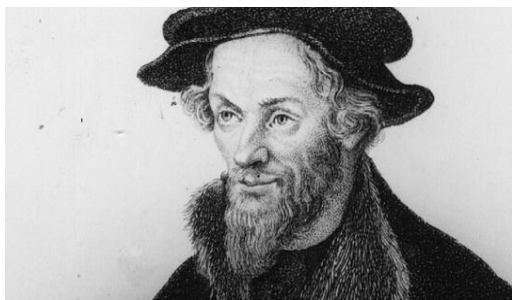
**Thursday:** *Comm. Of St. Jerome of Jerusalem, Bishop & Teacher* Pastor at Bethany;  
Bible Study at Bethany, 10:00am

**Friday:** Pastor at Concordia 9:30-5

**Saturday:** Pastor at Bethany

**Next Sunday:** *First Sunday After Michaelmas (Trinity 19)*

Holy Communion, 9am; Hebrews Study following Bethany's Service



**Hymns for Michaelmas:** The CHIEF HYMN for St. Michael & All Angels is Philip Melancthon's *Lord God, We All to Thee Give Praise*. Luther, Melancthon (his most valued partner in reform) and others paid little formal attention to angels. Perhaps this was a reaction against the false medieval veneration of angels as mediators with their own power to direct events on earth. Angels were still a

living part of their faith, though, as witnessed by Luther's morning and evening prayers in the Small Catechism, which commend the one praying into the care of the holy angel who combats the wicked foe in the believer's life. The Lutherans viewed all of human history since the fall as the battleground on which the devil seeks to undermine God's rule over His human creatures. Melancthon's hymn, written sometime around 1540, is a 16-verse poetic treatise on the angels. It expresses his confidence that God, who created the angel hosts, also marshals them for the conflict with Satan that besets individual believers, the Church, and society. The hymn extols God's protection given through these angelic beings who, assembled in the light of their Creator's throne, are listening to His Word. They never sleep, but like God Himself, they are ever watchful so that they can wage constant battle against the enemies of God's people.

# Explaining the Divine Service

## Communing with God: The Sermon, Part 1

### The Lutheran Church: A Preaching Church

Every Lutheran has some idea of how the Reformation restored preaching to its proper place in the church service. The *Apology of the Augsburg Confession* compares preaching in the Evangelical Lutheran churches to the preaching, or lack of preaching, in the Papal churches of the day:

Among the adversaries, in many regions, no sermons are delivered during the entire year, except during Lent. Yet the chief service of God is to preach the Gospel. When the adversaries do preach, they speak of human traditions, of the worship of saints and similar trifles, which the people justly hate. Therefore, they are immediately deserted in the beginning, after the reading of the Gospel text. A few better ones begin now to speak of good works; but about the righteousness of faith, faith in Christ, and the comfort of consciences, they say nothing. Indeed, this most wholesome part of the Gospel they rail at with their reproaches. On the contrary, in our churches all the sermons are filled with such topics as these: repentance; the fear of God; faith in Christ, the righteousness of faith, the comfort of consciences by faith; the exercises of faith; prayer, what its nature should be, and that we should be fully confident that it is powerful, that it is heard; the cross; the authority of officials and all civil ordinances; the distinction between the kingdom of Christ, or the spiritual kingdom, and political affairs; marriage; the education and instruction of children; chastity; all the offices of love. (*Concordia*, p. 219 – 1<sup>st</sup> edition)

### There Must be Preaching!

There are a number of things to glean from this description of Lutheran preaching. First, ***Lutherans actually preach sermons!*** Except in the rarest of circumstances, there ought always to be preaching in the Divine Service. Why? Because the church of all generations is called to teach and proclaim the Word of God and apply it to the faithful and the world in its own generation.

Jesus was a preacher. Preaching was the prophetic function of his three-fold office of **Prophet**, Priest, and King. The Old Testament prophets were sent by God to preach God's Word. Their mission was to call people to repent of their sins and to proclaim the coming of the Christ Who would come into the world to atone for sin. Jesus fulfilled that office. He preached that the Old Testament was fulfilled in His

coming. He did this not simply by reading the Old Testament Scriptures to the people, but chiefly by telling the people what the Old Testament Scriptures meant, by expounding on them and applying them. Everywhere he went, He preached (see for example, the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-7; also: Luke 4:16-30; Luke 4:31-32, 42-44; Luke 6:6).

Jesus sent out His apostles to preach (Matthew 28:18-19; Luke 24:46-47), and the very first thing the apostles did on Pentecost, after they had received the Holy Spirit, was preach. Peter's Pentecost sermon was a proclamation and application of three Old Testament texts: Joel 2:28-32, Psalm 16:8-11, and Psalm 110:1. Acts 2:42 gives us the basic structure for the early church's Divine Service: *And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers.* In other words, the faithful gathered together to listen to the apostles preach sermons and to celebrate the Lord's Supper, all within the context of *the prayers*, or the liturgy.

### **The Heart of Lutheran Preaching: Law and Gospel**

Second, the quotation from the *Apology* tells us that ***Lutheran sermons chiefly proclaim Law and Gospel.*** *The chief service of God is to preach the Gospel.* "The Gospel" is the good news of God's grace and forgiveness to sinners in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Sermons must proclaim that this Gospel is *for you*: God sent His Son into the world *for you*; Jesus Christ suffered and died, and rose again *for you*; The forgiveness of sins is *for you*.

Yet, in order for the sinner to care that the Gospel is *for him* or *for her*, there must be an acknowledgment of one's own sin, and need for Christ and the forgiveness of sins. Thus, any sermon must preach the Law, and that Law must be proclaimed to God's people where they are. There certainly is a need to point out the common sins of the world in which the members of the congregation live so that they will be warned not to "go along with the crowd." The main thrust of the Law's preaching, however, is never at the evil world outside. It is directed at the Christian sitting in the pew – one who is a Christian, but who also has a sinful nature. What sins have you committed? Do you repent? A Lutheran preacher hits the sinner who is listening to the sermon right where it hurts, so that the healing medicine of the Gospel may be applied to the sinner's wound.

*The Law and the Gospel*, then, are the two words from God that should be clearly heard in any sermon. For our Lord has said in Luke 24: ... *that repentance (Law) and remission of sins (Gospel) should be preached in His name to all nations,*

...

The Holy Scriptures are the Word of God. They are THE very words of the living God who inspired prophets, apostles, and evangelists to write them down (2 Tim. 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21). We must insist, however, that sermons are also the Word of God, insofar as they teach what the Bible teaches. The sermon that conforms to the Scriptures is also the very voice of the living God calling out to sinners to repent and believe the Gospel. The Law isn't just information *about* what God wants from us. It is actually God's voice that convicts the sinner of sin. The Gospel isn't just a word *about* Jesus or God's love for the world. In the preaching of the Gospel the living God Himself actually gives repentant sinners the gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation.

### **The Lutheran Church: A Teaching Church**

Finally, the quotation above from the Apology tells us that *Lutheran sermons teach Christian doctrine*. Go back and read that long quotation again, and consider the comprehensive list of doctrinal topics that sermons are to teach. The focal point of a Lutheran sermon is, of course, the Law and the Gospel. But that is not to the exclusion of the rest of Christian doctrine. On the contrary, all of the various topics of the Christian faith find their center in those two basic words from God: *Law* and *Gospel*. Thus, a proper preaching of Law and Gospel will necessarily touch on all the doctrines of the faith that God has revealed to us in His Holy Word.

