



Mt. Calvary Messenger

MARCH 2023

A Little Note from Pastor's Study

In Favor of Weekly Communion 1

(This series of articles is an overview of material presented by Kenneth W. Wieting in his book: *The Blessings of Weekly Communion*. I commend the book to you to read in its entirety. It's a worthy addition to your library and that of any Christian or their pastor.)

"But, the Apostolic/Early Church Didn't Celebrate Every Sunday Communion."

One defense of infrequent communion practice revolves around the ancient Church. The claims that her practice, shrouded in mystery and myth, was freer, less formal, and without man's sacramental focus, are simply untrue. The Early Christian Church observed a liturgical form inherited from the Jews and regularly used practices we would recognize immediately.

There is a great theological reference: *The Didache*, the teaching of the twelve. It dates from around 45-70 A.D., depending upon scholars' opinions. That's about the same time as the writing of some of the books of the New Testament. It is not scripture, and hasn't ever been considered such. But, it is a sort of a catechism, a manual of faith and practice for those in instruction towards membership in the 1st Century Church.

The *Didache* gives witness to two common practices of the 1st Century Church. The Church gathered together on the Lord's Day to confess their sins and receive the Holy Eucharist. The Church also excluded those who were not instructed from the altar. We find here a clear description of weekly celebration of the Lord's Supper in the Divine Service and a clear description of closed communion practiced by the church from her earliest days. (Wieting, p. 54ff.)

In the 2nd Century (101-200 A.D.), we find evidence of similar practices within the church. Justin Martyr reports (cir. 150 A.D.), in his defense of the un-subversive nature of Christianity to the Roman authorities, how the church gathered every week. The service featured readings from the Law and Prophets, a sermon by the presiding minister, the prayers, and finally the Eucharist. Again, the Lord's Supper is celebrated weekly and those who are not baptized and instructed are forbidden from the altar. (Wieting, p. 56ff.)

Rev. Jason M. Kaspar
Pastor
Office: (979) 968-3938
Fax: (979) 968-2918
Cell: (970) 201-7499
pastor@mtcalvary-lcms.org

Office Administrator
Office Hours:
Tues/Wed 8:00 -12:00
Thurs/Sat 8:00 -12:00
Or by appointment
Phone: (979) 968-3938
Fax : (979) 968-2918
secretary@mtcalvary-lcms.org

Lori Hollek
Preschool Director
Office: (979) 968-5913
Office Hours:
Mon.- Thurs.6:30—3:30
Fri. 6:30 —10:30
Preschool@mtcalvary-lcms.org

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Pastor's Study	1-2
Ask Pastor	3-5
Stewardship	6
Auxiliary News	9
For Your Information	7-8, 11
Birthdays	10
Just for Kids	cover
Church Calendar	insert
Serving Schedule	insert

The 3rd Century Christians (201-300 A.D.) lived under various persecutions and periods of partial peace. Hippolytus conveys the Apostolic Tradition (cir. 217 A.D.). The church seeks to preserve the Divine Service against mindless innovations in period of legal syncretism (all gods are the same and must be worshipped together in a common way). Hippolytus description includes the Eucharist, in which only the instructed and baptized Christians were allowed, as a weekly climax of the Divine Service. He even records this familiar dialogue:

Bishop: "The Lord be with you."

People: "And with your spirit."

Bishop: "Lift up your hearts."

People: "We have them with the Lord."

Bishop: "Let us give thanks to the Lord."

People: "It is right and proper." (Wieting, p. 59ff.)

Emperor Diocletian ordered that all Christians be removed from public office and that their homes, other buildings, and books be destroyed, beginning the Diocletian Persecution in 301 A.D. This 4th Century state persecution relaxed after ten years by the Edict of Galerius in 311 A.D. The edict specifically acknowledged "their assemblies" as an allowable practice. We can assume by this state observation that the weekly gathering for Word and Sacrament hadn't ceased and was understood as a central Christian activity. (Wieting, p. 65ff.)

After Constantine's full legalization of Christianity and individual embrace of the faith, he called the first Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D. The council codified the canon of scripture and reinforced the centrality of the Sacrament in Christian life. (Wieting, p. 67ff.)

The 5th Century saw a divide growing between Eastern and Western Christians. In the East, where the Roman Empire persisted, the Eucharist retained its weekly prominence for the faithful in their gatherings. The Western Christians lived in a crumbling Roman Empire. Here, the eucharist grew into a daily practice in cloisters and churches. In both cases, only those baptized and instructed Christians were admitted to the Lord's Supper. (Wieting, p. 73ff.)

It's clear that the first five centuries of Christianity observed the Lord's Supper weekly and practiced closed communion. Claims to the contrary are simply false and without evidence.



In Favor of Weekly Communion 2

(This series of articles is an overview of material presented by Kenneth W. Wieting in his book: *The Blessings of Weekly Communion*. I commend the book to you to read in its entirety. It's a worthy addition to your library and that of any Christian or their pastor.)

The Sacrament of the Altar in the Medieval Church, 6th-15th Centuries A.D.

The medieval church is a shining example of the distortion of God's gifts in Word and Sacrament. When we allow the Word and institution to take a backseat to our structures, we get a thing that misses the point entirely. Jesus gave us His body and blood for the forgiveness of sins, when we are gathered together in His name and as He taught us.

In the 6th-9th centuries A.D., the Western church saw a change in the focus of the worship life of the church and reception of the Lord's Supper. The Rule of St. Benedict (530 A.D.) encouraged a change from the ascetic monastic life in the early church to a monastic practice aimed at learning and service. Pope Gregory the Great proposed a number of changes in church life and practice. His included a focus on priests caring for souls, codification of elements of the church year, and use of plain-song music, some of which are still in our LSB hymnals. (Wieting, p. 77-78)

The period unfairly called the dark ages did possess strong centers of learning. The European monasteries retained studies of language, art, music, and science in an otherwise unlearned time. This was largely due to the requirements of the Rule of Benedict on monastic life. Monks were expected to pray the hours (8 times/day) and demonstrate poverty, chastity, and physical labor. (Wieting, p. 78-79)

Gregory the Great was the first monk to become Pope (590-604 A.D.). He directed priests to serve in monasteries for missionary purposes. The private masses started there and grew into common practice throughout European churches. Other errors begun under Gregory included: the doctrine of purgatory, sacrifice of the mass, and the cult of martyrs and saints as objects of prayer. The sacrifice of the mass is the chief error among these. It reverses the action in the Lord's Supper from God, delivering the forgiveness of sins to people, to us offering a new sacrifice of Jesus' body and blood to the Lord, earning His favor. (Wieting, p. 80-82)

The leadership of the European church crumbled under competing Roman leadership, moral collapse, and external influence by medieval rulers. Monasteries provided some of the only stability in the 10th-12th centuries A.D. Sadly, monastic error also gained prominence. (Wieting, p. 86) The great schism of 1054 A.D. finally severed the relations between Eastern and Western Christians.

Following the schism, Gregory VII, a Cluniac monk, ascended to pope (1073-1085 AD). He required celibacy practiced in European monasteries for all priests, which remains the practice today. (Wieting, p. 87) Priestly celibacy was enforced barely 400 years at the time of Luther. Even today, the requirement in Roman churches is less than 1000 years old in a 2000 year old church.

Concurrent to the 12th century crusades, a cultic view of the eucharist arose in the Roman Catholic church. Curiously, the cultic practices existed outside of the mass. They would visit the reserved host to adore it, process through the streets with the host, and bless people with it outside of the practice of the Lord's Supper. (Wieting, p. 88)

Pope Innocent III (1198-1216 A.D.) marked the zenith of papal power at the beginning of the 13th century. He amassed more authority in the church and among the city states of Europe than any other man before or after. He ordered that all Catholics partake of the mass at least once a year, revealing the error in understanding among the people. Unsurprisingly, the celebrants were influenced by the private mass to the degree that they prayed and chanted effectively to themselves,

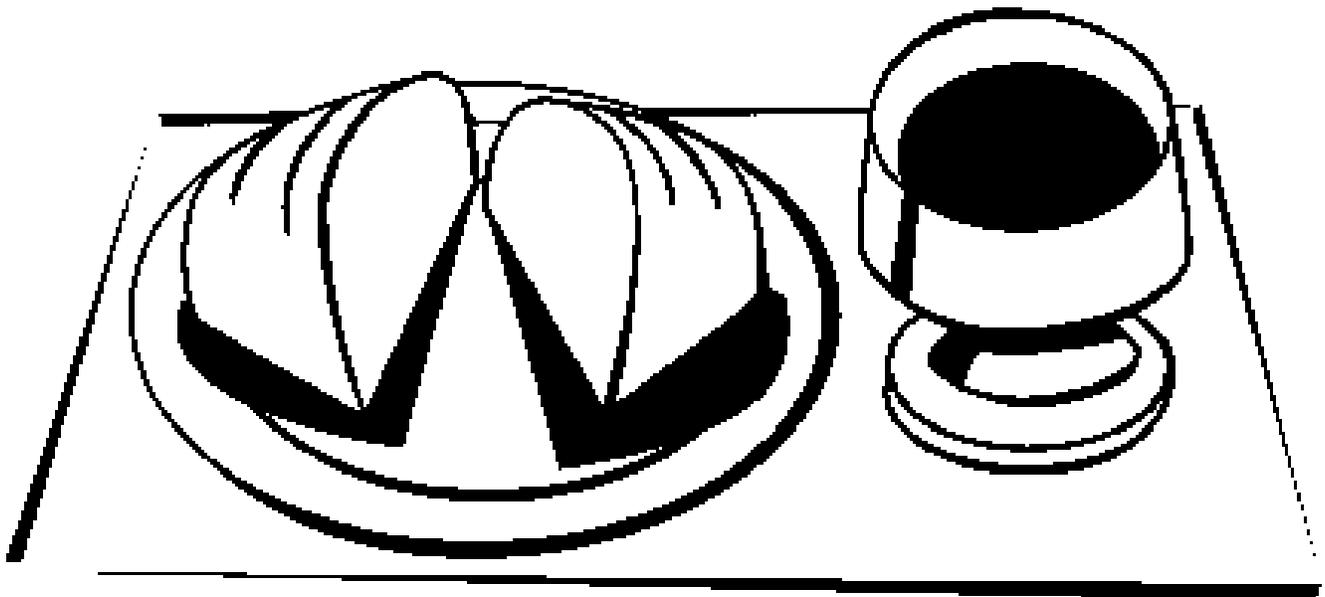
reinforcing the notion that the people needn't even be there. (Wieting, p. 90)

Despite daily masses rising in frequency to as many as 50 in a week, the people partook far less often. The spiritual cultist practices of saintly reverence in prayer and adoration of the eucharistic host became prominent in the lives of Christians over the very sacrament from which the host comes! Monks and priests would partake as infrequently as once a month, and the people as little as once a year. This is a significant shift away from the ancient practice.

The Medieval Church built a distorted system in need of reformation.

- Pastor

"O Lord, I love the habitation of your house and the place where your glory dwells. Do not sweep my soul away with sinners, nor my life with bloodthirsty men... My foot stands on level ground; in the great assembly I will bless the Lord." Psalm 26:8-9, 12



Come to the — Table —

Mt. Calvary Lutheran Preschool Fundraiser

Sunday, March 26th

Get your tickets soon!



BAKED POTATO DINNER

Lenten Discipline: Denying the Self

We are at the beginning of Lent. During the Lenten season, the church calls to our attention the sufficiency of what God gives. It points to the sufficiency of God's grace in the atoning work of Jesus. It shows us the sufficiency of faith in Jesus' work for us. It makes known the sufficiency of God's Word in faith and life.

But Lent doesn't just remind us of the sufficiency of God's spiritual gifts — the gifts that pertain to our redemption and salvation. Lent also reminds us of the sufficiency of the physical, temporal gifts of God which pertain to this body and life. In other words, it reminds us of the importance of godly contentment and of outward discipline and training of the body.

This outward training of the body teaches us not to give in to every desire of our flesh, but to learn to say no to them. And it does this in such a way that if you fail, it is no sin. It is a way to practice without putting yourself into a compromising situation.

Fasting is a good example of this outward training. When you fast, you are practicing saying no to the desires of your body. But if you fail in this, if you break your fast, you have not sinned. But you have learned something about how your flesh works, how

difficult it is to fight against it, and how you need help from above to discipline the desires of your body.

Another example is almsgiving. An increase in giving to the church and its mission during Lent is also a form of outward training. We all know that our flesh finds security in money and stuff. By committing to give more to the church, you are training your flesh. You are, by this outward discipline, training yourself to be content with what God gives. You are practicing saying "no" to your desires. Again, if you fail, you have not sinned. But you've learned just how powerful your flesh is — it leads you instead of you leading it. You've learned how you need help from above in being content with what God gives.

This is why St. Paul instructs young Pastor Timothy in this way:

But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away

from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs. (1 Tim. 6:6–10)
Our sufficiency is not of ourselves; it is in God. Let us learn this without sin by training our flesh this Lenten season.

— LCMS Stewardship Ministry: lcms.org/stewardship



For Your Information



In January 2023, the AMEN Food Pantry served 266 families (746 individuals). In comparison, for January 2022, the Pantry served 251 families (677 individuals).

Sincere thanks to the Mission Board for again sponsoring the “Souper Bowl of Caring”, and to all who donated. Items collected to help stock the AMEN Pantry shelves received a special blessing on Sunday, February 12. **A total of 278 pounds of food plus monetary donations of \$1,280.00 were collected. To God be the glory!!**

Shelf stable food items for the AMEN Pantry can be brought at any time and placed in the gray plastic bin in the church vestibule (coat/hat rack area). Or, the Pantry (located at 851 South Reynolds) is open every Thursday, 10:00 am - 12:00 noon, to accept donations only (no client shopping).

Contact Stell (979-966-2319) or Beverly (979-250-1718) if you have questions.

HAPPY SCRAPPERS - NATIONAL QUILTING DAY, MARCH 18

“Those who sleep under a quilt, sleep under a blanket of love”

For more than 75 years compassionate people just like you have put their faith into action and made quilts for people in need around the world. And not just a few quilts – **nearly 28 MILLION QUILTS!** These quilts of love make life brighter and a bit more comfortable for our neighbors around the world struggling with chronic poverty, illness, natural disasters and conflict. **THANK YOU.**

The Mary Martha Guild Quilters (Happy Scrappers), have been making mission quilts for Lutheran World Relief for countless years. **Records kept since 1999 show that during the past twenty-two years they have sewed and tacked over 2,150 quilts!!**

HAPPY SCRAPPER SCHEDULE FOR MARCH

The Happy scrapper quilting activities are continuing at 9:30 AM each Monday during the month of March – 6th, 13th, 20th & 27th. We usually work for about two hours and finish with a shared lunch and fellowship around noon. Visitors are always welcome!



THE MARY MARTHA GUILD MINUTE

MARCH

Monday, March 6th

Multipurpose Room

Fellowship Time—5:30 PM
Business Meeting—6:00 PM

Welcome
Devotion
Pantry Item
Mite Prayer
Hostesses

Beverly Albers
Janice Teinert
Oatmel
Nancy Lehmann
Jeanette Huelsebusch, Nancy Lehmann



BUSINESS MEETING

Project/Activity

Call to Order
Minutes & Treasurer’s Reports
Standing Committee Reports
Spring Zone Rally Invitation
LWR 2022 Report—LWR Personal Care Kits
National Quilting Day—March 19
Mite boxes distributed to congregation to return Oct. 1
College Student Care Packages

BIRTHDAYS

none

ANNIVERSARIES

(10) Linda Poncik; (31) Marilyn Spillane

Everyone is invited to attend the Guild Meetings in the Multipurpose Room at 5:30 PM on the first Monday of each month (except July & December). All volunteers and support of our projects are greatly appreciated. Contact our Member Development Committee, Karen Fitch, or any Guild member or feel free to call the Church Office at 968-3938 for more information.

A request concerning 2nd Chance: Mt. Calvary volunteers need your help! Can you spare a few hours, *every six weeks*? Back in "the day", we had 15-20 volunteers each time it was Mt. Calvary's turn to work. Now we have 5, for setting up the store on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday. You will NOT be "thrown to the wolves" without directions, OR without someone to work with/show you what needs to be done. Also, needed for helping on Fridays and Saturdays: 15 for each shift (9-12, or 12-3). Are you really so busy that you don't have time to support this worthy cause in the name of our church? For further information, contact Karen Fitch (979-561-6190)(karenfitch64@gmail.com) We need YOU! At least, will you think about it? Thanks!



News from the Board of Missions:The Board met on January 26, 2023, and finalized the budget totals. Budget includes giving to the following: Local individuals preparing for the LCMS ministry (Gary Johnson); 10 camperships for Camp Lone Star; Camp Lone Star "Family Fun Night"; "Soldiers of the Cross"; Food/clothing co-op at Ft. Wayne Seminary; \$\$ to defray the cost of renting a hall/space for (4) funeral luncheons; Christmas break student meal tickets at Ft. Wayne Seminary; Faith Lutheran High; CPH books for children at Easter and at Christmas; Chamber of Commerce dues.

Fellowship Time/Cookie Sunday will begin again (last attempt was 2020)! It will be held on the first Sunday of each month in the Multi-Purpose Room, 10:00-10:15AM. Chairs will receive a copy of the schedule in their church mailboxes.

MEN'S CLUB PIT STOP

Next Meeting : Monday, March 6, 6:00 PM @ BBQ pits

Preschool Fundraiser Meal: March 26, pulled pork on baked potatoes, 800 plates
Replace club signs with Amy Lochte

Joseph Johnson
Men's Club Secretary
mcmensecretary@gmail.com



Team 1:

Dennis Schnell
David Boening
David Cole
Willie Ahlschlager
Jason Von Minden
Mark Wilson
Ricky Dunk

Team 2:

Daniel Fischer
August Pietsch
Donald Roensch
Joe Johnson
Luis Sanchez
Lee Teinert

Team 3:

James Lehmann
Jason Lehmann
James Herbrich
Justin Hollek
Randy Pietsch
Charlie Herbrich

Team 4:

Randy Albers
Lummus Hannes
Glenn Altwein
Aaron Muniz
Neal Lochte
Harold Streicher
Jarrod VonMinden

MARCH

GEMS

Our Post Oak GEMS (Girls Embracing Mission Service) : All girls 5th-12th grade are invited to attend our monthly GEMS meeting on Sunday, February 26, at 2:00 at Holy Cross, Warda. Come join us for a devotion, snacks, and activity time. This month we will continue working on the fleece blankets we started at our last meeting. If time allows, we will also start making sock dolls. Both the blankets and the dolls are for the Children's Advocacy Center in Bastrop. As always, moms are welcome to attend too! Hope to see you there!

GRIEFSHARE

Thursdays January 19 - April 27
6pm - 8pm
Immanuel Lutheran Church, Giddings
(512) 461-5442
monniebartels@gmail.com

GriefShare is a special weekly seminar and support group designed to help you rebuild your life after losing a loved one. Our group is led by caring people who have experienced grief and want to help you through the difficult days ahead.

IN OUR Thoughts and Prayers

FLOWER CHART OPENINGS

Don't forget that we have a Flower Chart on the bulletin board in the narthex hallway. You can sign up to provide flowers for a special occasion or simply to the glory of God.

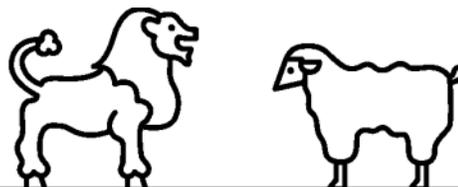
Call the church office if you would like more information!

BIRTHDAYS

Holly Mikulin
Eli Pietsch
Jonathan Bamsch
Anthony Weikel
Gracie Buscha
Kayley Brooks
Charles Votaw
Joshua Rials
Charlee Wessels
Holden Mikulin
Linda Herbrich
Ricky Dunk
Kenny Kruse
Melissa Lesikar
Donnie Bretting
Lisa Hibbler
Becky Weikel
Everett Cook
Taylor Almanza
Gavin Hollek
Susie Kinsey
Edwin Pietsch

ANNIVERSARIES

Daniel & Miriam Moerbe(20)
Trevor & Kayley Brooks (4)
Justin & Lori Hollek (22)
James & Mary Walker (55)
Martin & Karen Koopman(49)
Bruce & Melissa Lesikar(27)
Jarrod & Jordan VonMinden(13)
Dennis & Sherry Winkler(11)



MARCH

Remembering

We pray for the family and friends of Charles Richter who went to be with Jesus on 1/20/2023.

Our prayers are with the family and friends of Joyce Michael Polasek who is at rest in Christ on 1/20/2023.

Praise and thanksgiving for the birth and arrival home of Miles Woolridge.

A SEASON OF HOPE LENT

In the season of Lent, we are putting God's love in action by again making Lutheran World Relief Personal Care Kits. Poverty, earthquakes, other disasters and the uncertainty of COVID-19 continue to hit our poorest neighbors around the world even harder. We want to announce to the world that Christ makes a new season possible, a Season of Hope, so we are excited to engage in this project as a community during our Lenten journey this year.

Support Lutheran World Relief with a donation of personal care items or cash for their purchase, which will be used to assemble Personal Care Kits that give people around the world tools to stay healthy in life's most challenging situations. Each kit is to contain a towel, 2 bars soap, a tooth brush, comb and nail clippers.

PREFERRED COLLECTION LIST

Bath towels, light weight (20"x40" to 52"x27") dark color

Bath-size bars of soap

Cash - Cash is very much appreciated to purchase tooth brushes, sturdy combs and metal clippers in bulk on line. (Make checks payable to the Mary Martha Guild.)

Last day to make donations is Sunday, March 26th after which the kits will be assembled and packed. For assistance or more information, contact Marilyn Spillane or Jeanette Huelsbusch or the Church Office @ 968-3938.

A collection basket and information on the 2022 LWR Shipment are located in the Narthex.

WHERE DID LWR QUILTS & KITS GO IN 2022? 462,262 Quilts & Kits TO 19 COUNTRIES

Each year hundreds of thousands of lives are touched by the generosity of your hearts. The time, compassion and prayer that is dedicated to each quilt and kit – used by families worlds away in times of their darkest hours – bring reminders of God's grace and love to our neighbors most in need. And while these quilts and kits bring warmth and comfort to families facing crisis, their impact is much more powerful than that.

COUNTRY	SHIPPING WHSE	QUILTS	BLANKETS	SCHOOL KITS	PERSONAL CARE KITS	BABY KITS	FABRIC KITS	MASKS
ANGOLA	Maryland	18,480	-	-	9,890	4,950	1,230	-
ARMENIA	Maryland	12,375	-	-	-	-	1,230	-
BURKINA FASO	Minn.	14,760	-	4,480	9,100	4,480	4,100	4,400
DIJIBOUTI	Minn.	10,080	-	15,360	-	-	-	-
DOMINICAN REP.	"	-	-	15,360	-	-	-	-
GEORGIA	Maryland	36,960	-	-	-	-	-	-
GUATEMALA	Minn.	7,200	-	-	21,700	7,200	-	-
HAITI	Minnesota	8,640	-	-	2,800	-	-	-
JORDAN	Maryland	7,260	-	5,500	-	-	-	-
LEBANON	Maryland	15,180	-	8,000	6,900	4,200	1,230	-
MALI	Maryland	22,440	-	5,000	4,830	3,150	205	6,250
NIGER	Minnesota	11,160	-	5,760	-	3,840	-	4,400
PERU	Minnesota	15,840	-	-	7,000	-	-	-
POLAND	Maryland	11,520	-	2,500	7,360	3,480	-	-
SIERRA LEONE	Minn.	10,800	-	-	7,000	3,840	-	-
SOUTH SUDAN	Maryland	3,630	1,650	13,000	3,220	2,100	820	6,250
SYRIA	Maryland	-	-	6,500	5,908	-	-	-
TANZANIA	Minnesota	7,920	-	6,400	-	6,080	-	-
UKRAINE	Maryland	6,072	-	3,000	8,280	3,240	-	6,250
TOTAL		220,317	1,650	90,860	94,060	46,560	8,815	31,950

This shipping information is from LWR's 2022 fiscal year (Oct.2021 – Sept.2022)

**WHERE ARE LWR QUILTS & KITS GOING IN 2023?
EMERGENCY SUPPLIES OF QUILTS, PERSONAL CARE KITS AND BABY KITS ARE BEING
SHIPPED TO TURKEY TO PROVIDE AID CAUSED BY RECENT EARTHQUAKES.**

Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church & Preschool

800 N. Franklin St.
La Grange, Texas 78945

Change Service Requested

NON-PROFIT ORG.
STANDARD PERMIT #50
LA GRANGE TX

“Committed to Reaching Out With The Love Of Jesus”

Puzzle!

Slow down and uncover this message and Bible verse, using the code below.

A D	B 1 E	F H	G 2 I	K M	L 3 N	O S	R 4 T	U W	V 5 Y
--------	-------------	--------	-------------	--------	-------------	--------	-------------	--------	-------------

W

5 1 3 5 4 4

4 1 3 3 4 4 2 4 1

1 3 1 3 2 4 4 1 3

2 4 4 2 4 1

1 1 4 4 2 3 3 1 3 1

3 3 4 5 4 2 1 4

2 1 3 2 4 1

Answer: We must talk to God and listen for God. “Be still, and know that I am God.” (Psalm 46:10)