

# DSL CONNECTION

Volume 10 issue 6

June 1, 2015

## PASTOR'S VOICE

### "THE UNLIKELY APOSTLE"

There are many today who feel that they are not "good enough" to be included among the Saints; and certainly not "good enough" to be included as a worker in the Kingdom of God. After we examine the case of The Apostle Paul we find that no one should consider themselves to be beyond the salvation that comes from faith in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Saul (his name was later changed to Paul), was a Pharisee and a persecutor of the Christian Church. He was a very educated man having studied to become a Pharisee. Saul became zealous to destroy the Christian Church. We are told in Acts 7-8 that Saul approved of the killing of Stephen (believed to be the first Christian Evangelist). He rounded up believers and had them thrown in prison; he breathed out murderous threats against the believers. In fact Saul was on the way to Damascus to arrest as many believers as he could in order to have them thrown into prison when a funny thing happened on the road to Damascus. Saul had an encounter with Jesus Christ. A bright light shown around him and he was stricken blind. He was instructed to go into the city and wait there. The Lord then sent a man named Ananias to lay his hands on Saul restoring his sight. The Lord said to Ananias, *"This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel (Acts 9:15).*

After his conversion, Saul's name was changed to Paul. He became zealous for the Lord Jesus Christ. He conducted three missionary journeys sharing the good news of salvation by faith in Christ Jesus. He is believed to have written thirteen books of the New Testament. He gave us verses of Scripture that believers everywhere still live by today, for example, *"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13)*, and *"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith- and this not of yourselves, it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8)*. Paul became an Apostle because he was chosen and sent by Christ Jesus himself. He was an unlikely Apostle because he had been a persecutor of the Christian Church.

If you are one who thinks you are not "good enough" to be saved or you are not "good enough" to be a worker in building up the Body of Christ, remember the "unlikely Apostle" who through his missionary work and his writing of Scripture shared the saving grace of Jesus Christ with millions.

Odis Doyal, Pastor  
DSLCL

Divine Savior Lutheran  
Church

405 Ingram Road  
Devine, Texas 78016

Every Sunday

9:00 A.M. Sunday School &  
Adult Bible Class

10:00 A.M. Fellowship

10:30 A.M. Divine Worship  
Service

#### Phone Numbers:

Office 830-663-3735

Home 830-665-9440

Cell 830-931-5099

E-Mail

[divinesavior@sbcglobal.net](mailto:divinesavior@sbcglobal.net)

Pastor:

Odis Doyal

Dear Elders, Chairman, Council Members,  
and Members of the Congregation:

April 26, 2015

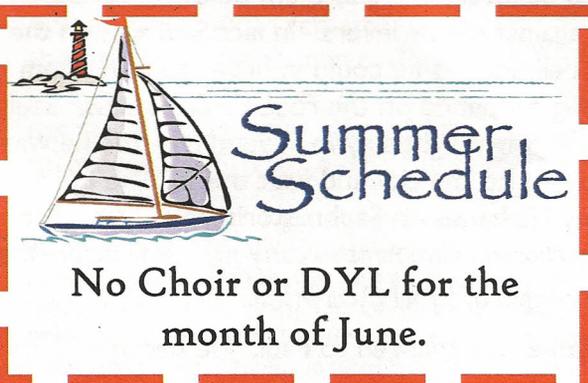
It is with very mixed emotions that I submit this letter. I have been the Pastor of Divine Savior Lutheran Church for twelve years now. While there have been some challenges along the way, serving as your Pastor has been a great blessing in my life. I am always humbled when I consider that the Lord would allow one such as me to serve as a worker in His vineyard.

I am writing this letter to inform you that it is my intention to retire effective November 01, 2015. Retirement presents me with an opportunity to spend more time with my Great Grandchildren and other family members. My retirement also presents Divine Savior Lutheran Church with the opportunity to call a young Pastor who is full of new ideas and full of energy. Expanding the reach of the Gospel should always be our goal. We have been entrusted with something of great value, that being the Gospel message. The word "Gospel" means "good news." We live in a world that is starved for "good news". We have a Savior who laid down His life to pay the price for our sins; that is "good news" worth sharing. Keep up the good work!

I have made lifelong friends among the brothers and sisters in Christ while serving as your Pastor. Divine Savior Lutheran Church will always be in my memories, thoughts, and prayers.

Odis Doyal, Pastor

Divine Savior Lutheran Church



Summer  
Schedule

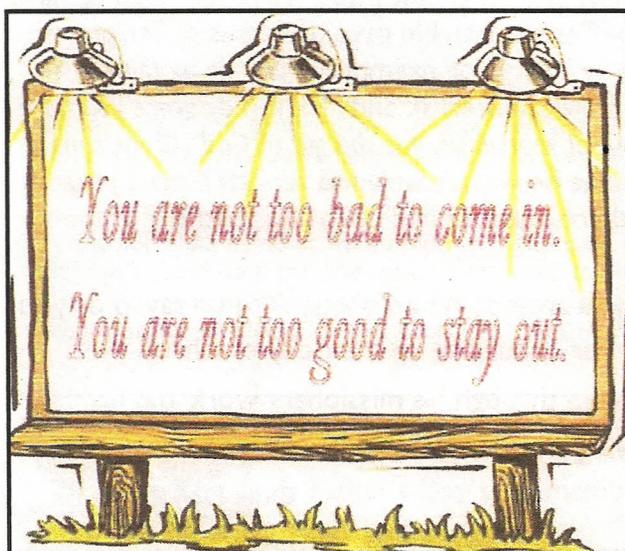
No Choir or DYL for the  
month of June.

The announcement is enclosed in a red dashed border. It features a drawing of a sailboat on the left and a lighthouse in the background.



Now Hear This

The logo features a stylized, colorful face with a large, multi-colored eye and a wide smile. The text "Now Hear This" is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font below the face.



*You are not too bad to come in.  
You are not too good to stay out.*

The sign is a wooden board with three light bulbs at the top. The quote is written in a cursive font. The sign is set against a background of grass and a wooden post.



Count Down to  
Gift of Hope!  
**6 DAYS**  
June 6th See You  
there!!

The central text is surrounded by various colorful icons: an ice cream cone, a sun, a drink, a sailboat, a baseball, and a pair of sunglasses, all connected by a network of lines.

## Proclaiming the Gospel

From the Evangelism Committee:

**Evangelism** is defined as: The preaching or declaring of the Gospel or Good News.

Our church recently received a letter from Jim and Susan Kaiser, the missionaries with Lutheran Bible Translators, who we assist by supporting their work to translate the bible into the common language of the people living in southwestern Ethiopia. The Kaiser's have moved to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and for the rest of this year will be learning the Amharic language, the official language of Ethiopia. Lutheran Bible Translators has assigned them to help the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus with their translation projects. Jim is serving as a translation consultant helping three different translation teams as the work to translate the Bible into three Ethiopian languages – Zayse, Konso, and Dirayta (also known as Dirasha).

There are 18,000 people who speak the Zayse language; 195,000 speak the Konso language; and 90,000 who speak Dirayta. That's over 300,000 people who will have the bible in their own language for the first time when these translation teams complete their work. They will be able to read God's revelation of Himself and learn about His gift of salvation through Jesus Christ by His grace and mercy as it is revealed in the Holy Scripture in a language that they can understand. Our church has a part in this mission by our support for Lutheran Bible Translators. LCMS is helping to reach people with the Gospel.

Romans 10: 11-15 (The Amplified New Testament)

(11) The Scripture says, No man who believes in Him – who adheres to, relies on and trusts in Him – will [ever] be put to shame or be disappointed. (12) [No one,] for there is no distinction between Jew and Greek. The same Lord is Lord over all [of us] and He generously bestows His riches upon all who call upon Him [in faith]. (13) For every one who calls upon the name of the Lord [invoking Him as Lord] will be saved. (14) But how are people to call upon Him Whom they have not believed – in Whom they have no faith, on Whom they have no reliance? And how are they to believe in Him – adhere to, trust in and rely upon Him – of Whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? (15) And how can men [be expected to] preach unless they are sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings! – How welcome is the coming of those who preach the good news of His good things!

DSLIC is helping to send the preachers who will bring the glad tidings – who will preach the Good News. Thank God for this opportunity to bless and be blessed.

When you make a

**VOW**

to

**GOD,**

do not delay  
fulfilling

it;...



**FULFILL**  
what you  
**VOW.**

**ECCLESIASTES 5:4**

## **BLESSED** History proves the Church will always suffer for Christ's sake. How can we pray that the Lord will keep us faithful too?

by ALBERT B. COLLVER III

Jesus said, "Blessed are those who are persecuted" (Matt. 5:10). He warned His disciples that they would be persecuted for His name's sake (Matt. 24:9). The prophets of old were persecuted (Matt. 5:11-12). The prophet Isaiah, who so beautifully proclaimed the birth of Christ, was sawn in half according to the tradition of the Church. John the Baptist, the last Old Testament prophet, was beheaded by King Herod (Matt. 14:1-12). Persecution at its core is suffering inflicted by the unrighteous upon the righteous. Ultimately, Satan and his evil hosts are the source of persecution in the Church. As a result, persecution will remain until the final judgment, when Christ returns and casts the devil and his servants into the lake of fire forever (Rev. 20:10, 14-15).

Abel was first. Then Lot suffered at the hands of the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah for being righteous (Gen. 14:12; 19:4). The Egyptians persecuted the Israelites (Ex. 1:8-11). King Ahab and Queen Jezebel persecuted the Church to such an extent that only 7,000 remained who had not worshiped the idol Baal (1 Kings 19:18). The unrighteous persecuted the righteous in Israel at the hands of various conquerors and during the various captivities (Assyrians, Babylonians, Greeks, Romans). In the New Testament Church, Stephen became the first martyr recorded in the Scriptures (Acts 7:54-60).

Persecution involves suffering for the faith, suffering for the name of Jesus. Persecution may lead to death. According to tradition, every apostle

save St. John, who died in exile on the island of Patmos, suffered as a martyr for Christ. Others suffer less than death but are hated by the world. Persecution takes many forms: ridicule, lost opportunities at work, imprisonment, physical suffering, torture and so forth. Innumerable cruelties were and are done to Christians because they confessed Christ.

### Sheer numbers

In the opening pages of *Lutheran Service Book* (pages xi-xiii), a few of those who suffered for the name of Jesus from the first 19 centuries of the Church are listed, beginning with Stephen the martyr, the apostles, the disciples of the apostles and others in the pre-Constantine era before Christianity was legalized in the Roman Empire. The first three centuries of the Church mark her time of pagan persecution—the time from the apostles to the Diocletian persecution (AD 303-311). Under Diocletian, Christian churches were destroyed, Bibles burned, Christians were deprived of their livelihood, their civil rights and ultimately executed unless they would sacrifice to the gods. Diocletian instituted one of the most intense periods of persecution, one that has been remembered to the present day.

Although many Christians were persecuted and murdered during this time, in terms of sheer numbers, more Christians suffered martyrdom in the twentieth century (estimated at 70-100 million) than all the martyrs of the previous nineteen centuries combined (estimated at approximately 30 million). The Communists alone created more Christian martyrs than the previous centuries. Beyond the sheer number of martyrs is the anonymity of them. Previously, the Church remembered the martyrs as the cloud of witnesses (Heb. 12:1). The twentieth century marked the time when the number of martyrs and the way in which they vanished all but wiped them from the history of the Church. This is one of the reasons

our present reality of martyrdom in the Church is so limited. The anonymity of the martyrs is one of the ways in which Satan and his evil hosts try to decimate the memory, the testimony and the witness of Christ from the world.

Dr. Martin Luther identified the cross, that is, suffering, persecution and martyrdom, as a mark of the Church. By this he meant that wherever the Church of Christ is located, there will be persecution and martyrdom. Luther writes, "The only reason they must suffer is that they steadfastly adhere to Christ and God's word, enduring this for the sake of Christ. . . . Wherever you see or hear this, you may know that the holy Christian church is there" (Martin Luther, "On the Councils of the Church," 1539, American Edition 41, pp. 164-165).

The Lord tells us that suffering and persecution are necessary until His glorious return, for wherever Christ is confessed, the devil and his servants will resist, attack and attempt to destroy the Church. Yet our Lord Jesus also promises to work these sufferings as a blessing both for the individual who suffers and for the Church. In Romans 8, the Lord promises to work all for good. He promises that persecution and suffering conform us into His image and cannot separate us from His love.

### The Lord's faithful

The twenty-first century demonstrates that the persecution and martyrdom of the Lord's faithful continues. Such suffering may even come to us. As the Church of God, we are called to be faithful and to confess the name of Jesus no matter the cost. We should give thanks for the martyrs and confessors of the faith, whom the Lord preserved during their time of trial. We should pray for those persecuted in the Church today. Although we may not know them, we can be certain that many are suffering and dying for the sake of Christ. We pray that the Lord keep us faithful. Come, Lord Jesus, come!



**June 21st**

Is Father's Day so remember to call your Father and tell him how much you love him.