



St. John's
Lutheran Church
& School

March 2020 Eagle Newsletter



LENT BEGINS

Luke 4:1-2 ESV

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness ²for forty days, being tempted by the devil.

Why I Don't Do Congregational Surveys

In my first congregation, we considered the question of how many services to offer and when to offer them. I learned a lot from that experience. One of the lessons I learned was the ineffectiveness of a congregational survey. The elders of that congregation decided to survey the members to see what their preferred worship time was. It was a disaster. Not only was there no consensus, but the very act of surveying gave people the impression that their preference was what was best for the congregation. Many of them became unwilling to even consider other possibilities. So I resolved never to survey a congregation again.

So when the question of service times was put to me at St. John's by several informal discussions with members, by a formal request from the Board of Trustees, and by my own observations over the first several months of my tenure at St. John's, I decided to do something different. Last fall I put four questions to the Board of Elders in our discussion concerning the St. John's worship service schedule. In January, I asked for these questions to be put to the congregation for reflection and discussion in preparation for the next voters' meeting.

These questions are not meant to be easy. If they challenge you to broaden your horizons and think about church and ministry in new ways, then they have been successful. If they make you uncomfortable, they should. At the same time, I ask that you do not read anything into these questions. There is no hidden agenda. And there are undoubtedly other questions that would accomplish the same results, and perhaps more effectively.

The questions are: How would God, by the work of His Spirit, cause St. John's to grow using only one morning service? How would God, by the work of His Spirit, cause St. John's to grow using two morning services? Does God ever will a local congregation to reduce in size? Does God measure growth in ways other than numerical statistics?

In my Eagle newsletter articles for the coming months, I will offer my own reflections to these questions. This is an ongoing conversation, and I welcome you to continue the dialogue through your elder, which can be found on the board outside the church parlor in the undercroft.

Pastor Ehrhard

The congregation is asked to consider the following:

- How would God, by the work of His Spirit, cause St. John's to grow using only one morning service?
- How would God, by the work of His Spirit, cause St. John's to grow using two morning services?
- Does God ever will a local congregation to reduce in size?
- Does God measure growth in ways other than numerical statistics?

Members can communicate their thoughts on these questions to their elders (listed below and in the parlor stairwell). Or, for confidentiality purposes, members can provide feedback to anyone in the congregation who can then direct the feedback to the elders. At the May Voters meeting the elders will present their findings and the congregation may choose to modify the worship schedule going forward.

Elders List:

- Last Name A-B = Timothy Eischen | eischentim@aol.com | 312.618.6085
- Last Name C-F = Aaron Doering | aaronmosesbro@gmail.com | 312.479.0767
- Last Name G-J = Doug Markworth | douglas.markworth77@gmail.com | 773.505.3296
- Last Name K-Ma = Doug McLane | mcutec007@gmail.com | 773.899.0036
- Last Name Mc-Q = Terry Dunn | mhdunn@sbcglobal.net | 773.507.4450
- Last Name R-St = Matt Pahnke | mattpahnke@gmail.com | 630.903.9100
- Last Name Su-Z = Adam Neubauer | neubauer.adam@gmail.com | 815.793.5743

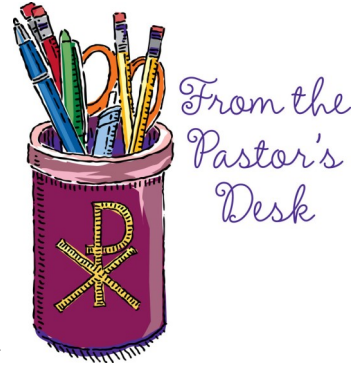


What's Up In Worship?

Corporate Confession, Individual Absolution

If you have a hymnal at home, you can open up to page 290 and follow along.

The Rite of Corporate Confession and Absolution is an extended service of confession. It is an updated form of the Order of Confessional Service from **The Lutheran Hymnal**, which was designed for use before communion services. As a service, it can stand alone or begin a service of Holy Communion for increased attention to the nature of the Sacrament and as an expression of worthily preparing for the Lord's Supper.



The service has an option for an opening hymn of confession, which would be most appropriate when it is used as a stand alone service. The official beginning is the Invocation, which recalls the name of God and the cross that was traced upon us in our baptism. **The sign of the cross + may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism**, states the rubric. Following the Invocation are a few short versicles from Psalm 43 and 124.

The bulk of the Rite of Corporate Confession and Absolution is the Confessional Address. It covers several themes of repentance, confession, and preparation for receiving the Sacrament of the Altar. Compare this address with the questions the Small Catechism provides on p. 329-330 of **Lutheran Service Book**.

The confession is followed by a short blessing and the question from the pastor, "Do you believe that the forgiveness I speak is not my forgiveness by God's?" This question comes from the Small Catechism, and based upon John 20:22-23.

Then the following option is given: **The pastor absolves the penitents individually at the altar, laying his hands on the head of each and pronouncing the following absolution, or he may absolve all the penitents corporately from the altar.**

Because Lent is a time of increased focus on sin and repentance, I will be offering this individual absolution following our Lent midweek services. Each midweek service after Ash Wednesday will begin with the Office of Vespers. After our prayer concludes, you are invited to remain for a service of Absolution and Midweek Eucharist.

Individual absolution will function much like the Lord's Supper. Each participant in the service will come forward and kneel at the communion rail. When I approach, please state your first name and I will offer you individual absolution by name. After all are absolved, we will then share the Lord's Supper as sinners who are forgiven in Christ.

Blessed Lent to you all!

Pastor Ehrhard

From the Principal: The month of March is packed with many activities. St. John's school clubs are in full swing. The annual St. John's Bowling Tournament also takes place during this month. I would like to invite the congregation to the following events. March 1st is PTL's Chili Cook-off. The cookoff begins at 1PM. St. John's Early Childhood Reading Night takes place on Friday, March 6th beginning at 6:30PM. On March 20th beginning at 3:30PM, the annual St. John's Fun Fair takes place. This is fundraiser for the 8th grade class trip. Please join us on March 27th at 7PM or March 28th at 2PM for the St. John's Spring Musical.

St. John's Auction is on April 4th. The event begins at 6:30PM. This is the major fundraiser for the school. Watch for more information in the weekly church bulletin. The funds raised for this event purchase items that are essential and not included in the annual school budget.

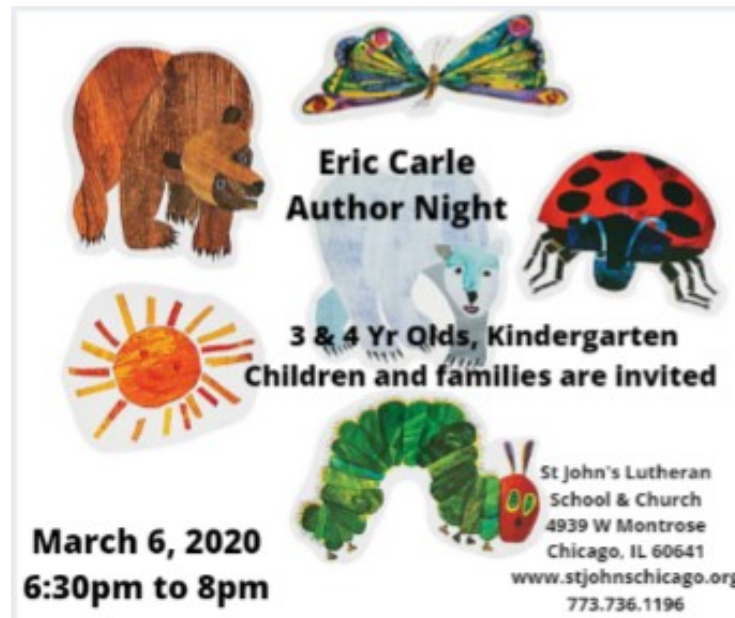
St. John's hosts open houses every Tuesday from 9AM – 3PM. This allows perspective new families to see the school while it is in session. Tours can also be scheduled by calling the school office. Please refer new families to St. John's.

Dan Green – Principal

Midweek Lenten Service Schedule:

Wednesdays in Lent: Vespers at 4:30PM & 7:00PM. Join us for Soup Supper in between Services in the Fellowship Room.

Ladies Book Club: In March The Ladies Book Club will be reading Educated by Tara Westover. This book is a memoir. The author was born in the mountains of Idaho to survivalist parents. She did not set foot in a classroom until she was seventeen. She taught herself enough math, grammar and science to take the ACT and was admitted to Brigham Young University. Her quest for knowledge transformed her, and took her to Harvard and Cambridge University. This insightful novel was recommended to us by Henry Kneuppel. It has been named by many as one of the best books of the year. Please join us on Tuesday, March 31st at 7PM at St. John's in the first floor conference room to discuss this insightful account of the struggle for self-intervention.



Easter Flowers

In order to enhance the beauty of the chancel for Easter, orders are now being taken for Lily, Hyacinth and Tulip plants. These plants will be delivered to church, placed in the chancel and may be picked up after the last service of Easter Sunday (plants may also be picked up the following week in the office.) Plants not picked up will be given to the homebound.

The cost of one plant is \$10.00. If you wish to place an order, please fill out the form below and return it to the office, Altar Guild window in the narthex or drop it in the offering plate. Please make checks payable to St. John's Altar Guild.

Given by: _____

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

Will pick up _____ **yes** _____ **no**

Phone Number: _____

Lily _____ **Hyacinth** _____ **Tulip** _____

Paid: Check # _____ or Cash _____

St. John's Auction

You are cordially invited to
attend St. John's PTL
Auction
at Allegra Banquet Hall.

5035 N. River Rd.
Schiller Park, IL 60176

April 4th
6:30-10:30 PM

More details coming soon



**ST JOHN'S LUTHERAN
PARENT TEACHER LEAGUE**

Chili Cook Off

Sunday, March 1, 2020
1:00 PM to 3:00 PM
\$5.00 Tasting - \$3.00 Per Bowl
Stop by and some chili!

St. John's Lutheran Church & School
4939 W Montrose Ave, Chicago IL 60649



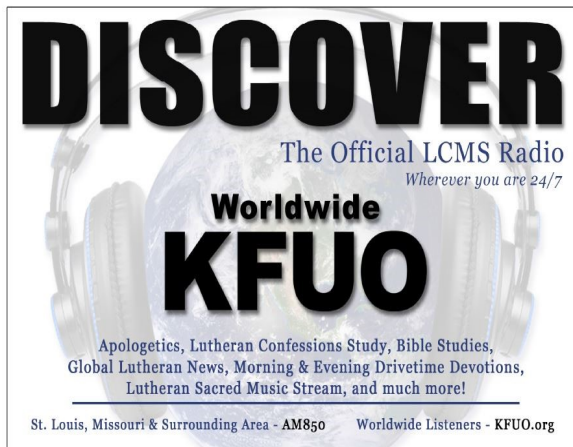
St John's Lutheran 8th Grade

FUNFAIR

Friday March 20, 2020
3:30 pm to 7pm

Fun, Food, and Fellowship

Supporting the Class of 2020!



Lutheran Radio Station Worldwide KFUO

Find and Listen at kfuo.org and follow us at [Facebook.com/KFUORadio](https://www.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!

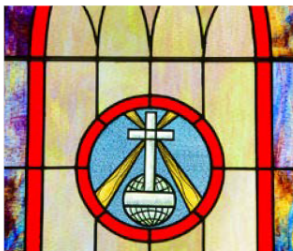
Cross Defense—Mondays @ 2pm CST or ON DEMAND via Website!

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.





MARCH

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD

Pray For Us Calendar

WORLDWIDE THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION — MARCH 1-31

The LCMS provides theological education throughout the world by means of seminaries and missionaries. Scholars and leaders from foreign church bodies also come to the LCMS seminaries for advanced degrees, learning sound doctrine from the Scriptures and Lutheran Confessions.

Remember the centrality of God's Word as you pray:

- 1.** for Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, that all there might grow in the Word and prepare for the proper proclamation of the Word and administration of the Sacraments.
- 2.** for Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind., that the faculty might teach the Word in its truth and purity; and the students learn God's Word in preparation for ministry.
- 3.** for Christ's work throughout the world, that the Gospel might be proclaimed to all people and the forgiveness of sins delivered through the Means of Grace.
- 4.** for Concordia Seminary, Hong Kong, that people and

pastors might be trained there to proclaim the Gospel.

- 5.** for Martin Luther Seminary in Lae, Papua New Guinea, that God would strengthen and preserve the seminary to prepare the pastors of the Gutnius Lutheran Church to convict people with God's law and heal them with the word of Absolution.
- 6.** for Japan Lutheran Seminary in Tokyo, Japan, that our Lord, Jesus Christ, would make the seminary a place where the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity.
- 7.** for Concordia Theological Seminary in Nagercoil, India, that the Lord would preserve the seminary from all evil and lead it to become a bastion of the

Gospel against the attacks of the wicked foe.

- 8.** for Timothy Lutheran Seminary in Birip, Papua New Guinea, that the Lord would use the instructors to shine His Word upon the path of students preparing to serve His Church.
- 9.** for students and professors of Lutheran Theological Seminary in Baguio City, Philippines, that they might serve the Lutheran Church in the Philippines faithfully.
- 10.** for Luther Seminary in Seoul, South Korea, that the Lord would preserve those who teach and those who learn to hold fast to His Word in all circumstances.
- 11.** for the ministry carried out through the Westfield House of Theological Studies in Cambridge, England, as this ministry trains church leaders for England and many other church bodies around the world.

12. for the Lutheran Center for Theological Studies (CLET) in Togo, that theological training for men from French-speaking countries in West Africa might continue.

13. for Concordia Reformer Seminary, Dominican Republic, that the students there might share the Gospel throughout Latin and South America.

14. for the Synod's Global Seminary Initiative (GSI), which helps to fill the need for trained church leaders who are native to the region and cultures in which they serve, that God would guide this program to strengthen the formation of pastors and deaconesses around the world.

15. for LCMS professors and pastors who travel overseas to teach seminars and intensive courses for our current and emerging church partners, that God would grant them safe travel and fruitful labors.

PHOTO: LCMS COMMUNICATIONS/VERIK M. LINSFORD

MARCH Pray For Us Calendar

16. for the international students who come to the Synod's seminaries, that God would grant safe travels and comfort while away from family and friends.

17. for Lutheran pastors worldwide, that they would have access to the necessary books and resources to teach Law and Gospel.

18. for the health and safety of LCMS missionaries who provide theological education, thanks that they have heeded the call to serve Christ in this way.

19. for Lutheran church workers in Europe, that their work is fruitful.

20. for the seminaries of LCMS partner churches around the world, that they would faithfully educate future leaders for their churches.

21. for the Gospel multiplication as pastors are equipped to teach their flocks and train new leaders for the church, thank God for the growth of His Kingdom.

22. for the continued growth of Christ's Church on earth, that the Lord would continue to raise up missionaries according to His good and gracious will.

23. for Lutherans throughout the world, that they rejoice in God's gifts of His Word and Sacraments.

24. for the Synod's generous donors, thanks for those who make it possible for LCMS theological education around the world.

25. The Annunciation of our Lord, thank God for sending His Son into our flesh.

26. for our partner churches, that God would raise up pastors and servants to serve His people.

27. for sound doctrine throughout the world, that God would preserve the truth of His Word against false teachings.

28. for those on vicarage from our partner seminaries, that God would bless their time in the field as part of their education.

29. for seminarians' wives, that they would be prepared to support their husband's call into ministry.

30. for seminarians' children, that they rejoice in the Gospel and in their father's calling.

31. for all who listen to those who receive theological education, that the Gospel might take root and produce fruit.



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.

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH
MISSOURI SYNOD

PHOTO: LCMS COMMUNICATIONS/VERIK M. LINSFORD

March 1st

John Straszynski

March 2nd

Niki Gernhofer

March 4th

Arnold Eurick

March 5th

Wolfgang Fey
Kristen Greif
Annemarie Hungerland
Steven Mackie

March 6th

Caitlyn Wheeler

March 7th

Dolores Schmoldt

March 10th

Tammy Straszynski

March 11th

Terrence Dunn

March 12th

Lawrence Pankonin

March 13th

Midge Klein

March 16th

Eric Bland
Janet Bowman

March 18th

Amy Shearer

March 20th

Bernard Giess

March 22nd

Michelle Castro
Marcy Riley

March 28th

Rachel Benedict

March 29th

Nicholas Penland
Michelle Runge

March 30th

Joe Ferenc

March 31st

Marlene Dunn
Morgan Sanders

BIRTHDAYS
march

March 2020 Stewardship Newsletter from the LCMS



We are at the beginning of Lent. During the Lenten season, the church calls to our attention the sufficiency of what God gives. It points to the sufficiency of God's grace in the atoning work of Jesus. It shows us the sufficiency of faith in Jesus' work for us. It makes known the sufficiency of God's Word in faith and life.

But Lent doesn't just remind us of the sufficiency of God's spiritual gifts, the gifts that pertain to our redemption and salvation. Lent also reminds us of the sufficiency of the physical, temporal gifts of God, those that pertain to this body and life.

In other words, it reminds us of the importance of godly contentment and of outward discipline and training of the body.

This outward training of the body teaches us not to give in to every desire of our flesh but to learn to say no to them. And it does this in such a way that if you fail, it is no sin. It is a way to practice without putting yourself into a compromising situation.

The easiest example of this is fasting. When you fast, you are practicing saying no to the desires of your body. But if you fail in this, if you break your fast, you have not sinned. You have, though, learned something about how your flesh works, how difficult it is to fight against it, and how you need help from above in order to do it.

There is another example of this. It is alms-giving. This is an increase in giving to the church and its mission during this time. We all know that our flesh finds security in money and stuff. By committing to give more to the church, you are training your flesh. You are, by this outward discipline, training yourself to be content with what God gives. You are practicing saying "no" to your desires. Again, if you fail, you have not sinned. But you've learned just how powerful your flesh is in leading you instead of you leading it. You've learned how you need help from above in being content with what God gives.

This is why St. Paul instructs young Pastor Timothy in this way:

"But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs." (1 Tim 6:6–10)

Our sufficiency is not of ourselves; it is in God. Let us learn this without sin by training our flesh this Lenten season.