



CELC Newsletter

Christ's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Church Website: www.celcstanley.com

Pastors Message

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the LORD Jesus Christ.

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. ²Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. ³For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, ⁴for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. ⁵Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. -Romans 13.1-5

You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin. John 19.11

The Fourth Commandment: Honor your father and your mother.

***What does this mean?* We should fear and love God so that we do not despise or anger our parents and other authorities, but honor them, serve and obey them, love and cherish them.**

Last month I wrote to the saints of Christ's Church questioning the government's authority—specifically a government's right to forcibly vaccinate its citizenship. This month's pastoral letter will be the conclusion to that and deal with when a Christian is called resist civil authority. There are three estates which are established by the Lord and made clear to us in the Word of God: 1.) the home 2.) the government 3.) the Church. Each of these estates is ordered by God and has limits placed upon it. For example, the government does not ordain ministers to preach and administer the Sacraments. Also, while Christians may serve in the military of their country, the Church does not go to war. It is rather the government's office to bear the sword. Likewise from this example, we can see that there's also some overlap to these estates in certain situations.

In the winter of 1546 and after a tumultuous life of fighting for the Faith, the Reverend Doctor Martin Luther entered into heavenly benediction. So when the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V (in league with the Roman pope) invaded Lutheran territories in 1547, there was no chief leader anymore; no one to muster the troops, so to speak. The natural successor it seemed to many was Philip Melanchthon. Surely because he was Luther's friend and colleague, surely because he wrote the Augsburg Confession and its Apology, he would make for a good leader of the Church of the Augsburg Confession. But a leader, Melanchthon was not. Without the fierce and bullheaded Luther by his side, Melanchthon proved to be a pushover, and a compromiser of doctrine. Thus, when Lutheran territories were invaded, the Emperor (and the pope) were met with little resistance when they came to set up the Augsburg Interim so that they might get these rebellious Lutherans back inline. When the Lutheran Fathers were told by God's appointed man of the civil order, Emperor Charles V (and the pope), that they had to use the Latin Mass instead of the German Mass for worship, that they had to teach many Romanist points of doctrine, including indulgences, works righteousness, and the sacrifice of the Mass, Melanchthon and many others sought doctrinal compromise and found themselves under an interim government. However, there were those that did not compromise.

These faithful pastors who refused to compromise the doctrines of their Lord did so either to their death or to the expulsion from their homes. Hundreds subsequently fled north to the German city of Magdeburg. On their heels was the might of the Holy Roman Emperor's army which besieged Magdeburg for over a year. These were people willing to die for the truth of the Gospel and their confession of it. And things did not look good for the Magdeburg Confessors at the time. They were surrounded by an army, there was the Bubonic Plague, and despite their pleas for help from other cities, no one came. The one thing they had, which they would not yield and that could not be taken from them, was their confession of the Faith. However, despite all that stood against them, in the end, (and almost miraculously) the confessors emerged from Magdeburg victorious over the Emperor's forces and sent them home defeated. Holy resistance against civil authority indeed!

Now it needs to be said that these people were not ignorant of the passages from the Sacred Text and from the Catechism that I quoted at the start of this letter. Indeed, I would argue they knew them more intimately than many of us today. However, they understood that these passages do **not** grant legitimate governments ultimate power—nor do they grant the same to the family, or the Holy Church. Furthermore, they understood that legitimate governments can (and do) abdicate their office when they fall into tyranny.

At this point, I need to bring up a crucial distinction—and one that the early Lutheran Fathers made. The fourth Commandment ever-stands. However, there is a distinction between the office and the one who holds an office. Children are to obey parents. Christians are to obey civil authorities. However, it would be absolutely absurd to expect a child who is physically abused by a parent to submit to such monstrous abuse. That parent has abdicated his/her office. Monstrous ongoing abuse is entirely different than a parent that spansks their children, or takes their phone away, or sends them to their room without dinner one evening, or any number of things that the child believes to be unfair. A parent may even come home after having a bad day and take their day out on their child, treating them unkind or cruel. This cruelty is a failure on the part of the parent and needs to be repented of, but it is *not* however and abdication of the office of parent in the way that monstrous physical abuse is. And so there is a difference between a cruel master that we are duty-bound to obey and a monstrous tyrant whom we should resist.

One of the things the Church at all times *must* learn from the confessors of the Faith at Magdeburg, is that the holy catholic Church of Jesus may not under any circumstances change, deny, or compromise its confession of truth because of mandates from the civil government. It is the case that when governments and parents (both of whom God has set over us for our good) openly rebel against holiness and virtue, they abdicate the offices which God has set them in. In this most unfortunate situation they become ministers of Satan instead of ministers of God and therefore ought to be resisted in a manner that is orderly and according to one's vocation. One question I've gotten from every catechism class I've ever taught occurs when we get to the Ten Commandments and goes thusly: *So Pastor, you're saying I can disobey my parents if they ask me to sin?* And the answer to that riddle is not only "Yes" but "Yes AND it is your duty to God and to them to do so".

It is the primary duty of the home, the government, and the Church to serve the Lord and the ultimate telos of all three of these estates is the glorification of God and the salvation of men. Now, with that said—we have been reared up in a country that has decidedly chosen to separate the Church and the State (or at least it thinks it has) and so many have come to believe that these two estates should have nothing to do with one another. On this we must insist the contrary. And the reason for the insistence is this: We confess that Jesus holds all authority on heaven and on earth. We also confess that it is his telos or end or purpose is to glorify God and save men. Therefore, the ultimate purpose of the Church, State, and Family *has* to be to glorify God and save men because they share the same divine Author. It was this reality that prompted the confessors at Magdeburg to write in their Confession:

“Although God does not want the estates to be confused with one another, He does want them so to serve one another that in the final result they all harmonize one with the other and each in its own place and its own way promotes as of first importance the true knowledge and glory of God and the eternal salvation of their members; or, when it does not attain this ultimate goal, at least effects the secondary

goal of men living peacefully, honestly, and beneficially in this life's civil society" (*Magdeburg Confession*, ch. 7)

As to Christian homes, which are the building block of all society, a government can make no law or mandate which interferes with a parent's rightful, God-given authority to teach, protect, and provide for their family. Likewise, when it comes to the Church, a government may not impede in any way the God-given authority and vocation of the Christian Church. It has zero to say in how, when, or why we administer the sacraments and preach the Gospel or how, when, or why, the Christian people gather together to receive those things. When the State starts to meddle in the affairs of the Church in such a way that it seeks to stop it from exercising its own God-given authority, it's then that it becomes tyrannical and a terror to the good. A couple of examples of this are vaccine mandates and the government closing Christians churches by executive order across our country. The government does not have the right to tell me that I have to stand back and watch my children be injected with anything—especially when there are indications of both myocarditis in young males, and reproductive harm in young females. That is an illegitimate intrusion of the government into the estate of the family and as such, is an abdication of its authority over me. When this happens, Christians should not just speak out against it, they are duty bound to resist.

So then what should we do if ever faced with such a thing?

For this we need to look again at those brave men and women who resisted at Magdeburg. Even though they were surrounded on all sides, they did not fall into unfaithfulness or despair. They saw their situation as yet another opportunity to confess before men. And so for all of those who compromised with the Emperor (and the pope) when he mandated that they were to worship and teach doctrines contrary to the Gospel, the Magdeburgers called them to task for what they had done and beseeched them to recant their false teaching and return to the Church. For all of those who in their cowardice refused to come to the aid of Magdeburg, they beseeched them to return to the good fight:

"We warn all the godly of all churches, both magistrates and subjects, and we point out not only how great a crime they have committed who have brought aid against us and to the persecutors of this doctrine and church, but also how they too are not without fault who have failed to lend us their aid, and how each of these offenses, the attack against us as well as the desertion of us, will be perilous to their temporal wellbeing and to their eternal salvation, as well as to all their posterity."

This is nerve that's rarely seen today, but that I pray will become more commonplace. Remember, that at the time of writing this, their city was being laid siege to. There is no one to help them, and no promise of any help to come as the might of the Holy Roman Empire engulfs them. It truly looks to them as if they're going to lose and become martyrs. And with a martyr's faith they **still** are bold in their confession of the Faith. They themselves are literally under fire and yet they still call for the repentance of their brethren who have compromised the precious doctrines of the Gospel and pray for their eternal well-being. Why would people do such a thing? Because when they confess that Jesus is Lord, that actually means something to them! It means that Jesus has all the authority and power and they will not fail him.

So too do we make our stand on the confession of the Faith of the Holy Church—the same Faith upon which the confessors of Magdeburg stood. We do this at home, and at church, and in our civil life according to the vocation or office that God has given to us. For example, when the federal government via the Supreme Court (a misnomer if I've ever heard one) declares that abortion is healthcare and that homosexual unions are marriage, the holy Church is obligated to respond for the sake of love with a clear confession that the government is wrong and then summon the offenders to repentance. Silence on such matters is itself a confession. The Church of Jesus does not have, nor does it want, the duty of implying that God's Word is of no importance or that these things can be left up to "bound consciences". The Holy Church has the commission, vocation, and mandate to teach the nations given by Jesus Himself, and we shall do just that, at whatever cost, or as one courageous soul once said, "*Were they to take our house, goods, honor, child or spouse...*"

And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest questioned them,²⁸ saying, “We strictly charged you not to teach in this Name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this Man's blood upon us.”²⁹ But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men. The Acts of the Apostles 5.27-29

Your brother in Jesus,

Pastor Frye+



We are starting the season with Ash Wednesday Evening service at 7pm. The Lenten Services will begin with a meal at 5:45-6:30pm and the Service will be at 7pm on March 9, March 16, March 23, March 30, and April 6. Please plan to attend for a wonderful time of fellowship.

Disaster Response Warehouse

Rodney Paulson runs the Disaster Response warehouse at Advent, Lutheran in Kings Mountain and he has requested that our congregation and congregations is the Mission district help replace some items for their disaster relief funds. The warehouse has been emptied out except for flood/cleaning buckets and is in desperate need of the following items: Health kits, blankets, school kits, diapers and wipes. He would like for our congregation to focus on these shortages to get the warehouse ready for the next disaster. Thank you and God Bless.

Please bring your items and put them on the tables in the Memorial Corridor. Thanks, Pastor Frye

Women's Bible Study

There will be a Women's Bible Study on March 8th at 10:00 AM in the Fellowship Hall. Please remember to bring toilet paper for the food pantry.

Prayer Requests:

Reminder: People's names will be rotated off of the Prayer List upon request or after 30 days. If you know of someone who needs to remain on the prayer list for longer than 30 days, and have their permission to do so, please let the church office know.

Immediate Care Concerns: Eric Melton, Lillian Chronister, Rene' Clippard, Devoe Casagrande, Martha Jean McIntosh, Ruth Ridge, Mack Cloninger, Don Edwards, Libby Michaels, Carol De-Jong, Ruth Laue, Jim & Bertie Billups.

Friends and Relatives: Geraldine Clarke, Ted Reid, Ray McNeely, Dawn Mitchell, Teresa Amelio, Ronald Sigmon, Sylvia Podlasinski, Cherry Huff, Loretta Bell, "Maggie" Magnolia White, Jerry Winham, Christina Walls, Jack Wilson, Rowena Helms, Tony Carroll, Buddy Hodge, Betty Coulter, Jim Bumgardner, Crystal White.

March's Birthday's

4 Nancy Olls
17 Kathy Shockley
18 Judy Cloninger
24 Joe Keefer
25 John Clark
28 Abigail Price
30 Ann Lineberger

March's Anniversary's

2 Charles & Judy Ray
31 Tim & Brenda Cloninger

Baptism Anniversary

3 Nancy Olls
9 Om Carter
19 Pat Ritchie
21 Julie Robinson
24 Cindy Keefer
27 Joe Keefer
28 Ron Abernathy
29 Teresa Davis

**THE STANLEY CEMETERY WORKDAY ON 2-26-2022
HAD THE BLESSINGS OF NO RAIN AND A LOT OF NEEDED VOLUNTEERS**







CHECKOUT THE BACKGROUND OF THIS PICTURE. COMPARE IT WITH THE BACKGROUND APPEARANCE OF THE CEMETERY LAWN IN THE PICTUES ON PAGE ONE. NOTICE THE VIVID COMPARISON SHOWING THE BEAUTIFICATION OF THE FINAL RESTING PLACE OF THE STANLEY AREA ANCESTORS.

**A HEART FELT THANK YOU TO ALL
THE WONDERFUL HARD-WORKING
VOLUNTEERS. THE STANLEY CEMETERY ANCESTRY
FUND APPRECIATES YOUR SUPPORT AND THE INSPIRING
AMOUNT OF VOLUNTEERISM TO BEAUTIFY THE FINAL RESTING
PLACE OF THOSE WHO HAVE GONE BEFORE US**

Stanley Cemetery

PO Box 772, Stanley, NC 28164



Ancestry Fund

(A TAX EXEMPT 501 C13 NON-PROFIT CORPORATION)

*Board of Directors: Judy Billings, Tommy Deese, Wesley Frye Dan King.
Barry Summey, Colin Withers, Robert Mahovsky, Pres.*

CELC CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING
January 9, 2022
MINUTES OF MEETING

Call to order: President Joe Keefer called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Devotions: Joe led the devotions for this meeting.

Roll call and action on excuse for absence:

Present: Joe Keefer, Wesley Frye, Judy Abernathy, Paul Brodland, Crystyl Human, Bob Mahovsky, Todd Campbell, Tammy Poarch, Gil Harris, Bud Abernathy, Buck Helms, David Lewis, Tim Cloninger
Absent: Kristina Wyatt, Richard Medlin

Minutes of Previous Meeting: Motion was made to approve minutes, seconded and passed.

Report of the Pastor:

Pastor's Report – Council, January 2022

Information - Officer Judy Billings is in charge of the Wreathes Across America program here in Stanley. She does this with Girl Scouts. Christ's for two years now has hosted the wreathes to be stored in our Family Life center until they are put on the graves of our local war veterans.

Information – Presided over 6 Divine Services, Two services of Confession and Absolution, Taught Wednesday Evening Bible Study 2 times, 4 meetings, and 35 calls.

Information – The Celebration of Epiphany *on* epiphany was new this year. We will do the same with the Feast of Ascension on Thursday, May 26.

Information – Pastor Claude Williams has requested that we host a meal for the Palm Sunday Service that Christ's is hosting. We can monitor the Covid situation until then and make a decision whether or not to have Lenten meals as the time draws near.

Information – Christ's Lutheran has raised \$1,050.00 for our NALC Disaster relief efforts in response to the December 10 tornadoes that struck the Midwest.

Information – Bible Study is to resume again starting this Wednesday, January 12.
Took time off after Christmas.

Executive session: At this time Joe call for Council to enter into executive session.

Regular Session: Once Executive session business was completed council resumed the regular business session of the meeting.

Reports by General and Capital Fund Treasures:

Paul presented the General Fund Treasures Report. Paul reviewed deposits summary for December 2021 and Designated Funds Report for the same period. General Fund Available Balance for December was \$98,179.31. Total Designated Offerings ending balance was \$68,917.21.

Food Pantry Available Funds January , 2022	
FOOD PANTRY SOUTH STATE BANK EST. BALANCE	\$17, 250.00
FOOD BALANCE IN THE DESIGNATED FUND	\$ 6,251.86
LOCAL BENEVOLENCE BALANCE TRANSFERRED	<u>\$ 4,511.12</u>
TOTAL FOOD PANTRY BALANCE ON HAND	\$28, 012.98
AVERAGE VISITORS PER WEEK 2021 = 4.3	

Crystyl presented the December 2021 Capital Fund Report. For benefit of the new council members, she explained the capital funds include three categories: Capital Repairs & Improvements, Memorials both designated and undesignated and others – such as playground, pennies for pots, etc... Capital Fund Balance ending 12/31/2021 was \$78,990.05.

Reports of Standing Committees

Stewardship: Tim asked Council what stewardship meant to them. Answers included giving of time, talents and possessions. Tim suggested that we focus on the greatest gift of salvation. We look forward to developing a more active stewardship ministry this year.

Property: Bud reported the first HVAC unit has been installed. Work on the main unit will begin within the next couple weeks. Pastor Frye stated worship will be held in the Family Life Center during the HVAC installation. The altar from our old church will be used in the FLC for these services.

Endowment: Joe asks for approval from Council for Endowment to pay the \$30,000.00 down payment for the HVAC installation. Judy made the motion, Gil seconded it and motion passed unanimously.

Worship and Music: Bud asks if a list of ushers and greeters could be developed again. Pastor will discuss this with Lois Conley, chair of Worship and Music Committee.

Report of Special Committees:

Cemetery: Bob presented information on the Stanley Cemetery Ancestry Fund and plans being made to begin selling newly discovered unoccupied grave spaces in the Cemetery area known as the Annex or South Acreage of the Stanley Cemetery with the proceeds going to the Ancestry fund. The owners of this property would like to donate it to Christ's Lutheran Church since the Stanley Ancestry Fund cannot own property. The Stanley Cemetery Ancestry Fund's Board of Directors will meet January 10, 2022, to discuss the information Bob presented.

Tim made a motion that after the Ancestry Board Meeting more investigation be done on the prospect of taking ownership of the property and serving as a conduit of proceeds to the perpetual care fund. Once this information is available, it will be presented to the congregation. Paul seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Bob asked if anyone on Council would volunteer to serve on the Cemetery Committee. Buck Helms agreed to serve.

Bob also presented information for Council's review for identifying potential areas for a Columbarium and examples of various types of structures. No action was taken at this time.

Other Reports – none.

Unfinished Business – none

New Business - New Council list was distributed. One email error was identified. Judy will ask Julie to correct it and resend it out.

For security purposes it was recommended that the lock on the church office door be changed and limited keys will be issued.

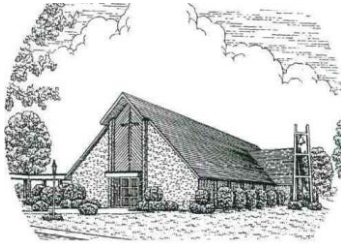
Adjournment:

- 1) Leonard and David will continue to open/close the church.
- 2) The next council meeting will be held February 20, 2022. Judy will lead devotions.
- 3) The meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,
Judy Abernathy
Vice President

March 2022

Sunday	Mon	Tuesday	Wed	Thursday	Fri.	Sat.
		1	2 Ash Wednesday Service 7pm	3 Food Pantry 11AM- 12:30PM	4	5
6 Divine Service 10:30 AM	7	8 Women's Bible Study 10am In the Fellowship Hall	9 Meal - 5:45- 6:30pm Lenten Service 7pm	10 Food Pantry 11AM- 12:30PM	11	12
13 Divine Service 10:30 AM Church Council Meeting 6pm	14	15	16 Meal - 5:45- 6:30pm Lenten Service 7pm	17 Food Pantry 11AM- 12:30PM	18	19
20 Divine Service 10:30 AM	21	22	23 Meal - 5:45- 6:30pm Lenten Service 7pm	24 Food Pantry 11AM- 12:30PM	25	26
27 Divine Service 10:30 AM	28	29	30 Meal - 5:45- 6:30pm Lenten Service 7pm	31		



Christ's Evangelical Lutheran Church

203 S. Main St. Stanley, NC 28164

CELC Newsletter March 2022



Pastor: Rev. Wesley R. Frye, STS
Administrative Assistant: Julie Bodenheimer
Facilities: Rick Chapman
Choirmaster: Nancy Olls

Schedule:

Sunday

10:30 am Worship Service

Wednesday

6:00 pm Bible Study

Church Office Hours:

Monday—Friday 8:00 am until 12:30 pm