

Trinity Tribune

Trinity Lutheran Church ✠ Paola, Kansas



"Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you, by miracles, wonders, and signs, which God did among you through Him." (Acts 2:22)

Did Jesus really exist? The latest fad among liberal supposed "scholars" is to claim that there is no reliable evidence even for His existence. One leading atheist said in a magazine interview, "The evidence he existed is surprisingly shaky."

In order to make this assertion, such "scholars" must first make a very *unscholarly* move: Completely dismissing the testimony of the four Gospels—all written within decades of Jesus' death and resurrection. The Gospels are in fact by far the best attested manuscripts from the ancient world, with many more ancient copies in existence than any other book.

Because of disasters such as the famous fire which destroyed the ancient library at Alexandria, Egypt, we have very few copies of most ancient writings, and those we do have usually date from thousands of years later. We have only seven copies of any works by Plato, the oldest dating to 900 AD, some 1,200 years after Plato; ten copies of works by Caesar, the oldest dating to 900 AD, some 1,000 years after Caesar; 49 copies of works by Aristotle, the oldest dating to 1100 AD, some 1,400 years after Aristotle. And it's the same with most other ancient authors. In contrast, there are *tens of thousands* of ancient manuscripts of the Gospels and other portions of the New Testament. Yet, no

one doubts the historical existence of figures such as Plato, Caesar, or Aristotle, or says that the evidence they even existed is "surprisingly shaky."

These supposed "scholars" must likewise reject the declarations of the Apostles, that they were eyewitnesses of Jesus:

"We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty" (2 Peter 1:16);

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it" (1 John 1:1-2);

"Many have undertaken to compile an orderly account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the Word" (Luke 1:1-2).

Even if you reject the Biblical sources, many non-Christian authors from the ancient world also wrote about Jesus.

But, even if you do reject these Biblical sources, there are many non-Christian authors from the ancient world who also wrote about Jesus—as would be expected for a figure having such an extraordinary impact on history.

From the first century of the Christian era, in which Jesus and His Apostles lived, we are blessed to have the writings of the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus (37-101 AD). He at first fought on the side

of his Jewish people in a rebellion against Rome, but later defected and became a leading adviser to the Roman Emperor Vespasian, and his son Titus, who commanded the Roman forces that destroyed Jerusalem in 70 AD, and later became emperor himself.

Because of Josephus' extensive writings, we have a first-hand account of the Roman destruction of Jerusalem, and life in the Holy Land in the first century. He certainly did not accept Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah. In fact, Josephus gained favor with Vespasian by concluding that the messianic prophecies of the Jews actually predicted the coming of this Roman emperor! Nevertheless, in relating the Holy Land's history during that era Josephus specifically mentions Jesus twice, as a real, historical figure:

"About this time there lived Jesus, a wise man. . . For he was one who wrought surprising feats and was a teacher of such people as accept the truth gladly. He won over many Jews and many of the Greeks. When Pilate, upon hearing him accused by men of the highest standing amongst us, had condemned him to be crucified, those who had in the first place come to love him did not give up their affection for him. . . And the tribe of the Christians, so called after him, has still to this day not disappeared" (Antiquities, XVIII, 3:3).

In his writings, Josephus also mentions all the following historical people: Pontius Pilate, Herod the Great, Agrippa, Herod Antipas and his brother Philip, Berenice, Annas, Festus, Felix, and Ananias the High Priest. He even cites John the Baptist (*Antiquities*, XVIII, 5:2), and James of Jerusalem, specifically saying that he is Jesus' brother (*Antiquities*, XX, 9:1). Of course, all of these people also appear in the four Gospels or the book of Acts, testifying that these divinely inspired books also have *historical* authenticity.

Josephus mentions many other luminaries from the ancient world, such as Caesar Augustus, Cleopatra, Marc Antony, Antiochus IV, Archelaus, and Caesar Claudius. No credible historian doubts the historical existence of any of these people. But, even though in the very same way Josephus twice mentions Jesus, for skeptical supposed “scholars” that somehow doesn’t count as evidence of His existence.

In addition to Josephus, we also have the testimony of many other ancient authors. Lucian of Samosata (120-180 AD), a Greek playwright who lived about a century after Christ, wrote:

“The Christians, you know, worship a man to this day—the distinguished personage who introduced their novel rites, and was crucified on that account . . . [they] worship the crucified sage and live after his laws” (The Death of Peregrine, 11-13).

Note that this non-Christian author takes for granted the historicity of Jesus, testifying that there was indeed such a man crucified by the Romans, who in his day a century later has devout followers.

Explaining how the evil Emperor Nero attempted to blame on the Christians the famous fire which destroyed Rome in 64 AD, the Roman historian Tacitus (55-117 AD) wrote about Jesus as a real person, put to death by one of Rome’s governors:

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“Consequently, to get rid of the report, Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. Christ, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judaea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome, where all things hideous and shameful from every part of the world find their center and become popular” (Annals, XV, 44).

Although the historical fact of Jesus’ existence can be fully proven from ancient sources outside the Bible, merely agreeing that He did exist is not enough for salvation.

Also serving as a Roman governor, Pliny the Younger in a letter to Emperor Trajan in 112 AD described in detail the followers of Christ, and their worship of Him:

“[The Christians] were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before it was light, when they sang a hymn to Christ, as to a god, and bound themselves by a solemn oath, not to any wicked deeds, but never to commit any fraud, theft or adultery, never to falsify their word, nor deny a trust when they should be called upon to deliver it up; after which it was their custom to separate, and then reassemble to partake of food—but food of an ordinary and innocent kind” (Letters of Pliny the Younger, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1935, Vol. II, X:96).

That last reference, that Christians “then reassemble to partake of food—but food of an ordinary and innocent kind,” is likely the earliest description outside the Bible of Christians partaking of Christ’s body and blood in Holy Communion, which some Romans misconstrued as actual cannibalism.

We have another letter, from Roman philosopher Mara bar Serapion (73-180 AD) to his son:

“What advantage did the Jews gain from executing their wise king? It was just after that that their kingdom was abolished. . . Nor did the wise king die for good; he lived on in the teaching which he had given” (British Library, Manuscript 14658).

Roman historian Suetonius records the Emperor Claudius expelling the Jews from Rome because of some agitation they were making over the Christians:

“Since the Jews constantly made disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus [Christ], he expelled them from Rome” (Divus Claudius, Chapter 25).

This agrees with Acts 18:2, which says that among the expelled Jews were Aquila and Priscilla, the husband and wife team who worked closely with the Apostle Paul: *“There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all the Jews to leave Rome.”*

This purge recorded by Suetonius occurred in 49 AD. So, it is significant that Suetonius clearly mentions Jesus Christ as a historical figure, who just 16 years after His death and resurrection at Jerusalem already had enough followers in remote Rome to cause such an incident, which agrees with the rapid growth and spread of the faith as recorded in the book of Acts.

Even in the Jewish faith, the *Babylonian Talmud* treats Jesus as a real historical figure, who lived on earth and was executed:

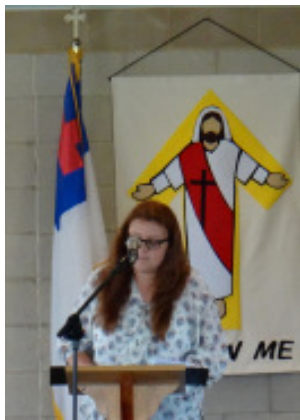
“On the eve of the Passover, Yeshu was hanged . . . since nothing was brought forward in his favor he was hanged on the eve of the Passover” (Babylonian Talmud, London: Soncino, 1935, Vol. III, Sanhedrin, 43a, p. 281).

Although the historical fact of Jesus’ existence can be fully proven from these and other ancient sources outside the Bible, merely agreeing that He did exist is not enough for salvation. As James 2:19 warns, *“You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.”*



Independence Day Outdoor Service & Potluck Picnic

Lots more pictures at
www.trinitylcms.org/photos



Beyond just acknowledging the historical fact of Jesus' existence, salvation comes through faith in Him as the divine Son of God and Savior of the world, faith which comes by the testimony of Holy Scripture. As John says, summarizing his Gospel:

"Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name"(John 20:30-31).

Pastor Kevin Vogts



These are the sermon topics for August. Pastor Vogts' sermons are available in both written and audio format on our website at www.trinitylcms.org/sermons. Also, printed copies of the current day's sermon and several previous sermons are available each week in a small literature rack in the back of the church.

August 7

"Faith in God's Promises"
Genesis 15:1-6

August 14

*"Let Us Run with Perseverance
the Race Marked Out for Us"*
Hebrews 12:1-3

August 21

"The Narrow Door"
Luke 13:24

August 28

"Move Up to a Better Place"
Luke 14:1-14



Trinity's Fourth Annual



Blocktoberfest

**Saturday, September 17
Noon–6:00pm**



**Blocktoberfest Outdoor Service
Sunday, September 20, 10:00am
In the Shelter House**

**Come Join the Blocktoberfest
Fun for the Whole Family!**





This
Month's
Anniversaries
& Birthdays

Our records of birthdays and anniversaries may not complete. If your information is missing or inaccurate, please accept our apologies and notify the Church Office at 913-849-3344 or email Church Secretary Stacey Elkinton at blocktlc@midwest-connections.com.

- August 1 Linda Giager
- August 1 Nancy Golubski
- August 1 Shirley Hubbard
- August 1 Justin Shay
- August 2 Zack Hutchison
- August 2 Russell Prothe
- August 3 Ilda Koopman
- August 3 Jeron Hermann
- August 5 Kelly Kaiser
- August 5 Halle Schlegel
- August 6 Jeremiah Ordonez
- August 8 Jeff Garrison
- August 8 Melissa Mondry
- August 8 Trevor Fleming
- August 8 Kurt Golubski
- August 9 Chris Tesar
- August 10 Hailey Jones
- August 10 Tabytha Ritch
- August 11 Angela Parks
- August 12 Janet Schneider
- August 14 Jeremiah Brandt
- August 14 Gerald Woodall
- August 14 Terese Vogts
- August 15 Alicia Brandt
- August 15 Joan Fehling
- August 15 Derek Johns
- August 16 Shaun Ferrell
- August 16 Shaylan Gibson
- August 16 Mike Oberheide
- August 16 Ellie Reyelts
- August 16 Jace Allen
- August 17 Tony Thompson
- August 17 Bailey Vaughn
- August 18 Kaley Debrick
- August 18 Cathy Warring
- August 20 Angela Carwile
- August 20 Enora Coppenbarger

- August 22 Gayle Plummer
- August 23 Ryan Boyer
- August 24 Kelly Gerken
- August 24 Anna Vogts
- August 25 Derik Vaughn
- August 26 Brooke Prothe
- August 27 Cale Elkinton
- August 27 Don Prothe
- August 27 Beth Prothe
- August 28 Courtney McHenry
- August 30 Barb Brandt
- August 30 Hailey Raines
- August 31 Jamie Ennett
- August 31 Quentin Garrison
- August 31 August Meyer
- August 5 Jeff & Karen Garrison (10)
- August 8 Dennis & Sara Prothe (18)
- August 9 Tyler & Danielle Allen (8)
- August 16 Doug & Judy Parks (36)
- August 17 ... Curtis & Lucy Kettler (31)
- August 18 .. Greg & Karen Windler (43)



Missionaries
of the Month

Each month we remember in prayer in our worship services—and you are encouraged to remember in your personal prayers—specific missionaries around the world who are supported by our congregation through our mission offerings to our Synod.

August 7
Rev. Micah Glenn
Ferguson, Missouri
(See Story Page 7)

August 14
Johanna Murray
Hong Kong

August 21
Vicar Paul Flo
Dominican Republic

August 28
Molly Christensen
Africa



Augustus Delos Prothe, son of Dustin and Candice Prothe, who was born on June 13, 2016 was born again in the Sacrament of Holy Baptism on July 31. *“Let the little children come unto Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these” (Matthew 19:14).*



The Epistles of Love
1st, 2nd & 3rd John

What is the meaning of love? How does God want you to show love toward Him and toward others?

You are invited to Adult Bible Class as we continue studying *The Epistles of Love—1st, 2nd & 3rd John*. They are often called the “Epistles of Love,” because these brief letters use the word “love” more frequently than any other books of the Bible.

Join in Sundays at 9:00am in the Overflow as we learn the true meaning of love from the Author of love.



In Christ Alone LCMS YOUTH GATHERING

Trinity Youth Attend LCMS National Youth Gathering

See Photos Page 8

From July 16-20, 16 youth and eight adult leaders and other chaperones from Trinity, led by Youth Director Janette Reinke and Pastor Vogts, had the experience of a lifetime as they joined over 25,000 other LCMS youth and adults from around the nation at the 2016 LCMS National Youth Gathering in New Orleans—so big that the daily mass rallies and closing Communion service were held in the Superdome!

This year's gathering also included youth from about a dozen countries around the world, who are members of Lutheran church bodies with which we are in fellowship. Out of all the congregations in our circuit, which is Johnson and Miami counties, our congregation had the largest contingent of youth attending. It was an inspiring and joyous experience!

Thank you to everyone who so generously supported our youth's many fundraising efforts so that we could reduce the cost for them to attend to a minimum. We were blessed mightily by the Lord, with safe travels, lots of fun, and spiritual growth.

On Sunday, September 11 we will have a special service led by our youth to share their exciting experiences.



On Sunday, September 11, our Trinity Youth will lead our worship service, sharing with us their experiences from the LCMS National Youth Gathering in New Orleans.

Following the service, everyone is invited to stay for a free all congregation pulled pork dinner. No need to bring anything, the youth and their families are providing the dinner.

This is the youth's way of saying "Thank You" for all the support given by the congregation and its members to their fundraising efforts to attend this event. It was really extraordinary that we raised so quickly the large amount needed for the big group of youth we had in attendance!



Nursing Home Services August 28

You are invited to help Trinity provide brief worship services for nursing home residents at North Point Care Center and Medical Lodge on Sunday, August 28. The simple services are approximately 20 minutes in length at each home. We begin at 1:30pm at North Point and then go to Medical Lodge for the second service.

The residents really enjoy these services, especially singing their favorite hymns. It's great to have church members there to greet the residents and sing along. We have a faithful few members who help but we could use your help too!

Our other nursing home services scheduled for 2015 are:

- ✘ October 2—Country Club Estates and Vintage Park
- ✘ November 6—North Point and Medical Lodge
- ✘ December 11—North Point and Medical Lodge



Raymond Lester Kettler

Entered Eternal Rest
July 21, 2016

Christian Burial
July 28, 2016

"I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed to us."
Romans 8:18



William Dillenbeck and Ashley Chrisman

United in Marriage
August 6, 2016

"A man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh, so they are no longer two, but one."
Matthew 19:5-6

AFTER CHURCH SNACKS

Could you—individual, family, or group—serve snacks sometime after worship during the remainder of 2016? All Sundays for September thru the end of the year.

Thank you to all those providing snacks and serving Coffee Hour!

August 7
Michele Haley

August 14
Jan Minden

August 21
Terry Vogts

August 28
Erin Meyer

MISSION NEWS

Synod Sends Missionary to Ferguson

Rev. Micah Glenn remembers the day Michael Brown was shot and killed in Ferguson, Missouri. It was August 9, 2014, a Saturday afternoon, the day after his 30th birthday, and Glenn, a seminarian, had just begun serving his yearlong vicarage in Huntsville, Alabama.

He also recalls watching on TV the weeks of violence the shooting triggered—the rioting, looting and destruction—and worrying about the safety of his parents, who lived in Ferguson then. And still do.

Glenn, too, had lived in that house from sixth grade on, attending public elementary and middle schools in

Ferguson and considering himself, at one point in his life, a lot like Michael Brown: a troubled teen with an uncertain future.

Now Glenn—who understands Ferguson’s people and their challenges as only a fellow resident can—is beginning his first call as a new pastor: executive director of the Lutheran Hope Center in Ferguson.



New seminary graduate Rev. Micah Glenn celebrates with other new LCMS missionaries at a “sending service” on June 17.

This new ministry is “very reflective of our hopes for multi-ethnic ministry—reaching into the heart of our cities, having a pivotal role in racial reconciliation in America, working with at-risk youth, and reaching out to our neighbors who are least like us as a church body,” notes the Rev. Steven Schave, director of Church Planting and Urban & Inner-City Mission with the LCMS Office of National Mission.

In his sermon for the June 17 “sending service,” LCMS Missouri District President Lee Hagan noted that Glenn and other multi-ethnic missionaries are sent “not to the ends of the earth, but to places nearby, places familiar, they are sent to work among people for whom Christ offered His life on the cross.”

New missionary Glenn, a lifelong Lutheran, strayed from his home congregation, Chapel of the Cross Lutheran, as a young adult, but returned

after accepting a job as a night attendant there, eventually becoming a youth and young adult ministry leader and, at the urging of fellow members, enrolling at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

In his ministry at the Lutheran Hope Center, which is under construction and expected to open at year’s end, Glenn will work in partnership with five local LCMS congregations to improve the lives of people—particularly at-risk youth—in Ferguson and surrounding North County communities through tutoring and mentoring programs, Bible studies, sports camps, parenting classes and a food pantry. He also will provide Word and Sacrament ministry at nearby Grace Lutheran Chapel in Bellefontaine Neighbors, Missouri.

Like a lot of the young men he wants to help, Glenn sports a number of tattoos—seven, to be exact, pretty much covering the upper half of his body—as an expression of who he is. Among them are colorful renderings in honor of his wife, Dorothy; his parents and four siblings; his friends; his Christian faith; and his birth state, Hawaii.

But, unlike those other young men, he’ll be wearing a clerical collar, an immediate sign that “this guy’s a pastor” and “this is who I am, this is why I’m here,” he said.

Glenn says he wants to get out into the neighborhoods, meeting people “where they are,” and convince teens that “school isn’t just something they have to do until they’re 18” but “can actually be a channel for them to have a career, a life.” And that God’s love—reflected by the LCMS—is there for them, ever-present and unconditional.

“We’re bringing hope into this broken community through the Gospel of Jesus Christ” and “only through that is there going to be any real change effected in the hearts and minds of people,” noted Glenn, who describes his call to serve in Ferguson as “providential.”

“I’m the lone black pastor in the LCMS who’s from Ferguson, Missouri, and I just so happen to be graduating and getting ordained at the time this ministry is going up,” he told Reporter. “If God’s not doing it, who is?”



In Christ Alone
LCMS YOUTH GATHERING
July 16-20, 2016
New Orleans

See story page 6

More pictures at
www.trinitylcms.org/photos

