

Holy Crossings

Our Mission... to seek, share, and serve our Savior

February 2020

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS - LOVE ONE ANOTHER!

Here at Holy Cross we want you to encourage you to learn more about mental health and to grow deeper in God's love for family, friends and church family having this malady in life. There is an old love song that expresses the never ending love of God. The refrain goes like this, "God's love is warmer than warmest sunshine, softer than a sigh, deeper than the deepest ocean, wider than the sky. God's love is brighter than the brightest star that shines every night above and there is nothing in this world that can every change God's love." Take time to reflect, to be mindful of all the ways God wants to show and for us to show, His unconditional love!

God's unconditional love in and through Christ, is always needed in all our life, and with mental health we pray for a never ending and ever constant flowing spring of God's love. Jesus is our guide in praying for His love to be never ending in us for all but not to forget that also means for those who suffer from mental health diseases. It takes intentionality! The following article on mental health and the need of love for people feeling alone is written by Jeff Pflug. It can be found at lcms.org/disability. This is reprinted courtesy the Lutheran Witness, November 2013, vol 132.

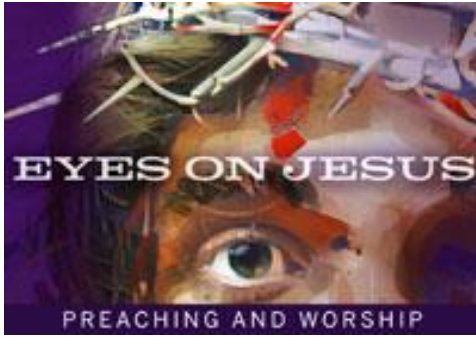
A catastrophic event(s):

"It was 1983, just a week or two after Easter. Our 19-month-old daughter became seriously ill. For two weeks, the medical team could not tell us why one of her lungs was collapsed. My wife, who was 25 years old and had just given birth to our oldest son a few months earlier, cared for our daughter night and day. One of her vocations included being a registered nurse, and the hospital staff truly appreciated and admired how she stayed at our daughter's bedside, caring for her and watching over her like the mother hen she is. Sadly, things did not appear to go well after a procedure to remove fluid from her chest. Her lung re-inflated, but unexplained seizures occurred and our daughter was transferred to ICU. I remember very well calling our pastor at 4:00 a.m. on a Sunday morning asking him to please come to the hospital. The now sainted Pastor Philip Kaufmann did just that, praying with us and staying with us until his vocation as a called servant of the Word beckoned him to the Divine Service. And God be praised, our daughter would eventually have a successful surgery and a month later all would be well with her.

But it was during that stay in the ICU that something catastrophic happened to my wife. She lost touch with reality and began to live in a world of delusions, paranoia, unfounded fears, confusion, sadness and isolation. These are a few of the so-called positive symptoms of mental illness, and they are anything but positive.

Awareness- cont. on pg. 3





Lenten Midweek

O come, let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. (Gradual for Lent, based on Hebrews 12:2)

When the characters in the Passion narrative look at Jesus, what do they see? In most cases, people misunderstood who He is and what He was doing. In some cases, by faith, people recognized Him aright. Our Lenten series this year, based on the Gospel according to St. Mark, will examine how the various people around Jesus viewed Him—and how we should view Him. We will “fix our eyes” on what Jesus has done to save us from our sins by His holy, precious blood and innocent sufferings and death, and celebrate what God sees on account of His work: our justification for His sake.

On Ash Wednesday, we will see how, in spite of Jesus’ repeated predictions about His upcoming Passion, the disciples with “Misjudging Eyes” fail to recognize that soon He will not be with them, and they cannot see the anonymous woman’s anointing of Jesus as preparation for His burial. But Jesus sees her actions as a beautiful deed that will be proclaimed throughout the world wherever the Gospel is heard.

Sundays of February

February 2, 2020

PRESENTATION OF OUR LORD

Theme: “The Salvation of the Lord Revealed to Simeon and Anna”

Text: Luke 2:22–40

Synopsis: Jesus is presented in the temple.

February 9, 2020

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

Theme: “The Light of the World—Light Living!”

Text: Matthew 5:13–20

Synopsis: You are the light of the world. Let your light shine.

February 16, 2020

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

Theme: “Reconciliation and Peace - Leave Your Gift and First Be Reconciled”

Text: Matthew 5:21–37

Synopsis: Leave your gift and go be reconciled.

February 23, 2020

TRANSFIGURATION OF JESUS

Theme: “The Lord Shines upon You! Listen to Him!”

Text: Matthew 17:1–9

Synopsis: Jesus is transfigured before Peter, James, and John.

February 26, 2020

ASH WEDNESDAY-7:00PM

Theme: “Misjudging Eyes”

Text: Mark 14:1–9

Synopsis: Jesus disciples fail to recognize that soon He will not be with them.



Lenten Supper

As a church family, we will gather to share a simple meal on Ash Wednesday at 6:00 pm. You can get involved by providing soup or other food items, we also need a coordinator, set-up, and clean-up helpers. Those that wish to assist can sign up on the sheets posted on the bulletin board in the Commons. Supper begins at 6:00 followed by Ash Wednesday Lenten service at 7:00 pm.



Sunday Schedule

8:15 AM

Traditional Worship Service

9:45 AM

**Adult Bible Study
and Sunday School**

11:00 AM

Contemporary Worship Service

Wednesday

7:00 PM

Midweek Lenten Service



Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty: With a culture, government and Church increasingly at odds, people just like you around the LCMS are standing up to offer a uniquely Lutheran response – through the Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty. Together, we are educating, encouraging, advocating and equipping LCMS members and organizations to take informed action in support of marriage, life and religious freedom. Start by learning more at lcrfrees.org. You can text LCRL to 444999 to receive the “Word from the Center” devotions and D.C. updates.

MISSION TRIP OPPORTUNITIES

Idaho Servant Adventures - Depart on June 26 and return on July 5th. We currently have 16 slots available to us. You can register by going to the following link.

<https://register.circuitree.com/Lutherhaven/Registration/RequestCode/17803>

The cost is \$650 which includes transportation, lodging, camp fees, and sightseeing expenses. Meals on the way there and the way home will be on your own.

Camp Restore Detroit - Depart July 18th and return July 26th. The cost will be \$400 which includes transportation, lodging, Camp Restore Fees, and any sightseeing expenses.

For more information please contact Rev. Dr. Brent Parrish of Immanuel Lutheran Church www.immanuel-fishlake.org or 612-499-1135.

The Lutheran Hour

The Lutheran Hour can be heard each Sunday on WCCO (830 AM) at 6:05 am. And it can be streamed online too, www.lhm.org. Check-out LHM's daily devotions too.

February 2

“Gold Without Glitter”

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler
Without the fire of the refiner's forge, there can be no glittering gold. And so it is with us. You are more precious to God than gold. But, like gold, you and I need refining. (Genesis 42)

February 9

“Break Through the No-Go Zone”

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler
Sometimes, the difference between then and now, between what used to be and what is, comes in a single moment, a defining act. We call that a breakthrough. (Genesis 43-45)

February 16

“Happy Families Are All Alike”

Guest Speaker: Dr. Dean Nadasdy
God is at work to bring about His good purpose, even in unhappy families. (Genesis 50:15-26)

February 23

“Know-How”

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler
Jesus knows our failures and our fears; He knows how to lift us up and bring us through. (Exodus 1-2)



Awareness-cont. from pg. 1

They are one side of a double-edged sword, and they are unwelcome additions that cut deeply into your loved one's mind, spirit and body. They cause so much devastation, so much pain. Now as I struggle to limit my saga and avoid melodrama, I must add that eighteen years later, mental illness would strike our oldest son, only much more severely. Many of his symptoms have not been relieved through medication and therapy.

Through organizations such as the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), I learned that the onset of biological diseases such as schizophrenia and schizoaffective disorder often affect young males between the ages of 18–25 and women in their early to mid– 20s. Learning that your loved ones' mental illnesses are statistically the norm does not ease, in the words of Luther, a family's tentatio and anfechtung (words that Luther often used to describe afflictions and a warlike attack on the human soul and body).

The tragedy of these illnesses is their cruelty. Mental illnesses take from us the very things that distinguish us as human beings. The double-edged sword strikes again as it slashes away the ability to focus, concentrate and have insight about what is happening around oneself; the ability to cope with minor problems, express joy and have emotional resiliency. These are some of the so-called negative symptoms that take from a person the gifts and wonders of our humanity. Especially cruel is when the illness strikes early in life, before one has opportunity to have a career or family.

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Finding and then maintaining a job, enjoying life with an expanded circle of friends, or pursuing the hope and dream of loving someone and raising a family feels impossible for many. Family members also suffer. I felt overwhelmed, helpless, angry, grieving. Something catastrophic had happened, and I did not know how to deal with it. I protected myself through denial.

I thought there was a perfectly logical explanation, and with good diet and proper rest these things would pass. I normalized what was going on, hoping against hope. In days gone by, I was embarrassed and became very protective. As a husband, father, seminary student, and pastor, I isolated the illness in our family for more than a decade, concealing things from my colleagues, my congregation, community and even my younger children. I became a master of facade. The tentatio and anfechtung of mental illnesses cause one to cry out with that one word question: "Why?" The seeming silence of God's answer to our "why" easily leads to isolation, embarrassment, guilt, anger and hurt. We are made numb, and we feel very alone.

You are not alone- The apostle John tells of how God in Christ pitched His tent among us (that is, He has dwelt bodily with us as we read in John 1:14) so that you and I might never be alone in our fallen humanity. Christ bivouacs with His creatures, and this is the great message of the Gospel, a message of forgiveness and mercy, of fellowship and restoration for the body, soul and spirit. In the fourth chapter of the Gospel of Luke, the first Messianic words are spoken by Jesus. He unrolls the scroll of the prophet Isaiah, and the Lord of all compassion proclaims to His hometown that the Spirit of the Lord 'has anointed Me to proclaim good news to the poor ...to proclaim liberty to the captives and the recovering of sight to those who are blind, and to set at liberty those who are oppressed' (Luke 4:18). Though the Lord was forced to "pass through" His unbelieving hometown folks, He then embarked on a ministry of mercy and restoration where those with leprosy were cleansed, a man who was paralyzed leaped to his feet, several who were blind received their sight, and many who were troubled in their minds and spirits were restored to wholeness, wellness and soundness of mind. All who were visited by Christ would hear that their sins were forgiven by Him who shows mercy and restores body, soul and spirit. The Lord gave them a foretaste of what heaven is.

This vocation of Christ He now gives to His Church. His baptized hold fast to Him and His Word, and He sends them to visit His creatures made after His image and likeness. He calls His Church to visit and befriend those who are oppressed, those who feel isolated and alone as they live with mental illness and other disabilities. They may appear fearful and embarrassed, even ashamed. In reality, their needs are not unlike yours; **they need hope and compassion, encouragement and a friend. What better place to provide such basic human need than within Christ's Church, which is His Body.** He provides all that we need for this body and life, giving us parents, siblings, friends, pastors, physicians, psychiatrists and counselors, and even wonderful organizations like NAMI.

And so, not by choice but by God's grace, as an advocate of those who live with mental illness, I want to encourage my Synod and my fellow saints: Please look for that member in your parish who may be off in the shadows. Perhaps you can visit and become his friend. He or she is really not that hard to find. She may be a neighbor in your community. He may be at work or school, and often you'll find him on the street. In the Spirit of Christ, I beg you, pray for them. And as opportunities arise visit them as a servant of Christ, and assure them by saying, 'You are not alone!' 'Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do' "Thess. 5:23-24). BY JEFF PFLUG lcms.org/disability REPRINTED COURTESY THE LUTHERAN WITNESS, NOVEMBER 2013, VOL. 132.

You are not alone

February Stewardship Article

Of the three things a person is not to talk about in polite company – religion, politics, and money – the church is called, in one way or another, to talk about all three. Perhaps this is the reason why teaching about stewardship often seems to be an afterthought. It's something that happens only out of necessity when financial constraints are already nipping at the heels.

There is a more excellent way. Stewardship shouldn't be the kind of teaching that comes up only when there is a financial crunch. It should be part and parcel of the ongoing instruction of Christians as they live out their faith in their vocations – members of their family, their society, and their church. This teaching touches upon every facet of our lives; it stakes a claim upon our time, our presence, our prayers, and our possessions.

Stewardship begins with the acknowledgment that we are stewards. A steward is a manager of someone else's possessions. In Christian stewardship, we recognize, according to the Apostles' Creed, that God is the owner of all things as the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. And in His fatherly divine goodness and mercy, He gives us what is His to manage here below. The principal virtue for stewards is faithfulness. As St. Paul wrote to the Christians in Corinth:

"Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful." (1 Cor. 4:2)

Stewards must manage that which belongs to the owner

according to the owner's wishes. That is what it means to be faithful in stewardship. That raises a question: How are Christian stewards to be faithful in their managing of what God has entrusted to them to manage? In other words, what are the specific duties of a Christian steward?

This depends upon what God has revealed in His Word for each of our vocations in life as those in a family (fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, children), society (governors or citizens), and the church (pastors or laity). The Table of Duties from Luther's Small Catechism lays this out in helpful and orderly way.

Let's look just at what the laity (hearers as it is labeled in the catechism) owe their pastors:

"In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel." (1 Cor. 9:14)

"Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches. Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows." (Gal. 6:6–7)

"Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, 'You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain,' and, 'The laborer deserves his wages.'" (1 Tim. 5:17–18)

"We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves." (1 Thess. 5:12–13)

"Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you." (Heb. 13:17)

We can see that the Lord commands hearers to support the work of the ministry with the gifts God endowed them – their time, their presence, their prayers, and their possessions. This is the means by which God blesses His people with His gifts: the ministry with the support of those whom they serve, and the hearers with the work of the ministry.

St. Paul expounds upon this further in his letters to the church at Corinth. He instructs them to give regularly (1 Cor. 16:1–2), proportionally (1 Cor. 16:1–2; 2 Cor. 8:12), and generously (2 Cor. 8:20) of our first-fruits (1 Cor. 16:2) with a spirit of eagerness (2 Cor. 9:2), earnestness (2 Cor. 8:7), cheerfulness (2 Cor. 9:7), and love (2 Cor. 8:23).

All of this teaching is set forth squarely within the context of stations to which God calls us. This is always appropriate for the church to speak because it instructs God's people in how they are to live out their faith as His stewards under those who are created, redeemed, and sanctified by Him.

