



Info about the Corpus Christi conference 2022

**Time:**

25th to 29th of July

**Place:**

Gothenburg, Sweden

**Theme:**

Fear Not!

**Main Speaker:**

Rev. David Preus

**How much?**

€ 149

(incl. accommodation)

Stay up to date by checking our website:

[www.corpuschristi.eu](http://www.corpuschristi.eu)

**Please keep in your prayers:**

- the planning of the conference
- an end to the covid crisis
- peace in Europe, especially in Ukraine
- unity in faith and truth amongst Christians
- repentance and renewal in our countries



*On the left: This year's main speaker Rev. David Preus. Having been a pastor in Montana (USA) and a missionary and professor in the Dominican Republic, he currently lives in Romania with his family and serves the Lord there as church planter and professor.*

*On the right: This year's venue, the L M Engströms Gymnasium, a Lutheran High School in Gothenburg.*

Update on the preparations

On the 7th of May an online meeting of the Board and the international working group took place. At the meeting we talked about topics for the discussions groups at the conference. The working group consists of about a dozen people from Sweden, Germany and Finland. Their tasks include preparing free time activities and the feast, as well as organizing the venues, accommodations, and meals. There's a registration team and others plan the post-conference excursion on Friday afternoon.

**Bible Reading and Devotional:**

*So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three. (1 Corinthians 13:13)*

With the words of Psalm 100, the Holy Spirit leads us to pray: "It is the Lord who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture." We who are baptized are God's people, the flock of the good shepherd, we are children of God. And as such God has gifted us with these three: faith, hope, and love. Let's ponder these three wonderful and divine gifts.

First, there is faith. **Faith** comes from hearing the Word of Christ. It does not originate in our emotions. It is not based on an act of our will. It cannot create itself. Instead, it originates in the word of God and it is nourished by the word of God, the Bible. Wherever this word falls silent, faith cannot remain. Wherever Jesus' words resound, faith can come into existence and grow in strength.

What is faith? What does it mean to believe? Believing is trusting in the invisible God, trusting that He will lead us the right way, sometimes trusting despite what we see with our eyes. What we see and what we hear here and now in the world around us makes us insecure. It makes us doubt God's goodness and sometimes brings us to despair. This uncertainty and these doubts won't vanish entirely as long as we live here. But who can help? God helps us by his word. By His word He keeps us from focusing just on ourselves, on our doubts and weaknesses. He helps us to focus on Himself, on our Creator, our Redeemer, our Good Shepherd. He reorients us towards himself.

**Hope** is the second gift of God to his children. Green is the color of hope. Hope is a wonderful plant and it always stays green, as a Christian lyricist said. This is different from our leafy trees. Their leaves change their color in autumn to yellow, red and brown. They fall off and die. Every year anew it is a sign of hope when everything starts to bloom, blossom and turn green. "While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, shall not cease." God gave this promise after the flood. Every year anew in springtime, He shows us that He keeps it.

Similar to our little faith we sometimes lack in hope. Imagining our hope as a plant, it often looks like a very weak and insignificant plant. However, what would be the use if a plant was stuck in thinking about its own insignificance? In contrast, the trees of the forest and the flowers in the field are models and examples for us: They reach out. They reach out their roots into the earth and their heads towards the sun. The sure foundation for our hope is this: Jesus Christ is Lord. He is almighty. He is in charge of our lives. He takes to heart our thoughts and worries. That's the earth into which we are rooted: Jesus Christ is Lord. Don't say to yourself: "Why hasn't God done this or that? Why is he so slow?" No, that's not hope. Instead, say to yourself: Jesus Christ is Lord. He died. He rose. He sits at the right hand of the Father and governs all things: your life, the lives of your loved ones, everybody's life. He sits at the right hand of the Father and there He is the Sun to which we lift up our heads.

Let's consider the third divine gift: **love**. The Bible is rich in various pictures which show us God's truth. While we might consider hope an ever-green plant, love is like a fruit. Jesus says: I am the vine; you are the branches. (John 15:5) The vine brings forth the branches. God's love brings forth our love, so that we love God and our neighbor. We also tend to doubt God's love. Where is God's love, when war breaks out? Where is God's love when worries pile up more and more? Where is God's love when people whom we love are so far away from God? If we look around us, if we look at our time and world, God's love seems to be hidden, almost like it has disappeared.

Confronted by this, let's not forget: There are certain signs of God's love, signs which persist despite all worries. The cross of Jesus Christ. His death for the sins of all people. This cannot be shaken. Or let's remember God's gift of Baptism. There He said: "You belong to me. You are my child." Let's pray that the people in our countries repent and return to God. Let's pray for the people close to us who do not know God and His love. God indeed loves them! And He loves us with a love hidden and beyond understanding. This is the love that gives up its own life for ours.

Amen.

*So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three.*

#### **Quote from a Church Father:**

Martin Luther about the Creed:

Behold, here you have the entire divine essence, will, and work depicted most exquisitely in quite short and yet rich words, wherein consists all our wisdom, which surpasses and exceeds the wisdom, mind, and reason of all men. For although the whole world with all diligence has endeavored to ascertain what God is, what He has in mind and does, yet has she never been able to attain to the knowledge and understanding of any of these things. But here we have everything in richest measure; for here **in all three articles** He has Himself revealed and opened the deepest abyss of his paternal heart and of His pure unutterable love. For He has **created** us for this very object, that He might **redeem** and **sanctify** us; and in addition to giving and imparting to us everything in heaven and upon earth, He has given to us even His Son and the Holy Ghost, by whom to bring us to Himself. For we could never attain to the knowledge of the grace and favor of the Father except through the Lord Christ, who is a mirror of the paternal heart, outside of whom we see nothing but an angry and terrible Judge. But of Christ we could know nothing either, unless it had been revealed by the Holy Ghost. (Large Catechism)

**Bible Verse of Encouragement:** „But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.“ (Matthew 6:33)