



All In His Time

*St. John's
Lenten Devotional*

2024

ALL IN HIS TIME

An introduction to our Lenten Devotional Booklet

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

Ecclesiastes 3:1 (ESV)

St. John's Lutheran Church and School invites you to join us in our walk through scripture during the season of Lent. These personal devotions are written by church members and students from our school. This yearly tradition has continued to be a blessing for almost 40 years!

Creatures on earth have to confront the passage of time during their lives. What does God tell us about time? What does He assure us about the timeliness of events in our lives and throughout history? How does our use of time draw us closer to or farther from Christ? Each devotional verse has been selected from God's Word based on a reference He has made to time and will help us to explore the answers to these questions.

As you read, think about your life with Christ. Examine time both from a grand historical scale and a very personal scale. Think about different perspectives of time, the passage of time, and the use of time. But most of all, consider how the timeliness of events has changed your life, including how your life would have been different, had the timing changed. We as humans may not always understand God's plan for the time in our lives, but as you read, we hope you will discover that your entire life has been "All in His Time!"

Thank you for taking this journey of faith with us. We pray that you will be blessed in your time with God each day of Lent through these scriptures and daily devotions.

February 14, 2024

Ash Wednesday

WHO ARE WE?

The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth; and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. Genesis 6:5 (ESV)

One year in my teaching career our administration had us fill out a survey to see if we had a growth mindset. One of the questions on the survey was: “Do you believe that all people are basically good?” This question gave me pause, because I knew that I wanted to have a positive viewpoint toward my students and colleagues, but knew in my heart that all people are not basically good. We are all on the same level having been born and conceived in sin. “I am a good person” is what I commonly have heard people say. This common belief in our culture today is completely contrary to what God tells us about ourselves in Scripture:

“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Romans 3:23 (ESV)

“We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like filthy rags.” Isaiah 64:6 (ESV)

Becoming aware of our own sinfulness is essential to our salvation! We are created in God’s image and He loves His creation. But this awareness of our sinfulness should drive us humbly to our knees and fill our hearts with thankfulness for His sacrifice of Jesus, His Son. Because of God’s holiness He cannot stand sin. Because of His great love for us, He provides a substitute sacrifice to pay for our sins. This Lent, let us reflect on our sinful condition, confess it and then joyfully and gratefully know in our hearts who we are because of God’s great love for us!

Prayer: Dear God in heaven, we are not enough, but You are! We are broken, but You are good! Help us not want to please ourselves, but to imitate You! Cleanse us of our sin and enable us to love You with all our hearts, souls, and strength! Amen.

Rebecca Hemminger

February 15, 2024

SAFE AND SECURE

The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. Psalm 9:9 (NIV)

Psalm 9 was written by King David after a successful victory over his enemies. In various translations, refuge is also called shelter, fortress, defense, and high tower. The Hebrew word means a high, safe place, inaccessible to the enemy.

When I visited the Luther lands years ago, I was able to tour the Wartburg Castle, where Luther fled for safety, took on the name "Junker Jorg" and translated the New Testament. It is a beautiful fortress on a precipice of 410 meters. The words of Luther's famous hymn, "A Mighty Fortress" really resonated with me, as I pictured him in this sanctuary, safe from those who sought to kill him.

Times of trouble? They are well known to us in 2024, as we think about serious illnesses, death, job loss, financial worries, family confrontations, and so forth. Daily, on the news, we are bombarded with war and its effects, as well as natural disasters. This verse reminds us that God is our safe space, His presence is sure, He is worth trusting, and He will not abandon us. We can go to Him at all times, as well as times of calamity. When we are weary from the fight against the devil, the world, and our flesh, God offers us rest and safety.

Another "refuge" Luther fled to, about ten years later, was Coburg Castle. He was banned from the empire so was not able to go to Augsburg with the delegation from Saxony. This fortress was used in countless military conflicts. I visited the Luther room and there is a writing on the wall which he scratched in Latin. It is Psalm 118:17: **"I shall not die but live, and declare the works of the Lord."** May we not only find hope and refuge in the Lord in times of trouble, but, as Luther, use the times of challenge to witness even more boldly of God's great love in Jesus.

Prayer: *Dear Lord, help us to come to You for comfort and guidance in times of trouble. Help us to trust Your will in all circumstances. Amen*

Marnie Smith

February 16, 2024

WATCH YOUR WORDS

The words of the Lord are pure words, like silver refined in a furnace on the ground, purified seven times. Psalm 12:6 (ESV)

“Sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me.” You may have heard of it, but it is not true. As a 9-year-old I hear it a lot. People believe that it is trying to encourage you that words don’t hurt. But they do. God’s words are as precious as gold. He loves you, but words hurt. My sister sometimes says rude things to me. For example, if I tell her something and she says back, “I don’t care,” it hurts. So, I encourage you to challenge yourself: ask God to cleanse your words and tell someone a compliment. Also, sometimes you don’t even need to talk to someone. You can communicate by actions. For example, when I went to Chicago there was a lot of people sitting on the streets. I went up to them and gave them money without talking, but I smiled. So, I communicated by smiling and giving them money.

Let’s pray: Dear God. Please help me to watch my words and help me say good things to someone even if they are mean to me. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Sofie Hemminger (Fourth Grade)

February 17, 2024

JOY COMES IN THE MORNING

For his anger is but for a moment, and his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning. Psalm 30:5 (ESV)

Mama! Mama! Baby Raelyn happily squeals as mama gets her out of bed in the morning. That video vividly brought back memories of greeting Baby Raelyn's mama in the mornings when she was a baby. It didn't matter if tears had been shed at bedtime. There was joy in the morning.

Let's consider a Mama who must have shed some tears. When Simeon saw baby Jesus in the temple, he told Mary that a sword would pierce her soul. We find Mary at the foot of her son's cross. There cannot be any more horrible place than the place Mary was standing. We cannot even imagine her feelings seeing her son suffer this horrible death. Were there tears? Was Mary in too much shock to cry? John was there. Was his face stained with tears? There must have been tears on that Friday night as those who loved Jesus heard that awful news. Jesus had died. But..... this is not where the story ends. Easter Sunday morning comes and there is joy. That joy changes our lives. Because Jesus died for us on that cross and rose on Sunday morning, our sins are forgiven and we will live forever with Jesus in Heaven.

Does that joy mean there will be no tears as we journey through life? Absolutely not. Jesus said we would have trials. ***I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world (John 16:33).*** We may shed tears, but they will disappear. In Heaven, ***He will wipe away every tear from our eyes (Revelation 21:4).***

There will be tears in the night. Joy comes in the morning – we don't know when that morning will come. But it will! Jesus promises that we will live with Him joyfully forever.

Prayer: Dear God, Thank you for promising to be with me when the tears come. Thank you for forgiving my sins and giving me eternal life with You. Thank you for promising me joy in the morning. Help me to embrace the promise that You will give me eternal joy. Amen.

Sherrie Smith

February 18, 2024

KEEP THE FAITH!

My times are in your hand; Deliver me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me. Psalm 31:15 (KJV)

“When I find myself in times of trouble, mother Mary comes to me. Speaking words of wisdom, Let It Be.” These are the opening words of Paul McCartney’s Let It Be. When there was enormous strife within The Beatles in 1969, Paul had a dream that his mum came to him and assured him everything was going to work out.

In our text, David is experiencing stress, isolation and depression. He is in hiding from the persecution of Saul. Everyone has abandoned him, and flee for fear of their lives when he is around.

What do you do when you are stressed? Take a run? Workout? Take a bike ride? Take a pill? Have a drink? Eat? Withdraw from everyone? We try to fix the situation **by ourselves**. We think we know better than anyone on how to pick ourselves up, but we end up falling down again and again. We don’t reach out for help, until it’s too late. Our stress morphs into depression and we withdraw into our own minds. We may seek medical assistance or Dial 988 for help. Most often we go it alone. Why? **Our faith is weak.**

David is depressed. He’s tired of being hunted. He’s physically and emotionally drained. He’s burnt out and ready to quit. So, what does he do? He calls out to God! He undeniably accepts that his life is totally in HIS hands, and not in his own. **He puts his trust in God.** Throughout Psalm 31, David acknowledges that God alone is in control of this life, and HE will sustain him as HE sees fit. Something we conveniently forget repeatedly.

When I find myself in times of trouble, God the Father waits for me, to remember HIS promises: **Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Matt 11:28 (KJV)**

Prayer: Lord God Heavenly Father. Give us a faith like David’s to call upon You in all our times of trouble, as You are always here with us. In Jesus’ Name. Amen.

Ken Miller

February 19, 2024

BUILDING A LOVING RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

But I will sing of your strength, in the morning I will sing of your love, for you are my fortress, my refuge in times of trouble. Psalm 59:16 (NIV)

I've always loved the Psalms. They've always been a sense of comfort to me. I remember reading them to both my mom and dad in their last days on earth. I never knew exactly which ones to pick although, like many people, I have my favorites. They consistently show that God's love is constant and unwavering and apply so well today in a world where there is so much conflict and hate. Chapter 59 in Psalms is a description of David's turmoil about his enemies and their plan to harm him. Yet David knew of God's strength and love and used his words to praise him in song, knowing that God was the best and only refuge he needed to overcome his enemies. He was able to turn a negative situation into a reminder that God had never abandoned him.

Last July, I completed a Bible app plan to read the entire book of Psalms along with Proverbs in a month's time. I decided to do the plan with encouragement from a friend who wanted to form a group to read each day and then comment about how the readings affected us, or what stood out or how we could apply that day's reading into our own life. What a joy it was to hear other people's perspectives each day. Their words were a blessing to me as they were encouraging about the love and strength of our God.

God wants us to have and experience a direct relationship with him. When we have that relationship, it seems easier to "sing" of His strength even when we are in a very difficult season of our lives. God is never far from us even when we may forget His presence.

How might your day start differently, if, before you set a foot on the floor, you would say a quick prayer of thanksgiving to a God whose love and faithfulness will never let you down.

Prayer: Gracious Heavenly Father, Thank you for being our refuge, our source of strength and unwavering faithfulness at all times, but especially in times of trouble. May we be bold to say it on a daily basis. Amen

Karen Ciango

February 20, 2024

A PERFECT SANDWICH

Trust in Him at all times, you people; pour out your hearts to Him, For God is our refuge. Psalm 62:8 (NIV)

This verse really spoke to me. I had been pouring my heart out to God quite a lot. I was telling Him all about the stress and fears I'd been experiencing and I was able to get myself really worked up about it. The problem with all that pouring out of my feelings to God was that it was all focused on myself. When I took the time to meditate on this verse, it became clear that the Psalmist sandwiched the "pouring out of our hearts" between two phrases that bring the focus fully on God.

First, we are reminded to trust at all times. That is the first layer of this sandwich. We need to start with a foundation of trust in the One who is trustworthy. And in case we forget, we need to trust Him *at all times*.

With a foundation of trust, now the outpouring of our hearts has a purpose. It's not a mindless rant, but a laying down of worries and concerns. We can place the burdens of our hearts onto God and trust that He hears, understands and sustains us.

That brings us to the final part of our sandwich. God is our refuge. When we give our burdens, whatever they might be, to Him, He provides sanctuary. A safe, restful, restorative place for comfort and healing has been prepared for us and waits for us to claim it.

My goal in the days and weeks ahead is to keep God's trustworthiness as my foundation and end each day thanking God for the refuge He provides.

Prayer: Dear Lord, Help me to trust in You at all times, no matter what burdens are on my heart today. Thank you for being my refuge.

Holly Hackelberg

February 21, 2024

IN HIS TIME

At the time I have planned, I will bring justice against the wicked. Psalm 75:2 (NLT)

When first reading this passage, it can seem daunting and worrisome. One day we will all stand before God and be judged for our sins against Him and His people. Each and every one of us sin daily and deserve the full judgment of God.

However, I encourage you to read the passage again, but instead of a lens of fear- look at this verse through a lens of comfort and safety.

We worship a God who is all knowing, faithful and just. His timing is not a moment too soon or a moment too late. In all things He is perfect. He will choose the right time to bring judgment upon the world and He will do it perfectly.

Thank goodness we aren't appointed to judge the world and do it fairly. Think about all the times we've wanted something to happen whether it be a job, a new car, house, or season of life to happen. We become impatient with anticipation. If we were appointed to bring justice to the world- we'd probably do it too soon and not with the integrity that God will.

It can be hard to wait for God's justice, especially when people hurt us. Yet remember, the same God that brings justice to us, will also bring justice to those that we have wronged. Thank goodness God was appointed as the superior judge and that He will bring justice in His timing and do it perfectly.

Prayer: Father- thank You for being the Savior of the world and the ultimate judge. We praise You for Your faithfulness in all circumstances. Help us to remember that all things happen perfectly in Your timing. Let us not forget to leave the judgment of others to You- as You are perfect and all knowing. Amen

Kylie Strasser Bender

February 22, 2024

OUR ONLY HOPE

Yet he was merciful; he forgave their iniquities and did not destroy them. Time after time he restrained his anger and did not stir up his full wrath. Psalm 78:38 (NIV)

Every day, in the news, we hear about murders, robberies, assaults, or some other act of wickedness. These things have become so much a part of our everyday life, that we sometimes pay little attention to them. While many people make light of so many sins, God still hates sin.

We know God wants us to obey his commandments and unfortunately, we also break his commandments every day. This appears to be bad news for everyone since we are all guilty of one sin or another.

God has the right to destroy all of us for our sins. Because of his love for all people, God has restrained his anger and even sent his Son Jesus to die for us so we can be with him in heaven.

If he did not send Jesus, we would be lost and in a hopeless situation. Why God still loves us is impossible to answer and we do not deserve what God has done for us. Without Jesus, God would surely be angry with us. "We are saved by believing in Jesus". What a wonderful thought.

Prayer: Dear God, we thank you so much for loving us so much that You sent Jesus to save us. Help us to live a thankful life which shows others our faith in Jesus. Amen

Don Wachholz

February 23, 2024

IS IT TIME TO EAT?

All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time. Psalm 104:27 (NIV)

I heard this question often when my children were growing up. Meal times were regularly scheduled, but snack times were whenever. We did not have a concern about going hungry on any given day; grocery stores were nearby, Mom had money in her wallet, and the pantry shelves were stocked. I could easily keep my family fed.

But the psalmist here reminds me that our “food security” was ultimately not my doing. In fact, he puts us together with all of the creatures of God's creation who will be fed at the proper time. We are all dependent on God for our food, for our very existence. We can observe the birds and wild animals going about their foraging for food. They gather what is provided for them in nature according to the seasons; instinct lets them know when they must store away more in preparation for the winter time. Though they do not know God as we do, what He gives them, they gather and are satisfied with it.

We rely on God for our own food—think about the growing seasons, the fertility of the soil, the viability of seeds, the different climates, the gathering, storage and shipping of crops. We cannot control many of these things, and need to trust in God's provisions for us. He provides for our needs, just as he does for all of His creatures. We, of all His creatures, are aware of this as a blessing from God, as he provides us with much more than just food; all of our earthly gifts are from his provision as well. Unfortunately, we are not always satisfied with what God has allowed us and it gives way to coveting and envy. That shows how we just don't trust God to give us what we need—not everything that we want. He has and will provide it in His own time and according to His wisdom.

For all of this God deserves our thanks and praise. We ask Him in the Lord's Prayer to “Give us this day our daily bread” and consider that He will do so, not only for us His followers, but also for the evildoers and unbelievers. With Martin Luther, we can ask in this prayer that He would help us to realize this truth and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.

*Before You Lord, we bow, Our God who reigns above
And rules the world below, Boundless in power and love
Our thanks we bring, in joy and praise
Our hearts we raise to You, our King (LW 500)*

Barbara Paulsen

February 24, 2024

HOW GOOD IS A TIMELY WORD

A person finds joy in giving an apt reply-and how good is a timely word. Proverbs 15:23 (NIV)

In this proverb, Solomon is encouraging us to give a timely, apt reply. Elsewhere in this chapter, an apt reply is emphasized: vs.1 **a gentle answer turns away wrath**, vs.4 **the soothing tongue is a tree of life**, vs.7 **the lips of the wise spread knowledge**, vs.28 **the heart of the righteous weighs its answers**.

Verse 23 is the only one in this section that emphasizes timing. The theme of our Lenten Devotional is “All in His Time”. This verse reminds us to think of our timing. Maybe we have thought of the best response to say, but the timing is wrong so our reply may not be as beneficial as we hope.

So, as we think about timing, we could listen to our child, spouse, friend, or co-worker’s whole story before we reply, so they know they have been heard. Before we respond on social media or after a disagreement, we could wait so that after reflection and time our response is appropriate. When a child, teen or student is struggling with a new skill, we could give them time to figure it out before we advise them. As God’s timing is perfect, maybe we should consider our timing when speaking to others as well.

Prayer: *Lord, help us as we interact with people to regulate our words and the timing of them to be a better reflection of You. In Jesus’ name, Amen.*

Cheryl Haugen

February 25, 2024

TURN, TURN, TURN

To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven. Ecclesiastes 3:1 (KJV)

Because I am of a certain age, every time I read or hear these words, the song “Turn, Turn, Turn” by the Byrds starts running through my head. At the time that it was hitting the Billboard Chart, I was attending a Lutheran grade school and was excited that a popular song was from the Bible. At age 12, I felt like I was an insider to the lyrics. Now that I’m older, I’m amazed that Biblical words became a hit song across the country.

King Solomon’s assurances in Ecclesiastes are as true for us today as they were when he wrote them. We all have seasons of sorrow and joy, despair and hopefulness, gain and loss. Each one of these seasons is intentional and God expects us to rely on His almighty comfort while we’re in the midst of them. Since we are constantly in these seasons, doesn’t it make sense that God expects us to rely on Him all of the time? What a comfort it is to be assured that when we are in a challenging period in our lives that it will pass, and knowing God is in charge will carry us to our “next season”. We are assured that each season has a beginning and an end and that there is a purpose for it having been in our lives. Often, we aren’t able to see the purpose for a season that we’re living through while we’re in the middle of it. But God has promised us, through King Solomon’s words, that there IS a purpose. And what a blessing to know that there will always be new seasons, ones that bring hope, comfort, and prayerfully, a deeper faith in our unchanging Lord.

Prayer: *Dear Loving Father, thank you for carrying us through the constantly changing seasons of our lives. Help us to see the purpose for each of them. In Jesus’ name. Amen*

Sue Kunz

February 26, 2024

NO RANDOM TURNS

**... a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted.
Ecclesiastes 3:2 (ESV)**

When I read the scripture verses of Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, it takes me back to the 1960's when as a little girl I would put my 45 single on the turntable and listen to these verses being sung in "Turn! Turn! Turn!" by the band, The Byrds. The song's theme, "a time to be born, a time to die; a time to plant, a time to reap," is a reminder of the impermanence of life.

"A time to be born, a time to die" -- the timing of our coming into the world and going out of it--- are fixed by God. It is appointed that they shall die; and particularly Christ, whose birth is at the time appointed by the Father, in the fullness of time; and whose life could not be taken away before his hour had come. In the book of Ecclesiastes, Solomon realizes that one cannot affect the timing of one's birth or death. It is a time that God alone has determined. Neither can he change the seasons of the earth. There is a planting season and a harvest season determined by God. The earth will "Turn! Turn! Turn!" Births and deaths will keep happening. Additionally, too often we try to reap during planting seasons and plant during harvest. God knows everything that will happen in our lives and His timing is never too early or too late.

While we struggle to discern His timing, we should be encouraged that God did not merely leave us to deduce his character and wisdom from nature. In Jesus, the Creator of all stepped into terrestrial time, into our frame of reference. In fully human form, He "dwelt among us" (John 1:14). God further displayed the marvelous wisdom of His timing when the time had come for the Son of Man to be glorified (John 12:23). Jesus obeyed his Father to the point of death, offering for all time a single sacrifice for our sins.

Prayer: Father, help us to trust your timing in working out the details in our lives. You make all things beautiful in your time, which counts for all eternity. Amen

Cheryl Farney

A TIME FOR EVERYTHING

...a time to weep and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance; Ecclesiastes 3:4 (ESV)

As a child, I was an early riser. I would often wander down the stairs, through the dark living room into the light of the dining room where I would greet my dad sitting at the table. While he was eating his breakfast and the house was quiet, he would read his Bible and a daily devotion. That spiritual habit gave him direction and strength each day.

As I grew into adulthood, my early thirties ushered in a number of life-changing events that taught me very quickly that I was not invincible, and have little control - "Jesus, Take the Wheel" by Carrie Underwood comes to mind. Thankfully, my dad's spiritual habit had become my own. God was growing my faith and dependence on Him. A few years later, my family was stunned with news that my dad had cancer and would need surgery. The morning of his surgery, I read a devotion from Ecclesiastes 3:1-8. I was looking for an answer, direction, and encouragement, but was perplexed at what God was telling me in Ecclesiastes. What did it mean that there is a time for everything? Would my dad be healed here on earth? I wrestled with what God was telling me about my dad's condition. Then, a Hebrew peace-blessing song "Shalom My Friend" came to mind. Shalom means "made good" or "fully restored". My dad would have peace and wholeness, and I needed to trust God with all the details, in His timing.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 prepares us with wise advice: "there is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven;" Life has shown me there is "a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance." God is in control; He's with us always; He's sovereign; and He's holding our hand every step of the way. His plan is always best for our lives.

Prayer: *Father God, Maker of heaven and earth, you alone are worthy of our worship and praise. Help us, Holy Spirit, and guide us for "there is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven". Thank you, Jesus, for the example you set for us to love our Father, and depend on Him in all circumstances. Amen.*

Julie Strasser-Lunde

February 28, 2024

TURN! TURN! TURN!

...a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, Ecclesiastics 3:7 (NIV)

My generation grew up with Folk Music and Rock 'n' Roll, experiencing all the great lyrics and melodies. One remarkable song was inspired by the Bible verses of Ecclesiastes 3:1-8. It was written and performed by Pete Seeger, and later covered by many popular artists. The song gained popularity when “The Byrds” sang it with a Folk-Rock twist in the '60s. The song eloquently describes the various cycles of life's journey experiences. Each verse presents opposites, contrasting directions from North to South, tears to mending, and silence to shouting.

Today, we will focus on the two parts of verse 7.

Part one: An example of tearing and mending occurs at a funeral, symbolizing the loss of a loved one that leads to the building of stronger family bonds. Even during Barb's journey with cancer a few years ago, we witnessed the Lord sending numerous wonderful people—doctors, nurses, church family, friends, and even strangers—to support us during challenging times. Now, we find ourselves in a position to offer support to others on their cancer journeys at the Wellness House in Hinsdale.

Part two: There is a balance between silence and speech, emphasizing the importance of listening before speaking out. Our general instinct is to speak first, but wisdom lies in following the examples of Biblical leaders like Nehemiah, Timothy, and Paul, who paused to pray before acting or speaking. In today's age of instant communication through social media, everyone is eager to share their opinions and hit the send button without thinking. A common example is news outlets, often presenting snippets of a story mixed with opinions and presenting it as news.

Closing Prayer: Lord, grant us the wisdom in Ecclesiastes 3 to be better servants for and with You. Amen

Jim Paulsen

FOCUS ON FOREVER

His ever expanding, peaceful government will never end. He will rule forever with fairness and justice from the throne of his ancestor David. The passionate commitment of the Lord Almighty will guarantee this! Isaiah 9:7 (NLT)

Often in our day to day lives, we find ourselves living and preparing for the time we will spend on this Earth. In this Lenten season, a time where we renew our focus on God through prayer and other spiritual disciplines, let us ponder this question: Do I spend more time building God's kingdom that will last forever or planning for my own, limited, worldly existence? When we live in such a way where we are expanding God's kingdom, we are working on something that will never fade. God promises his kingdom will be filled with peace, fairness and justice. We have each experienced the world's version of these concepts. They invoke incredible emotion, but they are always temporary. Thankfully, we are able to look forward to the everlasting peace, fairness and justice that God guarantees will reign forever in Him.

Prayer: God, thank you for all that You have blessed us with. Open our eyes to opportunities around us, where we can steward our time and resources to further Your kingdom. We pray this in Your name Jesus, Amen.

Justin Bender

March 1, 2024

WHERE IS YOUR TREASURE?

“....and He will be the stability of your times, abundance of salvation, wisdom and knowledge; the fear of the Lord is Zion’s treasure.” Isaiah 33:6 (ESV)

I’ve always loved the way the Spirit breathes through the words of Isaiah. In times of captivity by powerful nations, Isaiah reminded God’s people that God was the real power in the world, and that being in a right relationship with Him provides security nothing else can. His promises of salvation, wisdom and knowledge spoke of Jesus, who incarnates all 3 of these.

In recent years, I’ve felt thrown into a whirlwind of chaos in the world around me. We all have. Covid 19, the pandemic, economic instability, wars, environmental disasters and threats of environmental destruction loom in the news and social media every day. Our failure to trust God and obey His will is like that of the people during Isaiah’s time and in every time we’ve deviated from Him and suffered the consequences.

Yet Isaiah continually speaks of hope and redemption, as people see that God’s power is bigger than chaos, and that God alone brings peace to our struggling souls. In my own life, looking at the path ahead of me in God’s light and walking in it keeps me from falling over the cliff around me.

Prayer: Father, fill us with a fear of the Lord: a recognition of Your almighty power, Your salvation in Your Son, and Your wisdom and knowledge that the Holy Spirit pours into the world. Let us find our security in You alone, despite the rumblings around us. In Jesus’ saving, wise and all-knowing name we pray. Amen.

Chris Hubacek

March 2, 2024

WORTH THE WAIT

This is what the LORD says: “At just the right time, I will respond to you. On the day of salvation I will help you. I will protect you and give you to the people as my covenant with them. Through you I will reestablish the land of Israel and assign it to its own people again. Isaiah 49:8 (NLT)

Waiting seems to be one of the hardest lessons we have to learn in this life. Some of us are naturally more patient than others. I don't want to name names, but I have two kids; one of them is incredible at waiting. It doesn't matter where, why, or for what purpose, but he can sit patiently and wait endlessly. Conversely, my other child seems to have completely missed out on the patience gene. The most minor inconvenience will be met with persistent complaints and whining that slowly increases in frequency. No matter how often we give them opportunities to practice patience, one of my darling children just cannot seem to accept that anything in life is worth waiting for.

We can all probably relate to an impatient child sometimes. We impatiently wait for God's healing for family, friends, or ourselves. We impatiently wait for God to intervene in our personal struggles and in the chaos and suffering all over our world. Today's verse reminds us that even when we struggle to wait, God has a plan for us. Just as we see God's plan unfold throughout the Bible, His plan continues in our lives. We are living in that glorious unfolding even today!

If we are honest, waiting is never really fun. It is especially difficult when we do not understand the purpose or the plan in the waiting. When the impatience grows, remember that although we don't know the plan, we do know the planner, and we can trust Him to answer our prayers in His perfect timing.

Prayer: Dear Lord, thank you for always having our best interest in mind. We may not understand Your plan for us and our world, but help us to be patient and trust in Your timing, strength, and love for us. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Julie Rauch

March 3, 2024

ETERNAL LOVE

Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. John 13:1 (ESV)

Can you imagine what it was like for Jesus to grow in awareness of who He was and what was required of Him? I think about that when I read the Gospels. When did He know the Old Testament spoke of Him? Did that boy who lingered in the temple know that He knew God better than the priests did? At His baptism, did He know what His Father meant when God called Him His beloved Son in whom He was well pleased? What was He thinking and feeling as He approached Jerusalem during Holy Week, and how did He know His hour was coming? And what drove Him to choose His disciples and invest His love in those particular men? How did His love for them play out? These are big questions, and perhaps we'll never know the answers.

One thing we can know is that Jesus accomplished what He was supposed to and gave those He loved everything they needed to go forward after He left them. We can know what He accomplished in His suffering and death because God raised Him from the dead, and we can know that He provided for His friends because the Church is still growing after 2000 years.

In our lives, we can know that just as He loved His own who were in the world, He will love all of us who are His own until the end.

Prayer: Father, thank You for sending Jesus to save us from our sins. Jesus, thank You for living a life of perfect obedience to the Father and loving us eternally. May Your Spirit grow us into Your likeness so we will follow the Father in all our hours and love until the end...of forever. Amen

Chris Hubacek

March 4, 2024

GOD'S TIMING IS PERFECT

“The time is coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.” Jeremiah 31:31 (NIV)

The word “time” popped out and I’m expanding it to “timing”. Jeremiah was told the time was coming but not given a specific time. The time didn’t come until hundreds of years later. That’s a mighty long time. I don’t think I would have waited, and would have wanted to change the plan. All of us have our own experiences of time/timing: Not enough, too much, too slow, too fast, good, bad, inconvenient or a combination. We make plans and set the timing. Then something happens which totally changes everything.

Here is a quote from the devotional book, Jesus Calling. It’s written with Jesus talking. “Much, much stress results from wanting to make things happen before their times have come. One of the main ways I assert my sovereignty is in the timing of events. If you want to stay close to Me and do things My way, ask Me to show you the path forward moment by moment. Instead of dashing headlong toward your goal, let Me set the pace. Slow down, and enjoy the journey in My Presence.”

As like many of you, my Christian journey started when I was an infant, washed in the waters of Baptism and grew up with church, Sunday School, confirmation and youth group as integral parts of my life. Jesus has been my companion and Savior my entire life. This, however, doesn’t mean I never questioned plan changes or timing and asked God, “Why?”.

Many of you can relate to sudden changes with the timing seeming to be all wrong, but then turning into blessings in disguise. Here are some examples from my life that changed the course of my plans: My parents moved from Michigan City to Berwyn while I was in college, which messed up my summer job plans. My sister and brother-in-law invited me to live with them in Michigan City as long as I wanted, which ended up to be several years. When living and teaching in Michigan City, I stayed a summer with my parents in Berwyn while taking classes at Concordia River Forest. That’s when I met my parents’ neighbor, Dick. We dated, married, were blest with the birth of Jenn and had almost 50 years of a wonderful marriage before God called him home. Their move turned out to be a blessing.

We had moved to LaGrange Park when Jenn was six. We had a Lutheran church a few blocks away as well as a public school just down the block. I had enrolled Jenn in Forest Road School and planned to change our church membership - we were all set. As you guessed, our plans changed when Jenn’s first grade teacher at Redeemer Lutheran School in Cicero told us about St John’s Church and School in LaGrange. That became our church home and Jenn’s school. What a blessing. For us, God’s plans and timing were perfect!

We pray: *Christ be my leader by night as by day, Safe through the darkness for He is the way. Gladly I follow, my future His care. Darkness is day-light when Jesus is there. Amen (LSB 861 vs1)*

Sharon Broz

March 5, 2024

OUR HEAVENLY FATHER'S EVERLASTING LOVE

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord. I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God and they shall be my people. Jeremiah 31:33 (ESV)

Jeremiah lived at a time when Israel was forsaking God, following idols, and worshiping the works of their own hands. But God told Jeremiah that "Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you, and I ordained you as a prophet to the nations." (Chapter 1:5)

Then Jeremiah prophesied to the Israelites that God was very angry with them. Chapter 5:19: And it will be when they say, "Why does the Lord our God do all these things to us?", then Jeremiah, you will answer that "Just as you have forsaken Me and served foreign gods in your land, so you shall serve aliens in a land that is *not* yours."

In Chapter 7:23: God spoke through Jeremiah, "This is what I commanded your fathers: Obey my voice and I will be your God, and you shall be My people. And walk in the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you." (You can also read some of the other things that God said in Chapter 9:23-24; Chapter 17:5-13; and Chapter 23:5-6) When the Israelites became captives, Jeremiah wrote letters to them. Some included these words, as seen in Chapter 29:11-14: "For I know the plans I have for you", says the Lord, "thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. And I will be found by you", says the Lord.

When the remnant of Israel was saved, the Lord told them, "Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love." (Chapter 31:3)

We need to pray for all the people of Israel, just as Jeremiah did many hundreds of years ago. We know that God wants them all to be saved, just as He wants each of us to follow His commandments and to be a reflection of His love and salvation to many people. "Praise the Lord of hosts, for the Lord is good, for His mercy endures forever." (Chapter 33:11)

Prayer: *Dear Lord, Thank You for the love and forgiveness You give to us, and to people throughout the entire world. We look forward to spending eternity with You! Amen*

Pamella Christensen

GOD'S PROMISES FULFILLED IN HIS TIME

In those days and at that time I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David's line; he will do what is just and right in the land. Jeremiah 33:15 (NIV)

Has someone ever broken their promise to you? It can be frustrating to say the least, and it can even lead to distrust. But if we look at ourselves, I am sure we can see times in our lives when we have broken our promises to others. But God always keeps His promises.

Throughout the Bible we see evidence of God's promises. God promised Noah that he and his family would be saved if he obeyed God and built the ark and so it came to pass in His time. God promised Abraham that his descendants would be great. Centuries later, God fulfilled the promise in His time. In our text Jeremiah writes about the fulfillment of God's promise to David that a righteous branch would come out of his family. Jesus would be the fulfillment of that promise many years later in His Time.

As we see all these promises fulfilled by God in the Bible, we can be assured that God will fulfill the promises He has made to us in our lives. He has promised to forgive our sins and remember them no more. He has promised to be with us always, no matter what we are going through. He has promised to give us the strength to endure all that life throws at us. He has promised to give us the reward of eternal life just because we have faith in Him. All of this is done through His timing, not ours.

Therefore, all we need to do is put our trust in God to guide us through all that life brings. Look each day to see how God fulfills His promises in your life, and share your story of faith with others to help them in their walk of faith.

Prayer: *Heavenly Father, Help us to see how You are guiding us in our lives and fulfilling the promises You have made to us. Give us the strength and encouragement to live out our faith trusting in You every day. Amen.*

Tom Wykert

March 7, 2024

WE NEED TO BE “ALWAYS READY”

**Therefore, you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.
Matthew 24:44 (ESV)**

Are you ready? This is a question we hear a lot as we go through life. Are you ready to go here or there? One motto of the fire service, which I am very familiar with, is “Always Ready”. We never knew when that next call for service was going to be, so we had to always be prepared. Boots and coat ready to put on, meals eaten quickly because we didn’t know when the bell might ring.

In this verse and the verses which precede these in Matthew, we are being told to be prepared for the second coming of Jesus. We do not literally need to stay awake, but we need to stay in the Word and continue to strengthen our faith so that when the Lord does come, we are focused on Him and not the things of this world. The world (Satan) wants nothing better than to distract us and lead us away from God and our faith. Scripture tells us that we need to be prepared and stay focused on God and strong in our faith so we can fight Satan’s temptations with His help.

We do not know when our time here on earth will end as we know it, whether that is when Jesus comes back or before. I challenge you to be in the Word daily. Set aside that special time when you can read your Bible and pray and get that knowledge you need from God to always be ready, for we do not know the hour which He is coming! Reading these devotions is a great way to start that habit!

Prayer: Dear Father in Heaven, help me to be in the Word daily and put my trust in You so that when that hour comes, I have no fear that You will welcome me with open arms. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Gary Mayor

March 8, 2024

A SIGN OF THE TIMES

“When evening comes, you say, ‘It will be fair weather, for the sky is red,’ and in the morning, ‘Today it will be stormy, for the sky is red and overcast.’ You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times.” Matthew 16:2-3 (NIV)

I have occasionally wondered how it might have been to live at the time that Jesus spent on earth, witnessing His miracles, seeing demons being exorcised, nature being tamed, and hearing him speak parables. There would be no reason to doubt that He was the Son of God and my faith could be much stronger. I might even have all my questions answered. Seeing is believing, they say.

But apparently that isn't true, as we see in this encounter with Jesus, the Pharisees and the Sadducees. They had come to Him to test his validity as the Messiah. If He would give them a sign from heaven, they might . . . believe? Jesus knew their hearts, calling them a wicked and adulterous generation. While they were quite able to forecast weather by seeing the signs in the sky, they were missing other signs pointing to Jesus as the Messiah, had they been open to receiving them. They weren't hard to find; these religious pros had long been observing Jesus as he conducted his ministry. If they had taken their study of the prophets more seriously, they might have realized that the prophecies converged on this very time for the coming of the Messiah, a time that God had appointed for it to happen, the “fullness of time.”

They had not read the signs of the times, he accused them. Again, their thorough study of the Scriptures should have led them to seeing the Word point to the arrival of the Messiah. Daniel's prophetic writings, the ministry of John the Baptist, the speech of Simeon, among other things. They did not have a lack of evidence but instead were too stubborn to accept it as truth. Indeed, Jesus was not going to perform a sign just to humor them—because it simply would demean the miracle.

We must also be aware of the signs of our own times. The Messiah has already come, lived and sacrificed his life for us and then ascended into heaven where he is preparing for us. We do not know the day or the time in which He is expected, but we have been given signs to expect and told how to prepare for His second coming. With so much turmoil and misinformation and untrustworthy leadership around us, we need to remain in the Word of God and in prayer to keep us focused.

Prayer: Lord, open now my heart to hear
And through Your Word to me draw near
Let me Your Word e'er pure retain
Let me Your child and heir remain (TLH 5) Amen

Barbara Paulsen

March 9, 2024

THE SON OF MAN RETURNS IN HIS TIME

Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. Matthew 24:30 (NIV)

I selected this verse as the day is my birthday. It is a very powerful verse about the day for which we all long. Whenever I see beams of sunshine streaming through clouds, I think that is what it will look like when Jesus, the Son of Man, returns to earth in all his power and glory. Gives one goose bumps, doesn't it? I like to say, "I have read the end of the book and we win!" But with all that is going on in my family's life (cancer has struck us again) and in the world around us, I feel myself saying as St. John did in Revelation 22:20: "Come, Lord Jesus!" Why is it taking so long?

Because it is **ALL IN HIS TIME**. His perfect time. The Holy Spirit has more work to do. We, the saints here on Earth, have more work to do. We are being refined. We should not be surprised or anxious that we are being tested during this time. Earlier in this chapter, Jesus tells his disciples to expect wars, rumors of wars, and wickedness. In verses 12 and 13, He tells us, "Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved". As we wait for the return of Jesus Christ, may we not let our love grow cold, but rather let the knowledge of His perfect timing enkindle it.

Prayer: *Dear Heavenly Father, as the world around us becomes increasingly wicked, help us remember that one day Your Son will return with power and great glory. Keep us mindful that this wonderful day will happen all in His time and that timing is always perfect! We pray this in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen*

Gwen McNatt Enokian

March 10, 2024

GOD'S PLAN BEFORE ALL AGES TIMED PERFECTLY TO SAVE US

But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory. 1 Corinthians 2:7 (KJV)

Before the light
Before the night
Before the water and dry land
Before our God created man
Before all time began
God had a secret plan
 His plan decreed
 His plan we need
 His plan He made with greatest care
 His plan where mankind He would spare
 His plan, His time, to make aware
 This mystery for all to share
 The mystery concealed
 The mystery revealed
 The mystery that we must seek
 The mystery through God runs deep
 The mystery of which we speak
 Hides in the Gospel that we preach
 The Gospel is the Word
 The Gospel must be heard
 The Gospel has a history
 The Gospel holds a mystery
 The Gospel leads to glory
 Let's go tell ALL God's story!

Prayer: *Dear God, Knowing that You planned for our salvation even before the world was made shows us how truly deep Your love is for us and what an awesome God You are. We are very thankful that You did not remain hidden from us, but revealed Yourself through the sacrifice of Your Son, Jesus. Please send the Holy Spirit to guide and help us share this mystery of the Gospel with everyone so that all may know the great joy of receiving Christ Jesus into their hearts. We pray this in the name of Your Son, Jesus. Amen.*

Margaret Turner

March 11, 2024

SPEAK, HOLY SPIRIT, SPEAK

(Jesus said) “But when they shall lead (arrest) you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.” Mark 13:11 (KJV)

As a business owner, communication with customers is essential, and since most of my customers are overseas, it can be a challenge. Most of the communication is through email which allows time for rephrasing and editing before sending. I will usually compose an email to a customer and then save it and do something else. Later when I come back to it, I find I could word it better and with more clarity. I think and premeditate about what I am going to say.

Jesus is telling his disciples not to think about what to say but let the Holy Spirit do the talking through them. This would be after being arrested for their faith in the near future. But as with most Biblical prophecy, it has both a near and a remote point of reference.

Even though Christianity in the U.S. is being marginalized and maligned for being narrowminded, I don't foresee getting arrested for my faith. However, the downfall of Christianity in this country is not God's fault but our own because we are not letting the Holy Spirit speak through us. We have our own agenda. We see the sin of others but fail to see our own (Luke 6:41). We need to let the Holy Spirit speak when we testify to our faith. We need to trust God to give us the correct words to say.

Let us pray: Dear Heavenly Father, help us to trust You to put the Holy Spirit in our hearts so that He may speak through us to promote Your saving grace through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Your brother in Christ,

Art Schroeder

March 12, 2024

RESPOND INSTEAD OF REACT

Jesus said, “...for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say.” Luke 12:12 (NIV)

This title is especially important to us as it is the catch phrase for this month’s Friendly - Social Emotional Learning. We have learned that when you become angry, you should **Stop** to give yourself some space in order to respond thoughtfully. Then you should **Pray**- even something as quick as these 3 powerful words – “Jesus, Help Me”. After that you should **Walk Away**. The Bible verse that reminds us of this is from James 1:19-20. “My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.”

When we read this verse from Luke 12:12, we decided that this verse was telling all of us that when we are afraid or don’t know what to say to someone about God, we need to remember that God will give us the right words to say. He will also guide us in the right direction and lead us on the right path. We need to remember that God knows us better than we know ourselves. Another verse that reminds us of the importance of staying connected to God is from Genesis 4:7b that says, “But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at that door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.” We cannot win without giving our ways over to God and letting the Holy Spirit give us the words to say. We pray that all of us together will daily seek God’s Will and listen before we speak.

In our classroom we have been praying this prayer together as we begin each day. We want you to join us in praying this every day.

Prayer: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, thank you for this day. Bless us as we work, study, and pray. Be present with us, in all we do, may we bring glory and honor to You. Amen

St. John’s 5th Grade Class

Mrs. Wykert

March 13, 2024

VICTORY IN GOD'S TIME

**(Jesus said) Now is the judgement of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out.
John 12:31 (ESV)**

These are words Jesus spoke only a few days before He would go on trial and be sentenced to die on a cross. The leaders at the time, and Satan in particular, thought they would be done with Jesus once this happened and they would have victory. Little did they know that Jesus was taking on the sins of the world and, in the end, He would have victory over them through His resurrection. From this victory the world would never have a chance to win again, even though sometimes it seems like it is winning and gaining momentum every day when we listen to the news. What this is telling us is that time is precious and we must continue to be walking with Jesus, for we do not know when the hour of his return will be. It is also important that we are sharing this faith so others can come to know Him so when Jesus does come back for that final judgement, they too can be assured they have a spot in heaven for eternity.

Don't let time slip away from you; stay in the Word. Ephesians 6:13 tells us... "Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm". Satan has no power over us, God has already won, He is the Victor!

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You sent Your Son to die in my place and save me from my sins. Help me to daily follow You so that through You I can fight off the temptations of this world. I pray this in the name of Jesus, Amen.

Gary Mayor

WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

Since ancient times no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who acts on behalf of those who wait for him. Isaiah 64:4 (NIV)

There are times when we ask our Lord the question, ***When?*** Lord, when will I recover from this illness? When will my family reconcile? When will I find happiness again? To answer these questions, God wants us to humble ourselves and pray to Him for answers. Often times, we are expecting answers to our queries to come promptly, but that is not how our Lord “works”. He wants our attention. He wants us to be in constant union with Him through prayer. He wants our patience. In that time of waiting and anticipating for answers, He wants us to realize only He can affect change. He is the answer to our prayers and supplications. The true, correct and fulfilling answers always come from above.

So why is it we become impatient and lose faith in finding answers from God? That is the question before us. Why? We anxiously attempt to solve our own dilemmas and problems on our own terms. More often than not, we choose the wrong direction to proceed or find less desirable answers to our concerns because we unwittingly diminish the Lord’s help. Jeremiah 29:11 says, “For I know the plans that I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

The full import of God’s words in Jeremiah is the message that we should hold dear to the undying belief that He is the answer to all of our prayers, questions and concerns. Draw near to our Lord. Hold fast, for your answers will come in due season for He has our best interest at heart.

Prayer: Dear Lord, Help us to be patient in prayer and to know that Your timing is always for our benefit. In Your name we pray. Amen.

Rick & Kathryn Lange

March 15, 2024

IF ONLY SOMEONE WOULD HAVE WARNED ME

(Jesus said) “They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God.” John 16:2 (ESV)

How many times in your life have you uttered the words or thought to yourself “man, I wish someone had warned me about that”? If you are like me, hundreds of times. Since none of us is clairvoyant, we must rely on past experiences, advice from others, or our own gut feelings when faced with problematic situations and/or tough decisions. Sometimes things just happen unexpectedly with no notice or time to ponder. How nice it would be, especially if the outcome isn’t what we expected, to have been “warned” in advance. During the four years our son was being treated for leukemia, there were many decisions that had to be made about his treatment with limited information available about the outcome possibilities. The “if only someone would have warned me” thoughts were present frequently.

Jesus, however, is clairvoyant and did not want the disciples to be rudely awakened. This Bible passage, and several prior to and following it, tell us about one of many attempts Jesus made trying to prepare the apostles for what they will be facing after his eminent departure. Up to now, it was Jesus who shouldered the brunt of the torment and ridicule from the Pharisees and was a buffer between them and his disciples. That burden would soon be directed at and against the disciples once Jesus was gone.

Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, help us to always come to You for guidance when we need it. You have given us a look into eternity for those who follow Your Word and those who do not. Help us to take Your guidance to heart and follow it. Amen

Tom D’Amico

KNOWING ONE'S DUTY VS. KNOWING GOD'S TIMING

“He said to them, ‘It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority.’”—Acts 1:7 (ESV)

In a post-resurrection conversation with Jesus, his disciples asked if he was about to “restore the kingdom to Israel.” His response in this passage informs them that they do not need such information to fulfill God’s call on their lives. Rather, Jesus explains that they will soon receive power from the Holy Spirit and will need to turn their attention to serving as his “witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” In other words, they need to be mindful of, and attend to, their divinely-appointed duties and let God handle the rest.

One of my favorite historical examples of this type of vocational clarity occurred on May 19, 1780. On what became known as “New England’s Dark Day,” near complete darkness inexplicably enveloped the region from noon until the following day. In Connecticut, the Governor’s Council was in session and the startling lack of light caused many council members to request adjournment so that they could be with their families during what they assumed was the imminent Final Judgment.

A devout councilman, Abraham Davenport, became famous for his response to his nervous colleagues when he stated the following: “I am against adjournment. The day of judgment is either approaching, or it is not. If it is not, there is no cause for an adjournment; if it is, I choose to be found doing my duty. I wish, therefore, that candles may be brought.” And so they were, and the session continued.

My brothers and sisters, the consuming darkness of the world of 2024 is as unsettling as that experienced by our New England ancestors. It tempts us to “adjourn” into our private spaces and speculate on how long our Lord will tarry. But let us remember, we each are called to serve in “the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church” and within our society. May we, indeed, press on in our own divinely-appointed tasks and “be found doing [our] dut[ies].”

Prayer: *“Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, for the living of these days. Amen” LSB 850*

Kirk Farney

March 17, 2024

GOD'S TIME AND OUR PATIENCE

Text: "...whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago." Acts 3:21 (ESV)

It was an evening in May of 1976. It was the night of the seminary Call Service when all the graduates would first hear where they were going to serve. In a way, it represents everything you worked for over the past 4 years (or, in my case, 12 years!). Since they distribute the calls alphabetically A-Z, I had to wait a while for them to get to my name. It was a case when waiting was HARD! Finally, they got to me: "Ronald Weidler – Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Carlisle, Iowa." Iowa? I'd never been to Iowa! It sounded very rural. I was born and raised in Chicago! Holy Cross had no school. Since my wife and I both had extensive experience in Lutheran Schools, I had requested a call with a school. How was any of this going to work out? In a word, it all worked out WONDERFULLY! Space does not allow me to share how wonderful it all was. God just proved again He knows what He's doing.

In our text, Peter says God has set a date in time when Jesus will come back to "restore all things." And Peter adds this fact was known and prophesied "by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago." Earlier in v.18, he also says in just the same way the Old Testament prophets had known of and foretold the coming of the Messiah/Savior. The only thing is, God had not revealed WHEN the Christ would be born. He has not told us WHEN the End will be. We have to wait --- just like we're waiting for Him to send us a new Senior Pastor. WAITING CAN BE HARD! But don't get discouraged. HE KNOWS WHAT HE'S DOING!

We pray: "Lord, we need patience!" Like everything else, give it to us when You know best! Amen.

Pastor Ron Weidler

March 18, 2024

HE KNOWS

From one man He made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and He determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. Acts 17:26 (NIV)

“All in His Time” is the theme of this devotional. Now that’s a topic with which I don’t do very well. Who likes to wait for an answer or an explanation? Who doesn’t want to know God’s plan *right now*?

When I first read this verse, it immediately made me think of Esther. Esther became a heroine of mine during the pandemic. Just one week before our school shut down, my fourth grade class presented the primary musical on the story of Esther. I became quite familiar with the story during those months of rehearsals. It is no wonder to me (in retrospect of course) that God led Mrs. Tapia to choose that musical that year. HE KNOWS. Ever since then, I have clung tightly to Mordecai telling Esther that she had come to her royal position “for such a time as this.” I can’t tell you how many times I asked God why I was the principal of a school during a global pandemic! Every time I asked, Esther came to mind. Had I not spent so much time hearing the story of Esther in those months, I would not have had the comfort that it brought to me. Just like with Queen Esther, much could have gone wrong, but with God, anything was possible.

At present, I am the co-chair of the Call Committee to select the next Senior Pastor of St. John’s Lutheran Church and School. We began this journey a little over a year ago. It is not an easy task to “let go and let God” lead us to the man he has already chosen for us. Thankfully, we are a group of faithful people, who remind each other of two things: we were chosen to be a part of this committee “for such a time as this,” and that God’s choice for us will be revealed in HIS time. HE KNOWS. God always knows, but I, a poor miserable sinner, struggle to remember that sometimes...okay, often! That’s when I turn to a friend’s favorite verse, Psalm 46:10, “Be still, and know that I am God.”

I will end with this thought. I often see the following quote on social media: “How cool is it that the same God that created mountains and oceans and galaxies looked at you and thought the world needed one of you, too?!” Read that again. God knew that His beautiful creation needed one of each of us, at this moment, in this place, *all* in His time.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, You are an awesome God. Remind us that in good times and bad, You have a plan already in place for us. Help us to trust in You, for You know the plans You have for us. In Your most holy Name, Amen.

Teri Lyn Mannes

March 19, 2024

THE UNGODLY

**You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.
Romans 5:6 (NIV)**

When I first read this verse, it made me think about how I am not good enough. That I am ungodly. I fail every single day. I cannot do anything good. But that is what the devil wants us to focus on and stay there - thinking that we are not the apple of God's eye. But there is so much more to this verse and so much more to God.

Christ died for the weak, which is each one of us. No one God created can by their own strength live a Godly life. We are all ungodly. We all need saving. Because of sin, our relationship with God is broken. We are powerless. Again, that is where the devil wants us to stay - in that powerless defeated state. But our God is a God of love. At just the right time, Christ died for us. He is our Redeemer. This means He repairs, restores, protects and ultimately Jesus defeated the devil for us!

God's Love for us is bigger than anything we can ever imagine. Let that sink in and be what you hold onto. God's Love walks with us, shows us He is there in so many beautiful ways, and shows He has everything under control. When we fear, doubt or feel alone, we need to remember that God's Love for us is never ending and never swayed and always enough. When we focus on that Love, we see that at just the right time, which means ALWAYS- we have Jesus!

Prayer: Thank you, Lord, for loving us so much that You sent Jesus so that all of us who are ungodly now have Your amazing grace and are called children of God. We have the hope of eternal life and walk in that hope! May we share that message with everyone You bring into our lives. In Jesus' Name we pray, Amen

Vicki Wykert

March 20, 2024

TIME STANDS STILL

For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. Romans 8:22 (ESV)

Try to imagine what the world was like “In the beginning”. Now, jump ahead about 2000 years and try to imagine what it was like in Abraham’s time, or 1000 years later in David’s time, or another 1000 years later in Jesus’ time here on the earth. We can read a lot in the Bible about the struggles that each generation has gone through. Our generation, 2000 years later, is certainly no exception, nor will the generations to come be. The point is, for thousands of years, God’s creation has endured all of this because of sin. Our sin!

We are still waiting; waiting for Jesus to return as He has promised. How impatient God’s people were in days past, and we share a comradery with them in our impatience. In 2 Peter 3:9 we read, “The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance”. We, as God’s children, are not merely to “stand still” while we wait. We are told to *Go and make disciples*, to boldly confess Jesus as our Lord and Savior. And what are we to say about what Jesus has already done for us? Jesus has won the victory over sin and death! We have been washed clean in the blood of the Lamb. This is *Good News* to share with everyone!

Prayer: *Help us, Lord, to use the time that You have given us wisely. When we grow impatient, remind us of Your command to share Your Word with others, and to wait patiently for Your Spirit to do the rest. Thank You for loving us so much that You gave Your Son, Jesus, so that we are reconciled to You. In His name we pray, Amen*

Nancy Mayor

March 21, 2024

A SECOND TIME TO PRAY

He went away a second time and prayed, “My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done.”. Matthew 26:42 (NIV)

The ultimate love for us! As 8th grade students we can learn many things from this passage. We can all learn and be reminded of: ...

- When God’s path is not the one we want to take, we should take it. God knows what is best for us and lays out our path for us.
- Even though Jesus knows the pain through crucifixion that he will suffer, he wants his Father’s will to be done.
- God knows our paths already, just as Jesus knew too. Instead of trying to figure out our path on our own, we need to let God take full control.
- Jesus will still proclaim God’s will even through crucifixion.
- This verse reminds us to be thankful for Him, because even though he didn’t want to die on the cross he still did it to save us.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, We thank and praise You for the ultimate sacrifice - Your Son. Help us daily to search for Your will in all that we do and say. Amen

St. John’s 8th Grade Class

Mrs. Hull

March 22, 2024

WAIT TO KNOW THE ANSWERS

Therefore, do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God. 1 Corinthians 4:5 (ESV)

When I was 11 years old, I first learned the twelve points of the Boy Scout Law. From “Trustworthy” to “Reverent” the points were to guide behavior and purpose. In 1 Corinthians 4:2, we read that stewards should “Be found trustworthy”. However, in verse 5, St. Paul questions how any human can judge this in others because only God can “Disclose the purposes of the heart”.

Sometimes in life we may be asked to make judgments of which we do not feel capable. This is especially hard if we try to judge someone else’s opinions or intent.

In the Boy Scouts, when a scout was trying to move up in rank, he would sit with a Board of Review. This panel was composed of adult and scout aged leaders who were charged to ensure that all necessary steps had been completed to move into the next rank. One leader who sometimes sat on this Board always asked his favorite question, “What is the most important Scout Law?” The answers would vary, but if the scout did not pick the one this leader believed it to be, he would say, “Wrong!” and then try to explain why this was the only right answer. He judged and did not allow the scout to defend his reasoning. The leader, I felt, was the one who was “Wrong!” These events showed me how important it is in life to be patient, caring and understanding in hearing others' opinions and answers.

We should wait for the Lord’s judgments, and not our own, for when He reveals “The purposes of the Heart”, those answers will be right.

Prayer: Lord, Grant us patience to wait for Your true judgements and You reveal to us the purposes only You can perceive. In the redeeming grace of Jesus Christ we believe, Amen.

Mark Behnke

March 23, 2024

NOW IS THE TIME!

As we work together with him, we entreat you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says, “At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you. Look, now is the day of salvation!” 2 Corinthians 6:1-2 (NRSV)

As I write this devotion, myself and others have our New Year’s resolutions at the forefront of our minds. Perhaps your goal is to walk 10,000 steps a day or go the gym 3 out of 7 days, eat out less during the week, learn how to cook, make connections with friends and family more frequently, or spend 5-15 minutes in prayer or reading the Bible every morning. We should take advantage of all of the blessings God has granted us to make changes in our lives.

In our verse today, Paul warns us not to receive God’s grace in vain, we are cautioned to accept the gospel of reconciliation with God through faith in Christ alone and nothing else. Most importantly, NOW is the time to do it. We do not read in the Bible that we will be saved “someday.” We really do not know how many days we have left in life. We do not know when our time on earth will run out. Paul tells us not to delay but to turn to Christ right now; he wants us to put our full faith in Christ for salvation. Let us make our New Year’s resolution now to accept that grace.

Prayer: Lord, we remember that **today** is the day of salvation and we thank You for the opportunity to share Your salvation with someone today. Amen

Rebecca Schiltz

March 24, 2024

GOD IS ABLE TO BLESS YOU ABUNDANTLY

And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. 2 Corinthians 9:8 (NIV)

The concept of **ALL IN HIS TIME** reminds us that our Triune God is all powerful and has perfect timing. In other words, He is ABLE. In this letter to the saints in Corinth, St. Paul was praising their generosity to Christians in Jerusalem who were in dire need. He reminds them to give cheerfully and without anxiety as God would bless them abundantly with everything that they needed.

About 20 years ago, our family experienced financial hardship. I literally walked around with a single dollar in my purse most days. We had trouble meeting our basic expenses. During that time, St. John's adult education featured a stewardship course. One Sunday, driving home, Chuck and I decided to step out in faith and start tithing. It was life changing. God blessed us abundantly in ways that we could never have expected; all of our earthly needs were met. But we experienced more as our faith increased a great deal as we learned to trust God's generosity, ability and perfect timing. We learned that these blessings are not only material but spiritual as well.

This verse promises us that we will always have ALL that we need to abound in good works. This assurance is what makes the Christian life one of peace and not anxiety, no matter what we face. But we have to remember that the timetable is not ours, but His.

Prayer: *Dear Heavenly Father, We live in a chaotic world and face daily challenges. Keep us ever mindful that You are all powerful and all-knowing and able to provide us with everything that we need, all in Your time! Amen*

Gwen McNatt Enokian

March 25, 2024

WHAT TIME IS IT?

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. Galatians 4:4-5 (ESV)

I am not fond of waiting. I do not mean for Christmas or my birthday. I have outgrown that. I do not like to wait for God to answer my prayers. I should be more patient. I know God answers prayers in his own perfect time, but I am human, and sometimes that gets in my way.

People in the Bible were impatient, too. When Adam and Eve had sinned and God gave them the promise of a Savior, Eve thought her firstborn might have been the one. Wow, was she wrong!

The Israelites were given a promise of a great land once they left Egypt. Because they grumbled and complained to Moses and against God in the wilderness, they had to wander for 40 years until all those who complained were dead.

Throughout the Old Testament there are many more examples of those who did not wait well for God to carry out his plan.

God had a great plan, though, and he picked the right time. Prophets sent from God prepared the way. The Old Testament was full of prophecies. Isaiah 9:6-7 is the one we all remember. It begins, "For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given."

Because God keeps his promises, we have been redeemed. The promise was for us and all the world. Now it is our time to tell others so that they may also receive God's promise as sons and daughters of the King.

Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for having the perfect plan to save us. We have done nothing to deserve it. Because Jesus lived and died for us, we have become heirs of salvation. We praise You for that. Help us live every day in service to You. Amen.

Lynn Kahl

THE PANIC OF SEPARATION!

...remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. Ephesians 2:12 (ESV)

I remember this well. I was 5 or 6, at the National T grocery store. I was with my mom, I got separated from her somehow. At first, I wasn't worried, but then, as I looked down each of the aisles, I could not find her anywhere. I was separated from the person who loved me the most! And of course, you always think the worst: Mom left me on purpose, she doesn't love me anymore, what did I do wrong?

After 4-5 minutes, she finally found me, I was in tears, shaking uncontrollably. "Mom, why did you leave me?" Of course, I blamed it on her, there was no way it could be my fault (we are so selfish, aren't we?).

She gave me the biggest hug of my life, we had a "talk". My confidence is back, she loves me again, all is well with the world.

Has that ever happened to you? It has! It happened when you were born, you were born blind, dead and an enemy of God. And then for most of you, this was rectified in baptism. We were once separated from Christ; this verse says we were "alienated" we were "strangers, having no hope".

But in His time, this separation ended. How often we drift away from Him, and we don't even know it. And then, total panic sets in, we are all alone, we search down the aisles of our life in a panic. Where did He go?

And then we realize, He was there the entire time. He gives us that hug that we so desperately needed; we are brought back into the fold. The next time this happens (and it will), remember that He is always there, we are never separated from Him, all because He loves us.

Prayer: *Dear God, thank you for bringing me back into the fold, let me remember that You are always there. Amen.*

Pastor Mark Stapleton

March 27, 2024

TIMELESS AND TIMELY

“For at the right time Christ will be revealed from heaven by the blessed and only almighty God, the King of kings and Lord of lords” 1 Timothy 6:15 (NLT)

Paul says these words to Timothy, encouraging him to stay strong in the faith. The phrase “King of kings and Lord of lords” is used in various places in the scriptures, including Deuteronomy 10:17 and Revelation 19:16. Later, it would be set to music by Handel as the pivotal portion of “The Hallelujah Chorus”. In 1980, a contemporary Christian song, “King of Kings and Lord of Lords,” was written by a teenage girl, Nomi Yah, and has been recorded by several artists.

It is a timeless phrase used for thousands of years to describe the one true God, but what does it mean? To me, the answer is “The only one that matters”. There have been many kings and lords on earth throughout history, but this superlative phrase means **this** King and **this** Lord are the most important.

Growing up, when playing board games or ping pong with my father, he would use the title ‘Champion of Champions.’ We would decide to play one more game, and that person would be crowned The Champion. However, when the results did not swing his way, the new “Champion of Champions” title was suddenly employed. This was the true winner, the best of the best, and the final word. (I was sometimes crowned the Champion of Champions, but it wasn’t easy.)

The world does not see God as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, or the Champion of Champions, and we wonder if they ever will. Even though we do not always like God’s timing, the verse above tells us YES, Christ will be revealed at the right time for His ultimate plan. The King of kings and Lord of lords is timeless, and His return will be timely!

Prayer: *Heavenly Father, thank you for the concept of time that You gifted to Your children on earth. Empower us to believe Your timing is perfect and to praise You as the King of kings and Lord of lords! Amen.*

Jennifer Behnke

Maundy Thursday

March 28, 2024

DISCERNING EARS RATHER THAN ITCHING EARS

“For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions . . .”—2 Timothy 4:3 (ESV)

In this letter to Timothy, Paul warns of the proclivity of many of us to seek teachers who tell us what we want to hear, especially relating to matters of Christian doctrine. Paul notes that such persons “accumulate for themselves” these types of instructors. (The King James translation renders these words: “heap to themselves.”) In other words, in an effort to bolster self-justification, sinful individuals seek multiple teachers to confirm their flawed judgments.

Unfortunately, we live in an era when finding an abundance of “experts” to validate sinful thoughts and behavior is all too easy. As Saint Paul forecast, enduring truth has fallen out of fashion.

In 1930, Fulton Sheen, radio preacher on NBC’s *Catholic Hour*, observed that modern thinkers, both religious and secular, taught “with unbuttoned pride that there is no such thing as Truth with a capital ‘T,’ for Truth is ambulatory: we make it as we go; it depends on the Time in which we live.” Somehow, Sheen added, people had forgotten that “Truth is not our making, but God’s.”

One of the ways that “ambulatory” truth is most noticeable is in our modern practice of decommissioning the term “sin” and downplaying or rationalizing its various manifestations. In a world in which fallen humans need to repent, the inclination to explain away violations of God’s Law is perilous to souls and to society, the consequences of which were temporal and eternal. Fulton Sheen’s fellow radio sermonizer, Walter Maier on *The Lutheran Hour*, noted (also in 1930): “You will find that the short, three-letter word **sin** has been deleted from many modern vocabularies and that short, three-word sentence ‘I have sinned’ is one of the hardest confessions to wring from proud human lips.”

There’s a difference between what we want to hear and what we need to hear. Sound teaching makes our sinfulness clear. Sound teaching also rescues us by pointing us to Jesus.

Prayer: *Lord, I am a sinner. Help me to repent daily and trust in Your redeeming work, rather than deny the reality of my transgressions. Thank you for Your grace. Amen.*

Kirk Farney

March 29, 2024

Good Friday

THANK YOU, JESUS

...so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him. Hebrews 9:28 (NIV)

Good Friday could not have been a good day for the disciples. Jesus was crucified and their future was in doubt. Judas had betrayed Jesus, and Peter denied knowing him. Jesus told them what was going to happen, but they didn't seem to understand. They didn't know what was going to happen on Sunday. They must have been unhappy and confused. What joy they must have felt on Easter and we know the kind of lives they lived after that.

Like the disciples, we have good days and troublesome days, and our lives can have sudden things happen that may alter them completely. We become unhappy and confused and don't know what will happen next. We know we do not live sinless lives, and we know that it was necessary for Jesus to die for us to forgive our sins. We know Jesus rose on Easter and as the above scripture says, he will return and take us to heaven.

Prayer: *Dear Jesus, thank you for dying for us to save us from our sins. We ask You to help us live lives that reflect Your love. Amen*

Don Wachholz

FROM GREAT SUFFERING TO GREAT GLORY!

God has already begun judging his own people. And if his judgment begins with us, imagine how terrible it will be for those who refuse to obey his message". 1 Peter 4:17 (CEV)

The Biblical record of Holy Week is one of great suffering and great glory. Peter had seen Christ's suffering and glory firsthand and related these events in his letters to the New Testament Christians. He also wrote about his own suffering as Christ's apostle and the glory he would experience after death. He tells us that this is the legacy Christ has left for his people: *"If you suffer for obeying God, you must have complete faith in your faithful Creator and keep on doing right"* (1 Peter 4:19). Peter knew that he must prepare Christians for the suffering they would endure.

Life was not pleasant in Peter's day. Cruel Nero was killing Christians in huge numbers, and these believers assumed that they would suffer for their faith. Peter was encouraging them to rejoice in their sufferings, because they would ultimately enjoy the glories of heaven with Christ. He also reminds them that unbelievers will not escape judgment, suffering separation from God for eternity.

We may not suffer today as these early believers did centuries ago, but we need to be ready to give an account of our faith without hesitation. We deny our Savior if we remain silent. We may suffer no more than ridicule or rejection today for expressing our faith, but as the world becomes increasingly hostile to Christianity, we may be punished or imprisoned for acknowledging Christ. Whatever our future sufferings may be, we must never fail to declare that Jesus is our Savior and King. We claim this promise: *"Everyone will hate you because of me. But if you remain faithful until the end, you will be saved"* (Matthew 10:22).

We can rejoice as a church family that we are called to be Christ's faithful witnesses. It is our privilege to proclaim Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection as we celebrate Easter!

Our prayer: *We thank you, Jesus, for Your great suffering on our behalf, for the salvation that You have brought to Your people. Your death and resurrection have transformed our lives and given us hope for the future. We rejoice in knowing that You are reigning over heaven and earth as our King. Enliven us as we tell the story of salvation and empower our words by the work of Your Holy Spirit. In Your name we pray, Amen.*

Dalyne Shinneman

March 31, 2024

Easter Sunday

GOD'S WORD TEACHES US THE TRUE STORY OF EASTER!

Blessed *is* he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time *is* near. Revelation 1:3 (NKJV)

Evening and morning and at noon I will pray and cry aloud, and He shall hear my voice. He has redeemed my soul in peace from the battle which was against me. (Psalm 55:17-18)

And I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. (Luke 11:9)

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. (Psalm 23:6)

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your path. (Proverbs 3:5-6)

Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him and bless His name. For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting; and His truth endures to all generations. (Psalm 100:4)

Return, we beseech You, O God of hosts; look down from heaven and see, and visit the vine and the vineyard which Your right hand has planted, and the branch which You made strong for Yourself. Let Your hand be upon the man of Your right hand, upon the Son of Man whom You made strong for Yourself. Then we will not turn back from You. Revive us, and we will call upon Your name. (Psalm 80:14,15,17,18)

Prayer: Thank You, Heavenly Father, for sending Your precious Son Jesus to be our Savior and redeemer. And thank You for Your Holy Word which teaches us about our salvation and gives us the words to share with others. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Pamella Christensen

LENTEN SCHEDULE

“Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29) That was John the Baptist’s powerful witness to Jesus at the Jordan River when the Savior came to be baptized by him. The image of a lamb is used frequently in both the Old and New Testaments to describe the Messiah as well as the sinful people He came to save.

My intent is for us to examine and to meditate on some of these Biblical pictures of

“The Lamb”

February 14	Ash Wednesday	Genesis 22:1-14	The Substitute Lamb
February 21	Midweek II	2 Samuel 12:1-7a	The Lamb We Have All Killed
February 28	Midweek III	Jn. 1:29; Lev.16:21-22	The Lamb That Takes Away Sin
March 6	Midweek IV	Isaiah 53:6	The Lambs That Are Lost
March 13	Midweek V	Isaiah 53:7	The Lamb Led to Slaughter
March 20	Midweek VI	Deuteronomy 17:1	The Unblemished Lamb
March 28	Maundy Thursday	Exodus 12:21	The Passover Lamb
March 29	Good Friday	Exodus 29:38-39	The Lambs for Daily Sacrifice
March 31	Easter Sunday	Revelation 5:1-14	The Lamb That Was Slain

MIDWEEK SERVICE SCHEDULE

Ash Wednesday, Feb 14, 12:00PM & 7:00PM

Wednesdays, February 14- March 20

Light Supper 6:00PM

Worship Service 7:00PM

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Maundy Thursday, March 28, 7:00PM

Good Friday, March 29, 12:00 & 7:00PM

Easter Sunday, March 31, 8:00 & 10:45 AM

Please come to these special Lenten services. I wrote them in the prayerful hope that this extra time for meditation and devotion will prove to be a rich blessing on all of us. As the hymn says, “Jesus, I will ponder now, on Thy holy passion.” Only by focusing on the cross can the joy of Easter be fully realized and appreciated. Pr. Ron Weidler

Reflections

The 2024 Lenten Devotional

“All In His Time”

~Cover Design by Kristen Stapleton~

Worship

Sundays 8:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.

Equipping ♦ Engaging ♦ Encouraging

St. John's Lutheran Church and School

505 South Park Road

La Grange, Illinois 60525

708.354.1690

www.stjohnslagrang.org