



### Rooted in Christ, Growing in Stewardship

The heartland is now awash in various hues of green. The doldrums of winter give way to the colors of spring. Now, the promise of spring gives way to the growth of summer. Fields are planted and sprouted. Gardens are planted. Flowers adorn the beds of neighborhood homes and roadside ditches. Green is the shade of life!

Green growth is also the hue of the faithful steward. The seed of faith planted in human hearts in the waters of Holy Baptism grows as it is nurtured in the Word proclaimed and ingested in the Holy Supper. This faith does indeed save. But our stewardship of the Gospel is also designed to bear fruit for God's glory and the benefit of our neighbor.

To consider this, let us look at the hymn, "Fruitful Trees, the Spirits Sowing" (LSB 691). It is very much a stewardship hymn!

Fruitful trees, the Spirit's sowing, May we ripen and increase, Fruit to life eternal growing, rich in love and joy and peace.

- The tree of faith is not planted in us by us. It is the Spirit's work! We do not claim the title "steward." Rather, we are created for it (Gen. 1:26–28).
- He is the One who makes it grow in us. The fruits of the Spirit are borne out because we, by grace through faith, are connected to the vine that is Jesus (John 15).

Laden branches freely bearing Gifts the Giver loves to bless; Here is fruit that grows by sharing, Patience, kindness, gentleness.

Our stewardship is NOT about what we do. It is about what the Holy Spirit does in and through us.
 That is the fruit that we bear. His fruit for His purposes.

 But that fruit is lived out through us. The world sees the fruit of our stewardship of the Gospel in lives lived connected to Word and Sacrament.

Rooted deep in Christ our Master, Christ our pattern and our goal, Teach us, as the years fly faster, Goodness, faith, and self-control.

- Stewards have been created and redeemed to reflect the image of Jesus in the world. He is the pattern. We reflect to others around us the Light of the Gospel He has shone on us.
- This reflection comes when Christ's goodness flows from us to others.

Fruitful trees, the Spirit's tending, May we grow till harvests cease; Till we taste, in life unending, Heaven's love and joy and peace.

- Just as the Spirit has created us for stewardship of the Gospel, so also does He cause our faithfulness! He calls, gathers, enlightens, sanctifies and KEEPS us in this faithful stewardship of the Gospel.
- The ultimate goal of our faithful stewardship is eternity. For us. For



### **ROOTED IN CHRIST, GROWING IN STEWARDSHIP** continued

our neighbor. All worked out by the Spirit.

Green is the color of the world right now. It is also the color of our stewardship and it is growing in us as we are connected to the vine, Jesus! God grant our growth in Him!

Rooted in Christ, Growing in Stewardship. (2025, June). LCMS Stewardship Ministry, Newsletter Article. https://lcms.org/stewardship

## Jesus vs. Caesar

by Kendall A. Davis

"Savior." "Lord." "Son of God." If you asked someone in the ancient world who these titles referred to, they might tell you "Jesus." But depending on who you were talking to, they might also tell you "Caesar." Modern readers of the Bible often miss the fact that some of the language the New Testament us-



es to talk about Jesus was also commonly used to talk about the Roman Emperor, who was not just a political leader, but someone whom people worshipped and even offered sacrifices to.

To offer just a few examples, we know from various ancient inscriptions carved into stone that Roman emperors throughout the first century were often called "savior of the world."[1] Josephus, a Jewish writer in the late first century AD, tells us about a group Jews in Egypt who were tortured and executed because they refused to call Caesar "Lord" (*Jewish War* 7.418–19). Likewise, Roman emperors were commonly known as "god," "god of god," or "son of god." In the Greek city of Thespiae one could read the following words of dedication: "To the only ruling Caesar, the son of god, the savior, and benefactor."[2]

This is the world that the Gospel of Jesus was initially proclaimed in. This is the world that the New Testament was written in. Thus, when the first Christians proclaimed Jesus as "Lord," "Savior" and "Son of God," people noticed that they were proclaiming a different "Lord," "Savior" and "Son of God" than Caesar.

Of course, it's true that New Testament writers often taught Christians to "honor the emperor" (1 Peter 2:17), and you won't see New Testament writers going out of their way to pick a fight with the emperor by saying something like, "Jesus is Lord, but the emperor is not!" Nevertheless, the people who heard apostles like Paul preaching the Gospel sometimes made the connection all on their own. When Paul was preaching in the synagogue of Thessalonica, a group of Jews became so mad that they began to accuse Paul before the local authorities, saying, "These men ... have turned the world upside down ... and they are all acting against the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus" (Acts 17:6–7). By

#### JESUS VS. CAESAR continued

proclaiming Jesus as the ultimate king over the whole world, Paul was in conflict with the claims of Caesar. There can only be one savior of the world, only one king over all the earth.

You can see this in the Gospels when the Jewish council brought Jesus before Pilate; they told Pilate that Jesus claimed to be a king (Luke 23:2). They knew that Pilate would understand why this was a problem. This issue is crystal clear in John's account. When Pilate wanted to release Jesus, the Jewish leaders told him, "If you release this man, you are not Caesar's friend. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar. .... We have no king but Caesar" (John 19:12, 15). They understood what the stakes were.

### Jesus Is Greater than Caesar

One thing that we have to understand is that in the Roman Empire, the basis of government was not the will of the people. Nobody thought, like we do, that the right to rule comes from the "consent of the governed." In those days, people assumed that those in power ruled by the consent of the gods. So long as the gods were happy, kings and their people would be prosperous. If the gods were unhappy, then both kings and the people would come to ruin. What's more, people didn't think that the emperor (and other kings) were just political rulers. Many people really thought that these rulers were somehow divine. They would not only call the emperor a god or son of god, but they would offer sacrifices and even prayers to the emperor. Some small towns and cities, especially in the eastern part of the empire, would even set up altars dedicated to the current emperor where they would offer sacrifices.

It's no wonder then that people thought that Christians were bad citizens of the Roman Empire. Not only did Christians refuse to offer prayers and sacrifices to the emperor, but they also refused to acknowledge the gods who gave the emperor his power. Many upstanding, traditional, gods-fearing Roman citizens were concerned that if too many people started following this strange, eastern religion from Judea, then the gods would get angry, and the whole empire would suffer for it.

Christian claims fundamentally undermined the Roman state and the Roman emperor. They proclaimed a different lord, the Lord of heaven and earth. They acknowledged a different savior, the savior who died for the world on a cross. They worshipped a different son of god, the Son of God who was God's Son since before the world began, who invited people of all nations to become God's adopted children through Baptism. Ancient Christians acknowledged that Caesar was only a pale imitation of what Jesus really was. Caesar was just a man. He could not really save anyone, not in an eternal way. He ruled with God's consent (Rom. 13:1–7), but that didn't mean that Caesar could do whatever he wanted. It meant that he ruled at God's pleasure, and God could remove him whenever He wanted, as indeed happened to King Herod (Acts 12:20–23).

### And Today?

Christians today live in a very different world. While some today might get too worked up over their favorite (or least favorite) politicians, you'll be hard-pressed to find anybody praying to the president or dedicating an altar to him in the middle of their town square and sacrificing a bull to him. But that doesn't mean that people today aren't tempted to see politicians as idols. Consider Luther's explanation to the first commandment in the Large Catechism: "A god means that from which we are to expect all good and in

#### JESUS VS. CAESAR continued

which we are to take refuge in all distress. So, to have a God is nothing other than trusting and believing Him with the heart. ... Whatever you set your heart on and put your trust in is truly your god" (LC I 2 – 3).[3] People in the ancient world did this in a rather obvious and ostentatious way, but we do it too. We wouldn't say it this way, but we are tempted to see politicians as our saviors, whenever we put our trust in them in times of distress.

Thus, the message of Scripture is as relevant today as it was 2000 years ago: There is only one Lord. There is only one Son of God. Jesus. Nobody else even comes close.

To be sure, we have problems in our country that good politicians have the responsibility to address. It is good to pray to God and ask for good and faithful leaders and to vote for them when they run for office. Yet we do so while remembering that bigger than any problem a politician might address is the problem of sin and death. Jesus is the only one who's done something about that. Jesus died, rose again, and now lives and reigns for all time. Jesus is our true king.

- [1] See Craig R. Koester, "'The Savior of the World' (John 4:42)," Journal of Biblical Literature 109, no. 4 (1990): 667.
- [2] This transcription can be found in Lily Ross Taylor, *The Divinity of the Roman Emperor* (American Philological Association, 1931), 271. Translation is the author's own.
- [3] Translation from Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions, ed. Paul Timothy McCain, 2nd ed. (St. Louis: Concordia, 2006).

Cover image: "Then give to Caesar what is Caesar's," Maerten De Vos, 1602.

### About The Author

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Davis, Kendall A., (2025, January 15). Jesus vs. Caesar. The Lutheran Witness-Articles. https://witness.lcms.org/2025/jesus-vs-caesar/



# Life Quotes for June

June 1 "Watch and prepare for Jesus to return. Set your hearts on Him and on your life in Him. He is the beginning and end, the purpose and goal of your life. So there's no need for tears as you see Him ascend. He is with you always. He will come back for His people soon. Then we will appear with Him in glory." Rev. Peter Sulzle, St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, Redwood Falls, Minnesota – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org

June 8 "We are blessed because Jesus has come to us, God most high become a human baby. We are blessed because God has kept His promise to redeem us, even at the cost of His own suffering, death, and resurrection. And we are blessed because the Holy Spirit has given us faith in His good promises." Lutheran Hour Ministries Daily Devotion – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org

June 15 "You have a higher purpose than living for yourself. Your work is His. You live for the one who died and rose for you. You share the good news about Him. That's how God grows His family, adding branches to His tree. You get to be part of this family—a family with a rich past and a glorious future." Rev. Peter Sulzle, St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, Redwood Falls, Minnesota – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • <a href="Lutheransforlife.org">Lutheransforlife.org</a>

June 22 "Let your life be so focused on the grace of God in Christ that your eyes are open to the people He is bringing into your life even now, 'the least of these my brothers.' Do not worry about whether the world considers them influencers or nobodies. Be attentive to those in your sphere of influence as Christ Himself is attentive to you. Concerned citizens? Sure! It is important. But being concerned disciples of Jesus for others is what ultimately lasts." Dr. Gregory Seltz, PhD, Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • <a href="Lutheransforlife.org">Lutheransforlife.org</a>

June 29 "As your life goes on, you will continue to see the effects of sin in the world. Your own bodies will fail with time. The world will seem to be a darker place. Loved ones will pass away. But do not be ignorant about those who have fallen asleep, the Apostle Paul encourages you. Instead, know with certainty that 'the end for you is only the end of the hardship. Life awaits you in Christ!" Daily Devotion, Lutheran Hour Ministries – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • <a href="Lutheransforlife.org">Lutheransforlife.org</a>

# **Announcements**

### LWML Northeast Zone Retreat

"It Could Be Worse — but God has a Plan!"

This the theme of the 32<sup>nd</sup> LWML Northeast Zone Retreat. All ladies are invited to join us at Jordan Creek. Check the Friendship Circle board for the retreat poster and information. Registration blanks for this fun-filled, Christ-centered event are located on the table. Cost is \$25.00/person. Registration and payment deadline is September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025. For further information go to the Northeast Zone > upcoming events page at <a href="https://www.lwmlohio.org/">https://www.lwmlohio.org/</a>



# Call Committee Needs Your Input



The Call Committee (see list on the closet door in the rear of the church) has begun the Call process as we endeavor to Call our next pastor. Following the worship services on May 24/25 & May 31/June 1 two forms ("Desired Personal and Ministry Skills and Abilities" & "Nomination for Pastor") will be distributed to congregation members. Everyone is asked to consider filling out one or both of these forms. They may be returned to the designated box on the table in the back of the church no later than Sunday, June 8. If there are any additional questions/concerns please speak with Jack Lelle, Chairman, or you may email, jblelle@yahoo.com. Please continue to keep the members of the Call Committee and our congregation in your prayers. May the Lord bless and guide our deliberations during this important process.

# Flower Bed Up-keep

Want to help us upkeep the flower beds around St. Paul's? Please sign-up for any week or entire month in June, July or August! A sheet has been posted in the back of the church. You can come anytime that works for your schedule. We would really appreciate your help to make our church look beautiful! Thank you!





# Our Shepherd Annual Golf Classic

The annual golf outing fundraiser is scheduled for Saturday, July 12, 2025. Registration forms and information will soon be available at your church or on the school website - www.oslpainesville.org, if you would like to golf in the event. If you are not a golfer we invite congregation members to be a sponsor or make any monetary donation to offset the cost of outing (marked envelopes have been provided). This is the only major fundraiser of the year for Our Shepherd. For questions or more information email jdrake@oslpainesville.org.

### **June Food Bank Items**

Zion Food Pantry is requesting, Cereal, Boxed dinners (Hamburger Helper, Tuna Helper are examples) and Spaghetti Sauce. As always other items are appreciated. For those in need, the Food Bank is open on the last two Tuesdays of the month from 5:30—7:00pm. (June 17 & 24).





### **Altar Guild Needs Volunteers**

The Altar Guild is looking for volunteers to help set up communion on Saturday nights and occasionally Sunday morning. Currently, pastor has been doing it and when he departs for his new calling, we will need assistance in performing those activities. Saturday night would also require tear down as well. If you are interested please see Kristi McConnell.

# **Vacation Bible School**

"Epic Australian Adventure" is coming to Zion Lutheran Church, 508 Mentor Ave., Painesville, on June 16-20, 2025, from 9am-noon for all kids 4 years old thru completed 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Registration forms are available at zionpainesville.com.





# **May Meeting Minutes**

### Reports

Pastor's Report. (Pastor)

a. Shut-in visits = 1; Contacts = 21.

President's Report. (Dennis Concoby)

- a. Electric usage was consistent with last year.
- b. Other items in old and new business.

Vice President's Report. (Eric Drake) - none

Treasurer's Report. (Russ Walton)

- a. Provided financials through March 2025 (9 months).
- b. Our cash position continues to improve. A large portion of this is in the Special account from the Kujala insurance proceeds (\$10,230) Our offerings are up \$4,000 over last year. Several expense accounts are lower. Overall expenses are almost \$1,500 less.

Education Report. (Jenn Drake)

- a. Adult bible study Sunday morning will continue through the current lesson.
- b. Still making a determination on Sunday Bible study/school for summer.

Preschool Report. (Starshine Graziadei)

- a. Current enrollment for next year is nearly full; just 5 students short of full enrollment.
- b. Rate change and extended hours were implemented for the coming year.
- c. A payroll backup is still being sought.

Elder's Report. (Dale Kerver) - none

Stewardship Report. (Diane Wayner)

- a. The greeter sign-up sheet has been posted.
- b. A sign-up sheet will be posted soon for maintaining the flower beds.
- c. Planning a putt-putt outing for the summer.

Financial Secretary's Report. (Terry Wakelee)

a. Seeking counters for open positions in the summer months

Outreach Report. (Ken Chaffe)

- a. Outreach committee met April 23; next meeting will be May 15.
- b. Provided 240 plastic Easter eggs to the preschool on April 17.
- c. Provided gifts to preschool staff for teacher appreciation week.
- d. Planning for Trunk or Treat (Oct. 25) and Hot Dog Lunch/Preschool Open House (Aug. 16).

Building & Grounds Report. (Craig McConnell)

a. Lawnmowers are getting maintenance, as needed. Mowing schedule is updated.

### **MAY MEETING MINUTES** continued

- b. Refrigerator is acting up; will look into repairing or replacing it.
- c. Continuing to swap out fluorescent lights with LED.

Contribution Secretary's Report. (Billie Lelle)

a. April contributions were higher than previous years.

### **Old Business**

- 1. Alarm system phone line issues-no reported issues this month
- 2. Parsonage fence repairs pending
- 3. Sale of Ed Kujala's house Sale is pending, with another contingent offer as back up.
- 4. Potential for Armor Security taking over our Fire/Safety monitoring & Service
  - a. A. Received proposal from Visual Armor Security that will offer savings and better service.
  - b. Church office and Preschool confirmed that the fax line is no longer necessary.
    - i. Proposal/motion: Star made a motion to replace the current security provider with Visual Armor Security including removal of the fax line. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Erin. Passed unanimously.
- 5. WEB analytics usage Star will look into this over the summer. Hoping to wrap it up in Sept.

### **New Business**

- 1. Potential candidates for the open council positions in May
  - a. Recommendations were received for all open council positions; and members have been found to run for all open positions.
- 2. Potential candidate for the preschool treasurer (appointed) still seeking candidate.
- 3. Potential Call Committee members (need 9)
  - a. 11 members volunteered.
  - b. Peggy started working on the self-study.
- 4. Budget suggestions
  - a. See Dennis's report Add amounts for convention fees and guest musicians, combine Fellowship and Stewardship, add line item for Outreach, and separate church and parsonage maintenance.
  - b. Ken suggested adding a marketing line for website, billboard, print ad, etc.
- 5. Congregation meeting agenda Erin will create it.
- 6. OSL passed NLSA accreditation
- 7. Dennis will be going to the Ohio District Convention in June, but not Pastor.
- 8. Pulpit supply update provided by Dale
  - a. Secured Pastor Moyer starting the weekend of June 21. Pastors Davis and Just are willing to fill in occasionally. Jack Lelle will also fill in. Services are covered through the end of September.
  - 9. Pastor's final compensation. Motion by Star, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Eric, motion passed.

Next meeting: Wednesday, June 4, 2025 @ 6:30pm





# **Altar Flowers**



A great way to remember any occasion is with Altar Flowers. The Altar Flower Chart is located on the double doors at the back of the Sanctuary. Just sign up next to the appropriate weekend. Clearly print the occasion being remembered, who the flowers are for and who they're from. Altar flowers are \$40.00. Please place the monies in an envelope labeled "Altar Flowers" with the date of the weekend and put it in the collection plate.



# Those Who Serve: June 2025

### **ELDERS**:

6:00 P Saturday Aaron Lindrose 9:30 A Sunday Jeff Troutman

### **LECTORS:**

05-31-25		Saturday	Dave Murphy
06-01-25		Sunday	Eric West
06-07-25		Saturday	Dave Murphy
06-08-25		Sunday	Dennis Concoby
06-14-25		Saturday	Dale Kerver
06-15-25		Sunday	Terry Wakelee
06-21-25	6:00 P	Saturday	Dale Kerver
06-22-25	9:30 A	Sunday	Craig McConnell
06-28-25	6:00 P	Saturday	Dave Murphy
06-29-25	9:30 A	Sunday	Jennifer Drake

### **COUNTERS:**

Terry Wakekee, Ken Chaffe, Peggy McDonnell

### **GREETERS:**

Jun 1—Diane Wayner
June 8—Diane Wayner

### Scripture Readings for June May 31/Jun 1 Jun 21/22 2 Kings 2:5-15 Isaiah 65:1-9 Acts 1:1-11 Galatians 3:23-4:7 Mark 16:14-20 Jun 14/15 [Holy Trinity] Luke 8:26-39 Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31 Acts 2:14, 22-36 Jun 7/8 [Pentecost] June 28/29 Genesis 11:1-9 Matthew 19:16-20 1 Kings 19:9-21 Acts 2:1-21 Galatians 5:1, 13-25 John 14:23-31 Luke 9:51-62



# June Word Search—Deserts of the World

V	С	Α	Т	K	K	M	M	E	٧	Α	J	0	М
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N	0	В	D	Υ	I	Α	N	Κ	R	M	N	G	Α
Α	R	I	Υ	L	R	R	0	0	I	Α	Α	R	I
Т	Α	Α	M	Κ	Ε	Α	R	Υ	Α	U	Κ	Е	N
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С	0	S	I	M	Р	S	0	N	Α	Υ	M	Т	G
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M	Α	R	Α	Н	Α	S	В	Н	В	K	L	Α	Т
Α	N	Е	G	Е	V	I	Α	S	Н	L	K	S	Α
G	0	В	I	R	L	R	U	Α	С	U	Α	I	Р
R	U	В	Α	L	K	Н	Α	L	Ι	T	Т	N	٧
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**GIBSON** LUT SONORA NAMIB YUMA RUB AL KHALI TAKLA MAKAN MOJAVE ATACAMA **GREAT SANDY** LIBYAN SIMPSON GREAT BASIN KYZYLKUM KARAKUM NEGEV **COLORADO** SAHARA **PATAGONIA** SYRIAN GOBI KAVIR THAR ARABIAN

Play this puzzle online at: https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/8433212/

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### St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church and Preschool

250 Bowhall Road Painesville, OH 44077 440-354-3000 | www.splcpainesville.org | office@splcpainesville.org

"I was glad when they said to me 'Let us go to the house of the Lord" Psalm 122:1

Staff

Matt Chaffe, Organist Peggy McDonnell, Admin Assistant Worship Services Saturday 6:00 pm Sunday 9:30 am Sunday Bible Study
Adult 8:30am & 10:45 am
Children 10:45 am

St. Paul's Preschool
Amy Marizek, Director
preschool@splcpainesville.org
www.stpaulspainesville.com

Also Supporting







# June 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3 World Bicycle Day	4 6:30 pm Council Meeting	5 Global Running Day	6	7
8 PBATECORY SUNDAY	9	10	1 1 6:30 pm Elder's Meeting	12	13	14 FLAG DAY
Trinity Sunday	16	17	18 International Picnic Day	1 9 7:00 pm Outreach Meeting	July/August Newsletter Articles and Announcements Due	21  first day of SUMMERS!
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	COMMUNION SERVICE	Sunda	SHIP SCHEDULE Saturdays - 6:00pm Sundays - 9:30am ay School - 10:45am -8:30am & 10:45am	Office Hours Monday-Friday 9:00am-12:00pm June Birthstone Alexandrite, Pearl, & Moonstone	Bulletin Announcements Due Wednesdays June Flower Rose