

LIFELINES

of

LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Some thoughts in light of our current situation

What is God doing with all of this? What are the lessons we are supposed to learn? These are the big questions to which no human knows the answers. Still, it is easy to imagine some positive things God may be working out through this pandemic. For example:

- Increase in gratitude for the Body of Christ. Lent is normally a time of fasting and just as we set aside certain practices (like singing Alleluia) it is the lack of the familiar that leads us to treasure it more. Perhaps having to go without attending church or being around your church family for a month or two, will cause you to reflect upon and appreciate even more the fellowship we have.
- For those Christians who are being forced not to attend church in certain cities and states due to quarantines, this may cause them to reflect on something that is often taken for granted and that is religious freedom. I know I have thought a lot about it these past weeks and I realize what a precious gift this is. There are many around us who deny the power and reality of God and thus see no value to attending a church. Of course, they think our services are nothing more than “social gatherings” and certainly nothing like an “essential service.” Accordingly, they think all the churches should be shut in a time of crisis and have no problem with the government mandating this. As our society grows increasingly secular, this point of view may be ascendant. Now we are told that shutting churches is necessary to keep everyone safe, but what excuse will be used in the future by the enemies of Christ’s Church? Perhaps experiencing this lack of freedom for a time will cause many of us to consider how blessed we have been and how we can exercise our religious freedom and prevent those who would impinge upon it.
- I think this situation also allows families to spend more time together in general and Christians to spend more time at the family altar. This means in-home family devotions and prayers are increasing, which is a very good thing. If you would like help with resources that nourish you spiritually and guide your devotional life, here are some links you might want to know about:
 - Concordia Publishing House has several free resources available for at this time. You can access hymns and devotions, Bible studies and more at www.cph.org
 - Lutheran Hour Ministries also has a special link to Covid-19 ministry resources. This includes daily reflections and studies on relevant topics like “Stress and Worry.” Check them out at www.LHM.org
 - Higher Things not only provides excellent material for the youth, but the not-so-secret surprise is that their material is great for adults as well. Read interesting articles and daily reflections at www.higherthings.org
 - You will also find helpful information at the Synod’s webpage: www.lcms.org
- One more positive thing that may result from this time of crisis is that more people –including Christians- will have time to reflect upon their own mortality. The Christian faith prepares us for death. It is founded on the notion that the Son of God came into the world to defeat death and the grave. **“For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.”** [1st Corinthians 15:21-22]

Many Christians have been so blessed and have had such easy lives that they have focused only on how to live without thinking much about suffering and how we all must die. Christians should not be morbid and depressed thinking about death all the time, but the opposite of this is far worse, namely, denying and ignoring the inevitable fact that sooner or later our earthly life comes to an end. Ignoring the reality of death prevents one from preparing to meet their Maker and thus failing to repent and look to Jesus as the only Savior from sin. Perhaps the inevitability of death brought on by this pandemic will have people preparing, repenting, praying, and receiving salvation in Jesus. Let us sincerely hope so.

One more thing...

Plagues and Pandemics are nothing new. Christians have experienced these things many times in the last two millennia and many have written prayers and hymns to be sung and prayed in such times. Below is a German hymn which goes back to the 17th century. It is actually 10 verses long, below are six of them for your consideration. On the next page are a couple of prayers from C.F.W. Walther (1811-1887) written especially in time of epidemic.

Before Thee, mighty God, we own
Our measure of transgression
And yet in faith we pray and groan
For Thy divine compassion.
Take pity on our grievous fall,
Lord Christ, from us be taken
The deadly plague that weighs on all
The needy and forsaken.

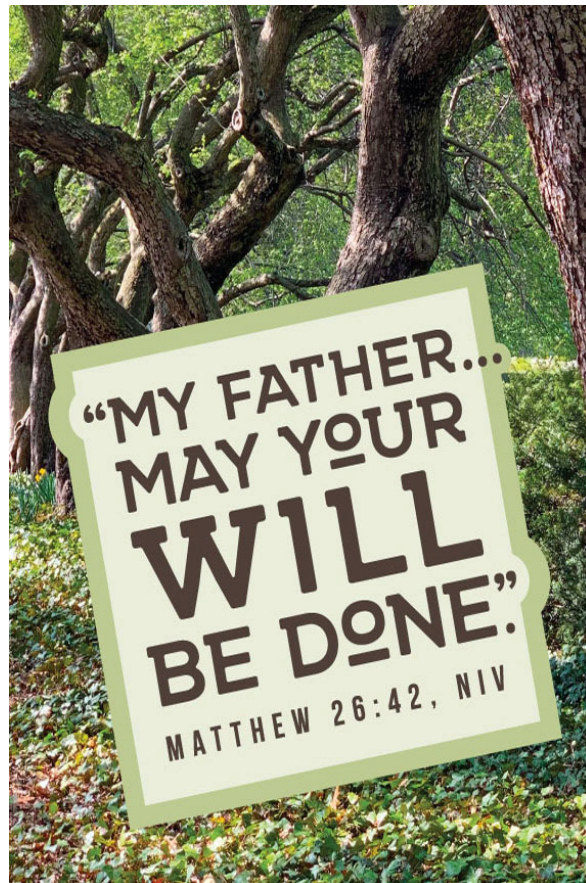
Turn from us, Lord, the pestilence
That round us walks discreetly;
Lest it come nigh us, drive it hence
From house and land completely!
O Christ, in grace defend our cause,
Strength to the feeble giving,
Deliver us from plague's firm jaws,
And let us all be living!

No man in peace can breath a breath
While he on earth resideth,
Until he shut his eyes in death,
Where better life abideth.
Then from this battle he is freed,
No more by foes offended,
Released from trial, cross, and need,
With which he oft contended.

My hope in God I now set fast,
On Him my spirit staying,
For death must come to all at last:
What use in long delaying?
And he who falls asleep today
Already shines in heaven
Far from this tumult and decay,
Crowned by his God in heaven.

O Jesus I commit to Thee
My living and my dying!
As pleaseth Thee, so deal with me,
Thy heavenly grace supplying!
Then, Jesus, I will be content,
To be a porter lowly
Above when life is spent;
Oh, grant me this thing solely!

And if I die, I die in Thee,
And Thou death too hast suffered,
And life eternal won for me,
When Thou wast freely offered.
This is my comfort constantly
And gives me sweetest slumber.
He who repents and hopes in Thee,
No ill his heart encumber.





prepare for worship in april

Wednesday, April 1, Services, 1pm & 7pm

Sunday, April 5: Sunday of the Passion

Texts: Is. 50:4-9a; Phil. 2:5-11; Matthew 27:11-66

Hymn of the Day: "A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth," 438

Maundy Thursday, April 9, Service 7pm

Good Friday, April 10, Service 7:30pm

Sunday, April 12: The Resurrection of Our Lord

Texts: Job 19:23-29; 1 Corinth. 15:15-57; Mark 16:1-8

Hymn of the Day: "Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds," 465

Sunday, April 19: Second Sunday of Easter

Texts: Acts 5:29-42; 1 Peter 1:3-9; John 20:19-31

Hymn of the Day: "O Sons and Daughters of the King," 470 or 471

Sunday, April 26: Third Sunday of Easter

Texts: Acts 2:14a, 36-41; 1 Peter 1:17-25; Luke 24:13-

35

Hymn of the Day: "With High Delight Let Us Unite," 483

Almighty, eternal God, Lord of life and death, we thank You that in these evil times You have graciously cared for us. Indeed, You are wielding over us the stern rod of pestilence that has, sadly, taken many a dear brother and sister out of our midst; but even so You have our welfare at heart.

Through the present epidemic You remind us that we must die, not to frighten us and to drive us to despair, but in order that we may divorce ourselves from this perilous world, be awakened from every sinful slumber into which we may fall, set our house in order, acknowledge our sins, and, above all, through firm faith take refuge in Your dear Son, our only Savior and Conqueror of death.

Grant, we beg of You, that Your call to repent and to prepare for death may be ignored by none of us, but that we may all take refuge in Jesus Christ, cling to Him day and night, and finally depart in peace.

You do not want us to abandon Your work at a time like this, but to work while it is day, for the "night is coming, when no one can work" [John 9:4].

Oh, therefore grant us grace in this evening hour, as at the portals of eternity, to deliberate in Your fear upon those things that are beneficial to Your dear children. To that end direct our understanding and our minds and let our efforts be crowned with success according to Your gracious will and for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

C.F.W. Walther, *For the Life of the Church*, CPH 2011, pg. 126

God, "You return men to dust and say, 'Return, O children of man!'" [Psalm 90:3]. What a solemn call to repentance You have sent us in the form of a deadly epidemic!

But, sadly, not only the blind and dead world ignores that solemn call and continues unafraid in sin; even we, Your Christians, must confess to You that our hearts, too, have become hardened.


Have mercy upon us, we beg of You, and accompany Your messengers of death with the power of Your grace to awaken us and to draw us to You.

Let not the glimmer of our faith be extinguished, but fan it into an ever brighter flame. Grant us strength firmly to rely upon the merits of Your only-begotten Son and upon the Word of Your grace, that we may with confident trust exalt: "If God is for us, who can be against us?" [Romans 8:31]. "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting? ... Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" [1st Corinthians 15:55-57]

Keep Your shielding hand over us and all those death to us. Should it please Your to take us out of this world at this time, help us through death into life, through conflict to victory, through danger to safety, through misery to glory.

Do this for the sake of Jesus Christ, Your only-begotten Son, our Redeemer and Advocate. Amen.

C.F.W. Walther, *For the Life of the Church*, CPH 2011, pgs. 67-68

	<p style="text-align: center;">Lord of Life Lutheran Church Plano, Texas <u>12:00 pm</u> <u>May 3, 2020</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Reaching Up...</i> <i>Reaching In...</i> <i>Reaching Out...</i></p>
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Voters Assembly Agenda

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|-----|---|------------------|
| 1. | CALL TO ORDER | Ben Scarth |
| 2. | OPENING DEVOTION and PRAYER | Russ Wilkerson |
| 3. | ATTENDANCE/NEW VOTING MEMBERS REPORT | Carolyn Moudy |
| 4. | APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES | Carolyn Moudy |
| 5. | ELECTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS | Ben Scarth |
| 6. | TREASURER'S REPORT | Kara Prescott |
| 7. | FINANCIAL REVIEW REPORT | Kara Prescott |
| 8. | ENDOWMENT REPORT | Pat Greer |
| 9. | STATE OF THE PARISH | Pastor Shaltanis |
| 10. | ANNOUNCEMENTS | Ben Scarth |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ELECTION RESULTS • NEXT MEETING - December 6, 2020 | |
| 11. | CLOSING PRAYER | Pastor Shaltanis |

The Sanctus in the Divine Service

by Nicholas Belcher

What happens on Sunday mornings when we gather to receive from the hand of our Lord is anything but haphazard. Indeed, everything in Divine Service has a rich theology behind it, and, by God's grace, we stand as the inheritors of nearly two-thousand years of Christian worship practices. It is truly a testament to the goodness of God that many of the things in which we participate during the service have been preserved and passed down by our Christian forefathers of old. The Sanctus is certainly no exception.

It may come as a surprise that the Sanctus is actually the oldest liturgical hymn of which we are aware; scholars claim that the Sanctus was sung in the temple and in synagogues during the time of Jesus' earthly life—in fact, there is a good chance he even sung it himself! In any case, Clement of Rome appears to make reference to it in one of his epistles dating back to the end of the first century, and, thanks to an ancient liturgy of a man named Serapion, we have hard evidence that it became known as a eucharistic hymn by the middle of the fourth century. By the end of the fourth century it was a universal feature of major eucharistic liturgies. Needless to say, the Sanctus has quite the pedigree.

The word Sanctus itself derives from the Latin word for "Holy," and it refers to the famous passage from Isaiah chapter six where the prophet receives his commission to bring the Word of the Lord to his people. Amazingly, Isaiah receives a vision wherein he sees the Lord sitting upon a throne, and above him are at least two mighty angelic beings called Seraphim. Verse three in the ESV then says, "one called to another and said: 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!'" This same proclamation (Holy, holy, holy) is also repeated in Revelation chapter four by other magnificent angelic creatures. Thus, in the first place, when we sing the Sanctus in the Divine Service, we should recognize that we are joining the angels that stand in the presence of God himself while proclaiming his holiness. In the second place, it seems quite fitting for us to join the angels' song given that our crucified and risen Lord is present among us bodily in Holy Communion, does it not? Luther certainly thought so. In fact, he held the Sanctus in such high esteem that he allowed it to be sung after the consecration of the elements to bring forth the reality that Christ is indeed present therein.

After the angelic refrain we also sing the following words from Psalm 118: "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord"! These were almost certainly the kinds of words shouted as King David brought the ark of the covenant into Jerusalem (see 2 Sam. 6). You might also notice these words were also said as Jesus rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday to be delivered up in short order for our salvation. In both events the very presence of God was manifested among his people, and the same also occurs for us each Sunday during Divine Service. Jesus' body and blood are present for us for the forgiveness of our sins, and as we move forward to the altar where heaven meets Earth, it is he whom we find there. Thus, the value of the Sanctus is as follows: by it we understand that (1) we are in the presence of Jesus and (2) we partake of the most sublime, heavenly feast as we receive his body and blood in the sacrament. Let nobody convince you these are mere theological abstractions. The Sanctus proclaims the mystery of God with us, and it does so beautifully.

Lord of Life Small Groups

EMPTY NESTERS' CARE GROUP

† For info contact Mike and Sandra Paradise at (972) 424-2951 or itsparadise.inplano@verizon.net

† Usually meet one Sat. a month at 2:30 PM

EPIC PARENTING

† For 30ish couples with kids

† For info contact Ben Scarth

BenjaminScarth@yahoo.com

† Usually meet one Sunday a month in the afternoon or evening

FRUITS OF THE VINE CARE GROUP

† For info contact Scott Peters at 972-898-3351 cell or speters@planolutheran.com

† Usually meet one Sun. a month at 5:30 PM

GOOD NEWS CARE GROUP

† For info contact Chris Oltmann at (972) 727-6330 or Mike Kunschke at (847) 951-6974

† Usually meet the 2nd Sat. of each month at 6:30 PM for Bible study

MIXED BLESSINGS

† For info contact Fred and Ruth Bernhardt at (972) 398-0771

† Usually meet one Sat. a month at 6:30 PM

TWENTY SOMETHINGS

† For couples and singles in their twenties

† For info contact Pastor Shaltanis at PastorShaltanis@yahoo.com

† The group is currently in transition, but has usually met on Sundays after late service



APRIL
Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 2 Brandon Lund
- 2 Teresa Strecker
- 3 Kathy Hite
- 8 Jon Chumbley
- 8 Brian Wolf
- 11 Grant Kostrzewa
- 14 Bob Helms
- 14 Cadence Tischler
- 15 Dudley Hall
- 15 Mallia Surdyk
- 15 Carl & Jan Carper (44)
- 15 Brooks & Joanna Smith (25)
- 16 Karen Lund
- 17 Jeff Berger
- 17 Luke Reinert
- 19 Lynda Abbott
- 22 Charles & Suzanne Gabriel (20)
- 22 Scott & Christine Messinger (25)
- 22 Rhonda Tabor
- 25 Kathy Helms
- 25 Rix Scarth
- 25 Laurie & Tom George (33)
- 26 Bon & Becky Padgett (23)
- 27 Mike & Sandra Paradise (57)
- 28 Katie Short
- 30 Earl & Karen Lund (32)

SUMMARIZED STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

2 Months Ending February 2020

	Y-T-D Operating Funds	Y-T-D Budget	Jan-Dec 2020 Variance	Jan-Dec 2020 Budget
Contributions				
Regular Offerings	81,748	86,360	(4,612)	586,549
Other	214	0	214	0
Total Income	81,963	86,360	(4,398)	586,549
Expenses				
Operating Expenses	72,319	92,379	(20,060)	552,379
Mortgage Payment	2,841	5,682	(2,841)	34,092
Total Expenses	75,160	98,061	(22,901)	586,471
Surplus or (Deficit)	6,803	(11,701)	18,504	78
Other Information:				
Operating Fund Balance	\$94,384			
Restricted Funds Balance	\$131,794			
Building Loan Balance	\$222,941			