



# Hope Ev. Lutheran Church

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[www.hopelutheranstl.org](http://www.hopelutheranstl.org)



## ✠ THE HOPE LUTHERAN ✠

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### God's Design in Sending the Cross

*For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. (Hebrews 12:11)*

*For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal. (2 Corinthians 4:17-18)*

We are certainly living through troubled times. The past year and a half of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ever changing (even questionable) measures of response continue to wear us down and cause confusion. Rising violence and crime rates in our cities, including our own, burden us by eroding safety and security. Many people are just angry at life and judgmental toward anyone and everyone. Our politics are more and more divided and divisive.

It is really nothing new that we fallen people in this fallen creation must endure the cross of affliction. Not only is affliction the result of sin in the world; it is also what we truly deserve for our sin. It is also what comes when we humans stray from God and His ways that are well expressed in the Ten Commandments.

As Christians, God's redeemed and baptized people, how are we to handle such times of affliction? What is God's design in sending the cross for us to bear?

German pastor Johann Starck (1680-1756) offers some very good biblical wisdom for pondering God's purpose in sending us times of affliction. This sage teaching applies to times of widespread trouble as well as individual trials. In his *Starck's*

*Prayer Book*, Starck gives this exhortation under the title "The Afflicted Ponder God's Design in Sending the Cross."

When children are chastened by their father, they weep and think themselves greatly afflicted. Is it a wonder, then, if afflicted persons do not know how to conduct themselves under the cross?

The afflicted should reflect that by sending us a cross God does not mean to lead us into destruction, but to save us from it. When a surgeon cuts into a wound, the surgeon intends to heal and purify. By means of tribulation, God intends to draw us away from this world and to Himself. When God sees that we have fallen in love with earthly things and creatures, He takes them from us in order that we may love Him alone and find our joy in Him. Yes, when He sees that because of our constant happiness, ease, and ongoing prosperity we are becoming sluggish in our prayers and negligent in our Christian faith, He sends us a little grief and sorrow, in order that we may long for Him again and seek to grow in love and knowledge of Him. All the while, however, He remains a gracious, almighty, wise, and kind God, who loves us deeply.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Starck's Prayer Book: Revised Concordia Edition* (CPH 2009), 190-191.

As he routinely does in his *Prayer Book*, Pastor Starck follows his exhortation with a rich, meaty prayer on the topic. I encourage you to make this your very own prayer...and pray it often!

My God, You have plunged me into such great sadness and grief that my heart is now in anguish, my mouth is filled with sighing, and my eyes are filled with tears. I do not know where to turn. Was I not happy? Was I not enjoying peace? Did I not have rest? Where, then, does this unrest come from?

My distress is great, but I will not on that account flee from you, my shepherd. You have struck me down with this grievous blow. Raise me up again with Your powerful Word, that I may ponder why this distress was sent my way. I know for certain that this cross has afflicted me not for my perdition or to injure my soul. No, my Father, lover of my life, it is not Your purpose to destroy me and bring Your anger crashing down on my head. Instead, by placing me in this mournful condition it is Your purpose to test me, whether I will love You in evil as well as in good days.

You would test my faith, whether I believe that You are an almighty, wise, and merciful God who is able to deliver me from this distress and to sustain me in it. You would test my patience, whether I will gladly bear this cross to Your glory. You would test my confidence, whether I trust in You above all things and rely on You, on Your grace, love, and mercy. You would test my

hope, whether I will hope when there seems to be nothing to hope for, and would rely on Your Word and promise.

Yes, my gracious God and Father, You would by means of the cross draw me away from the world, its desires, sins, and habits, that I may turn to You alone and cling to You. You take from me what gives me gladness so that I may learn to find my joy in You alone. You take from me what I delight in so that I may count You as my highest and dearest treasure. Well and good, my gracious God. I wish to become as You want me to be. I wish to bear whatever You lay on me.

Give me Your Holy Spirit, that He may furnish me with the strength and ability to do this. Without You it is impossible for me to maintain myself in such troubles, but by Your Spirit and gracious comfort I can be more than a conqueror. I am also willing and glad to be patient and hold still while You are at work, no matter how long it may last. I will also renounce the world and its pleasures and cling to You alone, that I may become one spirit with You. Thus this cross will purify me and greatly benefit my soul. You will send me help at the proper time.<sup>2</sup>

✠ Pastor Randy Asbury

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Blog: <http://rasburrypatch.blogspot.com>

Hope's Website: <http://www.hopelutheranstl.org>

On Facebook: [www.facebook.com/hopelutheranstl](http://www.facebook.com/hopelutheranstl)

## Reviving RE:VITALITY

LUTHERAN REVITALIZATION

A long time ago, in a congregation far, far away – at least in “COVID-time” – we at Hope began the process of “Re:Vitality” with the goal of doing some strategic planning. In early 2020 we participated in a self-assessment survey called “Congregational Assessment of Development/Decline Status” (CADDs). Now that we are returning to normal life and activities, this September we will redo the

CADDs self-assessment. With God’s blessing, we will also move forward with our strategic planning. Let’s see if the past year and a half has changed anything, and if so, how so. This will be a great time to discern why God has put us here in this place at this time to proclaim His wonderful works of salvation. More details are soon to come.

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<sup>2</sup> *Starck’s Prayer Book: Revised Concordia Edition* (CPH 2009), 191-192.

## Notes from the Kantor

What a summer it's been! I hope you have had a chance to relax and maybe do something out of the ordinary. Keri and I have been doing a lot of camping this summer and even spent a week camping/working while our floors were refinished at home. Summer is a time for these things, because once August hits school and church programs start ramping up again.

After more than a year of abnormality, especially in regard to our music program, I look forward to a reinvigoration of all aspects of our music program. I look forward to regular rehearsals beginning in September and our continued celebration of art and music in our *Music in a Sacred Space* series. Please continue reading for more information and updates!

### *Music in a Sacred Space*

After a strong start in the 2019-2020 season, our inaugural season was cut short in March 2020. Of course, there was no 2020-2021 season either. After working with some of the guest musicians that were cut short from our inaugural season the planning committee has assembled a delightful season of music making. Some events may be added throughout the season, but here are some important dates to pencil in.

**Sunday, October 31, 2021 at 3:00 pm**

*(note earlier time)*

Organ Vespers for the Reformation

Jacob Weber, guest organist

**Sunday April 3, 2022 at 4:00 pm**

Laudamus Choir

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

**Sunday, June 12, 2022 @ 4:00 pm**

Hymn Festival for the Holy Trinity

Kevin Hildebrand, guest organist and composer

### *Schola Cantorum*

Hope's adult choir is made up of singers in high school and up. They sing 2-3 times per month and on feast and festival days. Rehearsals are held weekly on Sundays following Bible Study for 60-75 minutes.

### *Kantorei*

The premier Lutheran, liturgical community-based children's choir in St. Louis! One of the hallmarks of the Kantorei is its outreach into our community for membership and incorporating those children with Hope members into the rich liturgical life of our congregation. The Kantorei sings one Sunday per month and for evening services to celebrate Epiphany and Ascension. Rehearsals are held on Tuesdays from 4:00-5:30.

### *Handbell Ensemble*

Did you know that Hope owns 3 octaves of handbells? It's been quite long time since we've heard all of them in worship. A minimum of 6 ringers are needed to form a handbell ensemble. However, we would love to have 11 people to ring all 3 octaves. Rehearsals are scheduled in consultation with the membership as needed.

**Are you a returning choir member? Would you like to join an ensemble? Email Kantor or use this QR code:**



If you aren't a singer, ringer, or instrumentalist you can still support the music program. Pray for them, support and encourage their musical efforts, and support them financially. Financial support is an important for the continued success of our *Music in a Sacred Space* series and to host guest musicians and provide receptions. This series is an important community outreach to our neighbors, near and far.

Together In Christ,  
Kantor Janssen  
mjanssen@hopelutheransth.org

# LCMS Stewardship Ministry

## Newsletter Article – August 2021

When it comes to stewardship, a favorite Bible verse is the account of the widow's mite (Luke 21:1-4). It's a moving account. Our Lord praises the seemingly small gift of two copper coins given by a poor widow above the abundance of gifts given by the rich, saying, "Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them" (Luke 21:3). And that is usually where we stop. But the text goes on. "For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on" (Luke 21:4).

"She ... put in all she had to live on." She gave everything. She held nothing back. She trusted that the Lord who made her and all creatures; who gave her everything she had; who redeemed her from her own sin, from death, and the power of the devil; who called her by the gospel and enlightened her with His gifts of Word and Sacrament; would continue to do this. He would provide her with all that she needed for this body and life because that is the character of the God she had.

But this is not why we give small gifts. Her gift, though it appeared small, was actually large. When we are tempted to give small gifts, it is precisely because we want them to be small! We don't trust the Lord to provide for us. We give small gifts because we lack faith in the One who created us, redeemed us, sanctifies and keeps us in the one true faith. We give small gifts because we doubt that God will really give us what we need and desire. We give small gifts because we are not content with what God has already given.

We are not slaves, children of the slave woman, under the Old Covenant (Galatians 4). We are adopted sons of the free woman. And since we are sons, we are also heirs. And heirs receive the inheritance. For everything is already ours in

Christ. And thus, moved by the willing spirit of adoption, we do the will of God in financial matters far beyond all that done by those under the Old Covenant who were forced by legal demands.

So, what have you decided to give? How do I decide what to give? Let the Scriptures be your guide.

We are to give proportionally to what we have received from God's giving to us (Luke 12:48; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2, 2 Corinthians 8:12). But you have not been set free to give nothing. See that you excel in the grace of giving (2 Corinthians 8:7)!

We are not free to live selfishly outside the Gospel, without regard for God who gives us all good gifts, without generosity for our neighbor who needs us and our gifts, without supporting the community of faith in which we live, without care for our spiritual fathers and those who teach and help raise our children in the faith, and without resources for the poor and needy.

In short, we are not free to live unto ourselves, hoarding what God has given us only for us. For love is the fulfillment of the law (Romans 13:10). And the sum of the law is this: Love God and love your neighbor (Matthew 22:34-40). We love because He first loved us. We give because He has given to us.

Luther once said, "Possessions belong in your hands, not in your heart" (LW 14:240). There is a reason your 10 fingers spread apart. With your hands you catch God's gifts for what you need and let the rest fall through your fingers to your neighbors – your family, your friends, your community, your church.

*“Therefore everything in this Christian community is so ordered that everyone may daily obtain full forgiveness of sins through the Word and [Sacraments] appointed to comfort and encourage our consciences as long as we live on earth”* (Large Catechism, II:55). Here’s what’s coming up in the Divine Service for August as we continue to learn and live the Christian faith and life.

Date	Day in Church Year	Gospel Reading	Gospel Focus (Theme of the Day)
August 1	<b>Ninth Sunday after Trinity</b>	Luke 16:1-9	<b>The Wise Steward</b> – The unjust manager gives us a lesson in wisdom. Christians are to be wise in their dealings in the world and not succumb to the world’s pressures and delights. We are called to use everything in life for Christ’s glory.
August 8	<b>Tenth Sunday after Trinity</b>	Luke 19:41-48	<b>The Lord and His People</b> – Jerusalem was blind to God’s gracious visitation in Jesus the Christ. Are we blind to God coming to visit us in His Word and Sacraments? Jesus wants His people to be attentive to His gracious presence.
August 15	<b>Eleventh Sunday after Trinity</b>	Luke 18:9-14	<b>The Pharisee and the Tax Collector</b> – The Pharisee worshiped himself, but the Tax Collector humbly confessed his sinful state. This is true godliness! God delights in people who tell the truth of their sin and live in His forgiveness.
August 22	<b>Twelfth Sunday after Trinity</b>	Mark 7:31-37	<b>The Healing of the Sick</b> – The Lord Jesus restores His good creation by opening our hearts to hear His Word and loosing our mouths to praise and confess Him. Thus healed, we confess not only Jesus’ forgiveness but also His creation.
August 29	<b>Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity</b>	Luke 10:23-37	<b>The Good Samaritan</b> – Jesus Christ is the true “Good Samaritan” who rescues us and heals us from our sin. In the same way, we Christians are called to “be neighbor” to people around us – that is, to be “little Christs” to them.

## LUTHERANS FOR LIFE ZOOM EVENTS

Lutherans For Life has zoom events called *For Life Live* on various topics. They are available to register and participate live or to watch in the archives later. The upcoming one this Tuesday, August 3, 7:00pm is on Critical Race Theory.

The speaker is LFL Board Member Col. John Eidsmoe. Discussion topics include- Marxism and Cultural Marxism, social justice, identity groups, how to respond to CRT, etc.

A recent zoom event on “Procreation: The First Blessing, Purpose, and Command” was given by Pastor Joe Signore. Pastor Signore had been a field worker at Hope several years ago! He is now a pastor in Florida and gives a

very interesting presentation on this topic. Here is the introduction to his message-

“What is the first blessing God gives? What is the first purpose of marriage? What is the first command? Procreation! ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth’ (Genesis 1:28). But too often procreation is not seen as a “first” when people, including Christians, look at sexuality, marriage, or general good living. But ... *what if* procreation is still God’s first blessing, purpose, and command for humanity even today? Deciding to have or not have (more) children is a conversation that too often centers on the desires and devices of the couple. But what if we begin the discussion instead with *God’s* purpose and plan?”

Another recent zoom event was “Disposable: When dating is not loving your neighbor” by Daniel Johnson. Topics discussed included- characteristics of the dominant dating culture and what a better approach would be considering Christian teaching and practice and then constructing a godly counterculture.

Pastor Jeff Duncan is the moderator of the

zoom events and helps keep the question and answer and discussion period interesting and moving smoothly.

For more information or to register for the zoom events, go to [lutheransforlife.org](http://lutheransforlife.org) and look for zoom events.



## YOU ARE INVITED!

All members of Hope are invited to the installation and inauguration of the 11<sup>th</sup> President of the Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

**Dr. Thomas J. Egger**

*Friday, August 27, 2021*

**10:00-11:30 a.m.**

Opening Service for the Seminary's 183<sup>rd</sup> Academic Year and  
Installation of Dr. Thomas J. Egger  
Chapel of St. Timothy and St. Titus on the Seminary campus

**Noon-1:30 p.m.**

All-campus luncheon  
Main quadrangle

**2:30-4:00 p.m.**

Inauguration of Dr. Thomas J. Egger  
Chapel of St. Timothy and St. Titus

For more information and to register your attendance call  
Kim Braddy at 314-505-7362 or email Kim at  
[braddyk@csll.edu](mailto:braddyk@csll.edu).



# INTERNATIONAL Lutheran Council

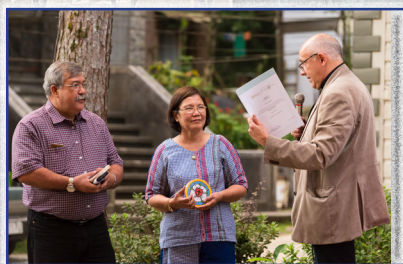
We are a growing worldwide association of established confessional Lutheran church bodies that proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ on the basis of an unconditional commitment to the Holy Scriptures as the inspired and infallible Word of God and to the Lutheran Confessions contained in the Book of Concord as the true and faithful exposition of the Word of God.



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We are a worldwide association of 60 confessional church bodies, in 48 countries, serving 7 million baptized members in 5 main worldwide regions.



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# August 2021

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1 <u>Trinity 9</u></b> 9:00 Divine Service & LIVE STREAM 10:15 Coffee hour 10:30 Bible Class/SS	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> <i>Pastor's day off</i>
<b>8 <u>Trinity 10</u></b> 9:00 Divine Service & LIVE STREAM 10:15 Coffee hour 10:30 Bible Class/ Summer Sunday School	<b>9</b> 7:00 Board of Elders	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> <i>Pastor's day off</i>
<b>15 <u>St. Mary, Mother of Our Lord</u></b> 9:00 Divine Service & LIVE STREAM 10:15 Coffee hour 10:30 Bible Class/SS	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> <i>Pastor's day off</i>
<b>22 <u>Trinity 12</u></b> 9:00 Divine Service & LIVE STREAM 10:15 Coffee hour 10:30 Bible Class/ Summer Sunday School	<b>23</b> New Missionary 7:00 Board of Finance Budget Town Hall Mtg.	<b>24</b> Doxology @ Hope	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> Installation & Inauguration of Dr. Thomas Egger @ Concordia Seminary	<b>28</b> <i>Pastor's day off</i>
<b>29 <u>The Martyrdom of St. John the Baptist</u></b> 9:00 Divine Service & LIVE STREAM 10:15 Coffee hour 10:30 Bible Class/ Summer Sunday School	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>			<b>Elder:</b> 1 – Jim Frost 8 – Scot Kinnaman 15 – Chad Rolland 22 – Scot Kinnaman 29 – Jim Frost	<b>Altar Guild:</b> 1 Spyers/Truebe 8 Asburry/Bergdolt 15 Brown/Patton 22 Keller/Janssen 29 Keller/Janssen