



The Love of God: Loving Even When Knowing All!

On the day of your wedding, if you knew your marriage would be filled with troubles, would you still say yes to the person you are marrying?

You may be asking, what do I mean by trouble? Most rationally minded couples understand that all relationships have disagreements and go through hardships. What I mean by trouble is the outright betrayal, betrayal as in having the person you love lie about you. Would you still love them even when they may curse your name in order to advance their personal agenda? What if they spit on you or abandon you when you needed them? What if they start unjust fights or kill in your name to justify their actions? What if loving them would cause family members like your parents, siblings or even close friends to no longer associate with you? Anyone living in a healthy state of mind, I believe, would probably think twice about marrying such a person, if not even make the decision to end the engagement.

Does the love of our all-knowing Heavenly Father end at the sight of trouble, big or small?

Thankfully no! Our Heavenly Father is one who doesn't stop loving us because of the troubling sins, big or small, that we commit in our relationship with Him. In the Gospel of John, the third chapter, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ says the following in verses sixteen through twenty-one:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only



Son of God. ¹⁹ And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. ²⁰ For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. ²¹ But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God."

Jesus says in this reading of John's Gospel that humans, since the beginning, have chosen to live in the blinding darkness of our sinfulness. Thankfully, in His unlimited love for us, our Heavenly Father, knowing that we would continue to sin against Him and our neighbors by what we have done with our thoughts, words and deeds, still has chosen to love us even when we don't deserve it. In His love, God took on our flesh to take our sin and death out of love, not to come and condemn us or divorce us from having a relationship from Him, but to be the payments for our sin in the death of Jesus on the Cross in order to restore our relationship with Him. Truly God and Man, Jesus poured out His blood out of love for you and all of humanity.

Sadly, we, as humans, do not love in the same way. We cut off our love or care for those we are given to love whether a spouse, family member or longtime friend over even the littlest of disagreements. On Facebook, a few weeks ago, I saw a post from a news outlet that spoke of how a celebrity was separating from their spouse because they asked that they make decisions with their spouse regarding their finances. This celebrity didn't want to be controlled or be told she could have done something better. Completely ridiculous! This small example shows how selfish we are as humans and how selfishly we determine when to show love to those around us. Unfortunately, we fail to see how we have also contributed to the decline in our relationships with others. Unlike God, we, in more cases than not, are not willing to love someone at the slightest glimpse of trouble.

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One way I think the church and individuals can start to at least begin to look at others with a Christ like love, comes from looking at everyone, including ourselves, as someone who Jesus was willing to die for on the cross. By looking at ourselves and others as someone who needed to be saved by the blood of Christ, we might see all people in our lives honestly as they are, as imperfect. When we see people in this way, especially those closest to us, we won't look at our friends or spouses with the false lens like maybe a Disney movie would, as if people would stop being a beast or toad if we just accepted their sin. When we look as we should at all humans with the lens of the cross of Christ, we see that anyone who we encounter is going to have flaws throughout their life and will more likely than not disappoint us at some point. With this lens of the cross of Christ, we see ourselves a little differently as well. Jesus is the only one who walked in humans' flesh that was perfect. We need to wake up to see that we should not put ourselves or some people upon a pedestal higher than anyone else. If you do, you will surely be disappointed and it could cause hate to grow in your heart because of the hurt. Looking at everyone with the cross of Christ, I believe creates the humility we need to have a healthy relationship. In our relationship with God, it is quite an unfair relationship. He receives all our betrayals and sins, while we receive all His goodness and mercy on account of the grace we have in faith in Jesus Christ. In a healthy relationship with fellow sinners, we must continually repent of our sins to God and to one another and then turn and give mercy daily whether we want to or not.

Even with continual repentance and mercy between people, relationships will still have their scars that may never completely heal in this life, but it does allow us to let go of the anger and pain in our lives. Finally, it allows us to look at others with the love and grace of Christ that we know we need daily allowing us to not push away new opportunities to heal wounded relationships and gain new healthy relationships because we don't enter relationships with rose tinted glasses. In this month of Valentine's Day, may the all-knowing love of our Heavenly Father grant you healing and peace.

Sincerely,

Pastor Ben Hollingsead

CONGREGATION EGG BAKE:

Egg Bake will continue to be on the first Sunday of every month through the winter months. Anyone willing to help out in providing an Egg Bake, please let Barb Peterson know: 763-670-1533 Thank you.



Do you like to sing or play an instrument? St. John's singers are looking for new members. All ages are welcome!

Contact Lynn Graber at 612-390-2689 or Sue Lein at 651-402-5480

FEBRUARY MONTHLY MEETINGS:

Youth Feb. 2nd, after second service

Little Angel Preschool Board meeting Feb. 4th @ 6:30 PM

Evangelism Feb. 4th, 6:30 PM

Worship & Music Feb. 6th, 6:30PM

Safety Team Feb. 3rd, 7:00 PM

Christian Outreach Feb. 10th, 6:00 PM

Missions Feb. 10th, 7:00 PM

Council Meeting Feb. 17th, 7:00 PM

Sabbath Group Feb. 17th, 4:00 PM



Wednesday, February 26th. 7PM



SUPER BOWL PIZZA ORDERS:

We are now taking Pre-orders for pizzas.

Pizzas are \$9.00 each.

Forms can be found on the table

by the "What's Happening" board. Pizzas will be made Saturday, February 1st and ready for pick up on Sunday, February 2nd.

There will be extra pizzas for sale on Sunday also.

ACOLYTE LIST FOR February - March 2020

February 2nd

8:00 Bella Johnson
9:30 Raechel Abress

February 9th

8:00 Nicole Robbins
9:30 Ariel Potrament

February 16th

8:00 Jillian Horsfall
9:30 Evan Locke

February 23rd

8:00 Grace Johnson
9:30 Raechel Abress

March 1st

8:00 Bella Johnson
9:30 Jordan Le Roux

SABBATH SUPPORT GROUP!

Jesus said in Matthew, Chapter 11 “²⁸ Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Many of us carry burdens that weigh us down in life that can just fill us with grief, anger and so many mixed emotions.

The next meeting will be **Monday, February 17th**, with Pastor Ben. At this Sabbath group, we will create a safe community for anyone who is going through hardship to come and lay down their burdens at the feet of Christ. We will have sharing times with scripture, music, prayer and other Christian resources that will hopefully leave all with the Sabbath rest of the Gospel that those with heavy burdens are looking for.

This meeting will take place the third Monday of every month at **4:00 PM**. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Ben.

BROTHERS, BREAKFAST and BIBLE

Calling men of St. John's! Our next morning men's breakfast will be **February 18th at 7:00AM**. It will be a great opportunity to share in fellowship while eating breakfast together at the Village Inn in Wyoming, MN. We will have a devotion to reflect on as a group. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Ben 651-323-3293.



2020 CONFIRMATION SCHEDULE

February 5th @ 6:30 PM
February 19th @6:30 PM
February 26th @7:00 PM Ash Wednesday
March 4th @7:00 PM
March 11th @7:00 PM
March 18th @ 7:00 PM
March 25th @7:00 PM
April 8th @ 6:30 PM
April 22nd @ 6:30 PM
May 6th @ 6:30 PM
May 13th @6:30 PM Last Session of the Year
May 16th @ 9:00 AM Confirmation Rehearsal with Photos
Confirmation Sunday May 17th @ 9:30 Service.

ESTIMATE OF GIVING/SERVICE UPDATE:

For those of you who did not attend church during the estimate of giving/service campaign, we are including copies for you in the newsletter.

Please fill them out and either mail them back to the church or bring them with you to service to drop off.

If you have any questions, please see Nicole Anderson.

St. John's Lutheran Church – LCMC

Church Council Minutes

Date: 12/16/2019
Present: Linda Welch, Linda Miller, Bethany Hardy, Patha Vue, Vickey Nelson, Pastor Ben, Jim Johnson, Sue Lein

Absent: Nicole Anderson, Paul Dahlstrom, Derek Fitcher, Hal Satter, Harvey Berg

Meeting called to order at 7:02 PM by Linda Welch.

Pastor Ben opened with devotion and prayer.

Minutes Approved

Vickey Nelson motioned to approve the minutes from 11/18/19, Jim Johnson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Financial Report

Financial Report was reviewed.

Discussion about the low gas bill. Patha will check into this.

Pastor's Report

Memorial service for Phyllis H. and funeral service for a non-member.

Low attendance at Advent services.

Christmas services at 4 PM and 10 PM.

Lynn will possibly need a fill-in for a short time in February.

Potentially three new families will be joining our congregation.

**St. John's Lutheran Church
Financial Report December 2019**

Budget Offerings (5 Sundays)	\$ 16,688.20
	<small>(\$173,557.28 Budgeted)</small>
Actual Offerings Received	\$ 13,983.00
	<small>(\$131,307.00 Received)</small>
Offering Budget Shortage	\$ (2,705.20)
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Office Expense	\$ 104.00
Phone	\$ 81.00
Computer Operations	\$ 125.00
Advertising/Evangelism	\$ 213.00
Payroll service Fees	\$ 70.00
Administrative Exp.	\$ 593.00
Excel Electric	\$ 518.00
Gas	\$ 273.00
City Water & Trash	\$ 230.00
Building Expenses	\$ 1,021.00
Employee Salaries	\$ 10,515.00
Visiting Pastors	\$ 0.00
Work Comp. Ins.	\$ 0.00
Total Salaries	\$ 10,515.00
Christian Outreach	\$ 46.00
Total Expenses	\$ 12,175.00
End of Month Total	\$ (1,808.00)
	<small>(offerings minus expenses)</small>
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Check Book Balance	\$ 87,317.00
Liabilities	\$ 0.00
Actual Cash Balance	\$ 87,317.00
Dedicated Accts. Balance	\$ 90,604.00
Church Acct. Balance	\$ (3,287.00)
N. Branch School Rental Balance	\$ 6,180.00
Gen. Offering Bal.: Year to Date	(\$ 42,085.00)

If you have any questions regarding this report, please call Patha Vue Treasurer at (651) 313-3165
Thank you!

FOOD PANTRY

Let us all remember to donate food items into our Food Pantry. Local food shelves are always in need of non-perishable food items to help the less fortunate. Also, don't forget paper needs like baby formula, diapers, soap, toilet paper, etc... are always needed. Buy one item for yourselves, but also buy one for the Pantry. Christian Outreach Committee will see that the items are delivered to the local food shelf.

New Business:

Budget

Linda Miller motioned to approved the budget, Vickey Nelson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

By-Laws addition

Contracts & Agreements (No Word of Mouth Agreements or Contracts, Donation of Items, Job Descriptions)- second read

Bethany Hardy motioned to approve the addition of the Contracts & Agreements By-Law with proposed changes, Sue Lein seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Property

Working on lighting in the sanctuary. The casing around the wires by sound system has been completed.

Stewardship

Poor response from Estimate of Gifts. This is adding to challenges in budgeting.

Deadlines for all committees' annual reports - December 20th

Annual Meeting January 26th, 2020

Little Angel Preschool

Christmas program

Great turn out at the Christmas program tonight. Many families here to fill our sanctuary.

Staffing

Jill Anderson has resigned from her position as a preschool teacher. The reason at this time is unclear. Bethany and Makayla are hoping to meet with her to gather some insight.

The LAP interview committee will conduct interviews to hire a new preschool teacher as soon as possible.

Vickey Nelson motioned to adjourn at 8:45 PM, Patha Vue seconded, motion carried.

The meeting closed with prayer by Pastor Ben.

Respectfully submitted by,

Bethany Hardy, Council Secretary

UPCOMING MISSIONS EVENTS:



Together, we can save a life

RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE - February 11th

“Give Blood, Help Save Lives”

An American Red Cross blood drive will be held at St. John’s Lutheran on **February 11th from 1:00-7:00 PM.** Please look for more information and a sign-up sheet in the church narthex, or visit redcrossblood.org and enter the sponsor code: **Stacy** to schedule an appointment on line.

Contact Harvey Berg at 651-462-1168 if you would like more information on how you can participate as a blood donor or as a volunteer.



Mn Adult & Teen Challenge

Mn Adult and Teen Challenge choir will be at St. John's Lutheran on **February 16th**, at both services, with lunch served to them following the 9:30 AM service. Please join us for songs of hope and stories of freedom from addiction.

WE WISH EACH ONE OF YOU A BLESSED DAY AND PRAY THAT GOD WILL BLESS YOU THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

FEBRUARY WILLING WORKERS FOR CHRIST



Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. 1 Peter 4:10

8 AM SERVICES GREETERS

02 Floyd & Lou Pinotti
09 Dewaine & Joyce Hischer
16 Dave & Kim Schmidt
23 Jim & Cindy Johnson

READERS

02 Linnea Kment
09 Barb Peterson
16 Corky Peterson
23 Teddy Abress

USHERS

02 Kirk Dahle
09 Duane & Nancy Nelson
16 Mike Kment
23 Jim & Karan Murphy

LAY SHEPHERD

02
09
16
23

ACOLYTE 8 AM

02 Bella Johnson
09 Nicole Robbins
16 Jillian Horsfall
23 Grace Johnson
02
09
16
23

9:30 SERVICES GREETERS

02 Bea Palmer
09 Barb Johnson
16 Kathie Eliason
23 Teresa Humble

READERS

02 Bea Palmer
09
16 Bridget Bump
23 Bridget Bump

USHERS

02
09
16 Teresa Humble
23 Mike Vogt

LAY SHEPHERD

ACOLYTE 9:30 AM

02 Raechel Abress
09 Ariel Potrament
16 Evan Locke
23 Raechel Abress

FELLOWSHIP HOST

02 Egg Bake
09 Nancy Nelson
16 LAP
23 Youth

ALTAR GUILD

Set Up
02 Cindy Johnson
16 Cindy Johnson

Clean Up
Sharon Jaworski
Cindy Johnson

Set Up
09 Cindy Johnson
23 Cindy Johnson

Clean Up
Evie Dockham
Cindy Johnson

St. John's Lutheran Church

February 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2 8:00 & 9:30 Traditional Services Egg Bake Sunday Pizza sale pickup Youth meeting after 2nd service-Fireside room	3 Safety Meeting 7 PM	4 Evangelism 6:30 PM LAP Board 6:30 PM	5 Confirmation 6:30 PM Faithweavers 6:30-7:30 PM	6 Worship & Music 6:30 PM	7	8 1 Pizza making 9 AM
9 8:00 Traditional Service 9:30 Contemporary Service	10 Outreach 6 PM Missions 7 PM	11 Missions Red Cross Blood Drive 1:00-7:00 PM	12 Faithweavers 6:30-7:30 PM	13	14 <i>Happy Valentine's Day</i>	15
16 8:00 Traditional Service 9:30 Contemporary Service MN Adult & Teen Challenge during both services	17 Sabbath Group 4 PM LAP - NO SCHOOL Council 7 PM Presidents' Day	18 B-B-B 7 AM	19 Faithweavers 6:30-7:30 PM Confirmation 6:30 PM	20	21	22
23 8:00 & 9:30 Traditional Services	24	25	26 Faithweavers 6:30-7:30 PM Confirmation 7 PM ASH WEDNESDAY	27	28	29

NO SCHOOL REMINDER:
February 17th NO Preschool



FEELING “BOARD”

Do you feel you have extra time to give? Please consider being a member of St. John’s Preschool Board. The board typically meets monthly and makes decisions on school curriculum and activities, budget, fundraising, staffing needs, and other ways to make it possible to bring Jesus into the lives of young children. Please contact Bethany Hardy, Chairperson at (218) 831- 2038 or LAPchairperson@gmail.com for more information.

- ◆ *Little Angel Preschool news*
- ◆ *Willing workers/Calendar*
- ◆ *Confirmation Schedule*
- ◆ *Acolyte list*
- ◆ *Events/Announcements*
- ◆ *Pastor’s Article*
- ◆ *Inside This Issue:*

Pastor Ben Hollingshead
 Cell: 651-323-3293
 Church Office: 651-462-5115

Return Service Requested

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The Voice of St. John’s

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