

LIFE IN CHRIST

Receiving God's Gifts — Sharing God's Gifts

The Newsletter of Christ Lutheran Church, Jackson, MS

+ July 2021 +



NORMAN ROCKWELL

On the Cover:
Freedom to Worship
Norman Rockwell
1943

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4423 I-55 North
Jackson, MS 39206
(601) 366-2055
www.ChristLutheranJacksonMS.org
Rev. George Fields
Sr. Sara Fields



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Let Us Attend

Pastor Fields

As we mentioned last month, the Season of Pentecost is a season of teaching, of engaging the Word of God and inwardly digesting it; of making it a part of ourselves. We study it not that we may merely know about it, but that it may become a part of us, that it may grow within us, and blossom in our day to day lives. For this reason, the color of the season is green, for in this season, we take in the teachings of Christ, and find new life.

We very often talk about the doctrines of the Bible. Sometimes the doctrines of the Bible even make the news; that this or that practice is good or bad, whether it be prayer in schools or graphic adult education for minors. The Word of God has much to say on such public, 'social' issues. But its concern is much more focused upon the individual believer; how he lives and acts, and whether he who has faith lives and acts well.

Just think of a few passages from the New Testament. The Lord Himself teaches, *'take first out the log from your own eye before the speck from another.'* Elsewhere He instructs us to *'judge not, lest we be judged.'* St. Paul writes: *'work out your faith with fear and trembling.'*

There is much to be said about each of these verses, but the one thing that is clear in all of them is that they call us not to focus on our neighbor, his sins, his problems, his faith, but to work out our own. And this is not out of any selfish naval-gazing, it is because it is God's concern to convict and work faith in another, it is our concern to embrace the faith worked in ourselves by Christ for ourselves. This is what the Bible calls 'wisdom'. Wisdom is making the faith *once for all handed over to the saints* our own, and to make its works and deeds central to our day to day lives.

It is not easy to gain wisdom from the Word of God. In fact, it is a life-long journey; hence why we repeat these 'Green Days' every single year, where we *grow in wisdom and stature*.

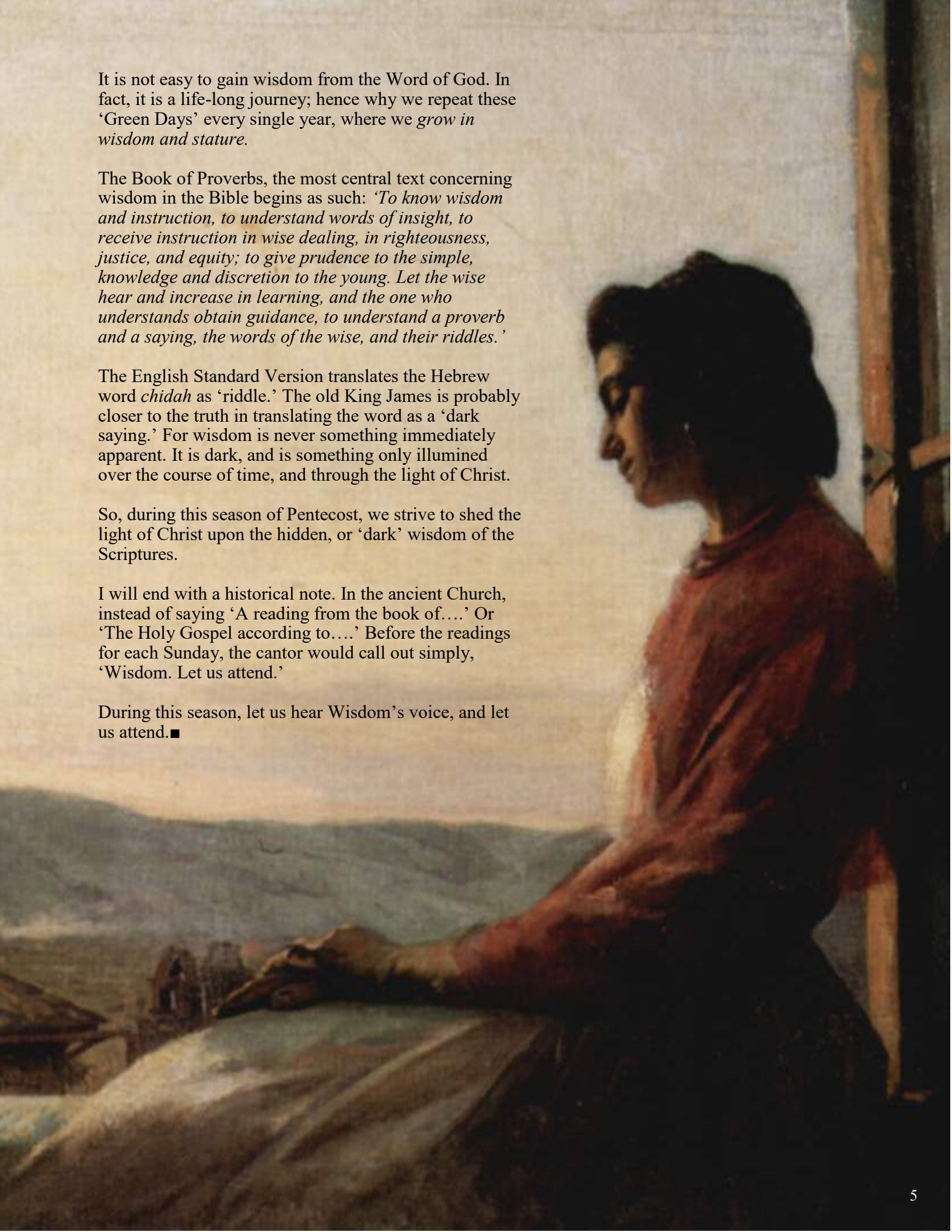
The Book of Proverbs, the most central text concerning wisdom in the Bible begins as such: *'To know wisdom and instruction, to understand words of insight, to receive instruction in wise dealing, in righteousness, justice, and equity; to give prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the young. Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance, to understand a proverb and a saying, the words of the wise, and their riddles.'*

The English Standard Version translates the Hebrew word *chidah* as 'riddle.' The old King James is probably closer to the truth in translating the word as a 'dark saying.' For wisdom is never something immediately apparent. It is dark, and is something only illumined over the course of time, and through the light of Christ.

So, during this season of Pentecost, we strive to shed the light of Christ upon the hidden, or 'dark' wisdom of the Scriptures.

I will end with a historical note. In the ancient Church, instead of saying 'A reading from the book of....' Or 'The Holy Gospel according to....' Before the readings for each Sunday, the cantor would call out simply, 'Wisdom. Let us attend.'

During this season, let us hear Wisdom's voice, and let us attend. ■



CLC Kids'

POOL PARTY

PARTY



What better way for the CLC kids to splash into summer than with a pool and pizza party! On June 19th, we gathered for some summer fun in the Hansfords' backyard and swam the afternoon away. The dads chilled under the tent, the moms talked VBS, and the kids enjoyed every manner of pool shenanigans. God is good to provide us with the blessing of fellowship with our church family!

Thank you to the Hansfords for hosting such a wonderful afternoon!



Beginning above, going clockwise:

1. The older kids help the littles navigate uncharted waters.
2. The dads perfect the art of chilling.
3. Alexis Burkhalter and Sister Sara say 'cheese.'
4. Emma Agent and Emily Held wrangle the Kettler Kids.
5. The boys (and one stray girl) float out to sea.
6. Ellie Fields and Emily Held pose for a picture.
7. Miles Agent and Ellie Fields sport the world's classiest eyewear.
8. Allison Agent and Lori Held stay cool in the shade. ■




Obedience to

An Independence Day Memorial

Pastor Fields

G



It is in the month of July that we celebrate Independence Day, and I am generally loath to speak much of politics. However, I love to speak of trivia, and trivia I shall give you.

Before the now official Seal of the United States of America was adopted, with its iconic eagle bearing both an olive branch, symbolizing the longing for peace, and a slew of arrows, symbolizing the willingness to wage war, there was another seal proposed by none other than Thomas Jefferson.

On one side, the seal put forth the national motto of *'E Pluribus Unum'*. With it were depicted Lady Justice and Lady Virtue, on either side of a shield. The shield was divided into six parts. The top two were a rose and a thistle, representing England and Scotland, the places where most in the United States had come from. Beneath them was a lyre and the fleur-de-lis, the first representing King David, the wise ruler, and the second Mary, the Mother of God, symbolizing the humility of a newborn nation. Under that was a dove and a lion, the dove representing peace, and the lion representing the willingness to fight for liberty.

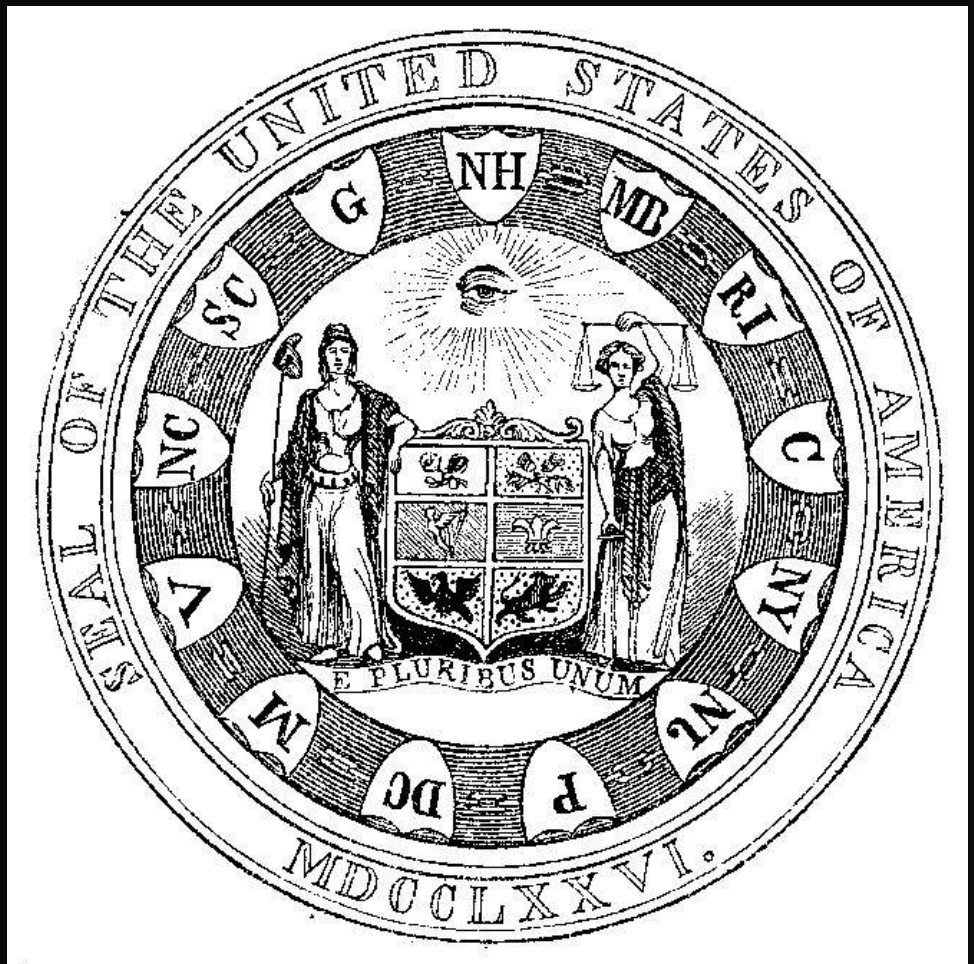
On the other side of the seal, more interestingly, was a depiction of Moses leading the Israelites through the Red Sea, with the sea consuming the Egyptians. This

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was to show that America was a nation drawn out of another nation; a new people delivered from an old people; and ultimately a New World guarded by God against the despotism of the Old World.

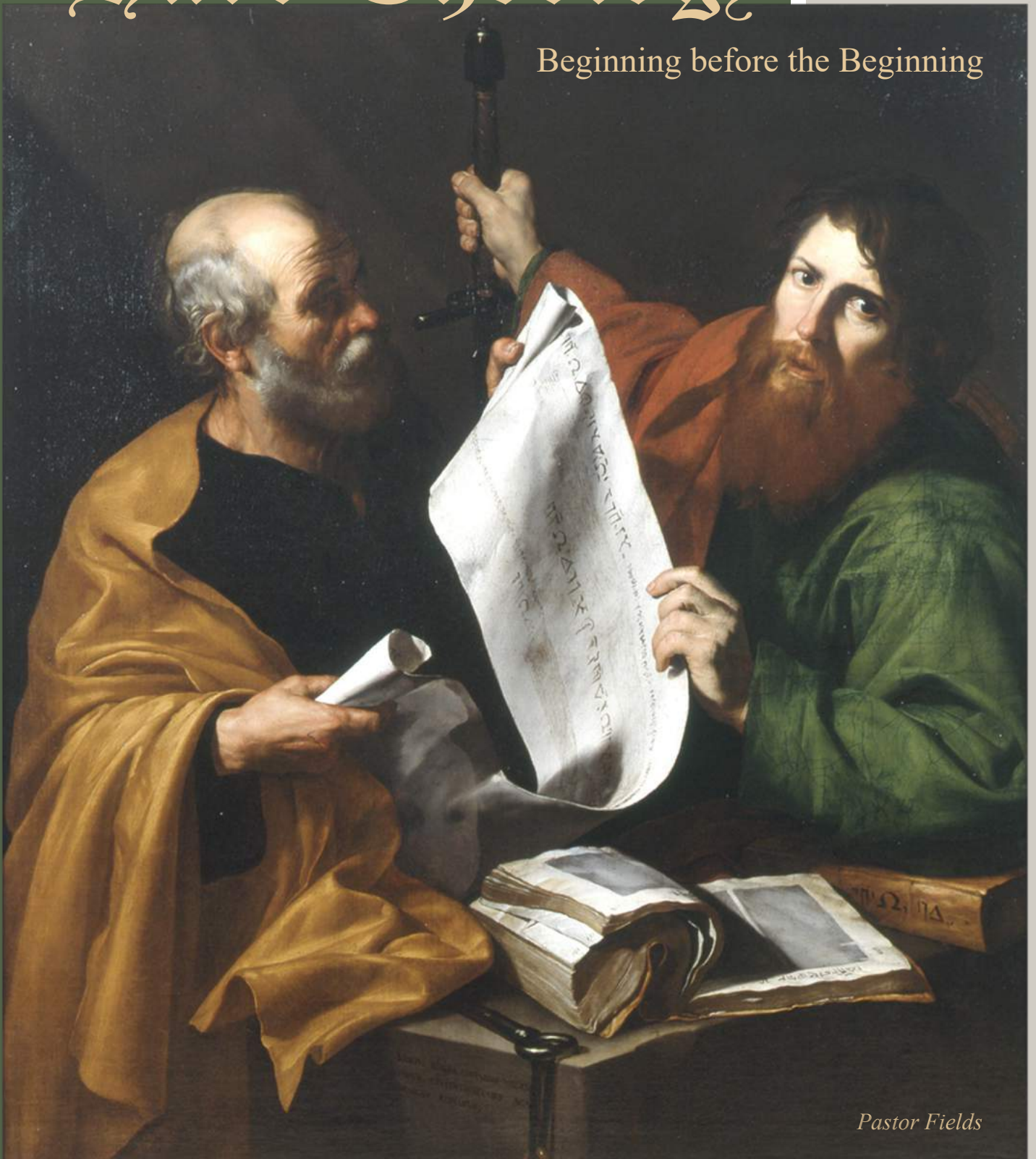
Around this side of the seal are the words: 'Rebellion to Tyrants is Obedience to God.' A proclamation that, ultimately, our loyalty is only to God, and only to the country insofar as it observes the justice and freedom commanded by God.

Nothing of this original seal remains in the current seal, save the phrase, '*E Pluribus Unum*'. Yet it is interesting to note, at least as trivium, the original Christian symbolism of our first proposed seal; and that seal proposed by Jefferson, someone who was never known to be particularly religious. Yet, though he did not practice Christianity, he understood deeply the fact that the nation was rooted in it. And so, that was the seal he produced. ■



Hard Theology

Beginning before the Beginning



Pastor Fields

Pious Christians, from the most simple to the greatest intellects, read good, often profound, works of Christian theology, written by saints, theologians, lay doctors, and mystics; and from these, they glean great insight, often transforming their lives.

However, few Christians who do not wear the black of the clergy ever set an eye on what can be termed ‘hard theology’; not ‘hard’ in the sense of ‘difficult’, but ‘hard’ in the sense of being logically forceful and philosophically defensible. Such ‘hard theology’ is often contained in books with Latin or Greek titles, and the jargon employed in them is so distant from everyday speech that they are almost impossible to understand to many who are not trained in Platonic and Aristotelian nomenclature (a fancy word for terminology).

Many Christians are tempted to say that such fanciful theology is

useless to the regular Christian, and therefore there is no point in thinking about it. I will admit that it is useless in the sense that it will not get you into heaven, for the *faith of a child* is what the Lord asks, and no more. That being said, that is not to say that there is nothing uplifting to be found in such theology, no wisdom to be procured out of its depths.

Thus we will be starting a little series, where we look at a passage from a few works of ‘hard theology’, attempt to translate them into normal talk, and then see why it is important to normal believers.

So let us begin with what comes before the beginning, that is with God, and His existence, Him who is the beginning of all that ever began.

The following is a passage from St. Thomas Aquinas:

‘I answer that the existence of God can be proven in five ways. The first and more manifest way is the argument from motion. It is certain, and evident to our sense, that in the world some things are put in motion. Now whatever is in motion is put in motion by another, for nothing can be in motion except it is in potentiality to that towards which it is in motion; whereas a thing moves inasmuch as it is in act. For motion is nothing else than the reduction of something from potentiality to actuality. But nothing can be reduced from potentiality to actuality, except by something in a state of actuality. Now it is not possible that the same thing should be at once in actuality and potentiality in the same respect, but only in different respects. It is therefore impossible that in the same respect and in the same way a thing should be both mover and moved, i.e. that it should move itself. Therefore whatever is in motion must be put in motion by another. But this cannot go on for infinity. Therefore it is necessary to arrive at a first mover, put in motion by no other; and this everyone understands to be God.’

— Let’s make sense of this. —

It can be confusing to read because Thomas does not use the word ‘move’ to mean ‘physically move’ or even ‘to move in time’ but to ‘logically cause’, that is, everything that happens is caused by something that happened prior to it, if not in time, at least in logic. A billiard ball is caused to

move because another ball hit it, which only moved because a pool cue hit it, which only moved because a player pushed it forward, which he only did because he desired to sink a ball, which he only did because he desired to win a game, which he only wanted to do because he

wants to show that he is a good pool player, which he only wants because he has a crush on a girl watching him play, etc. etc.

Notice that some of those ‘causes’ are in a sequence in time: the cue hits a ball, that hits another ball, in that order. But some of the other ‘causes’ are ‘timeless’: he may have wanted to impress others in showing his pool prowess before he ever had an interest in the girl, or vice versa. But as it concerns this particular situation, he wants to demonstrate his skills to impress the girl. Therefore impressing the girl logically precedes him playing pool.

This ‘chain of logic’ can be traced back, well, forever, or at least almost forever. It can’t actually be traced back forever, because if it were to go back forever, well, how would we have ever gotten to the present situation? There must be an ‘original reason’ for all this pool playing,

something that is the ‘first cause’ of all other events that follow it. And Thomas calls this ‘first cause’ God, for ultimately, everything that occurs, and everything we do, even the silly and carnal things we do, go back to our desire to be good, which is to be like The Good, which is to be like God.

Though this seems like a ridiculously difficult way of explaining the nature of God as ‘first cause’, it makes a difference in our lives, for it shows that everything we do, whether we know it or not, is linked in the end to God, and our deep, even if ignored, longing for Him. Whether we are kissing our spouse or painting on a canvas, all these things, these actions and desires, derive from one source, God; and it is our holy privilege as Christians to discern the connection between all we do, and all He is. ■

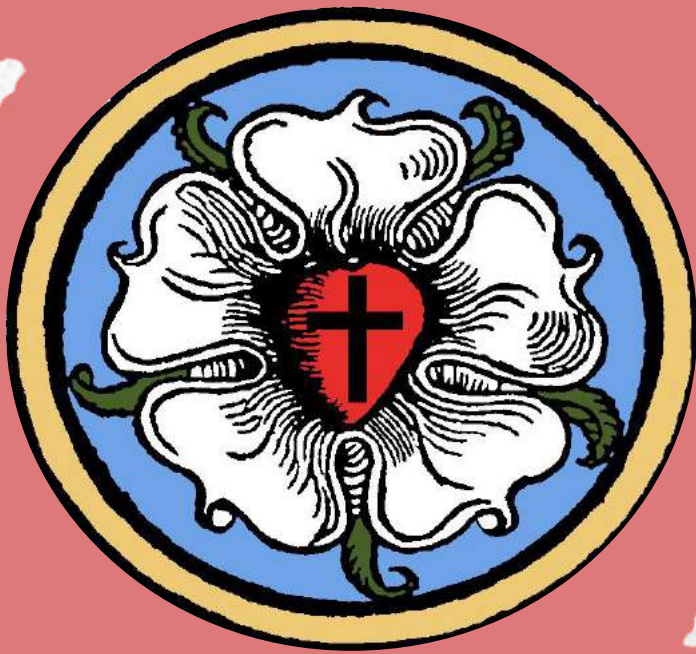


Ladies Night Out



The Lutheran Ladies enjoyed another night of fellowship last month, complete with a gorgeous view! Our gals gathered at Shaggy's on the Rez to soak in the sunshine and waves—and plenty of hush puppies, of course—while catching up with one another on a nice night off.

Many thanks to Alexis Burkhalter for organizing June's dinner! If you are interested in "hosting" a Ladies' Night Out (i.e. selecting a restaurant and collecting RSVP's; or, hosting in your home, if you like!), sign up in the Fellowship Hall or contact Sister Sara! ■



Update on

Spain

At the end of 2020, our beloved missionary to Spain, Rev. David Warner and his wife Shelee, returned to the States—this time, not just to visit, but to accept a call to South Dakota! Rev. Warner now serves Our Redeemer in Custer, SD, and Our Savior in Hill City, SD.

Amidst this time of their transition, we continue to pray for Rev. and Mrs. Warner and to thank God for blessings He brought our Spanish brethren through them. Rev. Warner left the church of Spain in faithful hands, and we look forward to supporting this nascent church through 2021 as they begin to take steps on their own.

Below is a story written for the LCMS International website upon the Warners' return to the United States. Stay tuned for more news about the Lutherans in Spain!



The Latin American and Caribbean field celebrates Pastor David and Shelee Warner and their six and a half years of dedicated missionary service in Spain. Though their departure is bittersweet, we are eager to see how the Lord will use them next.

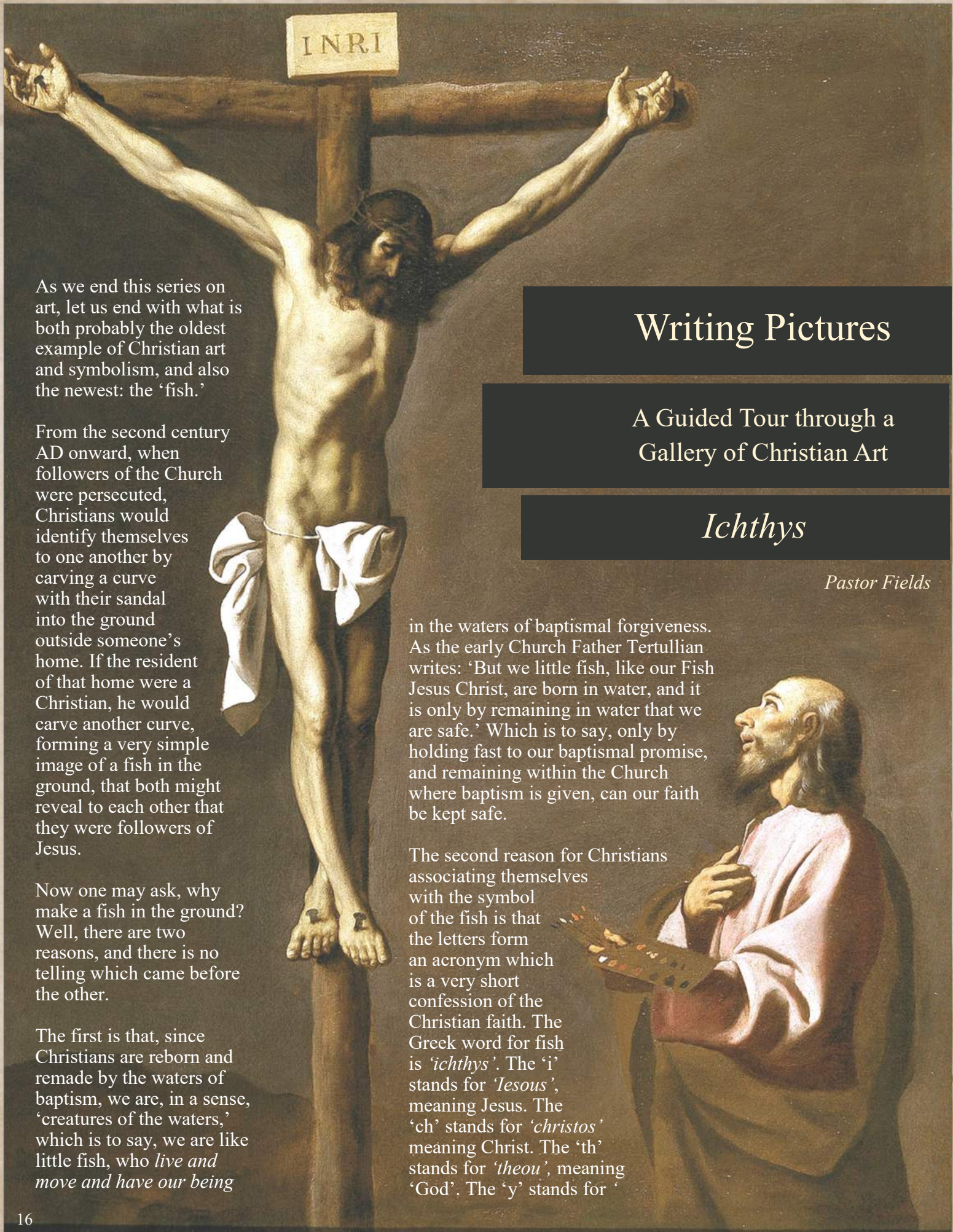
The Spanish Evangelical Lutheran Church (IELE) has persevered through many obstacles, and through it all, God has remained steadfast, blessing the seeds planted and growing His church.

While the Warners were on the field, they began to see a growing hunger for the Word of God. The frequency of Word and Sacrament ministry in Spain expanded greatly from intermittent meetings to three locations offering the Eucharist every Sunday, several new mission points, and other mid-week activities. The IELE saw God double church membership from 70 to 135. The number of ordained Spanish pastors grew from one to three. Two more men are nearing ordination, one woman is pursuing diaconal studies, and eight men have voiced interest in pastoral formation.

The IELE was blessed by Pastor Warner's service as Bishop for many years. We are thrilled to announce that Spanish Pastor José Luis of Valencia, who graduated from Seminario Concordia El Reformador – República Dominicana, will fill the position as a worker-priest. Pastor Warner played an integral part in the pastoral formation of Pastor Luis, and it is always a monumental achievement when a national replaces a missionary.

We wish Pastor Warner and Shelee all the best and ask for prayers in their transition. While they will miss Spain's beautiful beaches, sunshine, history, and food, the two are looking forward to spending time with their grandchildren as they prayerfully wait to see where the Lord might call them to serve next.

Story and photos by Johanna Heidorn. Johanna serves as an LCMS Missionary photographer based in the Dominican Republic. ■



As we end this series on art, let us end with what is both probably the oldest example of Christian art and symbolism, and also the newest: the 'fish.'

From the second century AD onward, when followers of the Church were persecuted, Christians would identify themselves to one another by carving a curve with their sandal into the ground outside someone's home. If the resident of that home were a Christian, he would carve another curve, forming a very simple image of a fish in the ground, that both might reveal to each other that they were followers of Jesus.

Now one may ask, why make a fish in the ground? Well, there are two reasons, and there is no telling which came before the other.

The first is that, since Christians are reborn and remade by the waters of baptism, we are, in a sense, 'creatures of the waters,' which is to say, we are like little fish, who *live and move and have our being*

Writing Pictures

A Guided Tour through a Gallery of Christian Art

Ichthys

Pastor Fields

in the waters of baptismal forgiveness. As the early Church Father Tertullian writes: 'But we little fish, like our Fish Jesus Christ, are born in water, and it is only by remaining in water that we are safe.' Which is to say, only by holding fast to our baptismal promise, and remaining within the Church where baptism is given, can our faith be kept safe.

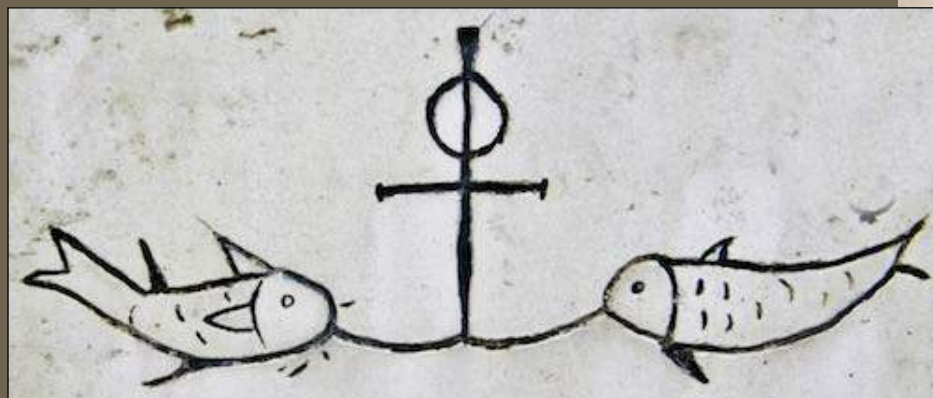
The second reason for Christians associating themselves with the symbol of the fish is that the letters form an acronym which is a very short confession of the Christian faith. The Greek word for fish is *'ichthys'*. The 'i' stands for *'Iesous'*, meaning Jesus. The 'ch' stands for *'christos'* meaning Christ. The 'th' stands for *'theou'*, meaning 'God'. The 'y' stands for 'y'

'yous' meaning 'son.' And finally, the 's' stands for 'soter' meaning 'savior.' Thus, taken together, the letters mean 'Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Savior.'

The Church has used the symbol of the fish everywhere, in paintings and mosaics, particularly in the Classical period, in all its art; and now, in this day, it adorns the trunks of many a car, signifying the faith of the traveler.

Though it be much derided by the world as a sign of a simpleton, and mocked by would-be clever atheists as they attach to the fish arms and legs, demonstrating that their worldview is little more than a priggish joke on an actual vision of life, it remains for the Church its most enduring symbol. And it, along with the Church, shall outlast every vain philosophy or faddish trend. It shall outlast even priggish jokes.

After all, few continued to mock Christ after He was raised from the dead, and even fewer will when He returns to judge the world. ■



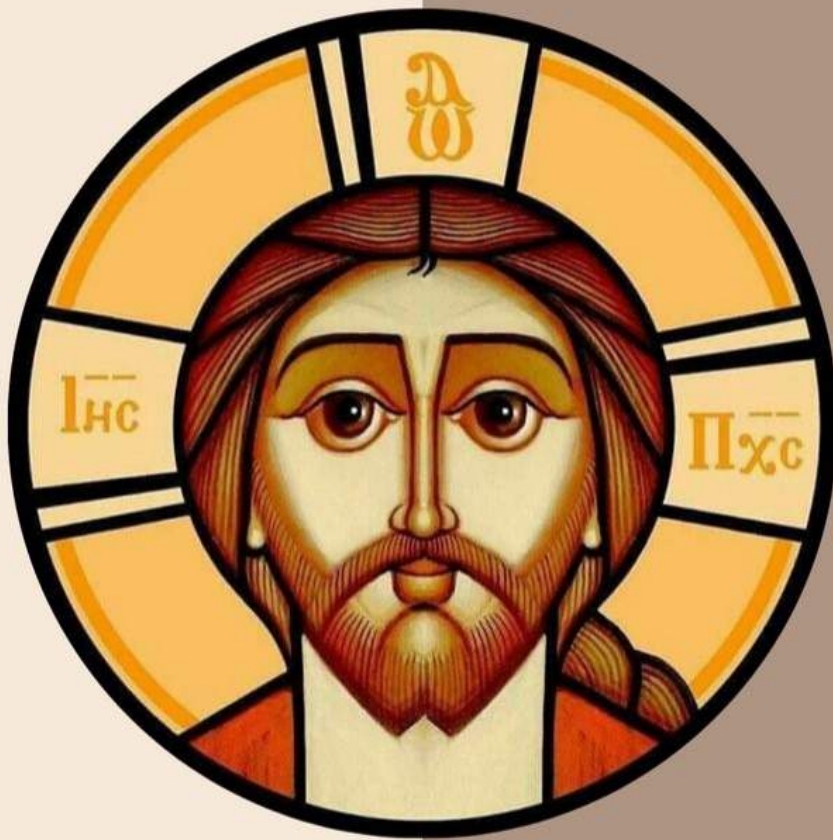
Top: Example of how the *Ichthys* was drawn in the sand

Middle: Gravestone of St. Domitilla, in a Catacomb in Rome

Bottom: Funerary Stele of Licinia Amias, in the Baths of Diocletian, Rome

According

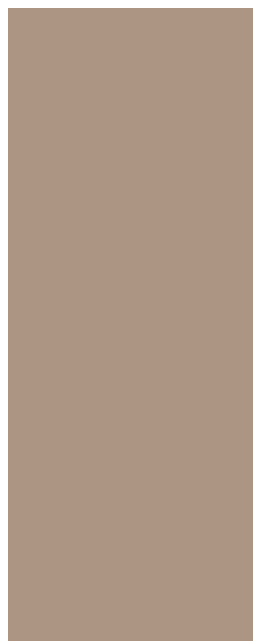
to the



Scriptures

Christ Lutheran VBS

2021





After a long, quiet summer last year, VBS returned with a vengeance! Christ Lutheran kids gathered this June for a long-awaited journey together through the Scriptures. As the title of this year's VBS implies, the kids saw how Jesus did all things *according to the Scriptures*: whether it was suffering in our place, giving Himself as the perfect sacrifice, or rising from the dead, He did these things just as He promised loooooong before they happened. We saw bloody 'paint' on the lintels and doorposts, did some painting of our own (*not* on the lintels and doorposts, of course), shared in some dinnertime "table fellowship," and burned off energy with Scripture-based games and obstacles courses!

Thank you

to all the kids,
parents, contributors,
and volunteers who
helped to make this
year's vacation Bible
school possible!

Photos...

Top right, going
clockwise: 1. Dads (Glen,
Jonathan, Brian, and
Pastor Fields) calmly
surveying the controlled
chaos that is VBS. 2.
William Held "helps" prep
for VBS. 3. Alexis
Burkhalter leads crafts.
4. Parker and Pastor and
pizza! 5. Allison Agent
explains the game of the
day, as always with the
cross at the forefront.
6. Westin
Ramsey,
painting with
passion! 7. Parker
Ramsey
(assisted by
Emma
Agent and
Emily Held)
crosses the
[plastic-]snake-
infested
waters of the
obstacle
course. ■



koinonia

Beginning a new book this July!

If you have been waiting for an opportunity to dive into a book study, your chance has come! Koinonia, one of our two monthly studies, is beginning a new book this month: *Saving Leonardo: A Call to Resist the Secular Assault on Mind, Morals, & Meaning*, by Nancy Pearcey. In this break from our recent run of fictional works, we will probe questions of worldview, culture, and Christian relevance in today's secular context.

Still curious? See the back cover summary:

“Is secularism a positive force in the modern world or does it lead to fragmentation and disintegration? In *Saving Leonardo*, best-selling award-winning author Nancy Pearcey (*Total Truth*, coauthor *How Now Shall We Live?*) makes a compelling case that secularism is destructive and dehumanizing.

“Pearcey depicts the revolutionary thinkers and artists, the ideas and events, leading step by step to the unleashing of secular worldviews that undermine human dignity and liberty. She crafts a fresh approach that exposes the real-world impact of ideas in philosophy, science, art, literature, and film—voices that surround us in the classroom, in the movie theater, and in our living rooms.

“A former agnostic, Pearcey offers a persuasive case for historic Christianity as a holistic and humane alternative. She equips readers to counter the life-denying worldviews that are radically restructuring society and pervading our daily lives. Whether you are a devoted Christian, determined secularist, or don't know quite where you stand, reading *Saving Leonardo* will unsettle established views and topple ideological idols.”

Koinonia meets once a month, beginning with dinner and old-fashioned fellowship, and ending with us elbow-deep in discussion. If you are interested in joining us for this new book, contact Sister Sara at sistersara@christlutheranjaxsonms.org! ■



SAVING LEONARDO

A Call To Resist The Secular Assault On
Mind, Morals, & Meaning





THIS MONTH

At Christ Lutheran

Find Christ Lutheran on
Facebook and MeWe!

Divine Services
Bulletins
Church Updates
Blog Posts
Devotions
And More!



ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΑ KOINONIA



SAVING LEONARDO

*A Call To Resist The Secular Assault On
Mind, Morals, & Meaning*



Hansford Home
July 25
5:00 p.m.



Galatians, Colossians, & Philippians

Join us for a journey through these
Pauline Epistles!

Beginning July 15

Thursdays
9:30 a.m.



Artwork in This Issue:

Cover: *Freedom to Worship*, Norman Rockwell, 1943.

Page 4-5: *Giovannina is sitting on the windowsill*, Pavel Chistyakov, 1864.

Page 10: *Saint Peter & Saint Paul*, Jusepe de Ribera, 1616.

Page 12: *The Apotheosis of Saint Thomas Aquinas*, Francisco de Zurbaran, 1631.

Page 14-15: Photos by Johanna Heidorn.

Page 16: *St. Luke Painting the Crucifixion*, Francisco de Zurbaran, c. 1650.

JOIN US FOR BIBLE STUDY

bible & breaky | fridays @ 6:30 a.m.



Ladies Night Out

Hansford Home
Wednesday, July 28
6:00 p.m.

Please RSVP to Krista by July 25



Saints' Days in July

- 2 The Visitation
- 6 St. Isaiah, Prophet
- 9 St. Ephrem the Syrian, Confessor
- 14 St. Bonaventure, Confessor
- 16 St. Ruth
- 19 St. Macrina
- 20 St. Elijah, Prophet
- 21 St. Ezekiel, Prophet
- 22 St. Mary Magdalene
- 25 St. James the Elder, Apostle
- 28 St. Johann Sebastian Bach, Kantor
- 29 Sts. Mary, Martha, & Lazarus
- 30 St. Robert Barnes, Martyr
- 31 St. Joseph of Arimathea



THE VISITATION
+ July 2 +

The **Issues**, Etc.
MAKING the CASE
CONFERENCE

July 23 & 24, 2021, Chicago, IL



July 2021

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
PRAYER FAMILIES and BIRTHDAYS Barbara Glenn						1 6:30 a.m. Bible Study <i>The Visitation</i>	3
	Allen & Sabrina Goodlett 5—Bailey Martin 5—Elaine Monaghan 6—Keeley Rimoldi	4 PENTECOST VI 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Divine Service	5	<i>St. Isaiah</i> 6:15 p.m. Elders Mtg.	7	8	9 6:30 a.m. Bible Study <i>St. Ephrem</i>
Haines Family 12—Zach Haines 14—Charles Cowards	11 PENTECOST VII 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Divine Service	12	6:15 p.m. Council Mtg.	14 <i>St. Bonaventure</i>	15	16 6:30 a.m. Bible Study <i>St. Ruth</i>	17
Merina Hansen 19—Sheryl Taylor 21—Eloise Springer 22—Barbara Glenn	18 PENTECOST VIII 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Divine Service 11:30 a.m. New Members Reception	19 <i>St. Macrina</i>	<i>St. Elijah</i>	21 <i>St. Ezekiel</i>	22 <i>St. Mary Magdalene</i>	23 6:30 a.m. Bible Study	24
Hansford Family 25—Emily Held	25 PENTECOST IX 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Divine Service 5:00 p.m. Koimonia <i>St. James the Elder</i>	26	27	28 <i>St. J.S. Bach</i> 6:00 p.m. LNO	29 <i>St. Mary, Martha, & Lazarus</i>	30 6:30 a.m. Bible Study <i>St. Robert Barnes</i>	31 <i>St. Joseph of Arimathea</i>