

Dear Council of Lutheran Women,

I just wanted to send a quick update of what I am doing and a thank you for your support. First, thank you for your continued financial support. It is very generous and greatly appreciated as it helps me in my endeavors.

It's been almost three months since I started vicarage, which means that somehow, I am already a quarter of the way through. I thank God that He has given me this opportunity to learn and grow here in Philadelphia. While here I have been trying to get students to attend our services in the city at Logan (a chapel in the heart of the city). We have several devoted students who attend regularly which has been quite an encouragement to me. Additionally, with this I have been able to teach and preach quite a bit so far. I am still working my way through our study of Athanasius' *On the Incarnation*. We are now about halfway through the book, and I greatly enjoy both teaching it and fielding the questions that get asked. I've already selected what to study next. I want to look at the book of Revelation, since it's such an under studied book of the Bible. I think showing people that it too does contain both the witness of God, and the Gospel will help them grow their appreciation for it. I will be making use of Jerome's *Expositions* commentary as well. What's more is that I get to preach on several important days in the church calendar. I will be preaching for Reformation Day, All Saints Day, and Christmas Day! These are very exciting opportunities as well as challenging ones. It can be difficult, as I've learned, to both preach the text and be mindful of the day on which it was assigned for. Oddly enough, Christmas Day is the one I'm most nervous and excited about. This is because it's such a large day in the church year, it's well attended, and there's a lot of festivities around it. For Christmas Day I get to preach on John chapter 1. The prologue of John's Gospel has a lot in it and as a result is a rich text. I just want to make sure that I do justice to it. However, with the Lord's guidance and wisdom I know I will be able to preach Christ crucified for all of these special days.

I finally feel like I have my feet underneath me, with that comes a level of comfortability in assisting in service and completing my daily tasks. I feel much more comfortable in the pulpit than when I preached my first sermon during my first year of seminary. I am also continuing to learn by heart all the services that the church has. It's been really a blessing from the Lord to begin to grow comfortable and not as anxious being in front leading service or being in the pulpit. Again, I would like to thank you again for your prayers and support. Your support is both a great aid and a wonderful encouragement. Again, I want to thank you for all that you have done for me so far and continue to do for me. With your prayers and support and by God's grace I am able to grow and learn each day how to best be formed for the pastoral ministry.

Sincerely,

Alexander Ogden