



*in the  
highest  
heaven!*

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GOS  
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IN  
THE  
HIGHEST  
HEAVEN!

# OUR SAVIOR EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

5 APRIL A.D. 2020

PALM SUNDAY



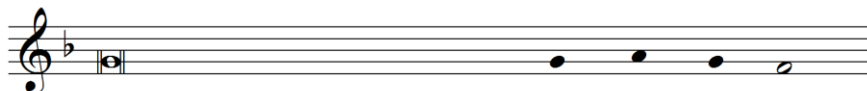
THE DIVINE SERVICE

## 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.

## A black silhouette illustration on a white background depicting the Palm Sunday procession. Jesus is riding a donkey in the center, flanked by two men. They are surrounded by a crowd of people, including children, who are waving palm fronds. The scene is set against a white background with a black ground line.

**C: Amen.**



3

*Palm leaves are triumphantly raised and the hymn is joyously sung as all meditate on the Lord's entrance into the time of His passion.*

## Processional Hymn

**"All Glory, Laud, and Honor"**

*Introduction by K. Sadowski*



- 1 You are the King of Is - rael And Da - vid's roy - al Son,
- 2 The com - pa - ny of an - gels Is prais - ing You on high,
- 3 The mul - ti - tude of pil - grims With palms be - fore You went;
- 4 To You be - fore Your pas - sion They sang their hymns of praise;
- 5 As You re - ceived their prais - es, Ac - cept the prayers we bring,



Now in the Lord's name com - ing, Our King and Bless - ed One.  
 And we with all cre - a - tion In cho - rus make re - ply.  
 Our praise and prayer and an - thems Be - fore You we pre - sent.  
 To You, now high ex - alt - ed, Our mel - o - dy we raise.  
 O Source of ev - 'ry bless - ing, Our good and gra - cious King.



*P: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.*



**C: Ho - san - na in the high - est.**

*Stand*

## Salutation and Collect of the Day



**P** The Lord be with you.



**C** And with thy spir - it.

**P** Let us pray.

Almighty God, by Your great goodness mercifully look upon Your people that we may be governed and preserved evermore in body and soul; 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*

## Old Testament Reading

Zechariah 9:9-12

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## Epistle

Philippians 2:5-11

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

*Stand*

## Holy Gospel

Saint Matthew 21:1-9

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the twenty-first chapter.



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

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



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

## Apostles' Creed

**C** I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
 maker of heaven and earth.  
 And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,  
 who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
 born of the virgin Mary,  
 suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
 was crucified, died and was buried.  
 He descended into hell.  
 The third day He rose again from the dead.  
 He ascended into heaven  
 and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.  
 From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.  
 I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
 the holy Christian Church,  
 the communion of saints,  
 the forgiveness of sins,  
 the resurrection of the body,  
 and the life T everlasting. Amen.

*(Please remain standing for Hymn of the Day.)*

### The Hymn of the Day

“Ride On, Ride On in Majesty”



1 Ride on, ride on in maj - es - ty! Hark! All the  
 2 Ride on, ride on in maj - es - ty! In low - ly  
 3 Ride on, ride on in maj - es - ty! The an - gel  
 4 Ride on, ride on in maj - es - ty! Thy last and  
 5 Ride on, ride on in maj - es - ty! In low - ly



tribes ho - san - na cry. O Sav - ior meek, pur - sue Thy  
 pomp ride on to die. O Christ, Thy tri - umphs now be -  
 ar - mies of the sky Look down with sad and won - d'ring  
 fierc - est strife is nigh. The Fa - ther on His sap - phire  
 pomp ride on to die. Bow Thy meek head to mor - tal



road, With palms and scat - tered gar - ments strowed.  
 gin O'er cap - tive death and con - quered sin.  
 eyes To see the ap - proach - ing sac - ri - fice.  
 throne A - waits His own a - noint - ed Son.  
 pain, Then take, O God, Thy pow'r and reign.

## Sermon

*Stand*

## Prayer of the Church

### Lord's Prayer

**P** Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**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.

### Concluding Collect

**P** Almighty and everlasting God, You sent Your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, to take upon Himself our flesh and to suffer death upon the cross. Mercifully grant that we may follow the example of His great humility and patience and be made partakers of His resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

### Benediction

**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 ✠ give you peace.

**C** Amen.

# Hymn at the Retiring Procession

"The Tree of Life" (P. Imre / K. Scott)



*Choir:* There in God's gar - den stands the Tree of Wis - dom, whose leaves hold  
**Women and Girls:** Its name is Je - sus, name that says, "Our Sav - ior!" There on its  
**Men and Boys:** Thorns not its own are tan - gled in its fo - liage; our greed has  
*Choir:* See how it branch - es reach to us in wel - come; hear what the  
**Cong:** This is my end - ing, this my res - ur - rec - tion; in - to Your  
**Cong:** All heav'n is sing - ing, "Thanks to Christ whose Pas - sion of - fers in



forth the heal - ing of the na - tions: Tree of all know - ledge,  
 branch - es see the scars of suf - f'ring; see where the ten - drils  
 starved it, our de - spite has choked it. Yet, look! it lives! its  
*Voice* says, "Come to me, ye wea - ry! Give me your sick - ness,  
 hands, Lord, I com - mit my spir - it. This have I searched for;  
 mer - cy heal - ing, strength and par - don. Peo - ples and na - tions,



Tree of all com - pas - sion, Tree of all beau - ty.  
 of our hu - man self - hood feed on its life - blood.  
 grief has not de - stroyed it nor fire con - sumed it.  
 give me all your sor - row, I will give bless - ing."  
 now I can pos - sess it. This ground is ho - ly.  
 take it, take it free - ly!" - A - men! My Mas - ter!

✠ SOLI DEO GLORIA ✠



**IN PREPARATION** for the Divine Service next Sunday, 12 April A.D. 2020 Easter Sunday, take time this week to read the lessons appointed for that day, Psalm 118:15-29, Job 19:23-27, 1 Corinthians 5:6-8, Mark 16:1-8, and the Hymn of the Day, "Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bonds," LSB 458.



**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 — 5 APRIL A.D. 2020

### ✠ PRAYERS ✠

**THE SICK, THE SHUT-INS, THOSE IN ADVERSITY:** Lucille Aldred & family, Adrian Atkinson, Leonard Badder, Dale Belmas, Dave Bosh, Susan Brandt, Mary Ann Brueggeman, Dan Bruzek, Debbie Defer, Joyce Griner, Luther Habitz, John Hangstefer, Marilyn Hatton, Donna Hay, Albert Heidinger, Landon Martens, Ronald Masch, Charles McCloskey, Cathy Pawlowski, Kathy Pump, Cindy Pushman, Calvin Reinke, Randi Talsma, Susan Vogt, Kristy Sweet, 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 Mahlburg and family, and Rev. Todd Roeske and family.

### **Tithes and Offerings**

#### **Weekly Financial Report 29 March A.D. 2020**

General Fund Income Week of 03/29	\$ 16,636.00
General Operating Savings Balance 03/29	\$ 677.60
General Operating Checking Balance 03/29	\$ 4,560.96
1+1+1 Eng, District Donations YTD 03/29	\$ 590.25
Debt Retirement Contributions 3/1/19-03/29	\$ 23,583.77

### **UPCOMING NEEDS**

Bills held over	\$ 1,658.61
Week of 04/05	\$ 30,578.80
Week of 04/12	\$ 2,104.46
Week of 04/19	\$ 34,157.26
Week of 04/26	\$ 22,191.47
Week of 05/03	\$ 25,234.00
Week of 05/10	\$ 2,038.00
Week of 05/17	\$ 28,850.60
Week of 05/24	\$ 24,769.58
<u>Week of 05/31</u>	<u>\$ 32,456.29</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$204,039.07</b>

## Message from Nicole Spangler

Brothers and sisters in Christ,

These are unusual times. You may be wondering, if I am not physically attending church, how can I still financially support my congregation?

There are many options. So that you can make a fully informed decision, here are all the ways to contribute without leaving your home, along with the benefits of each method.

- Mail a check to the church. Mail is still being collected regularly. Any contribution checks received in the mail are included with the Sunday offerings.
- Use your bank's online bill pay feature. Checks arrive in the mail and are handled as above.
- Sign up for Joyful Response automatic ACH transfer (form attached). Authorization must be in writing (via form email to [nspangler@oursaviorhartland.org](mailto:nspangler@oursaviorhartland.org)). This goes directly into the LCEF General Fund Savings Account. No physical contact. All bank fees are waived by LCEF. This is a recurring transaction and requires you to contact [nspangler@oursaviorhartland.org](mailto:nspangler@oursaviorhartland.org) to change or cancel this method of payment.
- Give online at <https://www.shelbygiving.com/app/giving/oursaviorhartland> - either a one time gift or set up a recurring gift. No physical contact. You 'push' payments. You can use credit, debit, or a bank account. Our Savior does not receive your account information. This method links contributions directly to our church management software.
- Text Giving - Text 'Give' to 248-845-1095 - you will be sent a link to online giving. Same benefits as online giving.

God be with each of us during our time apart.

Blessings,

Nicole

### Week of 06 April to 12 April

#### Birthdays

Suzanne	Molnar	04/06	Nancy	Cowden	04/10
Delores	Butterfield	04/08	Kathryn	Jock	04/10
Caden	Giddings	04/08	Tim	Packard	04/10
Eliza	Haponek	04/08	James	Tougas	04/10
Chris	Pies	04/08	Bill	Mrozek	04/11
Marissa	Zaremba	04/08	Benjamin	Glasco	04/12
Adelaide	Wiggins	04/09			

#### Anniversaries

Brian and Sharon Zaremba	04/08	20 yrs.
David and Liz Appold	04/10	10 yrs.

## **A progression of eNews Messages from Pastor Thoma during this past week:**

### **Our Savior eNews from March 23, 2020**

Brothers and sisters in Christ,

The Lord be with you.

I hope all is well for you and your family. I've certainly been praying for you as you've had to hunker down amidst the Governor's "stay at home" order, which I heard last night was extended until April 30<sup>th</sup>.

I know that's a month away, and yet, God willing, we're praying this will all come to an end soon, and the spring of 2020 will be nothing more than a memory.

Jennifer shared with me her hope that this time together as a family will be one that instills good memories in the children rather than being a recollection of a fearful time. I'm hoping for the same, as I'm sure you are, too.

Of course, after our conversation, I got to thinking about the role memories actually play in shaping us. It's hard to argue against the influence this pandemic is having on the communal memory of the whole nation, but in this particular moment, my concern is for you and your family.

After it's over, what will be remembered? What will be forgotten? What will the new normal be in your lives?

Well, before going any further, we have to be honest about memory's linking to our truest condition.

Informed by God's Word, we already know Sin's blast radius is vast. Every living thing in the created order exists within reach of its initial detonation. "Because you have done this," God said to the first man, "cursed is the ground because of you" (Genesis 3:17). Perhaps worse, when we actually venture into the wasteland to examine Sin's wreckage, we discover that it didn't just interlace with the world in ways that would give rise to COVID-19 alone, but it actually broke the whole globe. Sin is an occupying power now, one that's intricately woven into the fabric of mankind in every way (Matthew 15:19, John 3:19, Jeremiah 17:9). With this, we shouldn't be surprised that the human mind and its vault of memories are diseased, too.

Aware of this, I'd say Sin labors to infect the human memory in at least two notable ways.

I don't know about you, but I experience the first of Sin's twining grips on my memory when scenes from my past unexpectedly come to mind—words and deeds I've regretfully said or done. I could be doing just about anything—mowing the grass or eating a cheeseburger—and then suddenly, it's as if I've been whisked into a darkened corridor, and all along its uneasy length, I'm forced to pass sinister portraits of what haunts me most. There they are, everything I wish to forget, in all of their ugly details.

Sin won't let me forget my transgressions. It wants me to remember.

The second of Sin's handlings is related to its effect on the flesh. Again, the Lord announced after the fall: "From dust you are and to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:19). And Saint Paul affirms: "Outwardly we are wasting away..." (2 Corinthians 4:16). Indeed, our bodies are coming

undone with age, and as they do, so also comes the deterioration of the mind. For the honest among us, there is the haunting knowledge of a lifetime of memories we'll struggle to remember. Sin works here, too. In our "wasting away," it steals the scenes we hold dear—the children, when they were little, what their voices sounded like or which were their favorite toys; the mannerisms of a parent or grandparent we've lost to Death, their smiles and the familiar scent of their embrace; the rooms of our childhood home; the summertime freedoms with family and neighborhood friends.

Sin wants us to forget these things. It wants to strip us of the outward evidence of God's fatherly divine goodness throughout our lives.

So what do we do?

First of all, when it comes to Sin's ugly accusation, the best weapon against this is the Gospel of Christ's life, death, and resurrection for you. Hold onto this. In other words, do what you can to stay in the Word of God. The Word of God clads the Christian in ways nothing else can. Soak it up. Be devoted to it. Talk about it. Live and breathe it as God's people. I say this firstly because God tells us that His Word is far more powerful than the sinful flesh (Hebrews 4:12, 1 Thessalonians 2:13, Jeremiah 23:29, Isaiah 55:11). Secondly, not only do I believe this, but I can confirm it as true by way of countless examples.

Here's a great one.

Back in December of 2018, a friend of mine (someone most here at Our Savior probably know) experienced a cataclysmic aortic rupture. He wasn't expected to survive. He'd been without blood to both hemispheres of his brain for hours before medical personnel were able to get to him and do anything to help.

Plainly speaking, no one survives such an episode. In fact, thinking back, I remember being in his room in the ICU when the surgeon who'd worked on him said she'd never operated on anyone in as bad a condition as his.

Throughout the ordeal, I was with him pretty much every day—praying, reading the Word, giving Him, as Paul would say, "the unsearchable riches of Christ..." (Ephesians 3:8). Each time I was there, the doctors gave little hope that he would ever wake up, let alone be able to function cognitively if he did.

After surgery he'd been given no sedation. The hope was that within 72 hours we'd know. Either he'd wake up, or he wouldn't.

Now I won't go into all of the details, but as I said, I was with him at least once a day. During those times, I often noticed him giving my hand a little squeeze during prayer. Although, the nurses politely described it as nothing more than an involuntary response to this or that going on in his body. But one day while reading from Mark 4:35-41—Jesus calming the storm—after I was done, he turned his head to me. It'd been five days of careful watching, and this was a first.

I went back to be with him the very next day. When I walked into the room, the man who was barely alive the day before, was sitting up and watching baseball. The nurse was absolutely

beaming. He'd quite literally awakened an hour before I'd arrived, and the breathing tube had been taken out only moments before I walked through the door.

I can't even begin to tell you the joy at seeing my groggy, but living, friend! And the grin he gave when he saw me, it was breathtaking. For the first time in days, I could talk with him and hear him reply.

I did most of the talking, of course, not only because he was exhausted, but because his throat was very sore from the breathing tube. Still, we heard the Word of God again, prayed the Lord's Prayer, and this time, he prayed every single word along with me. I was able to give him a get-well card his fellow choir members had made for him, and he was able to hold it with his own hands and read it.

I asked him some questions, to sort of gauge where he was cognitively. Looking back, I'm glad I did, because if there was ever a time when Sin's grip on human memory would've proven itself, it would've been then.

I asked if he remembered anything.

He said he remembered Jesus on a boat with the disciples calming a storm. When I asked what he remembered about it, he whispered raspily the sense of a familiar voice, and when the voice stopped speaking, he wanted to hear more.

Do you get it, friends?

If God's Word is merely language—something that can be shelved like a favorite novel during this time of worldwide trouble—then it certainly made no earthly sense for me to be speaking it into this man's ears. And yet, there was my friend telling me he not only heard God's Word, but he wanted more.

Not even the natural deterioration of a Sin-destroyed body of flesh could get in the way of the power of God's Word. It sort of reminds me of the Lord speaking into the ears of the lifeless son of the Widow of Nain and raising him from the dead (Luke 7:11-17).

Again, I share this story as an urging to stay in the Word during this time away from your church. God's Word will continue to write into your heart and mind the certainty of a divine memory that knows all that Jesus has done to save you. It will continue to certify for you just who you are by faith in His sacrifice.

Beyond this, and I suppose as a side note to this time of quarantine, I'd encourage you to do things together with your family. Pack up the video games and put aside the mobile phones. Spend time together. If it's just you and your spouse, do the same. If it's just you and the dog, do the same. And while you're doing this, take some pictures. Or perhaps you could keep a journal. I guarantee that in a few years you'll come back to these crystalized memories of the pandemic of 2020 and you'll remember the feeling of joy more so than the sense of dread. You'll have something in hand to remind you just how much the Lord has blessed you.

I give one last example in this regard.

One of the great things about my *The Angels' Portion* volumes is that they serve as annals for the Thoma family. They're a retelling of so much of what has happened in our lives. In fact, it's

not uncommon for one of the kids to fetch a volume from the shelf during dinner and ask me to read a few of their favorite tales from among our countless everyday adventures. Within seconds, long-forgotten events in which we all participated come back to life, and with them arrive the sights, sounds, and smells—the enjoyment of distant times and former selves joining with us in the “right now.”

For the Thoma’s, these books are Godly ramparts against Sin’s effort to cause us to forget.

Finally, I’ll conclude this longer note by reminding you of God’s memory.

When He forgives you, He forgets your sins. We may remember them, but He doesn’t. “I will remember their wickedness no longer,” He says resolutely (Hebrews 8:12). This means if you were to stand before Him and say, “Hey, God, do you remember that one terrible thing I did yesterday?” His answer would be, “I forgave you, and so I really have no idea what you’re talking about.”

Even better, while He forgets your sins, He can never forget His loving promises (Psalm 136:23, Psalm 105:8, Psalm 103:17, Hebrews 13:5). The death of His Son for the sins of the whole world is the fulfillment of His greatest promise. His merciful memory is locked to this. All who believe in His Son, Jesus Christ, are ever-remembered by the Creator of the world as being His beloved and forgiven children.

Let all of this be of comfort to you during this time. It certainly is comforting to me and my family.

And with that, it’s on to the news...

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+ I need to begin by sharing some sad news. Our longtime and beloved member in Christ, Tom Hay, is very sick and doesn’t have much time left.

His health has been deteriorating for quite some time. Although, in the last week or so, the deterioration has gained significant momentum—more so than most knew.

When I spoke to him in the middle of last week, he told me about a mass on his pancreas. You know Tom. He wanted to keep this quiet until he knew more. And so he asked that I not share it with anyone until he was able to participate in some tests scheduled for this week. However, within the last few days or so, plenty of folks have been reaching out to me to ask if I knew about Tom. Apparently, someone shared it, anyway.

Well, I got a message last night from Tom’s daughter, Holly, that the actual diagnosis is stage 4 pancreatic cancer, that it was far worse than Tom was letting on, that it has progressed so much more quickly than anyone expected, and they’re not expecting him to be with us for more than a week.

He’s in bed. Hospice is making him comfortable.

When I got the news, I was intent on going right over (or at a minimum, getting over there first thing this morning), but Heidi, another of Tom’s daughter’s, discouraged me from coming until around dinner time, which of course, I’ll be doing. I also talked with Dennis, Heidi’s husband, to let him know I was going to share the news with all of you.

Please keep our dear brother in your fervent prayers. Humbly implore the Lord's merciful hand for seeing him through to the nearer presence of Jesus. I know Tom to be a devout Christian, and with that, I'm confident that in the hour of hours, by the power of the Holy Spirit, his heart will be certain in Christ's redeeming love.

+ Some of you might remember the Prayer Vigil we participated in together as a congregation a few years back. I put a booklet together, and over the course of a weekend before Advent (and Lent, too, I think), a good number of folks signed up for certain time slots and took turns coming into the nave one after the other to pray the vigil continually over the course of a weekend. It was quite a wonderful experience for us.

Well, I've made the booklet available on the website under the resource tab. Also, I intend to pray the vigil tomorrow, Tuesday, at 12:00pm. It doesn't take too long, maybe about 15 to 20 minutes at a maximum, if I remember correctly. I'll put a link to the video stream there, too. Feel free to join me if you are able.

+ A reminder that you may view our worship services at:

<https://www.oursaviorhartland.org/church-news/worship/our-savior-livestream/>

+ I'll admit that I'm terrified of annoying you with this new Mass Contact voicemail application available to us through our church software. The temptation to send you a sixty-second devotional thought every now and then is becoming more than I can bear. So, how about this. I promise to do it, maybe, only once a week while we remain apart during this time of quarantine. Is that acceptable?

It is?! Great! I feel better now!

+ Our teacher, Christopher Horn, is currently living with Tom Hay. He will need to move. If you know of anyone who can help provide him with housing accommodations, please let me know soon!

+ By God's grace, we managed to conquer that \$40K+ monster we were facing the week before last. It pretty much wiped us out, though. Good thing this past week was a light week, coming in right around \$2K. But the week before us right now is much bigger, landing on us with the weight of \$28K.

We came into this week with a little more than \$2,000 in the general fund checking. I don't know what was received this past weekend, but if it was anything like the week before (which was lower than usual, being at around \$16.5K), then I'm guessing we're going to be in for a struggle. It certainly would appear that what's happening in our world right now combined with our inability to meet together is directly affecting our giving levels.

Pray.

Pray that the Lord will continue to provide the material support for His Gospel in this place. Pray, commit, and then act as His servant in this regard. God will bless your effort toward faithfulness.

+ With regard to stewardship, a heartfelt letter from John Rose—a longtime member of the congregation, and someone who is currently serving as an elder—is provided below. Please take time to read it. He has a great idea.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” 1 Peter 1:3

As an Elder of Our Savior, I come to you with my sincere thoughts and prayers during this period of time of much uncertainty due to the Coronavirus pandemic. All of our lives are filled with various trials and tribulations. The present pandemic is just one example.

As we ramp up to Easter, let us be reminded of Christ’s death, which provided the perfect atoning sacrifice for the sins of all humankind. His death on the cross certainly confirms the love and care He has for this whole world.

I would like to take this opportunity and talk about stewardship during this challenging time. I know many of you might be suffering financially from this pandemic situation and, hopefully, will find relief soon from the stimulus bill. You’re definitely not alone. Many of us have been through tough times in the past while raising a family, but by the grace of God, we persevere.

I know church leadership is concerned about the financial shortfalls that could develop as a consequence of not being able to hold services during this time. *One thought that Donna and I had was to donate a portion of our stimulus payout to the church. If you are in the position to donate over and above your normal giving, then perhaps this would be a viable option for you too.*

Throughout the history of Our Savior, the church members have always stepped up to support God’s mission. As we are challenged once again, I’m confident that through faith in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we will receive His goodness and mercy and we’ll be able to respond accordingly. I’m also hopeful that we can soon return to church in person to receive His wonderful offering of Word and Sacrament, our great source of hope in this uncertain time.

Lord, keep us steadfast in Your Word and free from what this virus may bring!

As a reminder, the church and school staff are still working, and they are doing a remarkable job. The teachers are continuing the education of their students. Kim Leonard is working hard to deep clean the whole place. Joel Hornick is keeping an eye on the mechanical things. Pastor and Kantor and Pastor Z have been working in different ways so that the Word of God can go forth.

Please keep all of this in prayerful consideration, and may God bless you!

In Christ,

*John Rose, Elder of Our Savior*



+ Lastly—and it hurts to say this—but please don't come over to the church unless you are in some way providing onsite material support for basic operation. We're doing our best to keep the facility disinfected so that when the quarantine is lifted, we can get back to business as usual. Off the top of my head, the only folks who should be moving through this building right now are Kim Leonard, Joel Hornick, the Pastors, Kantor, Sara, Georgine, and Nikki Spangler. On occasion, our teachers, may be in the building. And Mark Elling, our financial secretary, needs to input financial information into a computer on site. Beyond this, unless there is an extraordinary emergency, few others need to be here in person.

Please adhere to this. It makes the process Kim has established for keeping things clean much easier.

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That's it for this week. Yes, lots of stuff.

God be with you in the days ahead.

In Jesus,

Pastor Thoma+

## OUR SAVIOR EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL

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