



The Messenger

International Lutheran Church

www.ilcseoul.org

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Issue #702

A NOTE FROM PASTOR CARL

ON THE ROMAN ROAD: TITLE!

"But the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23b ESV). We are reading the New Testament book of Romans this summer at International Lutheran Church and exploring the depths of God's gracious work in our lives.

The Letter to the Romans is considered the most concise articulation of the Gospel, or Good News, in the New Testament. Our closing verse in our text for today actually is one of the most explicit representations of this gospel: "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (6:23). One feature in Paul's letter to the church in Rome is that he often wraps the theological point in contrasting statements. In fact, the whole of chapter 6 is a contrast between the new freedom that we have in God through the gospel in comparison to the enslavement we experience in sin.

But the contrast is probably not what we expected. Paul says that we are either slaves to sin which leads to death or we are slaves to God which leads to life - eternal life! This imagery of slavery and bonded servitude is found right at the beginning of this letter ("Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus" (1:1)) as he sets out to clearly unwrap the new reality of our lives in Christ and the freedom we truly have in Jesus. This freedom, though, is not a freedom to disobedience which only leads to further enslavement, but a freedom to now serve God in obedience and righteousness. The confession "Jesus is Lord" proclaims that I now belong to Jesus. This is not as a conscious decision of the self, but rather the freeing power of God who suffered the consequences of my very enslavement. This free gift came at a great price. My freedom, your freedom, was the result of the obedience of the Son unto death itself. We cannot earn this gracious gift, nor do we deserve it. On the contrary, this gift of eternal life is just that: God's free action

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

9, 10, 11 *Socially Responsible Services* (three separate sessions; 40 minutes each; pre-register)

ANYTIME *Worship Service*
(to be available online prerecorded)

7:00 p.m. *Bible Study* (regularly scheduled at 9:00 a.m.; to be available online livestream)

THIS WEEK

Wed., 6/24 *Bible Study*
(to be available online livestream)

to set us free. Yet, this newfound freedom does not call us to serve ourselves but rather Him who set us free.

Paul is not defending the Roman practice of slavery or trying to make slavery appear normal or even acceptable. Rather, Paul is drawing on our collective sociological experiences or our "natural limitations" to emphasize the very freedom to which we have been called. We are freed to set free a world in sin and bondage. Slavery is not a thing of the past. It is not only a minor unfortunate episode in our common human history brought on by the ignorance of one dominating culture after another. The reality of our past undeniably impacts us today. This is why we desperately need to be set free! But how will we choose to use our freedom? As we travel together "On the Roman Road," we are freed to set free a world in bondage.

Pastor Carl

SENDING SUNDAY

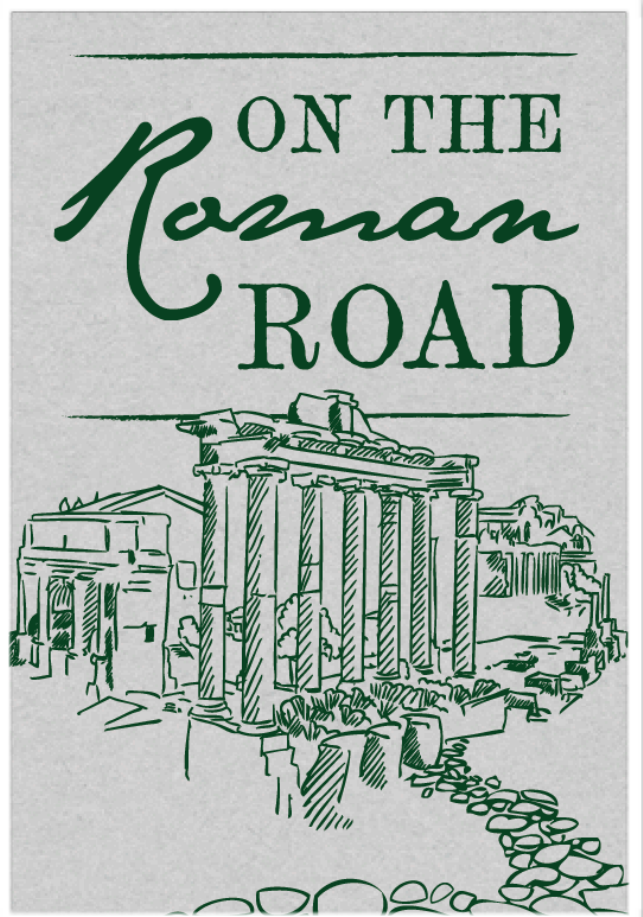
It is the custom of our ILC community to pray for those individuals and families who are moving away. Are you leaving soon? Next Sunday (June 28th) we would like to recognize your attendance, involvement, and support during your sojourn in this country. Please notify the church at seoulilc.volunteer@gmail.com to indicate if you will be departing Korea this summer to live in another country.

COVID-19 UPDATE

This Sunday, we continue ILC's *Socially Responsible Services*. **However, we also will continue to use our current online service format as the principal form of corporate worship.** Please watch *The Messenger*, the ILC Facebook page, and the ILC website for future updates and changes.

SUMMER SERMON SERIES

Pastor Carl has begun a new summer sermon series based on our readings of Paul's letter to the Christians in Rome. If you have the time, you might find it helpful to read the NT lessons in advance of the Sunday service. May God bless our growth in the message communicated through Romans.



CHURCH OPERATIONS CONTINUE

Though we are not meeting in person, church operations still continue and to that end we encourage you to make use of offering your tithes and gifts via online giving. Giving in this way will be recorded for your personal end-of-year giving statement.

If you are unable or do not wish to give electronically, you may hold your offerings until we resume our normal worship schedule.

Thank you for your role in keeping ILC's ministry ongoing.

CITIBANK 260-00497-243-01

READINGS

June 21: Third Sunday after Pentecost

OT	Jeremiah 20:7-13
NT	Romans 6:12-23
Gospel	Matthew 10:5a, 21-33

June 28: Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

OT	Jeremiah 28:5-9
NT	Romans 7:1-13
Gospel	Matthew 10:34-42