



Cornerstone

MAY 2020

How Should We Pray During this Pandemic -

I have struggled to pray with all my heart during this pandemic. Maybe you have as well. I have wondered, "why do I struggle to have a real heart for prayer in this?" In some ways the pandemic is an invisible thing to many of us. We all know someone who has gotten sick and some of us know someone who has died from it. We all know someone who has lost their job. We all experience the non-stop news about the pandemic and the bitter insults in the media. We all have seen the empty shelves in the stores. We have all felt the pain of those who cannot be visited in care centers. But in many ways the actual dire need seems to be at a distance.

I think for two reasons; one is that we have many resources to keep life going, safe homes and food and energy supplies. The other reason is we have been so provided for, for so long we cannot just imagine, that in our lives that certain things will not be there. Yes, we have been spoiled! While many in life have little hope for there to be an abundance, many

of us have been so used to abundance. So how do we really pray, and pray with all our heart?

Almost 99 % of the discussion about how to deal with the covid-19 pandemic is to stare at numbers, to create numbers that induce the highest fears, about the disease or about the economy, to be captivated by the latest fears. To discuss how we can isolate ourselves from the environment and to find a cure for the virus, as if that would be a wholesome answer to the problem.

The truth is we cannot control hardly any of the above. The fabric of our culture has been unraveling for decades and now our economy is unraveling when it was doing fairly well. With the general media and the majority of the population looking for how we humans can fix these great things we are in a great famine of knowing God is intimately involved in our world. We have decided that God is a last resort! That we can solve our problems and that we can live with God being very

distant. So human!

So how do we pray when we really are not wanting to look to God? We remember that God created the world and us out of a great love. We remember that God understands our sinfulness and the way of looking to ourselves. We remember that our sin causes us to look to ourselves and to think of ourselves. We remember that God has loved us so, so much in the person of Jesus, who took our rejection of God, our rejection of our brother upon himself. He took our anger, our sorrows, our death upon himself. He cares that much for us! God knows that Jesus life and death was a cure for us, a cure for the world. God was happy and satisfied that Jesus had freed us.

This past week in the Men's study we read Luke 18:1-8. The story of the persistent widow who was unrelenting in prayer. The main point was if an unjust judge gave to a helpless old woman what she needed just because of her being a pain in his life, just think of what a

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perfect loving creator would do for his chosen, beloved people? Just think of what God would love to do for us! Paul said it like this, "if God gave us his beloved Son while we were yet sinners, think now what God would give us now that we have been his redeemed through Christ!" God is the greatest news ever for earth! Just think of what good God is waiting to do for us!

Our scrapping with each other is because we have forgotten and turned away from the great God of love for us. We have turned to ourselves as if we can fix the problem without Christ. How do we pray? We pray as ones who believe and trust in God's overwhelming love for us. We pray for us to awaken and trust in God alone to fix, through people the problems of this pandemic, economy, politics etc.... We hear God's voice to return to him with all our hearts. In the pain of what we are experiencing, God is calling us.

In Luke 18:1-8 the story of how we should really engage with God in prayer, we should be in awe and wonder 100% of the time, persistent not in reminding God but praising God for his wondrous unfailing love! At the end of this great parable, Jesus asks, "When the Son of Man comes will he find faith on earth?" Wow, will we be praising God and relying on God realizing our true need for God on every level? Or will our lives and our society be so looking inward at ourselves that we will have no faith. When churches do open again will we come and worship God or will we go do our own thing? Will we have faith?

In Christ,

Pastor Ron Boettner

Christ Lutheran's Mission Partner for the Month of May

It is truly one of our greatest needs; to give of ourselves, to share our possessions, and to be in devoted prayer for others. Our Mission Partner for May is "Feed My Starving Children". Many of you have enjoyed packing meals of rice, vitamins, and vegetables that can be heated with water at anytime. They provide energy and vitamins to the diets of children around the world. Our monthly Mission partners receive \$1,833 each month. During this pandemic, FMSC has not been able to pack as many meals so we pray for them to be open soon.

Church Council Actions from April Meeting

1. We thank our quilters, Yoshi Grenell, Mary Couser, Norma Drawert, and Cindy Berquist for making over 150 face masks for MNATC.
2. The council voted to move forward and install the new flagpole and lighting for the cemetery so the project can be done for Memorial Day.
3. The Mission Partner for March was switched from the Maple Plain Food Shelf to Minnesota Food Share, being the Maple Plain Food Shelf will be closing.
4. The council voted to spend up to \$2,400 to re-do the landscaping at the parsonage. Funds will come from the parsonage fund.
5. When possible the church council will have a congregational meeting about calling an Associate Pastor versus a part-time youth director. Molly Sartor will be graduating with a masters in counseling in May and seeking a full-time career in counseling.
6. The Council voted to designate the Luella Munson bequests of \$27,400 as follows; to re-do the front entry in accord with the furnishing committee's plans for up to \$7,000 and to give \$20,000 to I-Point Bible Camp which is having to move the camp to a new location this year because of flooding and highwaters.
7. We are currently interviewing and searching for a Worship and Music Director to lead us in piano, choirs, organ, bell choir etc.. please join us in prayer for this important need.



The Christ Lutheran Men's Bible Study Meets on Wednesday Nights!

You are truly invited to join in! We have been meeting on ZOOM at 7:30 pm for the last four weeks.

Meeting on ZOOM is not nearly the same in person, but it is still a very rewarding time, we wish you would join us!

Below is a something that Ben Anderson wrote in response to one of our study times last year. I love it because he touches on the human experience of life and how God can touch our lives.

"I have hope and faith no matter the situation, because I know God's love for his people is taller than any mountain- wider than any ocean. His creation of this incredible planet is only one of many miracles I believe he has given us to show his love for us, and how he cares for us.

I know tragedy is possible and actually guaranteed in any life, even God's only Son! He was not spared because of privilege or lineage. There is no escaping the pain of tragedy or loss.

I believe he has given us the ability to grieve and to love! It is a gift beyond measure to do both! Jesus himself wept. This happened when his dear friend died.

I know that I am in a true relationship with Jesus. If I love Him, believe in Him, and follow Him...his love for me will be like the love he had for his friend Lazarus. He will weep for me and he will raise me from the dead! The pain of this world will be overcome by the love and faithfulness of my Savior.

And my time with him will be pure joy forever!"

-Ben Anderson

Financial Update for Christ Lutheran

A few people have asked us, how are we doing financially through this "stay at home" time. So, we like to share the basic info, but again we continue to do well because of faithful giving, God's amazing providing, and our hope that our church is making a difference in our lives and in our community.

The balance in the general fund at the end of March was \$124,559.61. The general offering for YTD through March was \$55,786. This was \$12,210. below projected anticipated giving of \$67,997. For this time of the year we are usually about \$9,000 behind in giving. So, we fell back just a little.

Our expenses for the YTD as of March 31 are \$59,561 so we are \$3,774 in the red for the year. This is very typical.

Electronic Giving has increased a bit during the "Stay at Home" order. Regular offerings in the plate have come in by person or mail to the office and they are down, simply because of traveling. We thank you for supporting the ministries of Christ Lutheran Church.

**JOIN US FOR A MEMORIAL DAY SERVICE
AT THE CHRIST LUTHERAN CEMETERY
AT 9:00AM**

**I THANK MY GOD
UPON EVERY
REMEMBRANCE
OF YOU**

PHILIPPIANS 1:3