

Christian Care at Life's End



Pastor Paul's Call

Pastor Paul is a theological educator in Taiwan, serving with the China Evangelical Lutheran Church (CELC) and China Lutheran Seminary (CLS). He is called to teach, write, and help plant and pastor Lutheran churches.

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



On a Friday afternoon Vicar Changlong Chen called me, informing me that his father, Fukun, was near death, and the family was likely going to make the decision to take him back up into their home in the mountains to let him die peacefully there. I went to the hospital immediately and was able to talk with Fukun, who was quite lucid and alert.

What a blessing to be able to absolve him of his sins one last time and assure him that because of Christ and His forgiveness he had no need to fear death. The family did take him to the mountains three days later and their father died within a few hours of his arrival back home. A few days after that, Irene and I journeyed into the mountains ourselves, where I led an evening Vespers service for family and friends who had gathered at their home. A week later I preached at the funeral and conducted the graveside burial service. At the funeral we sang their father's favorite hymn, "What a Friend We have in Jesus," and I stressed in my sermon that Jesus was brother Fukun's friend especially because "all his sins and griefs [Jesus did] bear." What a blessing and honor to be able to absolve sins for Jesus' sake and proclaim God's Word of comfort at such important times.

For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.
(Romans 5:10 ESV)





What can you pray for?

Thanks for:

- the Christian faith that God granted Fukun Chen, enabling him to die in peace
- the opportunity to teach the Gospel, as presented clearly in the Book of Concord

Petitions for:

- my teaching, that students would grow in faith and in their understanding of God's Word
- God to grant repentance and faith to Irene's parents

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In 2020 I plan to teach the Book of Concord three different times, the first of which I just began last week at China Lutheran Seminary. Later this year I hope to teach church leaders and members in both northern and southern Taiwan. This teaching actually began when I presented at the LCMS' partner church body's recent annual gathering, as I spoke about the role of the Lutheran Confessions in the life of the church. My conclusion to that presentation was: "So please come and study the Book of Concord with me!" Each time I teach this course is a wonderful opportunity to stress what the Book of Concord stresses so clearly – our salvation is a free gift of God on account of Christ through the faith that God gives us through His Word and Sacraments. This Gospel message is so crucially needed in the Taiwan society and also in the Taiwan church.

Teaching the Lutheran Confessions



Teaching about the Book of Concord at the CELC annual meeting. In the background is displayed the ordination vow in which a new pastor vows to preach, teach, and administer the Sacraments in conformity with Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions.

Brief Updates

- We welcomed three new members to our local mission congregation this past Sunday. All three have taken or are currently taking two different Luther's Small Catechism classes, one with Rev. Dr. Joseph Lu and one with me.
- We recently had two "hymn translating days" in Taiwan, the latest efforts in the long process of publishing a full Chinese Lutheran hymnal--- Lord-willing in a few years from now.
- Irene's 94-year-old father recently had surgery to repair a blood vessel. While the surgery was successful, his recovery has been somewhat slow. Irene now often spends time with her parents to help. The family also recently hired a helper to assist them. We're grateful the helper's a Christian and we pray especially that God would grant repentance and faith to both Dad and Mom.

Keeping up-to-date: If you're not receiving this newsletter by email but would like to, please contact us at michael.paul@lcms.org. For frequent Facebook updates, go to the facebook group: "Michael Paul family Taiwan mission."

To support our work financially, you may make checks payable (memo line: "Support of Missionary Michael Paul") to "The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod" and send your tax-deductible gift to:

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
P.O. Box 66861
St. Louis, MO 63166-6861

You can **ALSO** make checks payable to "**Mission Central**" and send your tax-deductible gift to our friends at: Mission Central, 40718 Highway E-16, Mapleton, IA 51034.

