

Nbr. 55 – November, 2023

### For the end of the Church Year

At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow,  
Every tongue confess Him King of glory now.  
'Tis the Father's pleasure we should call Him Lord,  
Who from the beginning was the mighty Word.

Humbled for a season, to receive a name  
From the lips of sinners unto whom He came,  
Faithfully He bore it spotless to the last,  
Brought it back victorious when from death He  
passed (LSB 512, st. 1 & 3).

*See? WOW!* Telling the Good News about  
Jesus extends His Lordship in grace before He  
comes in power at the end of days.

### Annual C-WOW meeting

In the October issue of this publication, I  
offered C-WOWs three possible Saturday dates on  
which we might hold our annual C-WOW meeting,  
via zoom. The dates were:

- Dec. 2 (best for me)
- Nov. 11
- Nov. 4

By the deadline, October 16, *no one* had  
responded to indicate which of these seemed  
workable. Well, Nov. 4 is just over two weeks away,  
so I am taking this date off the table as an option.

Let's try this one more time. By 8:00 a.m.  
on Tuesday, Oct. 24, please get back to me and tell  
whether Nov. 11 or Dec. 2 is workable for you.

You will find a rough agenda for the  
meeting in the next column. Important as it usually  
is for us to have these annual check-ins, this will be  
particularly important as we all go into 2024. Please  
participate!

### AGENDA FOR 2023 C-WOW MEETING

*November 11 or December 2, 2023*

- 9:30 Opening Devotion
- 9:40 The Synod's 2023 Convention and Evangelism
- 10:00 Report on Evangelism Commission discussion  
(Planning to implement 1-01A, CID Pastors'  
Survey, Lyman Stone studies, "O AFC for  
adults", "question of the day," etc.)
- 10:30 Break
- 10:40 Promoting *Every One His Witness* in 2024
- 11:00 Update: *Beyond the Classroom*
- 11:05 Reminders: Demographic Studies,  
CAD/DS survey, *re: Vitality* modules
- 11:20 General discussion . . . end by 11:30

### Register for Small Church Summit

The next Small Church Summit will meet in  
southern Illinois at Messiah, Carlyle, on Jan. 6 or (if  
weather is bad then) Jan. 27 and in central Illinois  
on Feb. 3 or (if weather is bad then) Feb. 10 at  
Faith, Lincoln. You can attend either of these free.  
See the September CID *GatePost* for details.

You can register now at

<https://forms.gle/5eEQYVGgAwMdtj4v6>

### Next few "back page" columns

The Lutheran Concerns Association has  
invited me to speak at its January, 2024 meeting in  
Fort Wayne, just before the annual symposia at the  
seminary there. I was delighted at the prospect of  
addressing this meeting on the topic of evangelism.

The LCA is also allowing me to show you  
what I will be telling them. The present *See? WOW!*  
issue and the next few will carry this message. It  
may also appear in the LCA's *Lutheran Clarion*.

Issues, etc. interviews with me on Evangelism:

[www.issuesetc.org/evangelism](http://www.issuesetc.org/evangelism)



Circuit Witness and Outreach Workers

*Worth Considering:*

The biblical message of Law and Gospel should fill and shape our approach to evangelism.

Certainly it should shape our evangelistic message, ruling out the works-righteousness that comes with synergistic approaches that ask people to make decisions for Christ and so forth. As Synod evangelism executive Erwin Kolb wisely used to say, people will try to stay with Christ the way they think they first got to Him. If they think they first got to Him in part by their own effort, they will keep on making such efforts. These will never be enough, and they will never be good enough in the sight of God. The Law cannot save a sinner. Only God in Christ can do that. He does it through the message of the Gospel, the power of God unto salvation.

But not only should Law and Gospel fill and shape our evangelistic address, as it were; in due distinction, they should also fill and shape our approach to evangelism. Why engage in it? Why does the church do this? And why would I be involved? Law plays a part in the answers to questions like these, yet certainly not only Law.

Toward the end of a recent workshop on evangelism in our District, a young pastor very politely made an important observation. He noted that we had talked for quite a while basically about ways and means – that is, about the *how*. He appreciated that, and he said absolutely nothing against it. Still, he did not think it would be good for the time to end without a word about the *why*.

Gentle rebuke duly noted! For it is important also to say what the Lord is doing through His church in evangelism. We want to move Christians toward evangelistic involvement, and to do so evangelically.

For years I have told a story from when I was much younger, listening as an evangelism leader said that he used to motivate people for evangelism by the Law. As he characterized it, he used to tell them they had to get out there and do it. They had to. They just had to. But this man went on to say that more recently he had started motivating people for evangelism with the Gospel – he told them *how* to do it. Of course, telling people how to do something amounts to still more Law. It does not proclaim to them reconciliation and peace with God on account of the Christ Who lived and died for them and rose again. Now, I know that. Still, in an evangelism workshop I showed myself capable of gliding over the best part of the *why* for evangelism, Christ and the salvation He brings.

C.F.W. Walther said: “After a long season of sluggishness and lukewarmness, during which you began to hate yourself because you saw no way to change your condition, you happen to hear a real Gospel sermon, and you leave the church a changed man and rejoice in the fact that you are a child of God. You suddenly become aware of the fact that it is not difficult to walk in the way of God’s commandments; you seem to walk in it of your own accord” (*Law and Gospel*, Dau ed., 384).

I still like an illustration I learned years ago. The Law is like a rudder that keeps a ship on course, but the Gospel alone can serve as the wind in the sails to move that vessel along. Like many other good works, telling the Good News about Jesus is something to which Christians need to be exhorted. There is nothing wrong with reminding God’s people of their responsibility. But the power to meet the responsibility comes through the Gospel, not the Law. – Ken Schurb [kschurb@cidlcms.org](mailto:kschurb@cidlcms.org)

