



AUGUSTANA DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

August 2018

335 Main St S • Hutchinson MN 55350 • 320.587.2093

IS CHRISTIANITY HARD OR EASY?

In the Augustana District, we make a big deal of theology. We do this because everyone needs to “do theology.” The moment after one hears or reads Scripture, one begins to “do theology” as reflection and interpretation begin. This is why Lutherans make such a big deal of preaching the living Word. The sovereign God is carrying out His divine election through the preaching of the Word, and that is a matter of ultimate concern. Preachers preach so that hearers also become preachers, and there are plenty of preachers outside of the church doors who are hard at it.

As I drove through downtown of the community in which I live, one jumped out at me. A sign preached: “The destiny of your soul is in your own hands by the choices you make.” That is quite a sermon! Or, as I drove down the interstate, another preacher jumped out: “If you die tonight....heaven or hell?...Choose Jesus!” It doesn’t take long to figure out why solid theology and faithful preaching from real live preachers among real live sinners who gather is so important. This is at the heart of Christianity itself.



C. S. Lewis gets at the heart of the matter in a wonderful little piece called, “Is Christianity Hard or Easy?” This famous atheist-turned-Christian understood that the answer to his question is, both. “My yoke is easy and my burden is light,” Jesus says. That sounds easy. Jesus also says, “You must be perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect.” That sounds impossibly hard, because it is!

The problem, according to Lewis, is that, in asking questions like this, we always tend to start with ourselves. We think that we must decide to be a better Christian and try ever harder. But when we start with ourselves and think this way, we will either give up trying (because the failure rate is high) or become unhappy. Lewis notes that “there are many Christians who ‘live for others,’ but always in a grumbling, disconnected way, and then wonder why others do not notice how hard they are trying, as they make martyrs of themselves.”

True Christian theology cuts much deeper. Jesus is not trying to tune us up or put a shine on us like a newly waxed car. He is not out to resuscitate our old selves. Lewis puts it this way. “Christ wants no half-measures. Christ wants all. He did not come to torment us by asking ‘the self’ to do the impossible. He came to kill the old and start over. Christ is not interested in cutting off a branch here and there. He wants to cut the whole tree down. He is not interested in drilling or crowning the tooth, but takes it out. He is after your whole self. In YOUR place, he gives HIMSELF. His will becomes ours.” It is a complete takeover.



So, is Christianity hard or easy? Lewis offers an interesting analogy. “It may be hard for an egg to turn into a bird, but it is impossible to learn how to fly while remaining an egg. That is infinitely harder. We can’t go on being decent, ordinary eggs. We must be hatched or go bad.” Just as with birds’ eggs, however, Christians do not hatch themselves. All of this is God’s doing, and to preach that clearly is not only true, but the only means of true freedom. This is why the Augustana District makes a big deal of theology. We do so because it is necessary to make sense of the infinitely hard and graciously easy business of Christian faith and witness.

Pastor Randy Freund

Augustana District Service Coordinator

WORLD MISSIONS

Notes by Pr. Paul Knudson, Board of World Missions

MISSION PARTNERS RICHLY BLESSED BY AUGUSTANA DISTRICT GENEROSITY

The outreach witness of the Tabor Congregation, our major AD partner in Ethiopia, was overjoyed to receive the recent quarterly gifts from our congregations and families. The following represents the most recent wiring of funds:

- ✚ \$14,950 for evangelist support (helps with the support of 69 evangelists);
- ✚ \$1,000 for the work of Tabor's agriculturalist working with farmers from their Outreach Centers;
- ✚ \$13,500 to cover 70% of the need for their two top priorities in providing worship facilities for their Outreach Centers (this gift was designated for this from a special donation from Faith Lutheran Church in Hutchinson);
- ✚ \$3,100 was sent to the North Central Ethiopia Synod from one AD congregation for the training program of their pastors and evangelists;
- ✚ And \$2,500 was sent to NCES from designated gifts to further progress on the worship facility for their Wurgessa Congregation.

DESIGNATED GIFTS SENT THROUGH THE AD BLESS THE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF ESTONIA

Before World War II there were one million Lutherans in Estonia, one of the Baltic countries. After about 70 years of annexation by the Soviet Union that number was reduced to some 30,000. Presently Lutheran leaders in this now free country are seeking help from many brother and sister Christians in Europe and America to provide much needed new facilities to train their pastors and those of other evangelical churches. (continued)



This endeavor is an act of faith that is already being heeded by many. The need of \$1,500,000 is daunting. Approximately 10% of the need has been met in a short period of time. One of our District congregations has given \$15,000. Individual members of district congregations, apart from any direct effort from the AD, have added some \$22,000.

Your prayers are invited for this audacious undertaking to be successful that it may encourage many around the world to step up and make this a reality. This highly secular, atheistic country is a challenging environment in which to bear witness. Pray that those few may multiply greatly in the years to come.



Question:

Who did God speak to out of a whirlwind?

a. Elisha
b. Moses

c. Israel
d. Job



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All the words listed below are in the puzzle - left, right, up, down or diagonally. When done, the left over letters will spell a mystery word.

Y	H	N	I	N	H	E	R	I	T	A	N	C	E	W
T	T	A	U	H	T	E	T	T	E	G	E	B	H	A
I	E	U	N	D	E	R	S	T	A	N	D	I	N	G
S	T	G	P	R	H	M	O	C	K	E	T	H	O	C
R	T	H	U	I	C	O	N	S	F	H	N	T	I	A
E	E	T	N	S	A	S	G	T	E	O	E	E	T	L
V	L	Y	I	S	O	O	E	R	I	B	L	N	A	A
D	E	T	S	E	R	B	S	T	H	E	L	M	N	M
A	S	O	H	N	P	O	C	S	C	G	E	E	I	I
D	R	N	E	R	E	U	R	M	S	I	C	D	M	T
E	O	G	D	E	R	E	O	S	I	N	X	N	O	I
P	M	U	V	T	H	D	S	R	M	N	E	O	B	E
A	Y	E	S	T	S	E	C	I	F	I	R	C	A	S
R	R	E	A	I	C	O	N	T	E	N	T	I	O	N
T	D	F	W	B	O	N	J	U	D	G	M	E	N	T

- ⦿ Abomination
- ⦿ Adversity
- ⦿ Begetteth
- ⦿ Beginning
- ⦿ Bitterness
- ⦿ Bosom
- ⦿ Calamities
- ⦿ Condemneth
- ⦿ Contention
- ⦿ Depart
- ⦿ Destruction
- ⦿ Dry morsel
- ⦿ Excellent

- ⦿ Fathers
- ⦿ Inheritance
- ⦿ Judgment
- ⦿ Letteth
- ⦿ Mischief
- ⦿ Mocketh
- ⦿ Naughty tongue
- ⦿ Reproacheth
- ⦿ Sacrifices
- ⦿ Understanding
- ⦿ Unpunished
- ⦿ Whithersoever
- ⦿ Wisdom

Kidz Coloring Page



You are to bring into the ark two of all living creatures, male and female,
to keep them alive with you.

from Genesis 6

Save the ~~AD~~ Dates 2019

Augustana District Annual Theological Conference

Monday, February 4 - Tuesday, February 5, 2019



Augustana District Annual Confirmation Retreat

March 8 -10, 2019

Luther Crest in Alexandria, MN

Augustana District Annual Convention 2019

Saturday, May 11, 2019

Living Word Lutheran Church, Alexandria, MN.



Answers

Job 38:1

1Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind and said: 2“Who is this who obscures My counsel by words without knowledge?



WORD FIND ANSWER: TRANSGRESSION

WOMEN OF THE WORD

WHAT'S IN YOUR CLOSET?

Saturday, September 15, 2018
Peace Lutheran Church, Watertown, MN.
visit <https://www.augustanadistrict.org>
for more details.

Registration deadline is August 31st!



Address Service Requested

Hutchinson MN 55350

335 Main Street S.

AUGUSTANA DISTRICT

