



St John's
Lutheran Church
& School

May 2021 Eagle Newsletter

Memorial Day



John 15:13 ESV

Greater love has no one than this, that
someone lay down his life for his friends.

Why I Got the COVID-19 Vaccine

As vaccination for Covid-19 becomes more widely available, there has also been a significant amount of skepticism about whether a person—especially a Christian—should receive the vaccine. Questions range from whether the vaccines are safe, whether they're effective, and whether they support the abortion industry. These are the kinds of questions theological ethics addresses, not just from a ground of reason, but reason informed by the Gospel.

I was among the first in our congregation to get a Covid-19 vaccine since I was eligible as a staff member of St. John's Lutheran School. I have received both doses of the Moderna vaccine, and have been fully vaccinated against Covid-19 since March 20th. I still abide by public health guidelines, such as wearing a face covering when I'm in public and avoiding close and extended contact with those outside of my household, and I will continue to do so until we come out of the pandemic as a community. It's my duty as a Christian to sacrifice my comforts and freedoms for the good of my neighbor (c.f. Ephesians 5:21; Galatians 5:13; 1 Peter 2:16). Service of the neighbor is one of the principles of theological ethics.

With respect to the vaccine's safety and effectiveness, I am not a leading authority. However, I know that my side effects were relatively minor and that major reactions are extremely rare. Both of the mRNA vaccines (Moderna and Pfizer) are remarkably effective according to reports and better than many other vaccines that are commonly used, including the flu vaccine. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine is less effective, but still provides significant protection. With all three vaccines, if a vaccinated person contracts Covid-19, they are likely to have a less severe case; hospitalization and death is virtually eliminated. I recognize that analyzing data in real time leads to only provisional conclusions and that these results are subject to change. But the overwhelming bulk of data indicates that the individual cost of vaccination is mild side-effects while the benefit is a high level of immunity against this novel virus.

Another benefit is that vaccinated people help slow community spread. This is an important aspect for considering the ethics of vaccination from a Christian perspective. With a vaccine, I no longer pose a serious threat to those who are most vulnerable. Christian ethics is always oriented toward what is best for my neighbor.

(continued on next page)



*From the
Pastor's
Desk*

(continued from previous page)

Now, what about support of the abortion industry? I am as pro-life as it gets. In fact, about six years ago, my wife and I decided to put our pro-life beliefs into action and invest tens of thousands of dollars into adoption in order to provide a safe and healthy home for a child who would ordinarily be a candidate for abortion. I take the pro-life position very seriously.

With respect to vaccinations, the life issues fall into two camps: conspiracies and rumors on the one hand, and the facts on the other hand. For instance, there is no vaccine that injects fetal cells into a human being, aborted or otherwise. Perpetuating rumors that distort the truth do not help the pro-life cause and can actually do damage to the pro-life movement because it detracts from well-reasoned arguments based on facts.

All of the current Covid-19 vaccines in our country make use of cells derived from aborted fetuses in some way. This is a fact that is not disputed by either side. Johnson & Johnson uses these cells in the production of their vaccine, while Moderna and Pfizer use them for testing. For Christians, the ethical question is whether the use of these vaccines makes you a participant in abortion. My conclusion is that they do not, for the following reasons.

The cells in use for both the manufacture and testing of certain vaccines have been propagated from tissues obtained from victims of elective abortions at least three decades ago. These cells are not directly harvested from aborted fetuses, and, more importantly, no new abortions are necessary for any of the techniques involved. Furthermore, the newer mRNA technology doesn't depend on fetal tissue at all to exist; it only uses it for testing. To put it in philosophical terms, the vaccine is not a final or teleological cause of abortion. Or, to put it in more everyday terms, the Covid-19 vaccines do not create a market for abortion. In fact, since the mRNA vaccines don't depend on any tissue at all, they could create the conditions in which use of fetal tissue is obsolete.

The Roman Catholic Church, with whom we stand on life issues, has also taught similarly in its instruction *Dignitas personae* (personal dignity). The use of therapies developed from illicit sources is not inherently unethical, they conclude. At the same time, a Christian also has the ethical obligation to advocate for therapies that do not depend on illicit sources. In addition to the Roman Catholic Church, many prominent evangelicals have also reached similar conclusions.

These are purely reasoned ethical conclusions, though. To examine it from a theological point of view, we can look to the theology of the cross. Luther said that the theology of the cross is about calling a thing what it is. The world often calls what is good bad and what is bad good. The cross of Christ, however, inverts all the world's schemes. We have a God who specializes in turning evil into good. "As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today" (Genesis 50:20). "And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28). Using a good that originates in evil is not an evil. We proclaim this every week when we gather as a congregation to eat and drink a good that God brought out of the evil of an innocent man's execution; as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

In conclusion, vaccination lies in the realm of adiaphora. It is neither commanded nor forbidden by God. Whether to receive a Covid-19 vaccine is a matter of freedom, and no one should be compelled to go against conscience. However, consciences should be well-informed, and they must be oriented toward the good of the neighbor. When presented with an ethical decision in the realm of adiaphora, a Christian must always ask, "What gives glory to God?" and, "What best serves my neighbor?"

While I am not a leading authority on vaccine safety and effectiveness, I have invested many years of study in theology and reflection on theological ethics in particular. I decided to get the vaccine.

In Christ, under the cross,

Pastor Ehrhard

Ladies Book Club: In May, the Ladies Book Club will be reading Broken Glass by Alex Beam. This true story recounts the creation of an architectural masterpiece, The Farnsworth House, commissioned by Edith Farnsworth in 1945, designed and built outside of Chicago by Mies van der Rohe, a world renowned architect in 1951. It details their friendship which deteriorated into a bitter feud over love, money, gender and the nature of art. The Ladies Book Club meets via Zoom the last Tuesday of the month at 7:30PM. Please contact Betty Carey if you would like to join us.



From the Principal: “Sent to Serve” is St. John’s theme for this school year. 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”*. While themes provide focus for an organization, if the theme is not acted upon, it becomes mere words. So how is “Sent to Serve” being lived *out at St. John’s*?

1. On Thursday, April 22nd St. John’s High School Prep students and their teachers practiced being “Sent to Serve” by spending a portion of their afternoon helping to clean up Wilson Park.
2. Also, on Thursday, St. John’s parent Mr. Merced practiced being “Sent to Serve” by spending his morning cleaning up the St. John’s Playground as well as cleaning up the church grounds.
3. St. John’s PTL practiced being “Sent to Serve” but setting up and running the very successful virtual auction.
4. Two St. John’s parents Mr. Hoyos and Mrs. Pancorvo assist with taking student temperatures at the beginning of each school day. They too are practicing being “Sent to Serve”.
5. St. John’s teachers and staff regularly practice being “Sent to Serve” by going above and beyond what their official job duties are.
6. St. John’s church members Mr. Byall and Mr. Knueppel are regularly on campus addressing maintenance issues. St. John’s is blessed that they choose to be “Sent to Serve”.

All of those mentioned above serve because they love St. John’s. I believe that they also are doing as Jesus did – *“The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve”*. I thank God that St. John’s has so many servants. How is God calling you to be “Sent to Serve”?

Ascension Day Service: St. John’s will have a Divine Service for the Ascension of Our Lord on Thursday, May 13th at 7PM.

Thank You: To our youngest ever Easter decorating crew! (pictured here):



Help Needed: St. John's need help in every capacity. We need people to serve on Trustees, Elders, Youth, Usher, Altar Guild, etc. Please contact neubauer.adam@gmail.com if you can serve.

May 2021 Voters Meeting: The Voters Meeting will take place on Sunday, May 23rd at 9:15AM in the church. We will elect new board members for a two-year term. We will also consider the following amendments to our by-laws, all located in Section V. The proposed changes are reflected in red to green.

The Board of Christian Education shall consist of ~~six to nine (6-9)~~ at least three members, one of whom shall serve as chairman.

The Board of Elders shall consist of ~~six to nine (6-9)~~ at least three members, one of whom shall serve as chairman of the Board.

The Board of Trustees shall consist of ~~six to nine (6-9)~~ at least five members, one of whom shall serve as chairman of the Board.

GoFundMe Shut Down: GoFundMe Charity announced that they are discontinuing their platform this year. Therefore, the Mission and Ministry of St. John's Campaign has ended.

We would like to express our appreciation of your support of this successful campaign. We raised \$80,076 of our \$100,000 goal in seven months. We have no doubt we would have exceeded our goal if GoFundMe had not shut down.

Going forward, if you would like to support St. John's electronically from your computer, please click [this link](#), where you can create an online profile if you haven't done so already.

If you would like to support St. John's electronically from your mobile device, Download the Give Plus app [here for Android](#) or [here for iPhone](#). Then, search by zip code 60641 and select St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church.

If you need any assistance, please contact neubauer.adam@gmail.com. Thank you for your joyous response to God's blessings!





Kid Book and Diaper Drive



St. John's Lutheran Girl Scout Troop 20010 will host a "Baby Book & Baby Supply Drive" for *Cradles to Crayons* on Saturday May 15, 2021 from 10 am to 1pm in the Montrose Parking lot. *Please consider donating your new or gently used children's books (board books for ages 0-2 especially needed), and unopened diapers, pull-ups and/or wipes* Drive up, and we can unload for you. No need to get out of your car.



Questions?

Contact Tracy Baldwin at teb618@yahoo.com or Renee Bohus at rbohus2@gmail.com

Cradles to Crayons is a non-profit that works to provide children from birth through age 12, living in homeless or low-income situations, with the essentials items they need to thrive—at home, at school, and at play. C2C supplies these items free of charge by engaging and connecting communities.



MAY

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD

Pray For Us Calendar

LCMS MISSIONARIES ON HOME SERVICE — MAY 1-15

Every other year, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod's (LCMS) international missionaries spend approximately two months in the United States on "home service." During this time, they reconnect with the individuals, congregations and groups who support their mission work. Home service also gives them a period of rest and renewal and the chance to spend time with their families.

Remember God's work through missionaries on home service as you pray:

- 1.** for the LCMS missionary families who will be on home service in 2018. Ask the Lord to keep them safe during their travels.
- 2.** for God's hand to guide and bless the details and logistical arrangements that are a necessary part of missionary home service, such as transportation and housing.
- 3.** for missionary families to be able to visit as many congregations and other groups as possible, while managing their limited time in the United States.

- 4.** for the Lord to guide missionaries as they prepare their presentations. Ask Him to help them to share their stories and ministry news with those who have so faithfully supported their ministry.
- 5.** for missionary families. Pray that God would give emotional, physical and spiritual strength as they travel, share with supporters and meet new friends.
- 6.** for missionary children. Pray that God would provide them with the opportunity to know that they are a vital part of their family's ministry.
- 7.** that many congregations all over the United States would

welcome missionaries into their churches for mission presentations, Sunday school, children's messages, celebration luncheons, Bible studies and other activities.

- 8.** that congregations and other groups would experience a revitalized interest in praying for missionaries and supporting their work, especially after visiting with them face-to-face and hearing about what God is accomplishing through them.
- 9.** that as missionaries share their experiences, the listeners would consider serving as a missionary themselves — in a short-term, long-term or career capacity.
- 10.** for the families of visiting missionaries, that they would enjoy their time together and mutually encourage one another.
- 11.** for God to comfort and sustain the missionaries who are not able to see family and friends in the United States this year. May they

Holy Spirit comfort them with His presence and assurance of God's calling to serve far from home.

- 12.** that missionaries would have an easy transition back to life in the United States — even for a short time during home service — with minimal effects of reverse culture shock.
- 13.** that the Lord would raise up supporters for missionaries who are struggling to finding the resources necessary for their ministry.
- 14.** with thanksgiving for the many forms of support and the joys the Lord provides to missionary families as they serve Him.
- 15.** that the conversations started during home service would continue long after the missionary has returned to the mission field. Pray that through ongoing communication, missionaries and supporters would encourage one another.

PHOTO: LCMS COMMUNICATIONS/ERIK M. LUNSFORD

MAY Pray For Us Calendar

PARTNER CHURCHES — MAY 16-31

The LCMS has 38 partner churches around the world. A partner church is a church body with which the LCMS has full altar and pulpit fellowship. Many LCMS partner churches also are members of the International Lutheran Council, a worldwide association of confessional Lutheran church bodies. Some LCMS partner churches came into existence through LCMS-supported mission efforts, while others have historic roots that pre-date the LCMS or that are sourced in the mission efforts of other Lutheran church bodies.

Remember God's work in His Church as you pray:

- 16.** for all LCMS partner churches, some of which only have a handful of congregations. Pray that they would never feel alone in their service to Christ and His Church.
- 17.** for LCMS partner churches in Latin America and the Caribbean. Pray that God's Word would continue to spread throughout these countries to bring the Body of Christ together in fellowship and to be witnesses to His love.
- 18.** for LCMS partner churches in Africa. Pray that God would strengthen Lutheran Christians in this region to carry out their work for His name's sake.
- 19.** for LCMS partner churches in Asia, that God would guide and strengthen Lutheran Christians

in this region, especially in areas where it is difficult or dangerous to do His work.

- 20.** for LCMS partner churches in Eurasia. Pray that God would continue to use His Word as a light to those in darkness and as a stronghold for the life of His Church.
- 21.** with thanksgiving for all the missionaries who serve partner churches, that they would remain faithful in their tasks and be witnesses to the Gospel through acts of mercy.
- 22.** for those who serve in leadership positions in LCMS partner churches around the world, as they guide, nurture and shepherd their people.
- 23.** for the laypeople of LCMS partner churches around the world, that they would be fulfilled by God's Word and Sacraments.



24. that God would continue to raise up faithful servants for His Church in locations around the world.

- 25.** for the Lutheran church bodies around the world interested in fellowship with the LCMS. Pray that God would guide the consideration process according to His will.
- 26.** in thanksgiving for those who pray continually for those who serve where spreading God's Word is difficult or dangerous.
- 27.** for Lutheran churches around the world that are dealing with strife between their members. Pray that the Lord would guide them to a peaceful resolution that would strengthen their witness to the community.
- 28.** for the Lutheran churches in Eurasia as they seek to minister

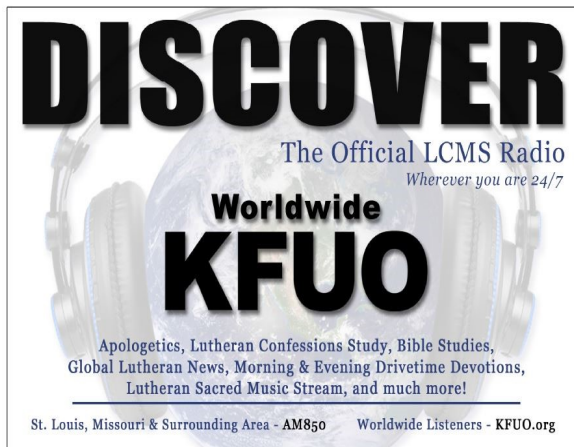
to the refugees in their midst. Pray for safety for both the church workers and the refugees.

- 29.** for all projects currently going on in LCMS partner church bodies, that each one would have the volunteers and resources necessary to carry out the work of the church as it shows mercy and provides physical and spiritual care for people around the world.
- 30.** for safe travel between and within countries in each world region. Pray that pastors, missionaries, medical teams and all who travel to assist partner churches would be kept safe and healthy, that the Gospel might be proclaimed to the far corners of creation.
- 31.** for all those still living in darkness, that the Gospel will be their light and life.

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.



PHOTO: LCMS COMMUNICATIONS/ERIK M. LUNSFORD



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.



Happy Birthday!

May 3rd – Christopher Kapusniak, Laurene Lohman

May 4th – Linda Newcomb

May 5th – Joyce Owen

May 6th - Thomas Clark, Mary Zanders

May 7th – Ryan Koza

May 8th – James Van Tilburg

May 12th – Sarah Andrich

May 14th – Ronald Wichner

May 16th – Mark Waldo

May 17th – Sue Griesmann

May 18th – Ronald Byall

May 19th – Nancy Pankonin

May 20th – Deborah Kraak, Karen McLane, Gary Sobiek, Leonard Tornabene

May 21st – Heather Helfen, Judy Sobiek

May 23rd – Brian Dunn

May 25th – Jason Burkett

May 26^h – Austin Tully

May 27th – Wayne Wenzel

May 28th – David Osmon

May 30th – Leslee Johnson

May 31st – Joanne Peck





May 2021 Stewardship Newsletter from the LCMS

St. Paul teaches us: "Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches" (Gal. 6:6). And again, he says: "Do you not know that those who are employed in the temple service get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in the sacrificial offerings? In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:13–14).

In other words, ministers of the Gospel are supported by the offerings of those who are served by them.

And this is how the church lives even now. It is standard practice. But this deserves closer examination. For it instructs us not just that we are to give but also what we are to give. And it does so with four little words: "In the same way ..."

St. Paul is building his case for supporting the preachers of the Gospel with the sacrificial giving of individual members on the example of the Old Testament people who supported the Levites with their offerings and sacrifices. We're to support the Gospel ministry "in the same way." But how did the Old Testament people support the Levites?

Moses records this: "You shall tithe all the yield of your seed that comes from the field year by year. And before the Lord your God, in the place that he will choose, to make his name dwell there, you shall eat the tithe of your grain, of your wine, and of your oil, and the firstborn of your herd and flock, that you may learn to fear the Lord your God always" (Deut. 14:22–23). The Levites were supported by the tithe, 10 percent of all the yearly yield of that which was harvested.

Does that seem like a lot? Does it surprise you that St. Paul instructs us that we are to support the New Testament Gospel ministry "in the same way?" If it does, ask yourself: Is the church's job in the New Testament bigger or smaller than the Levites' job in the Old Testament? Back then, there was one Temple, and the ministry was almost exclusively located in one nation among the descendants of Abraham. In Matthew 28, Jesus calls us to teach and baptize all nations, and there are churches and ministries all around the world! How could we support this new Gospel ministry with anything less than the Israelites supported the Old Testament ministry?

Of course, we are free to give more, for we have received more than those in the Old Testament. We have received the fullness of God's revelation, the fullness of His salvation, and the fulfillment of everything that God promised to do. For we have received Christ, God's own Son, in the flesh, who took upon himself our sins and in exchange gave us his righteousness. The Father claimed us as his own in Holy Baptism. He gathers us together in the place where his name dwells to feast on the first fruits of the resurrection, the risen and living body and blood of His Son – our Lord Jesus. He reminds us that we are His, that all things are ours because we belong to Him. He blesses us here in time with physical and spiritual gifts.

In the same way – and in response to His fatherly divine goodness and mercy – we gladly give to those who proclaim to us "the excellencies of him who called us out of darkness and into his marvelous light." For once we were not a people, but now we are God's people; once we had not received mercy, but now we have indeed (1 Peter 2:9–10).