

St. Stephen Lutheran Church

Member congregation of the Church of the Lutheran Confession (clclutheran.org)

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March 23, 2025 † Lent 3



We Welcome Our Visitors who are with us this morning.

We hope that you are uplifted by the Gospel at our worship service.

We invite you to join us every Sunday.

† Preparation for Worship: Read Psalm 23 (Lutheran Service Book or Pew Bible) †

**Our Worship Services will be Posted to Our Website Each Sunday Evening.
To Watch our Worship Service Online Please Click This Link:**

<https://www.sslwest.org/worship.html>

Opening Hymn 423 Jesus, Refuge of the Weary

(LSB 423)



1 Je - sus, ref - uge of the wea - ry, Blest Re - deem - er,
2 Do we pass that cross un - heed - ing, Breath - ing no re -
3 Je - sus, may our hearts be burn - ing With more fer - vent



whom we love, Foun - tain in life's des - ert drea - ry, Sav - ior
pen - tant vow, Though we see You wound - ed, bleed - ing, See Your
love for You; May our eyes be ev - er turn - ing To be -



from the world a - bove: Of - ten have Your eyes, of - fend - ed,
thorn - en - cir - cled brow? Yet Your sin - less death has brought us
hold Your cross a - new Till in glo - ry, part - ed nev - er



Gazed up - on the sin - ner's fall; Yet up - on the
Life e - ter - nal, peace, and rest; On - ly what Your
From the bless - ed Sav - ior's side, Grav - en in our



cross ex - tend - ed, You have borne the pain of all.
grace has taught us Calms the sin - ner's deep dis - tress.
hearts for - ev - er, Dwell the cross, the Cru - ci - fied.

Text: Girolamo Savonarola, 1452–98; tr. Jane F. Wilde, 1826–96, alt.

Tune: Erbaulicher Musicalischer Christen-Schatz, 1745, Basel

Text and tune: Public domain

Invocation

We invoke ("call upon") the name of the one true God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

P In the name of the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Confession and Absolution

We come before our Holy God recognizing that we are sinful and daily need His forgiveness.

P God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.

C If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one

another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

C **If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** (1 John 1:5, 7-9)

P Let us pray...

C **Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer:**

We confess that we are sinful by nature, and have sinned against You in our thoughts, words, and actions. We have not loved You above all things. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. Have mercy on us, and, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, forgive us our sins.

P Jesus Christ is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. We are forgiven! With boldness and confidence we may approach the throne to find grace to help in time of need. In the joy and peace of forgiveness let us praise the Lord...

"Oh, That I Had a Thousand Voices" LSB 811

The image shows a musical score for the hymn "Oh, That I Had a Thousand Voices". It consists of four staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is simple and hymn-like. The lyrics are: "I Oh, that I had a thou - sand voic - es To praise my God with thou-sand tongues! My heart, which in the Lord re - joic - es, Would then pro-claim in grate - ful songs To all, wher - ev - er I might be, What great things God has done for me."

Text: Johann Mentzer, 1658-1734; tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, alt. Tune: Johann Balthasar König, 1691-1758
Text: © 1941 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 130003862 Tune: Public domain

Prayer of the Day

P We pray: Almighty God, we confess that we deserve to be punished for our evil deeds. But we ask You graciously to cleanse us from all sin and to comfort us with Your salvation; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

The Passion History of Our Lord Jesus Christ

(According to the Four Gospels (New King James Version))

IV -- The Guiltless for the Guilty

But the Jews were the more fierce, saying, "He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee to this place." When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked if the Man were a Galilean. And as soon as he knew that He belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time. Now when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad; for he had desired for a long time to see Him, because he had heard many things about Him and he hoped to see some miracle done by Him. Then he questioned Him with many words, but He answered him nothing. And the chief priests and the scribes stood there and vehemently accused Him.

Then Herod, with his men of war, treated Him with contempt and mocked Him, arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe and sent Him back to Pilate. That very day Pilate and Herod became friends with each other, for before that they had been at enmity with each other.

Then Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests, the ruler, and the people, said to them, "You have brought this Man to me as one who misleads the people, and indeed, having examined Him in your presence, I have found no fault in this Man concerning those things of which you accuse Him. No, neither did Herod, for I sent you back to him, and indeed nothing worthy of death has been done by Him. I will therefore chastise Him and release Him.

Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to releasing to the multitude one prisoner whom they wished, whomever they requested. And they had then a notorious prisoner called Barabbas, who was chained with his fellow-insurrectionists. He had been

thrown into prison for a certain insurrection made in the city, and for murder. And the multitude cried aloud and began to ask Pilate to do just as he had always done for them. For it was necessary for him to release one to them at the feast.

Therefore when they had gathered together, the governor Pilate answered them, saying, "You have a custom, that I should release someone to you at the Passover. Whom do you want me to release to you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?

Do you therefore want me to release to you the King of the Jews?" For he knew that the chief priests had handed Him over because of envy. While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, "Have nothing to do with that just Man; for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him."

But the chief priests and elders stirred up the crowd and persuaded the multitudes that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. The governor answered and said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?" Then they all cried out at once, saying, "Not this Man, but Barabbas. Away with this Man, and release to us Barabbas." Now Barabbas was a robber. Pilate therefore, wishing to release Jesus, again called out to them. He said to them, "What then do you want me to do with Jesus, who is called Christ, Him whom you call the King of the Jews?" And they all shouted, "Let Him be crucified!" They cried out again, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"

Then the governor said to them the third time, "Why, what evil has He done? I have found no reason for death in Him. I will therefore chastise Him and let Him go." But they were insistent. They cried out more exceedingly, demanding with loud voices that He be crucified. "Let Him be crucified! Crucify Him!"

And the voices of these men and of the chief priests prevailed. When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but that rather a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person. You see to it." And all the people answered and said, "His blood be on us and on our children!"

And wanting to gratify the crowd, Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they requested. And he released Barabbas to them, the one they requested, who for insurrection and murder had been thrown into prison.

Confession of Faith

The 2nd Article of the Apostle's Creed *with explanation from Luther's Catechism (Sydow, p. 87)*

**☩ I believe 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, dead, and buried;
He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead;
He ascended into heaven and sits on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty;
from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe that Jesus Christ, true God,
begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man,
born of the virgin Mary is my Lord.**

**He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person,
purchased and won me from all sin, from death, and from the power of the devil,
not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood
and His innocent suffering and death.**

**He did this that I should be His very own, live under Him in His kingdom,
and serve Him in eternal righteousness, innocence, and joy;
just as He is risen from death, lives and reigns in eternity.**

This is most certainly true!

Hymn of the Day: 709 The King of Love My Shepherd Is (LSB 709)



1 The King of love my shep - herd is, Whose good - ness
2 Where streams of liv - ing wa - ter flow, My ran - somed
3 Per - verse and fool - ish oft I strayed, But yet in
4 In death's dark vale I fear no ill With Thee, dear

fail - eth nev - er; I noth - ing lack if
 soul He lead - eth And, where the ver - dant
 love He sought me And on His shoul - der
 Lord, be - side me, Thy rod and staff my

I am His And He is mine for - ev - er.
 pas - tures grow, With food ce - les - tial feed - eth.
 gent - ly laid And home re - joic - ing brought me.
 com - fort still, Thy cross be - fore to guide me.

5 Thou spreadst a table in my sight;
 Thine unction grace bestoweth;
 And, oh, what transport of delight
 From Thy pure chalice floweth!

6 And so through all the length of days
 Thy goodness faileth never;
 Good Shepherd, may I sing Thy praise
 Within Thy house forever!

Text: Henry W. Baker, 1821–77
 Tune: Irish, c. 18th cent.
 Text and tune: Public domain

Isaiah’s Passion History

Sermon Text: Isaiah 53:6 ⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. Sermon

Theme: The Shepherd and the Sheep

1. Our sheeplike nature
2. The shepherding care of our Savior Jesus Christ

Offertory

(LSB 956)

Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new
 a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way
 from Thy pres - ence; and take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it
 from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of Thy sal - va - tion;
 and up - hold me with Thy free spir - it. A - men.

Public domain

Offering *We offer our gifts to the Lord, remembering that He has first given to us that we might have to give to Him.*

Sermon Hymn: 710 The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want

(LSB 710)

1 The Lord's my shep - herd, I'll not want; He makes me
 2 My soul He doth re - store a - gain And me to
 3 Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale, Yet will I
 4 My ta - ble Thou hast fur - nish - ed In pres - ence
 5 Good - ness and mer - cy all my life Shall sure - ly
 down to lie In pas - tures green; He
 walk doth make With - in the paths of
 fear no ill; For Thou art with me,
 of my foes; My head Thou dost with
 fol - low me; And in God's house for -



lead - eth me The qui - et wa - ters by.
 righ - teous - ness, E'en for His own name's sake.
 and Thy rod And staff me com - fort still.
 oil a - noint, And my cup o - ver - flows.
 ev - er - more My dwell - ing place shall be.

Text: The Psalms of David in Meeter, 1650, Edinburgh

Tune: William Gardiner, 1770–1853

Text and tune: Public domain

Prayer of the Church *We bring our prayers to God.*

Lord's Prayer

LSB 209

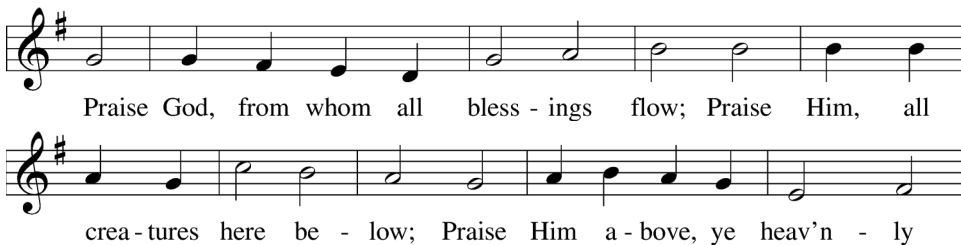
**☩ Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name,
 Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;
 give us this day our daily bread;
 and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;
 and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
 For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

Benediction *The blessing given by God for the blessing of His people (Numbers 6:24-26).*

☩ The LORD bless you and keep you.
 The LORD make His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you.
 The LORD lift up His countenance upon you and ✠ give you peace.

The Doxology

LSB 805



Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; Praise Him, all
 crea - tures here be - low; Praise Him a - bove, ye heav'n - ly



Christ the Lord is the Root, A - men.

Public domain

Closing Hymn: 919 Abide, O Dearest Jesus

(LSB 919)



1 A - bide, O dear - est Je - sus, A - mong us with Your grace
2 A - bide, O dear Re - deem - er, A - mong us with Your Word,
3 A - bide with heav'n - ly bright - ness A - mong us, pre - cious Light;
4 A - bide with rich - est bless - ings A - mong us, boun - teous Lord;



That Sa - tan may not harm us Nor we to sin give place.
And thus now and here - af - ter True peace and joy af - ford.
Your truth di - rect and keep us From er - ror's gloom - y night.
Let us in grace and wis - dom Grow dai - ly through Your Word.

5 Abide with Your protection
Among us, Lord, our strength,
Lest world and Satan fell us
And overcome at length.

6 Abide, O faithful Savior,
Among us with Your love;
Grant steadfastness and help us
To reach our home above.

Text: Josua Stegmann, 1588–1632; tr. August Crull, 1845–1923, alt.

Tune: Melchior Vulpius, c. 1570–1615

Text and tune: Public domain

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today: **10:00 a.m. Worship Service**
3/23/25 **11:00 a.m. Choir Practice**
Thur. & Fri. SSLS Parent/Teacher Conferences (noon dismissal)
3/27,28/25
Sunday **10:00 a.m. Worship Service**
3/30/25 **11:00 a.m. Choir Practice**

2025 St. Stephen Church Directory has been run off and is available in the distribution boxes. There are also extra copies of the directory on the table in the entryway.

CLC Call News Christine Starland (part-time teacher) and Deb Owens (band) have **accepted** their respective calls to Berea Lutheran School of Inver Grove Heights, MN. <> Pastor Paul Krause of Trinity Lutheran Church and School, Watertown, SD, and Zion Lutheran Church, Hidewood Township, SD, has **received** the call to Faith Lutheran Church, Manchester, MO. <> Pastor Tom Schuetze of St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, Lakewood, CO, has **received** the call to St. Stephen Lutheran Church and School, Mountain View, CA. <> Teacher Claire Abbas of Berea Lutheran School, Inver Grove Heights, MN, has **received** the call to Luther Memorial School, Fond du Lac, WI. <> Pastor Caleb Schaller of Messiah Lutheran Church, Eau Claire, WI, has **received** the call to Grace Lutheran Church, Valentine, NE, Peace Lutheran Church, Mission, SD, and St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church, White River, SD.



...pray for us, that the word of
the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified...

2 Thessalonians 3:1



Ongoing Needs of God's Servants—Due to poverty and a lack of opportunities in many developing nations where the CLC is privileged to work, seminary students and most pastors we work with struggle to support their families. This is true of most of the members as well. Because funding for pastoral training, Bibles, Christian literature, and direct Gospel outreach is the priority for CLC, we trust the Lord to provide for other local needs. Pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ who love and serve the Lord, asking our gracious Savior to provide all that is needed for His servants and for the spread of the Good News!

DR Congo (Central Africa) – The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has been [embroiled in war for many years](#). In recent months the violence has intensified with rebel militias advancing and capturing the major city of Goma. The level of brutality and suffering is almost unimaginable. The violence has caused massive displacement, with hundreds of thousands of people forced to flee their homes. Many live in makeshift camps with limited access to food, clean water, and healthcare. Because of the [violence, sexual assaults, child abductions, suffering, and death](#) that has taken place, citizens of the DRC have staged protests, some violent, against the centralized government, the UN, and western governments for not doing enough to end the violence. Many of the violent protests have taken place in the capital city of Kinshasa, where Pastor Lumiangu lives and ministers to the members of the [Confessional Luther- an Church of the Family of Saints](#). Pastor Yumba, who serves the [CCLC](#), reports that while protests have only happened in Lubumbashi, threats and rumors of rebel activities in the southeast part of the country keep everyone on edge. Much of the violence and fighting is taking place around the borders of Burundi and Rwanda, where CLC and CCLC contacts are located. Pray for peace and protection for all those who are suffering.

Myanmar (South Asia) – The [civil war in Myanmar continues](#) with no end in sight, causing much suffering for our brothers and sisters in Christ. Thankfully, we have been able to provide minimal humanitarian assistance through Kinship. Pastor Thang, the

president of CLCM, recently had emergency surgery to remove infected tissue from his abdomen due to complications from a previous surgery. The emergency medical aid from Kinship made this possible. The surgery was a success, and although he is weak, he is back home and recovering. Please keep our brothers and sisters in your prayers, asking for peace, justice, and relief for all affected by this conflict. Thank the Lord for sparing the life of Pastor Thang and ask for His blessings on his recovery.

Bangladesh (South Asia) – The BLCM building project is expected to begin soon as they need to complete the site work, foundation piles, and ground floor slab before the monsoon season begins in late April. They had hoped to begin sooner, but because Bangladesh is 95% Muslim, construction will be delayed until the end of Ramadan. The Board of Missions has sent the first installment of an MDF grant to help support this project. Plans are to send funds in five installments over the next six months to help complete this project. Additional offerings to the MDF will be needed to complete funding on schedule. This multipurpose building will serve God’s Kingdom as a Bible Institute for training faithful church workers, a place for worship, and housing for teachers and students.

Continue to pray for the success of this building project and that the Lord would move the hearts of His people to give generously for this important work so that the project can stay on schedule.

Mexico (Latin America) – Pastor Olvera’s mother-in-law has been suffering from diabetes for some time and was recently hospitalized. Both of her feet now have gangrene and need to be amputated, but she is too weak to undergo surgery. The doctors have indicated that there is nothing more they can do for her. Her condition has become septic, and she is receiving palliative care at home. Pastor Olvera’s wife, Claudia, is by her side to provide care until the Lord calls her to the eternal home He has prepared for her. Please pray that the Lord will relieve her pain and take her to heaven according to His good and gracious plan. Pray also that our Savior will grant courage, peace, and comfort to Claudia and her family as they wait on the Lord.

Nigeria (West Africa) – With an MDF-grant and local offerings, the Nigeria - CLC has begun construction on a new multipurpose building for the seminary. The building will include two large classrooms, library/computer room, and an office for faculty. [Recent pictures](#) show great progress. With an increase in enrollment and expectations for even larger enrollment next year, this new building will be put to good use. Missionary Ohlmann is scheduled to visit the NCLC in mid-March. Ask the Lord to continue to bless

this project and thank Him for providing the funding through the offerings of NCLC members and MDF offerings of CLC members. Thank the Lord for the privilege of working together in this effort to train faithful workers in His Nigerian harvest of souls!

Togo (West Africa) – Missionary Evensen reports that three students are in their final year at Mount Horeb Lutheran Seminary, with graduation tentatively scheduled for November. One of the students has started a preaching station in his home and is actively inviting people to attend. Pastor Kossi Blewu has been conducting a Gospel outreach radio program in a town located about 30 minutes away from the seminary. If the Lord blesses this effort to establish a preaching station, one of the graduates from the seminary will be called to serve there. Please pray for these students as they complete their studies and ask the Lord to bless their efforts in establishing preaching stations and congregations so that the truth of His saving word may be proclaimed for the salvation of Togolese souls.

Tanzania (East Africa)—The Wittenberg Lutheran Theological Seminary is nearing the end of a long and challenging semester. The class schedule includes a break for most of April. Many students will be traveling home to see their families and earn money during this time. Please pray for the safe travels of Missionary Naumann and Paula, Pastor Isangya, and the students. Additionally, pray for our Lord's provision for all those facing financial struggles as they dedicate their lives and resources to spreading the Gospel.

Kenya (East Africa) –Both of the CLC Kinship-supported schools are just a couple of months into their new school year. The Kenya-CLC is currently facing leadership and organizational challenges at St. David's Kinship School in Etago, as well as within the church body as a whole. Missionaries Naumann and Ohlmann are planning a visit in May to offer assistance and guidance regarding these issues. Pray that the Lord grants the necessary wisdom, love, patience, diligence, and clear direction as we seek His blessings for the upcoming meetings, correspondence, and decisions that the leaders of the KCLC, the CLC Kinship Committee, and the CLC Board of Missions need to make. And pray for the Lord's blessings on the children as they continue their studies, and ask for His guidance in both the teaching and the learning of His saving word in these schools.

The Philippines (Southeast Asia) – Missionary Ohlmann spent a week in February in the Philippines with Pastor Palangyos and the LAMP organization. Although a minor car accident caused some schedule disruptions, there were no injuries, and public

transportation was available. An outreach seminar and a church leadership seminar took place at a LAMP congregation, with members from both congregations attending. They also preached at a LAMP preaching station in Baguio. The highlight of the trip was visiting Pastor Palangyos' home village to discuss plans for establishing a new LAMP congregation and Bible training center. Please pray for the faith of the LAMP members and for success in their outreach efforts so that more people may repent of their sins and rejoice in the forgiveness of Jesus Christ.

India (South Asia) – The difficulties that the CLC was having in sending funds to India have been resolved, at least for now. Thank the Lord for providing the financial resources for us to assist with the important work of training faithful preachers and teachers of His saving word in a part of the world dominated by idolatry. Pray that the Lord will protect, support, and strengthen the faith of His children in India amid increased persecution against Christians.

Nepal (South Asia) – Missionary Ohlmann visited [Nepal in December](#). While in Nepal, he taught the fifteen kinship-supported students enrolled in the Himalayan Lutheran Bible Institute (HLBI). He and Raju also led studies at a regional pastoral conference organized by the HCLCN, with more than fifty pastors, students, and church leaders in attendance. Thank the Lord for blessing the visit and granting safe travels for Missionary Ohlmann to and from the mission field and for those who traveled many kilometers to attend the pastoral training. Thank the Lord for the fifteen men who have dedicated their time and lives to training for the Gospel ministry. Ask for the Lord's continued blessings of the Gospel outreach and ongoing ministry of the HCLC in Nepal.

Missionary Peter Evensen (Togo, West Africa) – Missionary Evensen continues his teaching duties at Mt. Horeb Lutheran Seminary and is also preaching and teaching at the local congregation in Lomé. He is still experiencing swelling and other issues with his left eye and is considering another trip to the doctor for further diagnosis and treatment. Thank the Lord for the work Missionary Evensen is doing, and pray for his improved health and for proper diagnosis and treatment for his eye.

Missionary Bruce Naumann (Tanzania-East Africa) – With the seminary on break for most of April, Missionary Naumann, Paula, and Pastor Isangya are planning to make visits to the Tanga and Zanzibar districts. Hopefully, they will find time and opportunity to enjoy a couple of days on the beautiful beaches of Zanzibar. You can follow Missionary Naumann's blog at <https://clc-tz.blogspot.com/>. Praise the Lord for all

that Missionary Naumann is accomplishing, thank the Lord for the faithful support and encouragement of his wife Paula, and ask our Savior to grant wisdom, patience, love, and all that is necessary to continue our Savior's work in East Africa.

Missionary Todd Ohlmann – As of now, Missionary Ohlmann is scheduled to depart on March 18th for a ten-day visit to Nigeria. His first visa application was denied, and he is currently waiting for word of approval from the Nigerian Embassy in Washington, DC. If his passport and visa are not returned in time, the visit will have to be postponed. In addition to Nigeria, his upcoming schedule includes visits to Mexico and Kenya, attending Board of Missions meetings in Eau Claire, organizing and leading the Mission Helper Trip to Nepal in June, and assisting with the pastoral vacancy at Faith Lutheran Church in the St. Louis area. Please pray that the Lord blesses and provides for all the necessary preparations for these trips to occur. Please continue to pray for his wife, Beth, as she cares for her elderly father, who longs for his heavenly home. You can read reports and see pictures here: missionaryohlmann.blogspot.com

Ongoing Opportunities – **Please continue to pray** for all of our brothers and sisters in Christ around the world, who, by God's grace, are dedicated to proclaiming the truths of God's saving Word for the salvation of souls as they trust the promise of our Savior that His Word will not return to Him void but will accomplish that for which He sends it

