

SPECIAL ISSUE Nbr. 23 – Ascension, 2020

“He will be back” and “You can come too”

A boy wanted oh-so-much to go fishing one fine summer afternoon. His father told him, “I have some work to do, but I’ll be back. Then we can go.”

The young man set about gathering up his fishing gear. For the hour or so he was waiting for his dad, he was productively and hopefully engaged. It was a joy! And even though he had his tackle box open and a variety of items spread out before him, the boy was ready. He was set to go at a moment’s notice. He had been ready since he first heard the promise . . . since his dad said, “I’ll be back.”

“I am going to prepare a place for you,” Christ promised. “I will come again and take you home with Me so that you will be where I am” (John 14:2-3). He will be back. We will be with Him.

One other thing the father told his son in our story (a true story, by the way): he said, “You may bring someone along.” So one of the first things the boy did while waiting for his dad was to go and tell a friend, “You can come too.”

The boy did not put this off. Why delay? This formed an integral part of his enjoyment, delivering the glad message: “You can come too.”

See? **WOW!** Jesus “breathed on them and said, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. Whenever you forgive people’s sins, they are forgiven’” (John 20:22-23). What is that, if it’s not saying: “You can come too”?

Zoom Meeting for C-WOWs?

I know you are quite busy, but I would appreciate knowing your thoughts on whether a Zoom conversation for all CID C-WOWs would be useful. I would like to be as helpful to you as I can be.

Please write me about this soon.

Messages for Unchurched People: “Pass This On”

In the issue of this newsletter earlier this month, I urged pastors to provide church members with digital resources they can share with the unchurched. Surveys show that lately some unchurched people, even self-identified secular folks, are listening to Christian messages. In some cases, they are seeking out such messages.

Starting on Monday, June 1, the CID office will send each congregation and/or pastor in the District the text of a short devotional-type message (300 words, maximum) via e-mail each week. Pastors can e-mail these messages out or, better still, use them to record audio or video features to share electronically with church members.

These messages are not primarily intended for the members, though. Pastors can urge them in turn to share these messages with their friends, including their unchurched friends. *The unchurched are the real “target.”* Hence the name for this series of weekly messages: “Pass This On” (PTO).

Pastors can modify the weekly PTO messages however they want. As written, each will point ahead to the coming Sunday’s service by connecting with some aspect of the LSB Series A lessons for that particular Sunday. (The first PTO message is on page 2. Consider it a sample.)

I will write PTO message scripts each week, but I think it is best if church members can pass them on and tell friends, “Here is something I just got from my pastor” – not from CID office! Pastors and laypeople can work together in evangelism.

PTO messages will be available every Monday for the non-festival half of the current church year. Then we can evaluate and perhaps continue them. (CID’s Facebook page will also carry the various PTO messages, somewhat modified, about two months after they are initially released.)



Circuit Witness and Outreach Workers

See? **WOW!** News and Encouragement for CID Circuit **W**itness & **O**utreach **W**orkers

First “Pass This On” message:

RELEASE DATE: June 1, 2020

In preparation for Trinity Sunday – June 7, 2020

Imagine a car that belches out smoke whenever it starts up. You have probably seen such a car. Maybe you have *owned* such a car.

It seems clear: something is amiss. All that smoke shows that something is wrong.

Yet no one would see the smoke and draw the conclusion that the car has no designer or no builder. Cars don’t just pop up by themselves, even if they don’t fire on all cylinders. Someone made the car in the first place, no doubt, but something has gone wrong.

There are a lot of things wrong in this world. Coronavirus forms just the most recent example. Nature is filled with instances of cruelty. There is disappointment, disease, and death.

That doesn’t mean that this world has no Creator, though. It means something has indeed gone wrong, dreadfully wrong.

The Bible begins by saying that God made the entire creation, with human beings at the pinnacle. He made it like a house for people to live in and care for. He made it all good, very good. Our first parents rebelled against God. They fell into sin, and the wage that sin pays is death.

Yet God did not stop at that. Although He ceased creating new things for this world, He sent His own coequal and coeternal Son to become Man and give His life in payment for all human sin. Then God raised this One, Jesus of Nazareth, from the dead. In Jesus is life – life as it was meant to be, life with God.

The Spirit of God was there at Creation. Now He takes people who are sick unto death with sin and makes them a new creation.

This Sunday, in our church service, we will hear of the great Creator and Re-creator God.

END OF FIRST “PTO” MESSAGE

Worth Considering –

A thought for the Ascension of our Lord from Formula of Concord Solid Declaration VIII 77-79:

It’s not “that only Christ’s divinity is present with us in the Christian Church and congregation, and that such presence does not apply to Christ according to His humanity in no way whatever. . .

. . . the majesty of the man Christ is declared [in Scripture, e.g., Matthew 18:20; 28:20]. Christ has received this majesty, according to His humanity, at the right hand of God’s majesty and power. So also, according to His received human nature and with the same, He can be, and also is, present where He wants to be. He is present especially in His Church and congregation here on earth as Mediator, Head, King, and High Priest.

This presence is not a part, or only one half of Him. Christ’s entire person is present, to which both natures belong, the divine and the human – not only according to His divinity, but also according to, and with, His received human nature. He is our Brother [Hebrews 2:17], and we are flesh of His flesh and bone of His bone [Genesis 2:23].

He has instituted His Holy Supper for the certain assurance and confirmation of this, so that He will be with us, and dwell, work, and be effective in us also according to that nature from which He has flesh and blood.”

(from *Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions*, page 594, additional paragraphing supplied)

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Circuit Witness and Outreach Workers