

PEW NEWS

APRIL 2022

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Experiencing Profound Love

I learned how to bake from my mom. Growing up I was convinced that nobody could bake better than she could. She made the best sweet potato pudding. I didn't realize just how good it was until I left home and tried others. I couldn't wait to go home and watch her make her pudding to figure out what made it so special.

I got my passion for woodworking from my father. I used to stand behind him and watch as he took a piece of wood and turned it into a piece of art and then I'd go and try on my own. When I was disappointed with how mine turned out I came back to dad to watch him at work.

Growing up both mom and dad taught me about love. As an adult my wife has continued to teach me about love. I treasure their love. But the love we give and receive in this world cannot compare to God's love. Listen as John explains in 1 John 4:7-8. "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love." God doesn't just love. God is love. The kind of love that will sacrifice everything for the sake of the someone else.

Just as I would go back to mom to master baking or back to dad to learn the art of woodworking getting close to my heavenly Father is the best way to experience deep, profound love. John tells us exactly where to see this love on display. In 1 John 4:10 he says "In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Love sent His only Son to bear our sins and die our death satisfying the wrath of God. That's propitiation.

Here's the great news. It's not too late to experience this profound love of God. Just as I would stand next to mom or behind dad to learn from the best God is giving us a front row seat to witness His love on display. Holy Week begins on April 10th as Jesus rides into Jerusalem to be the propitiation for the sins of the world. Holy Thursday Jesus will institute the Lord's Supper so that we can receive his body and blood for the forgiveness of our sins. Good Friday Jesus will give his life to atone for our sins. Easter Sunday he will rise triumphant over sin, death and the devil so that you too can rise triumphant every day of your life.

God is offering you a front row seat so that you can experience the depth of His love for you this Holy Week. The more we experience His sacrifice for us the better we understand profound love. "In this is love . . ."

Why Should We See the Blood of Christ in Baptism

By Martin Luther

Because this holy baptism was purchased for us through this same blood, which he shed for us and with which he paid for sin. This blood and its merit and power he put into baptism, in order that in baptism we might receive it. For whenever a person receives baptism in faith this is the same as if he were visibly washed and cleansed of sin with the blood of Christ. For we do not attain the forgiveness of sins through our world, but rather through the death and the shedding of the blood of the Son of God. But he takes this forgiveness of sin and tucks it into baptism.

This is what St. John was looking to when he mingled water and blood together, for, after all, it has in it that which was gained through the blood. And thus St. John deems the person who is baptized as having been washed in the blood of Christ. His blood is not that of a sinful man or the blood of a dead goat or ox; it is innocent, just, and holy, it is a blood of life. Therefore it also contains such strong salt and soap that, wherever it touches sin and uncleanness, it bites and washes it all away, eats and destroys both sin and death in an instant.

Thus St. John pictures our dear baptism for us in this way, so that we shall not regard and look only at the clear water, for, he says, Christ comes “not with water only” (as the Anabaptists blaspheme, saying it is nothing but water) “but with the water and the blood” [1 John 5:6]. Through such words he desires to admonish us to see with spiritual eyes and see in baptism the beautiful, rosy-red blood of Christ, which flowed and poured from his holy side. And therefore he calls those who have been baptized none other than those who have been bathed and cleansed in this same rosy-red blood of Christ.

Holy Week Schedule

Passion/Palm Sunday	April 10th	8 am & 10:30 am
Holy Thursday	April 14th	7 pm
Good Friday	April 15th	7 pm
Easter Vigil	April 16th	7:50 pm (sunset)
Easter Sunrise	April 17th	6:30 am (sunrise)
Easter Celebration	April 17th	10:30 am

Easter Breakfast

Between the two services on Easter morning there will be an Easter breakfast in the Fellowship Hall. We invite you to join your brothers and sisters in Christ for a hearty celebration and great fellowship. Eggs, sausage, coffee and juice will be provided. Bring your favorite sweet rolls or fruit salad.

Feeding Farmville

Our vision is to help our neighbors grow closer to God through an experience with His unconditional love. Since 2016 we have led an effort to share a warm meal with our neighbors each Thanksgiving. Even as the pandemic shut things down we continued to deliver God's love to over 800 neighbors in need. We have been able to do that because God brought together different community churches and businesses to accomplish something huge.

This project has shown us God's unconditional love is so many profound ways. This past year it could not have been more apparent. In Matthew 14 Jesus fed over 5,000 people with two fish and five loaves of bread. Then to the utter astonishment of all there were 12 baskets of leftovers. This year we were able to feed over 800 people and yet we have enough leftover that we can do more! Praise the Lord!

Therefore, we will be giving 200 people a meal for Easter. The meal includes ham, potatoes, vegetables, a roll and a cupcake from Mill Street Sweets. We will pack the meals on Friday, April 15th, at 2 pm. Teams will deliver the meals to our neighbors on Saturday, April 16th, at noon. If you're interested in helping call the church office to sign up.

The Great Sending Bible Study

We will begin a Bible study on April 3rd based on a book called "The Great Sending." This book contains 42 different Bible studies written by theologians around the country. "God's sending is a call to join Him in something beyond self, beyond a congregation, and beyond a denomination. God is calling us to much more. His Great Sending is His heartbeat for the world that He wants beating in and through you." There is no homework. Each week we will meet to read a selection from the Bible, some comments from the author, and then answer the discussion questions together. Join us Sunday at 9:15 am or Tuesday at 7 pm.



LWML News for April

Happy Spring! I'm looking forward to seeing more women join us at our meetings as the weather has warmed up a bit. We meet on the second Tuesday of the month at 9:30 with a Bible study from the Lutheran Women's Quarterly (available by the mailboxes in the kitchen). For April Ginny Dixon will lead the Bible study and Mabelle Bloker will provide a dessert for after the meeting. (Bring a sandwich if you like.)

LWML YARD SALE COMING UP MAY 14! Start setting aside items that you would like to donate. Look for times to bring your donations published in the next newsletter and in the Sunday bulletin. We will also have cookies to sell.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Summary Feb 2022	
Collections less savings & stained glass donations	\$ 15,691.97
Savings Used	\$ 1,495.22
Stained Glass Window Donations <Fully Funded>	\$ 963.00
Total Expenses	\$ 38,560.56
Additional Mortgage Collected & paid	\$ 260.00

2 new sets of Paraments were paid for.

\$17,310 Stained Glass Window deposit was made after artwork was approved.

Any Thrivent Choice Dollars from 2021 must be designated by March 31st.

St. John's Stewardship Corner

Applying Bible Principles

Male peacocks are interesting creatures. They love to be noticed, so they spread their bright plumage for any and all to see (especially female peacocks!). Some people are like that too, especially when it comes to their financial support of the Lord's work. They want people to notice their act of giving.

But is that God's way? A simple examination of the sixth chapter of Matthew's gospel reveals the answer. The Lord Jesus said that our giving is to be done secretly. If we take His instruction at face value, then it is apparent that we are not to let others know the extent of our giving. In fact, Jesus went so far as to say (figuratively, of course) that we shouldn't even let one hand know what the other is doing when it comes to our giving.

Sometimes, our giving will be seen by men. Sometimes, that's unavoidable. But Christ's point concerns our motive. We should give to please our Lord, not in order to be seen by other people so that we receive their commendation or accolades. In other words, we are to avoid what one writer described as "advertised piety."

A well-known evangelist said that the world has yet to see what could be accomplished for the sake of the gospel if we would quit being concerned about who gets the credit for what gets done in the kingdom of God. That includes our giving. In fact, one of the greatest tests for us as God's children is whether we are able to give cheerfully of ourselves and our resources without getting the credit.

Unless we give by cash and choose to forgo a tax deduction for our giving, probably the person who handles the church's financial affairs will be aware of our giving. Otherwise, though, it's a good idea to keep our giving a matter that's between ourselves and the Lord. Actually, it's more than a good idea. It's something Christ said we should do.