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Stephen A. Eckert, Pastor

Lutheran Church of Our Savior

Volume 58 – Number 4

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FROM THE PASTOR...

Dear LCOS family,

PSALM 121

I lift up my eyes to the mountains—where does my help come from?

My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.

He will not let your foot slip—he who watches over you will not slumber; indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord watches over you—the Lord is your shade at your right hand; the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night.

The Lord will keep you from all harm—he will watch over your life; the Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.

We don't know who wrote this psalm. Scripture doesn't tell us. But maybe that's a good thing because almost any one of us could have written it. We all understand fear, discouragement, and desperation. Clearly, the author of this psalm was experiencing these things. I suspect if he could jump forward in time to be with us today, he would understand our uncertainty and confusion. With this virus and the public response, we are all in uncharted territory. In my 34 years of ministry, I have never faced the cancellation of Sunday worship before. Maybe this highlights how blessed I have been.

Most of you have probably read LCOS President Paul Mattson's letter describing the things we are doing to keep in touch and encourage each other during these trying times. I won't repeat them, but do want to assure you we are doing everything we can to keep lines of ministry open for you. Please remember to use the telephone and/or check our website regularly to keep updated on what is happening at LCOS.

Finally, I want to share what the commentators in the Lutheran Study Bible say concerning Psalm 121: We are pilgrims on a journey

to our heavenly home. This psalm reminds us to focus on the Lord, who oversees our journey. Do not allow the mountains, moon, sun, or anything else in creation frighten you. Our God is eternally alert and goes above and before us. O Lord, we trust in your vigilant love. You will preserve us in order to bring us home. Amen.

Jesus is the one who can calm every storm in our lives. He will walk through this with us. Keep your eyes on Him. ✠

In His Peace,
...Pastor Steve Eckert

FROM THE LCOS COUNCIL PRESIDENT...

Date: March 19, 2020

To: LCOS Congregation Members

Re: An Update on COVID-19 impacts and measures at LCOS

I would like to begin with repeating the quote from Martin Luther that you may have already seen in various social media posts. The entire paper, which is worth reading for perspective, can be found by searching on "rockrohr Luther Plague" or going here: <https://rockrohr.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Luther-WHETHER-ONE-MAY-FLEE-FROM-A-DEADLY-PLAGUE.pdf>

When Martin Luther was dealing with The Black Death plague, he wrote these wise words that can help inform the way we approach things happening in our world right now...

"I shall ask God mercifully to protect us. Then I shall fumigate, help purify the air, administer medicine and take it. I shall avoid places and persons where my presence is not needed in order not to become contaminated and thus perchance inflict and pollute others and so cause their death as a result of my negligence. If God should wish to take me, he will surely find me and I have done what he has expected of me and so I am not responsible for either my own death or the death of others. If my neighbor needs

me, however, I shall not avoid place or person but will go freely as stated above. See, this is such a God-fearing faith because it is neither brash nor foolhardy and does not tempt God."

Luther's Works Volume 43 pg 132 the letter "Whether one may flee from a Deadly Plague" written to Rev. Dr. John Hess

At this time the Church Council has reached agreement that all services and gatherings at LCOS will be suspended through April 2, at which time the situation will be reevaluated. Prior to reaching this decision, the measures of canceling Lenten Soup Suppers and Lenten evening services had been enacted. Choir practices and bible studies have also been suspended. The LCOS Preschool will remain closed through Friday, April 3. Additionally, the Easter morning breakfast and Sunrise Service will be cancelled in response to the situation.

Having provided this brief summary of what we at LCOS will *not* be doing, as your Council President, I would like to draw attention to what we *will* be doing as we work through this situation.

Each member should be expecting to receive a phone call from his/her Elder, based on the Elder Flocks list in the church directory. More information and updates will be provided to each of you on this phone call. Your Elder will ask if you are willing to make phone calls to your fellow members at LCOS in an effort to use technology to continue our fellowship during this period of quarantine and isolation. This is an excellent opportunity to reach out to one another in love and make sure we are staying connected and everyone's needs are being met. Depending on how the COVID-19 virus affects you personally, your Elder may also ask if you are able and willing to serve your fellow members by running errands, doing shopping, visiting, or something similar.

The church office will remain open with regular hours and Pastor Eckert will be available (unless a lockdown is issued).

We are working with the technology team to implement Live Streaming of worship. In the meantime, audio files of the Pastor's messages will be posted at *LCOS.net* and available on thumb drive upon request. We hope to expand this effort to include video files made available via download or storage media such as thumb drive, CD, or DVD. More updates will be provided when available. If you want to be notified via e-mail,

please make sure you have provided your e-mail address to the church office. You may also check our church website at *LCOS.net*.

The property maintenance Mow Teams will continue to maintain the church property. The annual Spring Clean-Up Day on Saturday, April 4, will be held, while following the CDC guidelines for social distancing which means that snacks will not be provided, so bring your own. Participants will wash hands and keep separated by the recommended distance (unless a lockdown is issued).

LCOS continues to rely upon your financial support. In addition to the online giving tool that has been highlighted recently, found at *LCOS.net*, ***you may mail your donation to the church office or drop it off there***, where a special donation plate will be made available. As we work through this developing situation, your continuing financial support is now more critical than ever.

Referring back to the quote by Martin Luther, I ask that each of you continues to pray that God would mercifully protect us. Take care of yourselves and those around you by practicing the measures that are being recommended, such as hand washing, social distancing, and minimizing physical contact to essential activities. If you are feeling ill, avoid contact with others and seek medical attention as appropriate. In the meantime we can all thank God for the gifts of technologies that allow us to remain connected and in fellowship in spite of the other impacts that we must respect and follow as the situation around us evolves. ☸

**On behalf of the LCOS Church Council,
...Paul Mattson**

PORTALS OF PRAYER

The April-May-June issues of *Portals of Prayer* are available in the Church Office lobby on the ledge underneath the mail cubbies. Large-print copies are limited and intended for those who are visually compromised. Please feel free to pick up your copy during weekday office hours. ☸



All services scheduled for Holy Week and Easter have been canceled.

THERE WILL BE NO SUNDAY SERVICES UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

CHURCH OFFICE OPEN WEEKDAYS



Monday – Wednesday – Friday—9 AM to 1 PM

Tuesday – Thursday - 9 AM to 4 PM

Social distancing is observed in the Church Office.

EASTER LILIES CANCELED!



Easter lilies will not be available due to the cancellation of all worship services. ❀

ANNUAL SPRING CLEAN-UP POSTPONED!

The Annual Spring Clean-Up is postponed indefinitely. Look for the new day and time in future newsletters. ❀

**ELDER'S CORNER
What Is Baptism?**

I have the privilege of teaching the Confirmation students this month. We are studying Baptism, so I thought I would share some of the things we are learning.

The reformer, Dr. Martin Luther, regarded Baptism as the identifying mark of a Christian. In fact, for Luther, Baptism made a Christian. Luther thought Baptism so central to the Christian faith that he encouraged fellow Christians to repeat the words of their Baptism each day.

When John the Baptist began calling the people of Judah to repentance, he was following the practice of devout people in his day. However, John's preaching

showed that his Baptism was different from the washings of other Jewish groups (Matthew 3:5-12). John's preaching and Baptism were preparing for the coming of Jesus, for the new washing prophesied by Ezekiel and Jeremiah.

(Ezekiel 36:25-27) I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleanness, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes and be careful to obey My rules.

These Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled in the New Testament: (Hebrews 9:14-15) How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God. Therefore, He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant. The Baptism provided by Jesus would make all other ritual washings obsolete.

Lutherans may baptize by pouring, sprinkling, or immersing someone with water "In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." The mode of Baptism is usually decided by the setting and local custom, not by specific rules about how to apply the water. When a person is baptized at a Lutheran church, that person is regarded as a member of the congregation and a member of the Church universal.

**BAPTIZED
IN THE
TRIUNE GOD**



The Means of Grace are ways or vehicles through which God gives us His gifts—forgiveness of sins and eternal life. The Means of Grace include God's Word and God's Sacraments of Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Scripture teaches that the Sacraments are instituted and commanded by God (Matthew 28:19). They include a visible element connected with God's Word (Ephesians 5:26). They convey God's grace, the promise of forgiveness of sins and eternal life through faith in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:26; Acts 2:38-39).

Through the Means of Grace, God creates saving faith in Christ Jesus and strengthens and preserves the faith of believers. Baptism means a washing with water (Matthew 28:19-20). Yet, 1 Peter 3:21 makes clear that it is also the washing away of our sins. Scripture clearly connects the forgiveness of sins with Baptism. We were buried with Christ through Baptism into death. And just as Christ was raised, so we, too, are raised to a new life (Romans 6:3-4). This biblical truth brings us comfort when our sins weigh heavily upon us. Our sin was buried with Christ. Now we need to let those old, dead, buried sins rot and not bring them back to life. Christ and His righteousness are alive in us. Setting our hearts and minds on Christ brings much comfort.

He is Risen!! He is Risen Indeed!! ❀

...Jim LaBelle

MOWING IN APRIL



- Apr. 04 - Mark Hathaway,
Terry Morgan, Dick Scholar
- Apr. 11 - Corey Maddison, Harold Oliver
- Apr. 18 - Bill Williamson, Arlin Weiting
- Apr. 25 - Reese Riddiough, Nathan Schofield



APRIL 2020

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| Apr 15 | May Ministry Schedule Due |
| Apr 20 | May Newsletter Deadline |



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| Apr 03 | Molly Williams, Drew Schofield |
| Apr 04 | Alice Allen, Eric Davis |
| Apr 07 | Alexander Foley |
| Apr 09 | Becky Zielke |
| Apr 11 | Riley Olney |
| Apr 17 | Daniel Lehman |
| Apr 19 | Dave Block |
| Apr 20 | Julie Martin |
| Apr 22 | Jill Murdock |
| Apr 23 | Todd Martin |
| Apr 24 | Zelda Graham |
| Apr 25 | Art Atrops |
| Apr 26 | Peggy Payne |
| Apr 29 | Shaena Allred |
| Apr 30 | Ellen Olson |



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| Apr 11 | Paul & Debra Mattson |
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GETTING IN YOUR FACE

Facebook Users:

I have created a Facebook group called "LCOS Fellowship" at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/lcosfellowship/>

This group was created because I wanted us to have an intimate group for current congregation members or those that moved away but would like to stay connected. You can share anything you would like on there, from uplifting Bible verses to your daily concerns amidst this tumultuous time. I will be posting some resources on there as well, along with audio and video files of dad's sermons and other messages. Love you all and pray that everyone is staying safe and well.

Blessings,
...Deborah Maddison



Picturing the Lord's Supper

Jesus ate the Passover meal with his disciples as a symbol of the new covenant.



Directions: Use the picture clues to fill in key words from Luke 22:19-20, NIV.





And he took _____, gave _____ and _____ it, and gave

it to them, saying, "This is my _____ given for you; do this in _____ of me." In the same way, after the supper he




took the cup, saying, "This _____ is the new _____ in my




blood, which is _____ out for you."

LUKE 22:19-20, NIV