



First Things – July, 2022

Luther's Simple Way To Pray – ITCP

One day, while Martin Luther was having his hair cut, his barber (Peter Beskendorf) confided in him that he was having trouble praying and asked him for advice. Luther went home and quickly penned the little booklet *A Simple Way To Pray*.

He encouraged his barber to *pray the catechism*. By that he meant, that his regular prayers should be guided by the Ten Commandments, the Apostles Creed, and the Lord's Prayer.

Then he continued: "I take one part after another and free myself as much as possible from distractions in order to pray. I divide each commandment into four parts, thereby fashioning a garland of four strands. That is, I think of each commandment as,

1. instruction, which is really what it is intended to be, and consider what the Lord God demands of me so earnestly.
2. I turn it into a thanksgiving;
3. a confession, and
4. a prayer."



ITCP – Instruction, Thanksgiving, Confession, Prayer

For example, the First Commandment says, "You shall have no other gods." What instruction comes from this commandment? It teaches us to *fear, love, and trust in God above all things*.

Instruction – Lord you ask me to fear, love and trust in you above everything else.

Thanksgiving – I thank you for being my God, for loving me, for sending your Son to rescue me, for forgiving me, for promising to care for me.

Confession – but, I often forget about what you have done for me and I frequently doubt your promises, especially when I am faced with challenges.

Prayer – so, lead me to love and trust you more each day. Amen.

Board For Lay Ministry Update

1. **Finances** – through the end of May we received \$110,448 in offerings and other income. We had expenses totaling \$103,735. Therefore we did have a surplus of \$6,713! We pray that our members will continue their regular support of their congregation even when they may be away on vacation during the warm weather months.
2. **Roof Fund** – Totaling all the donations and “matching funds,” we now have \$30,049 on hand. We hope to have an updated quotation (the original was \$33,000) in the near future and the work should begin in July. Thanks for all your support!
3. **Hymnals** – the new blue hymnals have arrived. After the new books are “conditioned,” approximately half of the present red hymnal will be removed and replaced with the blue ones.
4. **Quarterly Meeting** – will take place on Sunday, July 17 after worship.
5. The board is looking for volunteers to form a committee to come up with ideas to **freshen up the church entryway**, which we’ll look at at the upcoming quarterly meeting. Contact Pastor Mark if you’d like to help.

The Month Of July

Sunday Mornings – Worship at 9:00 AM, **Pastor Oliver Lindholm** will be here on July 3/4 and July 10/11 while Pastor Rieke is on vacation – there will be **NO Sunday Bible Study OR CrossTalk** during the summer months

Mondays – Evening Worship @ 6:30 PM – **NO Monday Bible Study** during the summer

Thursdays – **First Women** will meeting on Thursday, July 14 at 4:00 PM
Women of the Word (WOW) will meet on Thursday, July 14 & July 28 at 6:30 PM

Board for Lay Ministry – will meet on Monday, July 18, after the evening worship service

ELC Business Team – will meet on Tuesday, July 19 at 6:30 PM

Monday Evening Worship

With all the summer activities that may take you away from home – and Sunday worship – on the weekends, please keep our Monday evening worship service in mind. It’s a little more relaxed worship service, but with the same readings and message. Just one more thing – this summer, **ALL** the Monday evening worship services will be held in the church, not outside. **And yes, there will be Monday Evening Worship on July 4.**

Area WELS Update

The pastoral vacancy at **St. John’s** in **Nodine** continues. **Pastor Benjamin Tomczak** of Sioux Falls, South Dakota is currently considering the call. During the summer months, I am preaching at First at 9:00 and then at Nodine at 10:30 AM.

Other vacancies remain: **St. Matthew’s** in **Winona, Rochester Area** – three vacancies, and **Good Shepherd** in **Holmen**. Please keep these congregations – and the men who serve them – in your prayers.

Greet & Get To Know Our New Members



1. **Brianna & Morgan Krueger** transferred to First from Belmont, California and now live in Brownsville
2. **Jerry & Jeanine Stotesbery** came to us from Prince of Peace
3. **Leo & Sandy Chaput** also came to us from Prince of Peace
4. **Terry Beitlich** transferred to us from the Twin Cities (he's camera-shy)
5. **Keith & Jo Heinze** recently came to us from First Lutheran in La Crosse
6. **Kyle & Jana Schroeder** and children **Josiah (JJ)**, **Savannah**, **Sophia**, and **Adalynn** are coming to us from Caledonia
7. Then there are new confirmands: **Cami Esser & Eli Holub**



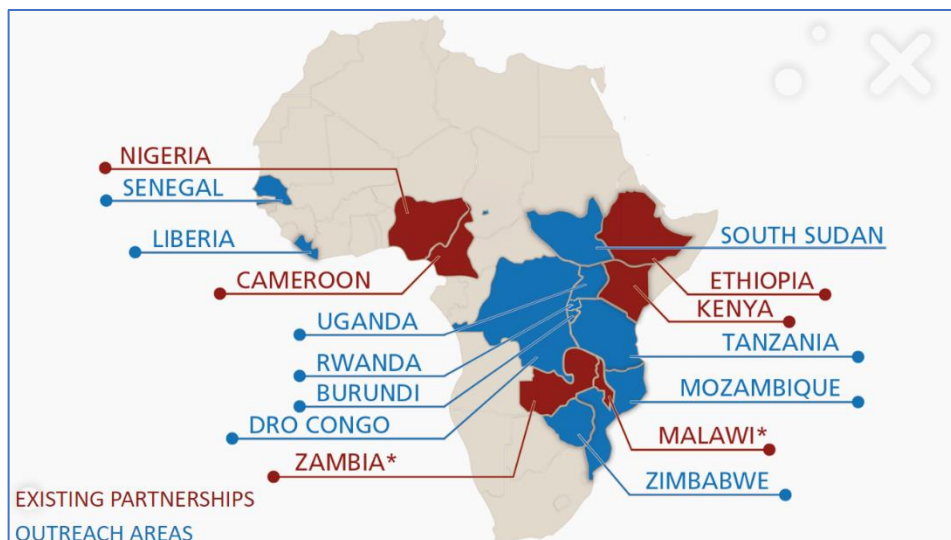
WELS In Africa

The Wisconsin Synod has had missionaries on the ground in Africa since 1953.

Over the years, most missionaries (including myself), lived and worked in **Zambia** and **Malawi**. They started and served congregations until there were African workers to take over the work. As a result, the Lutheran Church of Central Africa in Zambia and Malawi now have 65,000 souls.

Since 2017, the WELS missionaries in Zambia and Malawi have handed their congregational duties over to their African counterparts. Today, these missionaries – called the **One Africa Team (OAT)** – helps new “partners” throughout the continent of Africa to develop.

1. In **Nigeria**, OAT works with leaders of Christ the King Lutheran Church (2,500 souls) and All Saints Lutheran Church (1,700 souls)
2. In **Cameroon**, OAT works with the leaders of the Lutheran Church of Cameroon which has 800 souls
3. The OAT partner in **Ethiopia** is the Lutheran Church of Ethiopia and its 500 souls
4. The OAT partner in **Kenya** is the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ – Kenya with 3,500 souls
5. At the 2023 WELS convention, the WELS will likely enter into formal fellowship with the 750 souls of the Obadiah Lutheran Synod of **Uganda**
6. OAT is doing new work with the 5,000 souls of the Confessional Lutheran Church of **Liberia**
7. More exploratory work is being done with the 75 congregations of the Africa Missions Evangelical Church in **Tanzania**.
8. The OAT is also taking over outreach work with **South Sudanese refugees** who live in refugee camps in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda



Keegan Dowling, me, and Ben Foxen at [their commissioning at the recent Taste of Missions 2022](#) at the 54:45 point

In addition, the WELS Board for World Missions is hoping to send two missionaries to work among the Wolof people of **Senegal** in West Africa.

May the Lord bless the work of the One Africa team!

You can learn more about the One Africa Team (OAT) on the back of the July calendar.

God Bless,

Pastor Mark