



The St. Johns Servant

St. Johns
Lutheran Church

Park Rapids, Minnesota

February, 2023



Regular Worship
RETURNS

Regular Worship Schedule Resumes

This month we return to our regular Sunday worship schedule with services at 8:00 and 10:30 a.m., coffee and Sunday School at 9:15 a.m. and Bible study at 9:30 a.m.

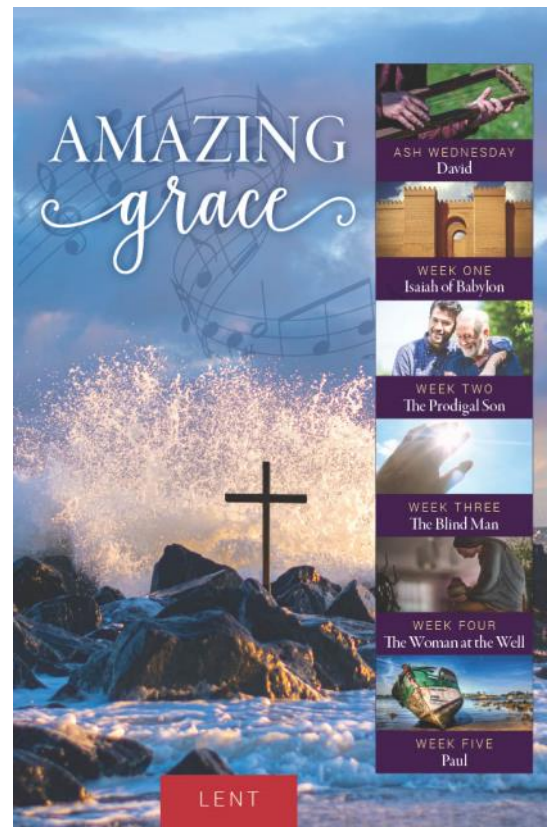
We're interested to know what everyone thought of the one service schedule in January. You can pick up a survey questionnaire at church or email us with your thoughts. You can click on "contact us" on our website, www.stjohnspr.org.

250 Years of Amazing Grace

In honor of the 250th anniversary of the writing of "Amazing Grace," our worship series for Lent ties the words of the beloved song to our lives today as Christ's disciples. Those in the Bible who experienced the amazing grace of God help us each week to realize that though we once were lost in sin, we now have been found by Jesus, and though we once were blind to God's mercy, we now can see his love at work in us through our Savior's death and resurrection.

Join us for worship each Wednesday at noon or 6:00 p.m. The services will also be live streamed. The Ladies Aid will serve lunch following the noon service. A meal will be served at 5:00 p.m. before the evening service. Here's a look at our focus and preacher for each week.

- ♦ February 22 *David*
- ♦ March 1 *Isaiah*
- ♦ March 8 *Prodigal Sons*
- ♦ March 15 *Blind Man*
- ♦ March 22 *Woman at the Well*
- ♦ March 29 *Paul*



Call Process Update



The Call Committee will be interviewing five candidates via Zoom on January 31 and February 1. We may submit a letter indicating our preferences to the placement committees at the seminaries. The ratio of calling congregations to seminary candidates is large so it's possible we may not receive a candidate. We should receive news about the placement by April. Stay tuned!



Things to Note

- ⇒ The Ladies Aid meets Thursday, February 9 at 1:00 p.m.
- ⇒ The Lutheran Laymen's League meets Thursday, February 9 at 7:00 p.m.
- ⇒ The Evening Guild changed their meeting time from 2:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. Next meeting date is Tuesday, February 14 at 1:00 p.m.
- ⇒ The Daily Power of Baptism is Pastor Harvala's topic this month for Wednesday Bible Study which meets at 10:30 a.m. in the social hall.
- ⇒ CPR/AED Class—Contact Brenda Huwe at 218-255-2070 if you are interested. The cost will be \$55.00 per person. This is a BLS (Basic Life Support) class and will take approximately three hours. Date has yet to be scheduled. We are researching if there are funds available thru LLL.
- ⇒ There's still plenty of open Sundays to provide flowers for the altar. You can sign up on the chart by the office. You are responsible for either bringing in the flowers yourself or having the local florist deliver them prior to Sunday. You will receive a reminder call the week before.



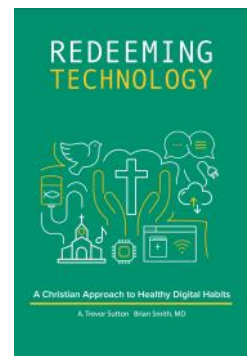
Choirs Coming Back

The Bell Choir is heading back to practice on Wednesday, February 8 at 5:00 p.m. The Senior Choir will resume practices on Wednesday, February 8 at 6:00 p.m. in the choir loft. During Lent they will practice following the 6:00 p.m. service. New members are always welcome! If you have questions, contact bell choir director, Vickie Helm at 218-330-3195, or choir director, Sarah Kaufenberg, at 651-260-3350.

Check This Out

4,105 hours. That's how much time Americans spend consuming media each year. That equates to about 11 hours per day spent on social media, in front of a screen, or texting your friends and family. Have you considered how all of this media time is affecting both your physical and spiritual well-being?

Pastor-psychiatrist duo Rev. A. Trevor Sutton and Dr. Brian Smith have teamed up to help you evaluate your technology use through a Christian perspective with their book, *Redeeming Technology*. This book offers insights to help you develop a healthy balance with technology in today's modern age while still being focused on Christ.



Each chapter includes a "Do This, Not That" advice column to help you make better decisions when it comes to your media and technology consumption. Additionally, there are discussion questions to get you thinking about your media use and to help you center yourself back on Christ.

This great book and many others are available in the church library. Check it out!



Main Street Living Programs This Month

Have you checked out Main Street Living? Programs are broadcast Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m. on KVRP Fargo-Moorhead. Here's the "North" programs for February:



February 5: Rev. Bruce Block, Immanuel Lutheran Church, McIntosh, MN, presents the message: "A Message of Wisdom or Power?" based on 1 Corinthians 2:15. *This Is the Life*: "The Gift" - A daughter struggles over what to do with birthday gift money.

February 12: Rev. Michael Suelzle, St. Andrew Lutheran Church, Niagara, ND, Grace Lutheran Church, Lakota, ND, and St. Peter Lutheran Church, Devils Lake, ND, presents the message: "A New Creation" based on Matthew 5:29-30. *This Is the Life* program: "The Priceless Book" - Money and health troubles on the farm lead a father to God's Word for comfort.

February 19: Rev. Jim Meyer, member of St. John's Lutheran Church, Thief River Falls, presents the message: "The Son Gives Light Beyond Words!" based on Matthew 17:1-9. *This Is the Life* program: "In Search of Dignity" - Two factory workers struggle to find meaning after they are replaced by machines.

February 26: Rev. Douglas Thompson, Trinity Lutheran Church, Fischer, MN, and St. Paul Lutheran Church, Euclid, MN, presents a message based on Matthew 4:1-11. *This Is the Life* program: "Which Way Grows the Vine" - A father struggles to accept the consequences of his actions and set an example for his son.

If you don't get KVRP you can watch the Minnesota South District version of Main Street Living on WFTC Channel 29 at 9:00 a.m. You can also watch all of the archived programs at any time online. To reach the website for archived programs go to www.mainstreetliving.com and then click on "North (Fargo)" or "Twin Cities."

What's On The Lutheran Hour

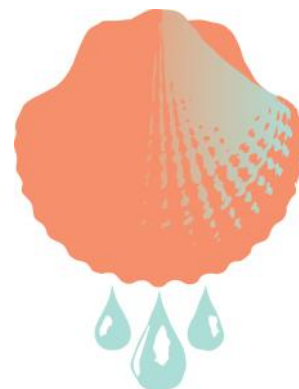
- ◆ 2/5 "Your Time to Shine"
- ◆ 2/12 "Shine Like Stars"
- ◆ 2/19 "Table Manners"
- ◆ 2/26 "It Begins with Who I Am"

◆ Listen to the Lutheran Hour every Sunday on KPRM 870 AM at 9:30 a.m. or KTIG 102.7 FM at 5:00 p.m. on Sundays. You can also listen on Sirius XM Family Talk Channel 131, Sundays at 9:00 a.m. or any time on SENTRadio at lhm.org/sentradio.

◆ The Lutheran Laymen's League sponsors the program on KPRM each Sunday. If you would like to help sponsor the program your gift may be placed in the offering and earmarked "Local Lutheran Hour."

† Baptism

01/22 Lola Autumn Frette
Stacey (Yliniemi) & Justin Frette





Stewardship Review - December, 2022

Avg. Sunday Worship Attendance: 145

Total Offerings: \$39,632	Avg. Weekly Offerings \$ 9,908	Budget/Week \$10,345
Total Expenses: <u>\$52,063</u>	Avg. Weekly Expenses <u>\$13,016</u>	Budget/Month \$44,827
Difference - \$12,431	Difference - \$3,108	

Yearly Summary:

Total Offerings: \$456,410
Total Expenses: \$473,112
Difference - \$16,702

Yearly Summary, 2021:

Total Offerings: \$466,476
Total Expenses: \$460,928
Difference \$ 5,548

CNB Checkbook Balance	\$75,209	Our Healthy Balance Goal	\$74,000
Less Dedicated Accounts	\$ 1,976	Raised so far	\$59,857
Difference	\$73,233	Still need	\$14,143

Front Entry Loan \$14,340

Here's a Few Offering Pointers

St. Johns is a generous congregation and the bulk of our contributions come through the offerings given at worship services. Here are a few tips to remember when you're preparing your offering that will make things easier for you and for our offering counters:

1. Please use your offering envelopes if you have them. It makes it much easier for the offering counters if they don't have to look up your envelope number. If you haven't picked up your envelopes, stop by the church office and we'll get them for you.
2. For special offerings, please make out your check to St. Johns. We can't deposit checks made out to other organizations (like the Food Shelf, Pregnancy Resource Center, etc.). These checks will be sent directly to the organization.
3. You don't have to put a separate check or cash in each weekly offering envelope if you are giving monthly or twice a month. You can write one check and use one envelope for the month.
4. If you really want to be nice to the counters, don't fold your cash or check. Just slip it right into the envelope.
5. Consider automatic offerings. You can set up an automatic withdrawal from your account to St. Johns. You decide the amount and frequency. It's easy to set up and there's no extra charge to you. Stop by and see Ginny Ranisate if you're interested. You can also give online at our website www.stjohnspr.org or with your phone. Check out the article to the left about the phone app.
6. If you're good with numbers, detail oriented and available one Sunday a month, consider becoming an offering counter. We usually have teams of two counters and it takes about an hour to count. Once again, stop by and see Ginny or give her a call at 732-9783 if you're interested.



Condensed Annual Financial Report Ending 12/31/22

	12/31/2021	12/31/2022
Current Assets	338,877	324,715
Fixed Assets	<u>1,510,123</u>	<u>1,520,968</u>
Total Assets	<u>1,849,000</u>	<u>1,845,683</u>
Liabilities/Dedicated Funds Payable	50,073	14,340
Equity	<u>1,798,927</u>	<u>1,831,343</u>
Total Liabilities and Equity	<u>1,849,000</u>	<u>1,845,683</u>
Income:	466,476	456,410
Less Expenses:		
Missions	75,000	75,000
Voters	255,436	234,729
Board of Elders	43,745	41,777
Board of Christian Education	22,208	24,583
Board of Church Properties	58,316	88,929
Board of Evangelism	821	1,384
Board of Parish Fellowship	302	517
Board of Stewardship	1,640	1,700
Board of Young People	1,681	2,949
Board of Public Relations	<u>1,799</u>	1,543
Total Expenses	<u>460,928</u>	473,111
Income Less Expenses	<u>5,548</u>	- <u>16,701</u>





Parish Planning Council Meeting Minutes

St. Johns Lutheran Church, Park Rapids, MN

January 24, 2023

PRESENT: Brandi Backmann, guest, Natalie Backmann, Connie Fondow, Lori Griess, Randy Griess, Rod Helm, Pastor Neubauer, Mike Poole and Ginny Ranisate. Director Rod Helm called the meeting to order. Pastor Neubauer read the book of Titus for the opening devotion. Motion by Mike, second by Lori to approve minutes of the October 25, 2022 meeting as printed in the newsletter. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT – Ginny Ranisate

Our income for 2022 was \$456,410 and expenses were \$473,111 with expenses exceeding income by \$16,701. In 2021 income was \$466,476 and expenses were \$460,928 with income exceeding expenses by \$5,548.

CNB Checking Account	95,848	
Less Dedicated Funds	<u>- 3,646</u>	
Available Funds	92,202	
CNB Dedicated Funds Savings	37,940	
LCEF Current Fund	120,992	
Less End. Fund Interest	- 1,778	
Less Parsonage Proceeds	- 18,548	
Less T. Haberer Memorial/Interest	- 19,209	
Less R. Haberer Memorial	- 1,047	
Less T. Haberer Trust		- 17,167
Less Healthy Balance	<u>- 59,857</u>	
Available Funds	3,386	

Front Entry Payable \$14,340

Discussion about funds for sealcoating and repairing the parking lot, estimated to be at least \$18,000 but less than \$30,000. Motion by Randy, second Connie to approve treasurer's report. Motion carried.

PASTOR'S REPORT

Our Lenten theme will be Amazing Grace. It's the 250th anniversary of the hymn. Sermons will feature different Bible characters. Pastor Neubauer is feeling pretty well now health wise. Thankful that Pastor Harvala is here. His original duties were visitation and Wednesday Bible study but duties increased with vacancy. Report accepted.

BOARD REPORTS

ELDERS – Mike Poole reported in Jerry Grudem's absence that the Elders continue to assist pastors.



CHURCH PROPERTIES – Randy Griess said things are quiet right now. They will work on the parking lot project in the spring. There's been a squirrel issue again.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION – Lori Griess presented her report. Deb Anderson has joined the Board of Education, We are so glad to have her.

Release Time – Kathy Henry has been assisting Pastor Neubauer. Classes are going well.

Sunday School – Due to the lack of teachers, Connie Fondow has assumed the role of Sunday School Superintendent. This enabled Shelley Lof to teach. Melissa Koch is looking for more contemporary books for the youth group. Discussed possible lock-in for the youth at LIC. We continue to have low number of children attending. The average is between 18-25. The offering is going to Good Shepherd Lutheran in North Fort Meyers Florida for the 22-23 school year.

Adult Education - Pastor Harvala continues with his Bible study on Wednesday mornings and Pastor Neubauer on Tuesday mornings.

Preschool - Preschool is going well. There are no available openings at this time.

YOUTH – Pastor Neubauer and Brandi Backmann reported. High school youth suppers have resumed and are going well. Two ping pong tables were bought for the group. Thrivent cards have been used for groceries. There are about 18-20 kids attending with around half being St. Johns members. Suppers will continue until Lent begins.

Other planned youth activities are a lock-in at Lutheran Island camp at the end of February, sledding at Detroit Mountain at the beginning of February and Three Bears Water Park in March. Planning for a high school youth breakfast at Lori's on a Sunday when Melissa has to be gone.

EVANGELISM – Connie Fondow reported. The Breakfast in Bethlehem event in December was well received. Approximately eighty parishioners and guests participated in the morning events. The board is in the process of evaluating the various aspects of this event so that adaptations and changes can be successfully implemented for the future.

The Board of Evangelism will be sponsoring a Trivia event for a Sunday in March. Proceeds will be sent to Good Shepherd Lutheran School in North Fort Myers, Florida to assist with hurricane restoration projects. Pertinent information concerning this event will be forthcoming.

The board will continue to look for internal and community outreach opportunities that focus on family friendly events and activities. There was discussion on expanding facilities, specifically adding a gymnasium. Connie suggested a capital campaign. Rod said the call/attendance committee plans to meet to discuss options following their work on the call process. Rod had mentioned the Release Time program which has 120 kids attending to Concordia President, Brian Friedrich. His response was that we should see the program as a positive and we need to meet people where they are.

(Continued on page 10)

Sunday School News

Perfect Attendance—January

PK4 Martin Hahn
2nd Grace Hockett
5th Alex Lof
8th Sawyer Harvey, Austin Lee

Great job!

January Offerings: \$33.48



2/04	Everett Bergerson
2/6	Clyde Kimball
2/13	Kolt Safratowich
2/23	Gunar Clark
2/25	Tony Meier
2/26	Kelly Kimball
2/28	James Trandem

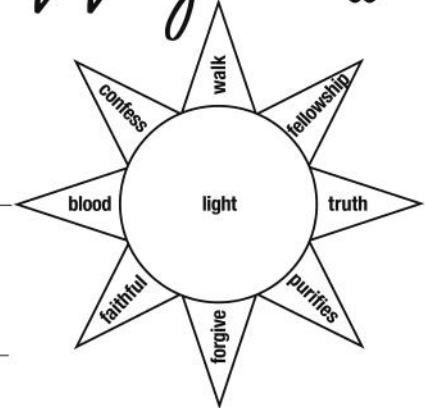
Baptismal Birthdays

2/04	Annie Mayer
2/6	Neveah Etter
2/7	Owen Christensen
2/08	Henli Maier
2/10	Ava Kimball
2/28	Ryan Maves



The light of forgiveness

The Lord is full of mercy and light. What happens when we confess our sins to God?



Directions:
Use the coded shapes
to fill in the blanks and
complete 1 John 1:7-9, NIV.

But if we _____ in the _____, as he is in the _____,
we have _____ with one another, and the _____
of Jesus, his Son, _____ us from all sin. If we claim to be
without sin, we deceive ourselves and the _____ is not in us.
If we _____ our sins, he is _____ and just and will
_____ us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

1 JOHN 1:7-9, NIV

Answer: walk, light, light, fellowship, blood, purities, truth, confess, faithful, forgive

Lessons this Month

2/05 “A Weather Wonder—*Jesus Calms A Storm*”

2/12 “A Life Restored—*Jairus’ Daughter*”

2/19 “The Fish & Bread Sign—*Jesus Feeds 5,000*”

2/26 “A Hearing Aide—*Jesus Heals A Deaf Man*”



Release Time Update

We are about half way through Release Time for this school year already. The 120 children have settled into their classrooms along with our seven teachers, our one helper, Betty Solberg, and our fearless substitute, Kathy Henry.

Kathy has been a fantastic sub this year. She is always willing to jump right into any classroom or situation where help is required. The teachers cannot say enough good things about her.

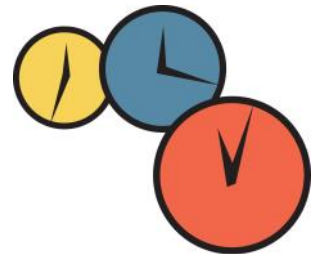
Betty has been helping out with 5th grade the first hour and 2nd grade for the second hour. Sometimes just having an extra “adult” set of hands in the room makes everything go smoothly. If anyone was thinking about volunteering to help out, talk to Betty. She can tell you exactly what you would do.

Continue to keep the program, teachers, helpers, our sub and all the children in your prayers.

God's peace,

Laurie Kimball, Release Time Director

P.S.—Keep a look out for next month's newsletter—there may be pictures!



Youth News

The high school youth suppers are going great! Ham and cheese sliders, pizza hotdish and wild rice soup have been on the menu. And we've got two new ping pong tables that are a hit! We'll continue on Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m. until Lent begins.

Join us for Sunday youth Bible study in the youth room at 9:15 a.m.

Plans are being made for a trip to Detroit Mountain early this month. Watch for updates.

We're also working on a youth lock-in at Lutheran Island Camp later this month.

The youth will serve the evening Lenten meals on February 22 and March 22.

In March we're planning a trip to Three Bears Water Park. It's always a fun event.





(Continued from page 7)

PARISH FELLOWSHIP – Rod read Elayne Luiken's report. We held the new member welcome/ Pastor appreciation on Sunday, November 6 between services. Semi-annual voters meeting/potluck was Sunday, November 20 after second service.

On Monday, November 28 our board facilitated the decorating of the church for Christmas. For Breakfast in Bethlehem on Saturday, December 3, at 9:00 a.m., our board was in charge of preparing the breakfast. Cookies and Carols was Sunday, December 18 between services. Congregation members brought Christmas cookies or candy to share. We made up cookie trays and delivered to shut-ins. Christmas decorations were taken down Monday, January 2.

STEWARDSHIP – Approved a scholarship for Daniel Neubauer who is attending Concordia University, Chicago.

PUBLIC RELATIONS – no report.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS:

Call Update –The committee will interview five candidates next week through Zoom. There are more churches calling than candidates so it is possible we will not receive a candidate.

Discussed how having one service in January went. There were a lot of positive comments from the people who attended – nice to have church full, later time means less of a rush in the morning, good to see all members. Rod pointed out that attendance at coffee, Bible study and Sunday School did not change. Pastor Neubauer plans to do a survey to see what everyone thought. Connie reviewed reasons for going to one service in January and asked if having one service is in line with our goal of getting more people to attend. Suggestion made to survey people who did not attend in January.

Board directors were asked to check with their board members as to who will stay on the board. We need to put together a list of board directors and members to vote on at the June Voters meeting. Ginny suggested that we look at changing our form of church government. She will research options further and report at a future meeting.

Rod said he and Brenda Huwe have looked at the AED machine and are working on getting it updated. Brenda is also working on scheduling a CPR/AED class.

Ginny brought up the possibility of dissolving the Endowment Fund and moving those funds into a Building Fund. She will look into it further.

Meeting adjourned. Closed with Doxology.

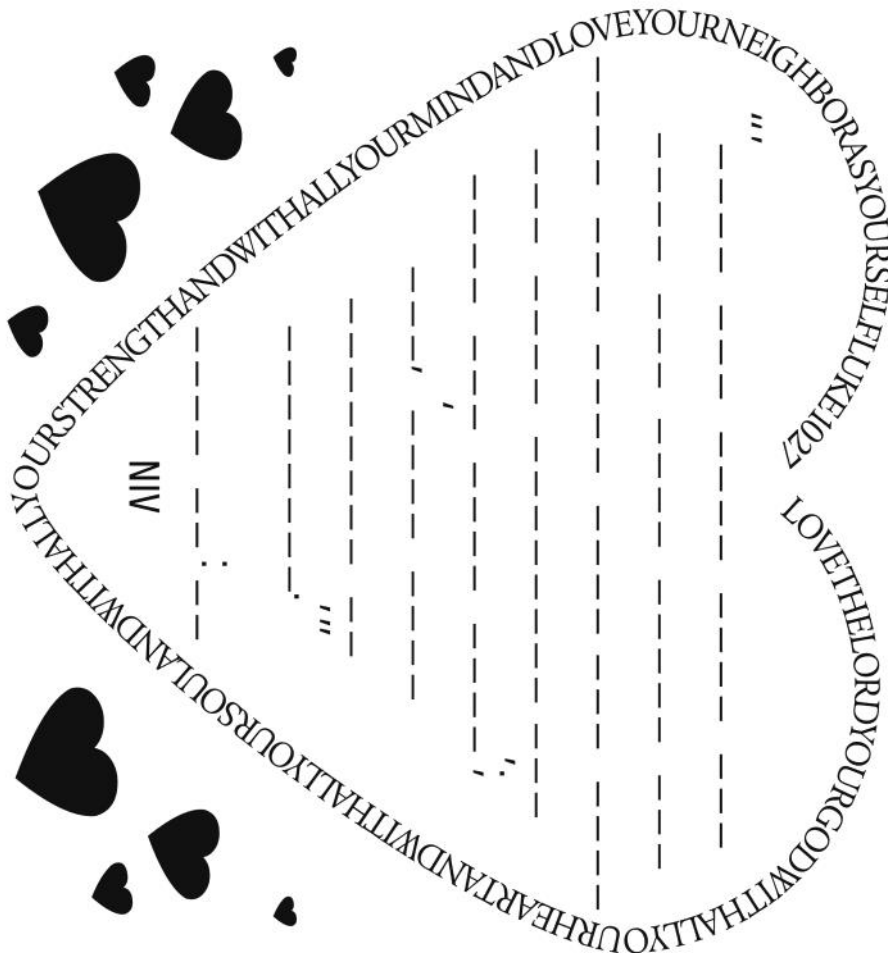
Next Parish Planning Council Meeting is scheduled for March 28, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ginny Ranisate



Puzzle!

Draw lines to separate the words in the heart outline. Then, starting with "Love," write the words in order inside the heart to complete the two greatest commandments.



Answer: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind; and, Love your neighbor as yourself." Luke 10:27, NIV



**St. Johns
Lutheran Church**

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*Pastor James Neubauer
Pastor Larry Harvala*



The Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod

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Return Service Requested

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If you, O LORD,
should mark iniquities,
O Lord, who could stand?

**BUT WITH YOU THERE
IS FORGIVENESS,
THAT YOU MAY
BE FEARED.**

PSALM 130:3-4, ESV

