



Epistle



S T . J O H N L U T H E R A N C H U R C H

“Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin.” St. John 8:34

“It is certain that man must utterly despair of his own ability before he is prepared to receive the grace of Christ.” Luther’s Heidelberg Disputation of 1518, Thesis 18

One year after Luther posted his 95 Theses on the All Saints’ Church in Wittenberg he was still searching for the Gospel among the authorities of his world. We on the other hand, have it all too easily; or do we? Some of the differences between our day and Luther’s are stark. A focus on mass produced goods, electricity, refrigeration, and computers may make anything before 1900 seem like the dark ages. However, consider one thing we in the 21st Century have in common with Luther’s 16th Century: universities. There was the struggle and drive to learn of God’s creation (and achieve higher status/honor/wages) by education in more technical and varied forms of service. Besides this social/economic commonality, there was the government and the church: which we know as the left and right-hand realms of God’s kingdom.

The rise of economic wealth between these five centuries may make the influence of both kingdoms seem diminished. Nevertheless, this change does not stop wars: both internal and external. Just as the Israelites allowed the pagan Canaanites and Philistines to remain and did not conquer all of their Promised Land (Judges 3), we also fail to follow God whole-heartedly and tend to compromise with evil: both within us and outside ourselves. Being a sinner also means being easily confused about what is evil. How does God expect me to love a sinner? Does it matter how I spend my time? How much do I really have to respect or obey authority?

Compromise is inevitable for sinners, especially for uncaring or uninformed ones. As slaves to sin, we depend on God to sustain our faith even if we do care and inform ourselves of His holy Word. Without His Holy Spirit, we turn Jesus into a teacher of earthly morals and not of the Truth that will outlast creation. The turning of our original transcendent God into a god of our world shows our slavery to sin and the weakness of our flesh. This is why Luther emphasized the disparagement of our ability and works when it comes to our salvation.

After Luther's rediscovery of the Gospel, the next problem was how sinner-saints grew to be experts at taking God and His Gospel for granted. Free grace means no work, right? In a certain way yes, but also no. As sinner-saints we are caught up in both of God's realms. As sinners, we will have affliction under God's continuing wrath against sin. All of our mistakes still have consequences. God still sustains this corrupt world with laws like gravity, reaping, and sowing. If a man does not work, let him not eat. (2 Thess. 3:10) It is an abuse of God and His gift of Baptism to disregard feeding one's faith. That is why our Confirmation Rite, (Lutheran Service Book pg. 273) repeats part of Holy Baptism (pg 268), and adds questions regarding your duty as a soldier of Christ.

- Do you intend to hear the Word of God and receive the Lord's Supper **faithfully**?
- Do you intend to **live** according to the Word of God, and in faith, word, and deed to remain **true to God**, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, even to **death**?
- Do you intend to continue **steadfast in this confession and Church** and to suffer all, even **death**, rather than fall away from it?

Those confirmed at St. John Lutheran Church who do not attend for years are not receiving the Lord's Supper faithfully. Due to our fleshly (and economic) sinfulness, we want to pay the least amount for everything. Why bother going to church if God already obtained our salvation? We go not for salvation, but because of our salvation. The eternal gifts God gives to His children begin even now because we as sinners will die, but saints live forever. On the other hand, God still allows Satan, the World, and our flesh to fight against our faith in Christ so that we may learn to defend our faith and glorify Christ and not our own works.

Pastor Justin Massey

Please join us on
Thursday, November 22
at 9:00 a.m. for our
Thanksgiving Service.

Missing Members of St. John Lutheran in Chester

We have no attendance record for the following list of individuals and families for the last nine years (note exceptions). We have received letters back from the below addresses in the attempt to communicate with them about their spiritual welfare. Please help us to reach out to our fellow St. John Lutheran members or share their contact information with Pr. Sims, Kelly or myself.

Aaron Mallery

Amber Verslle

Amiee (Alexander & Kylee) Hohman (2016, Belleville/O'Fallon?)

Angela (Devin, Anastasia, & Emma) Valleroy (2016, Red Bud?)

Brent Morris

Brittany Holley (2010, no longer at 117 Rainbow Dr, Chester)

Clara Wright (no longer at 1050 3rd St, Chester)

David Vieregge (2013, not at 115 Lou Ann Dr, Herrin)

Dawn Kueker (2015, Kansas?)

Debra (Curt) Welge

Gayla Crabtree (2010, Cape Girardo?)

Gus Stallman (not at 115 Carter Dr, Murphysboro)

Janet Shipp (not at 2155 E. Jacob Rd, Jacob)

Joe Goetting (not at 1605 S. 22nd St, Herrin)

John Knop (2013)

Kaleb, Shelby, & Randy Jr. Kueker (Randy W. transferred out)

Krista Downey

Lawrence Jougland II

Logan Handel

Malorie Morris (Hawaii?)

Matt Franklin (not at 2152 N. Greenbriar Rd, Longbeach, CA)

Miranda Weinken

Ricky Hecke (2010, not at 6318 W. Park Ave. A, St. Louis)

Suzanna Giffin (not at 505 S. Halliday Ave, DuQuoin)

Tori Brown

OUR 2018-2019 YEAR-TO-DATE FINANCIAL STATUS

Cash Flow from 7/31/2018 to 10/26/18

Year-to-date Income	\$230,778.25
Year-to-date Expense	<u>\$412,863.24</u>
Difference (Income - Expense)	(\$182,084.99)

Average 2018 Attendance per Week 240

Money owed on Line of Credit

Beginning Balance 7/31/18	\$104,076.27
Paid on Debt year-to-date	(\$182,080.02)
Borrowed year-to-date	\$168,000.00
LOC Renewal Fee	\$00.00
Current Balance as of 10/26/18	\$89,996.05

PTL CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

The St. John PTL Christmas Bazaar will be held on December 1 from 9:00 a.m. –4:00 p.m.

We are looking for volunteers and donations to make this a successful event. If you would like to help please contact one of the people listed below, call the school at 826-4345 or church office at 826-3545.

Donations of craft items, ornaments, and vendors contact Mariah Bargman 618-623-9189 or Mariah-design@hotmail.com

Coffee cake baking will take place on Friday morning, November 30. Call Valerie Blechle @ 615-8577 & let her know if you can help. Any help is appreciated. If you are not interested in baking, we have many other jobs, such as dishwashing, cleaning up, and setting up tables, etc.

Luncheon: If you would like to help prepare and serve lunch please contact Keri Sims at 414-699-5932.

As part of the PTL Christmas bazaar there will be a section called St. Nick's Attic. If you have any Christmas decorations that you are no longer using that you would like to donate to be resold you may drop them off at the church office.

Lutheran Church Extension Fund Announces

40-Month Note at 4%

In celebration of 40 years of partnership in ministry, Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) is excited to introduce a **40-month term note that pays 4% interest**. A few important things to share about this offer:

- The 40-month note will be available for a limited time.
- The minimum investment is \$500
- The maximum amount any one person or organization may invest is \$40,000 (spouses may invest separately).
- The offer is available for new funds only (no transfers from existing LCEF accounts).

The 40-month anniversary note is being offered to raise \$100 million in additional capital to assist in meeting LCEF's loan demand. Ministries are expanding literally around the world, and LCEF wants to be in position to help those ministries continue to grow!

The 40-month note at 4% investment offer will expire once the \$100 million goal is achieved, so be to take advantage of this opportunity soon. Applications are available at the church, or you may visit lcef.org/40month to print an application. If you have questions about this investment or the application process, please call LCEF at 800-843-5233.

Lutheran Church Extension Fund National Office: 10733 Sunset Office Drive, Suite 300 St. Louis, MO 63127- 1020. Phone number: 800-843-5233. Website: lcef.org. LCEF is a nonprofit religious organization; therefore, LCEF investments are not FDIC-insured bank deposit accounts. This is not an offer to sell investments, nor a solicitation to buy. LCEF will offer and sell its securities only in states where authorized. The offer is made solely by LCEF's Offering Circular. Investors should carefully read the Offering Circular, which more fully describes associated risks. Lutheran Church Extension Fund-Missouri Synod (NMLS# 3444).



STEWARDSHIP CORNER

Sometimes people don't like it when pastors talk about stewardship. For some, it hits too close to home. It is easier to talk about bad people in Washington, in history, or overseas than it is to think about what our daily life in Christ is supposed to look like – how we are supposed to love our neighbor.

The fact that we don't like hearing about stewardship certainly means we ought to face it. Here are a few simple and practical realities.

God calls us to first-fruits, sacrificial giving. This means we should give off the top. We should set a percentage of our income as a deliberate gift for the work of the Church and give that first. We write the check to the Lord's work in the Church before we pay the mortgage or pay for our medicine or pay for anything else.

We don't pay for all the stuff we need, and think we need, and then give from what is left over. That is the first-fruits idea. It is hard because we think we need all sorts of other things first. But that is the point of "sacrificial."

Next, how could the starting point for Christian generosity and sacrifice really be anything less than a tithe – 10 percent? The ceremonial law of the Old Testament was never arbitrary. In the Old Testament, the Levites received this tithe so they could be full-time ministers.

Does the New Testament have a ministry that is larger or smaller? It is far larger: "Make disciples of all nations" (Matt. 28:19). And we are still to have a full-time ministry: "The Lord has commanded that those who preach the Gospel should make their living from the Gospel" (1 Cor. 9:14).

So, if 10 percent was needed in the Old Testament, and we have a bigger mission need in the New Testament, how can we expect the Lord's work to be done on less than a tithe?

First-fruits, sacrificial, generous giving – that's the way. We shouldn't fool ourselves into thinking that we've out-given God's goodness or that we've given plenty.

We might be tempted to think so but consider – no one in the Church has given plenty because no one has given all. No one has died for his sins. Only the sinless Son of God did that.

Or, as St. Paul said, bringing the Good News of Jesus into the discussion of our giving to support the Lord's work in the Church:

"I say this not as a command, but to prove by the earnestness of others that your love also is genuine. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich" (2 Cor. 8:8-9).

As you can see, what the Bible commands about our stewardship can sting. It's law, and the law shows our sins. It calls us to repentance.

The law is meant to expose and accuse for the sake of showing us Christ and His fulfillment of the law. If first-fruits, sacrificial giving has you squirming, that's the point.

In Mark's account of the feeding of the 5,000, Jesus took the disciples' five loaves and two fish and blessed them. It was nothing among so many, but, of course, it was plenty. Jesus makes something from nothing.

Mark doesn't say that all the disciples gave Jesus all the bread they had. It is quite possible some of them held something back. But even if they did, that didn't stop Jesus from blessing them. Jesus makes something out of nothing.

He, who fed His people in the desert with Manna every morning, doesn't need their bread. But they need to give it. And what they give, however little it might be, however grudgingly they do so, He blesses it.

He not only blesses those whom He feeds with it, but He blesses them, the givers – not just in that they wind up with (a basket full for each loaf) but that they learned to trust and rejoice in Him.

The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away. The Lord gives abundantly or asks us to fast. We do not know what will happen. Blessed be the Name of the Lord.

He does all things well and works all things together for good. The disciples don't give their bread to Jesus because it is a good investment. They give it because He is good, they love Him, and they trust Him. Let us go and do likewise.

ACOLYTES



Sat Nov 3 5:00 p.m. + Jesse Heath & Gavin Schroeder
Sun Nov 4 7:45 a.m. + Cole Johnson & Max Blechle
10:00 a.m. + Sydney Collins & Nicholas Collins
Sat Nov 10 5:00 p.m. Jordan Buskohl
Sun Nov 11 7:45 a.m. Noah Homan
10:00 a.m. Evan Dunning
Sat Nov 17 5:00 p.m. Camryn Luthy
Sun Nov 18 7:45 a.m. Aden Runge
10:00 a.m. Joshua Sims
Thanksgiving Nov 22 9:00 a.m. Landon Hornbostel
Sat Nov 24 5:00 p.m. Clayton Kothe
Sun Nov 25 7:45 a.m. Kinsli McCartney
10:00 a.m. Isaac Sims

USHER TEAMS

Sat Nov 3 5:00 pm Volunteer
Sun Nov 4 7:45 am Dennis Kontz
10:00 am Gray Eggemeyer
Sat Nov 10 5:00 pm Volunteer
Sun Nov 11 7:45 am Ron Rathert
10:00 am Rick Casten
Sat Nov 17 5:00 pm Volunteer
Sun Nov 18 7:45 am Gary Duensing
10:00 am Don Stallman
Thanksgiving Nov 22 9:00 a.m. Ron Rathert
Sat Nov 24 5:00 pm Volunteer
Sun Nov 25 7:45 am Dennis Kontz
10:00 am Gary Eggemeyer

ALTAR GUILD



Nov 3 & 17 Larry & Sharon Congleton, Sherry Bohnert,
Melvin & Edna Neislein
Nov 4 & 18 Fred & Barb Fricke
Nov 11 & 25 Dr. Stephen Platt, Ron & Anne Rathert, Mike & Barb Welge
Nov 29 Fred & Barb Fricke, Mike & Barb Welge

WORSHIP SERVICES

Saturday 5:00 p.m., Sunday 7:45 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.
Sunday School and Bible Class at 9:00 a.m.
Sunday Worship Broadcast on KSGM 980 AM
online at ksgm980.com

GREETERS

Sat Nov 3 5:00 pm Vicki Search
Sun Nov 4 7:45 am Collette Powely
10:00 am Mary Stallman
Sat Nov 10 5:00 pm Marian Knop
Sun Nov 11 7:45 am Mary Loos
10:00 am Dolores Hillerman
Sat Nov 17 5:00 pm Ruby Schirmer
Sun Nov 18 7:45 am Barb McCormick
10:00 am Barb Welge
Sat Nov 24 5:00 pm Amber Cushman
Sun Nov 25 7:45 am Gennine Westerman
10:00 am Myrna Campbell

RADIO ANNOUNCER & TECHNICIANS

Nov 4 Mardell Granger / Tony Young
Nov 11 Chris Urquhart / Charlie Bargman
Nov 18 Chris Colvis / Lynn Rickenberg
Nov 22 Chris Colvis / Bob Platt
Nov 25 Mike Welge / Bob Platt



WEEKEND JANITORS

Nov 3/4 Ron Cushman / Chris Urquhart
Nov 10/11 Lisa Meade / Gary Kelkhoff
Nov 17/18 Larry McDonough
Thanksgiving Nov 22 Dennis Mott
24/25 Lisa Meade / Ryan Petrowske

ALUMINUM CANS

Oct 29– Nov 3 Larry McDonough
Nov 12–17 Brett Klindworth
Nov 19– 24 Fred Fricke
Nov 26– Dec 1 Larry McDonough



CHURCH E-MAIL

Rev. Timothy Sims- timoteosims@hotmail.com
Rev. Justin Massey- Justin.Massey@ctsfcw.edu
Kelly Walls— secretary@stjohnchester.com
Tammy Crawford— nurse@stjohnchester.com

St. John Ev. Lutheran Church
302 W. Holmes Street
Chester, Illinois 62233

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JESUS LOVES:



November

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BIBLE TREASURE HUNT:



Bible Incomplete: Fill in the missing letters to complete the passage.

Then _aid t_ey un_o him, _hat s_all w_ do, th_t we m_ght w_rk th_ work_ of Go_? Jesu_ answ_red a_d sai_ unto
_hem, T_is is _he wo_k of G_d, tha_ ye be_ieve _n him _hom h_hath _ent.

Answer to last month's Bible Treasure Hunt:

Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. Galatians 3:21

CAPPERS

CAPPERS will meet on Sunday, November 4 at 1:00 p.m. to play cards and have a light meal in the Parish Hall.

NEW FACILITY

We are thankful this Thanksgiving season for all the donations we have received. One way you can show your thankfulness to God during this Thanksgiving season is with a donation to the New Facility Fund. Many people share the dream of a new school for our children as evidenced by the growing of this account. The latest total is \$549,711.10. Be a part of the future.



CALLING ALL BAKERS!

The LWML ladies are organizing a Christmas Bake Sale on December 8. We will have Christmas stollens, cookie trays, and assorted candies, snacks and breads. We asking for your help again this year to make it a success. We need homemade items made from scratch, not store bought or box mix, but good old baked goods & candy like Grandma used to make. If you have a family favorite that you would be willing to donate please call Kathy Sprengel at 826-4121.

