



The Messenger

A Monthly Newsletter from St. John Lutheran Church and School

Inside this Issue...

Devotional Corner	page 2
Christian Parenting Today	page 3
Events	page 4
Church Highlights	page 5
School Highlights	page 6
Christmas Scrip Orders	page 7
Contact Information	page 7

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Gather. Grow. Go. To the Glory of God!



Devotional Corner

Ever Wonder... What's so important about Jesus dying and rising from the dead?

"I don't want to die. I want to live." A man that a missionary had known for about 25 minutes said those words to him as they were flying over the Caribbean Sea between Puerto Rico and Antigua. They were in the middle of a horrific lightning storm. Ten seconds before he said this, their airplane had lost all power and began to dip rather suddenly towards the deep blue expanse of water beneath them.

Thankfully, the airplane regained power after only a few agonizing seconds, and they quickly climbed back to cruising altitude. "Death scares me," he went on, "because I know nothing about it. I only know how to live."

Choosing between something you know nothing about and something you know quite a bit about is a pretty easy decision. Most everyone feels more confident with what they are familiar with. That's why this gentleman wasn't the first person to express himself in this way. He most certainly won't be the last.

Who can feel more confident about dying than living since we only know about life and not death?

Jesus had never died either. But as he hung on his cross, he knew it was coming. In fact, he had told his followers the day before that

"It was for this reason (dying) that he came to this hour." John 12:27

Jesus chose death, and he did so with you in mind. Jesus chose death to prove to you that those who follow him have no reason to be afraid of death.

If the pilot of that airplane had guaranteed the passengers before that flight that they'd land safely, that he'd flown through worse storms and made it, that the backup generators on the plane would keep any power outage from harming them, they would've been much more confident despite the storm.

Jesus makes a much greater guarantee when he tells us we don't have to be afraid of death. And he proved it by living after he died. The dead body of Jesus was placed in a grave on Friday evening, but he rose from the dead three days later.

When you follow Jesus, death's scare is taken away. The living Jesus gives you the confidence that your grave will be empty, just like his was. He tells all his disciples,

*"Because I live, you also will live."
John 14:19*

Jesus' death and resurrection are important because it guarantees for his believers that they too will rise from the dead and live forever!

In Christ's Service and Yours!
Pastor Mike Gehl

Worship With Us!

Sundays at 7:45 or 10:15 am
Wednesdays at 6:30 pm (Thursday services will resume after Lent)
1537 Day St. Greenleaf
Sunday School and Bible Classes Sundays at 9:00 am



Today's Parenting: How Do Parents Not Let Worry Get the Best of Them?

Excerpts from a Forward in Christ article by Nicole Balza, James Aderman, and Jenni Schubring

When I was expecting my first child, I remember someone telling me that having a child means that your heart will forever go walking around outside your body. It turns out that is a quote from Elizabeth Stone, an author and educator, and it's true.

Without God to lean on and trust, I truly don't know how parents handle all the worry that comes with having your heart walk around outside your body. It can be all-consuming if you let it.

Thankfully, we do have a gracious Father who is all-powerful and loves our children even more than we do. That is an incredible comfort to me as a parent. **-NB**

Worry can be an overwhelming topic. I believe everyone struggles with it. I don't know what the actual statistics are, but I am quite certain once you become a parent, worry increases by a lot. While I know worry can have many nuances, I narrowed it down to three main reasons:

1. *Worry gives us a perception of control.*
2. *Worry makes us feel like we care more.*
3. *On the other side of worry there is freedom, and we are unfamiliar with freedom.*

However, understanding why we worry doesn't necessarily help keep it from getting the best of us. Here is what I'm learning about living the life of a parent and ultimately the life of a Christian—surrender is key.

Surrender = acceptance of what is + faith that God's intent for us is good.

This formula is a huge weapon against worry.

Acceptance of what is: Sometimes this means we need to pause and recognize what is—not what we think it is, not what we think it might be, but what it actually is. So often we are worrying about the stories we are making up in our heads. It is important to realize what is actually going on.

Faith that God's intent for us is good: How would our perspective shift if we were to truly know this and believe this? God's love for us is unchanging, perfect, and abundant. He wants what is good for us. After all, "If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?" (Romans 8:31,32).

So often our idea of "good" is what makes us feel comfortable. When something causes us pain or discomfort, we automatically label it as bad. But if we recognize that God has so much more for us than simply feeling comfortable, we may be able to embrace the discomfort—especially with the knowledge that God's intent for us is good.

Surrender: We need to open our hands and offer our lives and our children's lives to God's care. He loves them more than we do. He pursues them more than we do. He desires a personal relationship with them even more than we do. Sometimes I look at my children and wonder how anyone—even God—could love them more. But he does—unconditionally.

Surrender seems like a strange antidote to worry, but not when we are surrendering to our heavenly Creator, who made us for the intent of loving us; Jesus, who gave up so much to remove any barriers for us; and the Holy Spirit, who dwells in our hearts and empowers us to "let go and let God."

How do we, as parents, not let worry get the best of us? Remember that our heavenly Father has the best for us. **-JS** *Article continues on page 7*



Upcoming Events



Easter Egg Scramble- Saturday, April 16 *Rescheduled*

Children ages 10 and under are invited to our annual Easter Egg Scramble beginning at 10:00. Baskets will be available. This year's Scramble will be held at our school campus. As always, we are open to the public, so be sure to invite your family and friends!



Bowling Tournament- Saturday, April 30

Join us for a 9-pin bowling tournament at Electric City Lanes in Kaukauna. The tournament will help us to raise funds for playground equipment at our new campus! Individual adults can sign up for \$75 or couples for \$125- no under 18s, please. Bowling kicks off at 3:00 pm. We encourage everyone to reach out to family and friends and invite them to join in. Businesses can also sponsor a lane for a \$500 tax-deductible donation. Reach out to Courtney Schisel or Janet Coenen to sign up or for more information.

Special Easter Services- Sunday, April 17th

Easter Sunrise Service will be held at 6:30 am, followed by Easter breakfast served by the men of the congregation. Easter Festival Services will take place at 9:00 and 10:30. Special services are also available on Maundy Thursday at 2:00 and 6:30 pm and Good Friday at 2:00 and 7:30 pm. Be sure to include these worship opportunities in your family celebrations!



Upcoming Events

- April 6- Parent Teacher Conferences
- April 7- Preschool- 1st grade Field Trip
- April 7- First Day of Spanish Club
- April 8- FoxFest Dinner Auction
- April 10- 5th-8th Grades Sing in Church
- April 10- All-member Open Forum
- April 11-12- Accreditation Site Visit
- April 12- Fellowship Luncheon
- April 14-18- Easter Break
- April 14- Maundy Thursday Worship
- April 15- Good Friday Worship
- April 16- Easter Egg Scramble *New date*
- April 17- Special Easter Worship Schedule
- April 21- Resume Regular Thursday Worship
- April 30- Adult Bowling Tournament at Electric City Lanes
- May 1- 8th Grade Confirmation

Church Highlights



Worship Service Helpers Needed

St. John is currently seeking ushers, greeters, and audio equipment technicians to help before and during our service times. Volunteering for these duties can be done easily before and/or during the services you already attend and are simple enough for almost any age to help out (audio work is done at the push of a button). Please speak with Pastor Gehl if you are interested in contributing to our worship services in these or any other ways.

As we see the needs we still have in all of our ministry efforts, remember to also take time to thank those currently serving. Thank you to all who bless the congregation through committee work, altar arrangement, volunteer cleaning, counting offerings, shut-in visits, serving meals, and so much more.



Updates on New Campus

Progress continues to be made on our new campus! A sign marking our new site has recently been erected to help the community anticipation ramp up, and the design committee has been hard at work picking out samples of flooring, cabinetry, countertops, siding, and roofing tiles. Visit the church basement before or after any service to see samples of the choices that have been made! A groundbreaking date will be announced as soon as possible, with the village needing to sign off on our designs this month.



Church Birthdays

Happy Birthday to these church members celebrating during the month of April!

Apr 1 Bea Ambrosius
Apr 2 Brooklyn Verheyen
Apr 3 Savannah Sommers
Apr 4 April Leick
Apr 9 Avery Asman
Apr 9 Hadley Schisel
Apr 10 Dakota Otten
Apr 11 Michelle Bruecker
Apr 11 Lincoln Wichman
Apr 14 Roy Schisel
Apr 16 William Olp
Apr 16 Nicholas Van Stratzen
Apr 19 Heather Bush

Happy Birthday

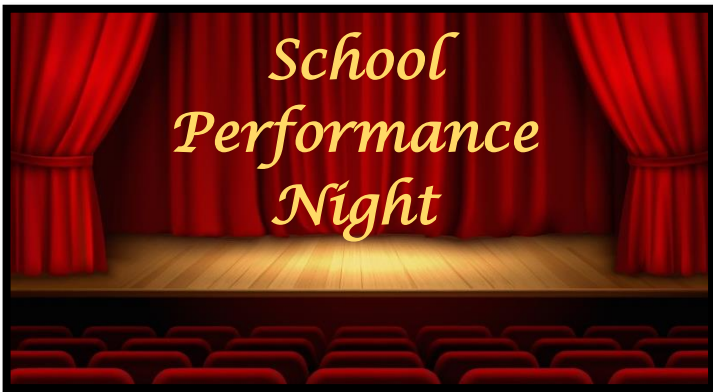
Apr 20 Hannah Wierschke
Apr 21 Corbin Calaway
Apr 21 Isaiah Cyracus
Apr 21 Jessica Laabs
Apr 21 Landen Cyracus
Apr 21 Matthew Laabs
Apr 21 Ruth Zittlow
Apr 23 Emery Heimerl
Apr 28 Brandon Beard
Apr 28 Amy Vande Hey
Apr 29 Donald Treptow
Apr 30 Judy Breister
Apr 30 Dianne Calaway

School Highlights



Parent-Teacher Conferences

Third quarter report cards are coming out now, and parent-teacher conferences are only days away. Please check that you have either filled in the Sign-Up Genius form to schedule a conference for this Wednesday, April 6th or spoken with your child's teacher to arrange another date that you can meet. Conferences are expected to last approximately 15 minutes.



School Performance Night (Formerly Grandparent's Day)

Grandparent's Day is a time-honored tradition here at St. John Lutheran School, and though our current campus facilities require some changes to be made, we do plan to continue the event this year. We are re-christening the event as a School Performance Night and opening the program to parents, grandparents, siblings, and all who wish to attend. Please mark your calendars for Tuesday, May 10th at 6:00 pm. We will be holding our program at the Wrightstown High School auditorium. The program will include skits and songs by all children preschool- eighth grade and will be followed by light snacks in the cafeteria.

Summer Care Announced

St. John will once again be offering their summer care program. Dates will run from June 13th- August 12th with a break for Independence Day. Care will be available from 7:30 am until 4:30 pm each weekday. Rates are \$18 per half day (\$90 per week) or \$28 per full day (\$140 per week). Please contact the school office to sign your child up.



School Birthdays

Happy birthday to the following students celebrating in the month of April!

- Savannah Sommers- April 3
- Hadley Schisel- April 9
- Arabella Evenson- April 12
- Montzerrath Amador Alvarado- April 14
- Haiden Aerts- April 15
- Barett Lemke- April 15
- Isaiah Cyracus- April 21
- Landen Cyracus- April 21
- Aaron Spatchek- April 29



Parenting Despite Worries

Continued from page 3

I battle worry. I worry about my daughters and their families. I worry about the one who recently has moved hours away and how her family will adjust. I worry about the daughter who has started a new job and the pressures that will bring. I worry most about the daughter, her spouse, and her two sons who live without Jesus.

How foolish I was when my kids were growing up. Then, a part of me believed that once my daughters got past diapers, lice outbreaks at school, catty sixth-grade classmates, and the heartbreak of high school crushes, my worry wars would ease into an armistice. A cease-fire never materialized. Instead, worry launched attacks on even more fronts. I've reached two conclusions:

1. *Worry is not a war to win but a daily battle.*
2. *The best weapon I have is thankfulness.*

Thankfulness for the blessings I recognize and those I don't. Thankfulness even in disaster.

Early in my ministry, I complained to a friend about ministry challenges. "Jim," he asked, "have you thanked God for those obstacles? That's what God says to do in 1 Thessalonians 5:18, 'Give thanks in all circumstances.' " He emphasized the word all. Then I found similar verses. Philippians 4:4,6 are examples. "Rejoice in the Lord always . . . Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, . . . with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

That theme is echoed in Ephesians 5:19,20, "Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything."

How does the weapon of thankfulness work? Thankfulness refocuses us on the ironclad guarantee that God can never leave us or forsake us (Hebrews 13:5). Thankfulness focuses us on Jesus—his perfection, crucifixion, and resurrection for us.

Thanksgiving defends us from worry's every thrust and parry. Worry attacks: "Your grandkids won't ever put down new roots. Their new friends will cause them problems." Thankfulness repels the attack: "Loving Father, Jesus' resurrection assures that my grandchildren are under your constant care. I thank you for your unshakeable grace."

Worry tries to outflank my defenses: "Your fallen away daughter and her children are beyond your God's grace." Thankfulness cuts through worry's battle lines: "Father, thank you that in Baptism you put your name on my loved ones. Thank you for acting on my prayers for them. Thank you that your life-giving Word is always at work."

Thankfulness for God's grace provides victories each day. It drives off worry with the truth that we are the dearly loved children of God, that his power and wisdom direct our lives, and that his grace surrounds us. Arm yourself with the weapon that defeats worry. "Give thanks in all circumstances."

*To view the full article, visit
<https://forwardinchrist.net/parent-conversations-worry/>*

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