

The Dove

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



JULY
2020

Rev. Kyle Mietzner, Pastor

The Lord Always Cares for His People

As your pastor, my primary means for pastoral care and parish leadership are preaching, teaching, and administration of the sacraments. I'm going to summarize everything we've been studying for the past few months in this article. We started reading Paul's Captivity Epistles (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon) in March while everyone was stuck in their homes. This seemed to be a good time to see what the Apostle has to say from his imprisonment and isolation. Needless to say, we're not stuck in prison, nor are our current situations comparable at all to Paul's sufferings, but nevertheless, he still has wonderful things for us who are facing incredible and unbelievable circumstances. Paul insists on **joy**, even in the middle of his suffering, which would lead to his death. He does not relent, for even a paragraph, from the insistence that Christ is the redeemer of all mankind. The church is the very body of Jesus Christ, which is raised from the dead even today. Nothing can keep the baptized faithful down, not even death. I'm struck by Paul's overwhelming joy and confidence in the universal nature of Christ's work on behalf of the world. There seems to be no limitation upon what Christ has done for us! The light of Christ shines even brighter when we are hidden away.

We've continued by reading 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus, which are collectively known as the Pastoral Epistles. These letters are Paul's instructions to Timothy and Titus, who have been appointed as bishops in Ephesus and Crete. They have been sent to preach the Gospel, holding fast to true doctrine, and to ordain pastors and deacons for the work of the church. Timothy and Titus are both instructed to remain vigilant in the Faith and their teaching. The church has always insisted on pure doctrine, which results in works of love. The order of things here is very important. Works of love will never result in pure doctrine, but pure doctrine will always inspire works of love. The church and pastor strive to remain faithful, while discovering what sort of works might be accomplished among us. This is why the church has always had deacons. Preaching the Gospel is so important that the early church appointed deacons to carry out the mercy work of caring for the needy among us. We've essentially lost this position of deacon in the Lutheran church, but have lifted up other offices in the church to do similar things. We have deaconesses, and church councils, which are given to care for the physical needs of the community. Paul's strategy for leadership in the church consists chiefly of faithful preaching and teaching, and always looking out for heresies and false teachers. There's no marketing strategy or gimmicks here. The pure Gospel is enough! Jesus is enough.

We've been studying the books of Chronicles on Sunday mornings. These books were written by Ezra upon Israel's return from exile in order to teach Israel of God's great mercy and care for His people. Our temporary exile pales in comparison to Israel's, but we have much to learn from their story, which is also our story. The big downfall of Israel, in Chronicles, is David's reliance on his own numerical strength. We are still tempted to measure our strength by our size. We think that small is bad and big is good. However, neither of these things matter when it comes to the Lord's people. What is important for us, the church, is that the Lord fights for us, and cares for us, no matter our numbers or strength. So may it go for us, especially during these confusing and strange times. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus!

IN THIS EDITION

Pastor's Letter	1
Church Notes	2
Worship Services	2
Stewardship	3
LSSA	4
Calendar	5

+Pastor Kyle Mietzner

CHURCH NOTES

Christian Education Opportunities

We have resumed bible study in person following worship service on Sunday, as well as on Zoom. The Wednesday 7pm bible study is via Zoom. If you, or someone you know, weren't included on the email invitation, please contact the Zion office and/or Pastor to be added to the distribution list.

Helping Hands Meal Prep

Our outreach program to help feed residents at Brother Francis Shelter and Clare House is temporarily suspended.

Pioneer Home Christian Fellowship

Suspended temporarily.

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.

Contribution Reports

Mid-year contribution reports are available to pick up at the church. Those that have not been collected through July 19th will be mailed. Please check your report and contact the office with any discrepancies.

Birthdays

Michael Theodore Anderson	7/1
Chris Dickerson	7/7
Guinevere Hopkins	7/8
Isaac Rawlins	7/8
Marilyn Freitag	7/9
Rev. Kyle Mietzner	7/12
Christopher Wateland	7/13
Terry Randel	7/16
Ann Marie Gulberg	7/23
Robert Wilkens	7/27
Jason Hess	7/29
Rayna Mascelli	7/31
Louie Monzon	7/31



Anniversaries

Joe & Jahna Pollock	7/2
Matt & Mary Mills	7/9
Don & Hillary Hodges	7/10
Daniel & Christie Mascelli	7/25



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

Worship Services

We have returned to having in-person worship services at 9:30am Sundays. For those not yet comfortable with gathering together, Livestream video is also still available via Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/zionalaska/live/>. There is an order of service PDF for each service posted on our website, [ZionAnchorage.org](https://www.zionanchorage.org). You will need a Lutheran Service Book for hymns and liturgy.

STEWARDSHIP

“Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” asked the rich young ruler. Jesus said, “You know the commandments.” And the ruler replied, “All these I have kept from my youth.” And Jesus said to him, “One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.” (Luke 18:18–22)

As we listen to this, one question is raised in our minds: Is Jesus speaking to us also or only to the rich young ruler? In other words, is Jesus telling us to sell all that we have and give it to the poor? As good Lutherans, we answer: No! But why? Why should we not sell all that we have and distribute it to the poor?

The simplest explanation is this: If we sold everything we have, our wife and our children would be neglected. In other words, to sell everything we have and give it to the poor would ignore, even abandon, those whom God has placed in our care. Our money, everything we have, is not to be used solely for the church. But that doesn’t mean it isn’t to be used for the purpose God intends.

Everyone has three stations in life, three spheres in which we live and are to be of service to our neighbors. These stations are the church, the family, and society. We are members of all three of these by birth.

- We are born into the church by water and the Word of God, and our duties to others in the church arise from either our birth into the church or the birth of others by Baptism into it.
- We are born into a family, and our duties to others stem from either our birth into that family or the birth of others into our family.
- Finally, we are born into society, which is simply a further extension of our birth into our family. The duties we have toward other members of society come from either our birth or the birth of others into the same society.

All that we have and all that we are is to be pressed into service for the church, the family, and society. If we were to sell all we have and give only to one, the other two would be neglected, and our duties toward them would falter.

So consider your life and all that you have in light of these three stations. You pay taxes to support and help those in society. You provide food, clothing, and shelter for the members of your family. You save for college for your children.

But the one station that is usually thought of last is the church. Since the needs of the family and society are more immediate, the church is often given what is left over. This is not how it should be. Rather, we are to give of our first fruits – the best from off the top – even as Abel gave the best of his flock.

This requires forethought and intent. It means that you sit down and make a plan for what you will give from the beginning. It means sticking to it even when it seems there are other more immediate and pressing things.

This is all the more necessary now as we enter into periods of time while giving is low due to high unemployment or restrictions on meeting in church to give. If we love God, his gifts of forgiveness given through the means of grace we receive at church and only at church, then we will support the church just as we love our country and our family.

For all that we have and all that we are is given to us by our gracious and giving God. He spared no expense for us and our salvation. He gave up His Son into death so that our sins are forgiven, and we will live. What is more, He provides for all that we need for this body and life. And our lives in this world, among these three spheres of the church, the family, and society, are to mirror the generosity of the one who gave us life in all three by birth.

Don’t let the church, your divine family, be ignored or even an afterthought. The church is nurturing you, bringing you up in salvation by Word and Sacrament for eternal life.

lcms.org

Lutheran Social Services of Alaska

As we reflect on the past four months, we realize that we are in one of the most extraordinary times in the history of the world. And yet it's God design that we are in the place we serve during this crucial time.

We have been busy here at LSSA helping our community with rental and utility assistance. We have distributed close to \$410,000 since late March with the AK Can Do funds. Beginning June 15th, we started distributing another \$1million of funds from the Municipality of Anchorage. We are blessed that we were chosen to be the agency that is bringing a little hope into people's lives that have been drastically challenged.

The Food Panty continues our normal hours of distribution, but with a different operation. We are pre-boxing all food and distributing from the parking lot. The Mobile Food Pantry has seen a 100% increase in the number of households served over last year at this time.

We are busy planning for the 20th annual HUGSS (Help Us Give School Supplies). We are planning a different distribution this year. The backpacks will be filled with school supplies and delivered to each school based on the number of students who registered at HUGSS last year.

We have large need for rulers, 24-count crayons, pee-chee folders, 1-inch 3-ring binders and 3-hole punch paper (both college and wide ruled), colored pencils, fine tip markers, and pencils. You can drop your donations off at the LSSA office or at your church. We plan on distributing school supplies to 3,200 students this year. If you would like to make a financial contribution, please mark HUGSS on your check or simply donate on-line through our website lssalaska.org.

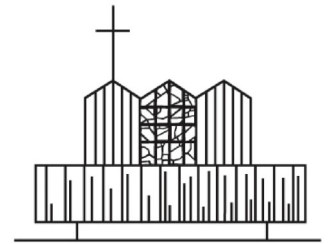
The Hunkered Down Harvest of Hope Auction is scheduled for Friday, September 18, 2020. This year's auction will be a virtual event. Look for more information on how you can participate.

Together we are caring for others.

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JULY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28 9:30am Divine Service 11am Bible Study via Zoom 12pm Voters' Assembly Meeting	29	30	1-Jul 7pm Zoom Bible Study	2	3	4
5 9:30am Divine Service 11am Bible Study via Zoom	6	7	8 7pm Zoom Bible Study	9	10	11
12 9:30am Divine Service 11am Bible Study via Zoom	13 7pm Elders' Meeting?	14 7pm Council Meeting	15 7pm Zoom Bible Study	16	17	18 Pastor Mietzner's 10th Ordination Anniversary
19 9:30am Divine Service 11am Bible Study via Zoom	20	21	22 7pm Zoom Bible Study	23	24	25
26 9:30am Divine Service 11am Bible Study via Zoom	27	28	29 7pm Zoom Bible Study	30	31	1-Aug