



St John's
Lutheran Church
& School

April 2020 Eagle Newsletter



Mark 16:6 ESV

"Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him."

Church when Life Turns Inside Out

The last few weeks have been interesting to be sure. Life has turned inside out in nearly every conceivable way. To compound the issues, the guidelines and best practices have changed almost hourly. Rather than write a long letter, I simply want to note a few things for you for the upcoming weeks. The leadership of our congregation will continue to meet to assess our situation and make informed decisions.

Church

Public worship and all other public gatherings will remain suspended until at least April 30th. We will follow recommendations from local, state, and federal officials as to when we can safely gather together again.

Worship

I am providing a recorded Service of the Word on Sunday mornings, which will be posted to our Youtube channel. In addition, I will be providing devotions throughout the week live on Youtube.

To access, follow our Youtube channel: www.youtube.com/StJohnsChicagoLCMS

Holy Week/Easter

During Holy Week I will be offering a special service every night at 7PM. Our circuit will be hosting a Good Friday Tre Ore service from 12PM-3PM on Good Friday.

I am hoping to produce a few special projects for Palm Sunday and Easter. Please see later in this Eagle newsletter for more information.

A schedule will be disseminated through our information channels when it is set.

Information

We are doing our best to get timely information out to the most people in the congregation as we are able. There are several ways that you can find the latest information:

Website: www.stjohnschicago.church. Major announcements will be posted on our front page. The Blog page will contain lengthier announcements.

Facebook: This is our main social media page:

www.facebook.com/StJohnsLutheranChicago.

Email: Occasional email blasts to our Eagle email list will inform you of major adjustments (for example, when we resume regular worship).

Phone tree: We have begun an informal phone tree to check in on our members. Hopefully you have received a call. If not, take out your church directory and make a few calls yourself.

(continued on next page)



(continued from previous page)

Individual Ministry

Pastor Ehrhard is available for individual/family ministry. If you desire to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion, please contact Pastor Ehrhard by email: pastor@stjohnschicago.org or leave a voice message at 773-736-3056 to arrange for a time to meet either at church or at your own home. Any hospital visits will need to be conducted via phone until restrictions are eased. This includes any severe illness or when death is imminent.

Giving

We still depend on the generosity of our members to continue to operate in our new inside out world, and to be ready for when we return to normal. We also need gifts for emergency repairs to the bell tower. The work is scheduled to begin in April.

Gifts can be mailed to 4939 W Montrose Ave | Chicago, IL 60641.

Gifts may also be given online at www.stjohnschicago.org/give

Word

Finally, let us hear a Word from Psalm 130

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord!
O Lord, hear my voice!
Let your ears be attentive
to the voice of my pleas for mercy!

If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities,
O Lord, who could stand?
But with you there is forgiveness,
that you may be feared.

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,
and in his word I hope;
my soul waits for the Lord
more than watchmen for the morning,
more than watchmen for the morning.

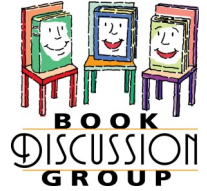
O Israel, hope in the Lord!
For with the Lord there is steadfast love,
and with him is plentiful redemption.
And he will redeem Israel
from all his iniquities.

In Christ, Under the cross,
Pastor Ehrhard



*From the
Pastor's
Desk*

Ladies Book Club: Because of current restrictions, the Ladies Book Club will not meet on March 31st. We hope, God willing, to meet on Tuesday, April 28th in the St. John's Conference Room at 7PM. We will be discussing The President is Missing by James Patterson and Bill Clinton as well as Educated by Tara Westover. Our next book is Where the Crawdads Sing by Delia Owens. It is a murder mystery about an abandoned child growing up in the marshlands of the North Carolina coast. Try and stay healthy everyone. Help and pray for each other and hopefully we will be able to leave our homes next month to once again talk and socialize.



From the Principal: By now you know that St. John's Lutheran School is temporarily closed due to the Coronavirus. While the school building is closed, learning continues. St. John's teachers are providing daily distance learning opportunities for the students. These learning experiences include face to face meetings via Zoom. There are daily devotions and this past week there was even a Wednesday chapel service. Lastly, every evening there is a story time with teachers taking turns reading a children's book to the students. I am so proud of our teachers that with little preparation time, they were able to completely shift the way they deliver instruction. There have been glitches but all are working together to provide the best learning opportunities that we can offer.

It is difficult to determine when St. John's will offer classes at the school. Currently, I am following Chicago Public Schools protocols. I have asked the cleaning company to thoroughly disinfect the school and pastor and I have asked the all non-essential activities be suspended and non-essential people stay out of the building until April 13th. Non-essential activities taking place and non-essential people entering the building defeat the purpose of disinfecting the facility.

St. John's continues to conduct business, albeit in a new way. Due to the efforts of faculty/staff, church and school leadership adjustments have been made. I encourage you to view Pastor's Sunday services and as many of the week-day opportunities that are being made available. Please visit the website for a schedule of those worship opportunities. I also encourage you to continue with your financial support of the mission of the church and school. I recently signed up to make my contributions electronically. I encourage you to do so as well. You can also mail your contributions to the office.

Stay safe and healthy and may God continue to bless you and St. John's Church and School!

Principal Green



St. John's Picnic Help Needed: Want to see a great picnic again this year? The picnic team, chaired by Lori Pahlke, needs lots of assistance. Please contact Lori (847-366-4158 | loripahlke@aol.com) and volunteer. The picnic will be Saturday, June 7th at Linne Woods.



Mites Gathered in 2019: The women of the LWML (Lutheran Women's Missionary League) have contributed millions of dollars over the years that fund district and national mission grants, largely through the use of mite boxes. Based on the biblical account of the widow's mite (Luke 21:1-4), the mite box is intended for regular offerings above and beyond the support given by women to their congregations and the LCMS (Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod).

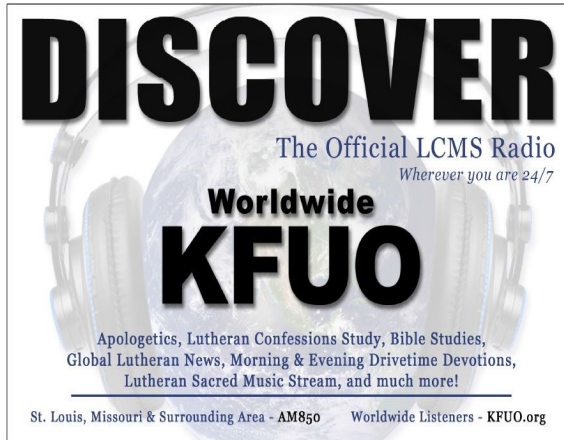
St. John's congregation has been generous in their support of mission work through their mite box donations. Two-hundred and thirty-four dollars were collected during 2019 and sent in to LWML of the Northern Illinois District. At the September 2018 convention of the LWML NID, 10 grant areas were chosen to sponsor. Your mite boxes help these grants as well as the national LWML grants chosen.

Mite boxes may be obtained at the LWML table in the Narthex. When you have filled the box with the loose change around your house and car, you may return it to the larger box at this same table. You are helping mission work. God bless.

St. John's ladies are invited to the five LWML meetings during a year. They meet in the Fellowship Room on the last Monday of August, October, January, and March. The December gathering is the Angel Tree Wrapping Party. Please feel a warm welcome to join us. Also, watch the EAGLET for news of LWML.

Food Pantry on TV: On March 24th at 10PM, Channel 5 news showed a clip of the St. John's Food Pantry in action in our school playground. Tables were set up in the schoolyard and were loaded with produce. At 5PM the gates were opened and only five people at a time were allowed entrance to select the food they needed. The Chicago Police were on hand to keep order and to remind people to keep six feet apart while waiting in line. Rick Paulsen, director of the food pantry, was pleased with the orderly way people behaved.

Pastor Ehrhard did the opening prayer.



Lutheran Radio Station Worldwide KFUO

Find and Listen at kfuo.org and follow us at Facebook.com/KFUOradio.

Issues, Etc.—Weekdays @ 3PM CST or ON DEMAND via Website! Christ-centered, Cross-focused talk radio.

Law and Gospel—Weekdays @ 9:30AM CST or ON DEMAND via Website! This is a program that uses the theological distinctions between Law and Gospel not only to apply the Bible but also to understand our relationship to the holy Trinity, our gracious salvation because of Jesus Christ and how to interpret reality the way God thinks.

Faith'n'Family—Weekdays @ 10AM CST or ON DEMAND via Website!

Faith'n'Family is a program that lets family's keep their Lutheran faith first as we praise God for the gift He has given us in our children, parents, grandparents, and even the in-laws! Every day, Faith'n'Family will have an expert on the show to discuss life issues such as money management, dealing with divorce, adoption, how to raise children to lead a God-centered life in a very non-Christian world, and more. And the best part of all, you can be part of the show by calling in with your questions and comments for our expert! While Faith 'N Family at KFUO is well aware of the fast-paced world of today, we want to keep the focus of raising our family and yours on what's really important—making Christ known for generations to come!

Cross Defense—Mondays @ 2pm CST or ON DEMAND via Website!

When a skeptic questions us about our faith, or when we ourselves have questions about what we believe, how do we answer them? Learn how to address modern-day issues and tough arguments levied against faith, *and* how to engage these conversations with intelligence and grace. Join us and discover how to share your faith clearly and lovingly.

Free to be Faithful — 3rd Wednesday of the Month @ 2:30PM CST or ON DEMAND via Website!

Free to be Faithful is very specific in addressing public policy matters that impact our LCMS community. It is often topical and linked to contemporary issues, such as political elections or the March for Life. the analytical program regularly has experts and observers interpreting the issues at hand and suggesting courses of action. Listen to high-caliber guests discussing in-depth knowledge of issues with host Kip Allen.





APRIL

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD

Pray For Us Calendar

TEACHING THE FAITH — APRIL 1-15

This month, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod celebrates the many ways that God's children are instructed, encouraged and strengthened in the faith. By teaching the faith, we nurture the faithful and reach the lost.

Remember how God works to strengthen the faith of His people as you pray:

- 1.** with thanksgiving for the gift of faith received at Baptism. Ask the Lord to continue to strengthen that faith — and the budding faith of our children — until we depart this life and are united with the Lord.
- 2.** with thanksgiving to God for the gift of His holy and inspired Word, the Sacred Scriptures; and for the Book of Concord and the many teaching aids that help us understand that Word aright and rejoice in its consolation.

3. for Christian families, that the Lord would provide the assistance and tools necessary to overcome every challenge — big or small — that might drive them apart.

4. for strong Christian marriages, that husbands and wives would cling to each other in the Lord, despite life's challenges, and raise their children to walk in the way of the Lord.

5. for Christian parents, that they would make teaching the faith to their children a priority. Pray that they set aside time to worship together, talk about faith issues, study the Bible and have family devotions.

6. that family members would treat each other with kindness and patience, so that each member might be built up in the family of God.

7. for our children and young people, who face daily assaults on their Christian beliefs, that God would strengthen and encourage them to stand firm while sharing the Gospel.

8. for our churches, that they would provide useful education and programs to help equip people at every stage of life — teens, husbands and wives, parents, caretakers of aging parents and more.

9. that God would continue to provide faithful church workers to serve as role models and teach people about their identity as a baptized child of God.

10. that church members would eagerly volunteer their time and talents to support the congregation's educational programs, such as vacation Bible school, Sunday school and groups for young families.

11. that LCMS members would eagerly participate in Bible studies, small-group discussions and private study.

12. with thanksgiving for faithful parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, teachers and other role models who help to "train up a child in the way he should go" (Prov. 22:6).

13. for the Concordia University System and the Synod's two seminaries, that the Lord would bless their work in training new generations of workers to serve the Church.

14. for the Synod's directors of Family Life Ministry, that God would bless their efforts to support healthy relationships in the families of our congregations.

15. that we might have hearts that are willing and eager to serve the Lord in every way.

PHOTO: LCMS COMMUNICATIONS/ERIK M. LUNSFORD

APRIL Pray For Us Calendar

MINISTRY TO THE ARMED FORCES — APRIL 16-30

Since the Civil War, LCMS pastors have served as military chaplains. Today, the Synod's Ministry to the Armed Forces (MAF) supports active duty, reserves, National Guard and Civil Air Patrol chaplains. MAF recruits, interviews and endorses all military chaplains and supports them throughout their careers. MAF also provides a network of care for our nation's military members, families and veterans through Operation Barnabas.

Remember God's work through LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces (MAF) as you pray:

16. that God would bless and guide the work of the MAF director and assistant director.

17. for the President of the United States. Ask God to guide our commander in chief to lead with wisdom for the protection of the innocent against evil.

18. for LCMS military chaplains serving on active duty for the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard.

19. for our LCMS Reserve and National Guard chaplains, especially those who have been mobilized stateside or overseas and taken from their parishes to extended active duty assignments, for those deployed, their families and their home parishes.

20. for Operation Barnabas, which is designed to meet the needs of congregations in the event their pastor/chaplain is mobilized. Operation Barnabas also seeks to assist veterans and military families during and after deployment.

21. for all congregations that reach out to members of our military through Operation Barnabas, that they would uphold them in prayer as they help to meet their physical, psychological and spiritual needs through the training they have received and the Lord's provision.

22. for increasing opportunities for LCMS chaplains to spread Christ's message of salvation, hope and restoration to those they serve.

23. for all chaplains returning home, that they would receive a hero's welcome for their

sacrifice to this country so that in freedom we can continue to openly worship the one true God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

24. for those who suffer from battle stress and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Pray that God would bring healing and renewal to those who have served or who are currently serving.

25. for all chaplains who are sick or have sick family members, that the Father of all mercies and the God of all comfort would look with favor upon them, and as it pleases Him, restore them to health or give them the grace to accept this tribulation with courage and hope.

26. for all chaplains in harm's way, that God would not let their hearts despair nor their faith fail them, but sustain, guide and comfort them.

27. for all members of the military who were disabled during their duty, that our heavenly Father would mercifully guide, aid and strengthen all

those with physical disabilities, enabling them to find fulfillment in their lives and encouragement for all their endeavors.

28. with thanksgiving to God for providing LCMS chaplains to serve members of the armed forces. Please pray that military chaplains would have every opportunity to share the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ with members of the military and anyone with whom they work and live.

29. for all military chaplains upon their return, that they would be reunited with their families, find gainful employment and receive all the care they need to heal their minds, bodies and souls. Grant that they would always look to Christ as their rock and their redeemer.

30. for those who minister to the armed forces, that by God's gracious working, they may honor Christ and advance the good of those committed to their care, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Congregations and individuals are invited to copy these pages for newsletters or other distribution. Download at lcms.org/prayforus or call 888-843-5267 to request a copy.



April 1st

Sharon Ortega
Grace Wenzel

April 2nd

Robert Clark
Grace Moore
Alyssa Randel
Jarvis Smallfield

April 12th

Airielle Havnoonian
Kyle Straszynski
Patti Wolke

April 15th

Gregory Dehmer
Erin Lackage
Jayme Wier

April 16th

Laura Puenner
Jennifer Weith

April 17th

Brigit Stacey
Joanna Stramel

April 20th

Julie Gall

April 21st

Dan Friend
Pearl Osmon

April 23rd

Julie Smallfield

April 24th

Melissa Kehr

April 25th

Kimberly Scott

April 26th

Linda Galek
Jake Spaid

April 27th

Krystina Davis
Mark Eggert

April 29th

Lenore Bowman





April 2020 Stewardship Newsletter from the LCMS

On the topic of stewardship, one of the most common questions a person might ask is not whether a Christian should give to their church. Everyone knows this. Of course, Christians should give to their church.

The most common question: "How much should I give?" But what they really mean is this: "Should Christians give a tithe of their income to their local congregation?" So, let's look at why you should or should not tithe.

Following are some reasons often offered for why Christians shouldn't give a tithe to their church. Some say you shouldn't tithe because it isn't expressly commanded in the New Testament. Lacking that command, there is no "Thus saith the Lord" and no "should" for giving a tithe to your congregation.

Others say that Christians give to their congregation in ways much broader than money. They give of their time and their talents, and these, together with treasures (money), add up to more than a tithe. Still others say they give of their treasures to other things besides their congregation, and they want to support those things alongside their church.

And there are those who think Christians shouldn't tithe because of fear. If they tithe, they are afraid their gift will be misused, and they are afraid they won't have enough to get the things they use, want, or need.

Following are some reasons for why Christians should give a tithe to their church.

Even though the New Testament doesn't specifically command Christians to give a tithe, the Old Testament people were commanded to tithe and did. On top of this, St. Paul often describes the giving Christians are to do in similar terms as a tithe: a regular and generous proportion of the first fruits of their income (1 Cor. 6:1–2; 2 Cor. 8:7–23; 2 Cor. 9:2–7).

But here's another way to think about it. What was the point of the tithe in the Old Testament? Where did it go? The reason for the Old Testament tithe was to support the full ministry of the Levites. They were not given any land because they had no time to farm; their full-time job was the ministry.

What does it say in the New Testament? "The Lord has commanded that those who preach the Gospel should make their living from the Gospel" (1 Cor. 9:14). This is the verse that Luther put in the Small Catechism's Table of Duties to cover what Christians owe to the support of the ministry. It seems clear from both the Old and the New Testaments that the tithe is the goal of Christians in their giving. But what if we're not there yet? How should we handle this? What are we to do?

Let's answer this by asking a different question about something entirely different. What would you say to your adult children who only attended church quarterly or once a month? There, is after all, no passage in the New Testament that requires Christians to go to church weekly. Hebrews 10:25 is the closest we have, and it states simply for Christians to not neglect gathering together. Even though there is no passage that commands Christians to gather weekly, that is the implicit expectation throughout the Old and New Testaments. It is the goal.

So, what would you say to that son or daughter? I'd expect that conversation would be something like this: "I'm glad you're still going to church. It is a wonderful blessing to hear God's promises of forgiveness, life, and salvation, and to receive His gifts in the Word and the Sacraments. But you can do better, and it will only be a blessing to you. There is a better way, and I'd really like you to try to attain it."

This same conversation is how we should approach the topic of the tithe. It's not specifically commanded in the New Testament, but it sure seems like the implicit expectation of both the Old and New Testaments. So, the church is ecstatic that you're giving when you're giving in all these ways – time, talents, and treasures.