

Deserve. Deserve. Deserve!

This was the theme of an email I received, describing the attitudes and actions of people at a restaurant after months of pandemic restrictions and now, for some, regained freedoms. Contrary to what you may think, it was not the staff — they were doing all they could to satisfy customers, deliver carry out, and obey the rules of their state. It was the patrons that felt they deserved to have distance seating further than six feet, the ability to move about freely, unmasked, as they pleased, to be seated without a reservation (a mandate for that location), or to add to their party when they were already at the state maximum. The staff was in chaos, trying to deal with those and other inappropriate behaviors. How relieved they were when one carry-out customer said she understood and would wait for her misplaced order.

A week before I read the message, I saw another scene. Several infants and toddlers were brought to the pastor at an outdoor service where all the families were socially distanced. Some of the children had been privately baptized but had come to publicly reaffirm their Baptisms and hear the church's promise to pray for them and be their family, while the others, like my three-week-old granddaughter, were brought to the font to receive God's gift of grace by the water and the Word. No whining (and no crying!) — no demanding — no chaos. Grateful parents, sponsors, and children were surrounded by God's grace. They came, not because they deserved it, but because God offers this gift of forgiveness and acceptance into His family so freely. The love flowing through the congregation was evident, even while obeying the rules: masking, staying within the designated white squares marked on the church lawn, and not hugging — as much as they wanted to do so.

We all have been restricted and imprisoned in various ways in our lives — by sin, by bars, by illness, by rules, by abuse, or by fear. In this issue you will study His Word and read stories of how God overcomes the prisons in our lives — all because of His great love for us — and be reminded that we, though undeserving, are ever Surrounded by HIS Grace, so that we, too, may share His story of salvation, hope, peace, and joy.

Thanks be to God for HIS undeserved Grace,



Sheila Lutz, Editor-in-Chief

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Future Quarterly issues:

Summer 2021 Take your LWML convention enthusiasm to others who are not like you: immigrants, foreign students, contracted workers on work visas. Deadline 2/15/21

Fall 2021 Share a story of a first responder in today's world, one who has a LERT (Lutheran Early Response Team) or mission experience, or a story from 20 years ago as we remember 9/11. Deadline 5/15/21