

# ST. JOHN'S NEWSLETTER

## ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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**BUILT ON CHRIST OUR CORNERSTONE**

**JULY 2022 - Vol. 125, No. 7**

### **-IN GOD'S GRACE - IN GOD'S SERVICE-**

#### **"The Christian Church...Where Is It? The Marks Part 4"**

We are continuing our series on the marks of the Christian Church, that is, how one can know where it is found here on earth since faith is invisible to all but God. We have already noted the four prime marks, the pure Word proclaimed, Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and the Office of the Keys. These are the prime marks because God works to create, sustain and strengthen faith *directly through these means*. In the last article, we mentioned a fifth mark, the Office of the Ministry. For Christ Himself, through His people, calls qualified men into this office in order to administer the first four means for the benefit of His people. This month we will now consider a two more marks that help identify where a Christian holy people are present.

The sixth way the Church can be recognized is by public worship, that is, prayer, praise, and thanksgiving to God. Truly where the Lord's Prayer is prayed and taught, where psalms, hymns and spiritual songs that agree with God's Word are sung (Ephesians 5:19), where the Ten Commandments, the creeds, and the basic teachings of the catechism are promoted and expounded, there certainly is a Christian holy people present.

For prayer is commanded by God, given the promise that He hears and answers it, and even sanctifies the common things of this life, *"For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer"* (1 Timothy 4:5). The psalms are really nothing other than prayers or hymns which the Holy Spirit inspired so that God's people could call upon Him in the midst of every trouble as well as to thank, praise, and honor Him. The Ten Commandments are God's Word of Law, and the Christian creeds faithfully instruct and profess the truths of the Word, especially the Gospel. Through all these God is working to sanctify His people, that is, to make them holy.

A seventh way that the holy Christian people are externally recognized is by the relic of the holy cross. Not the symbol on the building, the altar, or wherever (though such are fine of themselves), but the cross that Christ has called His people to bear as they follow Him (Matthew 16:24). God's people, though living righteously, must suffer misfortune, persecution, trials and tribulation from the devil, the world, and the flesh. The Church must be inwardly sad, timid, and terrified, while at the same time outwardly poor, despised, sick, weak and so be conformed to the image of Christ her Head (Romans 8:29). Though Christians are salt and light, yet they are despised, hated, even killed for the very reason that they bear Christ's name, will accept none other than Christ as their God, and so even their good and holy works of love called evil, are a stench of death to those who are perishing (cf. Isaiah 5:20; 2 Corinthians 2:15-16).

*"In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world"* (John 16:33).

*"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when other revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven"* (Matthew 5:10-12)

*Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God* (Acts 14:22).

Yet this mark of the holy cross, though certainly painful, is ultimately for our good. It is done so that God's true people are ever more conformed to their Head, Christ Jesus (Romans 8:29). Through such suffering the Old Adam (sinful nature) continues to be killed, for bearing the holy cross leads one to learn patience, humility, meekness, and to learn to rejoice,

offering praise and thanksgiving even in the midst of suffering (Romans 5:3-5). So while the world chases “success,” as does the “worldly church,” thinking that such proves they are God’s people, *the true Christian Church bears the cross*. She receives not only blessings, but also bane from God’s hand. Yet, in faith she remains confident that such discipline is for our good, discipline which proves that we are true children of God, and so truly are His Christian holy people, the Church (cf. Hebrews 12:3-11).

Sincerely in the name of the Lord of the Church, even Jesus Christ our Savior,

*Pastor Nelder*

*(Next month we will conclude the external marks by which the Church may be recognized.)*

### **Apologetics: Dead crocodiles down under<sup>1</sup>**

#### **How croc decomposition helps confirm a crucial element of Bible history**

A recent Australian research study on how crocodile carcasses decompose in water has important implications for fossilization.<sup>a</sup> The researchers were seeking to better understand the processes operating on a skeleton after the flesh decomposes, affecting such things as how much of the skeleton remains, and how much stays articulated (the bones aligned together as in life). If e.g. the top of the long leg bone or femur is found well away from its hip socket, that part of the skeleton has become *disarticulated*. A fossil skeleton in which the bones were scattered around would be completely disarticulated.

Crocodiles were chosen as they are commonly found as fossils worldwide, and are often found to have excellent skeletal articulation and completeness. For the experiment, eight dead Australian saltwater crocodiles, *Crocodylus porosus*, were placed in tanks of fresh water. These are the largest living reptiles, and can be huge; for this study, juveniles were used. Three different treatments were then used to assess how the rate and timing of burial affected the decomposition process.

1. Two carcasses were immediately buried under 20 cm (8 inches) of fine-grained sand, simulating rapid burial.
2. Three were allowed to ‘bloat and float’ uncovered until they sank to the bottom weeks later. At this time they were covered with 20 cm of fine-grained sand, simulating delayed burial.
3. Three were not buried at any stage.

#### **Some interesting findings**

All crocodiles in Treatments 2 and 3 bloated and rose within 3–5 days, and remained afloat on average for 32 days. This shows how quickly the carcass would have to be buried after death to be significantly preserved. At the end of the experiment, for crocodiles in Treatments 2, and 3 “...most of the axial skeleton, forelimbs, and hindlimbs were either partially articulated or disarticulated”.<sup>b</sup> The 20 cm of fine-grained sand used to initially bury the crocodiles in Treatment 1 was insufficient to keep one of them buried, and on day 12 it made a ‘bloat and float’ escape from the sediment (it was reburied the next day). The crocodiles which were immediately buried, unlike the others, stayed in the same position with virtually full articulation.<sup>c</sup>

On the basis of these findings, the authors concluded that “... preservation of articulated skeletons ... is more likely to result from rapid burial”,<sup>d</sup> and articulation is “... less likely to result from decay in a low-energy aqueous environment.”. Also, “... if a carcass is inhibited from floating, the likelihood of articulated preservation increases.”<sup>b</sup>

Given that one of the sand-covered crocodiles in Treatment 1 made a ‘bloat and float’ escape after burial, the authors further concluded, “Therefore, burial would not only have to be *rapid enough* to occur before the bloated stage commenced (approximately before 4 days ...), it would also have to involve *enough sediment* to continue to negate the positive buoyancy created by internal gas production” (emphases added).<sup>e</sup>

So to have whole fossil skeletons nicely preserved, they need to firstly be rapidly buried to provide immediate protection from scavengers. And the sediment covering them needs to be deep enough to protect

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<sup>1</sup> by Ron Neller; <https://creation.com/dead-crocodiles-downunder>

against burrowing scavengers, and heavy enough to prevent the gas buildup from decomposition allowing the carcass to ‘escape’.

However, in today’s conditions, where would the sediment needed to cover a crocodile come from? Extensive deposition of more than 20 cm of sediment is exceptionally rare and/or limited in extent; and even that depth was apparently insufficient in this experiment. Far more sediment would be needed to bury much larger animals than juvenile crocs.

The researchers offer alternatives to rapid sediment coverage. They argue that the carcass might get stuck in a log (!). It might bloat on dry land, and then afterwards somehow fall into the water. Quite cold or deep waters might reduce bloating—though how this prevents disarticulation from the scavengers who inhabit such regions is not clear. In any case, experiments have shown that even in oxygen-poor conditions and with protection from scavengers, unburied fish carcasses are quite disarticulated within a week.<sup>f</sup> Such alternatives cannot explain the vast fossil deposits of crocodiles and other creatures around the world, such as the Karoo Basin in Southern Africa (about half a million square kilometers).

After more than seven decades of monitoring sediment movement globally, scientists have long recognized that insufficient sediment is available for widespread fossilization. Sediment is being deposited in rivers, lakes, estuaries, lagoons, and marine environments worldwide. Sediment deposition also occurs during small storms and rare catastrophic events. However, insufficient sediment is produced in any of these environments to bury large numbers of animals over large areas.

There was, however, one catastrophic event that would have provided enough sediment. “And the waters prevailed so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered” ([Genesis 7:19](#)). A Flood such as described in Genesis would have initially eroded the landscape, creating huge quantities of sediment, and then deposited hundreds of meters of sediment in many parts of the earth, burying all life within it.

For vast numbers of creatures, though not all by any means, burial would have been fast and coverage complete, the conditions identified by the researchers as necessary for well-articulated fossilization. So one would predict that in addition to some disarticulated fossil skeletons, *well articulated skeletons would be very abundant*—which is what we find.

### More considerations

Depending on the circumstances and the nature of the sediment, fossil remains of rapidly-buried animals would be expected to not infrequently retain features that would have disintegrated if sediment coverage had been slow and gradual. For example, the impressions from soft tissues (skin, muscle, feathers, hairs and the like). And that, too, is what we find. Also, since the fossils were only entombed a few thousand years ago, it makes sense of the recent discoveries of *unfossilized* soft tissues. Things like blood cells, hemoglobin, and other proteins are still present within some fossils—including dinosaurs that supposedly died out more than 65 million alleged years ago.

Given that all this is indeed what we find, it is not difficult to ascribe the fossil record to the global Flood described in detail in the Genesis account of the Bible.

### References and notes

- a. Syme, C.E. and Salisbury, S.W., Patterns of aquatic decay and disarticulation in juvenile Indo-Pacific crocodiles (*Crocodylus porosus*), and implications for the taphonomic interpretation of fossil crocodyliform material, *Palaeogeography, Palaeoclimatology, Palaeoecology* **412**:108–123, 2014.
- b. Syme and Salisbury, ref. 1, p 120.
- c. Syme and Salisbury, ref. 1, p 116.
- d. Syme and Salisbury, ref. 1, p 119.
- e. Syme and Salisbury, ref. 1, p 121.
- f. Garner, P., Green river blues; creation.com/green-river-blues, especially ref. 8.

## A Look at the Lutheran Confessions

*We are continuing our look at Augsburg Confession Article XX: Good Works.<sup>2</sup> In the first part, we denied the false accusation that our teaching that faith alone saves us hinders good works, pointing out that our teachings on good works in all estates and duties of life have been beneficial to the growth of true good works. In this month's reading, we show that the teaching of justification by faith alone is the true teaching of Scripture and that to trust in our works is to despise Christ and His work for us.*

### *Augsburg Confession Article XX: Good Works, 8-14<sup>3</sup>*

The doctrine about faith, which ought to be the chief doctrine in the Church, has remained unknown for so long. Everyone has to admit that there was the deepest silence in their sermons concerning the righteousness of faith.<sup>4</sup> They only taught about works in the churches. This is why our teachers teach the churches about faith in this way.

First, they teach that our works cannot reconcile God to us or merit forgiveness of sins, grace,<sup>5</sup> and justification.<sup>6</sup> We obtain reconciliation only by faith when we believe that we are received into favor for Christ's sake. He alone has been set forth as the Mediator and Atoning Sacrifice (1 Timothy 2:5), in order that the Father may be reconciled through Him. Therefore, whoever believes that he merits grace by works despises the merit and grace of Christ [Galatians 5:4]. In so doing, he is seeking a way to God without Christ, by human strength, although Christ Himself said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (John 14:6).

This doctrine about faith is presented everywhere by Paul, "By grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8).<sup>7</sup>

If anyone wants to be tricky and say that we have invented a new interpretation of Paul, this entire matter is supported by the testimony of the Fathers.<sup>8</sup> Augustine<sup>9</sup> defends grace and the righteousness of faith in many volumes against the merits of works. Ambrose, in his book *The Calling of the Gentiles*,<sup>10</sup> and elsewhere, teaches the same thing. In *The Calling of the Gentiles* he says,

Redemption by Christ's blood would be worth very little, and God's mercy would not surpass man's works, if justification, which is accomplished through grace, were due to prior merits. So justification would not be the free gift from a donor, but the reward due the laborer.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Due to the length of this Article, it is being broken into smaller pieces.

<sup>3</sup> From Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions, Paul McCain, Ed. CPH, 2006

<sup>4</sup> The righteousness of faith is the righteousness of Christ *that we receive through faith in Christ*. Thus everything spoken here about faith means *faith in Christ crucified*. There is no benefit in having faith in anything else, no matter how sincere or strong, for any other faith is only a condemning delusion.

<sup>5</sup> Grace is simply understood as "God's undeserved love for sinners."

<sup>6</sup> Justification is God's declaration that we are "not guilty" of our sins and are actually "righteous," all through faith in Christ who has paid for our sins and has given us His perfect obedience to the Law.

<sup>7</sup> Note how this text clearly teaches that faith in Christ is itself a gift from God, and thus it can be given by the Holy Spirit as easily to an infant as to an adult (one more Biblical reason for the orthodox practice of Infant Baptism).

<sup>8</sup> Early church theologians and pastors. The point is not that they are equal to Scripture, but that the "Lutheran interpretation" is really *the ancient and true interpretation of Scripture*.

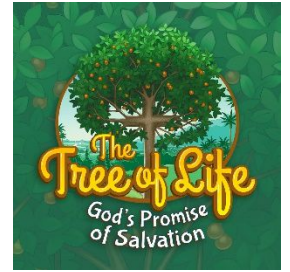
<sup>9</sup> Lived 354-430 AD.

<sup>10</sup> Historical note: At the time of the writing of the Augsburg Confession (1530), this work was thought to be the product of the Church Father Ambrose. Scholars today believe that it was written by the Church Father Prosper of Aquitaine (390-455 AD). Either way, it shows that the Lutheran teaching was nothing new to the Church with Luther, but a return to an earlier, more faithful understanding which had been (mostly) lost.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Romans 11:6

## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2022

VBS has been rescheduled for Sunday July 10th – Thursday July 14th. Light suppers are served at 5:30 pm with opening at 6:00. We will finish at 7:45pm. This year's theme is "Tree of Life: God's Promise of Salvation". Why not invite a friend or neighbor to come with you for several nights of fun and learning of God's love and promises He has to each of us.



Witnessing is about Jesus delivering people from their hopeless circumstance.

They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasene's. And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, for he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart and he broke the shackles in pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones. Mark 5:1-5

### NEW TESTAMENT STANDARD GIVING

Whenever the topic of stewardship and giving comes up, the conversation inevitably turns to the question: "How much should I give?" Answers will vary because the motive behind such questions vary also.

Sometimes the motive behind asking this question is for self-justification. Even though as Lutherans, we know that we are not saved by our works but by grace through faith because of Jesus' substitutionary atonement. Yet the natural religion of fallen man is to earn God's favor by what we do.



Take for example the response of our Lord to the rich young ruler who asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus first tells him to keep the commandments. The rich young ruler responds by indicating that all this he has kept from his youth. But Jesus tells him that he lacks one thing: He must sell all that he has and give it to the poor and then follow him. This rich, young ruler went away sad because he was quite wealthy and could not part with his possessions.

Here we see that those who seek to justify themselves by their giving will hear a response that intensifies the duty that God places upon them. Indeed, they will hear a response that makes it impossible to win God's favor by their works.

But to those who genuinely desire to know what their duty is, as Christians, in the arena of giving, we look to the Bible for our answer. We believe that the Bible is the Word of God. And we know that the Word of God has been "breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

So, we begin to answer the question, "What should I give?" with the question, "What does the Bible say about how much we should give and to whom?"

The Old Testament is explicit. The expectation is that the people of God would give a tithe, that is 10 percent, of the first fruits of their labor to support the full-time ministry of the Levites. This is what the Lord gave Moses to teach the people:

"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. And if the way is too long for you, so that you are not able to carry the tithe, when the Lord your God blesses you, because the place is too far from you, which the Lord your God chooses, to set his name there, then you shall turn it into money and bind up the money in your hand and



go to the place that the Lord your God chooses and spend the money for whatever you desire—oxen or sheep or wine or strong drink, whatever your appetite craves. And you shall eat there before the Lord your God and rejoice, you and your household. And you shall not neglect the Levite who is within your towns, for he has no portion or inheritance with you.

“At the end of every three years you shall bring out all the tithe of your produce in the same year and lay it up within your towns. And the Levite, because he has no portion or inheritance with you, and the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, who are within your towns, shall come and eat and be filled, that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands that you do.” (Deuteronomy 14:22–29)

This principle of tithing is carried over into the New Testament, though not explicitly by calling it a tithe. St. Paul teaches the Church at Corinth this: We are to give to the church regularly (1 Cor. 16:1–2), proportionally (1 Cor. 16:1–2; 2 Cor. 8:12), and generously (2 Cor. 8:20) of our first fruits (1 Cor. 16:1–2; Gen. 4:4; Prov. 3:9; Lev. 27:30) with a spirit of eagerness (2 Cor. 9:2), earnestness (2 Cor. 8:7), cheerfulness (2 Cor. 9:7), and love (2 Cor. 8:23). And all of this is because the “Lord has ordained that those who preach the Gospel should make their living by the Gospel” (1 Cor. 9:14), just as the Levites did.

This our New Testament standard. Since Christ became poor for us in order to make us rich in Him – blessing us with the riches of heaven – so we also have been so blessed to follow the example of our Lord and Savior and give of ourselves and the work of our hands to bless others with the same.

If we have been lax in this, let us – like our Lord, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross and scorned its shame – likewise begin to work toward this goal of regular giving of a generous proportion of the first fruits of God’s giving to us. And let us do so not begrudgingly, but for the joy set before us—with a spirit of eagerness, cheerfulness, and love—to share the blessings of God with those placed into our care.

### *JULY Birthdays*

- |                  |                    |                    |
|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 2 Tristan Blank  | 10 Stacie Rahn     | 21 Fern Kulpa      |
| 4 James Dahl     | 11 Brianna Rodgers | 24 Mark Ague       |
| 4 Calie McKibbon | 14 Payten Helg     | 24 Graysen Carlson |
| 5 Lynne Johnson  | 15 Lois Esterlein  | 26 Suzanne Blank   |
| 6 Alec Davila    | 15 Robert Wolfe    | 26 Nicole Werling  |
| 8 Wanda Rahn     | 19 Elizabeth Bjork | 28 David Schmedt   |
| 9 Scott Rahn     | 19 Kaleb Rahn      | 31 Elizabeth Hock  |
|                  |                    | 31 Joel Werling    |



### *JULY Anniversaries*



- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 5 Broc/Jennifer Krantz (2009) – 13 yrs | 17 Kyle/Ashton Wickwire (2010) - 12 yrs    |
| 5 Ky/Jamie Lambin (2003) - 19 yrs      | 24 Don/Rebecca Hickenbottom (2004) -18 yrs |
| 12 Brad/Mary Jo Gehn (1997) - 25 yrs   |  |

Happy Anniversary

### *JULY Baptisms*

- |                    |                    |                      |
|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| 3 Katrina Nerud    | 15 James Rahn      | 21 Emma Yerkey       |
| 5 Cooper Freeman   | 15 Kem Schillinger | 23 Rosalie Jorgensen |
| 8 Jessica Johnson  | 20 Brennan Lambin  | 26 Trevor Eastburn   |
| 9 Nicole Nerud     | 20 Vivian Smith    | 30 Kenneth Cullison  |
| 13 Alexander Wolfe | 21 Julie Lage      | 30 Kyle Rahn         |
| 15 Paula Chapa     | 21 Denise Winchell |                      |
| 15 Larry Hock      | 21 Seth Winchell   |                      |



### **CONCORDIA LUTHERAN ACADEMY (CLA)**

"Concordia Evangelical Lutheran Church’s voters in Geneseo have approved to start a Kindergarten class this fall (2022-2023 School Year) and, God willing, open up more grades the next school year (2023-2024). We desire for the CLA to be done with excellence from the start and want to be fiscally responsible. With this in mind, we are tasked to raise \$75,000 by July 15th. We are incredibly close to reaching that goal and moving towards the entire funding of our first operating year. We have been amazed and grateful for the support of our church and

community! You may have seen our shoe boxes in your church, which many people have helped donate new and gently used shoes in support of this fundraiser. We thank you for your participation! We are looking forward to the arrival of our prospective and experienced Classical Lutheran teacher, who is moving to Geneseo from Colorado this summer. As a circuit that places value on the Christian education of its children, we are excited to provide the opportunity for Lutheran education once again in our circuit. Throughout the summer and year, we will continue to have fundraisers and events which we will share information as they approach. It is our hope that Concordia Lutheran Academy will have the support of our circuit churches, foremost in prayer. Donations can be given by visiting [CLAdonate.com](http://CLAdonate.com), or scan the QR code and it will take you straight to our information website, where you can also donate. You can call Concordia's church office at 309-9443993 or email [concordia@geneseolutheranchurch.com](mailto:concordia@geneseolutheranchurch.com) for more information and/or to be added to our informational CLA mailing list. You can also follow us on our Facebook page (search Concordia Lutheran Academy) where all the latest updates are posted!

Peace in Christ, The CLA Creation Committee

### 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:

<b>Linda Aper</b>	<b>Lois Esterlein</b>	<b>Lynne Johnson</b>	<b>Carolyn Werner</b>
<b>Elizabeth Bjork</b>	<b>Betty Firch</b>	<b>Jim Rahn</b>	<b>Marilyn Woods</b>
<b>Jim Dahl</b>	<b>Arlyn Helke</b>	<b>Drew Schillinger</b>	<b>John Neumann</b>

**Don Eggers** (son of friend of Marilyn Woods)

**Jon/Anita Clausing** (missionaries in Kenya)

**Virginia Miller** (mother of Jamie Werling)

**Jodie Martin** (daughter of Gary/Darla Johns)

**Marilyn Potts** (wife of Cal Potts, former LFC)

**Rev. Justin Kane** (son of Sandra Kane)

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

**Mandy/Richard Davila** (daughter/husband of Linda Aper) **Luke/Nicole Thompson** (son/wife of Joh/Kindra Thompson)

**Ken Willeford** (husband of Alicia Willeford)

**Karl Flynn** (son of Mr/Mrs Paul Flynn)

**Casey Powers Jr.** (step son of Lisa Powers)

**Brittany Loenser** (daughter of Gabe Loenser)

**Zachary/Tiffany Gardner** (nephew/wife of Lois Esterlein)

### 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 flowers has increased to \$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.**

## GROWING IN THE WORD OF GOD

- Sunday morning Adult Bible class – 8:45am in the Fellowship Hall. The current study is the book of Colossians.
- Men’s Bible Study – 7 pm the first Thursday of each month. The new study topic is; *Alien Intrusion*.



- 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](mailto:churchoffice@stjohnsgeneseo.org)
- Website address – [www.stjohnsgeneseo.org](http://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.

### THANK YOU, THANK YOU!!!!!!!

A big thanks to everyone who supported the Baby bottles for Pregnancy Resources and the gathering of shoes for Concordia Academy. Your generosity is truly in accord with God calls us to do in helping our fellow man.

### Wrestling With God –

Many of us are familiar with the account of Jacob wrestling with God in Genesis 32. As we consider this story, we might wonder why God would want to wrestle with Jacob. Furthermore, we might wonder why the almighty God would allow Jacob to prevail.



**CENTRAL ILLINOIS  
DISTRICT**  
*of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod*

Prior to his wrestling match with God, Jacob had put his own needs and desires ahead of others. By wrestling with God, Jacob was forced to focus on God rather than on himself. Too often, we focus on our own desires rather than on God and his will. When we are tempted, we tend to focus on Satan and try to fight him with our own strength. This is counterproductive. God sometimes puts us in a difficult or painful situation and graciously invites us to wrestle with him by prayerfully and diligently searching the Scriptures for guidance, strength, and comfort. As we do this, we can see our problem in the light of God’s mercy and strength rather than see God in the shadow of our problem.

Jacob was humbled by the wound in his hip. God allows us to be wounded as a means to humble us and teach us that we are dependent on him for wisdom, mercy, and strength. Also, our wounds help us to become more empathetic towards others who are suffering.

Jacob’s name was changed to Israel. God gives us a new name in our baptism: CHRISTIAN, which is the name of God’s nation, the holy Christian Church. This new name reminds us that through wrestling with God in our trials and temptations, he empowers us to prevail against all adversaries and adversities.

Jacob gratefully realized that he had seen God face to face and his life had been spared. In Christ, we see God through the eyes of faith. Jesus, our Advocate, cleanses us of sin and makes us worthy of being in God’s holy presence. Through Christ we are invited to approach God’s throne of grace in repentance, prayer, and worship. And we rejoice that one day we will see God face to face as we gather with all the saints before his throne of glory.

Rev. Jeff Harter

### Stay Connected with your District

Looking for additional information visit <https://linktr.ee/cidlcms> or connect with the following items:



- † CID's GatePost (newsletter)
- † Subscribe to the E-GatePost/*News You Can Use*
- † Stay connect with us on Facebook and Instagram -- [Central Illinois District-LCMS](#)

### ***ITEMS OF INTEREST TO SHARE***

#### **60th Regular Convention Central Illinois District**

Crowne Plaza – Springfield, IL

July 17-19, 2022

Nominations for District President:

- † Rev. Karl Eckhoff - Christ, Peoria, IL
- † Rev. Mark Eddy - Zion – Taylor Ridge, IL
- † Rev. Michael Mohr- Holy Cross, Vandalia, IL

CID Convention Information and Updates are located at the CID Website Watch for the Convention Workbook that will be published soon on the District's website. (<http://www.cidlcms.org/events-2022-district-convention.html>).

#### **Reimbursements for Prison Ministry Materials**

Consider donating printed Gospel-centered materials to a nearby state or federal prison or county jail. Thanks to central Illinois LWML, you or your CID congregation can make such a donation and receive at least partial reimbursement from the District.

This is important work. The materials you donate can get into a facility even if something like a COVID spike occurs and keeps chaplains from getting in. Here is an opportunity for you to participate in prison ministry, even if you yourself never personally visit an inmate. <http://www.cidlcms.org/outreach-missions-prison.html>

#### **(Church) Planting Season**

At its last convention, our Synod resolved “That congregations and circuits be encouraged and supported by their respective districts to investigate and identify new mission plants” (2019 Res. 1-02).

To enable pastors and others to begin talking about church planting, CID is cooperating with the Synod's Office of National Mission to produce these resources: a.) a brochure, in two parts and b.) a set of four short videos. These tools will help inform and stimulate church plantings conversations in congregations. For more information visit: <http://www.cidlcms.org/outreach-church-planting.html>

Congregations are urged to use these tools. Talk church planting at Bible classes. Devote time at a regularly scheduled meeting to a discussion of church planting. Hold a special meeting for such discussion. Or encourage church members to view the videos and read the brochure, then talk amongst themselves. The District will be discussing church planting at its convention in July.

#### **CAMP CILCA OUTDOOR MINISTRIES**

The Central Illinois Lutheran Camp Association (CILCA) sits on 225 acres of woodland and open fields just north of Springfield, Ill. It offers a summer program of week-long camps and outdoor experiences for students of all ages and abilities; Outdoor Education programs for area students; and camping of many kinds for individuals, families and groups. Rustic and all-weather sleeping cabins, campsites for tents, trailers, RV's and pop-ups, swimming lake with beach, athletic fields, Challenge Course, and indoor and outdoor chapel spaces are among the camp's features.





## A Fourth of July Prayer

Heavenly Father,

We thank you for this Nation.

We thank you for the freedom we enjoy daily.

May we never take for granted the liberties we have been given.

May we remain humble and conscious of the blessings we enjoy because of the sacrifices made by countless men and women.

We thank you for the abundance we enjoy.

May we be sensitive to those around us who are in need,

and may our hearts be quick to help when we have the means to do so.

We pray for our leaders.

For those placed in authority over us.

Father, we ask that you guide every decision they make.

May they lead us with wisdom, humility, and grace.

Father bless our Nation with Your peace.

May Your love flow through each one of us, and may we never forget to give You thanks, always.

May you receive the glory, honor, and praise.

In Jesus Name we pray,

Amen.



# St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church—Genesee IL

## July 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>ELDER</b> Mike Dahl					1	2
3 SS/Adult/Youth Bible Study 8:45am Worship/Comm 10 am	4 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i> <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	5 Adult Instruction 7 pm	6	7 Elders 6 pm Men's Bible Study 7 pm	8	9
10 SS/Adult/Youth Bible Study 8:45am Worship 10 am VBS 5:30-7:45 pm —	11 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i>  VBS _____	12 Council 6:30 pm  VBS _____	13  VBS _____	14  VBS _____	15	16
17 SS/Adult/Youth Bible Study 8:45am Worship/Comm 10 am	18 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i>	19 Adult Instruction 7 pm	20	21	22	23
24 SS/Adult/Youth Bible Study 8:45am Worship 10 am Voters' Assembly	25 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i>	26 Adult Instruction 7 pm	27 SS Teachers' 7 pm	28	29	30
31 SS/Adult/Youth Bible Study 8:45am Worship/Comm 10 am						



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

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

**WORSHIP SERVICES 10 am - (Communion -1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday)**

**Live Streaming each week on Facebook**

**VBS – July 10-14, 5:30 pm – 7:45 pm**

**Stand fast therefore  
in the liberty wherewith  
Christ hath made us free.**

**Galatians 5:1**

