



# Hope Ev. Lutheran Church

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## ✠ THE HOPE LUTHERAN ✠

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### "Do Not Be Afraid"

Many are the times in the Bible that God commands us *not* to fear, be afraid, or let our hearts be troubled. A quick, computer-aided search gives these results for several of the ways throughout the Bible that our Lord tells us not to fear:

- "do not fear" - 35 times
- "do not be afraid" - 33 times
- "fear not" - 33 times
- "be not afraid" - 3 times
- "let not your hearts be troubled" - 2 times

These results are merely scratching the surface of the many ways God teaches us not to be afraid.

We can also zero in on the times such exhortations appear in the Gospels, from our Lord's own lips or through an angel:

- "do not fear" - 5 times
- "do not be afraid" - 8 times
- "fear not" - 5 times
- "let not your hearts be troubled" - 2 times

Our Lord has a lot of practice telling His people *not* to fear or be afraid! He knows how easily we fallen creatures can become fearful, frightened and terrified. This is certainly the case in our current time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Coronavirus itself sparks fear simply because it is new and previously unknown. The COVID-19 disease caused by the novel Coronavirus troubles us in the havoc it wreaks on the bodies of those who suffer most. The constant barrage of COVID-19 related stories, updates, statistics, and opinions in the 24/7 news cycle feeds the fear that has become our "new normal." Government leaders and medical experts are not above using fear to achieve their own objectives, whatever those ends may be.

Some of our fear may be understandable and legitimate given the uncertainty of our times. After all, no one wants to be reckless. Some of our fear, though, may be irrational and overblown. The real question we need to ask ourselves is: how shall we deal with our fear?

One way to overcome fear is to step back from the emotional and rationally evaluate and critique what we see, hear and experience. We might call it "critical thinking." Sometimes, though, that can go only so far. Emotions, including fear, often short-circuit or overcome our rational thinking.

The better way to allay our fears is to look to our gracious Savior Jesus and fall into His loving embrace. Many are His promises that He gives peace because He has overcome sin, death, and the devil. See John 16:33, for one. Many are His promises that He is with us, especially in times of trial, and will never leave us. See Matthew 28:20 and Joshua 1:5.

As Jesus comforted His disciples before He went to the cross, He also comforts us: "*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid*" (John 14:27). His perfect love for us drives out fear. "*So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.... There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear*" (1 John 4:16-18).

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# LCMS Stewardship Ministry

## Newsletter Article - June 2020

The sin of the world is paid for. God's Law has been kept perfectly on our behalf. The prophecies have all been fulfilled. Jesus Christ has finished it all! And that, dear Christians, should fill us with complete confidence in our salvation. Since Jesus has finished all these things in His self-sacrifice, we can be fully certain our sins are forgiven, and we have everlasting life!

St. Paul wrote: "I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship." (Rom. 12:1)

We hear the same teaching in 1 Peter. "As you come to him, a living stone, rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves, like living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 2:4-5)

It's the very thing Malachi foretold of the Lord, that He would come and purify His priestly people, that they may offer to Him an offering in righteousness. (Mal. 3:3)

So, what does this mean? In view of God's mercies - that is, because Jesus sacrificed Himself to make us pure, giving His entire self into death - Paul said that we are to sacrifice ourselves entirely to God, offering Him our whole lives. For our Savior did not give Himself for us in part. So, we do not give back to Him in part.

We don't offer ourselves to God just on Sunday mornings or Wednesday evenings, for example. Rather, we give Him our whole selves, all the time. We understand that offering ourselves to God as living sacrifices involves the giving of our time. It requires us to be faithful stewards of the time He has given us. Yes, it means we devote to our Savior all our time. Otherwise we

are not sacrificing our whole lives.

You see, God both teaches us, and has graciously qualified us, to present ourselves to Him as living sacrifices - to live as His holy priests, who offer Him acceptable sacrifices through Jesus Christ, all day, every day, in our various callings.

In the passages from Romans and 1 Peter, we hear several examples of Christian self-sacrifice: serving, teaching, encouraging, giving, leading, showing mercy, living peaceably with others, submitting to governing authorities and those over us in the workplace, wives submitting to husbands, husbands honoring wives, showing compassion, and suffering patiently in doing good.

In all these things, and in all our other everyday activities, we sacrifice ourselves by using our time, not just for our own benefit, but also and especially for the well-being of others. Work time, school time, exercise time, study time, mealtime, chore time, recreation and relaxation time, even sleep time - it's all God's gift to us to use for purposes that please and honor Him.

This challenges us to think about the way we spend our time, how we utilize our talents, and the way we spend our treasures. Whatever it is I'm doing, am I doing it "for the Lord"? (Col. 3:23) Am I presenting God a living sacrifice? Am I conducting myself as a holy priest, whose sacrifice is acceptable to God?

Because our Lord sacrificed Himself wholly for us, we offer ourselves wholly to Him as living sacrifices. This is following Jesus in self-sacrifice. By His saving mercy, yes, our sacrifice is acceptable to God. For the sake of Jesus' finished work, God is pleased with us.

*“All ceremonies should serve the purpose of teaching the people what they need to know about Christ”* (Augsburg Confession, 24:3). We now enter the *non-festival half* of the church Year. During the first half of the Church year we hear of the life of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now we begin the **“Trinity Season,”** the time of year when we focus on the life of the Church and the Christian life. Here’s what’s coming up in the Divine Service for June and July as we continue to learn and live the Christian faith and life:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Day in Church Year</b>	<b>Gospel Reading</b>	<b>Gospel Focus (Theme of the Day)</b>
June 7	<b>Feast of Holy Trinity</b>	John 3:1-17	<b>THE TRIUNE GOD</b> - God reveals Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We spend our lives faithfully trusting His goodness. “Trinity” and “Triune” refer to God being three persons in one God.
June 14	<b>First Sunday after Trinity</b>	Luke 16:19-31	<b>THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS</b> - The Holy Spirit creates and sustains the Church by the Word of God. The life of the Christian is marked first and foremost by hearing the Word of God given through the apostles and prophets.
June 21	<b>Second Sunday after Trinity</b>	Luke 14:15-24	<b>THE GREAT INVITATION</b> - God invites us to the fullness of His heavenly gifts. Some make excuses to be absent; others see their need for Jesus’ healing and life. Every Divine Service (Communion Service) is a foretaste of Jesus’ eternal feast.
June 28	<b>Third Sunday after Trinity</b>	Luke 15:1-10 or Luke 15:11-32	<b>THE WORD OF RECONCILIATION</b> - Jesus comes to seek and save that which is lost—us! God and all angels rejoice when sinners repent. That’s what the Church is all about: bringing sinners to repentance and faith in Jesus’ forgiveness.
July 5	<b>Fourth Sunday after Trinity</b>	Luke 6:36-42	<b>THE CONGREGATION OF SINNERS</b> -Jesus has nothing but sinners in His Church. Because of His saving work, He changes us into people who learn to forgive each other just as He first forgave us.
July 12	<b>Fifth Sunday after Trinity</b>	Luke 5:1-11	<b>FOLLOWING JESUS</b> - Jesus reveals Himself as God in the miraculous catch of fish, and Peter recognizes his sinfulness. That’s life in Jesus’ Church. We confess our sin; Jesus graciously forgives. In this way we “catch people alive” as we bring them into the “boat” of the Church.
July 19	<b>Sixth Sunday after Trinity</b>	Matthew 5:20-26	<b>THE NEW RIGHTEOUSNESS</b> - In Baptism our Lord Jesus makes us holy, that is, set apart from the world and belonging to God. Everything right about Jesus is given to us as pure gift. Therefore, we holy people live life in His perfect “rightness.”
July 26	<b>Seventh Sunday after Trinity</b>	Mark 8:1-9	<b>THE SANCTIFICATION OF OUR BODIES</b> - When Jesus feeds the 4000, He shows us that the body is a good thing. After all, He created us to have bodies. When Jesus Christ saves and forgives us, He helps not just the soul, but also the body.

# June 2020

Phone #314-352-0014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> <i>Pastor's day off</i>
<b>7</b> <u>Holy Trinity</u> 9:00 Divine Service & <a href="#">LIVE STREAM</a> 11:00 Divine Service	<b>8</b> 7:00 Board of Finance	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> <i>Pastor on Vacation</i>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> <u>Trinity 1</u> 9:00 Divine Service & <a href="#">LIVE STREAM</a> 11:00 Divine Service	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> <i>Pastor on Vacation</i>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> <i>Pastor's day off</i>
<b>21</b> <u>Trinity 2</u> 9:00 Divine Service & <a href="#">LIVE STREAM</a> 11:00 Divine Service	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> <i>Pastor's day off</i>
<b>28</b> <u>Trinity 3</u> 9:00 Divine Service & <a href="#">LIVE STREAM</a> 11:00 Divine Service	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>				

# July 2020

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> Church office closed for 4 <sup>th</sup> of July	<b>4</b> <i>Pastor's day off</i>
<b>5</b> <u>Trinity 4</u> 9:00 Divine Service & <a href="#">LIVE STREAM</a> 11:00 Divine Service	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> <i>Pastor's day off</i>
<b>12</b> <u>Trinity 5</u> 9:00 Divine Service & <a href="#">LIVE STREAM</a> 11:00 Divine Service	<b>13</b> 7:00 Church Council	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> <i>Pastor's day off</i>
<b>19</b> <u>Trinity 6</u> 9:00 Divine Service & <a href="#">LIVE STREAM</a> 11:00 Divine Service	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> <i>Pastor's day off</i>
<b>26</b> <u>Trinity 7</u> 9:00 Divine Service & <a href="#">LIVE STREAM</a> 11:00 Divine Service	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	