

My Dear Friends in Christ,

Several years ago at Woodbury Lutheran we went through a season of ministry that we called, **Greater**. For three years we gathered around the words of John the Baptist who after seeing Jesus declared, **“He must become greater and I must become less.”** Another way of saying this is more of Jesus and less of me; we would all agree that our world could use more of Jesus these days.

This past weekend you made the incredibly difficult decision to close the ministry chapter of Concordia Lutheran Church. I can only imagine how heavy your hearts must be, as your brothers and sisters we grieve with you and pray that the Holy Spirit would infuse within you **the promise of Jesus that He is close to the brokenhearted.**

Over the next several months there is going to be lots of change, some will be really exciting and some will be really hard. **Please know that at the heart of every change will be a desire to make Jesus greater!** I was at Concordia on Monday and I noticed a piece of paper on the bulletin board that described how members of Concordia committed to treating one another. As I looked over those commitments I was encouraged and I thought it would be good to share a few of the ways that we will be committed to you in this season of change:

- **We are committed to helping you grieve what you have lost, but we will not allow you to grieve without hope.** We are a hopeful bunch at WLC because we follow Jesus, be prepared for us to bring you a big dose of hope.
- **We are committed to listening to you and walking with you.** Through the changes your voice matters and we want to respect you. There will be times where we miss the mark, so I am asking for your grace, patience, and forgiveness in advance.
- **We are committed to doing our very best to help breathe new life into this campus.** This is not a short-term experiment; we are committed to seeing the Gospel continue to *Multiply Disciples and Transform Lives* in South St. Paul for years to come.
- **We are committed to the mission of making new disciples of Jesus and that is not easy.** Yes, things will be different for you and in those moments when it all feels like too much, remember the call Jesus has given to us to make disciples.

In the days and weeks ahead know that I am praying for you, I am proud of you for taking this step and I look forward to our partnership in ministry as one.

Peace,



Pastor Tom

PS – You can reach me anytime at tom@woodburylutheran.org



OUR MISSION

Creating a Christ-Centered community gathered together...To joyfully worship our God... To grow in faith and knowledge...To love one another...And to share the Good News of Jesus Christ.

MARCH WORSHIP SERVICES
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3 – 4:00 PM
SUNDAY, MARCH 7 – 9:00 AM
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10 – 4:00 PM
SUNDAY, MARCH 14 – 9:00 AM
with Communion
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17 – 4:00 PM
SUNDAY, MARCH 21 – 9:00 AM
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24 – 4:00 PM
SUNDAY, MARCH 28 – 9:00 AM
with Communion

Online Services will continue on Facebook and YouTube

Pastor's Message

A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth

If I informed you that our society sees nothing good coming from human suffering and death, I would not be telling you something you didn't already know. The death penalty is seen as barbaric; an unnecessary evil. Any death is dreaded unless it serves as a means of ending suffering. And so, do we see the increasing cases of assisted suicide. Euthanasia or mercy killing are in fact encouraged.

They are considered a good thing, as they offer an alternative to prolonged suffering. As for the crucifixion of our Savior, the elite of our culture regard his death as foolish, even embarrassing for anyone who considers himself religious and compassionate.

So, what about us? Can we find meaning in suffering and death, and more specifically, the miseries of Christ? How much sense does the Lenten hymn make: "A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth" (L.S.B. 438)? This Lamb of God, God's Son, bears the guilt of sinners. In fact, he's "laden with the sins of the earth" (verse one). For us sinners, he "goes patient on, grows weak and faint" (verse one). And he does it all willingly. "He bears the stripes, the wounds, the lies, the mockery, and yet replies, 'All this I gladly suffer'" (verse one).

Why willingly go through this torture and hell? Is Christ a masochist of some sort? Does he enjoy suffering? Hardly! A masochist, arguably, is one who chooses *one* form of suffering because he's convinced that he cannot tolerate *another* form of suffering. That is to say, he seeks out specific pain and misery in order to draw his own attention away from something he's already experiencing and

which he believes is worse. Jesus, however, accepts the penalty prescribed for him. But he does so not because he enjoys it. “The wrath and stripes are *hard* to bear”! (verse two). No. Jesus accepts the penalty which would have been received by us sinners. He doesn’t seek a diversion for *himself* from the designated suffering. He diverts his Father’s attention from the intolerable suffering which *we*, the citizens of the world, had deserved.

Yes, for us it would have been intolerable. That is why he willingly would suffer all this. It was a punishment we could *not* bear. He was “laden with the sins of earth, *none else* the burden sharing!” (verse one). A sacrifice for sin under God’s Law was required, for God is just. But Christ’s sacrifice was offered also out of mercy and compassion for sinners. Christ wanted all to share the fruit of his salvation (verse two). That is why he willingly suffers; that all people may thereby be freed from the penalty of sin. What’s more, he suffers that you and I may stand before his throne redeemed and glorified (verse four). And for that we needn’t feel foolish or embarrassed. Christ receives a crown made of *thorns* that we might receive a crown made of *his righteousness* (verse four)! Our Lord accepts a *scarlet* robe that we might receive a *royal* robe consisting of his grace (verse four)!

May the Lord give us strength when facing suffering and death by revealing what he would willingly suffer for all.

Pastor Peter Preus

The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod LCMS Stewardship Ministry

Newsletter article – March 2021

Hudson Taylor, a Nineteenth Century British missionary to China, is reported to have said, “God’s work, done in God’s way, will not lack God’s supply.” To know God’s way, we need to know His Holy Word. Or to say it another way: you need to know your Bible.

St. Paul, before he spends two chapters on giving, wrote that every thought is to be taken captive to

the obedience of Christ (2 Cor 10:5). Doctrine matters. And doctrine matters because the Scriptures matter. And the Scriptures matter because this is where we learn the teaching of Christ. Our thoughts must be brought into line with the teaching of Scripture so that our work is what God wants done and so that we do this work in His way.

A good tree bears good fruit. A bad tree bears bad fruit. We have been made good trees in holy baptism. We are fertilized and pruned for bearing good fruit by constantly hearing God’s Word preached and taught in sermon and Bible Class and in receiving the life-giving, faith-sustaining food of the Lord’s Supper. Remember your doctrine, hold on to the Lord’s teaching, and your thoughts will be taken captive to the obedience of Christ.

Bringing every thought captive to the obedience of Christ is recognizing that God does provide. The Lord’s Prayer teaches us to pray for daily bread. Praying this day in and day out reminds us that the Lord is the giver of our daily bread, and that we are to give thanks for His daily provision of it. God is rarely early and never late in His work, as Abraham learned on the mount of the Lord it will be provided. The Lord’s generosity forms our generosity in return.

Thus, we set aside for the work of God a generous, first-fruits, proportion of the daily bread that God has given to us. This act of trust in the Lord’s provision is the working out of our faith in Him. When budgetary discussions pop up our natural reaction is to point fingers. But remember your doctrine, and what your mother taught about pointing fingers. Our first natural reaction is not always right. In fact, when our thoughts are brought into captivity of Christ, our first reaction should be repentance. It should raise questions in our own lives. As good trees in Christ who are to bear good fruit, we should ask whether our thoughts have been taken captive by obedience to Christ. Have we given generously? Have we given our first-fruits? You know. And God knows. “For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him” (2 Chron 16:9).

God will provide. He always has and He always will. He gives His meat in due season. He has not left you as orphans but has grafted you into His own family. You belong to Him. Remember this, letting this thought dwell in you richly. And you will then be rich toward others.

Midweek Lenten Worship and Holy Week

Midweek Lenten Worship time has changed this year, we will hold service at 4:00 pm each Wednesday thru March 24th. We will not be hosting Soup/Sandwich Suppers this year due to COVID-19 restrictions. Maundy Thursday is April 1st and Good Friday is April 2nd. Worship time for both services is 4:00 pm.

Online Worship Service Still Available

You can watch our Concordia services and listen to beautiful organ music just by going to our Facebook page at [concordiassp](https://www.facebook.com/concordiassp) and choosing Concordia Lutheran, on the left hand side of the page click on videos and choose the one you want to watch or watch it on YouTube by searching Concordia Lutheran Church SSP, be sure to hit the subscribe button. Thank you to everyone involved in making this available to the congregation!

Private Communion

Private Communion is available. We ask that you call the church office to set up an appointment time.

Personal Daily Devotions and Offering Envelopes

The April - June Portals of Prayer and 2021 Offering Envelopes have arrived and are now available. We would like to get them into the hands of all who would like them as soon as possible. As we go forward day by day, Portals of Prayer continues to provide us all with readings, messages, and prayers in our walk with God.

We would like to offer to make that happen in a couple of ways:

1. The office is open for pick-up of Portals of Prayer and Offering Envelopes on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 am – 2:00 pm. They are located in the narthex for convenient pick-up. No need to arrange a pick-up, just come by.
2. Wednesday or Thursday doesn't work for you? If you would like to go for a drive and pick one up at the church, we can meet you in the parking lot and bring one to your window.
3. We can deliver one and drop it off outside your home.

To work out details with you of either option , please contact Mark at: 651-457-3819 (please leave message if we miss your call) or cstoltenow@gmail.com Mark Stoltenow.

Quilter's Looking For Fabric

Our Hannah's Quilters are looking for any cotton, flannel, or batting you may be looking to donate. Be on the lookout for extra fabric. Call the church office if you have questions or would like to donate.

Altar Flowers

As you might recall, it was decided to have fresh flowers on the Altar every Sunday regardless if they were purchased by an individual or not. On the Sundays when an individual does not purchase flowers for a special occasion, we want to offer the flowers to our members to take them home and enjoy at no cost. We will start this joy-filled event on February 28th. We kindly ask you to please return the vases once you are done enjoying the flowers. The empty vases can be put next to the Flower Book located on the counter in the Narthex. To those of you who are interested in taking home the Altar flowers after our worship service on certain Sundays, please see Sue Ogorek to be added to the on-going list. For people who may have a difficult time getting the flowers home, but would like to participate, Mark and Cindy Stoltenow have graciously offered to deliver the flowers to your home. If you have any questions,

please do not hesitate to reach out or call the church office.

Neighbors, Inc.

March Campaign Dates – March 1 through April 11, 2021

The “neighbors helping neighbors” philosophy has been at the heart of Neighbors, Inc. since the beginning. We rely on the generosity of those who are able to provide support to their neighbors during challenging times.

Right now we need your assistance during our Minnesota FoodShare March Campaign to help feed our neighbors in need.

Concordia Lutheran has a generous member who has offered match Dollars and Pounds up to \$2,000 during the March FoodShare Campaign. Please join us in our effort to Stretch Your Donation and Double it.

You can include a donation to Neighbors Inc. with your offering or make your check payable to Neighbors Inc and drop it in the offering. We will keep a tally of donations and pass them on to Neighbors.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bruce Avenson
Paul Helgerson
Neil Olson
Kris Westad

BOARD CHAIRPERSON

Board of Community Activities – Sue Ogorek
Board of Elders – Mark Stoltenow 651-283-9541

SUNDAY SCHOOL INSTRUCTORS

Bruce & Gail Avenson and Cathy Johnston

Announcement And Servant Article Deadline

The deadline for turning in bulletin announcement articles is Wednesday each week by 9 am. The deadline for turning in Servant articles is the third Thursday of each month by 9 am. Email is the preferred method for delivering your article(s). concordiachurch@qwestoffice.net

March 2021

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 9:00 am Board of Directors Meet	2	3 10:00 am Adult Bible Study 4:00 pm Midweek Worship	4 9:00 am Hannah's Quilters	5 9:00 am Church Cleaners	6
7 9:00 am Worship 10:15 am Sunday School & Bible Study	8	9	10 10:00 am Adult Bible Study 4:00 pm Midweek Worship	11 9:00 am Hannah's Quilters	12 9:00 am Church Cleaners	13
14 9:00 am Worship w/communion 10:15 am Sunday School & Bible Study	15	16	17  10:00 am Adult Bible Study 4:00 pm Midweek Worship	18 9:00 am Hannah's Quilters	19 9:00 am Church Cleaners	20
21 9:00 am Worship 10:15 am Sunday School & Bible Study	22	23	24 10:00 am Adult Bible Study 4:00 pm Midweek Worship	25 9:00 am Hannah's Quilters	26 9:00 am Church Cleaners	27
28 Palm Sunday 9:00 am Worship w/communion 10:15 am Sunday School & Bible Study 	29	30	31	Concordia Lutheran Church 255 W. Douglas St. South St. Paul, MN 55075 651-451-0309 Worship Service each Sunday 9:00 am Sunday School & Sunday Adult Bible Study 10:15 am Wednesday Adult Bible Study 10:00 am		



CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CHURCH
255 WEST DOUGLAS STREET
SOUTH SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA 55075



Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with
fasting and sackcloth and ashes. **Daniel 9:3**