

Darling Downs Parish of the AELC

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Redeeming Holy Days from Pagan Lies — Pentecost (edited)

Pastor Joseph Abrahamson

We can see that there is an anti-God bias affecting the way academics and popular writers portray Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, Ash Wednesday, and Halloween (All Saint's Eve). Lots of academics and writers say that these holy days have "evolved" somehow from pagan origins.



While it's not hard yet to celebrate Christ's birth at Christmas, or His death and resurrection at Easter, yet both Christmas and Easter have a lot of distractions. The World perverted the memory of St. Nicholas to use against the Christ. The World perverted the Christian symbolism of the egg and the rabbit to use them against the Christ.

But where can you or I buy any Pentecost candy, gifts, or cards?

Pentecost was the first of the three main Christian Holy Days lost to the world. Pentecost, like Easter, are New Testament names for Old Testament festivals. Easter is the fulfilled Passover, commanded by God in Exodus 12-14. Pentecost is the festival of Weeks or Harvesting the Firstfruits recorded in Exodus 23, 34, Leviticus 23, Deuteronomy 16, and Numbers 28. The date was set as the day after seven weeks from Passover were completed. That is fifty days. During Christ's ministry the Greek speaking Jews called it "Day Fifty" or Pentecost. The count of weeks began at the end of the Passover and Feast of Unleavened bread. From the end of that festival they were to count weeks.

Leviticus 23:15-16 says: ¹⁵ ‘And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed. ¹⁶ Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD.

There were two very famous historians who tried to claim that Pentecost was a development of the Christian church trying to replace the Roman festival of *Ludi Florales*. The first author was Joseph Martin McCabe (12 November 1867 – 10 January 1955) a man who fell from faith in Christ and spent most of his life writing against Christ, Christianity, and the Church. He was interested in discrediting Christianity so people would lose faith in God. In his 1903 book *St. Augustine and His Age*, McCabe makes the following bold lies:

“As to the processions and manner of worship in general, the Church was very accommodating: The Saturnalia became Christmas and its succeeding festivals. The purification of Isis became the purification of Mary; the Floralia, Pentecost; and so on. Hymns to Cybele were hastily adapted to the mother of Christ; statues of Horus and Isis quickly became Jesus and Mary. Stately processions once more made their way to the temples, now converted into Christian churches. Lanciani says that many pagan altars were in use in Roman churches until a century ago.” (p. 100-101)

The problem? Well, Pentecost started about 1400 B.C. when God gave the command to celebrate this festival to Moses and Aaron. The Romans instituted Floralia in about the year 238 B.C. That means that Pentecost is about 1,150 years older than Floralia.

The second famous historian, Will Durant, in his landmark *series The Story of Civilization* had a volume published in 1950 titled *The Age of Faith*. He wrote the following:

“Statues of Isis and Horus were renamed Mary and Jesus; the Roman Lupercalia and the feast of the purification of Isis became the Feast of the Nativity; the Saturnalia were replaced by Christmas celebrations, the Floralia by Pentecost, an ancient festival of the dead by All Souls’ Day, the

resurrection of Attis by the resurrection of Christ. Pagan altars were rededicated to Christian heroes; incense, lights, flowers, processions, vestments, hymns, which had pleased the people in older cults were domesticated and cleansed in the ritual of the Church; and the harsh slaughter of a living victim was sublimated in the spiritual sacrifice of the Mass.” (p. 75)

Notice how close Durant’s wording is to McCabe’s wording? This is interesting because Durant credits Sir. J. G. Frazer with the information. Frazer was another anti-Christian writer, an anthropologist, who sought to show how Christianity “evolved” from paganism and into scientific atheistic Rationalism. They all repeat the same words without any real demonstration from ancient documents. In fact, so few of the later writers actually checked the sources that the citation they give from St. Augustine’s City of God is often mistakenly written as if Augustine’s words were found in book eleven (11) instead of book 2 (Roman numeral II). And Augustine does not say that celebration of Floralia was replaced with or developed into Pentecost. He merely describes Cicero’s account of the lewd sexual acts and perversions the Romans engaged in publicly to celebrate their false goddess. There was nothing in common between the rituals of Ferialia and Pentecost.

But we come back to the basic problem with all of these so-called scholars: Pentecost was instituted by God in about the year 1400 BC. This is more than a millennium before this Roman pagan festival began. Notice how desperate those authors were to try to disprove every aspect of Christianity with some pagan celebration. They try to overwhelm the reader with too many pieces of information all at once, swamping and overwhelming the reader who probably doesn’t have the background to question their scholarly authority. But most of the pagan festivals they mention didn’t really exist in the way that they claim.

But the problem they faced was too big to overcome. Pentecost predated the pagan festival by over a thousand years. And they don’t happen on the same day. They were two different religions celebrating two very different festivals at approximately the same time of year.

What they can't disprove by lie or slander, they ignore. The world ignores Pentecost and the way God used that Holy Day to give His Holy Spirit to the Apostles. It is hard to find a Pentecost card or gift in any store that is not affiliated with the Christian Church.

Every year the popular media drag up the fiction of pagan origins for Christmas and Easter. The mostly do not cover stories on Pentecost. But I expect that there will be more resurgence of claims that Pentecost was a pagan holiday.

There is another important question raised by these unbelieving authors. Did the Christian Church adopt pagan customs or rituals? The word used to describe the fusion of two different religious practices is syncretism. The Egyptians and the ancient Babylonians adopted each other's mythologies for political and economical advantage. We have seen the Romans adopt many aspects and false gods of the ancient Greeks. The assumption of the authors I have referred to is that Christianity is a religion evolved out of syncretism of pagan beliefs and practices. They are wrong.

But did the Church adopt pagan customs or rituals? During the mission work of the Church in all ages, Old Testament and New Testament, there have been problems where members would fall away to the culture around them. They would abandon God's Word and follow after false gods (like King Ahab and the prophets of Baal); follow cultural norms that are contrary to God's Word (like Lot in the city of Sodom); and even try to bring false gods into the worship of the Church (like the followers of the false god Tammuz in the Temple during Ezekiel's time). Sometimes they would become inventive and leave God's Word by making new ways and places of worship that did not adhere to God's command (like Jeroboam, Saul, Nadab and Abihu).

There were many groups throughout the ages who abandoned God's Word and followed the teachings of the Gnostics, the Mithraists; some adopted practices like having women serve as priests from pagans; some sought to adopt the new and developing practices and laws of Mishnaic and Talmudic Judaism. Wherever Christianity spread, there you will find Christians

who have also departed from God's Word and adopted customs and rituals contrary to His Word.

But there is another important consideration to make in reading this history. As just one example, when the Church brought missionaries to South America, the local groups often worshiped false gods with particular attributes, one might be the false god of wood working. The local missionary would choose one or more of the saints who had similar attributes, like St. Joseph the Worker, Jesus' step-father. The missionary would then use the example of this saint whose attributes they understood, to show them by the saint's example that the right worship was of the One True God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Thus the example of the saint would be an instructional tool. The similarity of the saint's life and work to that of their false god would lend to easier instruction by that Saint's faith and obedience to God's Word.

This method of instruction also has problems and dangers. No doubt, there would be some who secretly kept the worship of the false god under the guise of the saint, rather than worshipping Christ. But that does not mean that the Christian church in that location was a development from pagan teaching.

Just as with Easter/Passover, the date of Pentecost was set by God through Moses in the Old Testament. The date of Christmas was understood based on these same Old Testament passages.

The question on each of these holidays/Holy Days is how will we as Christians use these days to the honour of God's name and the advancement of the Gospel. Let us not allow this festival of Pentecost or any other Christian Holy Day fall into disuse or become overwhelmed by the world's twisting's and reinterpretations of these days.



Islam, Muslims and the Gospel

Islam is and will continue to be a hot topic when talking about religion. There are a number of reasons for this. First, is its historic and present connection to violence, and even though many often argue against this, it is the obvious one. Second, is the emergence of Muslim advocacy groups in the media.



Truth
VS.
Quran

However, the one that is sure to keep Christians interested in the discussion is the increasingly common assertion of Islam that it is a legitimate religious alternative to Christianity. In view of this, it is important that Christians understand Islam and equip themselves to address Muslims with the Gospel.

Islam is a relatively new religion. It began with the preaching of a man named Muhammad (570-632 A.D.) in the Arabian town of Mecca. Although he was initially ignored and derided as an imposter, he was eventually acknowledged by those who became Muslims as a prophet through whom the creator of the universe spoke.

His message was recorded about twenty years after he died from the memories of his earliest companions in a book called the Qurán. Even though it is virtually impossible to verify its claims, Muslims regard it as the very word of God, wherein humans are taught how to order their lives in pursuit of and preparation for the “Day of Judgment.” Over and over it promises eternal life to those who believe in and submit to the law of Allah (an Arabic term for “God”), and threatens those who do not do so with eternal damnation.

Muslims regard Allah as absolutely sovereign, completely inimitable (or matchless), and essentially “one.” This, however, should not lead one to think that Muslims and Christians worship the same God. It is clear from the Qurán itself that Allah is quite different than the One True God. The Qurán rejects the holy Trinity and claims that Allah does not and cannot have a son.

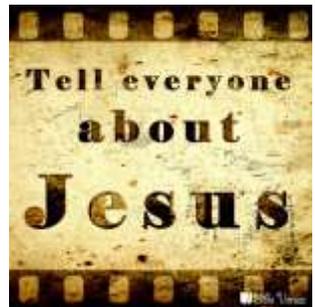
The Qurán views Jesus as a mere human, and it in no way conceives of Him as the eternal Son of God. In fact, it considers the biblical teaching of Jesus' divinity and the doctrine of the Trinity as a whole, to be an outright abomination.

The Qurán does consider Jesus to be a prophet, though. It even teaches that he was born of the Virgin Mary and assigns him the honorific title of Messiah. He does, however, play a different role as a prophet of Allah who taught Islam long before Muhammad, and, because Christians deviated from his teaching, they believe Jesus will eventually condemn Christianity.

This significant theological difference is equally matched by some of the differences in the narrative of Jesus' life in the Qurán. For example, Jesus is said to have spoken to Mary immediately after He was born. It claims that He performed a number of miracles, including bringing to life a clay replica of a bird. And most troubling of all, it asserts that Jesus was not crucified but instead ascended into heaven while someone was crucified in His place.

It is this last detail that poses a tremendous barrier in Christian-Muslim discourse. For if Jesus did not die on the cross, the Gospel - the Good News that Jesus' death and resurrection reconciled sinners to God - is unintelligible. Moreover, if Jesus did not die, then He did not rise from the dead. This, according to 1 Corinthians 15, renders the Gospel false.

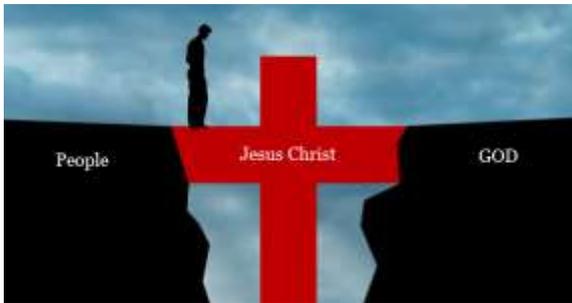
So what's the Christian to do who finds him or herself in conversation with a Muslim about religious matters such as these? First, we must not run or hide from having such conversations, regardless of how uncomfortable they may make us. Second - and this may seem counterintuitive - we must embrace such conversations, for these are the sorts of interactions that get to the heart of the matter.



It is a demonstrable fact of any normal approach to the events of history that Jesus was crucified on a Roman cross. Two eyewitnesses - Matthew and John - record it. Two companions of eyewitnesses to Jesus' life -

Mark and Luke - record it. The first and second century pagan and Jewish (respectively) Roman historians Tacitus and Josephus record it. It was, in the ancient world, a public fact (see Acts 26:26). There is no good factual reason to deny the crucifixion and death of Christ. The fact that the Muslim relies on a seventh century text like the Qurán betrays the ideological bias of someone who refuses to consider primary sources written much closer to the time when Jesus lived.

The question this begs to answer is: Why did Jesus die on the cross? There are lots of ways to answer this. Paramount in Christian-Muslim discourse is the legal answer. He had claimed to be coequal with God the Father. This, in the Jewish context of first century Palestine, was punishable by death, and is what led to His crucifixion.



But this is only half of the story. The Gospel writers claimed - from what they learned through the ministry of Jesus - that His life, death, and resurrection would take away the sins of the world.

Now, it is one thing to claim something. It is an entirely different thing to prove it. But Jesus did just this when He rose from the dead three days after His death. It is this event - also testified to by eyewitnesses - that serves as the final evidence of Jesus' deity, as well as the proof that our sins have been forgiven and our justification has been made complete. This great news is not just for us, however. It is for the Muslim, too. May the Lord grant every Christian the courage and wisdom to declare this witness to Jesus when the opportunity presents itself!

Share the Good News

Wars and Rumours of War

“And you will hear of wars and rumours of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.” --

Matthew 24:5

Rumours of war. That’s what we hear. And all around the world, nations are at war. Civil wars. Border wars. Big wars, little wars. Wars and rumours of wars.

And what does Jesus say? “See that you are not troubled!”

This, from the One at whose birth

angels said, “Peace on earth?” Still waiting! But wait, that’s a different kind of peace. When we speak of the “peace of Christ,” we don’t mean the end to world hostilities. We mean peace with God. You don’t want God as your enemy. But now that Jesus has gone through Good Friday and Easter, cross and empty tomb, God can never be your enemy. His forgiveness means whatever you have done that would make Him mad or disown you is gone. Forgiven. Wiped away. No matter how much fighting there is on earth, there will never be a fight between you and the Lord. He loves and forgives you.

So what about war? We like to think some wars (like World War II) are “good,” because we were fighting clearly evil individuals. We tend to think some wars are “bad” (like Vietnam) because it didn’t seem to have a resounding victory and humiliation of the enemy. There’s thinking about war when you’re watching the news on TV and there’s thinking about war when you’re marching through the jungle or looking for IEDs in the desert. Some people want to fight. Some people think we should stay out of it. Christians will end up on both sides. Some think the evidence says one thing and some think it says something else. But one thing is for certain: We will never be without wars or rumours of wars. Never. Not until Jesus comes back.

And that’s the point. We shouldn’t want a war. We shouldn’t want people to die. We shouldn’t want our own troops to be in harm’s way but



neither should we want anybody getting blown to bits for any reason. Death. Violence. Carnage. Evacuations. Refugees. Those are all sad things, and we will despair when we see these things if we take our eyes off of Jesus.

Jesus says, “See that you are not troubled.” Don’t worry about it. Don’t get worked up. There will be wars. There will be rumours of wars. But no matter how much fighting mankind engages in, Jesus still rose from the dead, and His resurrection means sin is defeated. This defeat of sin means that one day, when He comes back, wars will be gone. All rumours of wars will be silenced. Forever. Once and for all.



But until then, what? How do we live? We live rejoicing! For after all, when we see wars and rumours of wars, we know Jesus’ words are true. We are living in the End Times, however long they may be. We don’t know how all these wars will end. But we know this: there has been a battle that HAS been won: Jesus versus the devil. Jesus versus sin, and He has won, and that makes all the difference. It means there is a hope that does not reside in our weak attempts to keep out of trouble and avoid conflict (which never seems to work)! We have a hope in a Saviour who has endured all things and conquered all things for us. A Saviour whose love and forgiveness outlasts our wars and battles.

In the meantime then, soldiers, follow your orders. Leaders, make wise decisions. Citizens, pray for your leaders, for wisdom and integrity. And no matter what happens, know this: wars you will always have with you but because of the cross of Jesus, they needn’t trouble you as if they mean God is not God and Jesus isn’t Lord. Because He is, and His true and saving promises are not broken even by wars or rumours of wars.

Know-Nothing Know-It-Alls? The Curious Case of Agnosticism

Rev. Mark Pierson¹



“Knowledge is power.”
“It’s not what you know, it’s who you know.” “Know your enemy.”
Popular phrases like these reinforce the notion that knowledge is of the utmost importance. Indeed, many people think being called

“ignorant” is among the worst of insults. After all, who wants to be characterized as someone who ignores facts? Yet there is a religious position that actually takes pride in not knowing what is true or false. Agnosticism gets its name from the Greek prefix *a-* (no, not) and the noun *gnosis* (knowledge). Some have called it the “non-position position,” however, because its most basic belief is that one cannot really know what to believe.

Not Atheism, Not Relativism, But What?

Time after time, Christian apologists have successfully shot down the arguments of atheists, from the philosopher Nietzsche boldly saying, “God is dead,” to zoologist Richard Dawkins claiming “Evolution is a fact!” The evidence simply convinces most people of a higher power. But when it comes to who or what this higher power is, many seem content not knowing. Do you believe in only one God, or in many gods? “I don’t know.” Is God distinct from the universe because He made it, or is the universe itself sort of divine-like Mother Nature? “I’m not sure.” Do you believe in a personal deity who can be known, like the God of the Bible, or is “god” - just an impersonal force like in

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Star Wars? “Who can say, really?” And so Christians often get confused (if not annoyed) because agnostics not only doubt every basic belief of ours, but also the beliefs of everyone else.

This is partly due to globalization - the increase in knowledge of other religions, cultures, and worldviews. When people are confronted with a buffet of beliefs in the cafeteria of religion, some simply throw up their hands in despair. “How can we ever know which one is correct? But what agnostics don’t say is that all religious beliefs are correct, depending on how one views them. That is the position of relativism, which says there are many paths to the same “god” - that whole Jesus-is-true-for-you-but-Buddha-is-true-for-me nonsense. Agnostics, like Christians and atheists, realize that all religions contradict each other. So while they can all be false, they can’t all be true because that flies in the face of simple logic.

Humble Honesty or Sceptical Smokescreen?

It can be helpful to distinguish between two general types of agnostics.



First, there are those who think there’s currently insufficient evidence for reaching definite conclusions about religion, but (and that’s a crucial but) they are willing to leave the door open for the possibility that something will convince them someday. Agnostics such as these hope to acquire some new evidence and discover

the truth at some point, or at least be able to cross a few options off their list.

The second type of agnostic goes far beyond this and claims it is impossible for anyone to know what religious position is true. It’s not simply a matter of needing the missing pieces of the puzzle, but of

AGNOSTIC

i don’t know & you don’t either

declaring that the pieces will never be found. These agnostics not only claim they don't know, but also that they can't know.

When Arrogant Ignorance Knows No Bounds

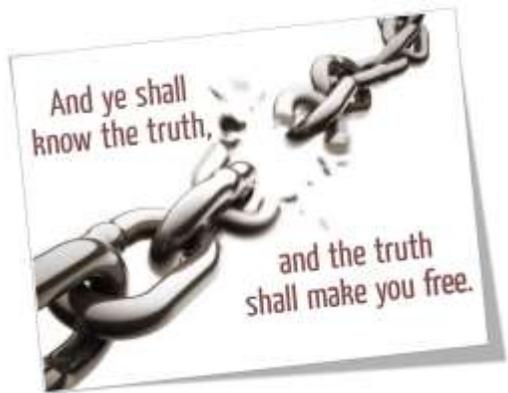
In my experience, the first kind of agnostic is few and far between. That's because they are genuinely humble about how little they know, and are willing to do some research in hopes of learning something. Conversation with this type of agnostic is generally more fruitful, because they are willing to listen and exchange ideas. However, talking with the second kind of agnostic can be more difficult. They regularly remain stubborn in their views, often using statements about how "nobody can know anything" as a trump card to shut down all conversation. Sometimes it seems like their insistent "I don't know" is really "I don't want to know." Then agnosticism becomes a cop-out, an excuse that allows one to be lazy and not look for answers. Or it's used to play an endless game of questioning, where nothing but 100% proof with absolute certainty will satisfy. It's like children who keep asking "Why?" after every answer you give. When you finally say, "I don't know," they act like they achieved some grand victory when in fact they never really wanted an answer in the first place.

While agnostics are not always on the same page, one thing many seem to have in common is their dismissal of the specific truths of the Christian faith. Often times this is not just the result of globalization, but of someone or something (like a professor, textbook, webpage, or roommate) actively trying to point out supposed problems in the Bible. So while agnostics all say, "I don't know what's true," many of them would add, "but I do know that the beliefs particular to Christianity aren't." The idea of progress is also considered important here. If we hold to the primitive and erroneous views of the Bible, the argument goes, then we'll be closing our eyes to other options and miss the truth. It is a fair question to ask the agnostic, "How do you know that?" And, "How do you know that the Bible is as full of holes as you've been led to believe? Why don't you doubt those who told you this as much as you doubt the text itself?" More often than not, a double standard is at work.

Indeed, by now you may have noticed some serious problems with agnosticism. To state flat out that we cannot know anything about religious matters is a claim of knowledge about religion. This view is therefore self-refuting. Likewise, not committing to any particular beliefs in favour of sitting on the fence indefinitely is actually a commitment in itself - a commitment to being non-committal. To be sure, there is nothing wrong with a healthy scepticism. Nobody should believe everything they hear. But there is also such a thing as unhealthy scepticism, which is dangerous. The truth will be missed if an unreasonable amount of certainty is demanded before knowledge is considered possible. Plus, it is inconsistent to apply such extreme scepticism to religious questions but not to other things in life. Imagine endlessly asking about whether the lunch your mom made was really poisoned, with no answers ever satisfying you. Eventually you'd starve to death!

You Shall Know the Truth

It is precisely when it comes to knowing the truth that Christianity alone has something to offer. Our God has not primarily made Himself known through philosophy or personal experience. Nor has He done so in creation or even by doctrines. Instead, the Christian God has revealed Himself first and foremost through a person - a



real flesh and blood man who lived at an actual time and place, who said and did particular things. Knowing the truth about God depends on knowing the truth about this person, Jesus Christ. As a figure in history, Jesus has opened himself up to being investigated, to the evidence being weighed, and to a verdict being rendered based on the reliability of the testimony about Him. So

there is no need to throw one's hands up in despair when deciding between Jesus and Buddha, Muhammad, Joseph Smith, or other religious leaders. Nor should anyone be stumped by questions about whether God exists and what He's like. These all are answered - these are all known by examining the evidence in the Gospel accounts of the One who is "God with us." And in the end, faith is never something we can talk a person into. It's the gift of the Holy Spirit who calls, gathers, enlightens and sanctifies us by the Gospel.

Agnostics may think they have the upper hand by remaining undecided, but there is no neutrality when it comes to Jesus. You are either for Him or against Him - period. As Christ Himself said, only those who know they're sick will look for a doctor. Sadly, agnostics prefer ignorance, and thereby reject both the diagnosis and the cure. For those interested in the truth, however, you can point them to this Man who is Truth itself, whose historic life, death, and resurrection have set the world free from guilt, death, and religious ignorance. For if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

LATEST PARISH NEWS

With the Easter Season behind us, we now enter the time of the Church, that time between Pentecost and Advent, the longest season in the Church Year.

Although the busiest period of the year, from Christmas through to Easter is behind us, yet there is much happening in the AELC to keep things going at a hectic pace. Our student in the ministry, Thomas Stenzel, has begun Greek and Early Church History with Pastor Priebbenow, and Christian Dogmatics with Pastor Ziebell. Pastor Ohlson will shortly start Thomas off on studying the Lutheran Confessions. Please keep Thomas and his teachers in your prayers!

Over the past couple months, congregations have been asked to read through material from the ULMA (United Lutheran Mission Association), as we continue dialogue that will, God willing, lead to a recognition of fellowship between the ULMA and the AELC.

One comment I keep hearing though is "How will fellowship with another Lutheran Church on the other side of the world benefit us here?" "What can they do for us?"

This is a wrong question. We do not seek fellowship as if it is something that should *only be for our benefit*. We need to remember the benefit such fellowship gives to the other party as well. Church fellowship or confessional fellowship is a participation in sacred things (*communio in sacris*), the means of grace, given by God Himself. This fellowship is created by those very means of grace and is evidenced in every expression and manifestation of a common faith. Christians practice church fellowship on the basis of the pure marks of the church. If the marks of the church are kept pure, and there is complete agreement in all the doctrines of Scripture, then fellowship ought to be exercised. Those in fellowship will unite in prayer asking His continual blessing (Acts 2:42). As they come together, even though thousands of miles apart, they will desire to grow in the life-giving Word as St. Paul urges the Colossians, “*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching, and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord,*” (Colossians 3:16). Christians will desire to gather as Christ’s body, the church, to receive His body and blood in the Supper for the strengthening and nourishment of their faith-life and in this way they are drawn into His one body, the church (Luke 22:19; Acts 2:42; 1 Corinthians 10:17). Together, Christians then will seek out other believers in Jesus Christ in order to build them up and to be built up by them through the means of grace (Romans 1:11-12).

Besides, at a meeting held on Monday, the 18th of February, 1991, the AELC was conceived, and at this meeting, 6 resolutions were adopted. The first three resolutions were all directed toward the LCA, and the false doctrines creeping into that church, while the next three resolutions dealt with the formation of the AELC. Resolution 4 stands out: 4. Resolved that when the AELC is established it shall initiate discussions with other conservative Lutheran groups with a view to recognising church fellowship with such bodies and to enjoy cooperation with them in the sacred function of the church. We are only doing what was decided to do at our founding.

I received the following email only last week from Pastor William Mack, whom we met in the States. It is quoted in part:

The *great* news is that the U.L.M.A. decided *unanimously* to recommend to its congregations that they embrace spiritual (altar, pulpit & prayer) fellowship

with the AELC! 😊 This was, and is, a joyous announcement for us. Personally, I am tremendously blessed knowing that the Truth of God's Word is being upheld and defended by brethren in the faith in a place I served so many years ago.

One congregation, Redeemer Lutheran Church (Saint Claire Shores, Michigan) just had their quarterly meeting and decided on embracing fellowship with the AELC! Our meeting (Christ the Rock Lutheran Church) is next month. Needless to say I will enthusiastically (in the proper sense) endorse fellowship with our brethren in "Oz". 😊

When the U.L.M.A. meets again in October, we'll announce a unanimous agreement made, already, by the independent congregations of our association. What a day that will be! What a blessing!

We hold you all dear to our hearts and pray that the blessed Gospel will continue to pour out the comfort we both hold dear in this glorious Easter season. "He is risen!" (He is risen indeed.....)

In Him Who rose because of our justification.

Pastor Bill Mack

Christ the Rock Lutheran Church

Carlsbad, CA

I have also recently received the following email from Pastor Brock Abbott, the "go to man" if you will, of the ULMA.

Hope things are well with you. I wanted to update you on our fellowship process. At the end of April, the United Lutheran Mission Association commission met in Ohio. After considering your Statement of Faith, they unanimously passed a motion to encourage the congregations to enter into fellowship with the AELC. Currently our congregations are looking at the AELC Statement of Faith and are individually voting on fellowship. Once we have gone through our process, we will tell you the outcome. At the moment, there hasn't been anything that would prohibit our entering into fellowship with the AELC. Again, once we have gone through our process, we will communicate the outcome. Everyone, so far, is very excited about the prospect!

In Him who has forgiven all of our sins!

Brock

Please continue to pray that fellowship may exist between our two churches.

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BIBLE WORD SEARCH!

BASIC WORDS OF THE BIBLE

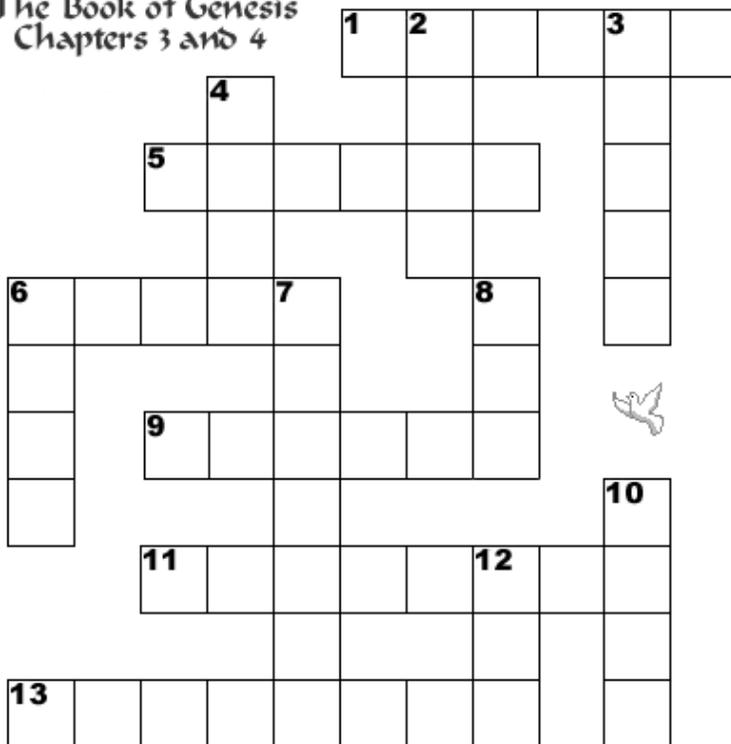
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JEW	MINISTRY	BETHLEHEM
GENTILE	BIBLE	JERUSALEM
HOLY SPIRIT	HOLY	BAPTIZE
GOD THE FATHER	SACRIFICE	TEMPTATION
PERSECUTE	FAITH	SIN

CREATED BY MELINDA SKAGGS

Bible crossword for kids

The Book of Genesis
 Chapters 3 and 4



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Down

- (2) Adam's second son
- (3) Cain's first son (Gen.4:17)
- (4) Adam's first son
- (6) Adam's third son
- (7) What creature tempted Eve
- (8) Cain lived in this land
- (10) First man
- (12) First woman

Across

- (1) Cain's occupation (Gen.4:2)
- (5) The ____ of Eden
- (6) Adam and Eve's first clothes(Gen.3:21)
- (9) Because of sin the ground was _____ (Gen.3:17)
- (11) Abel's occupation (Gen.4:2)
- (13) Cain became a _____ and a vagabond (Gen.4:12)



<i>HINT</i>	<i>FILL IN BLANKS</i>	<i>SCRIPTURE ANSWERS</i>
1. First man	A _ _ _	Genesis 2:19
2. Became King David's wife	B _ _ _ _ _ _ _	2Samuel 11:3
3. Adam & Eve's son	C _ _ _	Genesis 4:1
4. Cast into lion's den	D _ _ _ _	Daniel 6:16
5. Rode Fiery Chariot	E _ _ _ _	2King 2:11
6. Held Paul in bonds	F _ _ _ _	Acts 25:14
7. Brought good tidings	G _ _ _ _ _	Luke 1:19
8. Noah's son	H _ _	Genesis 6:10
9. Son of Abraham	I _ _ _ _	Genesis 21:3
10. Son of Noah	J _ _ _ _ _	Genesis 5:32
11. Saul's Father	K _ _ _	1Chronicles 12:1
12. Abraham's nephew	L _ _	Genesis 12:5
13. Led Israel from Egypt	M _ _ _ _	Exodus 13:3
14. Built an Ark	N _ _ _	Genesis 6 - 9
15. Vision of Edom	O _ _ _ _ _	Obadiah 1:1
16. Pharoah's Officer	P _ _ _ _ _ _	Genesis 37:36
17. Solomon's Fame Heard	Q _ _ _ _ (of Sheeba)	1King 10:1
18. Jacob's 2nd wife	R _ _ _ _	Genesis 29:28
19. Destroyed Temple	S _ _ _ _	Judges 16:28-30
20. Judah's Daughter-in-law	T _ _ _ _	Genesis 38:6
21. Bathsheba's husband	U _ _ _ _	2Samuel 11:3
22. What God made was....	V _ _ _ (good)	Genesis 1:31
23. God rest from.....	W _ _ _	Genesis 2:2
24. How ____ is thy name	_ X _ _ _ _ _ _	Psalms 8:9
25. Goliath destroyed by a...	Y _ _ _ _	1Samuel 17
26. Word of the Lord came to ____	Z _ _ _ _ _ _	Zechariah 1:1