

# Spirit of the Redeemer

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH, NASHVILLE, TENN.

January 2020

## Confession

The fifth chief part of the Small Catechism is Confession. Lutherans practice confession because of the wonderful promise, “If we confess our sins, [God] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 Jn. 1:9). Each Sunday, then, we confess our sins and hear the absolution in the preparatory part of the Divine Service.

The absolution received from God, by the authority of Christ, through the mouth of the pastor, is a true comfort! Luther considers absolution a third Sacrament, though it doesn’t have a visible element like water in Baptism and bread and wine in the Sacrament of the Altar. The absolution, then, is a tremendous gift whereby God is in action delivering his grace and forgiveness to poor sinners.

If you value the Corporate Confession each Sunday, perhaps you will also want to go to Individual Confession and Absolution. It is the form of Confession taught in our Catechism, and it is truly precious to burdened consciences. When sins have hold of you, and when you can’t forgive yourself, God’s powerful word of forgiveness “for you” is a welcome complement to the Corporate Confession that is spoken to all. Please visit pp. 292-293 in *Lutheran Service Book* to get familiar with the rite, and consider making an appointment with me. It would be my privilege to lead you through the rite and “to fulfill God’s will” (p. 292) by pronouncing forgiveness for you.

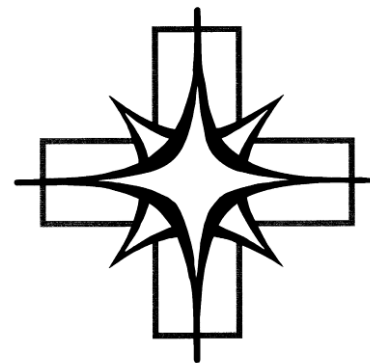
In Epiphany we are in between the penitential seasons of Advent and Lent. The Church Year continually brings our need for absolution before us. We are reminded of the need for the blessed birth of our Savior and for his innocent suffering and death on our behalf.

The Lord keep us in repentance and faith, confessing our sins without excuse. Almighty God forgive us all our iniquities for sake the Christ.

– Pastor Young

### Proper Preface for The Epiphany of Our Lord

It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord; for what had been hidden from before the foundation of the world You have made known to the nations in Your Son. In Him, being found in the substance of our mortal nature, You have manifested the fullness of Your glory. [Amen.]





## COMMISSION ON THEOLOGY AND CHURCH RELATIONS

### *The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod*

By Fred Guengerich

In September of this year (2019) I was asked to join the Synod's Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) for a 3-year term, as an appointee from the Council of (District) Presidents. I agreed to serve, with the help of God, and have attended two meetings thus far. I am not sure exactly how much most members of our congregation know about this body and how it works, so I thought that I would share some of the information with you. This is material that was distributed at the first meeting and is abridged here.

#### **WHAT IS THE CTCR?**

The Holy Christian Church consists of all those—and only those—who trust in God's Son, Jesus Christ, as their Savior from sin. It is called into being, nurtured, and extended by the power of the Holy Spirit working through the Gospel in Word and Sacraments. Because the church's life is so intimately involved with these means of grace, it must take special care that they are not falsified or distorted in any way as the church reaches out to people living in a particular time or place. A church body that prizes the Gospel will therefore be concerned about theology.

Moreover, because Christians are "eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph 4:3), a Christian church seeks to deepen and strengthen in every way possible its own internal unity and also its relationship with other Christian church bodies. Such a church body is therefore vitally concerned with proper church relations.

In order to provide leadership in dealing with the Synod's needs and opportunities in the areas of theology and church relations, the Synod established the Commission on Theology and Church Relations in 1962. Since that time, the Commission has provided reports on a number of significant theological issues and has been the Synod's primary agency for monitoring the Synod's ecumenical relationships with other Christians. The CTCR's reports, along with other theological documents and resources, are available on the CTCR's website at <http://www.lcms.org/ctcr>.

#### **MEMBERSHIP OF THE CTCR**

The membership of the Commission is carefully chosen so that it is as representative of the Synod as possible. In addition to the president and first vice president of the Synod and the presidents of the Ft. Wayne and St. Louis seminaries (who are advisory members), the membership of the Commission is made up of sixteen voting members: four lay persons, four pastors (two of whom must be parish pastors and one of whom must be a district president), one parish teacher, four seminary professors, one college or university professor, and two others. Five of these members are elected by the Synod convention, four are appointed by the seminary faculties, four by the Council of Presidents, and three by the president of the Synod. Because of his responsibilities, the Assistant to the President for Church Relations also regularly consults with the Commission. Because of its membership and the way it is chosen, the Commission represents a microcosm of the Synod itself.

#### **DUTIES OF THE CTCR**

The major functions and duties of the Commission are stated explicitly in the *Handbook* of the Synod (3.9.5, 3.9.5.2, 3.9.5.2.1, 3.9.5.2.2, and 3.9.5.4) as follows:

3.9.5 The Commission on Theology and Church Relations exists to assist congregations in achieving the objectives of Article III 1 and 6 of the Constitution of the Synod and to assist the President of the Synod in matters of church relationships.

[LCMS Constitution, Article III, 1 and 6:

The Synod, under Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, shall—

1. Conserve and promote the unity of the true faith (Eph. 4:3–6; 1 Cor. 1:10), work through its official structure toward fellowship with other Christian church bodies, and provide a united defense against schism, sectarianism (Rom. 16:17), and heresy;
6. Aid congregations by providing a variety of resources and opportunities for recognizing, promoting, expressing, conserving, and defending their confessional unity in the true faith;]

3.9.5.2 The Commission on Theology and Church Relations shall assist the President of the Synod at his request in discharging his constitutional responsibilities for maintaining doctrinal unity within the Synod.

3.9.5.2.1 The Commission on Theology and Church Relations shall provide guidance to the Synod in matters of theology and church relations.

- (a) It shall bring matters of theology and church relations through special studies and documents to the membership of the Synod and to conferences.
- (b) It shall refer theological issues and questions to the proper individuals or groups of individuals for additional study.
- (c) It shall suggest and provide studies of contemporary issues, including also current social issues, as they affect the church and as the church may affect such social issues.
- (d) It shall foster and provide for ongoing theological education through institutes, seminars, and other means.
- (e) It shall obtain and study theological treatises, conference papers, and similar documents and studies.

3.9.5.2.2 The Commission on Theology and Church Relations shall assist the President of the Synod at his request in discharging his constitutional responsibilities for maintaining doctrinal integrity as he relates to other church bodies.

- (a) It shall address itself to and evaluate existing fellowship relations for the purpose of mutual admonition and encouragement.
- (b) When a church body applies for formal recognition of altar and pulpit fellowship with the Synod, such recognition shall be proposed at a convention of the Synod only after the approval of the commission.

- (c) When a small, formative, emerging confessional Lutheran church body (identified as such by the President of the Synod as chief ecumenical officer) requests recognition of altar and pulpit fellowship with the Synod, after consultation with the Praesidium and approval by the commission, such recognition may be declared by the President of the Synod subject to the endorsement of the subsequent Synod convention.
- (d) When a mission of the Synod applies for formal recognition as a self-governing partner church, such recognition shall be proposed at convention of the Synod by the Board for Mission Services with the approval of the commission.

3.9.5.4 The Commission on Theology and Church Relations shall assist congregations and ordained and commissioned ministers of religion in fulfilling their commitment to witness publicly and privately to the one and only Gospel set forth in the Holy Scriptures specifically as they carry out their responsibilities relating to membership in societies, lodges, cults, or any organizations of an unchristian or anti-Christian character to which the Synod has declared itself firmly opposed.

### **STRUCTURE AND ACTIVITY OF THE CTCR**

The Commission seeks to carry out these functions and duties by meeting together four times during each year. The sixteen voting members of the Commission are assigned by the plenary commission to one of three standing committees:

- Committee I — Church Relations / Church and Ministry
- Committee II — Theology
- Committee III — Church and Society

The Commission was not established by the Synod to function as a kind of “Roman curia” or “ecclesiastical Supreme Court” that issues final answers to all kinds of questions. Nor is it charged with responsibilities of ecclesiastical supervision or doctrinal review of materials produced by Synod entities. Rather, the CTCR is a service agency of the church that seeks to give the church guidance and direction on theological, ethical, and ecclesial matters that have been referred to it by the Synod itself or its official entities. It does this primarily by preparing documents that address specific theological issues of relevance and concern to the church. In the performance of its tasks, the Commission currently has the services of two full time executives, an administrative coordinator, an administrative assistant, and a part-time assistant to the executive staff.

### **ONGOING ASSIGNMENTS**

#### A. Internal Church Relations

In any church body, but particularly one with a membership as large as the LCMS, there will be disagreements about various matters. Sometimes these disagreements are on relatively minor matters, but at other times they touch deep issues. One of the tasks of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations is to attempt to provide guidance in addressing the problems that cause such polarization. This is done through providing forums and conferences for the discussion of the most critical issues that are troubling our people.

#### B. Partner Church Relations

Through the Commission the Synod devotes considerable time and effort to improving and deepening relationships with our partner churches, that is, the 38 churches with which the Synod is in altar and pulpit fellowship. For a list of LCMS Partner Churches, see <http://www.lcms.org/page.aspx?pid=1372>.

In 2008, a new office was created (Director of Church Relations—Assistant to the President), so that full-time attention could be given to the ever-increasing challenges and opportunities in world Lutheranism today. The Executive Director of the CTCR and the Director of Church Relations work closely together with each other and with the President of the Synod in addressing these needs and opportunities.

A meeting of the International Lutheran Council (ILC) is held every three years so that the leaders of the ILC's 54 member churches (many of whom are partner churches of the LCMS) can discuss common problems and seek common solutions that are faithful to the Word of God, see <http://www.ilc-online.org/>.

### C. Other Lutheran Bodies

The CTCR also monitors the activities of Lutheran church bodies and groups with which the Synod is not in altar and pulpit fellowship. In North America these include the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), the North American Lutheran Church (NALC), the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS), and the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS). The Commission also monitors the work of other Lutheran organizations and groups (e.g., Lutheran CORE, Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ [LCMC]). In so doing it seeks: (1) to recognize obstacles to and opportunities for altar and pulpit fellowship; (2) to support and encourage faithfulness to Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions; and (3) to consider ways in which we can work with fellow Lutherans in external matters without violating doctrinal integrity.

Internationally, the Commission has regularly reviewed the structure and functions of the Lutheran World Federation, and has continued to monitor developments in this organization. CTCR staff members have also engaged in various conversations and meetings with representatives of large and growing Lutheran church bodies such as the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus, the Lutheran Church of Tanzania, the Malagasy Lutheran Church, and others. Such contacts have increased significantly recently due to strong opposition by many LWF churches to the Church of Sweden's and the ELCA's sexuality decisions of 2009.

### D. Other Christian Churches and Groups

Although the LCMS is not a member of the World Council of Churches (WCC) or the National Council of Churches (NCC), the Commission makes an effort to keep abreast of the latest developments within these groups. At the request of the President and the CTCR, the CTCR's executive staff participates in meetings of groups such as the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) and the Common Ground Christian Network (CGCN).

Through the CTCR and the President's office, the Synod takes part in various ecumenical discussions and dialogs. In past years the Synod has participated in discussions with Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, Methodists, the Orthodox, Baptists, the Reformed, and Evangelicals. The LCMS is currently involved in theological discussions with the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA), the NALC, and the WELS and ELS. In addition, theological conversations have taken place with representatives of the Roman Catholic Church on such topics as natural law and the responsibilities of Christians and Christian churches in matters of public policy. The goal of these dialogs is for our churches to gain a greater understanding of and appreciation for one another, to affirm each other insofar as we are able, and "to cooperate in externals" where that is feasible and can be done without theological compromise.

In short, the CTCR is one of the Synod's key agencies for guiding and directing its contacts with other Christians. This contact is important not only to show continued interest in and concern for fellow Christians, but to bear witness to the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ as we know it in the Holy Scriptures.

#### E. Religious Organizations and Movements

The 2001 Synodical Convention adopted Res. 7-27A "To Combine Commission on Organizations and Commission on Theology and Church Relations." This resolution assigns to the CTCR the responsibility, formerly given to the Commission on Organizations, to "assist congregations and ordained and commissioned ministers of religion in fulfilling their commitment to witness publicly and privately to the one and only Gospel set forth in the Holy Scriptures specifically as they carry out their responsibilities relating to membership in societies, lodges, cults, or any organizations of an unchristian or anti-Christian character to which the Synod has declared itself firmly opposed" (Bylaw 3.9.5.4). In carrying out this responsibility, the Commission has constructed a special website providing evaluations from a Lutheran theological perspective of a broad range of religious organizations and movements—both Christian and non-Christian. More than 30 evaluations are now available online.

#### F. Other Responsibilities

1. CTCR Sponsored Conferences, Consultations, and Convocations
2. Theological Opinions
3. Recognition of Altar and Pulpit Fellowship and Partner Church Relationships (Bylaw 3.9.5.2.2)
4. Expressions of Dissent (Bylaw 1.8.2)
5. Task Force and Special Assignments

The Executive Director is Rev. Dr. Joel D. Lehenbauer. He is assisted by an Associate Executive Director, Rev. Dr. Larry Vogel (who is retiring; the position is opening now).

This is going to be a learning experience for me. I am one of the four lay persons on the Commission. I am thankful to be working with an outstanding group of theologians and other lay persons. Thus far, I have found the group to be very collegial, as well as confessional. The CTCR has many papers on various topics available on-line (see above), and I encourage you to read these to understand the LCMS positions on topics.

I told my brother-in-law about this new job of mine, and his response was that he thought the LCMS must have already figured out everything in the last couple of hundred years. In a sense, yes, we have. However, our society is changing and Walther and his colleagues did not have to wrestle with some of the new challenges that have developed due to social and scientific changes. I am on Committee III, and some of our current jobs involve the publication of an annotated version of *The Large Catechism*, issues related to the end of life, and issues related to the beginning of life. There are a few overtures and resolutions from the LCMS Convention to act on as well. We also develop treatments and statements on ROMs (religious organizations and movements, see above), which I have found very useful over the years. All proposals by committees are approved by the entire Commission in plenary sessions.

I will be glad to discuss what I can about CTCR with any of you who are interested. Again, please see the work of the CTCR on their website.

Soli Deo Gloria,  
Fred Guengerich

## O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright

Lutheran Service Book 395

(adapted from hymn study by Rev. Todd A. Peperkorn found at <https://www.lcms.org/worship/hymn-of-the-day-studies>)

### Introduction

Philipp Nicolai looked out his window at the parsonage in Unna, where he served as a pastor in Germany. The year was 1597. It was August, a hot month, and a terrible time for the plague to hit their little village. Just the week before, he had buried 170 members of his flock. The number seems staggering to think about even now. He looked out of the window, longing to give his people hope in the midst of their suffering. Perhaps this was the time he began to pen the words, “O Morning Star, how fair and bright ...” Nicolai’s hymn is based to a large degree on Psalm 45. He subtitled the hymn as follows: “A spiritual bridal song of the believing soul concerning Jesus Christ her heavenly bridegroom: founded on the 45th Psalm of the prophet David.” Psalm 45 is called a “love song” in the Hebrew introduction to the hymn.

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### Collect for the Epiphany of Our Lord

*O God, by the leading of a star You made known Your only-begotten Son to the Gentiles. Lead us, who know You by faith, to enjoy in heaven the fullness of Your divine presence; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.*

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### Background

Philipp Nicolai (1556–1608) was a pastor, poet and composer. He was a part of what is called the *Meistersinger* tradition, where both the text and the melody stem from the same artist. We know Nicolai best for his two hymns, “O Morning Star” and “Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying” (LSB 516). These two hymns are known as the Queen and King of Chorales. Nicolai’s work has inspired many of the world’s greatest musicians, especially J. S. Bach, who wrote famous cantatas based on these two hymns (BWV 1 and BWV 140).

Nicolai lived and served at a time when sickness and disease were rampant, especially in the heat of a German summer. One of the roles that the pastor often played in these circumstances was to help his flock to realize that there is hope, that God has not abandoned them, and that they have a bright future in Christ. Nicolai did this well through his hymns and poetry.

### Making the Connection

The link between the main text behind this hymn (Ps. 45) and the text of the hymn itself lies in Nicolai’s sacramental imagery. In the Scriptures, nearly every time a wedding is discussed, it is in the context of a wedding *banquet*. Furthermore, the way that God reveals Himself as the God of love (stanza 3) is by His ongoing, forgiving presence with His people by His Word and Sacrament. Just as wine and music make the heart glad, so we rejoice and celebrate in Him at His holy wedding feast. This heavenly meal ties the presence of God here and now to our “happy place” with Him in eternity.

Pastor Nicolai looked out of his study at the graves of so many of his flock whom he loved. What his eyes told him is that they were dead and gone. But with the eyes of faith, he saw their resurrection and the bright Morning Star that keeps them in His bosom until the Last Day.

O Morning Star, how fair and bright!  
 You shine with God’s own truth and light,  
 Aglow with grace and mercy!  
 Of Jacob’s race, King David’s son,  
 Our Lord and master, You have won  
 Our hearts to serve You only!  
 Lowly, holy!  
 Great and glorious,  
 All victorious,  
 Rich in blessing!  
 Rule and might o’er all possessing!

***O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright***

*LSB 395:1*

## ***Epiphany and Its Season***

Begins with evening prayer on January 5.  
Ends the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday.

Epiphany is one of the oldest seasons in the Christian Church Year, second only to the Easter season. This season of lights emphasized Jesus' manifestation (or epiphany, from the Greek *epiphaneia*) as God and man. The earliest Christians called the feast of the Epiphany the Theophany ("revelation of God"). When the Gentile Magi come to worship Jesus, they show that everyone now has access to God. Now all people, Jew and Gentile, can come to God's temple to worship, because Jesus is the new temple: God in the flesh. The Epiphany of Our Lord (January 6) marks the celebration of the visit of the Magi.

Epiphany may include as many as nine Sundays, depending on the date of Easter. The season is marked at its beginning and at its end by two important feasts of Christ. On the First Sunday after the Epiphany, the Church celebrates the Baptism of Our Lord. The Father had sent Jesus to bear the sins of the world. So Jesus steps down into baptismal waters so that He can soak up the sins of the world: He is baptized into our sins, so that our Baptism might be into His death and resurrection for the forgiveness of sins.

The Transfiguration, celebrated on the last Sunday in the Epiphany season, is a significant and uniquely Lutheran contribution to the Christian calendar. This festival commemorates the moment on the Mount of Transfiguration when three of Jesus' disciples glimpsed their Lord in divine splendor, seeing Him as the center of the Law (Moses) and the Prophets (Elijah). Jesus proclaimed to His disciples, then and now, that He was the long-awaited one who had come to die for the sins of the world and be raised again in glory.

*(Treasury of Daily Prayer, Concordia Publishing House 2008, p.9-10)*

### **For the Month of January**

Ushers:

Altar Care:

**Sunday Morning Refreshments**

**Nursery Volunteers**

**Birthdays**

**Baptismal Birthdays**

**Wedding Anniversaries**

Find our newsletters online at:  
<http://redeemernashville.org/newsletter/>

# January 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<b>1 Name &amp; Circumcision of Jesus</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5 Second Sunday after Christmas</b> 9:15 Education Hour 10:30 Divine Service Door Offering	<b>6 The Epiphany of Our Lord</b> 7 Divine Service	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> Confirmation	<b>10</b> 7 LWML	<b>11</b> 9 Work Day (undecorate)
<b>12 The Baptism of Our Lord</b> 9:15 Education Hour 10:30 Divine Service Placement of Church Officers	<b>13</b> 8 AA	<b>14</b> 6:30 Council	<b>15</b> 10 Bible Study	<b>16</b> Confirmation	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> 8:30 Men's Breakfast
<b>19 Second Sunday after the Epiphany</b> 9:15 Education Hour 10:30 Divine Service <i>Sanctity of Life Sunday</i>	<b>20</b> 8 AA	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> 10 Bible Study	<b>23</b> Confirmation	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>26 Third Sunday after the Epiphany</b> 9:15 Education Hour 10:30 Divine Service Voters' Assembly LWML Mite Collection	<b>27</b> 8 AA	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 10 Bible Study	<b>30</b> Confirmation	<b>31</b>	



# Proclaiming the Praises of Christ in Prague



December  
2019



## Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Come, Thou long-expected Jesus,  
Born to set Thy people free.  
From our fears and sins release us;  
Let us find our rest in Thee.  
Israel's strength and consolation,  
Hope of all the earth Thou art,  
Dear desire of ev'ry nation,  
Joy of ev'ry longing heart.

Born Thy people to deliver;  
Born a child and yet a king!  
Born to reign in us forever,  
Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.  
By Thine own eternal Spirit  
Rule in all our hearts alone;  
By Thine all-sufficient merit  
Raise us to Thy glorious throne.

Text: Charles Wesley  
Lutheran Service Book #338

Art: Medieval Woodcut



The *Betlem* or nativity in *Staroměstské náměstí*  
(Old Town Square) in Prague

## Veselé Vánoce Merry Christmas

Prague—indeed, the whole Czech Republic—is festooned with Christmas markets. Every square in town has at least a few sheds set up to sell decorations, treats, gifts, or seasonal foods. Czechs love this time of year and seem to celebrate it with great joy. But that does not mean they get what it is all about.

Recently, we were shopping for some Christmas decorations. There were decorations of lovely stars, angels, and *Betlems* (nativities). But then the merchant pointed us to a basket filled with horseshoes, pigs, and shamrocks; all these here are considered tokens for good luck in the coming year. He explained to us that by hanging these on the tree we will be lucky. And then Suzanne spoke up, “We don’t need luck. We’re Christian.” At first, it seemed harsh, but, after further thought, perhaps it was the perfect answer. The merchant stumbled to apologize. But we added that Jesus was what we needed more than anything.

This time of year much of the world comes, at the very least, to the fringes of our faith. They talk about Jesus’ birthday. They mention the humbleness of the whole scene as recorded in the Scriptures. They may even know the words to “Silent Night.” And still others may be able to recount accurately the events of that first Christmas. However, that does not mean they understand what this holiday, and all its festiveness, is all about. But they can when we open our mouth and tell them.

On that first Christmas, there were a lot of mouths opening. The angelic herald came to the shepherds to tell them what had happened. The hosts of heaven joined him to sing praises to God who would undertake the salvation of mankind. And the shepherds, having come and seen, went and told what had been reported to them concerning this child. And then those same shepherds opened their mouths to praise and glorify God. This opening of the mouth concerning this event is not over. It continues when we open our mouths to share the hope and confidence we have because of the birth of the baby, who is God in flesh.

We are here to share that faith. And you are where you are to do the same. We are all missionaries in one sense. It is the joy of the Christian faith to declare the wonderful deeds that the God of heaven and earth has done in order to make us forgiven and pure, cleansed from sin and its curse, and brought into the family of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This has happened because the unthinkable happened: God took on human flesh so that we could be the children of God. Thanks be to God!



The Christmas markets in the main square of Olomouc, Moravia (eastern Czech Republic)



We thank the Lord for all of the people and ministries that support us. This month, we especially give thanks for:

Redeemer Lutheran  
Nashville, TN

St. John Lutheran  
Seward, NE

Peace Lutheran,  
Grand Island, NE

Our address in Prague:  
Rev. Dale and Suzanne Kaster  
Bubenečská 365/41  
160 00 Praha 6  
Czech Republic

The church address in Prague:  
St. Michael's Lutheran Church  
V Jirchářích 14/152  
110 00 Praha 1  
Czech Republic

Please, pray for the conversion of many people here in the Czech Republic.

Please, pray for many to come to church during the coming holiday season.

Please, pray for many people to see our advertisements we are placing in news sources.

There are many opportunities to serve as short-term or GEO missionaries. Check out the current list and download an application at [www.lcms.org/service](http://www.lcms.org/service). Click on "Service Opportunities."

Our email address is  
[Dale.Kaster@lcms.org](mailto:Dale.Kaster@lcms.org)



### American Thanksgiving in Prague

We have a number of Americans associated with our parish here. And we also have a few non-Americans who just like to eat! So, while we could not do it on Thanksgiving Day (everyone is at work!), we still gathered and shared a delicious

Thanksgiving meal with all the trimmings. It was a great afternoon of fellowship and feasting, and we did not mind at all that it was on a Saturday and there was not any American football. We thank the Hubers who opened their home to our gathering, and we hope yours was just as great as ours!

### An Update on Dale's Ear Surgery

We visited the doctor recently who says that everything is coming along very nicely. The surgical work is about 90% healed. And a quick test showed that there has been some great strides in regaining hearing in the ear. We just have to be patient as the ear continues to resume function. Our next appointment is six months away, and he will conduct a formal hearing test at that time.



### ECAV Meets in Annual Convention

During the month of November, the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession (ECAV) met in their annual convention. We heard a lot of reports and projections for the coming year(s). One thing missing was an emphasis on outreach to the many Czechs who do not trust in Jesus Christ. Please, pray for the work and the hearts of the ECAV, that a zeal for outreach and evangelization would take

hold. Also, pray for the Holy Spirit to bring many Czechs to the faith of Jesus Christ.



### Velvet Revolution Anniversary

November 17 is the anniversary of the Velvet Revolution, when Czechs rose up against the communist system and, without any bloodshed, ushered in the current politics of a free and open society. Usually, we would have avoided the crowds; but since our church building is right around the corner from where the students and police met, and since it fell on a Sunday, we were in the thick of it. It is, on one hand, an inspiring story of man's innate yearn for freedom, but it is also sad that so many Czechs find freedom outside of Christ.

### A Look Ahead

Makeshift memorial for freedom

Deacon Martin Damašek and Dale will be traveling to the Ft. Wayne seminary in January to attend the theological symposium (January 21-24). If you would like to meet with them, just send a note, and they would be happy to share some time with you and talk about the work here in the Czech Republic.

We commend you and your Christmas celebration to Christ!

Rev. Dale and Suzanne Kaster

*Your Missionaries to the Czech Republic*

To support the LCMS through the work of the Kasteters, you may send a tax-deductible gift to:

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod **OR**  
P.O. Box 66861  
St. Louis, MO 63166-6861

Mission Central  
40718 Hwy E16  
Mapleton, IA 51034

Make checks payable to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod or LCMS. Include "Kaster—Czech Republic," in the memo line. Gifts can also be given securely online through the LCMS website at [www.lcms.org/kaster](http://www.lcms.org/kaster).

## **Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church**

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(615) 646-3150  
[www.redeemernashville.org](http://www.redeemernashville.org)  
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