LUTHER MEMORIAL CHAPEL &
UNIVERSITY STUDENT CENTER

CHAPEL NEWS

1916 – 2016: A Century of God's Gifts in Jesus Christ

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Does God Will Suffering & Affliction?

A Letter from LCMS President Matthew Harrison

Does God will and even cause suffering? Or does He merely "allow" it to happen? Let's begin with the suffering and cross of Jesus. For the answers to our questions about suffering, so far as we can understand anything at all of what the Bible teaches, begin and end with Jesus.

Did God know from eternity that the Eternal Word, the Second Person of the Trinity, would assume flesh, be born, live, suffer and die for the sins of the world? Certainly so. Revelation 13:8 calls Jesus "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Already at the fall into sin, God gave the promise, "He [the Christ] shall bruise your [Satan's] head, and you shall bruise his heel" (Gen. 3:15). The promise was repeated by the prophets, first to last, and many times. The lambs of Passover prefigured Christ. Did God will that those original Passover lambs be sacrificed and their blood mark the doors of the Hebrew people enslaved in Egypt? Quite certainly. He explicitly commanded that it be done. When John the Baptizer pointed to Jesus and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29), was he indicating that the death of Jesus, although foreknown by God, would be effected by the will of men (for example, Judas, Pilate, religious leaders in Jerusalem)? No. There was more.

The answer comes most clearly in Gethsemane. "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done" (Luke 22:42). There it is. God the Father wills the suffering of God the Son. Under the pressure of the sins of the world, Jesus seemed to waver. Yet He, "who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15), also did not sin at that tense moment. Jesus said, "No one takes [my life] from me, but I lay it down of my own accord" (John 10:18).

So there you have it. God the Father and God the Son willed that the Son should suffer and die. God willed death. God willed suffering. At first, this is disconcerting. Isn't death a result of sin? Isn't suffering a result of sin? So, is God the cause of sin? No. God is not the cause and source of sin and death. Yet God Himself makes use of the curse of sin — suffering and death — for His good purposes. In doing so, He most often works in a hidden way. Our life

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Serving Us

Michael C. Larson, *Pastor*
Jason Lane & Brian German, *Assisting Pastors*
Kathryn A. Hill, *Church Secretary*
Martha Galvin, *Director of Music*
Julie Wohlrabe, *iO Director*
Hannah Engwall, *USC Coordinator*

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DOES GOD WILL SUFFERING & AFFLICTION? CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

is "hidden with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3). Just think of it. As Christ was dying on the cross, His followers were terrified, distraught, hopeless, helpless. They thought that God had abandoned Jesus, and them. But it was not so. The Father had abandoned Jesus to death for them. The greatest act in the history of the universe appeared to be the most pathetic, powerless and useless failure.

Christians see the world differently. God used affliction to test Abraham by telling him to act contrary to God's promise that the world would be blessed through Isaac (Gen. 22). God specifically gave Satan permission to all but slaughter Job. Yet against all the evidence that God must hate him, Job replied in faith, "Though he slay me, I will hope in him" (Job 13:15). St. Paul wrote:

"A thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. … But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (2 Cor. 12:7, 9).

There are many such passages of God willing suffering for good, but all of them pale next to the cross. And the cross could only be understood after the resurrection.

What's God doing with COVID-19? One could suggest that sin somehow corrupted a perfect creation to cause some very harmful changes in microbes. St. Paul declares "that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now" (Rom. 8:22). Our Lutheran forefathers, from Luther to Walther, never hesitated to preach that disasters and plagues were the just application of the Law upon the world and believers, to do what the Law always does, bring repentance.

Years ago, I was going through a particularly challenging period. (What it was about, I do not recall.) A dear colleague of mine pointed me to the following passage of our wonderful, Lutheran Formula of Concord, confessed by all the congregations, pastors and church workers in the LCMS. I've never been able to forget it:

"Furthermore, this doctrine [eternal election] provides glorious consolation under the cross and amid temptations. In other words, God in His counsel, before the time of the world, determined and decreed that He would assist us in all distresses [anxieties and perplexities]. He determined to grant patience [under the cross], give consolation, nourish and encourage hope, and produce an outcome for us that would contribute to our salvation. Also, Paul teaches this in a very consoling way. He explains that God in His purpose has ordained before the time of the world by what crosses and sufferings He would conform every one of His elect to the image of His Son. His cross shall and must work together for good for everyone, because they are called according to God's purpose. Therefore, Paul has concluded that it is certain and beyond doubt that neither 'tribulation, or distress,' neither 'death nor life,' or other such things 'will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord'" (FC SD XI 48–49, emphasis added).

I cannot fully fathom the tiniest portion of what God is up to in this time of crisis. I do know what He did in the cross of Jesus. I do know that He knows what He is doing. I do know that He works His greatest blessings through crosses. I plunge all my questions into the wounds of Christ on Calvary. I know that "he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities … and with his wounds we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5). "But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water" (John 19:34). I plunge my doubts into His hands and His side. I plunge my fears into His blood (Lord's Supper) and water (my precious Baptism). And I know that through crosses, the Father is conforming "every one of His elect to the image of His Son. His cross shall and must work together for good for everyone."

Excerpts from the Large Catechism by Martin Luther: The First Article of the Creed

The First Article

**I believe in God the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth.**

This is what I mean and believe, that I am a creature of God; that is, that He has given and constantly preserves to me my body, soul, and life, members great and small, all my senses, reason, and understanding, and so on, food and drink, clothing and support, wife and children, domestics, house and home, etc. Besides, He causes all creatures to serve for the uses and necessities of life—sun, moon and stars in the firmament, day and night, air, fire, water, earth, and whatever it bears and produces, birds and fishes, beasts, grain, and all kinds of produce, and whatever else there is of bodily and temporal goods, good government, peace, security. Thus we learn from this article that none of us has of himself, nor can preserve, his life nor anything that is here enumerated or can be enumerated, however small and unimportant a thing it might be, for all is comprehended in the word Creator.

Here we could say much if we were to expatiate, how few there are that believe this article. For we all pass over it, hear it and say it, but neither see nor consider what the words teach us. For if we believed it with the heart, we would also act accordingly, and not stalk about proudly, act defiantly, and boast as though we had life, riches, power, and honor, etc., of ourselves, so that others must fear and serve us, as is the practice of the wretched, perverse world, which is drowned in blindness, and abuses all the good things and gifts of God only for its own pride, avarice, lust, and luxury, and never once regards God, so as to thank Him or acknowledge Him as Lord and Creator.

Therefore, this article ought to humble and terrify us all, if we believed it. For we sin daily with eyes, ears, hands, body and soul, money and possessions, and with everything we have, especially those who even fight against the Word of God. Yet Christians have this advantage, that they acknowledge themselves in duty bound to serve God for all these things, and to be obedient to Him (which the world knows not how to do).

We ought, therefore, daily to practice this article, impress it upon our mind, and to remember it in all that meets our eyes, and in all good that falls to our lot, and wherever we escape from calamity or danger, that it is God who gives and does all these things, that therein we sense and see His paternal heart and His transcendent love toward us. Thereby the heart would be warmed and kindled to be thankful, and to employ all such good things to the honor and praise of God.

Thus we have most briefly presented the meaning of this article, as much as is at first necessary for the most simple to learn, both as to what we have and receive from God, and what we owe in return, which is a most excellent knowledge, but a far greater treasure. For here we see how the Father has given Himself to us, together with all creatures, and has most richly provided for us in this life, besides that He has overwhelmed us with unspeakable, eternal treasures by His Son and the Holy Ghost, as we shall hear.

MARRIAGE

On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples. John 2:1-2

Scriptures on Marriage

Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies.

Ephesians 5:22-28

Jesus said: "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate." Matthew 19:4-6

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Colossians 3:12-15

For married couples, the Church prays:

Lord God, heavenly Father, we thank you for instituting holy matrimony to keep us from unchastity and other offenses. Send your blessing on every husband and wife, that they may not provoke each other to anger and strife, but live peaceably together in love and godliness, and receive your gracious help in all temptations. Move us all to walk before you in purity and holiness, to put all our trust in you, to lead holy lives on earth, and in the world to come enjoy eternal life; through your beloved Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one true God, now and forever. Amen.

Hymn for married couples: O Father, All Creating

O Spirit of the Father,
Breathe on them from above,
So searching in Your pureness,
So tender in Your love
That, guarded by Your presence
And kept from strife and sin,
Their hearts may heed Your guidance
And know You dwell within.

Unless You build it, Father,
The house is built in vain;
Unless You, Savior, bless it,
The joy will turn to pain.
But nothing breaks the union
Of hearts in You made one;
The love Your Spirit hallows
Is endless love begun.

Public domain hymn stanzas reprinted from Lutheran Service Book *© 2006 CPH.*

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Thank You from Missionary Charles Cortright

July 18, 2020

Dear Pastor Larson and our brothers and sisters at Luther Memorial Chapel,

Greetings in Christ our Savior from Rīga, Latvia!

I found in my email this morning our July mailing from the folks at Mission Advancement, in which your kind and generous donation of June 10 was reported to Connie and me. I can't underscore enough how much it means to us to have the support and prayers of LMC—our home church—for our work with the Latvian Lutheran Church's Luther Academy. The work is not overtly dramatic but is very important. As my colleague Dr. John Bombaro and I work on creating an English-language bachelors-level curriculum for pastoral training here in Latvia, we are making it possible for pastoral students from all over the European Union to be educated and formed to serve as pastors in their own countries. Because the curriculum will be predominantly online, it makes it possible for us to work with students in diverse situations. For instance, I will be working with two men (early 20s) in Silesia in the Czech Republic starting in September with an online introductory course in theology. Likewise, an individual who lives in Padua, Italy. It would be impossible for any of them to relocate to study, and there is no confessional Lutheran seminary in either Silesia or Italy (no surprise about the latter!). Your gift is supporting us here in Rīga as I teach and work on the development of the full curriculum. Thank you!

Our prayers are certainly with our homeland and with our churches during the current troubles and unrest. We pray that God will guide, guard, and protect His people and we pray, too, that your witness of Christ's forgiveness and grace may be effective in reaching people who are caught up in all the strife.

Thank you again for remembering us among all the turbulence of the past few months. In terms of our own personal situation, we are doing well. Both of us are healthy (Latvia has not been greatly affected by the COVID-19 virus) and the Lord blessed us in being able to celebrate our 42nd wedding anniversary in June (on the 10th!).

Thank you so very much again for your kindness, prayers, and support.

The Lord bless and keep you in His grace and care!

Cordially and gratefully yours in Christ Jesus,

Charles and Connie Cortright

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Windmills on Saaremaa Island, Estonia.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Baptized One	Rebirth Date
Martha Galvin	Aug. 3
Zane Zirkle	Aug. 8
Katherine Genthe	Aug. 10
Marissa Beckman	Aug. 14
Connie Cortright	Aug. 16
Ronald Deichler	Aug. 17
James Genthe	Aug. 17
Alison Thoms	Aug. 19
Kelly Burns Stith	Aug. 21
Paul Hessel	Aug. 21
Lynn Thompson	Aug. 21
Jeffry Berrens	Aug. 22
Brett Galvin	Aug. 22
Amalia Paronto	Aug. 22
Oliver Grasse	Aug. 25
Katherine Burfeind	Aug. 28
Temish Christiansen	Aug. 29
Stephanie Hagedorn	Aug. 29

DEATH *July 17, 2020:*
Carol Habeck

NEW MEMBERS
Karl Meier
557 N 17th St
Milwaukee, WI 53233
cell 420-493-0677
karlmeier2000@gmail.com

Alex Schauer
3560 N Frederick Ave
Shorewood, WI 53211
cell 715-579-6995
alexander.L.schauer@gmail.com

DIVINE SERVICES: SUNDAYS AT 8 & 9 A.M. MONDAYS AT 7 P.M.

The Sunday morning 8 a.m. service is for those more cautious about COVID-19. This is a spoken service with no singing, per CDC recommendations. Every other pew is left open for social distancing. The purificator used to wipe the chalice is soaked in alcohol before the celebration of Holy Communion. Many other commonsense measures are used. Coffee hour is served (weather permitting) following the 9 a.m. Divine Service.

In the Lord's Supper we have the very antidote to death and the medicine of immortality. It is given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins, and "where there is forgiveness of sins there is also life and salvation." These treasures are for our benefit and good. We sing, "No poison can be in the cup that my physician sends me" (*LSB* 760:3). We trust in Him who has destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light. Jesus says, "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day."

Divine Service remains available by appointment for individuals and families throughout the week in the small chapel for any who desire a smaller setting.

PREPARATION FOR THE LORD'S DAY IN AUGUST

Date	Name of Day	Hymn of the Day	OT Reading	Psalm	Epistle	Gospel
Aug. 2	Eighth Sunday after Trinity	*LSB* 745	Jer. 23:16–29	Psalm 48	Acts 20:27–38 *or* Rom. 8:12–17	Matt. 7:15–23
Aug. 9	Ninth Sunday after Trinity	*LSB* 730	2 Sam. 22:26–34	Psalm 54	1 Cor. 10:6–13	Luke 16:1–13
Aug. 16	Tenth Sunday after Trinity	*LSB* 644	Jer. 8:4–12 *or* Jer. 7:1–11	Psalm 55	Rom. 9:30—10:4 *or* 1 Cor. 12:1–11	Luke 19:41–48
Aug. 23	Eleventh Sunday after Trinity	*LSB* 559	Gen. 4:1–15	Psalm 68	Eph. 2:1–10 *or* 1 Cor. 15:1–10	Luke 18:9–14
Aug. 30	Twelfth Sunday after Trinity	*LSB* 545	Is. 29:17–24	Psalm 70	2 Cor. 3:4–11 *or* Rom. 10:9–17	Mark 7:31–37

INTERNATIONAL OUTREACH AT LMC:
REJOICE, BE PATIENT, BE CONSTANT IN PRAYER

BY JULIE WOHLRABE, iO DIRECTOR

"Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer." Romans 12:12

The other day I was looking at the iO bulletin board at Luther Memorial Chapel and decided to remove everything. In its place, I wrote out the Romans verse above and placed it in the center of the board.

"Rejoice in hope": I AM hopeful for the future of iO, especially after a meeting with both Rev. Jonah Burakowski, the South Wisconsin District Mission and Mercy Director, and LMC's Pastor Michael Larson. Rev. Burakowski shared with me the importance of remembering and recognizing that so many things have changed with the SWD missions because of the coronavirus, and to press on doing what we *can* do. He said that the format we have used in the past with large gatherings is probably a thing of the past, at this point, anyway. I told him that some of the volunteers were staying connected with the Sunday morning Bible reading, now online. Other volunteers, including me, have stayed in touch in other ways, including telephone conversations, texting, WeChat, as well as stopping by to see our friends in person, socially distanced, of course. I keep folding chairs in my car and have stopped to visit outside homes or in parks with different people when it's been convenient for them. With this being sailing season on Lake Michigan, my husband and I have taken people out sailing with us on our boat, Selah Way. We have taken people from South Korea, China, Ethiopia, and Spain, so far. We are planning another trip with some students from Egypt and Madagascar this coming week. We held a special birthday party for one young man at our home, with a Wisconsin barbeque of brats, sauerkraut, and all the trimmings. Rev. Burakowski encouraged me to keep doing what we're currently doing, and that we will reevaluate our situation toward the end of this year and the beginning of next year.

The UWM Director of the International Education Program told me that 90% of the classes will be online this fall. Pastor Larson and I hope to set up display tables at the student union at that time to let the students know about iO and the UWM student organization called LCMS-U. We are also hopeful that we will receive the necessary authorization to make this happen. In addition, the director told me that there's a significant number of internationals who have applied to UWM, but she said that doesn't mean they will enroll. She also said those international students who have enrolled have deferred to the spring semester.

I have met with the CUW (Concordia University Wisconsin) Director of International Recruitment and Retention, who told me there are some masters students living off campus in the Milwaukee area, and they might benefit from our program. She is trying to facilitate something so that I can meet them. The sooner, the better, I hope!

"Be patient in tribulation": Thank You, Lord, for the fruits of the Holy Spirit, and particularly these days, the fruit of patience. Synonyms for *tribulation* include adversity, grief, heartache, woe, burden, bummer, difficulty, distress, drag, suffering, worry, trial. I'm sure we can all attach our own description of "tribulations" these past months, as we've all had to make adjustments through this pandemic, including those of us associated with iO.

"Be constant in prayer": Dear Heavenly Father, please make us to know Your ways, please teach us Your paths, please show us Your will for International Outreach, granting us ears to hear, eyes to see, and a willingness to obey. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Offerings to Luther Memorial Chapel

Please remember your gifts to LMC. Here are a few options for giving:

1. You can mail your weekly offerings to the church.
2. You can also do an online bill pay through your bank account, which can reoccur each month. Your bank then sends LMC a check with your offering. There is no cost to you or LMC for this.
3. You can set up online giving through an App called Tithe.ly. There is a small fee associated with this transaction. You may find this option at www.lmcusc.org/give.

Three August Feasts

In the month of August, the Church remembers three saints, with feasts for St. Mary, Mother of Our Lord, St. Bartholomew, Apostle, and the Martyrdom of St. John the Baptist.

Reading the propers for each feast day is a way for Christians to meditate on the example of these saints who have gone before us. Excerpts from the propers are copied for you below.

Aug. 15, St. Mary, Mother of Our Lord

Introit: *Psalm 34:2–5; antiphon, v. 1*

I will bless the LORD at all times;
his praise shall continually be in my mouth.
My soul makes its boast in the LORD;
let the humble hear and be glad.
Oh, magnify the LORD with me,
and let us exalt his name together!
I sought the LORD, and he answered me
and delivered me from all my fears.
Those who look to him are radiant,
and their faces shall never be ashamed.

Collect of the Day

Almighty God, You chose the Virgin Mary to be the mother of Your only Son. Grant that we, who are redeemed by His blood, may share with her in the glory of Your eternal kingdom; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Aug. 24, St. Bartholomew, Apostle

Epistle: *2 Corinthians 4:7–10*

But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies.

Collect of the Day

Almighty God, Your Son, Jesus Christ, chose Bartholomew to be an apostle to preach the blessed Gospel. Grant that Your Church may love what he believed and preach what he taught; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Aug. 29, The Martyrdom of St. John the Baptist

Collect of the Day

Almighty God, You gave Your servant John the Baptist to be the forerunner of Your Son, Jesus Christ, in both his preaching of repentance and his innocent death. Grant that we, who have died and risen with Christ in Holy Baptism, may daily repent of our sins, patiently suffer for the sake of the truth, and fearlessly bear witness to His victory over death; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.