

The Dove

Newsletter of Zion Lutheran Church—Anchorage, AK (LCMS)



**FEBRUARY
2021**

Rev. Kyle Mietzner, Pastor

Jesus Is the World's Anchor

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, to which Zion belongs, has a system of universities, which are all titled “Concordia.” I graduated from two of these institutions, along with many of my family and friends. Three years ago, there were ten colleges and two seminaries in the Concordias. It was announced today, that Concordia College - Bronxville, will close in the fall of 2021. There will now be seven universities. There are many other institutions of higher learning in our church that have closed over the last century. My guess is that there will be further closures. What happened? What is happening?

On the same day that this closure was announced, some sort of kerfuffle is emerging over the trading of stocks and cryptocurrencies. I understand less about these things than I do cash strapped institutions, but what I do know is that the prices of these stocks and currencies often are not linked to any real thing. Cryptocurrencies aren’t real things. For that matter, the money in your wallet is not real either. It is only worth what we believe it is worth. Our belief determines reality.

These two events are intrinsically related. We, as a society, have lost sight of reality. We cannot tell what is true and what is false. Darkness is said to be light. We call good evil, and evil good. Anyone who actually believes what God says about anything these days is said to be intolerant at best, and hateful at worst.

For a long time, our society was shaped largely by Christian morality, or “Judeo-Christian” values as we used to say. The church became lazy and forgot how to teach the truth. It looked like things were going well. We now find ourselves in a position where we’ve forgotten that there was always something underneath that wholesome morality; a structure designed by the Lord, which undergirds the world. We’ve rebelled against God, and replaced Him with our own idols. We’re very good at this as individuals, but it’s spread into our greater society now, to the point where Christian colleges are closing at a fairly rapid pace, and no one knows what any money is actually worth anymore. We’ve become unhinged from reality.

Have you ever asked “what’s the point?” What’s the point of all this? What’s the point of what we do at Zion? Week in and week out, we gather to hear the Word of God, receive the Sacraments, sing, and build a world based on the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. You push back the darkness of this world with the light of Christ. More schools will close, and currencies will become untethered. Society will continue to unravel. What will stand when it all falls apart, and no one believes in right or wrong anymore? Jesus Christ holds everything together. He is the beginning and end, and everything in between. You are being made part of reality through the work of Jesus Christ. You are baptized into something greater than yourself; the death and resurrection of all flesh and all things through Jesus Christ. This is the most real thing that has ever happened, and it has happened to you.

We have an anchor in our window, and it is more than just because of our city’s name. Jesus Christ is the anchor of the whole entire world. He is your anchor. You cannot be swept away. You are deeply rooted in the Word of God through Jesus Christ, and will survive the collapse, whatever it is and whenever it happens. Our hope is not in colleges or currencies, but in Christ. This is what we must teach our children, and to what we ourselves must cling. This is what we will proclaim the world over, which already belongs to, and is sustained by, Jesus Christ. It will be a fight, but I think it will be worth it. That’s the point. It isn’t easy, but it is worth it.

+Pastor Kyle Mietzner

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CHURCH NOTES

Christian Education Opportunities

*Our schedules are changing constantly due to Covid.
Check for updates in the bulletin, during
announcements and in weekly emails.*

Children's Sunday School—Sundays @ 11am

Adult Bible Study—Sundays @ 11am
—Wednesdays @ 7pm via Zoom

Women's Study — Tuesdays @ 11am & 6pm

Youth Catechesis—Wednesdays @ 4pm via Zoom

Birthdays

Clara McBride	2/1
Tom Rawlins	2/3
Steve Lanz	2/10
Don Mueller	2/12
Joshua Wabrowetz	2/12
Marian Lampert	2/24
Chase Mascelli	2/24



Helping Hands Meal Prep

Our outreach program to help feed residents at Brother Francis Shelter and Clare House has resumed at a reduced level. Due to social distancing guidelines, Helping Hands are recruited as needed.

Anniversaries

Chris & Jacque Dickerson	2/2
Clint & Betty Olson	2/3



Offerings

You are welcome to mail your offerings to the church to be presented during the next Sunday worship service. This can also be done through your financial institution's BillPay service.

Church Contacts

Church Office:	338-3838
Preschool Office:	222-3838
Pastor's cell phone:	(336)944-2394
Church address:	2100 Boniface Pkwy Anchorage, AK 99504

LUVS is in the Air

This Valentine's Day, show your love for the
Community Pregnancy Center
by donating diapers (any brand).

Please bring donations to Zion's narthex.
Diaper sizes needed include Newborn, 1 & 4.
Also needed are crib sheets (standard size).



Donations will be delivered to CPC on Tuesday, February 23.

FROM THE MUSIC DIRECTOR

Janet McCullough

zionlcmsmusic@yahoo.com

The Music of Lent There is some evidence that, perhaps as early as the late Apostolic Age, Christians observed a pre-Easter period of fasting in commemoration of the Lord's 40 days of fasting and temptation in the wilderness immediately following His baptism. By the time of the Council of Nicaea, c. 325, the 40 days preceding Easter were being utilized as a time of intense preparation for candidates prior to baptism. The word "Lent" refers to the lengthening of daylight hours after winter's darkness.

Christian congregations around the world have various Lenten traditions, including differing musical practices. Some denominations do not significantly alter their worship format during the weeks prior to Easter. Most liturgical denominations – Lutheran, Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican, for example – do modify their liturgies during Lent. Generally, this consists of dispensing with the *Gloria* and *Alleluias*, selecting choral anthems with no or very spare instrumental accompaniment, and eliminating or reducing the use of instrumental voluntaries such as preludes and postludes. Here at Zion, we follow the practice of laying aside the *Gloria* and *Alleluia* during Lent. The organ prelude will be shorter in duration and the postlude will be eliminated.

The prelude for Ash Wednesday will be Bach's *O Man Bewail Thy Grievous Sins*. We will hear the German hymn before Bach's chorale prelude, since we no longer have this hymn in our hymnbooks. This is one of the most beautiful organ chorale preludes ever written. It seems as if Bach is reminding us of the beauty of Jesus, even as He hangs on the Cross as sacrifice for our sins.

Each of the Sunday preludes during Lent will feature arrangements of the Passion Chorale, *O Sacred Head*, (LSB 449/450). During the Wednesday evening services, we will hear arrangements of *O Dearest Jesus*, (LSB 439). Both of these melodies appeared in German hymnbooks in the 1600s and have been sung by Christians of all denominations since that time. The names and dates of the composers will be printed in the bulletin so the congregation can follow the musical progression of five centuries of organ arrangements on these chorale melodies.

SOLI DEO GLORIA

STEWARDSHIP

“I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich” (2 Corinthians 8:8-9).

Without commands or even arm-twisting, St. Paul encourages, even challenges, the Church in Corinth to demonstrate the sincerity of their faith by their generosity in giving. He does this because giving generously is a gift of the Spirit given to us through the Gospel.

St. Paul wrote: “But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving” (2 Corinthians 8:7). In other words, just as we grow in faith and speech and knowledge of eternal things by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God, so also do we grow in giving from the same Spirit through the same Word.

The problem is that the grace of generosity often grows cold in us. It’s not so much that we stop giving, but we don’t put it first. We treat it like all the other bills that must be paid. It becomes a chore, just one more thing to check off a list of things to do. That empties it of its spiritual power and robs us of the joy that Christ and the Scriptures assign to it.

On top of that, since this generosity is linked to faith and knowledge of divine things, a lack of excelling in giving is sure sign that our faith and knowledge of God are under attack as well.

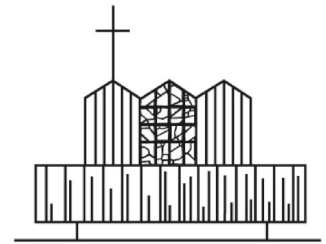
Thus St. Paul points to the foundation of generosity: the generosity of Christ Himself. Even though He was rich, He became poor so that we who are poor might become rich. Thus, the incarnation, suffering, and death of our Lord on the cross is the reason, source, and driving force for our generosity in giving to the church.

And since Christ who was rich became poor so that we might be rich in His grace—of which generous giving is part—so we also who are rich in His grace can excel in pressing His grace into service toward the gracious work of the church.

Pay attention to what you give to the church so that you may excel at it. And if you find that your heart has grown cold or indifferent toward it, immerse yourself in God’s Word. Read it at home. Attend Bible Class. Hear and listen to it preached in the Divine Service. Be reminded of what Christ has done for you in His incarnation, suffering, and death. For this will strengthen your faith and knowledge. And where that excels, so will the grace of giving excel also.



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FEBRUARY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
31 9:30am Divine Service 10:45am Special voters meeting 11am Bible Study & Sunday School	1-Feb	2 11am Women's Study 6pm Women's Study 7:30pm Elders' Meeting	3 4pm Youth Catechesis via Zoom 7pm Bible Study via Zoom	4	5	6
7 9:30am Divine Service 11am Bible Study & Sunday School	8	9 11am Women's Study 6pm Women's Study 7pm Council Meeting	10 4pm Youth Catechesis via Zoom 7pm Bible Study via Zoom	11	12	13
St. Valentine's Day 14 9:30am Divine Service 11am Bible Study & Sunday School	15	16 11am Women's Study 6pm Women's Study	17 4pm Youth Catechesis via Zoom 7pm Ash Wednesday Service	18	19	20
21 9:30am Divine Service 11am Bible Study & Sunday School	22	23 11am Women's Study 6pm Women's Study	24 4pm Youth Catechesis via Zoom 7pm Lenten Service	25	26	27
28 9:30am Divine Service 11am Bible Study & Sunday School	1-Mar	2 7:30pm Elders' Meeting	3 4pm Youth Catechesis via Zoom 7pm Lenten Service	4	5	6