



Pastor Paul's Call

Pastor Paul is a theological educator in Taiwan, serving with the China Evangelical Lutheran Church (CELC). He teaches God's Word at seminary and congregational levels, and develops text, audio, and video resources for the Chinese Church.

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Sharing God's Word

Whereas Christian parents and grandparents in the U.S. often pray for their children and grandchildren to remain in, or return to, the Christian faith, in Taiwan it's more often the other way around—children and grandchildren pray for their parents and grandparents to be saved by God granting them repentance and faith through His Word and Spirit. Irene and I certainly continue to pray for her 91 year-old mother, who continues to believe that she can trust in her own goodness for a good life after death. In our many years living in Taiwan, I've twice had the opportunity to baptize elderly people right before their death, including one in the hospital just the night before she passed away. Recently, Irene was asked to visit the mother of our friend and church coworker, Sharon, who lives in a nursing home and is beginning to experience the effects of dementia. Sharon's mom, Su-Ching, has certainly heard God's Word shared with her many times, not only from her daughter Sharon, but also from her husband, who was baptized many years ago. Especially since Su-Ching was becoming more and more confused by her dementia, Sharon felt it was even more urgent that her mom hear God's Word again soon, and hoped that an “outsider” might be able to succeed in sharing more with Mom than a family member. So Irene gladly made her way half-way across Taiwan, and met up with Sharon at the nursing home. Miraculously, the nursing home bended their rules and allowed them a full hour to meet with Su-Ching. And even more miraculously, the next day they were given two hours to meet! Sharon was so grateful that Mom was willing to talk with Irene, and the two had mostly clear communication, including lots of God's Words of Law and Gospel shared from different angles. At the end of their time together, Irene boldly said to Su-Ching, “OK, the next time we'll bring a pastor...and he'll bring some water...and God's Word...and he'll baptize you if you're ready, okay?” While Su-Ching didn't really agree, she also didn't reject the idea, giving hope that

God's Word and Spirit were indeed working in Mom's heart. We haven't heard from Sharon about any “next steps” yet, so we just pray, and ask you to join us, that Su-Ching would indeed request Christian baptism and finally be saved.



So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.
Romans 10:17 (ESV)





What can you pray for?

Thanks for:

- the opportunity for Irene to share God's Word with Su-Ching
- studying God's Word in Augsburg Confession class
- our powerful, gracious God who carries us to heaven

Petitions for:

- Su-Ching, that God's Word and Spirit would grant her repentance and faith, and that she could soon be baptized.
- time and wisdom to adequately prepare for lots of additional teaching in the next few weeks

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VDMA
the Word of the Lord
endures forever

our official website:
www.lcms.org/paul

There are many opportunities to serve as short-term or GEO missionaries. Check out the current list and download an application at www.lcms.org/service. Click on "Service Opportunities."

New Teaching Opportunity

My Call to Taiwan is to serve as a "theological educator," which just means that I teach God's Word to many or to few, to pastors and to new (and sometimes non-) Christians. My latest opportunity to teach is at Salvation Lutheran



Church, where we now regularly worship. Every Sunday morning at 9am (worship begins at 10am) I teach a small group the Augsburg Confession. We look at the text of the confession itself, but spend at least half our time looking at some of the many Bible verses from which the confession is drawn. This past Sunday we studied article 4 – justification. Next week we'll continue with article 5 – the ministry of the preaching office.

This past Sunday during worship I began hearing a strange rumbling noise. While I should have known immediately what it was, I was really confused for a few minutes...until I distinguished the sound more clearly---

Firecrackers During Worship

firecrackers. Firecrackers are often set off in Taiwan for many different reasons. In this particular case, on both Saturday and Sunday firecrackers were continually set off as a way to get attention...and hopefully bring good fortune. The gods/idols of a famous temple had been brought to our city and were paraded continually for those two days on all the major streets of town. The idea is that if the god comes to your street he'll bring you good fortune, and the firecrackers announce his arrival and scare away evil spirits. Whenever I see gods being carried down the street like this, I always think of these verses from Isaiah (46:1,3-4 NIV):

"Bel bows down, Nebo stoops low [Bel and Nebo were two of Babylon's gods]; their idols are borne by beasts of burden.

The images that are carried about are burdensome, a burden for the weary... 'Listen to me, you descendants of Jacob, all the remnant of the people of Israel, you whom I have upheld since your birth, and have carried since you were born. Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you.'"

What a blessing that the One true God isn't helpless, needing to be carried by us, but He rather powerfully and graciously carries us for Christ's sake all the way to the joys of heaven to be with Him forever.

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:

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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.