

ST. JOHN'S NEWSLETTER

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Hearing/Handicapped Assistance Available



BUILT ON CHRIST OUR CORNERSTONE

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“Conversion Part 4: God’s Work through the Gospel in Conversion”

Last month we learned that God works conversion in us through means of His Word. We also noted that before a person is converted (brought to saving faith in Christ), they also need to know that they are condemned sinners under God’s righteous wrath so that they would know their need for Jesus as their Savior. This preliminary work of contrition (godly sorrow over sin) is affected by the Holy Spirit through the Law (John 16:8; Romans 3:20) and is absolutely necessary for one to be converted. Yet, it is not, of itself, conversion.

God’s holy Law cannot give new life (conversion) for it is the ministry of condemnation and death (2 Corinthians 3:6-7, 9). This does *not* make it “bad.” First of all, the fault is not with the Law but with us, we are the ones who have broken it! Second, as noted above, only after we know our terrible state (the diagnosis of the Law) are we ready to receive the medicine (the Gospel of Jesus Christ). Yet, the diagnosis is not the medicine. The medicine is the Gospel.

“Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ” (Romans 10:17). The Gospel, the “word of Christ,” is “the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes” (Romans 1:16). It is the word of truth by which believers are brought forth (James 1:18), the living and abiding word of God by which sinners are born again, being converted from sin to faith in Christ (1 Peter 1:23). Thus the Gospel is the ministry of the Spirit and of righteousness (2 Corinthians 3:6, 8-9), for the Spirit gives life through the Gospel, the message that for Christ’s sake all your sins are forgiven and His perfect righteousness covers you. A person who believes this, that is, *is converted*, will be able to confidently stand before the judgment seat of God.

It must also be taught and confessed that this saving Gospel comes through the Christian Sacrament of Holy Baptism. Jesus Himself referred to Baptism as being born again of water and the Spirit (John 3:3, 5; cf. 1 Peter 1:23 with the similar language of “born again”¹). Peter declared that Baptism gives the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38), which makes sense because Baptism is the washing of water with the Gospel Word (Ephesians 5:26).² Therefore, Baptism truly is “the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit” (Titus 3:5). Peter boldly writes “Baptism...now saves you” (1 Peter 3:21) which again indicates beyond all doubt that the Holy Spirit works conversion through Baptism, giving faith, for only believers are saved (John 3:16).³ Therefore Jesus proclaimed, “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved” (Mark 16:16).

Let us take a moment to consider two practical outcomes of the doctrinal truths about conversion that we have presented in the last few articles. First, Scripture is clear that there are only *two* causes in a person’s conversion: 1) the Holy Spirit’s working (efficient cause) and 2) the Gospel in Word and Baptism (instrumental cause). Those who would add to this last a third cause, namely “the assenting will of man” (“decide for Jesus” theology) deny the Scripture which says that mankind is dead in sin (e.g. Ephesians 2:1) and so wickedly steal some of the credit and glory for their salvation from God who alone deserves all the glory! They also reject Baptism as a means of grace,

¹ The Greek words in the two texts are not exactly the same, but they are synonyms.

² The Word connected with the water must be the Gospel and not the Law since the text declares that it is a cleansing water.

³ The fact that faith and baptism should not be set against each other is further indicated when one considers that John 3:16 (faith), follows and is connected to the previous teaching on Baptism in 3:3, 5.

which then commonly leads to rejecting infant baptism, and they thereby hinder the children from coming to Jesus (Mark 10:14)!

Second, what we have learned about conversion so far is also incredibly important for evangelism, pastoral care, and ongoing perseverance in saving faith. It reminds us that God, in His divine freedom, *has chosen* to work through the means of His Word and Sacraments. We are not to look for the Holy Spirit to work faith apart from these means. Therefore, we need to be sure that we are hearing the Word, receiving the Lord's Supper, and encouraging others to do the same, for a faith that is separated from these means has been removed from its spiritual (the Holy Spirit!) life support and so will eventually die. But when that faith keeps hearing the word of Christ and feeds upon His body and blood, then that faith is also receiving the life-giving Spirit who works through the Gospel, and so it will persevere. And it is this last point, *persevering faith*, which will lead us to consider next month the necessity of "continuing conversion."

In Christ our dear Lord to Whom we have been graciously converted,

Pastor Nerd

Apologetics: Flowers are *still* Darwin's "abominable mystery"⁴

In 1879, some twenty years after the publication of his famous *Origin of Species*, Charles Darwin wrote a letter to botanist Dr. Joseph Hooker. One sentence in particular underscored a vexing problem for evolutionary theory: "The rapid development as far as we can judge of all the higher plants within recent geological times is an abominable mystery."¹ By 'higher plants' Darwin had in mind the plants he viewed as being the most 'highly evolved', i.e. the Angiosperms—plants with flowers (with seeds produced inside the female reproductive organ). As BBC Science put it, "The famous naturalist was haunted by the question of how the first flowering plants evolved."²

Although many evolutionary scientists since then have tried to address this issue that "haunted" Darwin, the problem remains. "One hundred and forty years later, the mystery's still unsolved," acknowledged University of London evolutionary biologist, Professor Richard Buggs. "Of course, we've made lots of progress in our understanding of evolution and in our knowledge of the fossil record, but this mystery is still there."

So, flowers are still an evolutionary mystery, in spite of the vastly increased knowledge of the fossil record. Professor Buggs says of the fossil record leap from gymnosperms (e.g. firs, spruce, pine trees): "Why can't we see intermediate forms between the gymnosperms—things like conifers—and the flowering plants?"

Evolutionarily 'out-of-place'

Buggs refers to "our knowledge of the fossil record" but this has to be selective knowledge. Evolutionists have to ignore or try to explain away various 'out-of-place' angiosperm fossils from beneath their supposed first appearance in Cretaceous rocks. For example, fossil "pollen of the Compositae" (the daisy family), which is found all the way down in the Precambrian, presumed by evolutionists to encompass the time that life first evolved.^{3,4} This would mean flowering plants preceded the allegedly 'more primitive' plants, such as algae, mosses, ferns, and pine trees. Little wonder evolutionary theorists are 'allergic' to Precambrian pollen!^{5,6}

Flowers from the beginning

The Bible actually places the origin of all plants—algae, mosses, ferns, pine trees, and the flowering plants—on Day 3 of Creation Week; not billions of years ago, but only about 6,000. And from the Bible we can conclude the 'fossil record' does not display the order of evolution over long time periods, but rather the order of burial during and since the global Flood of Noah's day, about 4,500 years ago.

So, for those who despite the evidence and the Bible's eyewitness account want to cling doggedly to evolutionary ideas, Darwin's "abominable mystery" remains. For Bible-believing Christians, however, there is no mystery.

References and notes

1. Cambridge University, Darwin Correspondence Project: Letter to J.D. Hooker 22 Jul 1879, darwinproject.ac.uk.
2. Briggs, H., New light shed on Charles Darwin's 'abominable mystery', bbc.com, 23 Jan 2021. (Unless otherwise indicated, quotes and other information in our article come from this source.) Return to text.

⁴ By David Catchpoole; January 2022. <https://creation.com/flowers-still-darwins-abominable-mystery?>

3. Stainforth, R.M. Occurrence of pollen and spores in the Roraima Formation of Venezuela and British Guiana, *Nature* **210**(5033):292–294, 1966.
4. Bailey, P.B.H., Possible microfossils found in the Roraima Formation in British Guiana, *Nature* **202**(4930):384, 1964.
5. Silvestru, E. and Wieland, C., [Pollen paradox: Evolutionists have ‘allergic’ reaction to Precambrian pollen—South American fossils more than a billion evolutionary years ‘out of date’](http://creation.com/pollen-paradox), *Creation* **33**(3):16–17, 2011; creation.com/pollen-paradox.
6. Batten, D., [Pollen problem](http://creation.com/pollen-problem), *Creation* **36**(2):56, 2014; creation.com/pollen-problem.

A LOOK at the LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS

Last month, we continued our look at Article XXIV, The Mass. There we rightly condemned the use of the Mass, that is, the Sacrament of the Altar, as a money-making tool. This month we present the Scriptural understanding of salvation in contrast to the Roman Church’s teaching on the Mass.

Augsburg Confession Article XXIV: The Mass, 21-29⁵

An opinion was added that infinitely increased private Masses.⁶ It states that Christ, by His passion,⁷ made satisfaction for original sin and instituted the Mass as an offering for daily sins, both venial and mortal.⁸ From this opinion has arisen the common belief that the Mass takes away the sins of the living and the dead⁹ simply by performing the outward act. Then they begin to argue about whether one Mass said for many is worth as much as special Masses for individuals. This resulted in an infinite number of Masses. With this work, people wanted to obtain from God all that they needed, and in the meantime, trust in Christ and true worship were forgotten.

Our teachers have warned that these opinions depart from the Holy Scripture and diminish the glory of the passion of Christ. For Christ’s passion was an offering and satisfaction, not only for original guilt, but also for all other sins, as it is written, “We have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Hebrews 10:10). Also, “By a single offering He has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified” (Hebrews 10:14). It is an unheard-of innovation in the Church to teach that by His death Christ has made satisfaction only for original sin and not for all other sin. So it is hoped that everybody will understand that this error has been rebuked for good reason.

Scripture teaches that we are justified before God, through faith in Christ, when we believe that our sins are forgiven for Christ’s sake. Now if the Mass takes away the sins of the living and the dead simply by performing it, justification comes by doing Masses, and not of faith. Scripture does not allow this.



Another work day is scheduled for **Saturday, June 3rd** beginning at 8 am. Work will be mainly on outside projects concentrating on the outdoor worship area. If work continue to the noon hour, lunch will be provided. Many hands will help make the work easier and quicker. Thank you!!

ANNIVERSARY THANKSGIVING OFFERING

As been our custom since the dedication of this building, the offering from the first Sunday in June was given to Laborers for Christ and more recently Synod Disaster Response. This year a plate will be on the table under the office window. You may give your freewill gifts toward the Disaster Response in thanksgiving for all God’s blessings to St. John’s. The plate will be out for the next three Sundays.

⁵ From *Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions*, Paul McCain, Ed. CPH, 2006. Due to the length of this Article, it is being broken into smaller sections.

⁶ These were private celebrations of the Mass done for various reasons, but which brought great income into the church.

⁷ *Passion* is Latin for “suffering.”

⁸ Sins that either do (venial) or do not (mortal) allow a person to remain in a state of grace. While both use these terms, there is disagreement between the Lutheran Church and the Roman Church on the definitions of these terms. However, the point here is that Jesus’ death didn’t completely earn forgiveness and salvation, since the sacrifice of the Mass is needed to forgive sins. Based upon Scripture, we obviously disagree, as our Confession here declares.

⁹ Those in purgatory, another unbiblical concoction.

USHERS NEEDED

The Elders have placed a sign-up sheet for those willing to volunteer to be ushers for church services on a monthly basis on the table next to the coat room. We need at least three per month but would like to have four. Please be aware that both men and women can be ushers. We would also like to encourage those of confirmation age and those of high school age to volunteer. Also, thank you to those who have served as ushers in the past.



SAVE THE DATE

Faith Lutheran Church, 620 Hepner Drive, Kewanee IL is hosting a service of Song and Prayer Friday, June 2 @ 2pm. Join with your brothers and sisters in Christ to sing songs of prayer and praise to the Lord who continues to bless you daily. Hope you will be able to join us.

“But let all who take refuge in you rejoice, let them ever sing for joy.” Psalm 5

PASTOR ON VACATION

Pastor Nerud and his family will be on vacation June 19th – July 9th. Reverend Mueller will be available for emergencies (989-928-6603 c). Reverend Hagen will lead Adult Bible class and worship services June 25 and July 2. Reverend Brondos will lead Adult Bible class and worship July 9th. If you have any other issues you may call an Elder (Carl Freeman, Aaron Raschke, Preston Smith) or the church office for help.

COME ONE – COME ALL- MEN-WOMEN-CHILDREN

The Rev. Jonathan Clausung, LCMS missionary in Tanzania, is back in the USA. He serves as theological educator at St. Peter Theological Seminary in Himo, Tansania, teaching a variety of courses in multiple departments.

Rev. Clausung, his wife and six of their children will be HERE at St. John's on Tuesday, June 13. He will be presenting a program on his work in Tanzania, Africa.

Doors will be open and desserts will be served at 12:30 pm. The program will begin at 1:00 pm. In support of his ministry there will be a freewill offering.

So we have an idea of how many will be attending, please sign the sheet on the table by the coat room.

GROWING IN THE WORD OF GOD

- Sunday morning Adult Bible class – 8:45am in the Fellowship Hall. The study of the book of Colossians is completed. The new study is the book of Nehemiah.
- Men's Bible Study – 7 pm the first Thursday of each month. The current study is 'Lost Books?' Don't miss this opportunity to grow in God's word as well as build and strengthen relationships with other men at St. John's.



“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 Corinthians 8:9). ‘A Dollar for Missions’ is a project hosted by Evangelism/Stewardship Bds. One EXTRA dollar given by EACH member of the churches of the Central IL District Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, will enable tremendous Mission work to be accomplished.

The new project is a 12-passenger van for University Lutheran Church, Champaign. CID President Michael Mohr has announced that DFM funds received so far and those being received for some time to come will go to this congregation for support of a van purchase.

This project is the next on a list approved by the CID Board of Directors las January. The previous projects turned out to be non-starters when vicars were not assigned to Immanuel, Springfield or for Spanish language work in Beardstown. Placement of pastoral candidates and 2023-2024 vicars occurred at the two LCMS seminaries in late April.



A Dollar for
Missions

University Lutheran (affectionately called “UniLu”) envisions using a van in two main ways; shuttling students to Sunday services and providing transportation for activities, retreats, and service projects throughout the year.

As of the end of April, a total of \$9,483.19 in DFM money has been received at CID office. When this total reaches \$35,000, the van project will be funded. Then President Mohr will announce that DFM money from that point on will support the next project, for Prison Ministry.

BLANKETS FOR PHIL’S FRIENDS

A big ‘Thank You’ to those who took a blanket and tied the fringe. We shipped 9 blankets for use in the cancer comfort boxes. Your kindness will surround 9 patients with warmth and comfort.

BABY BOTTLE BOOMERANG

St. John’s members are filling Baby bottles for Pregnancy Resources. This project, which began Mothers’ Day, will continue until Fathers’ Day. Anyone can pick up a bottle, place your monetary gift in the bottle and return it to the church office at your earliest convenience. These gifts help to save the lives of babies.

CHRISTIAN LIVING

(A message from Stewardship & Evangelism)

What Do You Want?

One of the best-known and most-beloved psalms is Psalm 23, the “Shepherd Psalm.” There we learn that the Lord is our Shepherd. And since He is our Shepherd, we will not want. We will not suffer want because the Lord, our Shepherd, will lead us to green pastures and beside still waters. In other words, the Lord, our Shepherd, will provide for all that we need in both body and soul.

Yet, we live as though this is not the case. We live as though we *actually* suffer from want, that the Lord, our Shepherd, will not provide for all that we need. And thus, we live as though the Lord is not our Shepherd. And that means that we live as though we are not the Lord’s sheep.

When do we live as though the Lord is not our Shepherd? When we put anything else before Him and His provision for us. When we think that going to work is more important than receiving His gifts in church on Sunday (in violation of the First and Third Commandments). When we fail to give generously of the first fruits of what the Lord has provided for us because we don’t know what the future will bring (even though He has promised that He will lead us to green pastures and still waters).

We live as though we are not the Lord’s sheep when we think that the Lord is only in the business of helping those who will help themselves. We act this way because our minds are set on earthly, temporal things and not on heavenly, eternal things. We act this way because we have stopped hearing the call of our Shepherd, which comes through His Word.

Through the Word of God, the Shepherd calls us to Himself. Through the Word, the Holy Spirit gathers and enlightens us with His gifts. Through the Word, we are kept holy and nourished in the one true faith, the faith that follows our Shepherd wherever He leads us. He promises to lead us to our true home, to the land flowing with milk and honey, to a better country, not of this world, but a heavenly one.

And so, here’s the Good News: the Lord is your Shepherd, even and especially for wayward sheep. For Jesus seeks and saves those who are lost. He finds the lost sheep and carries them back to the fold. He is the Shepherd who lays down His life for His sheep. The Lord is your Shepherd. Let us live as His sheep.

– LCMS Stewardship Ministry: lcms.org/stewardship

As the faithful witness, Jesus shows us what witnessing is all about. Many encounters, various settings, differing reactions, addressing one great need and showing God’s love, mercy, and grace through the cross.

“Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know and bear witness to what we have seen but you do not receive our testimony as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his



only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. John 3:11-18

SERVING

We are all part of a variety of different groups/organizations. We each have our families, work place, social groups, and even the church to name just a few. When each member works for the good of whatever group they are a part of, all flourish and much is accomplished.

St. John's congregation has many areas that need willing volunteers. All have been given talents and abilities intended for use in serving others. Following is a short list of areas you might give some consideration. Undoubtably you can also think of other ways to benefit St. John's.

Ushers

Song leader during communion

Gardening (maintain the plantings around church property)

Cooking (funeral luncheons, potluck, etc.)

Teaching (Sunday school, Bible Study)

Food/Care (for shut-ins, elderly, sick)

Prayer Chain

Work with the Youth

Altar Guild

Care for Sunday Altar flowers

Annual church work days

Driver for shut-ins, elderly, sick

Serve on a church council board



MEMBERSHIP UPDATES

Jacob Johnson – 309-312-0145, jacobwjohnson101@gmail.com

Timothy Wolfe – timothywolfe@gmail.com

JUNE Birthdays

1 Jessica Johnson

1 Jerry Hickenbottom

4 Aidan Coppejans

6 Mike Kolb

7 Darla Johns

7 John Neumann

7 Kem Schillinger

8 Coni Himmelman



8 Katrina Nerud

9 Richard Anderson

12 Paula Chapa

12 Emerson Mitchell

12 Seth Winchell

13 Mandolyn Davila

16 Rachael Himmelman

16 Denise Winchell

18 Sharilyn Iliff

18 Sandra Rahn

19 Nicole Nerud

24 Haillie Miller

24 Rodney Miller

25 Rosalie Jorgensen

27 Kyle Rahn

28 Liz Neumann

JUNE Anniversaries

6 Rufus/Kristin Hamby (2013) - 10 yr

7 Gary/Darla Johns (1964) - 59 yr

14 David/Denise Schmedt (2015) - 8 yr

15 Evan/Kate Rocheford (2019) – 4 yr

18 Arlyn/Marcia Helke (1967) - 56 yr



20 Justin/Justine Mitchell (2009) - 14 yr

22 Jay/Janelle Gibson (2014) - 9 yr

24 Fred/Sheila Magerkurth (1962) - 61 yr

25 Bill/Julie Lage (1999) - 24 yr

27 Mike/Francie Kolb (1970) - 53 yr

JUNE Baptisms

2 Rylie Hallendorff

3 Jennifer Magerkurth

4 Dan Werner

5 Harrison Wright

6 Ben Schillinger

8 Matthew Gehn

8 Linda White

10 Kyle Wickwire

12 Addison Jorgensen

14 Gannon Marckese

15 Linda Aper

16 Charles Johnson

16 Theresa Mosher

17 Randall Rasmussen

18 Martin Himmelman

18 Janice Neeld

22 Mike Dahl

22 Lindsey Gustafson



24 Payten Helg

26 Richard Anderson

26 Craig Mosher

27 Gabe Loenser

28 Kyle Miller

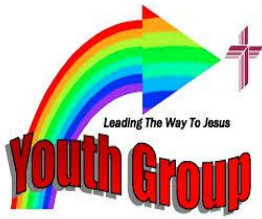
29 Claire Yerkey

30 Marcia Helke

30 Jacob Miller

ALTAR FLOWERS

Celebrate a special occasion with flowers given for a Sunday worship service. Sign the flower chart, found on the bulletin board next to the rest rooms. **NOTE: Cost for 2 arrangements is \$30.** Put money in a yellow envelope (found by the chart). Fill in the date for the flowers along and occasion/memory and place envelope in the offering plate. Flowers will be ordered by the office and picked up for you.



- We will meet the 2nd Sunday in June, since the 3rd Sunday is Father's Day. Sandy will be contacting the youth about a fun day at Arcadia Family Fun Center in Geneseo during June and a week-end to do a lock-in in the month of July.
- June 25 we are invited to go with the Rock Island Circuit Youth to visit Starved Rock. We will carpool from Concordia, Geneseo at 1:30. There will be hiking, exploring, and supper returning to Concordia at 7:00pm. Please let Sandy know if you are going by June 11th.
- Other plans for RICY is a pool party in July, details forth coming. And on Aug 6 Taylor Ridge will host baseball/kickball and a wiener roast starting at 4:00pm.

Preparations are being made for Vacation Bible School. Curriculum has been selected. We have contacted parents to check on unavailable dates so we can choose date for VBS.

We are planning a 'Family Fun Night' in August. The whole congregation will be invited to attend.



Please note SS meetings are moved back to the fourth Thursday of each month beginning at 6:30 pm.

PRAYER GROUP (CHAIN)

All are invited to participate either by becoming an email prayer warrior or asking for prayers. Prayer warriors receive requested prayers from the Pastor via email which then can be used as they pray throughout the day. Those desiring prayers can make a request to the Pastor.

This is a blessing to those requesting prayers and those praying for our brothers/sisters in need of prayers.



Please call the office or Pastor when someone is ill, hospitalized, or homebound or you desire private communion.

- Please use this email to contact the office: churchoffice@stjohnsgeneseo.org
- Website address – www.stjohnsgeneseo.org
- Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/St.Johns.Geneseo/>
- All Sunday services are 'Live' streamed at 10am and posted to our church website the following day.
- All newsletter articles need to be into the office no later than the 15th of each month.
- Bulletin announcements must be to Terri by Wednesday morning each week.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Our Infrequent Attendees – pray the Holy Spirit bring them to understand their need to be in regular worship in church and we as brothers and sisters in Christ would reach out to them.

Our LWML Chapter – that God would continue to bless their work.

Sunday school – pray the Holy Spirit would direct and guide the students to a better understanding of God's love and mercy in Jesus Christ and that all parents would be diligent in bringing their children each Sunday.

Youth – pray the Holy Spirit would provide the means to work with our youth to keep them faithful to their confirmation promises. Bless and increase their numbers.

Elderly/Homebound - pray that this congregation would continually remember our Elderly and Shut-ins and minister to their special needs.



Confirmation Students – pray that they will be eager to study, learn and grow in the teachings of the Lutheran church and their faith. May they see this is the beginning of a life lived for Jesus.

REMEMBERING THOSE IN NEED!

ST. JOHN'S FAMILY—O Lord, You are the great Physician of soul and body. We pray that You would show mercy these members of St. John's:

Elizabeth Bjork	Lois Esterlein	Lynne Johnson	Wanda Rahn
Paula Chapa	Betty Firch	Jessica Johnson	Marilyn Woods
Jim Dahl	Arlyn Helke	Drew Schillinger	Mary Jayne Nash
Anthony/Sami Sedotto (Seminararian)		Andrew/Sarah Hill & family (Seminararian)	
Don Eggers (son of friend of Marilyn Woods)		Jodie Martin (daughter of Gary/Darla Johns)	
Jon/Anita Clausing (missionaries in Kenya)		Marilyn Potts (wife of Cal Potts, former LFC)	
Rev. Justin Kane (son of Sandra Kane)		Laurie Sanford (sister of Jan Dahl)	
Mike Erdman (nephew of Bob Erdman)		Kim Riedy (cousin of Mary Jo Gehn)	
Shandel Loenser (wife of Gabe Loenser)			

(Please remember to call the church office if you are needing prayer. Also let us know when we can remove your name because your health has improved and you are living a regular life. We love to give thanks to God for His healing just as we send Him our requests.)

MILITARY – We pray for those serving in our military and their families:

Mandy/Richard Davila (daughter/husband of Linda Aper)	Casey Powers Jr. (step son of Lisa Powers)
Luke/Nicole Thompson (son/wife of John/Kindra Thompson)	Zachary/Tiffany Gardner (nephew/wife of Lois Esterlein)
Karl Flynn (son of Mr/Mrs Paul Flynn)	Brittany Loenser (daughter of Gabe Loenser)



NEWS YOU CAN USE May 2023

“My dad is stronger than your dad!” 12 year old Thomas said to his friends. An argument ensued regarding whose dad was strongest, richest, smartest, etc. Then the children began bragging about the important people their fathers knew. “My dad knows the mayor,” one boy bragged. Another chimed in, “My dad knows a U.S. senator!” A third boy said, “My dad knows the governor!” Thomas didn’t think his dad knew any important people. He didn’t know what to say. Then he remembered that his dad would bring his mom and his two sisters to church every Sunday. His dad would often help with the worship service and sometimes remained afterwards to speak with the pastor. Thomas blurted out proudly, “My dad knows God!” The other boys were silent.

Many people claim to know about God. But not nearly as many truly know God. To know about God means little. James 2:19 tells us that the devil knows that much! To know God is to know him as our Father and creator, and to rejoice that he knows us. To know God is to praise and honor him with our words and our actions. It is to believe what he says in the Bible, to frequently speak to Him in prayer, and to trust that through Jesus we are saved from sin and death.

Those who know God tell others about him. We do not brag about knowing God. Rather, we boast about all the wonderful things he has done and continues to do for us. This Father’s Day, may we boast in the Lord and celebrate that we have a Father who loves us always and forever.

Rev. Jeff Harter

Items of Interest to Share

Dollar for Missions projects: Your congregation is invited to propose a project for Dollar for Missions funding in 2024! The deadline for applications is September 1, 2023. Projects will be funded in the following order of priority: 1.) new church starts; 2.) mission-focused augmentations to existing ministries; and 3.) established CID missions. For more, see the Guidelines and Resources document available at <http://www.cidlcms.org/outreach-missions-commission.html> or contact Ken Schurb at the District office.

CID Bible Bowl Results: Congratulations to Mt. Calvary (Galesburg) Team A for their first place first in the CID 2023 District Bible Bowl. The team members were Nikki C., Ezra S., and Seeley K. Second place was the Mt. Calvary B team, and Good Shepherd -Sherman was third place. Please plan on having a team next year; the theme will be released later.

Small Church Summit - June 3rd, 2023 - Concordia Lutheran Church (NEW LOCATION), 2300 E. Wilshire Rd -Springfield, IL - 10:00 am-2:30 pm (ice Cream social after the event)

Please Register by May 26th.

Small Church Summit provides churches of any size a free opportunity to gather with folks from other small CID and SID churches, to share encouragement and plans, learn together, and hone in on priorities for your church.

The featured presenter will be Pastor Todd Kollbaum, Director of LCMS Rural and Small Town Mission. He will talk about *resources* and *cooperation*:

- Helps for small churches
- Ways for various congregations to work together

Trip Rodgers of CID staff will speak briefly concerning the Synod's national contract with Ministry Safe, a firm that provides churches with background checks and other tools for the safety of children. Your congregation can get involved with Ministry Safe this year at no cost! Please register by May 26th at <https://forms.gle/PPzJpC72NJhCZqME8>

A LETTER FROM OUR SEMINARIAN, ANTHONY SEDOTTO

Dear St John's Lutheran Church

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ! He is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! I pray that this letter finds you in good health during this Easter season! It's crazy to me that the season of lent is already over, and that Pentecost is only a few Sundays away...time really does fly by.

This is especially true now, being that call day just occurred and the next vicar for St. Paul Lutheran Church has already been announced; having a new vicar starting in a few months really makes the ending of my vicarage seem a lot closer than I feel comfortable with because I am truly enjoying my time here, as is my wife! It will be sad to leave the friends and community we have made here. But, I'm glad for the next vicar, as I know that he will have a great experience like me!

And speaking of wonderful experiences, as this letter reaches you, I will be away on my first vacation of the year, spending 10 days in Italy! This has always been a dream of mine and I am almost flabbergasted that I will really be there in only a few days...it truly seems unreal! But, my wife and I have been blessed and were able to save up money for a while to make this dream come into a reality! Now we are looking forward to enjoying some meats and cheeses and wine as we go across Naples, Rome, and Tuscany. Not only that, but we are also very excited to see all of the places that we learned about in school, especially Rome of the cathedrals in Rome and The Vatican.

When we get back from Italy, it will be crunch time until the end of vicarage – not so much in terms of workload, but more so in terms of trying to get in all those things that we wanted to do while we were here that we never quite seemed to get around to. We will be spending time with family, visiting some Florida destinations, and spending as much time at the beach as we can before we become landlocked in St. Louis again as we finish of that fourth year of seminary.

I came into this year unsure of my abilities to be a pastor, but I am grateful to be leaving with the confidence instilled in me through this vicarage, and it is all possible through the generous support of people like you. So, thank you once again for your generous support! Happy Easter!

God's peace and blessings, Anthony Sedotto

A LETTER FROM OUR SEMINARIAN, ANDREW HILL

Dear friends, family and all who have so generously supported us.

First of all, I apologize for not getting an update to you before call night. It was my intention to do so but was hampered by sickness and life in general.

It has been a very full few months for my family. Our most important news is that my wife safely delivered a son on May 1st. Adam Russell Hill was born at 8# 5oz and 21 in. He was baptized into Christ last Sunday (5/7). His siblings are absolutely thrilled about him and love him to pieces.

As you may have noticed, I did not take a call this year. I chose to stay at the seminary for additional studies first. I hesitated to spread my plans too widely in case they fell through. However, everything is official now. I have been accepted into the PhD in Theological Studies program here at CTSFW. It is a four-year program: two years of classes, one of reading examinations and one year for the dissertation. While I do not have to have a dissertation thesis proposal until year three, my intention is to study some combination of Christology and the doctrine of the Trinity. During this time, I will have some minor teaching responsibilities. The first step will be language examinations in German, Latin, and Greek. Preparation for these will fill my summer.

These past months in general, but particularly these past weeks have been filled with ups and downs. I thank God for the opportunities he has given me, and I am eager to use the gifts he has given me for to the glory of his name. It has been bittersweet to watch my brothers receive calls. This is what we all have trained for these four years. Yet I rejoice in their faithfulness and am eager to see their work in the Lord's harvest. I look forward to the day when, Lord willing, I will be called to join them.

Thank you for all your support and especially your prayers. Please continue to pray for me and my family as we enter this new phase of education and preparation for the ministry.

Peace be with you, Andrew R. Hill

*Now I have found a firm foundation
Which holds mine anchor ever sure:
'Twas laid before the world's creation
In Christ my Savior's wounds secure:
Foundation which unmoved shall stay
When heav'n and earth will pass away.*

*When all my deeds I am reviewing,
The deeds that I admire the most,
I find in all my thought and doing
That there is naught whereof to boast.
Yet this sweet comfort shall abide-
In mercy I can still confide* -TLH 385 1,8



Our Father in heaven, you have made yourself known to us through Jesus Christ and have invited us to pray to you as our Father, that we may pray boldly and confidently to you.

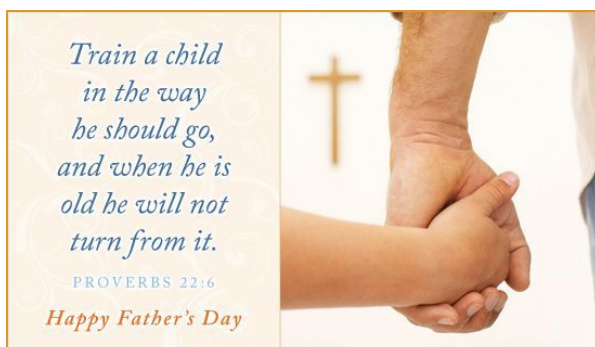
We pray for fathers. Give them wisdom. Give them patience. Give them the ability to love in a way that reflects your love.

We pray for children. Give them guidance. Give them a spirit of obedience. Give them warmth, comfort, and peace in their fathers' homes.

We pray for the fatherless and those who struggle in their families. Be their Father when earthly fathers fail. Show them love and guidance, and help them to know a father's love through your love, providence, and care.

Use Christian friends and other families to encourage and guide, nurture and instruct, and bless them with your peace; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

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ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
GENESEO IL
309-949-2516



2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<u>ELDER</u> Preston Smith			1 Men's Bible Study 7 pm	2	3
4 SS/Adult/Youth Bible Study 8:45am Worship/Comm 10 am Elders 11:30 am	5 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i>	6	7	8	9	10
11 SS/Adult/Youth Bible Study 8:45am Worship 10 am	12 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i>	13 LWML 1 pm (hosting Rev. Clausing) Council 6:00 pm	14	15	16	17
18 SS/Adult/Youth Bible Study 8:45am Worship/Comm 10 am Youth Group 11:30 am	19 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i> Pastor on Vacation—	20	21 <i>First Day of Summer</i>	22 SS Teachers 6:30 pm	23	24
25 SS/Adult/Youth Bible Study 8:45am Worship 10 am Pastor on vacation—	26 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i>	27	28	29	30	

Happy Father's Day



ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
8948 N 1900 AVE
GENESEO IL 61254-8941

A **RIGHTEOUS**
man **WHO** *walks*
IN **INTEGRITY** -
HIS
How **BLESSED**
ARE **CHILDREN** *after* him.
PROVERBS **20:7**

Sunday school/Adult & Youth Bible Class
8:45am

WORSHIP SERVICES 10 am
(Holy Communion 1st & 3rd Sundays)

Live Streaming each week on Facebook

*Happy Fathers'
Day*