



“Some thoughts on Suffering.”

by Rev. Thomas Chryst



Lent is just around the corner, beginning this year on February 26th with Ash Wednesday.

One of the themes of the Lenten season, and especially Holy Week, is the suffering of our Lord.

A Roman Catholic friend of mine once said, “you Lutherans don't really have a theology of suffering, do you?” Sure we do! It starts (and ends!) with Jesus.

Jesus knew suffering all his life – from his birth “in a stable mean and bare”, to his relative poverty – “*Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head*” (Matthew 8:20). He knew the temptations of Satan, and likely far worse than any we might bear. He knew the pain of grief – probably the sorrow of loved ones dying – like his stepfather Joseph and certainly he wept at the grave of Lazarus. And he knew the scorn and rejection of the crowds when his teaching became too difficult, and the hatred of the Jewish leaders who sought to trap him and finally had him arrested. He even knew the betrayal of a close friend, Judas, who betrayed him with a kiss. And then the rest of his friends abandoned him.

He is able to sympathize with us in our weaknesses, for he was like us in every way, yet without sin. He suffered all manner of sorrows in this vale of tears, and so no matter what we go through, Jesus has been through it, and worse.

Jesus is the Suffering Servant described in Isaiah, the Man of Sorrows, who bears pain and scorn for us, his people. He's not the majestic and glorious and powerful kind of Messiah the people wanted back then, or the sanitized and

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*That you may believe that Jesus is the Christ,
the Son of God, and that by believing
you may have life in His name. —John 20:31*

politically correct kind of Jesus many people want today, either. He suffers. He bleeds. He dies.

It's a rather ugly picture to imagine this Suffering Servant of ours, nailed to a cross for all to see. It's a bitter death he dies, but all the more because he was forsaken by God, whose wrath over sin was poured out on Jesus. It's foolishness to the Greeks and a scandal to the Jews.

But what does all this mean to you, when you suffer? When your spouse is dying in a hospital bed? When your children make terrible choices? When you can't get past the guilt and shame of past sins? When sickness and death are all around you?

Paul writes, *“For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too.”* 2 Corinthians 1:5

Jesus, who suffered horribly and died a bitter death, also knew the comfort of hope. That a resurrection would follow. That death would be no more. That sin was finished. That life and glory awaited. The ultimate light at the end of the tunnel. The darkness of death would be broken by the dawn of life.

So for us. In the midst of our sufferings, we too have a hope, a promise, of comfort in Christ. His resurrection paves the way for ours. His acceptance by the Father means we, too, will be welcomed. No matter what suffering we bear in this life, it's not worth comparing to the glorious inheritance that awaits us in Christ.

Ponder Christ's suffering, this Lent. And bring your own suffering to his cross. He'll bury it, along with your sins. And when Easter dawns for him, celebrate your own resurrection to come. A powerful comfort. A brighter day to come.

Christians Need Heroes

by Vera Sweet

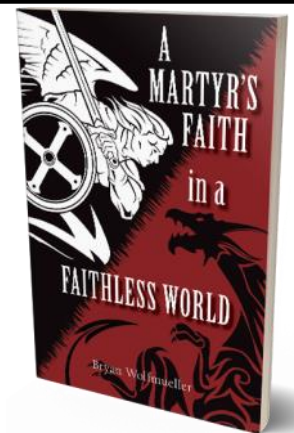
A Special Event with Pastor Bryan Wolfmuehler

Saturday, February 29th 2020

1:00 PM – 6:30 PM at Messiah Lutheran Church, Keller, TX



Rev. Bryan Wolfmuehler, pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Austin, Texas and Jesus Lutheran Church of the Deaf will be on hand at Messiah to present “Christians Need Heroes”. Rev. Wolfmuehler's latest book, “A Martyr's Faith in a Faithless World” was published recently and copies will be available for purchase and personal signing. His previous books are “Has American Christianity Failed?” and “Final Victory”.



Christians need heroes who can stand as examples, especially when the Lord gives us their same vocations and callings. Mary and Joseph are heroes for parents. Stephen is a hero for preachers. David is a hero for rulers. And all the Christian heroes are our examples in faith and love, in prayer and joy, in patience, in suffering, and in death. Christians need heroes who pray, serve, suffer with patience and who die.

Sign up at Messiah's Facebook (Look under "Events")
Or send Pastor Chryst a note that you are attending.

Dear Messiah friends,

Three months ago I informed Pastor and the staff that I would be retiring from my position here at Messiah as Administrative Assistant to the Pastor on January 31, 2020. Many seasonal activities in all our lives – and especially here at Messiah - have taken place and that date has come and gone. Some of you were aware of my decision, many, I realize, were not.

There is so much that I could say about my years working here at Messiah. It has been a true pleasure and privilege to serve the congregation and Pastors as a member of the church staff. I so enjoyed all of my tasks ...even those “other duties as assigned”! It was a perfect fit for me. Most enjoyable and rewarding were the many contacts made with all of you, with our senior members who are not able to attend church services any longer, with the Confirmation students as they prepared for a major event in their spiritual lives, with the Acolytes, Crucifers, Elders, the church Board members, the school staff and students, the preschool teachers, the darling little preschool children singing...and crying...down the hall, the community in an effort to help support their ministries and activities. It is also a blessing to be able to work alongside those who are in fellowship spiritually and to develop wonderful and lasting friendships.

The church office is truly a “hub” of accomplishment and activity. It is a place where worship services and events are planned, executed, and afterwards recorded for posterity. It is, and must always be, a welcoming place – not only for the Fed-Ex and UPS guys, but for all – and especially our Messiah families.

My heartfelt thanks to you all for your kindnesses through the years, for your support and helpfulness in making my tasks easy and enjoyable. I will miss seeing many of you from behind my desk, but know that the activities and assistance desired for you will continue as always.

Thank you also for the very generous monetary Christmas gift. Messiah has always been caring and generous with its appreciation of the work of the Pastors and staff.

Pete and I will continue to worship and remain active here at Messiah. We do not have specific “glorious” plans for our “retirement”, but we are confident that there is a plan. We look forward to the years to come and a decade full of new successes, new learning, and good health. As written in Jeremiah 29:11, “I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for good and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope”.....

Blessings to you all!
Carol Hibbs

Lenten Sermon Series 2020 ~ “Luther’s Catechism Hymns”

by Pastor Chryst

Most of us know that Martin Luther wrote the Small Catechism as a simple way to teach the faith in the Christian household. It contains 6 sections, or “chief parts”, covering the most important topics in biblical doctrine. But Luther also wrote many hymns, including 6 hymns which coordinate with the chief parts of the catechism. This Lent, we will meditate on each of these in turn, to draw us deeper into the Scriptures, and to better see God’s love for us in Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Each Wednesday will feature a light meal at 6pm (except no meal on March 11th), followed by the Order of Evening Prayer at 7pm.

Ash Wednesday—February 26th—Confession and Absolution

Midweek 2—March 4th—The Ten Commandments Midweek 4—March 18th—The Lord’s Prayer

Midweek 3—March 11th—The Apostles’ Creed Midweek 5—March 25th—Holy Baptism

Midweek 6—April 1st—The Lord’s Supper

Using online posts from Cambria Stame (CUI), Anna Barger (CTSFW), and Christina Buhler (CUC)



"I definitely have the coolest job ever- hanging out with the sweetest women who love Jesus, love their neighbors and raise their voices in songs of praise every chance they get." —Anna Barger

I had the pleasure of serving as Head Proctor for Christ Academy Phoebe School, which is an event for young women considering the vocation of Deaconess. Being a head proctor means that I had the opportunity to do a myriad of fun and slightly dangerous things, including driving a fifteen-seater van all around Indiana (all the students are still alive), encouraging Team Olympia (whose name derives from an early church deaconess) to win the House Cup at all costs by mercifully crushing their competition in hymn-singing competitions, and by staying up way past any godly hour to discuss deep theological questions with anyone game enough. —Cambria Stame

Back Row: Jonah, Harvey, Christina, Evan, David, Ethan, & Matthew
Front Row: Ana, Amanda, Anna, & Cambria all holding Joseph



One of the best teams I have ever had the pleasure and joy of working with (if not the best). I will never forget these kind and wonderful people and how well we worked together in order to inspire other young men and women in their consideration of being Deaconesses or Pastors and encouraging them in their faith. Christ Academy is such a wonderful program and will always have a very special place in my heart. The people I have met and the friendships I have made as a result of this program mean the world to me. —Christina Buhler



During morning staff meetings, we discuss important things like the schedule for 25% of our time and exchange homemade memes and inside jokes for the other 75%.



"Students had the opportunity to hear from their proctors today during the Proctors' Panel. They fielded questions about their experiences of study, prayer, and community life in college." —Christ Academy FB





Of the three things a person is not to talk about in polite company – religion, politics, and money – the church is called, in one way or another, to talk about all three. Perhaps this is the reason why teaching about stewardship often seems to be an afterthought. It's something that happens only out of necessity when financial constraints are already nipping at the heels.

There is a more excellent way. Stewardship shouldn't be the kind of teaching that comes up only when there is a financial crunch. It should be part and parcel of the ongoing instruction of Christians as they live out their faith in their vocations – members of their family, their society, and their church. This teaching touches upon every facet of our lives; it stakes a claim upon our time, our presence, our prayers, and our possessions.

Stewardship begins with the acknowledgment that we are stewards. A steward is a manager of someone else's possessions. In Christian stewardship, we recognize, according to the Apostles' Creed, that God is the owner of all things as the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. And in His fatherly divine goodness and mercy, He gives us what is His to manage here below.

The principal virtue for stewards is faithfulness. As St. Paul wrote to the Christians in Corinth:

"Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful." (1 Cor. 4:2)

Stewards must manage that which belongs to the owner according to the owner's wishes. That is what it means to be faithful in stewardship.

That raises a question: How are Christian stewards to be faithful in their managing of what God has entrusted to them to manage? In other words, what are the specific duties of a Christian steward?

This depends upon what God has revealed in His Word for each of our vocations in life as those in a family (fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, children), society (governors or citizens), and the church (pastors or laity). The Table of Duties from *Luther's Small Catechism* lays this out in helpful and orderly way.

Let's look just at what the laity (hearers as it is labeled in the catechism) owe their pastors:

"In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel." (1 Cor. 9:14)

"Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches. Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows." (Gal. 6:6–7)

"Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, 'You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain,' and, 'The laborer deserves his wages.'" (1 Tim. 5:17–18)

"We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves." (1 Thess. 5:12–13)

"Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you." (Heb. 13:17)

We can see that the Lord commands hearers to support the work of the ministry with the gifts God endowed them – their time, their presence, their prayers, and their possessions. This is the means by which God blesses His people with His gifts: the ministry with the support of those whom they serve, and the hearers with the work of the ministry.

St. Paul expounds upon this further in his letters to the church at Corinth. He instructs them to give regularly (1 Cor. 16:1–2), proportionally (1 Cor. 16:1–2; 2 Cor. 8:12), and generously (2 Cor. 8:20) of our first-fruits (1 Cor. 16:2) with a spirit of eagerness (2 Cor. 9:2), earnestness (2 Cor. 8:7), cheerfulness (2 Cor. 9:7), and love (2 Cor. 8:23).

All of this teaching is set forth squarely within the context of stations to which God calls us. This is always appropriate for the church to speak because it instructs God's people in how they are to live out their faith as His stewards under those who are created, redeemed, and sanctified by Him.

Messiah Lutheran Church
Board of Stewardship

Quarterly Voter's Meeting notes

by Bill Brandt—*Secretary*

The Messiah Lutheran Church Voters Assembly met on January 26, 2020. The roll was called with 33 voting members present.

Treasurer report was delivered by Herbert Herrmann. The report noted a surplus of over \$12,000 for the first quarter of FY20. No funds have been borrowed from the previously approved line of credit. The spending plan was adjusted to insure we maintain a positive cash flow throughout the fiscal year.

Peter Hibbs reports for the Board of Elders that the new Head Elder is Steve Latham.

Clay Brandt reports for the School Board that the Chess Board and Ninja Course are nearing completion. Marcia Huebel has rejoined the faculty as Art Teacher. Clay reports that the Board has determined to maintain our existing leadership structure and personnel through the next school year. The goal is to demonstrate a positive enrollment trend line in order to have the financial wherewithal to bring on a fulltime Headmaster.

Bruce Dana for the Board of Evangelism reports a very successful Angel Tree program and the continuing success of the Swaddling Clothes Ministry. MLC is ceasing our relationship with Blue Rock Marketing and looking for more profitable ways to employ our marketing dollars.

Paul Lara updated the voters on the work of the Trustees. In addition to the continuing work the Trustees will fix the drainage problems at the sport court, support a new Fellowship Hall Podium, and address a further problem with the 2nd floor air conditioning.

Bill Stone, Chairman of the Board of Stewardship is developing the FY21 budget with input from all Boards. He noted that we have begun pay-down of Mortgage #3 using income from investment account. These payments are in addition to our regular budgeted payments.

Under New Business:

The Elders submitted 33 names for removal from the rolls of MLC due to failure to respond to numerous letters. The motion to remove was approved.

Peter Hibbs moved: To direct the Chairman of the Board of Stewardship to program \$42k into the FY 20/21 budget for Vicar Salary, Housing & Utility, and Vicarage Fee. The motion was approved.

Nominations Committee Chris Aguilar submitted the slate of nominations for board members and officers. Ken Blume was nominated from the floor by Eric Weber for inclusion on the slate for the Board of Education.

All nominees were elected. All boards have at least two elected members. A full list of board members is located on the bulletin board in the church copy room.

Bill Brandt announced that there will be an all board member, all officer orientation meeting on Wednesday, February 5th at 7:00 pm.

What happened to the extra hymn?

by Miguel Ruiz—Director of Parish Music

For thus said the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, "In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength." – Isaiah 30:15.

You will notice that we will be scheduling two hymns for the distribution of communion instead of the usual three. Many Sundays the third hymn was not sung in either or both services, and the last thing we would want is for singing to feel rushed during communion just so that all the songs could be sung. As much as I personally love singing more than nearly anything else, it is also beneficial during worship to have moments of silence and reflection. Rather than scheduling a hymn that isn't sung or rushing through music, we will *intentionally* allow time for silence or soft instrumental music to facilitate stillness before the Lord, in addition to singing, as we partake of the holy mysteries in the sacrament of the altar. If it proves too much space, we can always add the third hymn back in later. But for now, I am reminded Leopold Stokowski quote, "A painter paints his pictures on canvas. But musicians paint their pictures on silence." Sometimes less can be more, silence can increase the meaningfulness of sound, and a moment of rest can prepare us to more vigorously resume our common labor to tell the next generation what God has done for us as we sing the Lord's song.

"Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!" – Psalm 46:10

THANK YOU!

by Larry Goedecke and Bob Knipp

Many months ago when we learned that Vicki Main would be retiring this year, a committee was formed to honor her with a retirement party. The Church Council approved funding and the committee members began their work. As anyone knows who ever worked on a committee, there is a whole lot of work required to plan large events...find a venue, plan the program, find willing participants and handle a thousand other details. Thankfully, I had a wonderful committee along with others in and out of the church that made the event the success it was.

I want to sincerely thank the following members at Messiah for their time, their talents and other contributions:

Retirement Committee:

Kandi Baker
Kris Carter
Susan Holder
Judy Klingbeil
Bob Knipp
Bridget Palmer
Miguel Ruiz
Karen Shrum

Registration and Funds Management:

Pastor Chryst
Carol Hibbs
Veronica Hobson
Tamarra Liddle
Jinel Munoz
Olivia Bolton
Katie Bolton

Speakers:

Pastor Tom Chryst
Pastor Glenn Huebel
Steve Latham
Dr. Eatherton

Choir/Music Direction:

Luke Palmer
Miguel Ruiz

Adult Choir:

Patti Lewis
Annelise Palmer
Karen Shrum
Linda Borchelt
Bridget Palmer
Mary Ann Cotton
Durk Cotton
Debbie Lee
Carol Lemmon
Miguel Ruiz
Luke Palmer
Seth Baker
Ray Main
Larry Goedecke
Mikaeyla Haynes
Tricia Boyd
Stan Taber
Patti Stone
Kandi Baker

Instrumentalists:

Helena Chryst, Violin
Morgan Chryst, Violin
Tony Corson, Tuba
Luke Palmer, Piano
Miguel Ruiz, Piano

Adult Bell Choir:

Tamarra Liddle
Becky Hooper
Linnea Johnstone
Ellen Butler
Miguel Ruiz
Alison Smith
Kimberly Kass
Caitlyn Latham
Herbert Herrmann
Carrie Herrmann

Youth Bell Choir:

Ellie Johnson
Faith Field
James Buhler
Joseph Buhler
Sophie Hooper
Caleb Liddle
Hannah Liddle
Helena Chryst
Morgan Chryst
Seth Baker

Video & Logistics:

Carson Carter
Colby Carter
Luis Munoz



Messiah Lutheran Church & School
The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

1308 Whitley Rd. Keller, TX 76248

Church Office: (817) 431-2345

Academy Office: (817) 431-5486

Sunday Worship: 8:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.

Sunday School & Adult Bible Class: 9:30 a.m.

Rev. Thomas Chryst, Pastor

www.messiahkeller.org

Bag Mat-ters

by Vicki Main and Carrie Herrmann



To each mat we attach this Bible verse from Proverbs 3:24 ESV . . . *When you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet.*

Last Tuesday morning Ray & I again had the pleasure to deliver Messiah's comfort mats from our Bag Mat-ters group to the Presbyterian Night Shelter in downtown Fort Worth—15 of them this time. Even as we were unloading them from the car, a gal, who had been watching us from afar, came over and asked if she could have one for in her tent. . . . It is always a very humbling experience to make this delivery.

Flattened plastic

bags—cut into 1-1/2" strips—looped together—single crocheted together with a size Q crochet hook. The form I fill out upon delivery asks for the value of the donation *priceless*. Messiah has a very dedicated group of gals continuing on with this project. Watch the bulletin for the next Saturday morning gathering and consider coming to help. It was a pleasure to start this group and now to know it will continue is priceless indeed!



THANK YOU

Thank you to Ray and Vicki Main for all their hard work on this outreach. Bag Mat-ters will continue to meet under new leadership. Kandi Baker, Carrie Herrmann and Debbie Goedecke

will be the new "Bag Lady Leaders". The group will continue to meet the **second Saturday** of each month in the Fellowship Hall.

What do we do on those Saturdays? First, the plastic bags we collect are flattened out, cut, and "plarned". Second, the "plarn" is used to crochet the sleep mats for the homeless community.

How many bags does it take to make one sleep mat?

Roughly 750-800 bags go into the making of one sleeping mat. So, please donate as often as you are able.

Who can help with Bag Mat-ters? All are welcome! Whether you stay for two seconds, five minutes, or two hours; your presence is humbly noted and appreciatively welcomed.

If you have any questions, please contact one of the new leaders:

Kandi Baker: 817-703-4709 Debbie Goedecke: 682-558-1627
Carrie Herrmann: 817-881-8929

