



THE PILGRIMAGE

The newsletter of Pilgrim Lutheran Church (LCMS), Broadway at Florey, Kilgore, Texas
September 2025

We glorify God by receiving the forgiveness of sins by grace through faith in Jesus Christ and sharing that salvation through word and deed with those in our midst, in our community, and throughout the world.

Might our confessing Jesus include a “state of confession”?

Dear Members and Friends of Pilgrim Lutheran Church,

Jesus says that whoever confesses Him before people, He also will confess before His Father Who is in Heaven, but whoever denies Him before people, He also will deny before His Father Who is in Heaven (Matthew 10:32-33). You can hear or read my sermon centered on those verses for Pilgrim’s Commemoration of the Augsburg Confession earlier this year online (<http://www.pilgrimlc.org/sermons/2025-06-25/the-presentation-of-the-augsburg-confession>). For our purposes on this occasion, note that Jesus neither sets a specific period when we *should* confess Him nor sets a specific period when we *should not* confess Him, so we might say that we should confess Jesus all of the time, as if 24 hours per day, 365 days each year.

Nevertheless, some 50 years after the Presentation of the Augsburg Confession, the authors of the Formula of Concord—another one of the Lutheran Confessions, like the Augsburg Confession, to which Pilgrim’s pastor and all of her members by their membership subscribe—referred to “times of persecution, when a confession is called for” (Epitome X:2) and a “time of persecution, when a clear-cut confession of faith is demanded of us” (Epitome X:6); similar is the Formula’s referring to a “period of persecution and a case of confession” (Solid Declaration X:2) and “time of confession” (Solid Declaration X:10). Notably, while seemingly envisioning special times, cases, and perhaps also confessions, the Formula of Concord does not refer to a “state of confession” (often in the Latin *in statu confessionis*, as a contemporary of the Formula is said to have written), though the Formula is often cited in regards to the “state of confession” concept, with that term’s specific meaning in various contexts variously debated and adjudged.

In the relatively recent history of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), in two different periods, the first in the early 1970s and the second in the early 2000s, some LCMS pastors and congregations declared themselves in a “state of confession” against the Synod. (See, for example, the February 9, 2025, Special Congregational Study titled “Walking Together: Ecclesiastical Supervision/Dispute Resolution”, with its handout and audio and video recordings available online at <https://www.pilgrimlc.org/bible-studies/walking-together>.) In both instances,

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the LCSM Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) took up the matter of the legitimacy of such a “state of confession” in light of the LCMS Constitution and Bylaws to which its member pastors and congregations voluntarily submit themselves by their voluntary membership in the Synod. The Bylaws, at least, not surprisingly, had changed over the years between the two occasions, especially in regards to the addition of provisions for expressing dissent. (A Convention Resolution from 1971 is also relevant and presumably still in force.)

In its April 1970 statement, the CTCR recognized the use of the “state of confession” to refer to a “state of protest” over a particular teaching, practice, or action as contrary to the Word of God or as endangering the Gospel, and the CTCR said that in that sense a “state of confession was not the same as breaking fellowship. However, in its April 15, 2005, “Response to Questions from the Praesidium of the Synod”, while acknowledging its earlier statement and its use by the Synod itself in its 1977 “state of protesting fellowship” with the American Lutheran Church, the majority of the CTCR said, “the agreements for how we operate together as a Synod do not include provisions for issuing a confessional protest as a way of dealing with disagreements about doctrine and practice” and that “the suspension of withholding of Communion to fellow members of the Synod”, which is usually entailed in such a “state of confession”, “is by definition a severing of church fellowship”.

Commission member Paul Nus’s September 9, 2005, “Minority Statement” to that more-recent CTCR document argued that the CTCR’s assertion that a “state of confession” by definition severed church fellowship contradicted “centuries of Christian practice”. And, Commission member Kurt Marquart’s April 19, 2005, separate “Minority Opinion” to that same CTCR document noted that the proper response to a “state of confession” is “a conscientious examination of the issue or issues of truth raised in each case”, possibly leading to the correction of the wrong—two things the CTCR’s “Response” to the Praesidium’s specific questions had not even explicitly mentioned. Professor Marquart also wrote that “conscientious Lutherans” may have to leave the Synod.

Pilgrim’s Constitution commits her to hold membership in the LCMS as long as the Synod “remains true in doctrine and practice” to Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions. Our Special Congregational Studies have suggested that the Synod no longer so remains true. There is much for Pilgrim’s pastor and people, especially her voters, to consider prayerfully as together we endeavor to confess Jesus before people faithfully and have Him confess us before His Father in Heaven.

*His and your servant,
Pastor Galler*

DAILY BIBLE READING

- 1 1 Chr. 29:10-13
Job 31-33
- 2 Psalm 86
Job 34-36
- 3 Psalm 87
Job 37-39
- 4 Psalm 88
Job 40-42
- 5 Psalm 89
Proverbs 1-3
- 6 Psalm 90
Proverbs 4-7
- 7 Psalm 91
Proverbs 8-10
- 8 Psalm 92
Proverbs 11-13
- 9 Psalm 93
Proverbs 14-16
- 10 Psalm 94
Proverbs 17-19
- 11 Psalm 95
Proverbs 20-22
- 12 Psalm 96
Proverbs 23-25
- 13 Psalm 97
Proverbs 26-28
- 14 Psalm 98
Proverbs 29-31
- 15 Psalm 99
Ecclesiastes 1-3
- 16 Psalm 100
Ecclesiastes 4-6
- 17 Psalm 101
Ecclesiastes 7-9
- 18 Psalm 102
Ecclesiastes 10-12
- 19 Psalm 103
Song of Solomon 1-4
- 20 Psalm 104
Song of Solomon 5-8
- 21 Psalm 105
Jeremiah 1-3
- 22 Psalm 106
Jeremiah 4-6
- 23 Psalm 107
Jeremiah 7-9
- 24 Psalm 108
Jeremiah 10-12
- 25 Psalm 109
Jeremiah 13-15
- 26 Psalm 110
Jeremiah 16-18
- 27 Psalm 111
Jeremiah 19-22
- 28 Psalm 112
Jeremiah 23-25
- 29 Psalm 113
Jeremiah 26-28
- 30 1 Chr. 29:10-13
Jeremiah 29-31

SEPTEMBER 2025



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September 2025

Pilgrim Lutheran Church

www.pilgrimlc.org

903-984-4333

Pastor's Regular Study Hours

Tuesday 5:00-8:00 PM
 Wednesday-Friday 9:00 AM-Noon
 Saturday Noon-3:00 PM

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p><i>September 5 to 13</i> <i>Right to Life East Texas</i> <i>Gregg County Fair Booth</i> <i>in Longview</i></p>	1	2	3	4 10:30 AM to 2:00 PM DFW Study Group meets in Keller	5	6 (Willows Services are suspended)
	Pastor Galler is on vacation after the Divine Service 8/31 through midday 9/16. An Elder will monitor the Church Phone.					
7 13 TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (G) 9:15 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service "The 15-2 Folk" Gathering	8	9	10	11	12	13
Pastor Galler continues his vacation through midday 9/16. An Elder will monitor the Church Phone and contact Pastor Adler as needed.						
14 14 TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (G) 9:15 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service Clay Ellis (B)	15	16 6:00 PM Elders' Budget Meeting	17 7:00 PM Midweek Bible Study	18 4:15 PM Catechesis 7:30 PM Catechesis Robert Shockley (B)	19	20 2026 Budget pieces due to Treasurer Debbie Shockley by tomorrow
Pastor Galler continues his vacation.						
21 ST. MATTHEW, APST. AND EVNG. (R) 9:15 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service Mary/Martha Society Gathering	22 Peggy Adler (B) Linda Traylor (B)	23 Hazel Ford (B)	24 7:00 PM Midweek Bible Study	25 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM Circuit #14 Pastors meet (location TBD) 4:15 PM Catechesis 7:30 PM Catechesis	26 Jim Treadway (B)	27
28 16 TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (G) 9:15 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service Council meets as Budget Commtt.	29	30 Melody Ford (B)	Elder on Duty: Jeromy McMurray (Back-up: Carl Gardner or Don Gibson)			

“Praise, Lord, for him whose Gospel Your human life declared, Who worldly gain forsaking Your path of suff’ring shared. From all unrighteous mammon, O raise our eyes anew That we in our vocation May rise and follow you.” (LSB 518:25)

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713 Florey Street
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The Pilgrimage is a monthly newsletter for the members and friends of



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