

# OUR SAVIOR EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

22 MARCH A.D. 2020

## THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT



“JESUS SAID TO PHILIP, ‘WHERE ARE WE TO BUY BREAD, SO THAT THESE PEOPLE MAY EAT?’  
HE SAID THIS TO TEST HIM, FOR HE HIMSELF KNEW WHAT HE WOULD DO.”

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### THE DIVINE SERVICE

#### REVERENCE IN THE LORD’S HOUSE

The writer to the Hebrews urges, “Thus let us worship, with reverence and awe...” (12:28). Solomon writes in Ecclesiastes 5, “Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. To draw near to listen is better than to offer the sacrifice of fools...” (5:1). In part, Martin Luther defined “the sacrifice of fools” as irreverent conduct by those who show they will not listen to the Word of God (LW 15:76). In order to maintain reverence in the Lord’s house, we ask that 1) men remove their hats, 2) mobile phones, tablets, and gaming devices be turned off and put away, and 3) with the exception of parents providing appropriate snacks for small children, please refrain from bringing food and/or drink into the holy spaces.

#### THE LORD’S SUPPER

The Sacrament of Christ’s Body and Blood is celebrated in the Divine Service. Participation in the Lord’s Supper indicates unity in faith (1 Corinthians 10:16-21). Visitors desiring to commune are asked to first speak with the Pastor. Ushers are available to arrange a meeting prior to the service. Parents who bring children to the altar to be blessed during the Lord’s Supper, *to avoid spillage, please refrain from giving them the individual communion cup after you have communed.*

ORDER OF SERVICE  
BASED ON DIVINE SERVICE, SETTINGS THREE & FIVE

✠ IN THE NAME OF JESUS ✠

**Prelude**

“Jesus, Priceless Treasure” (*The Hymn of the Day*) M. Machemer

*Stand*

**Invocation**

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**C** Amen.

**Exhortation**

- P** Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.
- P** Our help is in the name of the Lord,  
**C** **who made heaven and earth.**
- P** I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,  
**C** **and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.**

*Silence for reflection on God’s Word and for self-examination.*

*Kneel/Stand*

**Confession of Sins**

- P** O almighty God, merciful Father,  
**C** **I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.**

**Absolution**

- P** Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.

*Stand*

# SERVICE OF THE WORD

## Kyrie

- P** Lord, have mercy.  
**C** Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

## Salutation and Collect of the Day

- P** The Lord be with you.  
**C** And also with you.
- P** Let us pray. Almighty God, our heavenly Father, Your mercies are new every morning; and though we deserve only punishment, You receive us as Your children and provide for all our needs of body and soul. Grant that we may heartily acknowledge Your merciful goodness, give thanks for all Your benefits, and serve You in willing obedience; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** Amen.

*Sit*

## Hymn of the Day

“Jesus, Priceless Treasure” (Please see page 9)

## Readings from Holy Scripture

*Following the Old Testament and Epistle readings, the Pastor and People respond:*

- P** This is the Word of the Lord.  
**C** Thanks be to God.

**Old Testament Reading**  
**Second Reading**

Isaiah 49:8-13  
Acts 2:41-47

*Stand*

**Holy Gospel**

John 6:1-15

- P** The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the sixth chapter.



**C** Glo - ry be to Thee, O Lord.

- P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.



**C** Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

## Nicene Creed

**C** I believe in one God,  
the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth  
and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the only-begotten Son of God,  
begotten of His Father before all worlds,  
God of God, Light of Light,  
very God of very God,  
begotten, not made,  
being of one substance with the Father,  
by whom all things were made;  
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven  
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary  
and was made man;  
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.  
He suffered and was buried.  
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures  
and ascended into heaven  
and sits at the right hand of the Father.  
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,  
whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord and giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,  
who spoke by the prophets.  
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,  
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,  
and I look for the resurrection of the dead  
and the life  $\text{✝}$  of the world to come. Amen.

*Sit*

## Sermon

*Stand*

## Prayer of the Church

*(Please remain standing.)*

## Preparation of the Lord's Table

"By Grace I'm Saved" D. Busarow

**Offering** *(Please place your offerings in the plates located in the narthex as you leave the service.)*

# SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

## Preface

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** And also with you.

**P** Lift up your hearts.

**C** We lift them to the Lord.

**P** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C** It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

**P** It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who overcame the assaults of the devil and gave His life as a ransom for many that with cleansed hearts we might be prepared joyfully to celebrate the paschal feast in sincerity and truth. Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

**C** Holy, holy, holy Lord. God of power and might: heaven and earth are full of Your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

## Lord's Prayer

**C** Our Father who art in heaven,  
hallowed be Thy name,  
Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;  
give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

## The Words of Our Lord

**P** In the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, at His command, and with His own words, we receive His testament:

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My  $\text{✠}$  body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My  $\text{✠}$  blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

## Pax Domini

**P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C** Amen.

## Agnus Dei *(Spoken)*

**C** O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us.  
O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us.  
O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, grant us Thy peace.  
Amen.

*Sit*

## Hymn at the Distribution

“By Grace I’m Saved”



1 By grace I'm saved, grace free and bound-less; My soul, be-lieve and  
2 By grace! None dare lay claim to mer - it; Our works and con - duct  
3 By grace God's Son, our on - ly Sav - ior, Came down to earth to  
6 By grace! On this I'll rest when dy - ing; In Je - sus' prom - ise



doubt it not. Why stag - ger at this word of prom - ise?  
have no worth. God in His love sent our Re - deem - er,  
bear our sin. Was it be - cause of your own mer - it  
I re - joice; For though I know my heart's con - di - tion,



Has Scrip - ture ev - er false - hood taught? No! Then this word must  
Christ Je - sus, to this sin - ful earth; His death did for our  
That Je - sus died your soul to win? No, it was grace, and  
I al - so know my Sav - ior's voice. My heart is glad, all



true re - main: By grace you too will life ob - tain.  
sins a - tone, And we are saved by grace a - lone.  
grace a - lone, That brought Him from His heav'n - ly throne.  
grief has flown Since I am saved by grace a - lone.

Tune and text: Public domain

*Stand*

## **Dismissal**

**P** The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting. Depart  $\text{✠}$  in peace.

**C** Amen.

## **Post-Communion Collect**

**P** Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

## **Benedicamus and Benediction**

**P** Let us bless the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

**P** The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and  $\text{✠}$  give you peace.

**C** Amen.

## Hymn at the Retiring Procession

"Jesus, Refuge of the Weary"



1 Je - sus, ref - uge of the wea - ry, Blest Re - deem - er,  
2 Do we pass that cross un - heed - ing, Breath - ing no re -  
3 Je - sus, may our hearts be burn - ing With more fer - vent



whom we love, Foun - tain in life's des - ert drea - ry, Sav - ior  
pen - tant vow, Though we see You wound - ed, bleed - ing, See Your  
love for You; May our eyes be ev - er turn - ing To be -



from the world a - bove: Of - ten have Your eyes, of - fend - ed,  
thorn - en - cir - cled brow? Yet Your sin - less death has brought us  
hold Your cross a - new Till in glo - ry, part - ed nev - er



Gazed up - on the sin - ner's fall; Yet up - on the  
Life e - ter - nal, peace, and rest; On - ly what Your  
From the bless - ed Sav - ior's side, Grav - en in our



cross ex - tend - ed, You have borne the pain of all.  
grace has taught us Calms the sin - ner's deep dis - tress.  
hearts for - ev - er, Dwell the cross, the Cru - ci - fied.

Tune and text: Public domain

## Postlude

"Jesus, Refuge of the Weary" D. Schack

✠ SOLI DEO GLORIA ✠

# Hymn of the Day

# "Jesus, Priceless Treasure"



1 Je - sus, price-less trea - sure, Fount of pur - est plea - sure,  
 2 In Thine arms I rest me; Foes who would mo - lest me  
 3 Sa - tan, I de - fy thee; Death, I now de - cry thee;  
 4 Hence, all earth - ly trea - sure! Je - sus is my plea - sure,



Tru - est friend to me, Ah, how long in an - guish  
 Can - not reach me here. Though the earth be shak - ing,  
 Fear, I bid thee cease. World, thou shalt not harm me  
 Je - sus is my choice. Hence, all emp - ty glo - ry!



Shall my spir - it lan - guish, Yearn - ing, Lord, for Thee?  
 Ev - 'ry heart be quak - ing, Je - sus calms my fear.  
 Nor thy threats a - larm me While I sing of peace.  
 Naught to me thy sto - ry Told with tempt - ing voice.



Thou art mine, O Lamb di - vine! I will suf - fer  
 Light - nings flash And thun - ders crash; Yet, though sin and  
 God's great pow'r Guards ev - 'ry hour; Earth and all its  
 Pain or loss, Or shame or cross, Shall not from my



naught to hide Thee; Naught I ask be - side Thee.  
 hell as - sail me, Je - sus will not fail me.  
 depths a - dore Him, Si - lent bow be - fore Him.  
 Sav - ior move me Since He deigns to love me.

**IN PREPARATION** for the Divine Service next Sunday, 29 March A.D. 2020, Fifth Sunday in Lent, take time this week to read the lessons appointed for that day, Psalm 43, Genesis 22:1-14, Hebrews 9:11-15, John 8:46-59, and the Hymn of the Day, "My Song Is Love Unknown," *LSB* 430.

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### **SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

**THE FLOWERS ADORNING OUR LORD'S ALTAR** today are placed to the glory of our Triune God Jim and Suzanne Molnar in honor of their 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

**THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM** was celebrated on Saturday, March 21 for LOGAN LOIVIER WHITE son of DANIEL and ALEXANDRIA nee` CUNNINGHAM, WHITE. Logan's witness is MATTHEW CHODAZK. God the Father bless Logan as he has now been washed with water and the Word in the Name of Christ by the Holy Spirit.

### **✠ PRAYERS ✠**

**THE SICK, THE SHUT-INS, THOSE IN ADVERSITY:** Lucille Aldred & family, Adrian Atkinson, Leonard Badder, Dave Bosh, Susan Brandt, Mary Ann Brueggeman, Dan Bruzek, Joyce Griner, Luther Habitz, John Hangstefer, Marilyn Hatton, Donna Hay, Flip Keck, Landon Martens, Ronald Masch, Charles McCloskey, Cathy Pawlowski, Kathy Pump, Cindy Pushman, Calvin Reinke, Randi Talsma, Susan Vogt, Michael Whalen, Frances Wyckoff, and Matt Zavada

**MILITARY:** Fletcher Armstrong, Jennifer Baca, Ramone Baca, Drew Barber, Brandy Bates, Robert Bell, Corry Brennan, Tom Buller, Brian Chapman, Mark Ciero, Kathleen Cottrell, Jonathan Cross, Kenneth Eyer, Kody Fletcher, Sgt. Paul Harrison, Drew Helmreich, Chad Libby, Neil Lipon, Richard McManamon, Meighan Mills, Matthew Niendorf, Chris Robosky, Steve Roeske, Samantha Russell, Jake Simkins, Cora Spangler, Sara Spangler, Logan Terao, Albie Therrien, Austin & Maria Wright, and Alex Young

**MISSIONARIES:** Rev. Charles Ferry and family, Rev. Steven Mahlborg and family, and Rev. Todd Roeske and family.

### **Strengthened by God's grace... *Pray, Commit, and then Act!***

We are fortified by the power of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel given in Word and Sacrament to be God's people and to produce fruits of faithfulness to Him. These fruits include the giving of tithes and offerings. If you are unable to give in the usual way, feel free to use your mobile device to scan the QR code provided here. It will take you directly to the church's online giving page. *Don't have a QR scanning application? Visit the Android or Apple App Store to download a free application.*



# OUR SAVIOR EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

## ANNOUNCEMENTS — 22 MARCH A.D. 2020

### WEEKLY ATTENDANCE

**March 11, 2020—6:30 P.M. Midweek Office of Evening Prayer:92**

**March 15, 2020—9:30 A.M. Divine Service: 139**

March 15, 2020—11:00 A.M. No Sunday School & Bible Study

### Tithes and Offerings

#### Weekly Financial Report 15 March A.D. 2020

General Fund Income Week of 03/15	\$ 20,634.40
General Operating Savings Balance 03/15	\$ 8,062.89
General Operating Checking Balance 03/15	\$ 26,307.64
1+1+1 Eng, District Donations YTD 03/15	\$ 570.25
Debt Retirement Contributions 3/1/19-03/15	\$ 23,583.77

### UPCOMING NEEDS

Week of 03/22	\$ 40,050.97
Week of 03/29	\$ 25,774.08
Week of 04/05	\$ 27,456.40
Week of 04/12	\$ 1,591.60
Week of 04/19	\$ 34,157.26
Week of 04/26	\$ 22,191.47
Week of 05/05	\$ 25,234.00
Week of 05/12	\$ 2,038.00
Week of 05/19	\$ 28,850.60
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 207,344.28</b>

**THE QUARTERLY CONGREGATION MEETING IS POSTPONED  
UNTIL THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER, APRIL 19.**

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### Acknowledgments

Divine Service, Settings Three and Five from Lutheran Service Book

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Brothers and sisters in Christ,

The Lord be with you!

I hope you're not expecting me to talk about the coronavirus. Sure, it's on our minds. But since we're already being so diligent, how about we catch our collective breath and get back to considering other things?

Mindful of the season of Lent, the current desktop image for my computer is the portrait by Carl Heinrich Bloch entitled "An Angel Comforting Jesus before His Arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane."

Yes, it's a rather long title. Even so, it's a moving image, one that not only gives a glimpse into the Lord's diligent prayer in the garden before His capture and eventual crucifixion, but it also attempts to portray in the moment His exhaustion and absolute loneliness—the kind of loneliness that can only be soothed by otherworldly comfort. Thus the angel in the image (Luke 22:41-43).



The portrait is deeply moving in its depiction. But it's equally moving because of what it doesn't portray. It's just Jesus and the angel. No one else. And yet the Gospel narratives remind us that Jesus was only a stone's throw from friends. The Lord had asked for His disciples to keep watch with Him as He prayed. He was preparing to enter into the hours that belonged to the powers of darkness (Luke 22:53), but before taking that first fateful step, He wanted nothing more than to pray to His Father, having the comforting presence of friends at His flanks as He did.

But they slept. In the midst of the Lord's praying, even as the intensity of the oncoming moments caused His sweat to become drops of blood, his friends slept.

This is a telling moment, and it sheds a little light on something of the human nature.

I'll give you an example relative to me.

Over the past few years, I've experienced a fair share of disconcertion from people who disapprove of me engaging in the affairs of the state. On the other hand, I've enjoyed an equal portion of encouragement from friends all around the state and nation who are glad for a clergyman's willingness to carry the concerns of the Church before the princes of this world, and then to share the details of the efforts with others through writing.

But here's the twist...

A couple of weeks ago after the Republican Primary Candidate Forum here in Livingston County, I did the kind of thing I've done a thousand times in the past. I took the liberty of writing a piece about the event, namely the handful of men and women running for the particular seat

in Congress. As usual, it was an attempt on my part to think out loud, to observe critically, and to tip my hat to what an opposing party's candidate might bring to the table of critique. Of course, all readers were free to take from it whatever they wanted.

Interestingly, very soon after I posted the piece, my phone began chirping with private messages from online friends and acquaintances who'd always been so glad in the past for my engagement in the public square, but were now rather unhappy with me. So unhappy, in fact, they were going out of their way to discourage me from involvement in politics altogether, urging me to consider that pastors shouldn't be so outspoken in the public square. Seriously. They were imploring me to delete the piece and to bow out of the conversation.

I should add to this that my closer friends—the ones who actually know me as a person and know I'd never close the door on a conversation with anyone—they didn't do this. They reached to me with their opinions, and they did so in courteous ways. I listened to them, considered their points of view, and then I gave a little more of the content behind mine. Those conversations were incredibly enriching, and I can say those friendships are even stronger now than they were before. I'm glad for that.

But what happened with the other folks? Why the 180 degree turn from being so glad for my activities in the public square to working overtime to convince me to tone down my efforts and exit the discussion completely?

Well, apart from the strange criticisms of my writing style, which so many already know so well—my typical words, forms, and device choices (which, out of respect to a few folks, I did end up going back to rearrange here and there)—the deeper thread of concern, the one that was common to all of their pings to my phone, was that my article came to its conclusion with me recommending one particular candidate as the best performer in the forum and ultimately the best bet for beating the opposition.

But the candidate I favored wasn't the candidate they favored.

Simply put, my trajectory didn't align with these particular friends' preferences. This angered them—enough so that it erased their previous sentiments, replacing them with words of admonition, words meant for quieting any influence I might have on a larger community of readers still teetering at the edge of a decision.

Interesting.

The disciples slept. Why did they fall asleep? It's not that they weren't Jesus' friends. Of course they were. It's also not that they weren't in favor of Him. They had great favor for the Lord. It's just that they were more in favor of themselves and what they wanted, and with this, His particular trajectory would remain out of alignment with theirs.

He was suffering, and He wanted the comfort of their watchful companionship. They were tired and went to sleep.

The human nature.

Again, Lent is a time to reinvigorate the combat against the human nature. It's a time for us to observe and then apply extra pressure to those situations in which we put our wants first, and as a result, discovering ourselves saying and doing things that fracture relationships, things we wish we could take back. It's a time to examine the motives behind our responses and to see if they really can withstand the beaming light of God's Word that's always ready to challenge them.

I, for one, am glad for the season of Lent. As I've said before, it's incredibly recalibrating. Nathaniel Hawthorne said, "Life is made up of marble and mud," which is to say sometimes life is sturdy and steady, and sometimes it's shifting and messy. Lent—its liturgies, readings, prayers, and the like—they all work together to remind us of something here. They lock arms as one and burrow through our hardened exteriors (which we like to think are impenetrable) and they implant in the core of our human nature. Lent prompts us to recall we're far more shifting and messy than we'd ever like to admit. Lent shines a light on the fact that as we go about our days making our lists of "bad guys" and "good guys," it should be no surprise that we have the tendency to shift so many of the people we know from one list to the other and then back again, all the while our own names remain strangely fixed in the list of good guys.

It's not necessarily that we're against anyone in any particular moment. It's just that we're always more in favor of ourselves. Again, that's the human nature—the Sin-nature.

Just so you know, Christ went to the cross to drown this nature in the tides of His blood. Lent reminds us that when it comes to the human nature, there really aren't two lists. There's only one—the bad guys. But Lent also primes our hearts to know that Jesus went to the cross for every single person on that dreadful list (Matthew 9:12; 1 Timothy 1:15). With this, there's an urgency to Lent's plea for contrition. It calls for us to awaken to the fact that if in our own hearts and minds we never seem to find ourselves on the list of bad guys, then we're heading toward a Good Friday event that will appear to be of little value to us.

Lent calls out, "Repent! Turn around and go the other way! Wake from sleep and watch with Jesus (Romans 13:11)!" Lent sets before us the gory, but ever-so-splendid, message of the Gospel of our Lord's passion. It encourages us, "Wait and watch with your Lord. You're not going to want to miss what the Son of God is about to do for you and the rest of the whole world beside you on the 'bad guys' list."

And with that, it's on to the news...

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+ With regard to our stewardship... Please do not skip this note.

Last week was a lighter week when it comes to our expenses. We came into the week with \$11,852.08 in the General Fund checking account and only \$4,061.00 in bills. But this week we're looking at a big week—around \$40K in expenses.

We were down in yesterday's service attendance by almost 100 people.

I should say that I did get word from folks saying that while they didn't attend, they do intend to keep their commitments to the Lord. Some will be dropping off their offering envelopes today, and for that, we are grateful. God's people are being moved to faithfulness.

We certainly need to rally together and then step up to the plate as individuals ready to swing away. And yet, perhaps an over-and-above gift is possible on your part? Maybe a Lententide *reconsideration* of giving levels is in order? Perchance the tackling of a percentage of what's due this week is an idea?

I suppose in the end, the encouragement of God's Word must remain the same: Pray, commit, and then act. God will bless your efforts toward faithfulness.

*Lastly, I need to share something uplifting as it relates to our finances.*

I received two separate emails this weekend letting me know the great love folks have for this community of faith and how glad they are to be a part of it. In order to express their thankfulness, some have opted to donate their paychecks to help meet the salary needs of the staff during this turbulent time. Others have elected to continue paying the bills for their children's daycare even though the daycare is closed.

Thanks be to God for the generosity! Thanks be to God for His faithfulness at work through people!

+ I spoke with Joel Hornick this morning, and it looks like we're going to turn off the water supply to the baptismal font and empty it. As an alternative, we're either going to move the old font back into the nave—the font with the steel bowl. It's much easier to clean the bowl and change out the water. Another option is to find a similar bowl that will sit in the current font. Either way, this temporary change is coming.

+ The Board of Social Ministry has elected to close down the food pantry. It has nothing to do with the current situation, but rather it's just not getting enough usage by the community to justify its maintenance. In fact, far too many of the items in the pantry are going unused well beyond their expiration date, and being mindful of Godly stewardship, the Board is going to meet the needs by having gift cards more readily available. In the meantime, feel free to visit the food pantry and take some of the remaining items. There's still a lot of useful products in there. Keep them. Give them away. Whatever. Just use them.

+ The Kantor sent me the following note regarding the Lutheran Schools Music Festival this past week. Enjoy!

Congratulations to the Choristers and Middle School Handbells of Our Savior Evangelical Lutheran School for their accomplishments at the Lutheran Schools Music Festival at Concordia University Ann Arbor on March 10! Both groups glorified God through their singing and ringing and performed courageously for the judges to the best of their abilities. As a result, both ensembles received a 'Division I' (highest possible) rating, with

the Middle School Handbells earning a perfect score and the Choristers missing a perfect score by just one point. Way to go students! To God alone be the glory!!

+ All of the lights in the nave have been replaced! God willing, no more flickering bulbs in the middle of worship. Thanks to the trustees for all of the hard work. Not only did you manage to get the massive lift into the nave, but you braved going up in it to change out the bulbs! Blessings and thank you!

+ I received the following note from Ed Dietrich, our School Board president. Thanks, Ed!

The school board would like to announce the Person of the Month for March and she is Nicole Spangler. Nikki is continually helping out the school board and principal navigate through the accounting maze to provide the best educational practices while maintaining prudent financial controls. When the Girl's Outdoor Club was established this year as an after school program, Nikki volunteered to be a chaperone so that the program could be implemented. She has been of great help in assisting Harry Jock to provide an exceptional learning experience in the great outdoors. Thanks Nikki! In Nikki's honor the school board is donating \$100 to debt retirement.

+ One final, and very important message:

Because of the cancellation of all studies, I need to restructure our confirmation efforts. Parents of Junior and Senior Catechumens, here's the plan.

*Junior Catechumens are done for the year.* With only a couple of sessions remaining in our term, I'm okay with that. All of the parents and students did a marvelous job. Everyone worked hard, the memory work was accomplished, and class discussion was top notch. Great year! We'll pick up again in September.

Senior Catechumens, we're not going to make it in time for the Great Confession on Saturday, April 4, or Confirmation on Sunday, April 5 (Palm Sunday), so we're going to push our remaining sessions past Easter break. With this, we need to be creative. I'm pondering two days of solid work together—to finish what needs finishing with regard to content, but also to prepare for the Great Confession and to help work on Confirmation essays.

As I mentioned in the notes above, things are dynamic right now, but I'm willing to suggest some preliminary dates so that you can mark your calendars. If we have to change them, we will.

My suggestions for meeting dates are Monday, April 20 from 6:00 PM until 8 PM, and Saturday, April 25 from 9 AM until 11 AM. I'd like to shoot for Wednesday, May 13 at 7:00 PM for the Great Confession, and Sunday, May 17 for Confirmation. Get back to me and let me know.

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That's it for this week.

Blessings to you!