



Opening Thoughts:

“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” (Romans 3:23-24)

Don't just be offended. Be free.

I don't remember the first time God offended me -- that is, the first time the truth of His Law made me feel the shame that I deserve. I might have been four, or maybe fourteen. No doubt: the Lord was right. And so was His representative (most likely, my mom or dad). The Law shows us our sin. The Gospel shows us our Savior, Jesus.

It certainly wasn't the first time it happened, but I vividly remember a time when the Gospel set me free. I had ruined something my dad had made. I 'fessed up ... probably slowly. Then I was forgiven -- by my dad and by my Father. I think it seemed too good to be true. *But it wasn't. Undeserved? You bet. True? You better believe it.*

Like other pastors throughout our District, I get to stand in a pulpit occupied by tremendous pastors before me, preaching and teaching Law and Gospel. What I (or *your* pastor) deliver ought to offend you. But don't go away when that happens. Lean in. Listen. Be free.

Lean in and listen as the Gospel goes deeper. The mercy of God in Jesus covers all your sin. It's not too good to be true. You are forgiven for Jesus' sake. Completely? *You better believe it!* Rejoice, too, that God restores those things -- and people -- we think have been ruined. To that end, pray for your preacher!

- Pastor Mike Burdick St. John's Lutheran Church, Effingham

Pray For Our Central Illinois District Missions supported by your church's Mission Dollars to the District. “Finally, brothers, pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored...” Please pray for CID's efforts to call a Missionary Pastor to work in inner city circumstances in south Peoria. Christ Lutheran Church there will provide a “staging area” for outreach by a new District missionary. Pray the Lord of the harvest to send a laborer!

Stay Connected with the Central Illinois District

CID's website: <http://www.cidlcms.org/>

CID's GatePost (newsletter) <http://www.cidlcms.org/gatepost.html>

Subscribe to the E-GatePost/Monthly Bulletin Inserts:

<http://www.cidlcms.org/>

CID CHURCH EXTENSION FUND NEWS:

Receive a double blessing! - The CID Church Extension Fund is still offering for a limited time its 24-Month **SPECIAL RATE** of **2.35%** (minimum investment of \$500). Not only will you receive an excellent financial return on your investment, you will be participating in the expansion of God's Kingdom and ministry as you partner to provide resources to churches and schools in the Central Illinois District! This special rate is available to *all LCMS members* as well as LCMS churches and schools and their organizations. Please contact Chris Anderson or Susan Short at the CID-CEF (phone: 217-793-1802, email: cef@cidlcms.org) for this special interest rate and other investment options. Thank you for investing in the future of our LCMS!

Help your church or school take advantage of the CID Church

Extension Fund Mortgage Interest Rebate - If your church or school has a standard loan with the CID Church Extension Fund, it has the opportunity to receive back a significant portion of its interest payments in the form of a Mortgage Interest Rebate. Historically, the Church Extension Fund has returned between 20% - 35% of interest paid by the church or school through this rebate. The one criteria to qualify for the rebate is that the church or school must be current in their loan payments by the end of the year. You can lend your assistance by fulfilling your capital campaign pledge or through a special gift to your church or school.

2020 Lutheran Youth Fellowship (LYF) Teen Leadership Training

Event: LYF Teen Leadership Training

When: March 12 - 15, 2020

Where: Pallottine Renewal Center, St. Louis, MO

Total Cost: \$375 per participant (transportation is not included)

(Grants for up to \$275.00 per individual may be available from the CID office)

Timeline:

Now On-line registration open for both congregations and districts.

March 1, 2020 Registration Closes/Due for all participants

March 12, 2020 The 2020 LYF Teen Leadership Training begins!

At this event, young people and the adults who serve and support them are encouraged in their faith and acts of witness and service. Youth then lead the training back to their home district, circuit, or congregation. This provides opportunities for leadership and encouraging others in their life in Christ and the Church.

Registration is now open here: <https://lcms.regfox.com/2020-lutheran-youth-fellowship-training>. Early registration is recommended as our space is limited at the center.