

Friendship

Lutheran Church of

June 2020

From the Pastor's Desk

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May has faded into the annals of history and the pages of our calendars are turned with hopeful anticipation toward the month of June. The last few months have been difficult for all of us whether we have been directly touched by the COVID-19 pandemic virus or not. We have had our lives disrupted in many ways ranging from minor inconveniences to the way we live from day to day to severe disruptions to the things we often take for granted. Having to wear a mask, social distancing, trying to figure out how to work from home, turning your kitchen into a classroom are just some of the things we have had to struggle with. Some of us may have lost or be in fear of losing our jobs. Some of us have had to put off seeing and being with family; it is especially difficult when we can't be with and enjoy our grandchildren. Many have had to deal with being in the hospital, having loved ones in the hospital that we can't visit or encourage in person. Many have had to forgo visits with loved ones in assisted care facilities. Some of us have had loved ones die (often alone), and we can't even have a "normal" funeral. Added to all of these things, we have not been allowed to gather as God's people for worship and fellowship where we share each other's burdens and find comfort that the Lord provides through His Church.

The month of May came to an end with another event that has sparked another type of fear. By now, I am certain that you have heard of the most recent case of police brutality that ended with the death of George Floyd, a black man, who had already been subdued and handcuffed by white police officers. The response to this tragedy has brought out both the best and the worst of people from all over the country. We are all too aware of the strife, which from time to time, rears its ugly head to wreak havoc on our otherwise peaceful co-existence, but are we aware enough to notice that the current problem begins with that phrase of "co-existence." What does that even mean? It seems we are talking in terms that further perpetuate the idea that there is an **us** and there is a **them**, when the truth is that there is only **us** – and **we** are **them**. People are people! We are all people! We may, and do, have cultural differences between people groups whether they be of Asian, Latino, Arabian, European or African descent. Cultural differences, however, are exactly that – cultural.

With the little remaining space I have, I would like to present that there are three distinct groups that we have seen and three distinct motives afoot. First, we have those who are seeking justice by exercising the right which is given to all Americans in the first article of the United

States Constitution to freedom of speech and freedom to assemble (protest). We should all be in favor of and supportive of all people in exercising this protection. We should even join our voices with those who have legitimate grievance and seek social change to right an injustice. The second group consists of those who will take any opportunity to get what they can get (looters). They have always existed and always will. We do not support them in any way, shape, or form. The third group is highly organized and seeks to create havoc whenever and wherever they can. This group consists not of people seeking to right a wrong, but of those who are anarchists. This group seeks to disrupt any semblance of law and order. These would be the people engaged in the destruction of property, attacks on police or any type of authority (rioting). These people often infiltrate/attach themselves to a movement or cause that is legitimate in nature and recruits those on the periphery to join them in their quest. This group also has little to no concern for the original justice being sought; rather, the goal of this group is to seek how best they can create the most amount of damage. Unfortunately, this type of group has always existed and we roundly condemn their actions.

All of these happenings present each of us the opportunity to search our own hearts and ask if we, albeit not intentionally, may be harboring some feelings of self-proclaimed self-righteousness as we watch the events unfold around us. Do we remember that **we**, too, have fallen short of the glory of God? (*Romans 3:23*) Do we remember that **we** are all created in God's own image as we read in **Genesis 1:26-27**, but do **we** reflect often enough on what that means? Do **we** love as God loves? Do **we** seek to fulfill the words of Ephesians 2:10? Do **we** focus enough on *Matthew 25* (least of these)? And lastly, **we** should/need to daily examine Jesus' words, "**You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.**" ⁴⁰ *On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.*" (*Matthew 22:36-40*).

Blessings!
Pastor

Mission News

In May, we received a Newsletter from “Reaching The Unreached” founders Rodney and Melinda Henricks. Rodney writes, “I pray you are spending extra time reading God’s Word each day and spending extra time in prayer. None of us has ever lived through a crisis like this present one. It affects 185 countries. I am sure God is seeking our attention.”

Philippians 4:7 says, “And the peace of God which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.” I pray you will have Christ’s peace as He lives in your heart.

Melinda writes of how grateful she is that God provided a radio station for Evarist, a missionary in the country of Togo, Africa. All those who have a radio can hear Bible teaching and Christian music bringing encouragement and hope. Evarist has the Bible on CD in nine different languages so many tribes in the north can hear the Bible in their own language. What a blessing.

Travel is restricted in the Ivory Coast and for our missionary Pascale. Pray God’s Word will continue to encourage believers and nonbelievers there also. May God bless us all with a sense of His presence.



Elders' Corner

I want to introduce you to the man who has rescued me from death, filled me with hope, directed me in the decisions that have shaped my destiny, employed me in His global work, and is currently preparing a new home for me in a place where I'll never grow old.

He is my Mentor and Master, and it's a joy to introduce you to My Jesus. None of us know Him as fully as we should, for Jesus is the Almighty God whose throne is in heaven; the Nazarene carpenter who wiped sweat from His brow; the Stranger of Galilee who napped in a boat; the Teacher whose wisdom change the ethics of the world; the Prisoner whose execution was excruciating; the Corpse who borrowed a tomb; the Body who returned to life; the Savior who bled for the world; and the glorious King whose return is right on schedule.

The Bible overflows with names, titles, and designations to describe Jesus. He is:

The Alpha and Omega, and the Anointed One
The Beloved Son, and the Bright and Morning Star
The Carpenter of Nazareth, and the Christ of Glory
The Deliverer and the Daystar From on High
The Everlasting Lord
The First and the Last, and the Faithful and True
The Great I AM, and the Good Shepherd
The High Priest, and the Holy One of the Israel, Immanuel --- God With Us
The Judge of All the Earth, The king of the Jews, and the King of Kings
The Lily of the Valley, the Lamb of God, the Lion of Judah, and the Lord of Lords
The Man of Sorrows, and the Morning Star
The Nazarene, the Overcomer, the Prince of Peace
The Redeemer, the Rabbi, and the Rock
The Son of God, the Son of Man, and the Savior of the World
The Teacher Who Came from God
The Virgin's Son, the Word of God
The Way, the Truth, and the Life
Yeshua, Joshua, Jesus

Because Jesus lived in history (there's no doubt about that) and because His life was recorded (the entire Bible is about Him) we can learn about Him. But because He rose from the grave and is now alive, we can have a personal relationship with Him and come to know Him more deeply and intimately.

(this is taken from the book, "The Jesus You May Not Know" by David Jeremiah)

Put Jesus in the driver's seat of your life. Jesus will turn down the road of generosity and down the road of forgiveness. He will produce in you "the fruits of the Spirit -- Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Gentleness, Goodness, Faithfulness, and Self Control."

– Galatians 5:22

Habitat & Thrivent Faith Build Project Update



As you know, the project had to be postponed due to the Covid-19 outbreak. The original plan was to begin in April, but that became impossible due to the need to social distance in order to curb the spread of the virus. Habitat's first priority has been and will continue to be keeping everyone safe.

After much discussion among staff from both Habitat and Thrivent they have decided that the Faith Build will still happen this year. With the gradual loosening of social distancing restrictions now underway, the Faith Build will now commence in July and continue through the rest of the summer and into the early fall. The build will kick off with a "Mini Blitz Build" which is a 4-day build that will take place from [July 8th-11th](#). They will need volunteers to come out to help with the Mini Blitz and then on Saturdays until the build has been completed. They will be limiting the daily volunteer number to no more than 10 at a time, and all food that is brought to the build site will have to be in the form of individually packed lunches. They are dedicated to following all the necessary safety guidelines.

Friendship has promised to volunteer for one 4 hour shift of building, provide one meal or snack, and donate \$500. I will contact Habitat to get our date to volunteer and then I will send out an email to all those signed up. We had plenty of volunteers signed up, so if you are not comfortable in this public setting, then feel free to not participate. As always, please keep the project in your prayers. More information coming soon! If you have any questions, please let me know.

Lisa Hellmer
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LCMS Stewardship Ministry

The sin of the world is paid for. God's Law has been kept perfectly on our behalf. The prophecies have all been fulfilled. Jesus Christ has finished it all! And that, dear Christians, should fill us with complete confidence in our salvation. Since Jesus has finished all these things in His self-sacrifice, we can be fully certain our sins are forgiven, and we have everlasting life!

St. Paul wrote: "I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship." (Rom. 12:1)

We hear the same teaching in 1 Peter. "As you come to him, a living stone, rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves, like living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 2:4-5)

It's the very thing Malachi foretold of the Lord, that He would come and purify His priestly people, that they may offer to Him an offering in righteousness. (Mal. 3:3)

So, what does this mean? In view of God's mercies – that is, because Jesus sacrificed Himself to make us pure, giving His entire self into death – Paul said that we are to sacrifice ourselves entirely to God, offering Him our whole lives. For our Savior did not give Himself for us in part. So, we do not give back to Him in part.

We don't offer ourselves to God just on Sunday mornings or Wednesday evenings, for example. Rather, we give Him our whole selves, all the time. We understand that offering ourselves to God as living sacrifices involves the giving of our time. It requires us to be faithful stewards of the time He has given us. Yes, it means we devote to our Savior all our time. Otherwise we are not sacrificing our whole lives.

You see, God both teaches us, and has graciously qualified us, to present ourselves to Him as living sacrifices – to live as His holy priests, who offer Him acceptable sacrifices through Jesus Christ, all day, every day, in our various callings.

In the passages from Romans and 1 Peter, we hear several examples of Christian self-sacrifice: serving, teaching, encouraging, giving, leading, showing mercy, living peaceably with others, submitting to governing authorities and those over us in the workplace, wives submitting to husbands, husbands honoring wives, showing compassion, and suffering patiently in doing good.

In all these things, and in all our other everyday activities, we sacrifice ourselves by using our time, not just for our own benefit, but also and especially for the well-being of others. Work time, school time, exercise time, study time, mealtime, chore time, recreation and relaxation time, even sleep time – it's all God's gift to us to use for purposes that please and honor Him.

This challenges us to think about the way we spend our time, how we utilize our talents, and the way we spend our treasures. Whatever it is I'm doing, am I doing it "for the Lord"? (Col. 3:23) Am I presenting God a living sacrifice? Am I conducting myself as a holy priest, whose sacrifice is acceptable to God?

Because our Lord sacrificed Himself wholly for us, we offer ourselves wholly to Him as living sacrifices. This is following Jesus in self-sacrifice. By His saving mercy, yes, our sacrifice is acceptable to God. For the sake of Jesus' finished work, God is pleased with us.

One Month Bible Reading Plan

Most people professing faith in Jesus have never completely read their Bible. Many people start reading the Bible but then become overwhelmed by the number of chapters (1,189) and verses (31,102) there are. What we don't realize is that we can read the Bible in a year by reading fewer than four chapters a day. Every month we will post the "reading schedule" in the Newsletter. This structured approach of reading Scripture brings a fresh approach to each day's reading, while providing a clearer understanding of the Bible's larger message.

Tips on Reading the Bible Daily

1. Start reading the Bible today — there is no better time than now!
2. Set aside a specific time each day. Set your schedule and then stick to it. Feel free to use any time that works consistently for you. If you miss a day, just make it up (don't give up); habits both good and bad are formed easily.
3. Read the Bible for the sake of learning, not simply to accomplish your next reading. Say a short prayer to God before you begin, asking the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom and understanding, then be refreshed by the words you read!



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Job 36:1-39:12	2 Job 39:13-42:9	3 Job 42:10-17; Psalms 1:1-5:7	4 Psalms 5:8-8:9	5 Psalms 9-10	6 Psalms 11:1-17:5
7 Psalms 17:6-18:36	8 Psalms 18:37-21:13	9 Psalms 22:1-24:6	10 Psalms 24:7-27:6	11 Psalms 27:7-31:5	12 Psalms 31:6-33:5	13 Psalms 33:6-35:21
14 Psalms 35:22-37:26	15 Psalms 37:27-39:13	16 Psalms 40-42	17 Psalms 43:1-45:12	18 Psalms 45:13-48:14	19 Psalms 49:1-51:9	20 Psalms 51:10-54:7
21 Psalms 55:1-57:3	22 Psalms 57:4-60:12	23 Psalms 61-64	24 Psalms 65:1-68:4	25 Psalms 68:5-69:4	26 Psalms 69:5-71:16	27 Psalms 71:17-73:20
28 Psalms 73:21-76:7	29 Psalms 76:8-78:24	30 Psalms 78:25-72				

In Our Prayers

The Power of Prayer



- ♥ Prayers of peace and comfort for Jacquie Voeks' friends, Greg & Debbie
- ♥ Marian Rodgers' cousin, Larry
- ♥ Jacquie Voeks' friend, Jim
- ♥ Prayers of safety & protection for Allison Arends' friends in the Minneapolis area
- ♥ Church
- ♥ LCMS Synod, Districts, Members and Pastors
- ♥ Church members
- ♥ Those who have yet to believe
- ♥ All who travel
- ♥ Country, state, and local governments
- ♥ All who serve (first responders, military, police, fire, EMTs)

Celebrations



June Birthdays

- 3 Al Hagen
- 5 Garrett Oostdyk
- 6 Taylor Waller
- 10 Mae Ryherd
- 11 Isaac Armstrong
- 12 Eric Rodzen
- 13 Ron Courtright
- 14 Dave Madigan
- 17 Scott Currid
- 21 Fay Drews
- 27 Elmer Zuehls

June Anniversaries

- 5 Mel & Ami Reitmeier
- 6 Ron & Jean Sexton
- 16 Terry & Becky Howard
- 17 Dave & Nikelle Miller
- 19 Ed & Blanche Stoller
- 20 Ron & Allison Arends
- 24 David & Deborah Roesch
- 26 Bruce & Tracie Paulsrud
- 28 Roger & Peggy Francisco
- 29 Duane & Mae Ryherd



June Baptism Birthdays

Isaac Armstrong, Sarah Ashwill, June Bauman, Grant Carlson, Amy Carlson, Clara Chandler, Jacob Clark, Jenna Clark, Joshua Clark, Erin Dillon, Nicholas Hellmer, Nancy Morris, Aaron Penick, Nathan Reitmeier, Duane Ryherd, Mae Ryherd, Taylor Waller, Kristin Weatherford, Gayle Zuehls



May 18, 2020

"The three Illinois District Presidents of the LCMS have sent another letter to the Governor of Illinois expressing our joint concern with the "Restore Illinois" Plan which delays the opening of our churches to any significant degree until "the disease is eradicated or a vaccine is developed," and which hinders the reopening of our schools. Added to that effort, President Matthew Harrison has sent a letter to the US Department of Justice asking Attorney General William Barr to look into the inequities of our Illinois Governor's Proclamation and the impact it is having on our churches. A contact in the DOJ has said that President Harrison's letter is deeply appreciated and may spur additional DOJ action against the Governor's orders in regards to the constitutional protection of religious freedom."

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Visit us on the internet!
www.friendshiplutheran.com

OUR MISSION:

To *Joyfully* connect people to Christ and His family.