



St. John's
Lutheran Church
& School

July 2020 Eagle Newsletter



Independence Day

Romans 13:1 ESV

"Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God."



From the Pastor's Desk

Summer Intensive Studies

This past spring semester, I took two graduate courses at Concordia Seminary toward the completion of my PhD program. Like school at every level, we had to make adjustments due to the Covid-19 threat. But since a portion of these classes were already distance learning through an online tool, the adjustments were not as severe as other cases. The biggest change for me was that I attended classes from my office at church instead of a classroom at the seminary.

One class was on a topic outside of my wheelhouse - "The Bible in the Middle Ages." The major takeaway from this class is that what we take for granted, namely access to our own Bible, is only a recent privilege for Christians. In the early middle ages, lay Christians may have never even seen the biblical text and many scholars and monks only had access to parts of the Bible. This was not because of some conspiracy by church authorities to keep God's Word out of the hands of Christians, but the reality that Bibles took a very long time to produce before the printing press and an entire Bible (called a pandect) would be a very large book.

This does not mean that Christians had no access to the Bible, however. Christians knew the Bible (and many times they knew it better than we do today) through the liturgy. "The Bible" for Christians who lived before the 15th century was not so much a book, but a living conversation that took place in worship. Particularly interesting is how medieval Christians enacted the words of Scripture in their worship and performed what the Bible means.

The second course I took, which requires me to still write a final paper, is Post-Constantinian Theology. This course studies a particularly American strain of theological work that conceives of theology as politics. This does not mean that the church lobbies politicians to enact legislation friendly to the Christian way of life, but something quite the opposite. These theologians recognize that in Western culture since the time of Emperor Constantine the church and the world have been wedded together such that the church has lost its peculiarity. The result is that the church assimilates itself to the world and "sponsors" its agenda rather than offering a distinctive counter-culture.

One of the most prevalent features of post-Constantinian theology is its adherence to nonviolence. Some of these theologians are outright pacifists, while others allow for interpretations of the just war theory, which goes back to St. Augustine. While I don't end up in full agreement with any of those we read in class, they do present a compelling argument and a means to critically evaluate my own theological position.

The post-Constantinian theologians are not from any one particular tradition. Some leading voices are: John Howard Yoder, a Mennonite and now deceased; Stanley Hauerwas and William Willimon, Methodists; Rodney Clapp from the Episcopal Church; and James McClendon of the anabaptist tradition.

Most helpful for Lutherans in my opinion is the conception of the church as a polis, or a city of God. Post-Constantinian theology is political theology, because it constantly, if not always consistently, deals with how God's people act as a unique people in the world, an outpost of God's kingdom on earth.

- Pastor Ehrhard



From the Principal: The National Lutheran Schools theme for the 2020-2021 school year is "Sent to Serve." It is based on Matthew 20:28, "The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Throughout the coming school year St. John's Lutheran School will be seeking ways to serve others both internally and externally in our neighborhoods and school family congregations.

Plans are being made to gather in person for instruction beginning August 24th. At this writing, specific protocols for a safe return to school are still being developed. These plans will be constructed in conjunction with the Illinois and Chicago Departments of Health, local and state government and best practices being developed by the Chicagoland Lutheran Education Foundation and the Northern Illinois District of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. One way that you can serve is to cooperate by following these protocols once they are published when you visit the school building.

The Chicagoland Lutheran Education Foundation (CLEF) held a virtual Teacher Recognition Dinner on June 17th. Every St. John's teacher that applied for a Dream Grant received it. The Dream Grants provide funding for classroom improvement initiatives that cannot be funded by the school. CLEF also purchased and installed new classroom furniture for the High School Prep classrooms. The old furniture was donated to Walther Christian Academy. Lastly, CLEF announced the winners of the Above and Beyond Award. Nominees of this award went above and beyond expectations during the weeks of distance learning. I am proud to announce that second grade teacher Veronica Gahgan received this award.

I want to publicly thank St. John's leadership for developing a plan to continue to pay our teachers during this health crisis. Dan Karnatz was integral in leading the process of acquiring the PPP loan. Dan is truly one who is "Sent to Serve."

"The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and give his life as a ransom for many." - Matthew 20:28

- Principal Green

Ladies Book Club: The Ladies Book Club is reading The Art of Hearing Heartbeats by Jan-Philipp Sendker for the month of June. This book is a romance mystery novel in which a young woman, Julia Win, sets out to track down her father four years after he disappeared in Burma. It is the story of "an incorruptible love, forged by two kindred spirits set against the rustic yet lushly exotic backdrop of Southeast Asia."

In July we will be reading The Gown by Jennifer Robson. It is the story of a young woman who inherits a box of embroideries which match the motifs decorating Queen Elizabeth II's wedding gown from her grandmother. In the box is a photo of her grandmother with a celebrated artist and Holocaust survivor. The story moves between 2016 and 1947 as she discovers her grandmother's past.

The Ladies Book Club has not been able to meet since the start of the pandemic. Hopefully, we will be able to meet on Tuesday, July 30th at 7PM in the St. John's Conference Room.





JULY

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD

Pray For Us Calendar

LUTHERAN SCHOOLS — JULY 1-15

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) School Ministry serves as a national voice for Lutheran schools, upholding the standards of Christ-centered schools that are academically strong and respectfully operated. Nationwide, there are 1,992 LCMS schools, which include 1,127 early childhood centers, 778 elementary schools and 87 high schools.

Remember God's work in Lutheran schools as you pray:

- 1.** for the children attending Lutheran schools, that their eyes, ears, hearts and minds would be open to God's Word.
- 2.** for Lutheran school teachers, that they would correctly divide and deliver Law and Gospel to students through real-life applications each day.
- 3.** for Lutheran school principals, who lead people to passionately embrace the witness our schools provide to the community. Pray that pastors, principals, directors and teachers would work together in God-pleasing unity.

- 4.** for pastors, who champion the Kingdom work happening in our schools. Pray that pastors would be excited to be an integral part of their school's ministry and the teaching of the children.
- 5.** for the ability of Lutheran schools to serve every child in their care. Ask that the Lord would provide the means to help schools serve children who have disabilities, who have experienced trauma or who come from families with limited resources.
- 6.** for Lutheran schools that are struggling to fill empty seats. Pray that God would revitalize their ministries, energize their staff members and bring more children through their doors.

- 7.** for parents who support our Lutheran schools with their time, talents and treasures. Give thanks for their dedication to the mission of the school.

- 8.** for daily opportunities for our teachers and staff to show God's mercy, love and forgiveness both inside and outside of the classroom. Pray that God would maintain our ability to practice our faith in Lutheran schools.

- 9.** for church members who tell the story of their Lutheran school, that their recommendation might lead more students through the school's doors.

- 10.** for the many non-Christians and exchange students who are coming to our schools. Pray that God would work through the Gospel that they will have faith in Jesus.

- 11.** for first-year teachers, that they may apply their gifts to demonstrate grace and mercy. Pray that God would give them strength and patience.

- 12.** for our early childhood centers that introduce young families to the saving love of Jesus. Pray that they are a faithful witness to the littles of God's children and their families.

- 13.** for courageous Lutheran schools willing to take calculated risks that will result in significant rewards for students. Give the leaders of these schools wisdom in their decisions.

- 14.** for comfort and healing for school faculty and students during times of injury, illness and loss.

- 15.** for God to raise up wise and gifted leaders who are willing to serve in administrative roles at Lutheran schools.

PHOTO: LCMS COMMUNICATIONS/ERIK M. LUNGFORD

JULY Pray For Us Calendar

CAMPUS MINISTRY — JULY 16-31

The challenges to Christians on our nation's college campuses are increasing exponentially. On practically every campus, objections are increasing to the biblical worldview, Christian doctrine, traditional ethics and moral practices. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod's (LCMS) campus-ministry arm, LCMS U, aims to encourage, support and help students, faculty and staff in their response to these challenges so they can boldly bear witness to Christ.

Remember God's work through LCMS U as you pray:

- 16.** for the 200-plus LCMS U chapters around the country, that they would receive the support they need to effectively reach out to America's college students.
- 17.** that more congregations and individuals would become involved with their local LCMS U chapters or start new ones.
- 18.** for the growth of LCMS U on urban campuses and at community colleges, two fertile mission fields. Pray that the Lord would open doors to the spread of His Word in these places.
- 19.** for all the dedicated staff and volunteers involved in campus ministry, that God would energize them for their work and use them to plant seeds of faith that will continue to grow.
- 20.** for students starting their first year of college, that they would find a church to attend,

Christian friends and make good decisions while living away from home for the first time.

- 21.** for the parents of college students, especially those who have an empty nest for the first time. Pray that they would find joy and contentment in the midst of life's changes.
- 22.** that Lutheran college students would be bold witnesses to their faith in Jesus Christ, even when faced with pressure from peers and professors.
- 23.** that young people would hunger for the certain truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and not be deceived by the half-truths and lies of Satan.
- 24.** for the 800,000-plus foreign students studying at American colleges and universities. Many come from countries where the Gospel is not freely preached. Pray that their time in the U.S. would provide the opportunity for them to learn about Jesus.



- 25.** for the international students who came to faith while studying abroad. Ask the Lord to provide support so that they can continue to grow in their faith after they return home.

- 26.** for busy college students, who are pulled in many directions with the demands of school, work, friends, family and other activities. Pray that they would make God a priority by setting aside time for worship, Bible study and Christian service.

- 27.** for the development of campus-ministry programs at institutions of higher education around the world.

- 28.** that God would bless and guide the work of all students

involved in mission work and volunteer opportunities both at home and abroad. Pray that this time would be a blessing to them and others.

- 29.** with thanksgiving for a new school year. Pray that students and campus-ministry workers would return refreshed and with renewed dedication.

- 30.** for recent college graduates, that they would find gainful employment as well as a church home where they can learn about God's holy Word in all of its truth and purity.

- 31.** for all students, that God would protect them and provide people to share with them the Word of God.

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.



PHOTOS: LCMS COMMUNICATIONS/ERIK M. LUNGFORD



July 1st

Robert Mohr

July 2nd

Rebecca Przybylski

July 3rd

Ginny McDonnell

July 4th

Jennie Stinar

July 6th

Helen Jariabko
JoAn Markworth
Matthew Pahnke

July 9th

John Moore
Thomas Randel
Herbert Wichner

July 11th

Karen Banks

July 12th

Rick Gernhofer
Robert Miller
Jacob Runge

July 13th

Stephanie Todd

July 15th

Wayne Lemon

July 17th

Linda Kleim

July 18th

Daniel Fasshauer

July 21st

Thomas Deahl
Dan Green

July 22nd

Zachary Moore
Jack Penland

July 23rd

Carrie O'Grady
Mary Slattery

July 24th

Diane Polvere
Lynsey Scott

July 25th

Leonard Heldt

July 27th

Rachael Franklin
Elizabeth Nelson

July 29th

Rick Gernhofer
Bill Whitehead

July 31st

Karen Bebart





July 2020 Stewardship Newsletter from the LCMS

Christian stewardship is the free and joyous activity of the child of God and God's family, the church, in managing all of life and life's resources for God's purposes.

<http://www.lcms.org/stewardship>

"Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" asked the rich young ruler. Jesus said, "You know the commandments." And the ruler replied, "All these I have kept from my youth." And Jesus said to him, "One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." (Luke 18:18–22)

As we listen to this, one question is raised in our minds: Is Jesus speaking to us also or only to the rich young ruler? In other words, is Jesus telling us to sell all that we have and give it to the poor? As good Lutherans, we answer: No! But why? Why should we not sell all that we have and distribute it to the poor?

The simplest explanation is this: If we sold everything we have, our wife and our children would be neglected. In other words, to sell everything we have and give it to the poor would ignore, even abandon, those whom God has placed in our care. Our money, everything we have, is not to be used solely for the church. But that doesn't mean it isn't to be used for the purpose God intends.

Everyone has three stations in life, three spheres in which we live and are to be of service to our neighbors. These stations are the church, the family, and society. We are members of all three of these by birth.

- We are born into the church by water and the Word of God, and our duties to others in the church arise from either our birth into the church or the birth of others by Baptism into it.
- We are born into a family, and our duties to others stem from either our birth into that family or the birth of others into our family.
- Finally, we are born into society, which is simply a further extension of our birth into our family. The duties we have toward other members of society come from either our birth or the birth of others into the same society.

All that we have and all that we are is to be pressed into service for the church, the family, and society. If we were to sell all we have and give only to one, the other two would be neglected, and our duties toward them would falter.

So consider your life and all that you have in light of these three stations. You pay taxes to support and help those in society. You provide food, clothing, and shelter for the members of your family. You save for college for your children.

But the one station that is usually thought of last is the church. Since the needs of the family and society are more immediate, the church is often given what is left over. This is not how it should be. Rather, we are to give of our first fruits – the best from off the top – even as Abel gave the best of his flock.

This requires forethought and intent. It means that you sit down and make a plan for what you will give from the beginning. It means sticking to it even when it seems there are other more immediate and pressing things.

This is all the more necessary now as we enter into periods of time while giving is low due to high unemployment or restrictions on meeting in church to give. If we love God, his gifts of forgiveness given through the means of grace we receive at church and only at church, then we will support the church just as we love our country and our family.

For all that we have and all that we are is given to us by our gracious and giving God. He spared no expense for us and our salvation. He gave up His Son into death so that our sins are forgiven, and we will live. What is more, He provides for all that we need for this body and life. And our lives in this world, among these three spheres of the church, the family, and society, are to mirror the generosity of the one who gave us life in all three by birth.

Don't let the church, your divine family, be ignored or even an afterthought. The church is nurturing you, bringing you up in salvation by Word and Sacrament for eternal life.