



Pastor's Notes

Dear Friends,

Last week, I wrote to you about the restoration of all the prescribed scripture readings to our Sunday worship service. Today, I write about a related topic. Some of you may have noticed that for several months now, the readings on Sunday haven't always matched up word-for-word with the bibles in our pews.

Augsburg Fortress is the publishing house of the ELCA. In the fall of 2025, they discontinued use and sales of the NRSV bible, as well as the NRSV bible content that churches use in their weekly worship bulletins.

Since then, we have been using the new NRSVue edition of the Bible for our readings each week.



What is the NRSVue edition? Some of you may remember having an RSV edition that was used in church and study decades ago. Over time, scholars found that updates to the language used were necessary based on new archeological findings and better understanding of language and context. Many old-English sounding words, reminiscent of the King James version, were replaced with modern equivalents. More importantly, errors in translation that caused great pain and suffering for marginalized peoples were also corrected. In 1989 a new, improved edition of the Bible was released as the NRSV - the New Revised Standard Version - and replaced the RSV as the standard in ELCA churches.

Fast-forward to today, and the NRSVue reflects discoveries of ancient texts and new insights made since our Bible was last revised. It offers clearer, more inclusive language, and increased cultural sensitivity absent of the unintended biases of prior versions. It sets out to be the most literal translation of the Bible available to date.

How did this new Bible version come to be? The National Council of Churches, copyright holder of the NRSV Bible, commissioned the Society of Biblical Literature, a diverse and learned group of biblical scholars, to direct the revision. The process took four years, and with its completion the older NRSV is no longer in print.

You may have heard that “any version of the Bible is fine.” While it's certainly better to read any version than none at all, there are major differences that can shape how we relate to God and to our neighbors. Even among the branches of Lutheranism there are different bibles used. I recommend having an NRSV or NRSVue bible as your “go-to” for reading and study, and using other versions (RSV, NIV, ESV, KJV and others) as helps in reading for comparison and insight. For example, if you are doing Lectio Divina, or “dwelling in the word,” you might want to read once from the NRSVue, and once from another edition.

Today, the NRSVue is available nearly anywhere Bibles are sold. Augsburg Fortress sells a new version of the Lutheran Study Bible, as well as pew and gift bibles. If you would like to see an example of the NRSVue, please stop by my office and I'd be happy to share with you.

Wishing you the Lord's peace,

 *Pastor Brian Moeller*