



Hope Ev. Lutheran Church

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✠ THE HOPE LUTHERAN ✠

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Called to Serve in Society

According to the “Table of Duties” in the *Small Catechism* we Christians are called to live holy lives in several arenas—in our home lives and in the places where we work and take part in the economy. The third arena in which we live holy lives is society. We may subdivide this arena into two parts: citizenship and neighborliness.

Called to Citizenship in the Political Realm

Of Civil Government

Luther cites Romans 13:1-4 as he exhorts governing authorities on how to serve in society according to God’s will and design. Scripture reminds us that governing authorities are given by God: “Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God” (Romans 13:1).

How are governing authorities to serve? Romans 13:4 says, *“He is God’s servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God’s servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.”* Governing authorities serve by rewarding good and punishing wrongdoing. Governing authorities are to protect their citizens from outbursts of evil—civil strife, lawlessness, wars, etc.—in order that citizens *“may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way”* (1 Timothy 2:2).

Luther highlights this service – protecting citizens – when he discusses “daily bread” in the *Large Catechism*.

In short, this petition [4th Petition] applies both to the household and also to the neighborly or civil relationship and government. Where these two things are hindered so that they do not prosper as they should, the necessities of life also are

hindered. Ultimately, life cannot be maintained. There is, indeed, the greatest need to pray for earthly authority and government. By them, most of all, God preserves for us our daily bread and all the comforts of this life. Though we have received from God all good things in abundance, we are not able to keep any of them or use them in security and happiness if He did not give us a permanent and peaceful government. For where there are dissension, strife, and war, there the daily bread is already taken away or is at least hindered (*Large Catechism*, III:73-74).

Governing authorities, Luther reminds us, are “worthy of all honor” because “by their office we have protection and peace” (LC III:75).

This, however, is a far cry from what we see happening in our own land. Currently our governing authorities tend to see their purpose as actually providing more than peace and protection for the citizens. Their intent seems to be to control and mandate the minutiae of our lives, from what we can or cannot eat to how much money we can make and invest. This is much more than just providing peace, justice, and protection. This gives us more reason to pray for our governing leaders, that they may serve according to God’s will rather than amass power and control for themselves.

Of Citizens

Luther also cites Romans 13, among other passages, to exhort citizens on their place and service in society:

It is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience. This is also why you pay taxes, for the

authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing (Romans 13:5-6).

The Fourth Commandment teaches us to honor our parents and, by extension, other authorities. When we submit to them, we take our proper place in relation to them. This means paying taxes in order that those serving over us on our behalf may do their God-given work. It also means praying for our governing leaders. Not only do they need all the help and wisdom they can get, but we also pray that they would govern according to God's will (See 1 Timothy 2:1-3).

In our nation, though, we do more than just pray, pay, and obey. We are more than mere subjects; we are citizens. We have much more of a share and a say in how our governing leaders govern. Robert Kolb reminds us, "Christian citizens are called to active involvement in the political life of their nation."¹

Contrary to popular notions in our land, yes, Christians should be active in the governance and direction of our nation. One such notion is that faith and religion – especially Christianity – should be a private matter and kept out of the "public square" and "policy debates." But that runs afoul of God's will! Some fear that Christians will try to establish a form of "Christian theocracy." However, nothing could be further from the truth.

When God places His Christians in the world to be salt and light, He wants them to influence the world around them for the good of all. Christians are salt and light primarily to spread the Gospel, but they also serve as preserving and enlightening agents for the good of society here and now. Robert Kolb explains:

[Christian citizens] do not participate in the political process with a Christian agenda; they rather seek the practice of civic righteousness, the righteousness which common sense should show all people is the best way to live. Luther's distinction of the two governments is helpful here. True godliness arises out of a proper vertical relationship, out of fearing, loving, and trusting in God above all things. But external conformity to God's design for life is possible to a large extent on the basis of human rationality. We cannot impose faith in God through law upon the unbelievers, but through law and political persuasion we can impose external compliance with large portions of God's design for our lives. That civic

righteousness is certainly preferable for all concerned to any kind of civic unrighteousness.²

We do not seek to establish some sort of "Christian nation," be we can and do strive to influence the political and social realm for the good of all people, whether Christian or not.

In addition to the the bare minimum duties of voting and paying taxes, Christians may also write to public officials and sign petitions to guide public policy, join political parties, and even run for and hold public office. All of society benefits when Christians hold public offices, from dogcatcher to neighborhood associations to United States Congress. It does involve the dirty and messy business of politics, persuasion, and compromises, but it also helps enlighten and preserve civil society according to God's will.

Called to Neighborliness

Christians are also called to holy living in society through *neighborliness*. This is much needed in our 21st century culture, especially since we have become so individualized. The widespread use of social media shows that people want to be connected with one other, but virtual connections can only go so far. We all can benefit from much more in-person neighborliness. Robert Kolb again provides good insight:

The responsibilities of exercising friendship, of enjoying its benefits and meeting its obligations, can offer a model for application in the other situations of life. For friends want to be treated with respect and love, with care and concern. They understand the wisdom of treating others as we want to be treated ourselves, difficult as that may sometimes be. They can begin to learn that when Jesus takes away our need to defend ourselves, we can touch the needs of others that bring pain and trauma to the surface. They can understand that we must bear and share such trouble with our friends.³

✠ Pastor Randy Asbury

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¹ Robert Kolb, *Teaching God's Children His Teaching* (Concordia Seminary Press, 2012), p. 148.

² Kolb, p. 148.

³ Kolb, p. 147.



In [Christ] we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth (Ephesians 1:7-10).

...O LORD, we pray, give us success!" (Psalm 118:25).

SERVING IN GOD'S MISSION In February, we completed a Sunday morning Bible study series—thank you to everyone who participated and shared. Your hopes, prayers and thinking about the future of our congregation as a family, journeying on the same road together—all under God's grace and provision—are cherished treasure. What's next in Hope's strategic planning process? **A series of congregational workshop sessions, in which all members of Hope are invited to participate.** Using *Re:Vitality* resources developed in the LCMS Office of National Mission, the outcome of these lively sessions will be a comprehensive strategic ministry plan that will include Hope's vision, mission and purpose statements, as well as a set of specific goals designed

to extend the proclamation of the Gospel to the communities that God has called us to serve. **IMPORTANT: Please mark your calendar now and plan to join your fellow Hope members in our fellowship hall on the following dates.** ALL are welcome and encouraged to join us; we need your input.

Saturday, September 10, 9:00-11:15 am

Saturday, September 24, 8:00-11:45 am

Saturday, October 8, 9:00-11:30 am

Saturday, October 22, 8:00 am-Noon

Saturday, November 5, 9:00-10:30 am

More details (previews of agenda and content) to follow, but for now, please mark your calendar and plan to join a vital conversation that we pray will impact our congregation's mission and ministry for the coming generations, to the glory and praise of Christ our Lord!

P.S. Mark your calendar now with the dates/times shown above...and then come. Unable to make a specific session? No worries...plan to join us for the others.

Basement Renovation Update

With the renovation of our sanctuary completed and the worst of the COVID pandemic in the rearview mirror, it's time to start moving forward on the basement renovation project. The renovation committee consists of Julie Day, Kay Shoemaker, Julie Vigil and Pam Nielsen (chair) with the plan to add at least one more member to the group. We are working to keep both the Church Council and Pastor Asburry informed as we move along. To date, we have walked through basement areas with the contractor, architects, and engineers several times. Our guidance has come from the feedback we had from the congregational survey conducted about the desired

use for the space. "Flexible and functional" space that is up-to-code is the end goal. The architect has prepared some general schematics and plans to present to the committee for our feedback and questions. We will provide a more detailed update once those are in hand and we've had some time to digest them. We are working to determine a proposed plan and scope for the project, including estimated costs. At that point, the project can be presented to the congregation for consideration with discussions about timeline and funding still to be determined. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Pam Nielsen via email: pamjniel@aol.com

LCMS Stewardship Ministry

Newsletter Article – March 2022

God's Providential Care

Everything we have and everything we are is a gift of God's providential care. We understand that we're not islands unto ourselves, that we could not exist without those who have gone before us and are alongside us. God has given us forefathers in family, country, and faith. We are recipients of what God worked through them. We know that God provides for our well-being through these means.

He gives us farmers and ranchers of all sorts so that we can eat. But more than that God created and gave us all the things that those farmers and ranchers cultivate. He gave us the corn, the beans, the wheat, the cows for milking, the steers for grilling. He gave each of those things, properties for our nourishment and sustenance. Without God creating and instilling in those things their taste and their nutritional value, we would not exist.

He gives us doctors, surgeons, nurses, and hospitals. He gives us medicine and medical instruments. Again, he gave us all things that go into making those medicines and medical instruments. He instilled in those things the properties that can be utilized for that purpose. Without God creating and instilling those healing properties into those things, and without God creating the ability within man to find this out and press it into service of our medical needs, we would not enjoy the kind of health we do now.

But there's more. He gives us gainful employment through our employers and provides for the necessities of life through the labor of our hands: "Then Moses said to the people of Israel, 'See, the Lord has called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; and he has filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, with intelligence, with knowledge, and with all craftsmanship, to devise artistic designs, to work in gold and silver and bronze, in cutting stones for setting, and in carving wood, for work in every skilled craft. And he has inspired him to teach, both him and Oholiab the son of Ahisamach of the tribe of Dan.'" (Exodus 35:30-34)

And one step back from that, He has created and given us hands. And attached to those hands are arms with strength. He created us with minds in order to make

those arms and hands move to accomplish the work set before us. And He has given us reason and senses. That mind, because of the reason God has instilled in it, is able to work through difficult problems before we press those arms and hands into labor. It allows us to grapple with concepts and run through scenarios instead of having to experience every situation personally. It allows us to learn from the mistakes as well as the accomplishments of others. This can be done for our entire body, all our skills and talents, everything that makes us ... us. So that everything we have AND everything we are is a gift from Him. This is what we confess in the First Article of the Creed when we say that we believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

But that is just the First Article of the Creed. We confess two more articles that deal with God's provision for our spiritual well-being. That He sent His Son to die and be raised on the third day for our justification. That He delivers that justification through the Means of Grace (Baptism, preaching, the Word of God, and the Lord's Supper). And to give you those Means of Grace, He gives pastors and teachers, etc. Again, this could be expanded and expounded upon. So that literally everything that we have and everything that we are – in this life and the next – is an inexpressible gift from God.

And it is for this, all of this, that we give thanks. And that is what stewardship is all about – giving thanks for God's provision for us. To give thanks is more than having an attitude of gratitude, more than just a feeling in our hearts. It is an action. It begins in the heart, but it doesn't stay there. It works its way out through the mouth in praise for God's gifts and in love and charity through the hands to our neighbors in family, country, and church. "For all this is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey him" (*Luther's Small Catechism*, 16).

So give thanks to God for His inexpressible gift – for everything we have and everything we are. Do this not in word only but also in deed.

– LCMS Stewardship Ministry: lcms.org/stewardship

"All ceremonies should serve the purpose of teaching the people what they need to know about Christ" (Augsburg Confession, 24:3). This month we continue our spiritual pilgrimage to Calvary in the great 40 days of Lent. For the great 40 days of Lent, we focus on God's great works of saving us from our sin and death. The time of Lent draws our attention to Christ and His great Suffering ("Passion") and Crucifixion to save us sinners. In April our somber repentance will turn to joyous gladness as we celebrate our Lord's victory over death. He certainly has trampled down death by His death, and He gives us His new, resurrected, eternal life! The Lord's Service in the Lord's House will shape us this way:

Date	Day in Church Year	Gospel Reading	Gospel Focus (Theme of the Day)
March 6	First Sunday in Lent	Matthew 4:1-11	Temptation – Our Lord's temptation. Because our Lord rejects the means of "victory" that Satan offers Him (bread, miracle, power), His way leads to the cross. But by His cross Jesus conquers Satan and temptation for us.
March 13	Second Sunday in Lent	Matthew 15:21-28	The Servant of the Lord – The Canaanite woman shows us how prayer addressed to our Lord is heard. Even though Jesus "hides" behind His threefold "No" she still trusts His healing mercy.
March 20	Third Sunday in Lent	Luke 11:14-28	The Lamb of God – When Jesus opens the mouth of the mute, devil-possessed man, He breaks through into Satan's territory. That same victory is ours in Holy Baptism where we "renounce the devil and all his works and all his ways."
March 27	Fourth Sunday in Lent	John 6:1-15	The Bread of Life – In the feeding of the 5000 Jesus Christ shows Himself as the true Bread of Life, the very same Bread of Life who comes to us in the Lord's Supper.

EASTER LILIES

Once again on Easter Sunday, April 17, lilies will be used in the altar area. If you wish to place a plant in honor or memory of someone, please pick up an envelope from the narthex or call Carol, 314-752-0525 or 314-691-3619, **before April 4**. Lily plants are \$8.00 each and are yours to take home after the service on Easter.



MARCH ON THE ARCH

Coalition for Life is organizing the annual prayer walk *March on the Arch* for Saturday, March 19. The rally begins outside Planned Parenthood in the city at 11:00am and then the march begins at noon. The four mile walk ends

at Laclede's Landing by the Mississippi River.

The invitation from the website says, "... March joyfully for children too young to have a voice, for real support and options for their mothers, for families, for LIFE in our region." For more information, see their website <http://www.coalitionlife.com/stlmarch/>



40 DAYS FOR LIFE

The national *40 Days for Life* is beginning to start again. It is scheduled in the St. Louis for March 2- April 10. *40 Days for Life* is an intensive effort designed to raise awareness, save lives, bring healing, and lead our nation to repentance for the sin of abortion through three

components: prayer and fasting, peaceful vigil, and community outreach. There are two locations in the St. Louis area for the vigil- the Planned Parenthood in St. Louis and the one in Fairview Heights, IL. For more information, see <https://www.coalitionforlifestl.com/40-days-for-life/>

THRIVE PARENT UNIVERSITY

Parent University should be starting up at Hope again soon. We will be looking for volunteers to help with serving food and helping with childcare. Please contact Judy Maichel if you would like to help- mjmaichel@juno.com.

ROSCHKE-STOHLMANN SCHOLARSHIPS

Applications for scholarships from the "Roschke-Stohlmann Lutheran Vocations and Education Fund" are now being accepted. Scholarships shall be granted based on motivation, financial and scholarship needs of the applicant as evaluated by the Board of Finance. Scholarships shall be awarded in the following order of priority: 1. Seminary training; 2. Pre-seminary training; 3. Full-time rostered church work training (teacher, DCE, DCO, Deaconess, etc.); 4. Lutheran elementary education; 5. Lutheran high school education. Application must be received by **Sunday, March 20, 2022**. Contact the church office for a copy of the application.

LUTHERAN SOUTH CONCERTS

On Sunday, March 6, 2022, at 7:00 pm the Lutheran South Wind Symphony will share a concert with the Concordia University - St. Paul Concert Band at Concordia Lutheran Church in Kirkwood. The program will feature *Festivity: A Celebration for Band* by James Curnow and *On a Hymnsong of Philip Bliss* by David Holsinger performed by both groups together. The Concordia University Concert Band will be traveling on their annual tour of the Midwest.

On Tuesday, March 8, 2022, at 7:00 pm the Lutheran South Concert Band, Jazz Band, and Choir will perform in the Kuhlmann Center on the campus of Lutheran South. The concert will feature repertoire by Timothy Broege, Clare

Grundmann, Donald Busarow, and John LaBarbera.

"MAKING THE CASE" CONFERENCE

We have a great speaking lineup for the **2022 Issues, Etc. "Making the Case" Conference** Friday, June 24 and Saturday, June 25 at Concordia University Chicago.

Former Attorney General Bill Barr
Dr. Albert Mohler of Southern Baptist
Theological Seminary
Pastor Bryan Wolfmueller of *Has American Christianity Failed?*
Pastor Chris Rosebrough of *Fighting for the Faith*
Dr. Joel Biermann of Concordia Seminary
Pastor Will Weedon of *The Word of the Lord Endures Forever*

Early-bird registration is \$135 and includes three meals. Attendance is limited to 500. [CLICK HERE](https://issuesetc.org/2022-conference/) for more information or go to issuesetc.org/2022-conference/.

LUTHERAN RESALE SHOP

We have just donated \$15,000 to Lutheran Family and Children's Services and Lutheran Senior Services. In fiscal year Oct. 2020 to Sept. 2021 we donated \$28,000. We sell items from collectibles and furniture to clothing and crafts. We are in great need of volunteers for weekly or monthly help, including hanging clothing, folding linens, pricing new donations, sales, etc. Some jobs can easily be done while sitting. Please call Monday through Saturday, 10 am to 3 pm and let us know when you can help. 314-389-9970. We are at 6701 W. Florissant.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR KINDNESS

Both charities we sponsored this year through the "Giving Tree", Our Little Haven and Lydia's House, have sent letters thanking members of Hope for their generous gifts this Christmas. These gifts helped foster children and abused women and their families experience a Christmas of love and caring. Thank you for your participation in the "Giving Tree".

Phone: 314-352-0014

March 2022

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Elder: 2 – Jim Frost 6 – Chad Rolland 13 – Scot Kinnaman 20 – Kevin Robson 27 – Scot Kinnaman	Altar Guild: 6 Spyers/Truebe 13 Asbury/Bergdolt 20 Brown/Patton 27 Keller/Janssen	1	2 Ash Wednesday 5:00 Kantorei rehearsal 7:00 Divine Service with Imposition of Ashes	3 <i>Pastor Asbury vacation</i>	4	5
6 <u>Lent 1</u> 9:00 Divine Service 10:15 Coffee hour 10:30 Bible Class/ SS 11:30 Schola/Confirmation	7 <i>Pastor Asbury vacation</i>	8	9 5:00 Kantorei rehearsal 7:00 pm Lent Evening Prayer	10	11	12 <i>Pastor's day off</i>
13 <u>Lent 2</u> 9:00 Divine Service 10:15 Coffee hour 10:30 Bible Class/SS 11:30 Schola/Confirmation	14 7:00 Church Council	15	16 NO Kantorei rehearsal 7:00 pm Lent Evening Prayer	17	18	19 <i>Pastor's day off</i>
20 <u>Lent 3</u> 9:00 Divine Service 10:15 Coffee hour 10:30 Bible Class/ SS 11:30 Schola/Confirmation	21	22	23 5:00 Kantorei rehearsal 7:00 pm Lent Evening Prayer	24	25	26 <i>Pastor's day off</i>
27 <u>Lent 4</u> 9:00 Divine Service 10:15 Coffee hour 10:30 Bible Class/ SS 11:30 Schola/Confirmation	28	29	30 5:00 Kantorei rehearsal 7:00 pm Lent Evening Prayer	31		