



St Luke's Lutheran Church Newsletter

"Love the Creator & His Creation Like Jesus"

May | June 2020

Pastor's Corner

"...the Lord will bring upon you severe plagues and chronic illnesses." (Deut 28:59)

As the book of Deuteronomy comes to its close, the Lord warns his people about the consequences of not following his commands and living in his Way. We see in the Torah as a whole that the commands of the Lord are about teaching his people to live in harmony with him and all his creation. God's commands are not arbitrary, they are about guiding his people into a right relationship with all creation. This is seen most clearly in the Sabbath laws which are about taking care of workers, animals, and land. To disobey the commands of the Lord is to choose to live out of balance with God's creation. If we are not in balance with workers, animals, and land then destructive consequences will come upon us. As Paul puts it in Romans, through our daily disobedience "we are storing up" consequences for a time when they will suddenly unfold upon us.

Humanity is currently suffering some of these consequences right now. COVID-19 is a result of our failure to heed the Lord's teachings and live in proper harmony and balance with workers, animals, and land. But these consequences have been unfolding long before COVID-19 burst onto the scene. Chronic illnesses are ravaging our society and those all around the world. According to the CDC (Center for Disease Control), 60% (!) of Americans have at least one chronic illness. The seven most prevalent in our culture are heart disease, cancer, chronic lung disease, stroke, Alzheimer's, diabetes, and kidney disease. Sometimes we suffer these illnesses because of our own personal choices that are not in harmony with God's creation, yet other times we suffer these illnesses because we happen to live in a sick and toxic society and culture.



Those with chronic illnesses or those who have COVID-19 are not "worse sinners" than the rest of us as Jesus makes very clear in Luke 13:1-5. These rampant chronic illnesses and plagues running their course in our world are a powerful warning to each and everyone of us to wake up and repent. We need to repent of our personal choices and lifestyles that are at odds with the Creator and his creation. We also need to repent of passively participating in the ways of our culture that are at odds with the Creator.

As Paul says, the Lord desires all people to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth. One of the key ways the Lord accomplishes this is through patiently allowing us to suffer the consequences of our disobedience. God's judgment is for our salvation. Strangely enough, COVID-19 is for our salvation. Let's heed its warning. Let's listen to what it is showing us about ourselves. Let's turn to the Lord with all our hearts and lives. In him alone are life and salvation.

Pastor Luke



Council Corner

These are incredibly strange times and we appreciate your patience as we try to navigate the ever changing landscape created by COVID-19 while still trying to be the faithful church of Jesus. It is likely that in the coming months and years the restrictions by the authorities will come and go in waves. We will continue to meet outside at the Disciple Garden for worship and Bible studies until we get to the “yellow zone.” This is determined by the county and likely means we are outside through May. Once we get closer to the fall we will reevaluate and begin to explore if we will be able to bring back choir, bell choir, and Jesus Time in safe ways. On Pentecost, May 31 we will be welcoming our new members into our church. These new members have been going through a 9 month process of discernment and learning and we are very excited to welcome them officially into our family. Also, on July 5 we will have our annual congregational assembly. During that time we will appoint four to six Stewards to sit on the Church Council for the next two years. Please pray and think about which members of our church have a strong commitment to worship and Bible study and whose wisdom would help lead our church. Please share your Steward nominations with Pastor Luke.



Disciple Garden Corner

We got wonderful news in the last couple months: we will NOT be required to build tens of thousands of dollars worth of sidewalks for the city at this time. As such, we are only about \$5,000 away from everything we need to finish the Disciple Garden! Construction has also been proceeding well in the last couple months. The windows are all in, the front porch has been poured, the interior utilities are done, the walls are in, plaster is up on the ceilings, the outside retaining walls have begun, and many other little things are falling into place. We have also passed our rough-in inspections (with shocking speed for our city!), so we can proceed with completing the interior. The driveway is also set to get its asphalt finish in the next few weeks. On the gardening front, the Dierks family has been volunteering to help twice a week: picking up trash, planting dozens of our 100+ fruit/nut trees, hauling brush, helping with the wood-chipper, spreading mulch, planting a vegetable garden, etc. Make sure to enjoy the beauty of the Disciple Garden this time of year!



Community Ministry Corner

During our confession we sing a phrase, "from trust in wealth and weapons," I think this must be regurgitated to deepen analysis, understanding, experience, and connection with the living LORD's ways.

"Weapons" (that is, "violence") has a framing and phrasing that our human nature often too easily casts off as a sin of the other—of any other, of "THEM" or those other more aggressive, abusive people and groups. But we all have a mirror we are called to look into to catch a glimpse of the depths of our very own subtleties or depravities that must be confronted, addressed, and compassionately understood. This mirror can help reveal the boundaries and steps of repentance that we need as we walk and work out plans toward retribution. In Isaiah 2, 11, & 65 we see this along with the phrase, "swords turned into iron plows/pruning tools." This kind of "narrow way" reconciliation gives us another phrase we also too easily say no longer applies to us or our times.

If we are to be God's people in the rightest sense, then we need to be people who are learning and living unconditional love. We need to do this for our own awareness, confession, and repentance, not for those other people. We need to work on our own very indulgent, blatant or subtle use and misuse of positions, prestige, and power that are constantly at play in the background of our hearts and minds as we work for our own advantages. We need to weekly, daily, and moment-by-moment confess, address, and turn into meek, tender, and yet lovingly strong people like the Savior. We need to be ever-tuning in, syncing

with, and melding into the Father and His commands, demands, and invitation as we live out His will on the earth and in our souls. This all must be done in the inner recesses of our individual selves, and as our collective unity as the Body of Christ in any place. We must learn to give our allegiance to the Father alone.

And on another important level of addressing the good and bad of our power positions, we need to ask ourselves if we are being a tiny and silent voice of presence that is rightly honoring the Father in humanity's larger circles of Kansas City, family, work circles, and the largesse movements of a regularly and easily misguided and perverse (though well-intentioned?) mass of humanity. We are called to be a presence of awkward silence while constantly being painfully reformed, refined, and remolded as an individual cell that is part of the living Body of Christ. We are called to become the iron sharing plow that participates in His confronting of all the arrogant and blatant misrepresentations, misinterpretations, and misperceptions of what it means for humanity to be those created to have "dominion" over His creation—both within and without the invisible church. We are called to be an aggressively silent steward in constant new wine metamorphosis as we offer a never-tiring, while oddly always at peace and rest, testimony for the Creator throughout all creation. Now that's a "weapon" learning to be worth its weight in "gold."

Kevin Dierks

Scripture Study: Romans & Peter's Letters

Join us from 6:00-7:30 pm on Wednesdays in May as we finish going through Paul's most epic letter, Romans. Then in June we will begin to explore Peter's two letters to the church. Peter will challenge us with being faithful in the midst of suffering and how to endure in hope while human Civilization collapses around us.

VBS & Golf Tournament Changes

Due to COVID-19 the golf tournament has been moved to Friday, September 11. Talk to Kevin if you have any questions. Also due to the virus VBS will likely get shifted back or take a completely different form this summer. We are trying to navigate what it means to connect with these kids but not propagate the spread of COVID-19 in our city.

St Luke's Schedule

Sunday

- 9:30 am Holy Communion
- 10:30 am Food & Fellowship
- 11:15 am Text of the Week Study

Monday

- 6:00 pm Table Talk (June)

Tuesday

- 5:30 pm St Luke's Council — May 5, Jun 2

Wednesday

- 6:00 pm Scripture Study: Romans (May), 1 & 2 Peter (June)

🎂 Birthdays 🎂

- Todd Deines — 2 May
- Sondra Loftiss — 3 May
- Sarah Martin — 23 May
- Kevin Dierks — 26 May
- Charlene Sargent — 9 Jun
- Georgia Story — 9 Jun
- Rose Tiszka — 12 Jun
- Luke Kammrath — 23 Jun

♥ Marriages ♥

- Steve & Chrissy May
3 Jun 1989 — 31 yrs
- Todd & Roxanne Deines
10 Jun 2000 — 20 yrs
- Stan & Sondra Loftiss
15 Jun 2013 — 7 yrs
- Kevin & Lisa Dierks
17 Jun 1995 — 25 yrs



Check out our website and find access to great resources like the church calendar, sermons, newsletters, online-giving, updates on the Disciple Garden, and more!

www.stlukeskck.org