

FIRST EV. LUTHERAN CONGREGATION

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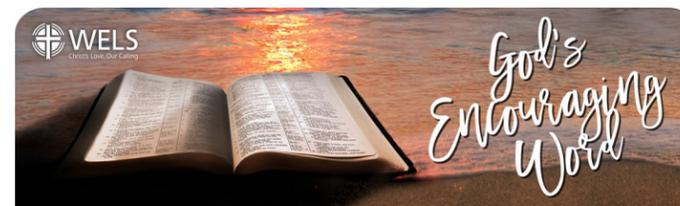
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SEEK YE **First** the kingdom of God and His righteousness



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God's Encouraging Word ... when I am burdened with guilt

What she had done in the past weighed heavily on her conscience. She was living under the soul-crushing conviction that the death of her nine-year-old daughter was God paying her back for her sins.

He was resigned to live the rest of his life in despair. His wife had begged him to get help for his alcoholism through their entire marriage. Now suddenly, she was gone and so was any opportunity to make up for being a lousy husband and father. It was too late.

His head hung low as he dissolved into tears. When he looked up, he asked, "What kind of person would steal from his own family?" He knew the answer. That was why he was sobbing.

How does your guilt feel? Does it hit you like a wrecking ball when you are confronted with the horrifying truth of how evil you really are or how much damage and pain you've caused? Does it leave you hopeless or even horrified at the truth you have to face sooner or later? The truth that you're never going to be the person you know you should be. The truth that makes you a failure to a holy God and undeserving of anything good from him.

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You should know something about all those people mentioned above. They all found relief from guilt. They found it in the only place it can be found—in the God who pledges, "I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more."

You might think your sins and weaknesses define you. They don't. Not in God's eyes. You know how you highlight a phrase and then hit "delete" when you are editing a document? God does that with your sins. He not only doesn't see them anymore, he doesn't even remember them. He doesn't recall the worst things you've done or your habitual failings. So your sins not only don't define you to God, they don't condemn you to his punishment either.

How is that possible? God loved you with a love so amazing that he charged his Son, Jesus, with your sins and punished him in your place. All of the ways you have sinned or ever will sin, have been paid for. They are not on your record or clinging to your identity anymore.

Believe it, and in Jesus live unburdened from your guilt and in the joyful freedom of forgiveness.

SUMMER SERVICES SURVEY



Our church is considering having only one worship service on Sunday mornings during the summer months. We are looking for your thoughts and input concerning this possible change. A survey will go out during the month of March to gather feedback. Let us know what you think!



HOLY WEEK

On March 25th we begin a very special week of the church year, Holy Week. Beginning with Palm Sunday, we remember and celebrate the final days of Jesus' life, culminating with his death and resurrection. Throughout Holy Week we will hold special services to follow Jesus, step-by-step, as he carries out the redemption of the world.

On Maundy Thursday (March 29th, 6:30 p.m.) we follow Jesus to the upper room and witness the institution of the Lord's Supper. On Good Friday (March 30th, 1 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.) we follow Jesus to the cross and witness his suffering and death. Holy Communion will be celebrated in all three of these services.

Finally, on Easter morning, we journey to the tomb and find it empty! Jesus' victory over death will be celebrated in 4 different services (April 1st). A sunrise service will be held at 6 a.m. Identical Easter festival services will be held at the regular times of 8:00 and 10:15 a.m. The Path Easter service will be held at 6:30 p.m. in the church basement. Men's Club and the youth of our church will serve Easter breakfast in the church social room between the services (7-8 a.m. and 9-10 a.m.). A free-will offering will be taken for the meal.

LUTHER NEWS

Several important decisions were made at the Luther High School Conference of Delegates on February 7. One of these decisions had to do with the building program. Phases 1 and 2 have been completed. The main part of this work was the new chapel/auditorium. The delegates voted to proceed with Phase 3, which includes finishing the new science rooms, a new maintenance garage and a new entrance at the southwest corner of the building. The total cost is just under two million dollars. In the near future we will share information with our members about how we can help.

The second major decision made by the delegates was an increase in tuition for the 2018-2019 school year. The new rates are: \$7076-1st child; \$5137- 2nd child, \$3196- 3rd child. Our congregation does provide tuition assistance: \$1250- 1st child; \$875-2nd child; \$625-3rd child. Assistance is also available thru Good Steward and other sources. For the coming school year students may also be eligible for assistance thru Wisconsin's Parental Choice Program. The application period for this help is February 1- April 20. Information may be found at www.lutherhigh.org or at dpi.wi.gov

Looking ahead the Luther High Drama Club will present the play "Beauty and the Beast" in the new auditorium on March 9 (7 p.m.), March 10 (7 p.m.) and March 11 (2 p.m.). The choirs will present their Easter Concert on March 28 at 7 p.m. Everyone is invited to attend these events.

FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT



On Friday, March 16th at 6 p.m., First Lutheran Early Childhood Ministry will be hosting a Family Movie Night. We will be watching

the movie in the school gymnasium. Please bring chairs or blankets for seating. This year we will have movie concessions available for purchase. Bring the whole family and invite friends to join us!



The 2018 WELS International Youth Rally will be held from June 26-29 at Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio. The youth rally is targeted to youth who, as of the spring of 2018, are between 8th-12th grade. The cost of registration is \$345.

Our church is planning on taking a group to the rally. Attendees will meet WELS teens from across the country and around the world. They will hear speakers who bring Biblical perspectives to timely teen topics. They can gather information on colleges, ministries, and service opportunities. One of the biggest highlights is the opportunity to worship with 2,000 other people.

In the coming weeks, we will have an informational meeting for those interested in attending the rally. Be on the lookout for time and location.

HEIRS TOGETHER

In March, we will begin a new Bible study, "Heirs Together." This 8-lesson study begins by giving healthy emphasis to the often forgotten shared blessings and responsibilities men and women have in serving Christ. All the lessons are meant to provide opportunities for men and women to discuss what Scripture says about their interdependence and the unique applications of unchanging principles for different ministry settings. The topics in the first half of the study are: Equality in God's Image, Equality in Sin and Salvation, Our Shared Mission as Royal Priests of God, and The Spiritual Gifts God Gives both to Men and Women.

The second half of the study looks at our unique callings as male and female by defining head, helper and calling, and then applying these relationships in marriage, church and the unbelieving world. This study will take place between services in the church social room. Please join us to study this relevant and important topic!

CARING CHRISTIANS

Caring Christians-Mental Health will hold its next monthly meeting in our church social room on Monday, March 4 at 6:30 p.m. In spite of inclement weather for our last meeting, we had a very good attendance and a good discussion on bipolar disorders. We plan to continue the discussion at our March meeting. Everyone who is interested is invited to attend.

THE PATH

During the month of March our Path services will reach the end of our journey thru the alphabet. Path services are held in the church social room on Sundays at 6:30 p.m. A meal is served before the service at 6 p.m. on the second Sunday of the month. Holy Communion is celebrated in the service on the third Sunday of the month. The schedule to the end of the alphabet follows. Join us whenever you can.

March 4- X
March 11- Yield
March 18- Zeal

CONTINUING EDUCATION

In almost every profession today, the workers are encouraged to pursue continuing education in order to do their work better. Recently our synod has developed a program of continuing education called "Grow in Grace." This program is intended to help our pastors do their work better. In the near future both of the full time pastors will be eligible to benefit from this program. Thus far the congregation has not budgeted any funds for this purpose. So the Council has decided to designate the special offering envelope for March to be used for continuing education for our pastors. We invite all of our members to use a special envelope in March for this purpose. In the end this will be a blessing for all members of our congregation.

SPECIAL MEETING

A special voters' meeting has been scheduled for Sunday, March 4, after the late service. The purpose of the meeting is to review proposals for the repair of the school roof and make a decision about the work. The meeting should not last too long. We encourage all voters to take the time to attend and help us reach a God-pleasing decision.

New Members

Since the time of our last church newsletter, the following individuals were received into congregational membership:

Lawrence Dobbe
Aaron Tappendorf

We welcome them into our fellowship and pray that God will richly bless them.

HELP NEEDED

Our church's monthly newsletter is prepared for mailing by a wonderful group of friendly volunteers. At this time we could use a few more volunteers. We meet in the church social room on the third or fourth Monday of the month at 1:30 p.m. The work usually lasts 1 ½ to 2 hours. If you would be willing to help, please come on March 26 at 1:30 p.m. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Sachs.