

Holiday Confusion - It's the end of October as I write this article and it will be the beginning of November by the time you read it. If you are able, try to look at this time of year without any of your emotions or biases – as if you were a complete stranger to the world (think of how Mork, in that old sit-com *Mork and Mindy*, struggled to understand our oddities). This really can be a confusing time of year for us as Christians. What holiday(s) should we be celebrating? Which ones might be best for us to keep at an arm's-length?



For example: Is October 31st *Halloween* or *Reformation Day*? What's *All Saint's Day* all about one day later on November 1st? And *Day of the Dead* is on the calendar to be "celebrated" from October 31st through November 2nd. If you look to the stores for help, the confusion only increases. Pumpkin displays, candy and costumes for Halloween right next to Pilgrim and Turkey decorations for *Thanksgiving*, and one aisle over, in the largest display area we find *Christmas* trees, lights, wrapping paper and more. Could a person with multiple personalities even keep it all straight?

What are we Christians to think of it all? Don't lose heart. Instead of throwing your hands up in frustration or disgust; rather than dropping into a tirade about how the true meanings of our holidays is now overshadowed by the commercialization of society (which I do actually believe) and that all is lost, perhaps I can shed a different light on the issue for your consideration.

But before I do, there's one more thing that adds to the confusion: this is also the time of year for elections, so we're wrestling with other questions about "Who's the best candidate" and "How will this person or proposition impact me, my community and our freedoms?"

That's where I'd like to encourage us all to go to cut through all of the confusion and questions. I think it's far too easy for us to look right past and maybe even forget how truly blessed we are – both as Americans and Christians. Here in America we do still have the freedom to pick and choose from all of the holidays which ones we believe our Triune God wants us to focus upon and which ones we should not because they actually celebrate or promote ideas and beliefs that are not pleasing to God and therefore put our faith at risk.

You see, this freedom to worship and celebrate Christian holidays without risk of persecution or physical danger is not a given in many parts of the world today. For example, in the little-known African country of Burkina Faso Christianity is a minority religion (25%) with Islam being the most common (64%). In mid-July of this year eleven Christians were killed and others were taken hostage or remain missing. Why? just because they worship and proclaim Christ as their Lord and Savior. So, while we worry about what holiday we should celebrate, they have had to flee their homes. One Christian leader says that they "continue to face attacks on nearly a weekly basis" and another said, "Thousands of believers are being displaced; hundreds are being killed. There's a lot of pain but also a lot of perseverance." <https://www.icommittoprayer.com/request/2891/christians%2Din%2Dburkina%2Dfaso/>

When we Lutherans celebrate *Reformation Day* we remember the extreme perseverance in faith of men like Martin Luther through whom God worked to bring His Church away from such senseless killing and back to the truth of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. In fact, many Christian martyrs lost their lives attempting to do what God eventually did through Martin Luther. Three examples are Henry Voes, Johann Eck and Lampertus Thorn. These three Roman Catholic monks were brought to trial and charged for being "led astray" by Luther's teaching against the Pope. Henry Voes boldly replied, "Yes, we were led astray by him, as were the apostles led astray by Christ." (Foxe: *Voices of the Martyrs*, © 2007, pg. 95) These men were burned at the stake because of their faith and Luther, overcome with sorrow at their executions said, "The

cause which we defend is no longer a simple game; it looks for blood, it seeks for life" (Ibid. pg. 96).

That same cause that Luther and so many others risked their lives to exercise and proclaim is still your cause and mine today – God's truth in the Christian faith. It is that faith that you and I are seeing challenged even today in this "free" country. Yes, because we Christians have quietly just shaken our heads or even gone along with what we've defended as "harmless celebrations or policies", we are seeing God's truths slowly "burned at the stake" of "tolerance" or "not wanting to get involved in" today. Consider how the definition of marriage has changed; how biological men are allowed to compete in women's sports; how abortion is still legal; how it's expected now that a couple will live together before marriage (if they get married at all) and how all Christian churches are in a serious decline.

In spite of these challenges to our true Christian faith, God offers us the same hope of those believers at the time of the Reformation, more than 500 years ago; the same Good News as Christian's celebrated on the day that Jesus rose from the dead! That Good News is what we celebrate on November 1st with *All Saints Day*. It is the truth of Christ's victory over all that seek to attack His people of faith from the beginning of time to the day of His return. It is the truth that because of Jesus, you and I, and all believers in Christ are now declared "saints"; sinners whose sins have been washed clean in the blood of the Lamb; men, women and children made holy by Jesus with a permanent citizenship in heaven before the throne of God (Phi. 3:20). In Revelation 7:10 the saints before the throne, those loved ones that have already died in the faith, are quoted as saying "with a loud voice, Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"



This is where our eyes and voices as Christians still on earth must also be focused today – in the face of persecution; in the midst of difficulty; in the celebration and remembrance of Jesus' gracious work for us and our salvation.

These are the truths of *Reformation Day* and *All Saints Day* – two holidays that too easily get lost among all the options at this time of year – two holidays that encourage us and point us always to our Savior Jesus Christ.

Happy Reformation Day and a blessed All Saints Day to each of you,

Pastor Keith Beed

Yes! It's time to plan for poinsettias! Last year the Altar Guild, rather than ordering poinsettias, requested that members purchase a poinsettia plant from the store of their choice and donate them to the church for use during the Christmas season. This worked very well, so we will be doing so again this year.

We ask you to purchase a poinsettia, or two, from any retailer and bring it in to the church and leave it until after the Christmas Day service. We will have labels to put on your plant in case you would like to have it after the Christmas services. You have the option to spend as little or as much as you like—it's totally in your control. The only stipulations are that they should be **red** or **white** and need to be **at the church by**

December 20th as that is the day the Altar Guild cleans and decorates the sanctuary for Christmas.

A sign-up sheet is posted on the bulletin board to help you plan for making your purchase/s and for us to keep track of how many are coming in. Thank you for your help in adding to the beautification and enhancement of our sanctuary during the Christmas season.



May God richly bless us all as we enter the Advent and Christmas season with our hearts focused on celebrating the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Respectfully, The Altar Guild



CELEBRATING OUR BLESSINGS!

**It's easy for us to find
things to gripe about, but
God's blessings abound!**

- ✦ For faithful retired pastors who are willing to guest preach so our Pastor can have time with family.
- ✦ Everyone who contributed "mites" for LWML Sunday!
- ✦ Everyone who helped out in some way at the Craft Bazaar, Lunch, and Bake Sale.
- ✦ For the veterans who were willing to serve our country in the Armed forces.
- ✦ The beautiful fall colors in God's creation.
- ✦ Our generous and loving congregation.
- ✦ Doctors, therapists and all medical workers who care for and treat our various ailments and concerns.
- ✦ God's work though His earthly servants in bringing His church back to His truth in the Reformation.

Count Your Blessings



Lutheran Women's Missionary League Concordia Seminary Food Bank

Grant amount: \$5,000



This grant will make life as a seminarian more affordable by providing essential budget relief to students.



**Church Family
Thanksgiving
Potluck &
New Member Welcome**

**As our church
Thanksgiving Dinner,**
we will have a "Church
Family Thanksgiving
Potluck and New
Member Welcome" on
November 30th, after
Bible Study.
Plan to stay and get to
know our new
members as well as
enjoy potluck!



I am so **thankful** for everyone who helped out with the **Craft Bazaar, Lunch and Bake Sale!** Although we had fewer shoppers due to weather, we still raised over \$1400 for the church general fund! What a remarkable way to witness to, and to serve, both our church and our community. We had a "church" table and some people even took information about our church. Corinne G. and Cathy N. worked hard on planning and making the chili lunch and Christina K., and Jan H. ran the Bake Sale. Sharon R., Sylvia A., and Ann P. took turns at the cashier table and were even able to sell 15 Youth Calendars! Many and various baked goods were generously donated by various members. Several helpers were there to fill various roles as servers, manual labor etc., including Elizabeth D., Kathy H., Mike P. and more. And also a thank you to those who came out and shopped! Our crafters were all quite satisfied with our turnout. Plans are already in the making for next year! – Tracy T.



Remember – Confirmands this includes YOU!
Please remember that we cannot be a
Youth Group without YOU!
All school age kids are welcome:



Thank you Sharon Raley (and Sylvia) for selling our calendars at the October 18th Craft Bazaar. You are greatly appreciated! These beautiful calendars can be found on the table by the bathrooms and sell for \$8 each. They make great Christmas gifts. Each week the table will be supervised by one of our youth group members to help you purchase a calendar until they are all sold. October 26th, look for Owen. November 2nd look for Natalie. November 9th, look for Jacob. November 16th, look for Anna. November 23rd look for Abby. November 30th look for Owen. December 4th look for Natalie. December 7th look for Jacob. December 10th look for Anna. December 21st look for Owen. Hopefully we will not have any more calendars to sell by this date, but if we do, Natalie will help you December 28th. We are hoping that Isaiah will be able to supervise the table during the Advent meals and services, December 3rd, December 10th and December 17th.



Owen is participating in Frederick High School's production of Macbeth Thursday, November 6th and Friday, November 7th at 7:00 PM, and Saturday, November 8th at 2:00 PM. He is helping with the sound for this production. See Owen, Jessica, Nathan, or Nona for more information.

Jacob is involved in two clubs at Weld Central High School, Knowledge Bowl and TSA. In TSA, he uses technology in music and robotics. His Knowledge Bowl involvement takes him to competitions around the state and possibly Chicago. Good luck Jacob!

Natalie and her friend Abby Murphy, our new confirmands, are involved in band at Coal Ridge Middle School and Frederick High School. They will have concerts in December so stay tuned for more information.

Anna is involved in dance and will also have a recital in December.

The Group will be hosting the December 17th Advent Meal. More information is coming after our November 16th meeting.

The Youth Group is sponsoring a Christmas movie night for all ages Sunday afternoon, December 21st, along with decorating Christmas cookies and crafts. More information will be included after our November 16th meeting.

Yours In Christ's Service,
Nona Schaefer, Chairperson Board of Youth

YOUTH
Our next **Meeting** is:
November 16th



Greetings from the Board of Education!

As we look to the coming of Advent, we are discussing what to do for a "Christmas Program" this year. Unfortunately, between low Sunday School attendance and the overall "busyness" of families, I'm not sure we can have traditional programs any more. I remember as a child memorizing the Magnificat for a program. Another year I was the angel who sang "From Heaven Above" with a choir of very young "Gloria" singers. Regretfully, I don't see our current students having those experiences. We can barely get our students to participate on Sunday, let alone the hours of practice outside of church. In Exodus 31:13, The Lord told Moses, "Above all you shall keep my Sabbaths, for this is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I, the LORD, sanctify you." How will our kids, our grandkids, learn this if not by example? Adults too! Are you making an effort to attend church and Bible Study on a regular basis? I hope so. Fortunately, Christmas Programs are not required for Salvation. And as our previous melodramas have shown, they are also not just for kids.—Tracy Tiscareño





I find it amazing how easy it can be to overlook something, even when it is right in front of us. I'm sure the experience of searching for something in the pantry or refrigerator, claiming that it's not there, until another set of eyes comes and finds it immediately is familiar and frustrating to most people. I am also intrigued at how easily it is to overlook something when it is so prevalent around

you. We can almost become numb and blind to that which surrounds us. One such example are the many and marvelous blessings that God showers upon us daily. The other unfortunate things we often overlook are the many temptations that bombard us continually as we live in this now sin-steeped world.

Can you imagine living in a world with no temptation? What freedom and joy that would be. Patience, my dear brothers and sisters, we will eventually experience that peace, but for now we must endure on. What about a world with only a few temptations? That should be easy enough to recognize and avoid, right? God gives us a view of that reality as Moses recorded it for us in Genesis 2:15-17. "The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying 'You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.'" This shows us two early temptations that Adam and Eve would face: 1) not working and keeping the garden, and all of God's creation, that He entrusted to mankind and 2) not eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. At this point they only knew good, from their creation in the image of the Triune God. They had no problem following these two directions that had been given them. Then we see in chapter three, the introduction of the first temptation prompted by the serpent. "So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate"(Gen 3:6). In the end, the main temptation was to be knowledgeable and wise like God. This is an understandable temptation that would be easy to fall into. Do we have an excuse now that we have more temptations that we must deal with? No. The temptations that we deal with may come in different ways, but they are still essentially all based on two basic principles. 1) Not putting God, and His ways, first and as our absolute priority and 2) not taking care of His creation, especially our neighbor, and putting his/her needs above our own. This is absolutely something that we are surrounded by each day of our lives and it should not be dismissed or taken lightly.



What then can we do? Do we have any hope of overcoming this daunting and seemingly insurmountable hurdle? Of course we do! It is not us but our hope and faith in Christ and what He has done for us. Remember James' instructions to us. **"Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am being tempted by God,' for God cannot be tempted with evil, and He Himself tempts no one. But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death"** (James 1:13-15). The author to the Hebrews states it clearly: "Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin" (Heb 4:15). So it is possible to resist the temptations that surround us. Paul has also given us comfort and reassurance. "No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and He will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation He will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it" (1 Cor 10:13). We, however; are not Christ and will fall to temptation; into sin. Thankfully God, in His infinite wisdom, planned for this and prepared for our salvation through the sacrificial death and resurrection of His beloved Son, Jesus, for the entire world. Let this be a comfort and reassurance to you in times of temptation that you are not alone and you can resist. Also, do not be discouraged when you find yourself falling to the many temptations pressing in on you. You have the support and help of your fellow believers around the world, cheering you on and rooting for you. More importantly though, you have Jesus in your corner who has done all the work needed for you. While temptation and sin may be prevalent, His grace, love, and forgiveness are immeasurably more. Amen. -Nathan Deepe



Mt. Calvary's Ministry Plan – Monthly Update

Target Group #5 Spiritual Outreach



Our Target: **Our church members care for the needs of the Community.**

Task #1: Continue to support the Ft. Lupton Food Bank

- ✦ We currently support the Food Bank with food donations.
- ✦ We have one member of the congregation volunteering at the Food Bank.

Task #2: Continue to Support Butler Elementary School and other local entities.

- ✦ We are collecting Longmont Dairy Milk caps and donating them to Butler Elementary School.
- ✦ We are collecting medicine bottle caps for Miracle House.

Task #3: Identify an effective way or event that we could reach out to the local community-not just Ft. Lupton.

- ✦ On Saturday October 25th, the Board had a Farm Friends Outreach. We had animals for the children to view and pet, a firepit to roast marshmallows and a treat bag to hand out to the children.
- ✦ We are collecting gravy packets to be used by the Methodist church in their Thanksgiving baskets to be handed out to those in need.

Opportunities for the congregation to help:

- ✦ Volunteer at the Food Bank.
- ✦ Save your medicine bottle caps as well as your Longmont Dairy Milk Caps.

Board of Spiritual Outreach

On October 25th, the Board of Spiritual Outreach sponsored a community event in the parking lot of the church from 4:30 pm to 6 pm. A variety of animals were available for everyone to pet or look at. Treat bags were handed out to children under the age of 10. We had over 30 people come and about half were kids!



The Board of Spiritual Outreach is asking for donations of **turkey gravy packets** again this year. The packets will be used in the Thanksgiving baskets that the Methodist church puts together to hand out to those in need. Our goal is to collect a minimum of 175 packets, but more would be even better! All donations are due by November 16th.



We are still collecting medicine bottle caps to be used by Miracle House (They have raised over \$62.50) and milk bottle caps from Longmont Dairy for Butler Elementary. Please place them in the boxes that are on the table by the restroom. Your donations have been helping tremendously.—Judy Kimball