

Causes for Rejoicing



Recent Events in 2019:

13-14 August. Concordia Theological Seminary, Nagercoil, hosts a Pastors' Refresher Course for all IELC Pastors.

16 November. Sri Lankans elect their new President, Gotabaya Rajapaksa.

21 November. President appoints Mahinda Rajapaksa (the former president) as the new Prime Minister.

Please continue your prayers for the safety and peace of all people, especially Christians suffering persecution in both India and in Sri Lanka.

To be added to or removed from this mailing list, send an email message to edward.naumann@lcms.org with the word ADD or REMOVE in the subject line.



A gratuitous photo of Baby Alfred; he is now walking and playing, and a causes us lots of joy!

When we hear the word 'rejoicing', we usually think about happy memories, weddings, births, graduations, and other events like these. We naturally rejoice in our hearts, because of some material or spiritual 'good thing' that we receive. Or we rejoice with others, because of the good things they are celebrating. Material and spiritual goods, however, are not identical. Sometimes the privation of a visible, material good can amount to or result in the acquisition of an unseen spiritual good. This way, in Matthew 5, Jesus calls 'blessed' those who may seem quite the opposite. We rarely feel like partying with those who are 'poor in spirit', 'those who mourn', and 'the meek', but maybe we should! After all, Jesus promises they will get the Kingdom of Heaven, be comforted, and inherit the earth! Likewise, 'Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account', Jesus says, but our immediate reaction betrays our incredulity. We bristle at the thought of enduring such persecution for the sake of our Lord, and we pity and mourn for those who are going through such dire straits. Our Lord's commandment, however, is the opposite: 'Rejoice and be glad!' He explains, 'for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you'. Mt 5:11-12.



Prayer requests

- For the safety, health, and prosperity of Pastor Naumann's wife and children.
- For progress with publications of the Ceylon Evangelical Lutheran Church.
- For peace and stability in Sri Lanka; for the government and all who are in authority, especially the newly elected and appointed, that they may rule with wisdom and justice.

We should also remember how—strangely, perhaps, but marvelously—the disciples kept this command, who after they suffered a beating for Jesus' name, went away: 'rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name'. Acts 5:41. We who are in Christ Jesus have cause to rejoice always, and at all times to praise and give thanks. How truly good, right and salutary it is, at all times and in all places to give thanks to You, Holy Lord, Almighty Father, Everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who for the sins of the world in ancient times was crucified and raised to life, and who today knows the needs of His servants and missionaries, and for us makes constant intercession! Wherever you are, reading this today, we hope you will rejoice with us in Sri Lanka; lift up your hearts and raise a glass! For it is a great privilege to be counted worthy to serve the LCMS overseas, for the sake of the name above every name!

Focusing on Sri Lanka

Recently I have been directed to concentrate efforts on publications in Sri Lanka, for which reason I hope to have some exciting new developments to report in the coming months. Right now I am working intensively on producing well-edited liturgies in both Sinhala and Tamil. This will especially enable us to assist Tamil-speaking congregations who want to use the form of the Lutheran service, but may not have access to Tamil Lutheran Hymnals. A number of other resources are being made available online for the first time, and printed resources such as catechisms and Sunday School materials are planned for the very near future. Sometimes progress can be difficult and slow.

“All Change!”

I heard these words often as a boy, as I journeyed on the London Underground. There are times when it seems that everyone and everything is changing, and moving so quickly around us that the only thing in clear focus is the transience of the short span of our days. Governments and rulers, work and colleagues, house and home: 'change and decay in all around I see', including that man in the mirror! One thing, however, never changes, but endures forever: the Word of the Lord. May God preserve us all in his saving Word, and remind us that nothing can separate us from his love, in Christ Jesus!

Your servant,

Pastor Edward Naumann



The boy Jesus teaches in the Temple. Illustrated by Wilton Rajapaksa