

# Trinity Tribune

Trinity Lutheran Church ✠ Paola, Kansas



*Almighty God, You chose the Virgin Mary to be the mother of Your only Son. Grant that we, who are redeemed by His blood, may share with her in the glory of Your eternal kingdom; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.* (Collect for the Festival of St. Mary, Mother of Our Lord, August 15)

I mentioned in a recent sermon that a visitor had told me, with sadness, that his pastor, in a church of a different denomination, said that the Virgin Birth of Christ is an unnecessary teaching, and it's not important to believe the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds when they state that Christ "was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary" and "incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary." I told him he should ask, "What else do we say in the creeds that we don't really believe anymore?"

I did not mention the specific denomination at the time, since I hoped that this heresy was only a quirk of that particular pastor. However, the visitor later sent me a link to their denominational website, where this heresy was publicly, brazenly stated, and the denomination is the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It has since been deleted, no doubt because of the controversy that erupted. However, the internet is forever, and the original article is still available from "The Wayback Machine" internet

archive at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20090604004702/www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/New-or-Returning-to-Church/Dig-Deeper/Virgin-Birth.aspx>.

In this article, they supposedly give "equal time" to "both sides of the issue." However, giving equal time to heresy is not a virtue. Paul says in Ephesians 4:14 that we should, "no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming." And Hebrews 13:9 says, "Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings."

In addition, from a theological, historical, and basic linguistic standpoint, there simply is not another "side" of this issue worthy of consideration. Liberal "scholars" claim that the Hebrew word *almah* in Isaiah 7:14 does not mean "virgin" but simply "a young woman of marriageable age," supposedly with no indication one way or the other as to her virginity. Unfortunately, the translation "young woman" in this verse has worked its way into several modern Bible versions. However, the contention that "a young woman of marriageable age" does not indicate physical virginity ignores that the punishment for adultery in Old Testament times was being stoned to death (Deuteronomy 22:20-21). In that culture, "a young woman of marriageable age" was either a virgin or she was dead!

Besides Isaiah 7:14, *almah* is found six other times in the Hebrew Old Testament (Genesis 24:43; Exodus 2:8; Psalm 68:25; Proverbs 30:19; Song of Songs 1:3, 6:8). None of these occurrences in any way indicates a young woman who is not a virgin, and the fact of physical virginity is obvious in the first two instances. Also, in two places, one of them being Isaiah 7:14, the Greek version of the Old Testament, the Septuagint, translated *almah* with *parthenos*, the Greek word for a virgin in the technical sense. So, it seems the Septuagint translators understood *almah* to mean a physical virgin. And in Ugaritic, the more common Semitic word for virgin, *bethwlah*, is used in poetic parallelism with *almah*. In short, the Hebrew words for "virgin" and "a young woman of marriageable age" are synonyms, both indicating physical virginity.



**The Holy Family—Jesus, Mary, and Joseph—was depicted by renown Lutheran artist Albrecht Dürer in this woodcut from about 1500.**

The ultimate objective of this campaign to replace “virgin” in Isaiah 7:14 with “young woman” is to deny the validity of the New Testament’s application of this verse to the conception and birth of Jesus (Matthew 1:22-23). However, despite the pretentious posturing of the ELCA and other critics, both Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:22-23, as well as Luke 1:27, clearly state that Mary was indeed a virgin when she miraculously “conceived by the Holy Spirit.” In 1 Timothy 1:7, Paul passes judgment on such so-called “scholars” who reject the teachings of the Bible: “They do not know what they are talking about or what they so confidently affirm.”

After ostensibly giving “equal time” to “both sides of the issue,” the ELCA article finally comes to the quite shocking and really sarcastic conclusion: “When we confess in the Apostles’ Creed that Jesus was ‘conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary’ . . . we are not making a gynecological assertion.”

I was absolutely flabbergasted that this was actually stated so blatantly and publicly on the ELCA web site. This is the most horrible blasphemy against our Lord, as well as the Blessed Virgin, and St. Joseph. Consider for example the verses below, which clearly indicate that Mary was indeed a virgin in the “gynecological” sense:

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Matthew 1:24-25: — “Joseph took Mary home as his wife, but he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son.”

Luke 1:34-35 — “Then Mary said to the angel, ‘How can this be, since I do not know a man?’ And the angel answered and said to her, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore the Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.’”

In the Bible, the expression “to know” is often used for sexual relations, and so most modern translations, such as the New International Version and New Revised Standard Version, translate Mary’s words in Luke 1:34 as, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” (NRSV)

The ELCA’s bald assertion, “When we confess in the Apostles’ Creed that Jesus was ‘conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary’ . . . we are not making a gynecological assertion,” has absolutely no basis in either Scripture, church history, or even basic etymology.

In John 9:29, the enemies of Jesus sneer: “As for this fellow, we don’t even know where he comes from.” That is generally understood as questioning Jesus’ parentage, the ancient equivalent of calling him a bastard. It is shocking that some who profess to be Christians have now joined Jesus’ enemies in this very blasphemous insult.

However, Paul prophesied such turning from the faith in 2 Timothy 4:3-4, “For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.” And Peter warns in 2 Peter 2:1-2, “There will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves. Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute.”

It is ironic and particularly sad that a supposed Lutheran church body would

cast doubt on the Virgin Birth, for Martin Luther himself commented very pointedly, almost prophetically, on this very issue:

*“It is an article of our faith that, ‘I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary.’ Women call it ‘becoming pregnant’; the article of faith calls it ‘conceived.’ Mary’s impregnating or conception was by the agency of the Holy Spirit. This article of faith must forever remain a part of Christian doctrine, a truly excellent, wonderful article of faith, against which, first of all, the devil contends, and then, also, all those who side with the devil. We Christians are called upon to believe and to confess a teaching which by the world is considered to be rank foolishness.*

*“From the standpoint of reason, it does indeed appear to be a foolish concept for Christians to believe and confess. Women, no matter how high or low their station, become pregnant in only one way, namely, as is written in Genesis 1:27-28. But, with Mary, God made an exception, something that had never happened before in the world, or would ever again happen as long as the world endures. She conceived a Child and became a mother not by virtue of a man, but by the Holy Spirit. Preposterous to human reason, and to every thinking person! And the more learned and wise they are, the more foolish they find it that Christians believe and confess this, something so totally unacceptable and impossible to human reason!*

*“If you’re going to be a Christian, you will believe and do things which other people do not believe or do. Yes, I’ll have to appear odd and strange to other people who are vexed and offended because of my faith. That’s the situation here. I’m to believe that Mary, a virgin, is pregnant, and will become a mother. This sounds foolish and impossible. Nevertheless, it is true: God accomplished something unique with her, Mary was pregnant, became a mother, and yet remained a chaste virgin!”* (First Sermon for The Annunciation of Our Lord, House Postils, Vol. 3)

Pastor Kevin Vogts



## Sermons for May



Complete videos of all our services, as well as audio and printed text of the sermon only, are available on our church website at [www.trinitycms.org/sermons](http://www.trinitycms.org/sermons). Printed copies of that day's sermon and several of the most recent sermons are also available in the Gathering Room.

May 2

*"The Four Loves  
of a Healthy Marriage  
1 John 4:1-11*

May 9 (Mother's Day)

*"God's Triple Testimony  
1 John 5:1-8*

May 16

*Rev. Paul Helmer  
Guest Minister*

May 23 (Pentecost Sunday)

*"The Person and Work  
of the Holy Spirit"  
John 15:26-16:15*

May 30 (Confirmation-Trinity Sunday)

*"Create in Me a Clean Heart"  
Psalm 51:10*



Our records of birthdays and anniversaries may not complete. If your information is missing or inaccurate, please accept our apologies and notify the Church Office at 913-849-3344 or email Church Secretary Stacey Elkinton at [trinitylutheranblock@gmail.com](mailto:trinitylutheranblock@gmail.com).

May 1 ..... Clint Haley  
May 1 ..... Eric Prothe  
May 1 ..... Elijah Minden  
May 2 ..... Brad Hendrickson  
May 3 ..... Steve McMullin  
May 4 ..... Maysen Armstrong

May 4 ..... Alex Brack  
May 5 ..... Sarah Berner  
May 5 ..... Kameron Alpert-Munir  
May 5 ..... Mallory Allcorn  
May 7 ..... Henry Vaughn  
May 8 ..... Garrett Rausch  
May 8 ..... Chloe Rausch  
May 8 ..... Jim Ohlmeier  
May 9 ..... Melanie Golubski  
May 10 ..... Bobbie Jo Debrick  
May 10 ..... Kathy Haley  
May 10 ..... Bobbie Kunard  
May 10 ..... Johnny Pagels  
May 11 ..... Denise Holtz  
May 13 ..... Kraig Kettler  
May 13 ..... Lucy Kettler  
May 13 ..... Nathan Peckman  
May 13 ..... Nicholas Peckman  
May 14 ..... Trish Armstrong  
May 14 ..... Miranda Ferrell  
May 14 ..... Beth D'Amato  
May 15 ..... Matthew Reynolds  
May 15 ..... Kris Stubbs  
May 17 ..... Lori Donahue  
May 17 ..... Dean Gerken  
May 17 ..... Sherri Webb  
May 18 ..... Emily Kettler  
May 18 ..... Susan Ashley  
May 19 ..... Jackie Smith  
May 20 ..... Paul Sombke  
May 21 ..... David Herrs  
May 21 ..... Barb Koelsch  
May 21 ..... Clifford Prothe  
May 21 ..... Leslie Rudzinski  
May 23 ..... Andy Brack  
May 23 ..... Jeanne Hutchison  
May 23 ..... Amanda Maisch  
May 23 ..... Shane Gibson  
May 25 ..... Stephanie Debrick  
May 25 ..... Roger Holtz  
May 25 ..... Kristie McMullin  
May 26 ..... Scott Gerken  
May 26 ..... Sharon Grother  
May 28 ..... Alyssa Holtz  
May 28 ..... Kayla Massey  
May 28 ..... Dale Prothe  
May 28 ..... Rawena Shay  
May 29 ..... Wendy Bryant  
May 29 ..... Brandon Gibson  
May 29 ..... Aliyah Lester  
May 30 ..... Ginny Linville  
May 31 ..... Sarah Pemberton  
May 31 ..... Janet Koelsch  
May 31 ..... Amanda Stubbs  
May 1 ... Randy & Jennifer Rethman (23)  
May 1 ..... Dale & Patty Moser (28)  
May 16 ..... Ed & Marcie Reyelts (33)

May 19... Mike & Linda Oberheide (42)  
May 19... Clifford & Donna Prothe (58)  
May 25.... Lloyd & Ginny Peckman (58)  
May 25..... Jeff & Pam Thompson (41)  
May 25..... Alex & Jeri Brack (2)  
May 30..... Stan & Gayle Plummer (40)  
May 31 ..... John & Lori Schlegel (18)



## Voters Assembly Summary

*Because some are unable to attend the Voters Assembly at this time due to the virus, this summary is provided for your information. Full minutes will be approved at the next Voters Assembly.*

The quarterly meeting of the Voters Assembly on April 25 was called to order by Chairman Windler, with Pastor Vogts offering opening devotions. Roll was answered by 16 members; there were no new member requests.

Financial reports by the home treasurer and missions treasurer were given. Pastor Vogts reported on his worship, education, visitation, and administration efforts up to the second quarter of 2021. Trustees reported on numerous items, including installation of new 110 volt receptacles in the altar and choir loft, church cleanup slated for May 8, and that front sign design/discussions continue. Reports were heard from the Endowment Committee, Board of Education, and Blocktoberfest.

It was approved to proceed with improvements to the parsonage barn for an estimated cost of \$15,380. Volunteers are still needed for the Outreach committee. It was reported the youth received \$904 from bierock sales and \$2,860 from casserole sales, with proceeds to be used toward attending the 2022 national youth convention.



## Missionaries of the Month

Each month we remember in prayer in our worship services—and you are encouraged to remember in your personal prayers—specific missionaries around the world who are supported by our congregation through our mission offerings to our Synod.

May 2

*Rev. Jonas & Elizabeth Burakowski*  
Dominican Republic

May 9

*Rev. Andrew & Megan Fedder*  
Ukraine

May 16

*Ashley Lehr*  
Puerto Rico

May 23

*Rev. Gerald & Heidi Paul*  
Cayman Islands

May 30

*Rev. Christian & Lula Tiews*  
Missionary to Muslim Immigrants  
Germany



Despite the challenges of the worldwide coronavirus pandemic, our Synod continues to send out new missionaries to a world that needs the Good News of God's love now more than ever! All of this month's "Missionaries of the Month" (see left) were part of the latest group of ten new missionaries commissioned in a ceremony at the LCMS International Center in St. Louis on March 19. Pictured above are Rev. Christian & Lula Tiews and their daughter Lillian, the youngest of their six children, who will be moving with them to Germany. Rev. & Mrs. Tiews are natives of Germany, moved to the United States for his career in sales, he then became an LCMS pastor here and served for 12 years in Oklahoma, and now they are going back to their native land to serve as missionaries to Muslim immigrants. Your mission offerings help support them and our Synod's hundreds of other missionaries around the world!



*Debra "Debbie" Ann Oberheide*

Born July 16, 1959  
Entered Eternal Rest  
May 6, 2021

Christian Burial in  
Trinity Lutheran Cemetery  
May 12, 2021

*"Come unto Me, all you who  
are weary and heavy laden,  
and I will give you rest. . . you  
will find rest for your souls."  
Matthew 11:28-29*



Confirmation for Minna Meyer, Lilly Rush, and Madison Wood will be held on Trinity Sunday, May 30, with the Public Examination on Friday, May 28 at 7:00pm. There will also be a special service of Holy Communion that Sunday.



The quarterly issue of the devotional booklet *Portals of Prayer* for April thru June is available in the Gathering Room at church, in regular size, large print, and a medium "digest" size (same size as *Reader's Digest*). A great way to keep close to the Lord!



## **Bible Class on Titus**

Our current study in Adult Bible Class is "*Titus: The Conduct of the Christian and the Life of the Church.*" Join in Sundays at 9:00am in the basement Fellowship Hall!