

First Hearts

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“Closed Communion”

One of many great things about being Lutheran is that Lutherans are prolific writers. Recently, a new book was published by Concordia Publishing House entitled “Closed Communion” written and compiled by Matthew Harrison, President of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, and John Pless, Professor at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana. In this letter I would like to give you just a few quotes from this book. In this letter, I would also encourage you to read the book, “Closed Communion.”

In the opening paragraph of the introduction to “Closed Communion” are found the following words: “Writing in the midst of increasing pressures for a more relaxed approach to altar and pulpit fellowship in 1957, Hermann Sasse observed, ‘Open Communion’ is not Communion at all; it may be a fascinating rite, a religious experience, but it is not the Sacrament of the NT.” Biblically and historically, admission to the Lord’s Table was on the basis of confession. . . . Indeed the Lutheran Confessions cite John Chrysostom as an example: “Chrysostom says that the priest stands daily at the altar, inviting some to Communion and keeping others away.” Clearly for the Lutheran Confessions, the apostolic exhortation for self-examination (1 Corinthians 11:27) does not relieve the pastor of his responsibility as a “steward of the mysteries of God” (1 Corinthians 4:12).”

Next, I would like to share with you the paragraph at the bottom of page 384 and the first full paragraph on page 385. Quoting:

“The fact that we, as one might say, cannot “picture” anything of Christ’s body in Holy Communion to ourselves expresses no more and also no less than our inability to picture to ourselves anything pertaining to the contents of our Lord’s eschatological promises. Since the exalted Lord forms the content of the Holy Communion promise, the latter, too, belongs to the promises of “the last things.” All that lies beyond death falls into this category. But this “beyond” is not limited chronologically. It dawned

with the resurrection of Christ, and the Holy Communion promise tells us that it has dawned also for us. Yes. Holy Communion is the dawn for us. For as the resurrected Lord presents us with His body and blood, He does away with the boundary line between the realm of the physical, which is appointed to death, and the realm of the other, which has overcome death. As always, we can be only the recipients, because not we but only the resurrected Lord removed the line. But we actually receive what He promised: “He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day” (John 6:54). That may seem presumptuous to a theology which seeks to understand the relationship between God and us only dialectically, that is, from the contrast between God and us. We understand it from the fact of the atonement.

In Holy Communion, promise and reception correspond to each other exactly as promise and faith do in the kerygma. This by no means involves only an analogy. Christ’s body is truly given for us and His blood truly shed for us for the remission of sin. This implies, as Paul tells us, that there is also an “unworthy” reception of His body and blood, just as there is in some a hardening of the heart over against the kerygma. As for Holy Communion, it is received worthily only by faith, a faith which is indeed not devoid of penitence, a faith which receives forgiveness. Thus it may seem that Holy Communion is but a duplication of what faith receives by and through the proclamation of the Gospel. However, what is presented us is not only the Word, nor is our reception of it only by faith. The gift distributed to us is Christ’s body and blood, and our reception takes place

by means of eating and drinking. These cannot be dissociated from each other.”

Next, I would like to share with you a paragraph from Martin Luther’s “Open Letter to Frankfurt on the Main” which is found on page 11 of this book. I would like to point out that one translation that I read some years ago translated the fifth word of this letter – not as “appalling” – but as “a horror”. Here is the paragraph from Luther:

In Summa, it is appalling to hear that in one and the same church or at one and the same altar both sides should come for and receive of one and the same Sacrament, yet with the one side believing that it receives only bread and wine while the other is believing that it receives the true body and blood of Christ. And I often doubt whether it is possible to believe that a preacher or pastor could be so hardened and malicious (and moreover remain silent) as to let both sides go, each one in their delusion that they receive one and the same Sacrament, each one according to his faith, etc. If there is that kind of a pastor, he must have a heart harder than any rock, steel, or even a diamond. He must certainly be an apostle of wrath; the Turks and Jews are much better. They deny our Sacrament and confess this plainly. Thus we are not deceived by them, and we fall into no ungodliness. But these fellows must be the right high archdevil, who would give me only bread and wine and would let me mistake it for the body and blood of Christ and so miserably deceive me. Too hot and too hard, that is simply going too far; God will strike there before long. Therefore, whoever has such preachers or is deceived by them, let this be a warning for them as before the devil incarnate himself.”

In closing, I would like to share a few sentences from the Small Catechism. At the end of question 305 in Explanation of the Small Catechism - Section on the Sacrament of the Altar - Section IV How to Receive This Sacrament Worthily is found the following paragraph. “Note: Pastors as stewards of the mysteries of God (1 Cor. 4:1) have the greatest

responsibility as to who should be admitted to the Sacrament. Some of the responsibility also rests with the congregation and the communicant.”

Dear ones, Our God, the Triune God, is a loving, fatherly God who gives good gifts to His Children. The greatest of His gifts are His Word in Holy Scriptures, Holy Baptism, and the Holy Supper - our Lord’s Supper. As a Steward of the Mysteries of God listed in the previous sentence, your pastor has great responsibility toward these gifts and mysteries. The Lord’s Supper is meant to be given to those who believe in Him to forgive their sins and strengthen their faith. It is not meant to be given to the unbelieving lest it do great harm by furthering their unbelief – lest it harden their unbelieving hearts. While the pastor is responsible for the distribution of the Lord’s Supper, the congregation also has some responsibility in this matter as does the individual communicant himself. “Open communion” is in fact a contradiction in terms and is no communion at all. “Closed communion” is communion the way the Lord intended it to be – the giving of God’s Son in body and blood – the giving of God’s Son both physically and spiritually - to those who receive Him in faith – for the forgiveness of their sins and the strengthening of their faith.

In Christ, Pastor Floyd Smithey

Worship This Month

I pledge allegiance to the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the faith for which it stands, one Savior eternal with mercy and grace for all.

November 6 – 24th Sunday after Pentecost (All Saints’ Day): *Revelation 7:9-17; 1 John 3:1-3; Matthew 5:1-12.*

November 11 – 25th Sunday after Pentecost: *1 Kings 17:8-16; Hebrews 9:24-28; Mark 12:38-44.*

November 18 – 26th Sunday after Pentecost: *Daniel 12:1-3; Hebrews 10:11-25; Mark 13:1-13.*

November 15 – Last Sunday of the Church Year: *Isaiah 51:4-6; Jude 20-25; Mark 13:24-37.*

THANKSGIVING EVE SERVICE will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 21. Please join us!

Prayer List

OUR PRAYER LIST SHOULD

INCLUDE:

Serving Our Country: Brett Anthonijs, Robert Boatman, Isaac Davis, Chad Kaiser, Adam Smith, Jeff Stone, Neil Whitehead

Other Prayer Requests:

MEMBERS WITH SICKNESS OR BURDENS:

Brion Bissell (needs kidney)	Pastor & Mary Schmidt
Margot Bridges (homebound)	Carl Testerman (cancer)
Gene Franklin	Judy Testerman (cancer)
Gladys Frankenberg (homebound)	The Varner family
Pat Hinds	Don & Carolyn Weaver
Karla Hood	Kris Weaver
Mike & Mary Jones	Harold & Katherine Whitaker (homebound)
Dan Jordan	Mary Ann Wheat
Don & Sandy Linde	Marilyn Wing (homebound)
Sharon Mueller	

NON-MEMBERS WITH SICKNESS OR BURDENS:

Jonathan Campbell (Diane Baum's co-worker's brother) fighting infection after an appendectomy to remove his ruptured appendix
 Steven Dew (Carolyn Weaver's friend)
 Bill Flynn (Sharon Mueller's brother), whose cancer has returned
 Ken Hamilton (father of Anna Marie Hamilton, UT student from Alabama)
 Judy Hamrick (Shirley Watson's neighbor) with a tumor that is growing
 JoAnn Harbaugh (Kathleen Holliday's mother)
 Cheryl Hooks (Diane Baum's friend) undergoing months of chemotherapy after removal of part of her colon and intestines due to cancer
 Helen Linderfelt (Lynda Graves' friend)
 Joyce Lipscomb (Rick Elmore's friend)
 Annette Lotivio (Marc Blais's friend) with pancreatic cancer
 Joanne Mattingly
 Joan Mincey (Shirley Watson's friend) with stage 4 COPD and breast cancer
 Karen Nall
 Tom O'Brien (Marissa Wilson's co-worker's husband) with prostate cancer
 Travis Parrott (the Wolford's son-in-law) needing a kidney transplant
 Tom Roberts (Sara's grandfather) with Alzheimer's
 Daniel Rule (the Slifkas' friend) suffering from RSD
 Kristy Shirk (Lynda Graves' friend) with cancer of the sinuses
 Barbara Thornton (Janice Kaiser's relative)

Sam and Alex Weaver

Other News and Happenings

STEWARDSHIP – Sometimes people don't like it when pastors talk about stewardship. For some, it hits too close to home. It is easier to talk about bad people in Washington, in history, or overseas than it is to think about what our daily life in Christ is supposed to look like – how we are supposed to love our neighbor.

God calls us to first-fruits, sacrificial giving. This means we should give off the top. We should set a percentage of our income as a deliberate gift for the work of the Church and give that first. We write the check to the Lord's work in the Church before we pay the mortgage or pay for our medicine or pay for anything else.

We don't pay for all the stuff we need, and think we need, and then give from what is left over. That is the first-fruits idea. It is hard because we think we need all sorts of other things first. But that is the point of "sacrificial."

Next, how could the starting point for Christian generosity and sacrifice really be anything less than a tithe – 10 percent? The ceremonial law of the Old Testament was never arbitrary. In the Old Testament, the Levites received this tithe so they could be full-time ministers.

So, if 10 percent was needed in the Old Testament, and we have a bigger mission need in the New Testament, how can we expect the Lord's work to be done on less than a tithe?

First-fruits, sacrificial, generous giving – that's the way. We shouldn't fool ourselves into thinking that we've out-given God's goodness or that we've given plenty.

In Mark's account of the feeding of the 5,000, Jesus took the disciples' five loaves and two fish and blessed them. It was nothing among so many, but, of course, it was plenty. Jesus makes something from nothing. Mark doesn't say that all the disciples gave Jesus all the bread they had. It is quite possible some of them held something back. But even if they did, that didn't stop Jesus from blessing them. Jesus makes something out of nothing.

He does all things well and works all things together for good. The disciples don't give their bread to Jesus because it is a good investment. They give it because He is good, they love Him, and they trust Him. Let us go and do likewise.

CHURCH DIRECTORY PICTURE TAKING:

Dates and times will be Sundays, October 28,

November 4 and 11th

Location: School library, around the corner from the mailboxes.

Times: 9:45 AM to 10:15 AM and 12:00 Noon (after Divine Service) to 1:15 PM

On Sunday, November 4, there is going to be a church potluck to celebrate Confirmation. This will be held in the gym so the picture taking will be set up in the gym for that day. Same times.

Doc Sternberg will be taking these pictures; Kevin Booth and Bobby Eisold will be handling getting directory on our web site and printing copies for members who request a printed copy. Plan is to have these available by early December. Please have your picture taken... *The Church Directory Committee*

YOUTH CONFIRMATION SUNDAY will be Sunday, November 4. A public examination will be held on Saturday, November 3, at 4:00 p.m. in the Meeting Room. Lunch and celebratory cake will be served after worship on Sunday, the 4th.

UT FOOTBALL GAME on Saturday, November 3. The Vols will take on Charlotte. Tickets are \$25.00 each. Come join us for some tailgating, fellowship, and some UT football. Please let Shellia know if you plan to go. She only has a few tickets left.

BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP MEETING is scheduled for 7:00 on Tuesday, November 6.

55 ALIVE will meet on Thursday, November 8, at 12:00 noon. We will have a delicious turkey dinner with dressing made by our school's cook, Stacy Takonis, at \$7.00/person. We will have special presenters Steve and Judy Schoenhur from Tellico Village telling us about the ministry with their comfort dog Jewel. Then, Jewel will visit all the classrooms from Preschool-8th grade because Jewel loves children! See you there@

BOARD OF ELDERS MEETING is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 13.

DAY SCHOOL BOARD MEETING is 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 13.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES meeting and workday at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, November 17.

THERE WILL BE A THANKSGIVING MEAL after worship on Sunday, November 18. Ham and turkey will be provided. Please bring a side or two.

BUY GROCERIES AND SUPPORT OUR SCHOOL – It's as easy as linking your shopper card online or speaking to the cashier.

Kroger: (Kroger.com/account/communityrewards) code PN664

Food City: (foodcity.com/schoolbucks) code 40424

Ingles: (ingles-markets.com/toolsforschools-link) code 11634

Amazon: (smile.amazon.com) code 62-0553429

School News and Happenings

CALENDAR

2 – K-8 Field Trip to KSO Young People's Concert

6 – Fall portrait retakes

6 – ECE closing at 5:30 p.m.

9 – No UniDay – Theme: Red, White, & Blue

11 – 3rd - 5th Choir sings at FLC

16 – ECE Thanksgiving Feast

16 – K-8 Thanksgiving parties

21-23 – Thanksgiving Holidays: no school, ECE open

11/21 - student services available

30 – K-8 field Trip to Appalachian Ballet

NEWS FROM FIRST LUTHERAN SCHOOL

Dear Friends,

First Lutheran School is a blessing to so many: our students, families, community, and congregation, but the day to day happenings in the classroom is something most of us do not get to experience. Oh, to be a fly on the wall in one of our elementary classrooms. You would be witness to joy and learning in its purest form. There is a great deal happening in our Kindergarten and First/ Second Grade classrooms, and in this environment, students are thriving.

Kindergarten is a grade filled with discovery. They don their first uniforms and try to find their place as elementary student. Miss Newell works to find unique and different ways to help the students' social, emotional, and intellectual development. This means students are learning through play in centers base off a current unit of study. They are also regularly reading and writing to cement their new-found knowledge. After reviewing the alphabet at the start of the year, they march through the school presenting a Letter Parade singing to other classes in the ECE and to older students. It is truly a sight to behold. Last week, I was fortunate to see them work on their public speaking skills as they presented their Leaf Reports. Of particular importance to our Kindergarteners are their Eighth Grade Buddies.

Each Wednesday at Chapel the Eighth Graders sit with their younger buddy helping them follow along with the service and worshipping together. Then on Fridays the two classes come together to learn and work on projects. The Kindergarteners look up to the older students, and it is a truly special relationship that students remember even after they had graduated First Lutheran. These kindergarteners are growing into lifelong learners filled with enthusiasm and optimism.

Moving on to First and Second grade, Mrs. Wiberley is fostering the independence and critical thinking necessary for a strong academic foundation. The students are finding their passions, and Mrs. Wiberley encourages this enthusiasm with engaging projects. Book reports expose students to different genres and how knowledge can be shared in a wide variety of formats. Hands-on learning is a favorite in the First and Second grade room. They build the Pyramids of Egypt and the Great Wall of China. They conduct experiments and collect artifacts directing their own learning by asking questions and seeking the answers. The wonder and awe they have for the world around them is contagious.

Sometimes these grades even share experiences, such as their field trip to Mrs. Wiberley's home where they analyzed apples as artists, scientists, and mathematicians. Then together they went and saw *Pete the Cat* at the Civic Auditorium. Through it all Miss Newell, Mrs. Wiberley, and Miss Kari work to provide classrooms where students can grow in mind, body, and most importantly faith.

During these busy days, the young students embody what it means to have faith like a child, they show Christ's love to each other through frequent acts of kindness and compassion. They boldly proclaim their love for Jesus without prompting. If you walk the halls at the right time, you might hear their sweet, strong voices lifted in praise to God as part of their religion class or simply because the Holy Spirit is working in their hearts. It is in moments such as this that one can truly understand what makes First Lutheran School a special place.

In His Service

Jessie Irwin, Interim Principal

Birthdays and Anniversaries

BIRTHDAYS

- 1 – Melanie Bartholomay
- 2 – Michelle Tillman
- 3 – Zoe McKenzie
- 4 – David Cooper
- 5 – Pat Hinds
- 6 – Rosa Beck
- 7 – Allie Bryant, Kelly Miller
- 8 – Lynda Graves, Karen Varner
- 9 – Rick Elmore, Dustin Samuel
- 10 – Eric Flanigan
- 12 – Erik Blomenberg
- 14 – Fred Schell, Melissa Smith, Katherine Whitaker
- 16 – Jake Varner
- 17 – Pastor Floyd Smithey
- 18 – Amanda Knopps
- 19 – Nelson Tower
- 20 – Melissa Norton\
- 24 – John Haynes, Joe Haynes
- 27 – Kevin Booth
- 29 – Bailey Hatmaker, Steve Kaiser, Tammy Wheat
- 30 – Gene Framnklin

ANNIVERSARIES

- 7 – Mike & Mary Jones
- 18 – Steve & Janice Kaiser
- 19 – Pastor & Sherrill Smithey
- 22 – Cameron & Jeannie Brown
- 23 – John & Carolyn Milligan
- 27 – Pastor & Gloria Schulz
- 28 – John & Sharon Mueller, Randy & Joy Witt

DEADLINE FOR THE DECEMBER NEWSLETTER IS FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 16

Floyd P. Smithey, Associate Pastor; Ceci Steele, Editor.
Worship Services are held Sundays at 10:30 a.m.
Children's Sunday School and Adult Bible Classes are held on Sundays at 9:15 a.m.

First Lutheran Church
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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
November 2018						
				1	2	3 Youth to UT game 4:00 Questioning of Confirmants
4 DST ENDS CONFIRMATION SUNDAY 8:45 First Bells Rehearsal 9:00 Fellowship 9:15 SS & Bible Classes 10:30 Worship Service 12:00 Lunch for Confirm.	3 6:00 New Testament Books	6 7:00 Board of Stewardship	7 8:30 School Chapel 5:45 Lutheran Ring. Rehears. 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	8 12:00 55 Alive	9	10 10:00 - 2:00 Karate Graduation
11 8:45 First Bells Rehearsal 9:00 Fellowship 9:15 SS & Bible Classes 10:30 Worship: 3-5 Choir	12 9:30 Quilting 6:00 New Testament Books	13 6:00 Day School Board 7:00 Board of Elders	14 8:30 School Chapel 5:45 Lutheran Ring. Rehears. 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	15	16 DEADLINE FOR DEC. NEWSLETTER	17 9:00 Workday
18 MITEBOX SUNDAY 8:45 First Bells Rehearsal 9:00 Fellowship 9:15 SS & Bible Classes 10:30 Worship Service 12:00 Thanksgiving meal	19 6:00 New Testament Books	20 7:00 Council Meeting	21 5:45 Lutheran Ring. Rehears. 7:00 Worship Service 7:45 Choir Rehearsal NO SCHOOL	22 THANKSGIVING	23 NO SCHOOL / NO ECE	24
25 8:45 First Bells Rehearsal 9:00 Fellowship 9:15 SS & Bible Classes 10:30 Worship Service	26 9:30 Quilting 6:00 New Testament Book					