

ST. JOHN'S NEWSLETTER

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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BUILT ON CHRIST OUR CORNERSTONE

AUGUST 2022 - Vol. 125, No. 8

-IN GOD'S GRACE - IN GOD'S SERVICE-

"The Christian Church...Where Is It? The Marks Part 5"

We are continuing our series on the Christian Church. Recall that the Church is invisible because saving faith makes one a member of the church, but faith cannot be seen by anyone other than God. So we asked, "Since the Church is invisible, how can we find it?" That led us to consider the "marks of the Church," those things that themselves are not the Church, yet which mark that the Church is "here," just as the "X" marks the spot where the treasure is on a map, though the map with the X is not the treasure itself. So far we have discussed seven marks¹:

1. The Word of God purely preached,
2. The Sacrament of Holy Baptism administered according to Christ's institution,
3. The Sacrament of the Altar administered according to Christ's institution,
4. The public use of the Office of the Keys where repentant sinners are forgiven and impenitent sinners are not forgiven and are put under church discipline,
5. The presence of the Office of the Public Ministry (pastoral office),
6. Public prayer, praise, confession, and thanksgiving to God in worship, and
7. The bearing of the cross, that is, suffering for being a Christian.

The first four marks are primary, as they are the direct means God uses to create and preserve saving faith. The fifth mark recognizes the necessity that the first four marks need someone to publicly use them for the sake of the congregation, to be the steward of the mysteries of God (1 Corinthians 4:1), and so it confesses the divine institution of the Public Ministry. The sixth mark deals with our response in faith to receiving the first four marks (mostly through the fifth). The seventh mark deals honestly and soberly with the reality that believers will often suffer in this life *because they are faithful believers*² even as we recognize by faith that God is using such suffering to sanctify us, which means to help us grow in holiness. These then are the chief marks, yet two more "minor marks" can be mentioned.

In addition to the above, which deal primarily with what we call the First Table of the Law, Commandments 1-3, which deal with our relationship with God, there is also the Second Table of the Law, our relationship with other people (the neighbor). The Holy Spirit works holiness in us by which we grow in love for others as seen by our obedience to Commandments 4-10.

Thus the Holy Spirit guides and empowers believers to honor parents and other lawful authorities in both church and state, even as He helps believing parents, pastors, and leaders love those who are placed under their authority, protecting them and providing for them according their vocation. He empowers us to not harm others, to not be resentful or bear grudges, nor be filled with anger or hate, but instead to gladly forgive and readily

¹ These marks were laid out in detail by the blessed Reformer Martin Luther in his great 1539 treatise, *On the Councils and the Church*.

² Cf. Matthew 5:10-12; John 16:33; Acts 14:22; and consider the example of Job.

offer help and counsel to others. He helps us to honor marriage by being chaste, whether in regard to our spouse or, if not married, to all people through celibacy. He enables us to be disciplined, sober, kind, meek, mild and humble, to not steal or be greedy, but instead to be generous and lend, even without thought of return if that is what love demands. He keeps us from lies and gossip, leading us to speak the truth, to speak only what is necessary and when necessary, and to explain all things in the kindest way. He does such by working in our hearts, leading us away from covetousness of what others have into contentment with what we have received from our heavenly Father.

Some churches (and some Christians even in churches that aren't this way) would hold this mark up as the key one. They will hold up "living faith," "true disciples versus just believers," and make statements such as "deeds not creeds." However, while this new life is certainly necessary and it does give evidence of faith (hence it *is* a mark), Biblical Christians recognize three reasons why it should not be placed on the level of the previous seven and why it is not as certain as them either:

1. Good works do not save, only faith does. By making works the major (or at least one of the major) marks, our obedience enters the realm where faith in Christ's obedience alone belongs.
2. As we cannot see the heart, we cannot know for certain if these works are truly coming from faith or if they are being produced by a hypocrite or an unbeliever (civil/external righteousness). Certainly somebody who chooses to avoid the previous seven marks, especially 1-4, cannot be considered a believer no matter what their works may be.
3. As Christians still have the Old Adam (sinful nature), their new life of good works will never be what it should be.

As a final mark, we will consider what can be called "useful customs" within the Christian Church. These are those things which keep proper order, encourage due reverence, and help to teach God's people. Here we consider the observation of the church calendar, vestments for ministers, paraments for the church building, assorted rites and ceremonies within the liturgy, pulpits, altars, baptismal fonts, crosses and crucifixes, art work of various sorts, candles, etc.

Clearly such things, of themselves, are not commanded by God and, therefore using them brings us no closer to Him in and of themselves. As they are purely external, we could, in good conscience, either use or not use them. Yet, *the concepts behind them* (order, reverence, edification) *are biblical*. Consequently, we (as a congregation that is a voluntary member of a synod), in our Christian freedom, have chosen to use them accordingly, even as this means we have willingly given up some of our freedom for the sake of love for our fellow members by freely limiting ourselves to certain things. And so, when these customs are used as described here, then they can be considered a mark as well, for only Christians can use them in such a way.

This concludes are subseries on the marks of the Church. Next month, we will continue our considering of the attributes of the Christian Church, this time looking at how the Church is *one*.

In the name of the Lord of the Church,

Pastor Nerd

A quote from Rev. Dr. C. F. W. Walther³: "Therefore, if we do not wish be called hypocritical Lutherans, but want to be and remain Lutherans in deed and truth, let us walk together and again gather around the banner of the ancient, unchangeable doctrine of our church; pleading together that the LORD awaken and create help that comfort again be taught; together fighting against all deceptions with the sword of the Spirit and together bearing the shame by which the LORD strives to designate His servants. We dare not hope that the church in these latter, horrible times will be established again in a condition of glorious bloom, yet we may also not abandon hope that our witness and our battle will not be completely in vain, but rather will give way to praise of the LORD and convert many souls from the errors of their way." (Source: *Der Lutheraner*, Volume 2, Number 11, January 1846, pg. 42-43, Translated by Joel Baseley.)

³ Rev. Dr. Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther served as the first president of our synod, professor at and president of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and pastor.

A Look at the Lutheran Confessions

We are continuing our look at Augsburg Confession Article XX: Good Works.⁴ In last month's reading, we highlighted that the teaching that we are saved by faith alone in Christ, and not our works, should be taught as the chief doctrine in the Church. We pointed out that this teaching of justification by grace through faith in Christ is the true teaching of Scripture and was taught in the early church. In this month's reading, we confess that this teaching is only appreciated by those who rightly know their sinful state, and fear God's wrath against their sins. We also remind people that faith is more than a mere knowledge of Biblical truths which unbelievers and even the demons have.

Augsburg Confession Article XX: Good Works, 15-26⁵

Spiritually inexperienced people despise this teaching.⁶ However, God-fearing and anxious consciences find by experience that it brings the greatest consolation. Consciences cannot be set at rest through any works, but only by faith, when they take the sure ground that for Christ's sake they have a gracious God. As Paul teaches, "since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God" (Romans 5:1). This whole doctrine must be related to the conflict of the terrified conscience. It cannot be understood apart from this conflict. Therefore, inexperienced and irreverent people have poor judgment because they dream that Christian righteousness is nothing but civil and philosophical righteousness.⁷

Until now consciences were plagued with the doctrine of works. They did not hear consolation from the Gospel. Some people were driven by conscience into the desert⁸ and into monasteries, hoping to merit grace by a monastic life. Some people came up with other works to merit grace and make satisfaction for sins. That is why the need was so great for teaching and renewing the doctrine of faith in Christ, so that anxious consciences would not be without consolation but would know that grace, forgiveness of sins, and justification are received by faith in Christ.

People are also warned that the term *faith* does not mean simply a knowledge of a history, such as the ungodly and devil have [James 2:19]. Rather, it means a faith that believes, not merely the history, but also the effect of the history. In other words, it believes this article: the forgiveness of sins. We have grace, righteousness, and forgiveness of sins through Christ.

The person who knows that he has a Father who is gracious to him through Christ⁹ truly knows God [John 14:7]. He also knows that God cares for him [1 Peter 5:7], and he calls upon God [Romans 10:13]. In a word, he is not without God, as are the heathen. For devils and the ungodly are not able to believe this article: the forgiveness of sins.¹⁰ Hence, they hate God as an enemy [Romans 8:7] and do not call Him [Romans 3:11-12] and expect no good from Him. Augustine also warns his readers about the word *faith* and teaches that the term

⁴ Due to the length of this Article, it is being broken into smaller pieces.

⁵ From Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions, Paul McCain, Ed. CPH, 2006

⁶ That is, the teaching that faith alone (without our works) saves us. This is despised by those who do not truly understand the Law's demand for perfection and therefore, foolishly, believe their own works to be impressive in God's eyes. *This is the dying person telling the doctor that they are just fine!*

⁷ That is, mere external conformity to the Law without the proper motivation of true love for God and others. An unbeliever is capable of such! But the Commandments demand a *right heart* as well as right words and actions, and such a heart *must be present* for the work to be pleasing to God.

⁸ Becoming a religious hermit.

⁹ That is, has a true faith (trust) in Christ as Savior.

¹⁰ Either in pride they deny they need forgiveness and a Savior, or in despair over their sins they believe themselves to be too bad, and therefore unforgivable.

is used in the Scriptures, not for the knowledge that is in the ungodly, but for the confidence that consoles and encourages the terrified mind.

Apologetics: The waiting time problem¹¹

DNA carries the instructions for how and when to make the principal components of cells, called proteins. Different organisms differ in their DNA instructions (composed of DNA ‘letters’, technically called ‘base pairs’) such that they make at least some different proteins.

To change an organism into a different kind, you would have to have a mechanism for changing the letters. For evolutionists, the ‘only game in town’ to change the letters is mutation. Mutations are accidental changes to the instructions, which can be one letter at a time, or multiple letters at once. Letters can be swapped, deleted, or added. Obviously, to change an organism into something more complex, letters would have to be added, not just swapped or deleted.

Now consider that human DNA has about 3,000 million letters, which is equivalent to a thousand Bible-sized books. Imagine an ape evolving into a human. We have to add letters—via mutations—to create the information for the features that humans have that apes do not have. This amounts to a difference of *at least* 10%, compared to our closest relative, according to evolutionists—the chimpanzee.^a That amounts to 300 million letters!

Imagine that an ape has a baby and a mutation has added one letter to the baby’s DNA. Would the mutation be ‘beneficial’ in terms of progressing evolution? ‘Beneficial’ here means only that the baby will grow up to have more offspring than other apes that don’t have the mutation. Would natural selection be able to ‘see’ it and favor the survival of the mutation into the following generations? This is known as ‘fitness’. The probability that this random change will contribute enough to the individual’s fitness for natural selection to be able to ‘see’ it is very low. Evolutionary geneticists acknowledge this.

Now imagine that another mutation occurs, not just anywhere, but next to the one above, in an individual that has the mutation passed on to them. There could be a population of evolving apes, of say 10,000. The ‘right’ mutation is more likely to occur in the offspring of apes other than the one that already has the first such mutation. And then they have to meet, mate, and have babies, which is unlikely. Or, over many generations the mutations might spread slowly through the population, increasing the chance of them getting together in a mating pair. This obviously takes time.

How much time? Calculating this is complex, taking everything into consideration, such as mutation rate, fitness due to the mutations, number of offspring, generation time, population size, etc. Well, a team of scientists created a computer program, called *Mendel’s Accountant*,^b which does these calculations. In a review more than a decade after the program was first published, CMI geneticist Dr Robert Carter commented,

We are unaware of any peer-reviewed paper that attempts to refute the methods or conclusions of Mendel. After a decade of established work, there should be something. Their silence is telling.^c

The program simulates or models a real population and can work out how long it would take to get these DNA letters lined up next to one another.

When numerical assumptions are made that favor evolution happening, such as unrealistically high fitness from the mutations, it takes 84 million years to get just two letters lined up in an individual.^d This greatly exceeds the timeframe—about seven million years— evolutionists give for the evolution of humans from a common ancestor with chimps. To get just five letters lined up together, the time exceeds *two billion years!* This is not even a tiny fraction of a single small gene, which might be several hundred letters long. Many genes are thousands of letters long. This is the ‘waiting time problem’—for evolution.

In other words, evolution of humans from apes is not just unlikely or improbable, but *impossible*.

References and notes

- a. Tomkins, J. and Bergman, J., [Genomic monkey business—estimates of nearly identical human–chimp DNA similarity re-evaluated using omitted data](#), *J. Creation* **26**(1):94–100, 2012; creation.com/chimp.

¹¹ By Don Batten. Posted on homepage: 13 June 2022; <https://creation.com/waiting-time-problem?>

- b. Sanford, J. *et al.*, Mendel's Accountant: a biologically realistic forward-time population genetics program, *SCPE* 8(2):147–165, 2007; scpe.org.
- c. Carter, R., [A successful decade for Mendel's Accountant](#), *J. Creation* 33(2):51–56, 2019; creation.com/mendels-accountant-review.
- d. Sanford, J. *et al.*, The waiting time problem in a model hominin population, *Theor. Biol. Med. Model.* 12(18), 2015.

HELP NEEDED!!!

There is a need for several to volunteer for two different committees here at St. John's. Please be willing to give some of your time to one of these.

It is time to review our church constitution and revise as needed. We are needing two more volunteers to work with Pastor and one other (already volunteered to help). You will review the current constitution and make recommended changes if needed. The current Council members are willing to give suggestions for their present area of service. This should be an aid to those on the committee.

There is a need for a nominating committee of 3 people. You will secure a slate of names from the congregation who are willing to serve on the 2023 Council. A list of offices needing to be filled can be gotten from the Council Secretary, Sheila Magerkurth.

Both committees are needed ASAP. For more information on duties or any other questions, please contact Don Hock (309-945-6675) or Pastor Nerud.



FAMILY FUN NIGHT

The Bd. Of Education is hosting a night of fun and food for the entire congregation Friday, August 19th from 6 pm – 9 pm. There will be a cookout, games, fellowship and fun for all. Watch the bulletin and emails for more information to come soon. This event will take the place of the regular Rally Day.

Have you ever noticed the subtle ceremony involved in receiving the offerings during the Divine Service? After all the offerings have been collected, they are brought forward and given to the pastor or one of his assistants. The pastor then turns toward the altar, and as he slightly bows his head, the collection plates with the offerings in them are raised slightly to the Lord and then placed either on the altar or a table for the offerings. Why do we do have this ceremony? And what does it teach us? For that is what ceremony does; it teaches, as the Augsburg Confession tells us, what we need to know about Christ (AC XXIV, 1–3).



Originally, this ceremony included more than simply bringing forward what was collected in the offering plates. The elements for the Holy Communion—the bread and the wine—were brought forward along with the offering plates. As the offering plates and the elements were lifted toward the Lord, and placed upon the altar, the elements would be put in the center and the altar, now made a table, would be set for the Lord's Supper.

These gifts brought to the altar came from the sweat of the people's brow. It is the bread and wine, the fruits of the peoples' labor in this fallen world. After six days of labor and toil, the people would bring a generous proportion for the Lord's work. It was set upon the altar and offered to the Lord for Him to take up and press into His service for His gracious work in and among them.

For what they offered to the Lord from the sweat of their brow, the bread of anxious toil, came back to them as the bread of life, the bread come down from heaven that whoever eats this bread and drinks this cup would receive life through the forgiveness of their sins.

This is not unlike what the Lord did for His people in the Old Testament:

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.

What a blessing! God provides for us in all things. He provides bread from the sweat of our brows, and He receives this from us in the first fruits offerings we give to Him in thanksgiving and praise. He receives and turns it into spiritual bread, heavenly bread, the bread of eternal life and gives it back to us so that we might have joy. So, the next time you are in the Divine Service, watch this ceremony in wonder, that the Lord gives back to us, what we have given to Him so that we may rejoice in the salvation He has won upon the cross and gives to us in His supper.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATES

Please note these changes in your Membership Directory.

Jacob W. Johnson (new member) – 614 Olive Ct. Geneseo, IL 61254, (764-413-0015),
jacobwjohanson100@gmail.com

Paula Mooney – Transferred to the Church Triumphant 7/9/2022



EVANGELISM:
Sharing Christ With Others

Do you know someone with whom you can share the greatest Friend anyone will ever have? Maybe it is your mechanic, your hair dresser, a neighbor or a person at work or school. Spend time with that person. Look for opportunities to point him or her to Christ.

AUGUST Birthdays

1 Gary Johns
3 John Thompson
4 Sean Barry
7 Autumn Raschke
8 Kristy Rodgers
9 Matthew Werling
9 Griffin Marckese

13 Linda Pinegar
15 Kathy Curry
15 Janice Dahl
16 Jared Wright
18 Joel Goetz
19 Don Hickenbottom
20 Dawn Daebelliehn



21 Jamie Lambin
22 Lisa Bear
26 Cole Freeman
26 Kayci Freeman
27 Linda Lundquist
31 Kindra Thompson

AUGUST Anniversaries

6 Brent/Bailie Bauchmann (2016) – 6 yrs
8 Lucas/Nicole Thompson (2015) – 7 yrs
12 Rodney/Theresa Miller (1989) - 33 yrs
16 Kem/Linda Schillinger (1997) - 25 yrs
19 John/Elizabeth Neumann (1961) - 61 yrs



Happy Anniversary

21 Shane/Heidi McKibbon (1999) - 23 yrs
29 Richard/Trish Anderson (1998) - 24 yrs
30 Brian/Jennifer Magerkurth (1997) - 23 yrs
30 John/Kindra Thompson (1989) - 33 yrs

AUGUST Baptisms

1 Aidan Coppejans
3 Tristan Blank
3 Sandra Rahn
6 Madeline Mosher
7 Broc Krantz
8 Arlyn Helke
9 Marta Haughton



9 Sabrina Smith
10 Cali McKibbon
14 Rylan Mitchell
15 Sean Barry
18 Elizabeth Bjork
21 Scott Rahn
23 Elizabeth Hock

24 David Schmedt
26 Gage Gehn
30 Jan Dahl
31 Gary Johns
31 Rodney Miller

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:

Linda Aper

Lois Esterlein

Lynne Johnson

Carolyn Werner

Elizabeth Bjork

Betty Firch

Jim Rahn

Marilyn Woods

Jim Dahl

Arlyn Helke

Drew Schillinger

Carolyn Wildermuth

Paula Chapa

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)

Virgina Miller (mother of Jamie Werling)

Rev. Justin Kane (son of Sandra Kane)

(Please remember to call the church office if you are needing prayers. Also let us know when we can remove your name because your illness has gotten better and you are living regular days. 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) **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

• 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.



WALK FOR LIFE—Pregnancy Resources annual fund raiser is set for Saturday, September 10th. Walkers may check in between 8:30—11:00 am at the East Shelter of Ben Butterworth Park. Walkers may walk any time between 9-11:30 am. If you wish to support

this event but are unable to walk, you may send your donation to: Pregnancy Resources, 3825—16th St., Moline IL 61265.

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH AND FAMILY

St. John's in East Moline is looking for a Director of Youth and Family. This is a salaried position with an average of 16 hours per week. A detailed job description can be found in St. John's office. Applicants will need to fill out an application and supply a resume with 3 letters of recommendation. Call Cris Braddy at 309-235-7984 if you have any questions.

FUNERAL LUNCHEON COORDINATOR

We are looking for a second person to shadow Terri Hock and help with the coordination of the funeral luncheons served at St. John's. Responsibilities include: working with the family on selection of the menu, ordering/purchasing/picking up food, secure helpers for preparation/serving/final clean-up the day of the funeral, and disposing of any remaining food after the funeral. Please contact Terri Hock if you are interested in this position.



Doxology – The Lutheran Center for Spiritual Care and Counsel will sponsor a seminar on Saturday August 27 at Trinity Lutheran Church in Davenport entitled: A Call to Courage, Confession, and Love: Christians in a Woke World. This seminar prepares Christians to advocate

confidently, purposefully and positively for the biblical vision of human flourishing within their families and the public square. The conference runs from 8:15 – 3:15 and is open to all. Registration (\$20) is available at www.doxology.us.



Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the opening of CLA! Your time, skills, prayers, and donations are all greatly appreciated. It's wonderful to see our congregation and circuit churches coming together to support Lutheran education!

We currently stand at \$70,000 (our goal being \$75,000 by July 15th) with our initial campaign to start the academy off on stable financial footing. What an amazing show of support! Please keep CLA in your prayers and share our new education opportunity with friends, family, and members of your community!

You can call Concordia's church office at (309) 944-3993 or email 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!

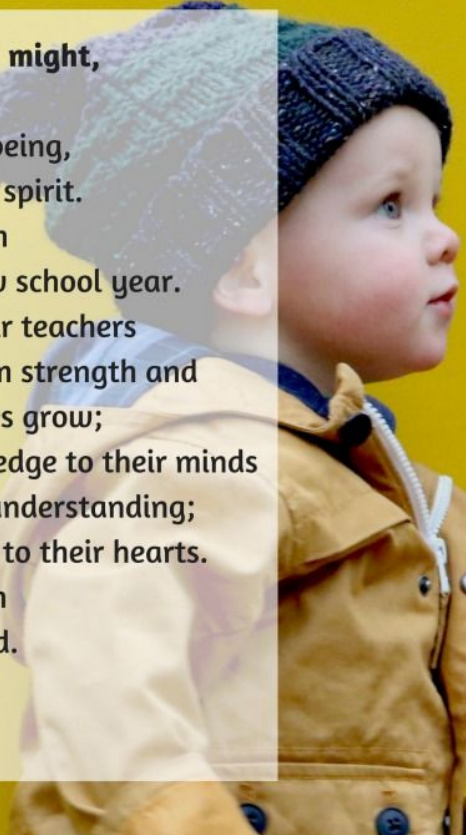
In His Service,
The CLA Creation Committee

Scan the link to learn a bit more about CLA and to donate!

Note: CLA will begin this fall with a kindergarten class. Marilyn Brondos will fill the position as teacher for this class. Her bio can be seen on Concordia's Facebook page. We thank God for His gracious provisions in this endeavor.



Prayer for A New School Year



God of wisdom and might,
we praise you for
the wonder of our being,
for mind, body and spirit.
Be with our children
as they begin a new school year.
Bless them and their teachers
and staff. Give them strength and
grace as their bodies grow;
wisdom and knowledge to their minds
as they search for understanding;
and peace and zeal to their hearts.
We ask this through
Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A Prayer for Our Teachers

Dear God,

Thank you for the amazing teachers
who have given their lives to serve
our children. As they prepare for
the new year fill them with
strength to lead, grace to guide and
hope to thrive in their classroom.
Bless them beyond measure for
their willingness to pour into the
next generation through education.
In Jesus' name, amen.



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Rev. Pablo G. Domínguez



AUGUST 2022

I have lived a life of continuous sin. Will God truly forgive me?

*Have mercy on me,
O God,
Wash away all my
iniquity
and cleanse me
from my sin.*

PSALM 51:1-2

During one of my chaplain duty days, I had the opportunity to meet a young patient. He thought that I was one of the hospital doctors. He told me his serious abdominal health troubles. He was in pain and bleeding. It was his second time in the hospital in less than two weeks. His doctors didn't know what was causing his bleeding. He looked tired, and very anxious. He thought that he was going to die. Finally, I introduced myself as a volunteer chaplain and offered to pray. He started to cry and said that his life was full of sin. He had offended God and his neighbor. "I have lived a life of continuous sin. Will God truly forgive me?" he asked. He was not sure that he was able to receive God's forgiveness. He was deeply repentant. I shared the Gospel of love and salvation offered in Christ Jesus with him. The next day I returned to visit him, but the room was empty. I'm certain that God has forgiven his sins and that Jesus will be with him always, in this world and in eternal life.

Will God truly forgive me? Perhaps at times we ask ourselves this question. Doubt is sown by the devil, but God's answer is always clear, faithful, and confident: *"though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool"* Isaiah 1:18

Comments:

I continue to visit and phone church families and contacts. I am well received, and I pray with them before I leave the residence. Some families assure me that they are going to come to worship, but then they don't.

I recently met a man who sells cars. he mentioned that at his church, attendance has also dropped considerably. He admitted that he is not attending himself.

It is true that there is not a large group at CR, but they are faithful in attendance. The faithful members and prospects have not missed Sunday service, and even better yet they stay for the Bible study that follows the worship service. Every Sunday I keep encouraging the faithful to invite a family member or friend to church.

Every day through CR and personal Facebook, Messenger and What's Up, I send "the Good Mornings" with Bible verses and brief meditations to members, contacts and friends and encourage them to share them.

CR members came together to help others by collecting used shoes for Concordia Lutheran Academy, Geneseo, and taking them to Immanuel, Rock Island for pickup.

FB Live on Mondays and Fridays at 4:00 pm.



St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church—Geneseo IL

August 2022

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



ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
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"And whatsoever ye do,
do it heartily, as to the Lord,
and not unto men;
knowing that of the
Lord ye shall receive
the reward of the
inheritance: for ye
serve the
Lord Christ."

Colossians 3:23-24 KJV

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

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

Live Streaming each week on Facebook