

Christ Jesus came
into the world to
save sinners...

1 Timothy 1:15, NRSV

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The Reporter

July & August 2022

The Reporter

Volume 20, Issue 03

“Fighting the Flesh”

by Pastor Proeber

God has called us to be holy. He also provided his Son so that we could be declared holy and live lives set apart for his holy purposes. It sounds simple enough, just live the way God wants us to live. Sadly, it is easier said than done.

We face a myriad of enemies. We know the devil is always present and persistent. He stalks us like a roaring lion. We also know the world in which we live is ever deceiving us with its alluring devices. We know these enemies well. We mark them and seek to avoid them. Still there is one enemy to our spiritual well-being we often overlook. It is the enemy within.

Our sinful flesh is just as dangerous as the devil and the world. Its dangers are seen in our justifications and moralizations when it comes to following God’s will and Word. Then there is the horrible reality that our sinful flesh is present with us until the day we enter the kingdom of heaven. Until that time we live as sinner-saints, recognizing the struggle about which Paul wrote:

¹⁴ Certainly we know that the law is spiritual, but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. ¹⁵ For I do not understand what I am doing, because I do not keep doing what I want. Instead, I do what I hate. ¹⁶ And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷ But now it is no longer I who am doing it, but it is sin living in me. ¹⁸ Indeed, I know that good does not live in me, that is, in my sinful flesh. The desire to do good is present with me, but I am not able to carry it out. ¹⁹ So I fail to do the good I want to do. Instead, the evil I do not want to do, that is what I keep doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who am doing it, but it is sin living in me.

²¹ So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is present with me. ²² I certainly delight in God’s law according to my inner self, ²³ but I see a different law at work in my members, waging war against the law of my mind and taking me captive to the law of sin, which is present in my members. ²⁴ What a miserable wretch I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? ²⁵ I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

(Romans 7:14-25)

It’s no wonder we hear so many imperatives in the New Testament. “Run the race so as to win.” “Put on the full armor of God.” “Fight the good fight.” These are included for our instruction and our encouragement.

Of particular importance is “fight the good fight.” The original language uses a

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verb form which calls for “continual action.” We could use the word, “continue or keep on.” Continue fighting the good fight. The meaning is simple and clear. We can never afford to become apathetic, or assume the fight is not that important. We need to keep on fighting our flesh daily.

The battle with our flesh consumes us. We cannot escape its deceptions or its suggestions. I suppose you could say, “they are always in our face.”

Our sinful flesh is sinful, and everything it suggests or compels us to do it sinful. There are no pure motives. There are no good intentions. It is why Paul wrote “I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwells no good thing.” This is why we need to take the battle seriously. Our flesh will never give up, and it will always come disguised by plausible justifications.

Let’s look at one simple area, our worship life. The Lord wants us to worship him with all our heart, all our soul, all our mind, and all our strength. To aid us in our worship he shows his undeserved love and blessing by inviting us to worship him weekly. If that were not compelling enough, he also offers us the body and blood of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of our sins, the strengthening of our faith, and the grace to serve him with a God-pleasing life. Our new creation longs to receive these blessings, but how does our flesh respond? It makes legitimate sounding excuses to keep us away from those blessings. Sadly, we know them all too well. “I have to work on Sunday to get caught up.” “I have to go to sporting events to support my kids.” “I don’t want people to know I am struggling.” “I might get sick.” “I’m just too lazy to get up and get going.” “I can always catch it later on YouTube.” Do any of these sound familiar? Are any of these currently keeping you from worshiping your Lord in love and faith?

Let’s change the perspective a little. Instead of listening to or trying to secure the approval of our sinful flesh, we need to seek approval from the Lord who said, “Remember the Sabbath Day by keeping it holy,” and, “let us not forsake the gathering of ourselves together as some are in the habit of doing?” What reason would we give to the Lord of glory and grace for ignoring his will? I’m too busy? My kids are more important? I don’t trust you to protect me? I don’t think you can help me? I’m just lazy? Which of these would the Lord accept? Each of us already knows the answer in our hearts and minds. God will never accept the excuses my flesh offers.

There is an added consequence if we don’t repent, that is turn from our ways and return to the Lord. Our flesh grows stronger and our faith becomes weaker. What also gets weaker is our ability to make the change that is needed. In the end, we simply become lukewarm to our Lord, and this puts us under his justice. Recall the conviction given to the church in Laodicea—

“The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God’s creation, says this: ¹⁵I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. If only you were cold or hot! ¹⁶So, because you are lukewarm and not hot or cold, I am about to spit you out of my mouth.” (Revelation 3:14-16)

This is why we need to keep fighting our flesh, and why we give thanks to the Lord. We are not alone in this fight. We have a Savior who has triumphed over all our enemies, especially our flesh. Through his all-surpassing power and his unyielding love we can say “no” to our flesh. We are not helpless victims dragged here and there by our flesh. We are conquerors, and with Jesus’ supreme victory we can fight the good fight of faith, and we can win!

Report from District Convention

by Al Todd

The WELS District Conventions for all twelve (12) WELS districts are convened every two years on even years and every congregation is required to send its pastor(s), male teacher(s) (if applicable), staff minister (if applicable), and one layman. The conventions are chaired by the district presidents and administered by a staff of pastors. All are elected by the congregations in each district at the convention. The year following the district conventions is when the WELS convenes its synod wide convention (in 2023 this will be convened at the Michigan Lutheran Seminary in Saginaw, Michigan). So, in even numbered years the district conventions are convened; in odd numbered years the Synod convention is convened.

Our Redeemer is a member of the Arizona-California District. The 34th biennial district convention this year (2022) was convened in Scottsdale, AZ from June 13-15 at the Embassy Suites by Hilton Scottsdale Resort. The theme was taken from Philippians 4:4: "Rejoice in the Lord Always".

The purpose of these conventions is to react and respond to the Synod's Report to the Twelve Districts (RttD). The actions taken (resolutions, memorials, etc.) at the district conventions become the "voice" of the district and are considered at the Synod convention the following year. This provides the Synod with "grass roots" input to help the Synod establish ministry priorities.



Arizona-California
DISTRICT

Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod

This year's convention, similar to previous year's conventions, opened with a Communion Service at Grace Lutheran Church, Glendale, Arizona. The church is located about a 40 minute drive from the resort where the convention is actually conducted; however, it is certainly worth the drive to fellowship and worship with other convention delegates and to be served with the body and blood of our Savior Jesus. Musicians from all over the District provided music and included brass, strings, piano, and organ and several cantors. The service also included as Preaching Minister Reverend Professor David Scharf from Martin Luther College (MLC) who also provided the four part Keynote Address at the convention "Giving to God Our All, Our Best".

Delegates are assigned to committees to review each section of the RttD (see above). The key committees are: World Missions, Home Missions, Ministerial Education, Congregation Services, Administration, and the District President's Report committee. This year I served on the World Missions committee. The committees meet for about one hour at the end of the first day of the convention in separate rooms to review the RttD for their area of focus and to comment and make recommendations for the Synod's review at the Synod convention in 2023. These comments and recommendations are turned into Resolutions which are presented on the second day of the convention for adoption or defeat by all the convention delegates voting in session.

Throughout the convention – about every hour or so – elections are held for each district office. So as a delegate you are voting constantly. This year (and most likely for all subsequent years) the convention was paperless. Each delegate had to bring a computer – either a laptop or notebook with wireless internet capability – to view the agenda, assignments, notes, reports, power points, etc. The first hour I was sort of lost because there was a mix up with my email address and I did not get some of the information needed

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to navigate the district convention web site. Thankfully, I sat next to Mr. Frank Lui, a math instructor from the Arizona Lutheran Academy, who quickly got me squared away.

The first day of the convention we heard reports from the District President (Rev. Jon Buchholz), began the elections process, heard a report from WELS President Mark Schroeder, listened to two parts of the keynote address on Stewardship by Rev Professor David Scharf, met in our committees, and had a closing devotion by Pastor Noah Bater (Wilma's grandson) from Prince of Peace Thousand Oaks, CA.

The second day of the convention we opened with a devotion by Pastor Andrew Schroeder of Californian Lutheran High School, continued with elections, listened to parts 3 and 4 on Stewardship by Rev Professor David Scharf, heard reports from the various WELS Missions, listened to Jim Holm from the WELS Foundation and the WELS Investment Funds (Our Redeemer invests with WIF), voted on resolutions presented by the various committees, and closed with a devotion by Pastor Caleb Bassett of Redeemer Fallbrook, CA. From 8-10 P.M. there was an adult Fellowship Gathering in the convention ballroom lobby. (Note the "adult" requirement. Many of the Pastors and teachers bring their families to this convention for a mini vacation as the resort has a couple of pools and other family friendly amenities).

The final morning of the convention we again had opening devotions this time by Pastor Sean De Frain of St. John's Tarzana, CA followed by presentations on the WELS retirement program, Martin Luther College, and final committee reports and resolutions. The closing devotion was conducted by Pastor Mike Schroeder of Living Hope, Wildomar, CA. After the formal closing of the convention, Pastor Mike Schroeder conducted the installation of officers (President, 2nd Vice President, and Secretary). The convention ended at 12 noon Wednesday, June 15.

It is always a pleasure to meet with brothers in the Lord at these conventions. Even though it is quite a bit of work, it is very satisfying to be at a working convention where everyone is looking out for the good of the whole, and where courtesy and politeness reign. Anyone who has been in the business world at similar working conventions will appreciate the contrast!

Some logistics notes: The drive to Scottsdale is about 486 miles and took us (Sonja traveled with me) about 9 hours. It was particularly warm in Scottsdale – when we arrived on Sunday night (the 12th) it was 111 degrees and cooled off after a couple of days to 108 degrees. Lows were in the 80s early in the morning. Breakfast was free at the hotel's Azul Club and was surprisingly good with a selection of just about anything you want (open from 6 to 9 AM) - all other meals are on your own. Gas was a dollar per gallon cheaper in Arizona compared to California (still too high!). There are a plethora of restaurants and shopping opportunities in up-scale Scottsdale. Fashion Center is normally within walking distance, but for us California wimps it was too hot so we drove the 1/8 mile! We also stayed an extra day (at the convention room rate) so we could make it back to Santa Barbara before night fall which we did - leaving at 8:15 and arriving home at 5 P.M. with two stops.

This convention reminded me again how blessed we are to be part of a Synod that uncompromisingly preaches and teaches the Word of God in all its truth and purity. May it ever be so.



4th of July—Film, Food, and Fireworks

On Monday, July 4th, we will have our traditional celebration of Independence Day. The afternoon begins with a 5:00 pm dinner. This year will offer traditional 4th of July faire—hot dogs, beans, salads, and more.

Around 6:00 pm we will move to the sanctuary to watch the movie, “Death of a Nation.” It reminds us how precious our freedoms are as a constitutional republic. There are also some timely parallels with the events Abraham Lincoln’s term in the 19th Century and the current affairs of the 21st Century.

Following the movie, we will return to the fellowship hall for desserts. Sadly this year we will not have our usual trip to Girsch Park for fireworks. God-willing this will resume next year. See you there!



Birthdays for June, July and August

We rejoice in the many blessings God has given the members of our family of faith. May the Lord continue to bless them richly.

June

- 8th - Henley S.
- 9th - Sun P.
- 10th - Jaden S.
- 18th - Julie S.
- 29th - Landon S.
- 30th - Hilary S.



July

- 7th - Emily P.
- 8th - Elijah D.
- 10th - Mark G.
- 13th - Janessa S.
- 18th - Sally K.
- 20th - Barb F.
- 21st - Marieta E., Michael F.
- 25th - Devon J.
- 31st - Justin Sc.

August

- 14th - Brittany G.
- 24th - Jonathan Y.

Note from the Editor:

Please share any corrections or updates with Pastor Proeber. We are currently in the process of updating the membership directory. More information will be coming through July. Thank You!

Reporters Wanted



Book review? Personal Story of Faith?
Event report? Potluck—gathering? Party? Field Trip?

Half-page to three pages
Reviewed for scriptural consistency
Due by 25th of month to appear in next issue

Email to Pastor Proeber—pastor.orlcsb@gmail.com

A simple and rewarding way to serve!

Thanks to Al Todd for his article this month. There is always a standing invitation to provide material for the *Reporter*. Throughout the past volumes, articles authored by members have really made every issue more interesting. We pray that every member will provide an article for 2022. If you have an idea, and you are not sure whether to act on it, please don't hesitate to speak to Pastor Proeber for advice. Thanks!

Meetings for July-August

Church Council	Tuesday, July 5 th & August 9 th at 7:00 pm
Committees	Tuesday, July 12 th & August 9 th at 8:00 pm
Outreach Committee	Tuesday, August 23 rd at 7:00 pm

Congregational Meeting—July 17th following the worship service

If you have a question regarding a specific area of ministry, please contact a member of the appropriate Board. He will be happy to help.

Notes & News

July and August are usually quiet months, but there are a few activities to keep in mind. On August 28th, we will have our Beach, Bike and Barbeque at Goleta Beach, Area C. There will be good food, games, desserts, and day filled with sunshine and fresh air. Watch the worship folder for more information, or ask one of the Outreach Committee members.

Throughout July and August, Sunday Worship and Christian Education will continue. Adult Bible Class will continue to take an in-depth look at one of the lessons for the day. The “Digging Deeper” lessons are created to be completed in one Sunday.

The Quarterly Congregational meeting is scheduled for July 17th following the worship service. Once again, plan to be present as we consider our Gospel ministry.

In **September** our regular schedule of events will restart. There will be mid-week Bible Classes, hand-bell and mixed voice choir practices, Sunday School, and other activities. Keep an eye open for opportunities to serve and grow in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ!

More Notes & Notes

Beach, Bike & Barbeque

The Annual Beach, Bike and Barbeque is scheduled for Sunday, August 28th at Goleta Beach. We will meet at our regularly reserved area—C around noon. Games will be provided and there will be something for everyone. Please bring along your favorite chair, along with a dish to pass and dessert. Meat and drinks for the barbeque will be provided. If you are biking, we will leave the church parking lot around 11:15 am. Friends are always welcome!

Mid-Week Bible Class

The Wednesday evening class will come to a close July 6th. We have considered the Apostle Peter along with his training, his rise to prominence in the early Christian Church, and his fade from prominence. The final class will consider some of the myths and traditions which have led to faulty, even unscriptural views of Peter and his ministry.

If you haven't caught the previous lessons, it is still not too late to come. We start at 7:00 pm.

Outreach Training Classes

Before we get into the Fall schedule, two outreach and evangelism classes will be offered. Although a day has not been determined, the classes will offer training in the mechanics of outreach—what do I say and why do I say it. They will also offer training in how we speak with someone about the Gospel. The second class is called “One by One.” It was developed by a Pastor Rosenau and his congregation in Florida, and has been fairly successful in creating contacts. Watch for more information!

Remodeling and Improvements

Through the course of 2021 there was a plan to remodel the men's bathroom to make it more compliant with ADA requirements. That plan will become a reality beginning in July. The changes will be simple, but they provide greater accessibility for those who have to use a walker or a wheel chair.

Changes will include taking the metal partition out, installing a long reach sink and motion activated faucet. The small privacy wall will also be taken out, and a handicapped accessible door entry and lock will also be installed.

All in all, the improvements will provide facilities which will be helpful for the future.

Last, but not least, the plan is to keep the restroom useable throughout the project. We apologize for any inconvenience it may cause.

July 2022

Church Office: 967-1128

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church

Parsonage Phone: 967-3570

Grow in Grace! Encourage one another! Proclaim what we have seen and heard!

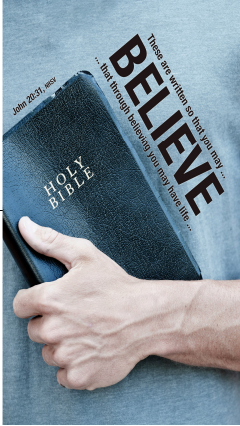


Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
3 Lord's Supper Worship / Streaming 9:30 am Education 11:00 am	4 Fourth of July Dinner, Movie & Desserts at 5:00 pm	5 Council 7:00 pm Committees 8:00 pm	6 Bible Class 7:00 pm Apostle Peter	7 	8 Office Hours 10:30—2:30 pm	9 Clean: Williams Lawn beginning July 10th—Favuzzi
10 Worship / Streaming 9:30 am Education 11:00 am	Celebrate 		13		15 Office Hours 10:30—2:30 pm	16 Clean: Aitkins
17 Worship / Streaming 9:30 am Congregational Meeting after Worship			20		22 Office Hours 10:30—2:30 pm	23 Clean: Brown Lawn beginning July 24th J. Schueler
24 Lord's Supper Worship / Streaming 9:30 am Education 11:00 am	25	26	27		29 Office Hours 10:30—2:30 pm	30 Clean: Everson
31 Worship / Streaming 9:30 am Education 11:00 am					1 Office Hours 10:30—2:30 pm	2 Clean: Todd

August 2022

Church Office: 967-1128
Grow in Grace!

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
Encourage one another!

Parsonage Phone: 967-3570
Proclaim what we have seen and heard!

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		2	3	 <p>Everything else is WORTHLESS when compared with the INFINITE VALUE of knowing Christ Jesus <i>my Lord.</i> Philippians 3:8, NLT</p>		6 Clean Favuzzi Lawn beginning the 7th—Brown
7 LORD'S SUPPER Worship / Streaming 9:30 am Education 11:00 am		9 Church Council 7:00 pm Committees 8:00 pm	10			13 Clean Florez
14 Worship / Streaming 9:30am Education 11:00 am	15	16	17	18	19	20 Clean Grunewald Lawn beginning the 21st—Todd
<div> <div>←</div> <div>Pastor Proeber will be in Arizona and return on the 18th</div> <div>→</div> </div>						
21 Worship / Streaming 9:30 am Education 11:00 am	22	23 Outreach Commit- tee 7:00 pm	 <p>The Sovereign Lord is my strength; ... he enables me to tread on the heights. Habakkuk 3:19, NIV</p>			27 Clean Hanna
28 Worship / Streaming 9:30 am Beach, Bike, Barbeque at Noon	29	30				