

ST. JOHN'S NEWSLETTER



BUILT ON CHRIST OUR CORNERSTONE

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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GROWING IN CHRIST'S FAMILY

-In God's Grace

-In God's Service

“THE MEANS of GRACE PART I: WHAT'S THE DEAL?”

We have heard the words *means of grace* numerous times. Hopefully we are aware that these *means of grace* are: 1) the Gospel Word¹ and 2) the Gospel Word empowered Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. But have you ever wondered any of the following?

1. What's the actual purpose of these again?
2. Are these *really* the only means God uses, or are we limiting Almighty God?
3. Are these things really of any value to me and my Christian faith and life?

Perhaps there are other questions that you have about the *means of grace*. Maybe you don't have any because you never really thought about them too much in the first place. Speaking generally, it is noticeable in parts of modern Lutheranism that there is a general lack of knowledge about the *means of grace*, which is only made worse as the many Protestant churches and the broad-based Evangelical movement continue to have their teachings infiltrate the minds and hearts of individual Lutherans and, at times, even whole Lutheran congregations.² And, not surprisingly, where there is a lack of knowledge, a general lack of appreciation soon follows.

The question then really is, “Does a lack of knowledge of the *means of grace*, with its corresponding lack of appreciation, have an impact on my Christian faith and life?” The Lutheran answer is a very clear, “**YES!**” Article V of the Augsburg Confession reads³:

So that we may obtain this faith,⁴ the ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments was instituted. Through the Word and Sacraments, as through instruments,⁵ the Holy Spirit is given [John 20:22]. He works faith, when and where it pleases God [John 3:8], in those who hear the good news that God justifies those who believe that they are received into grace for Christ's sake.

Our churches condemn the Anabaptists and others who think that through their own preparations and works the Holy Spirit comes to them without the external Word.⁶

¹ We must always remember that while the Law, such as the 10 Commandments, is truly God's Word, it always brings God's demands and threats of punishment for our failure to meet His demands. There is **no** grace in the Law!

² This happens most commonly through the reading of non-Lutheran Christian materials, listening to most radio and TV evangelists, and through generally grabbing onto “things we like” from other churches without thinking through any of their theological implications.

³ *Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions*, p. 33

⁴ “That is **justifying faith** in Christ Jesus, which was just discussed in Article IV of the Confession.

⁵ The terms *means* and *instruments* are synonymous.

⁶ “Without the external Word,” i.e. without the *means of grace*.

Based upon such a confession, it becomes obvious that the *means of grace* are of central importance in Lutheran theology. Recognizing their necessity, as well as the general lack of knowledge/appreciation about them parts of our church today, this article is the first in a series that will deal with the *means of grace*. The goal of this series will be to highlight the Scriptural foundation for what we confess in Article V of the Augsburg Confession. This will not be done merely to “prove the article,” however. For consider this, if this article is true, the *means of grace* aren’t merely an afterthought, or even a “good idea”, they are the **only place** where the Holy Spirit promises to come to us to create and sustain our faith in Jesus Christ, **the very faith that is necessary to enter heaven!**

I pray that these articles will be of value to you, increasing your knowledge and appreciation of God’s *means of grace*. I also pray that they will be useful for you as you discuss faith topics with others (both within and outside of Lutheranism) whom do not know, understand, or appreciate the truth about the means of grace, and the tremendous blessing that they truly are.

Sneak peek at next month: Let’s Talk About Grace.

For the honor of Christ, the teaching of His Word, and the building up of His Church,
Pastor Nerud

A LOOK at the LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS:

The Catechisms of Dr. Martin Luther, History Part II

Last month we briefly looked at the history of catechesis up to the time of the Reformation. This month we continue our account, focusing on Dr. Martin Luther and his catechisms.

When considering catechisms, it must be noted that Luther’s were not the first. Last month we noted some known examples from the Early Church. We also know of a few examples that date back to roughly the 8th century in England, Switzerland, and Germany. Thus catechisms were present throughout the medieval centuries right up to the Reformation. But at least two things made these of limited value. First, though present in some areas, they weren’t widely used as a whole.⁷ Second, the material within the catechisms was not always the best. In Luther’s day a catechism might contain the Ten Commandments, the Lord’s Prayer, and the Creed, all quite proper, but it would also likely have other things of truly questionable value, such as lists of seven spiritual gifts, seven cardinal virtues, the seven sacraments, and prayers to Mary and the saints (especially the *Hail Mary*).

Within this setting, Luther’s description of the situation that he found in the Saxony churches when he was an official visitor (1528) becomes understandable, as does his urgency to prepare an Evangelical catechism.⁸ He records what he witnessed in his preface to the Small Catechism:

The deplorable, miserable condition that I discovered recently when I, too, was a visitor, has forced and urged me to prepare this catechism, or Christian doctrine, in this small, plain, simple form. Mercy! Dear God, what great misery I beheld! The common person, especially in the villages, has no knowledge whatever of Christian doctrine. And unfortunately, many pastors are completely unable and unqualified to teach. This is so much so, that one is ashamed to speak of it. Yet, everyone says that they are Christians, have been baptized, and receive the holy Sacraments, even though they cannot even recite the Lord’s Prayer or the Creed or the Ten Commandments. They live like dumb brutes and irrational hogs. Now that the Gospel has come, they have nicely learned to abuse all freedom like experts.

Due to the urgency of the situation, Luther knuckled down, completing both catechisms in 1529. In early 1529 he published part of the Small Catechism on posters. In April, *German Catechism, Martin Luther*, was finished (what we know as the *Large Catechism*, which drew heavily from his catechism sermons). Shortly after, in May, *The Small Catechism* was printed in booklet form. It instantly became a best-seller and quickly went through several editions being published in Wittenberg and several other cities of Germany.

Luther’s goal was a catechism that truly served the laypeople. He wanted to teach them *the basics of the Christian faith*, the things that are absolutely necessary if one is to have saving faith, what is necessary to calm

⁷ The printing press was not present in Europe until the 1400’s making mass production nigh impossible.

⁸ While the term *Evangelical* is largely used today to describe certain Protestant churches and cross-denominational groups, historically it first was used of the Lutherans. It refers to the Greek word for *Gospel* and was used to describe us as those who focused on the Gospel. We take it as a compliment!

their troubled consciences and support them in the midst of suffering and bearing the cross, and give them a guide for how to live as Christians in their daily vocations.⁹

Initially, the Small Catechism's purpose was to give the often poorly educated clergy a tool to assist them in teaching these basic truths of Scripture in a simple way to their congregations, especially the youth. However, while certainly still being used within the church, the full intention was that the Small Catechism would be used by families in their homes, as numerous headings within the Small Catechism itself indicate (*As the head of the family should teach it in a simple way to his household*).

Again, the Large Catechism's initial purpose was for the pastors and preachers to study so that they would better understand the truths of the catechism that they were called to teach and proclaim. However, as with the Small Catechism, the full intention was that the laity as well would study it and grow in their own understanding of the basics of Christian doctrine. Thus the Large Catechism covers the same topics as the Small, but gives more thorough explanations.¹⁰

While the focus of this and the previous article was the history which led to the writing of Dr. Luther's catechisms, it is appropriate to point out that the usage of his catechisms, especially the Small Catechism, continues to remain a central part of Lutheran catechesis leading to Confirmation, both for youth and adults. Study books, workbooks, the Explanation section printed along with the catechism, all of these are fine additions. But they remain based upon, build upon, and return Christians again and again to the simple, yet profound truths of the Catechism. The hymnwriter said it well:

*Lord, help us ever to retain
The Catechisms doctrine plain
As Luther taught the Word of truth
In simple style to tender youth.*¹¹

APOLOGETICS DEVOTION: DON'T INSULT the CREATOR

Do roosters really think that they control the rising of the sun by their crowing? Perhaps. Did the great wealth and power of the Egyptian pharaohs really seduce them into believing their own mythology, that they were deities on earth who formed Egypt and its mighty river? God thought so: "I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt, you great monster lying among your streams. You say, 'The Nile is mine; I made it for myself'" (Ezekiel 29:3).

We would not dream of such arrogance today. Or would we? Do you think that the Colorado River formed the Grand Canyon? Do you think that the Himalaya mountain range was formed by billions of years of stress along the earth's tectonic plates and formed itself as it extruded upward? Do you think that the fantastically complex human being that is you had no designer? That over time, a lot of time, organisms changed themselves from one-celled amoebas into something like you?

There is an enticing allure behind the theory of evolution. If you are God's creation, living in God's world, then you are subject to him. You owe him. If you reject God's creation, you can declare yourself a sovereign, independent agent and live any way you want. You can create your own morality and need fear no accountability to a higher power. Rejecting God's creation and ownership of the universe is spiritual suicide. Those who do so will hear a voice from heaven thunder, "I am against you."

© Pastor Mark Jeske, *Grace Moments*, www.timeofgrace.org

WORSHIP SERVICES

We are now worshiping together on Sunday mornings. It is a blessing to be back together as a family. All Sunday services continue to be streamed Live on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/St.Johns.Geneseo/>) during the regular service time of 10 am each Sunday morning. These streamed services will also be posted on our church website (churchoffice@stjohnsgeneseo.org) the day following each service.

⁹ Recognize that neither the Small nor the Large Catechism addresses *all* the Biblical teachings, nor do they give everything *that could be said* about the topics that they do address. Such was never Luther's intention. The purpose of a catechism is to lay the necessary foundation for saving faith which was then solid ground upon which all other teaching would continue to be built.

¹⁰ The Large Catechism is a fantastic tool that is too often underused, even generally unknown by our laity.

¹¹ "Lord, Help Us Ever to Retain," *Lutheran Service Book* #865.

OFFICE

- Please call the office when someone is ill, hospitalized, or homebound.
- Please use the email addresses below. Bulletins and sermons are posted on the website each week.
Terri Hock – churchoffice@stjohnsgeneseo.org
Website address – www.stjohnsgeneseo.org
Facebook pages: <https://www.facebook.com/St.JohnGLY/> (youth page)
<https://www.facebook.com/St.Johns.Geneseo/> (church page)

THANK YOU!

Thanks so much to all of you for all the cards, phone calls, and good wishes I received for my birthday. Thanks also to those of you who created your own greetings. What a nice surprise! And, for your information, Tootsie Rolls can be mailed in an envelope.

Liz Neumann



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 BAPTISM BIRTHDAYS

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

AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

6 Brent/Bailie Bauchmann (2016) – 4 yrs
8 Lucas/Nicole Thompson (2015) – 5 yrs
12 Rodney/Theresa Miller (1989) - 31 yrs
16 Kem/Linda Schillinger (1997) - 23 yrs
19 John/Elizabeth Neumann (1961) - 59 yrs



21 Shane/Heidi McKibbon (1999) - 21 yrs
25 Jim/Shirley Dahl (1956) - 64 yrs
29 Richard/Trish Anderson (1998) - 22 yrs
30 Brian/Jennifer Magerkurth (1997) - 21 yrs
30 John/Kindra Thompson (1989) - 31 yrs

MEET OUR CONFIRMANS



Nicole Lynn Nerud is the second daughter of Pastor and Heidi Nerud. Nicole was born in St. Cloud Minnesota on June 19, 2006. She was welcomed into the family of God through Holy Baptism on July 9, 2006 at Concordia Lutheran Church in Fairhaven Minnesota. Spare time activities for Nicole include reading and enjoying the outdoors. This fall Nicole will attend Geneseo High school as a Freshman. Her favorite school subject is science. The resurrection account of Jesus is Nicole's favorite story from the Bible. Mac n cheese is a favorite food she enjoys eating whenever possible. The family currently has two pet cats who love to roam the yard. After high school Nicole plans to attend college. If she could travel anywhere in the world she would like to visit Egypt.

Joshua James Hock is the youngest son of Don and Sarah Hock. Josh was born in Geneseo IL on May 4, 2006. He was welcomed into the family of God through Holy Baptism on May 28, 2006 at St. John's Lutheran Church in Geneseo IL. Spare time activities for Josh include working and sports. This fall Josh will attend Geneseo High school as a Freshman. His favorite school subject is agriculture. Josh's favorite Bible verse is Philippians 4:13, which he chose as his Confirmation verse. Josh loves to eat chicken alfredo. They have 3 dogs and 7 cats as pets. After high school Josh wants to work and farm. If he could travel anywhere in the world he would like to visit Spain.



We welcome these new communicant members and pray their lives will bring much glory to their Heavenly Father according to His perfect plan for each of them.

LWML NEWS

We are still unable to meet together for our monthly meetings BUT, we can continue to give our Mites to the mission work of our God. Hopefully all are continuing to gather their Mites. These can be dropped off at the church Office and Terri will be glad to pass them on to our treasurer Wanda Rahn or you may send a check directly to Wanda.

LWML/LCMS LADIES EVENT

On Sunday, August 23rd, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., Immanuel Lutheran Church LWML is hosting a social distancing kick-off event for women in the Immanuel parking lot and grassy area.

Come and enjoy fellowship time with other LCMS women of all ages. Dixie cup ice cream and other individually contained desserts will be provided.

Please RSVP by August 16th to parrycm@yahoo.com. We will try to hold this event outside, so it will be BYOLC (Bring Your Own Lawn Chair). Please email Christine with questions at parrycm@yahoo.com. Immanuel's address is: 3300 – 24th St. Rock Island IL.

STEWARDSHIP

Winston Churchill reportedly said, "we make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." According to Churchill then, our lives are defined less by what we have gotten and more by what we give away.

Our Lord's life is defined in this way. He gave completely of Himself for us. He became man for us. He taught the truth of God's Word. He healed those with many and various diseases. He died the death that we deserve because of sin. He gave of Himself in order to save us from sin, death, and hell. So it is that by giving completely of Himself, He got us for Himself, making us citizens of His eternal kingdom by grace.



As it was for Jesus, so it is also for us. We get more from giving than we do from simply getting. Giving softens our hearts and frees us from the worries of this world and making a living. For when we are singularly focused on making a living, we are singularly focused on what we get.

That mindset begins to bleed into all areas of our lives – our relationships with friends and family, with neighbors and coworkers, and with the Lord. It shifts our focus from asking "How can I be a friend, family member, neighbor, and servant to others?" to "What have they done for me lately?" We become more selfish instead of selfless.

But, when we give, we do not have less, and we do not become less. We have more and become more. Because when we give, we join in the bond of friendship and family, the bond of service to those around us out of love for them. And love is the fulfillment of the Law. It is the nature of God Himself, for God is Love. Thus, we are participating in the divine nature. As Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

SUNDAY SCHOOL

It is good to be worshipping together as a congregation. We pray your family has either returned to corporate worship or you watch the Live Streamed service on Facebook. This is such an important priority in the life of a Christian family. Don't let the difficulties of this world keep you from the Word of God.

No specific plans are in place for resuming Sunday school. This will take some time to maneuver through. In the meantime, Concordia Publishing House has many free materials you can use with your children. Please take some time to look at what might work for your family and age of children.



Thank you to everyone who helped out with VBS this year. It was nothing like we have ever experienced before but I pray the children who participated were richly blessed.

Please continue to pray that these trying days will quickly come to an end and we at St. John's can soon get back to gathering for all the activities we so enjoy. God's blessings to all.

EVANGELISM

Matthew 14:22-33: What do you do in the midst of a storm? The right answer is: Take cover! But sometimes cover isn't enough. The disciples found themselves in a life-threatening storm. Jesus said to them, "Take heart, it is I." As He was for the disciples, Jesus is for us. Jesus is our Protection and Refuge whenever we encounter life-threatening danger. He is Lord of wind and wave and of life and death. The world we live in tends to run for their own cover: drugs, alcohol, self-sufficiency. We have a Word to share with the world, and it is a gentle Word of Gospel: Take heart; trust in Jesus. There is so much that threatens our security, but only one Lord and Savior in whom we can place our total confidence. Real storms or even seeing them on the news give us an opportunity to share the One in whom we "take heart" and the One who is truly Lord of all. Share your confidence in him. Source: LCMS.ORG

MEMBERSHIP UPDATES

Jim/Shirley Dahl – 920 S. Chicago St. #19, Geneseo IL 61254

HOW CAN WE PRAY FOR YOU?

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6-7

Each week there is a small group of women who gather for prayer. They pray for the needs of their families, this congregation and its members, our community, nation and world. All are invited to join them whenever possible. We also have a 'Prayer Chain'. All prayer requests can be made to the office and a special prayer will be sent to those prayer warriors.



'What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer'!

Pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. James 5:16b

COUNCIL/VOLUNTEERS

During the month of August, we ask you remember our Board of Education (Wanda Rahn, Sandy Rahn) and teachers (Wanda Rahn, Marilyn Woods, Sheila Magerkurth, Sara Yerkey, Sandy Rahn, Heidi Nerud and Heidi McKibbon). May God continue using them as His tools for sharing the Good News of Jesus with all children and Youth.

Our Infrequent Attendees –pray the Holy Spirit bring them to the understanding of their need to be in regular worship in church on Sunday and that we as their 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.

Women's Ministry - we pray that a ministry would begin which would speak to the needs of all women.

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.

Stephen/Care Ministry – pray that God would guide us to the needs of others and supply willing people who will reach out to help provide for those 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:

Drew Schillinger	Jim Rahn	Lillian Hock	John Erdman
Arlyn Helke	Bob Esterlein	Carolyn Werner	Carolyn Wildermuth
Derek Helke	Lee/Lynne Johnson	Betty Firch	Marilyn Woods
Jim/Shirley Dahl	Barrett Hock	Larry Hock	Paula Chapa

OUR EXTENDED FAMILY/FRIENDS:

Andrew, Sarah, John, Daniel Hill (seminary student)	Virginia Miller (mother of Jamie Werling)
Don Eggers (son of a friend of Marilyn Woods)	Nick Fredrickson (neighbor of Linda Aper)
Mike Miller (friend of Bob & Sherry Wechsler)	Casey Powers (husband of Lisa (Bear) Powers)
Jodi Martins (daughter of Gary & Darla Johns)	Kelly Wechsler (cousin of Bob Wechsler)
John & Anita Causling (missionaries in Kenya)	Kathleen VanDe Rostyne (friend of Bob/Sherry Wechsler)
Marilyn Potts (wife of Cal, former LFC)	Joseph Baamonde (friend of Paula Mooney)
Pam Bennett (friend of Dan/Roselyn Maeltzer)	Clinton Kane Family (son of Sandy Kane)
Karen Wright (wife of Pastor Gary Wright)	Connie Cunningham (employee of Brad Gehn)
Mike Rowlands (friend of Arlyn/Marcia Helke)	Jim Neumann (father-in-law of Brad Gehn's son)

MILITARY, THOSE SERVING & THEIR FAMILIES:

Mandy & Richard Davila (daughter & son-in-law of Dale & Linda Aper)
Luke & Nicole Thompson (son & daughter-in-law of John & Kindra Thompson)
Ken Willeford (husband of Alicia Willeford)
Tyler Hynes (nephew of Mark Ague)
Karl Flynn (son of Mr. & Mrs. Paul Flynn)
Zachary & Tiffany Gardner (nephew/wife of Bob & Lois Esterlein)

THE LUTHERAN HOUR

The Lutheran Hour can be heard each Sunday on the following Stations at the listed times.

WGEN	Kewanee, IL	1500 AM	5:30 am
WKEI	Kewanee, IL	1450 AM	5:00 am
KCLN	Clinton, IL	1390 AM	9:30 am
WMT	Cedar Rapids, IA	600 AM	6:30 am

You can receive Daily Devotions to your computer. Go to lhmin@lhm.org

LISTEN TO:

Music of the Church, Morning Chapel, and Issues, Etc.
Christ Centered, Cross-Focused Talk Radio anytime at:
LUTHERANPUBLICRADIO.ORG





Christ the King - Cristo Rey - Lutheran Church

1301-19th Street, East Moline, IL 61244

E-mail: cristorey-em@sbcglobal.net

Phone: (309) 738-6124

Rev. Pablo G. Dominguez

<http://iglesialuteranacristorey.ctshost.org>

JULY 2020

Psalms 27 was written by David, the most famous king of Israel, but David faced many dangers before he became king. He suffered several assassination attempts, lived as an outlaw, was pursued by armies, and fought in many battles. His life was in constant threat, but David felt safe. David trusted God. He knew God was with him and protected him at all times. Because of this God-given confidence, he wrote Psalm 27.

The reason for our trust

- 1 *The Lord is my light and my salvation whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life of whom shall I be afraid?*
- 2 *When the wicked advance against me to devour me, it is my enemies and my foes who will stumble and fall.*
- 3 *Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear; though war break out against me, even then I will be confident.*

David faced very great dangers that would be difficult for anyone to overcome; however, he knew that God is much greater than any threat. In the first verses of this Psalm we see the total trust that David had in God: fruit of the experiences of his life. He had experienced the saving power of God, His help and care in moments of great risk. He had lived great moments with God so his confidence in Him was absolute. He knew that God would help him in the midst of any situation. Sometimes we may feel that the problems we face are impossible to solve. Everything seems to be against us, but we have God, His presence, His help: therefore, we should not be afraid. Nothing is impossible for God. When God is with us we can confront armies with confidence.

In God we have a safe place

- 4 *One thing I ask from the Lord, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the Lord and to seek Him in his temple.*
- 5 *For in the day of trouble He will keep me safe in his dwelling; He will hide me in the shelter of His sacred tent and set me high upon a rock.*
- 6 *Then my head will be exalted above the enemies who surround me; at His sacred tent I will sacrifice with shouts of joy; I will sing and make music to the Lord.*

When the hour of difficulty arrived, David took refuge in the presence of God. The temple represented His presence where everyone could come and receive a blessing. It was there that David found victory. Being before God gives peace and relief in the hardest moments of life. There is nothing else that can give us such deep peace. When we find it difficult to face the world and its challenges, we can run to God and find the strength we need to overcome all problems.

God hears our cry

- 7 *Hear my voice when I call, Lord; be merciful to me and answer me.*
- 8 *My heart says of you, "Seek His face!" Your face, Lord, I will seek.*
- 9 *Do not hide your face from me, do not turn your servant away in anger; you have been my helper. Do not reject me or forsake me, God my Savior.*
- 10 *Though my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will receive me.*
- 11 *Teach me your way, Lord; lead me in a straight path because of my oppressors.*

12 *Do not turn me over to the desire of my foes, for false witnesses rise up against me, spouting malicious accusations.*

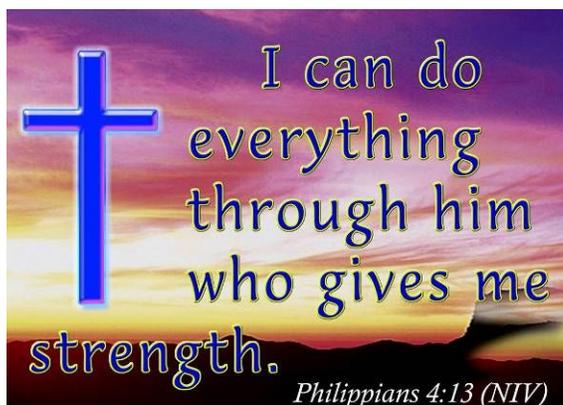
So far it seemed that David only experienced times of victory and joy. Now we see that he also had struggles but knew the secret to regain trust in God: prayer. David cried out to God when he felt insecure or afraid. He knew there was nothing he could do on his own. He needed God, to feel His presence, to see His face. No one else could save him. We all feel insecure at times. When this happens, we need to cry out to God for help, go before Him in prayer and supplication. God always listens to those who put their trust in Him. He does not abandon us in our hour of need.

God, our certainty and courage

13 *I remain confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.*

14 *Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord.*

David had a certainty. No matter how many difficulties came to his life he knew he would see the goodness of God again in his life. In the midst of difficult circumstances, he knew that God would bring good things to his life. So, the Psalm ends by encouraging listeners (each of us) to put their hope in God. He ends by giving a word of encouragement, saying that we can always trust God because He will never fail us.



You can do it! I've heard this phrase many times. I'm sure you have, too. This story is about "doing something all by myself".

During my high school years, a classmate invited me to be part of a band. I didn't play any instrument. I was the second voice. We had practiced several times when another classmate, who was going to celebrate her "Quinceañera", invited us to play. A few months later, my brother died in a car accident. He had a guitar which my father then gave to me. So, I started to play guitar, and I really enjoyed it. A friend taught me a little and in just a matter of days I was able to play and sing a song. Wonderful! I'm a Rock and Roll star!

A cousin asked me if he could borrow the guitar, and I agreed. It was a big mistake because when the guitar came back to me months later, it was in very bad shape. It was basically destroyed and useless. I was so frustrated! I really loved that guitar because it had belonged to my deceased brother. My dreams to be a guitar player disappeared.

When I came to serve at the Hispanic Ministry in the Quad Cities, we started our Spanish worship services and Sunday school classes. I used recorded hymns on CD's. Later my sister gave me a Spanish hymnal used in her church in Monterrey. This book came with chords, but I didn't know how to read them. At this time, we were still using CD's. About four years ago my wife told me that she had seen a commercial on TV about guitar lessons. This company would provide a guitar if you bought a five DVD course. Days later I saw the same commercial, and immediately ordered the DVDs. A few days later, the DVD course and the guitar arrived. I started to watch the first DVD. The teacher was so patient, and he said, "don't worry if your fingers hurt; that happens to all guitar players. Don't be discouraged". I have to admit that this happened. I spent 20 minutes to an hour practicing every day, seven days a week. I took the hymnal and started to play a hymn with easy chords, and after several days, I felt more confident, so I played others hymns. A final test was when I played one Sunday for Sunday school. I did it! All glory to God!

Since then, I have continued to play the guitar. I know I'm not a professional but "I can do it"! Do you know why I am able to do it? It's because of God's grace.

God inspires us to do many things for His cause. Use your God given gifts! Use them in the church! Use them among your friends and neighbors! St. Paul said: ***“I can do everything through Him who gives me strength”***
Philippians 4:13

Next time do not feel discouraged! God will give you the right words to speak! And when you speak or serve, do it all for God’s glory! He will bless your efforts!

Other comments:

May 20. Midwest Lutheran Hispanic Ministries meeting by Zoom.

22 pastors working in Hispanic ministry held this meeting. Important issues related to the Covid-19 epidemic were discussed:

- Family challenges
- Financial problems
- How quarantine affects me emotionally
- Family violence during quarantine
- How we are helping our congregations (Food items, money, gift cards, etc)
- How we support our church members? Daily devotionals by Facebook Live, Youtube
- Constant prayers
- The next meetings will continue in the same manner.

The last worship service in the church building was on March 15.

The first FB broadcast was on March 26, at 4 pm. I continue with a daily devotional of 13-18 minutes in length.

Now we have been having a full service on Sundays at 10:30 am via Facebook.

The church will have its first service in the building on Sunday, June 14 with the proper sanitary measures taken. Of utmost importance is that God is honored, praised and glorified, and His people are fed with Word and Sacrament.

***We continue to thank God for your faithful prayers and loving support
of this Hispanic ministry!***

Be assured that our Almighty God is at work at Cristo Rey!



August

2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		<u>ELDER</u> Larry Hock	<u>ACOLYTE</u> Kaleb Rahn	<u>USHERS</u>		1
2 Worship/Comm 10 am (Service Live Streamed)	3 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i>	4 <i>Elder's 6 pm</i>	5	6	7	8
9 Worship 10 am (Service Live Streamed)	10 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i>	11 Council 6:30 pm	12	13	14	15
16 Worship/Comm 10 am (Service Live Streamed)	17 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i>	18	19	20	21	22
23 Worship 10 am (Service Live Streamed)	24 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i>	25	26	27	28	29
30 Worship/Comm 10 am (Service Live Streamed)	31 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i>					



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

**WORSHIP SERVICES/Holy Communion 10 am
Live Streaming**

