

The Epistle

FEBRUARY 2021

**St. John's Lutheran
Red Bud, Illinois**

**Church: 508 Bloom Street
618/282-2394**

**School: 808 South Main Street
618/282-3873**

618-282-4087 (fax)

office@stjohnsredbud.org

www.stjohnsredbud.org

Worship: Saturdays at 5 p.m.

Sundays at 8 and 10:30 a.m.

Christian Education Hour:

Sundays from 9:30-10:15 a.m.

We preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ,
administer the sacraments and provide
Christian education in service to all people.

Rev. Mark A. Nebel, Senior Pastor

Mrs. Lindsey Hudak, Director of Parish Music

Mrs. Deitt Schneider, Principal

Mr. William Becker, Director of Christian Education

Rev. Clifford Adair, Assistant to the Pastor

Mrs. Amanda Falkenhain, Daycare Director

From Lutheran Church Charities

“Does Your Wife Know You Love Her?”

*Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church
and gave Himself up for her. Ephesians 5:25*

Why does the Bible say, ‘Husbands, love your wives...as Christ...loved the church and gave Himself for her’? Because your wife needs to know you love her, think about her, include her in your plans, and that you consider her opinions, needs, and desires. And if you don’t tell her, she won’t know it! So let’s look at how Jesus loved the church, which began with twelve disciples who were flawed human beings, and learn how you should love your wife. 1) *He loved them unconditionally.* Was it always easy? No. But instead of nagging His disciples about what they were or were not, He rejoiced, thinking about what they would become when His grace had worked in their lives. Stop and remember the qualities you saw in your wife that initially attracted you to her. Over the years she may have gained a few pounds, added a few new wrinkles, and sometimes seems to be buried under a mountain of housework. But she’s still the same wonderful person you fell in love with. That’s easy to forget, so you must constantly remind yourself – and her – of it. When roses are

exposed to frost, they wither and die, but given the right amount of sunshine and rain – they flourish. Describing an ideal wife, Solomon writes, ‘*Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her*’ (Proverbs 31:28). Why did these children praise their mother? Because they saw their father do it! So if you’ve been too busy, too self-absorbed, or too distracted, change your ways – and tell your wife how much you love her. (And by the way, ladies – that principle works both ways!)

Prayer- Dear Jesus, help me to show the love that You had for Your disciples to those who are the closest to me in my life, especially to my spouse. In Your name, Amen.

Your Pastor’s Ponderings

Somehow I am included in emails from the Coalition of African-American Pastors. It is very good material. They come from Rev. Bill Owens and his wife, Dr. Deborah Owens. He marched with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. during the 1960s Civil Rights Movement. He is a strong advocate for biblical values, Christian freedom and personal rights in our country. He sent out the following message after the violent protest at the US Capitol:

“As Christians, we are called to love others without exceptions. The Bible doesn’t say, ‘Love your neighbor ... unless you disagree on immigration issues and tax rates.’ We must love him regardless of our disagreements. Remember the instruction given to us by John the Evangelist: ‘If anyone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.’ (1 John 4: 20-21)

There has been too much anger- and too many excuses made for hate - in the past few months. Yes, it is true that some of the political issues that divide us have grave consequences, such as the issue of abortion, which is literally one of life and death. But we cannot bring people to our side through anger and hate. In the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., ‘Returning hate for hate multiplies hate, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can.’

It is tempting to say that we will act with love and tolerance as soon as we see those virtues demonstrated to our satisfaction by our political enemies. But that is not what the Bible is calling us to do. We are to act with love for our neighbor regardless of his actions or beliefs. We must demonstrate Christian love through our own speech and actions at all times.

This doesn't mean that we cannot still work for justice and the defense of our beliefs. Those are both vital missions and we should never abandon our efforts to preserve freedom, faith, and family. But it is possible to adhere to this mission from a place of love and charity for all.

For too long, our nation has allowed the rhetoric of division and anger to chip away at our American values. It is time that we remember all that unites us and come together, in love, to heal our country."

I hope that the calls for unity in our country expressed by our nation's leadership will result in actions for that unity instead of decisions that will divide us even further, especially if that involves the censorship of biblical teaching and the expression of Christian doctrine.

Your servant in Christ, Pastor Mark Nebel

Welcome to Our Family of Faith

January 3 Baptism of Logan Ronald Gramenz

Midweek Lenten Services

The season of Lent begins on February 17 with Ash Wednesday. We will observe this with Holy Communion services in church at 8:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. The theme for our midweek worship this year is "By His Wounds We Are Healed."

The following is a description of this series: "Our Lord and Savior suffered mortal wounds as punishment for the commandments broken by us. Yet, those very wounds are the means by which our sins are forgiven and we are made whole again. This worship series for the season of Lent leads us to reflect on how the wounds of sin affect relationships with God and with others and how, through graceful healing, our Lord restores us once more."

Our Midweek Lenten services under that theme will continue the following Wednesdays at 8:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. through March 24. The evening services will be preceded by a meal in the Fellowship Hall provided by Mr. Becker and served by our Senior Youth. There also will be a hymn sing in the sanctuary before worship.

Sunday Morning Studies 9:30 to 10:15 a.m.

Adult Bible Class meets in the Fellowship Hall with Pastor Nebel. Refreshments are provided.

DCE Bill Becker offers a parents and other adults class in the Junior High Wing at school off of the new gym lobby. He continues with a class on "Faith in the Shadow of a Pandemic. Seminarian Wade Waterstreet is guiding our high school-aged members in a study of the Gospel of Matthew. They meet in Room Two of the Fellowship Hall.

From Your Director of Christian Education

The month of February holds many things in store, including the beginning of Lent. One of my favorite Lenten hymns, "My Song is Love Unknown" reads in verse one:

My song is love unknown, My Savior's love to me, love to the loveless shown that they might lovely be. Oh, who am I that for my sake My Lord should take frail flesh and die.

It is because of our sinful condition that Jesus did die. We know that the season of Lent will include 40 days of somberness and reflection on the life and suffering of Jesus.

Activities that are being planned for this month include Wednesday, Lenten meals, another to go meal for seniors on Friday, February 26, and a new Bible study topic on Sunday mornings.

The Lenten meals will begin on Ash Wednesday with chicken noodle soup, sandwiches, and desserts. Wednesday, February 24 will be a birthday celebration for a special lady, my wife, her favorite meal of spaghetti, garlic bread, salad, cake, and homemade ice cream will be served! Stay tuned to March's newsletter for the remaining meals. The Senior Youth will help serve. We will observe COVID restaurant restrictions with masks, gloves, etc. Tables in the Fellowship Hall are spaced apart and I recommend families sitting together. The free-will offerings collected will be designated for the Senior Youth and our next Youth Gathering.

A third and final winter to-go meal is planned for Friday, February 26. The menu will include chicken pot pie, crescent rolls, applesauce, and of course desserts! Please call or text me at 618-282-2958 again by Wednesday, February 24 so enough supplies and food are ready. Pick up from 11 a.m.-noon behind the Fellowship Hall.

We will start a new Bible Study using a book titled, *Being Lutheran* by Rev. Trevor Sutton. "This is a must-read for all Christians wanting to dig deeper. It is a great resource for pastors and teachers to put into the hands of 'new' Christians and 'old.' It is good for anyone who seeks a better understanding of what it means to be a follower of Christ, one who desires even more to get to know Jesus and the power of His Word in their lives. This book would be excellent for any individual, but it is especially useful for small groups because of Sutton's use of today's relevant concerns and apathies as the context into which to speak the things of Jesus and the Good News of God's Grace. Complete with vignettes and discussion questions, this is a resource that is sure to bless." *Rev. Gregory Seltz, former Speaker of The Lutheran Hour*

I hope to see many of you either at an upcoming meal, Bible class, or in church. *In His service, Mr. Bill Becker*

Fellowship Hall Midweek Bible Studies

Wednesday class meets this month only on the 3rd and 10th at 7:30 p.m. as we continue with 1st Samuel from the Old Testament. After that we will break for Midweek Lenten services. The Thursday morning, 8:10 to 9 a.m. class continues studying the Gospel of Luke with Pastor Nebel. The first and third Saturdays at 7 a.m. is our Men's Bible Breakfast reading through the book of Job.

Divine Call Extended

In our Voters Assembly meeting on January 24th the proposal to enter into a dual parish arrangement with St. John in Baldwin for the purpose of calling a Split-time Pastor who will serve us as an Associate Pastor and serve the Baldwin congregation as its Sole Pastor was approved. We will extend this call for a spring placement seminary graduate. For us this would replace our arrangement with Rev. Clifford Adair as our part-time Assistant to the Pastor.

Officers And Board Members

Thank you to all who were willing to have their names placed into nomination for elected positions in our congregation. We appreciate your willingness to serve our Lord and His people here in our family of faith. The following were elected at our January 24th Voters assembly meeting: Bruce Schneider (Chairman); Darren Liefer (Vice-Chairman); Ray Wagner (Treasurer); Joan Ruwald (Secretary); Larry Gielow, Kevin Guebert, Gerald Hanebutt (Elders); Bart Miller and Kenneth Langrehr (Trustees); Devon Albert and Andrew Langrehr (Parish Education); Connie Muench, Kathleen Salger, and Crystal Liefer (Finance); Kara Wagner (Estate Fund) and Kathy Valleroy (Christ Our Savior LHS Board [begins July 1]).

We also thank those whose current term of service has ended for their dedication, effort and commitment to our congregation. They are Gary Buatte (Vice-Chairman), Stuart Langrehr, Stanley Langrehr, and Quentin Stenzel (Elders); Scott Burmester and Fred Salger (Trustees); Kyle Herriman and Paul Mollet (Parish Education); Briana Becker, Sarah Heller and Jennifer Langrehr (Finance); Devon Albert (Estate Fund) and Lisa Quinn (Christ Our Savior LHS [ends June 30]).

Custodian Position Available

We are looking for a part-time school custodian. The hours are noon to 4 p.m. starting at minimum wage. We desire a person who is conscientious in work skills, cares about maintenance and cleanliness, is a team player and respects the health and safety of our student body. Please call John Preston (282-7783) or Mrs. Schneider at school (282-3873) if you are interested.



Our staff provided a Spaghetti for Seniors lunch on Friday, January 15 from the Fellowship Hall. Sixty-one people were served carry-out meals. DCE Bill Becker organized this project. Pictured from left-to right are school staff members Lindsey Hudak, Cindy Nebel, Justin Palm, Doreen Schnepel, Betty Schmitz, Patty Schnepel, Deitt Schneider, Cindy Steele, Bill Becker, Darlene Letcher and Becky Liefer.

From the Principal's Pen

Greetings to all! I write this on our first "real" snowfall for the year! Our students have been excited with the prediction. Now it is falling making a beautiful landscape. I know our students cannot wait to go home to play outside!

We are celebrating Lutheran Schools Week this week. It is always a special time for us to remember our blessings by being in a Lutheran School. Our activities do look a little different as we are not allowed to gather by large groups but we still share daily devotions and pictures posted on line. Thank you for all the donations of towels, soap, toothbrushes and combs. These will be packed later for Lutheran World Relief with the help of our Evening Guild.

This week we were also surprised by being allowed to practice volleyball! The students are so excited! Basketball will follow this week with drills by the coaches on Thursday. We will have to wait to see if we will be allowed to play games and what the restrictions will be. Always a waiting game but we have learned to be patient!

February is right around the corner. Valentine's Day falls on a weekend so we will have parties on that Thursday, February 11. We have a remote learning day on Friday, February 12 with no student attendance.

Our Southern Illinois District Convention which was scheduled for February 11-13 has been postponed due to Covid restrictions. Depending what our synod decides on the national convention (2022 or 2023), we may have it later this year or it will be postponed to next February

We plan to hold a Geography Bee on February 25 for our students. The National Geography Bee was cancelled because of COVID-19 but we decided to hold our own so the students have a chance to be the 2021 winner. The Bee

will be on Facebook live for parents to watch during the final rounds. We look forward to this event. We will have another Remote learning day on February 26 so there will be no student attendance that day.

Looking ahead, we also plan to have a Musical in April even if it must be virtual. We will keep you posted on this as well. Please watch the Cougar Tracks, Church Bulletin, Facebook, Remind and any other form of communication we have to find out what is new and upcoming. Our schedules do seem to change from day to day so please check the latest news.

God's blessings to you, Mrs. Deitt Schneider

Second Quarter Honor Roll

4th Grade- Honors: Caleb Klausing. High Honors: Levi Nagel, Brendyn Wegener, Brooke Wolter. Highest Honors: Ella Cowell, Maya Macbeth, Carson Moll, Jack Sachtleben, Tessa Stenzel & Cailyn Wilson.

5th Grade- Honors: Cason Birch, Emily Farmer, Colin Korando & Molly Kuehn. High Honors: Mallory Arbeiter, Joey Biffar, Brian Liefer & Lilly Meyer. Highest Honors: Karleigh Liefer, Addy Schloemann & Norah Wagner.

6th Grade- Honors: Connor Bumann, Annika Herriman, Olivia Valleroy, Colby Voss, Ty Voss & Alan Wolter. High Honors: Kendall Crafton, Amelia Guebert, Kinley Macbeth, Lucas McCarthy, Lilly Minemann, Eve Schwartzkopf, Blayton Sutton, Milla Neff, Jenna Whelan & Julia Whelan. Highest Honors: Addie Rahn, Landon Ruebusch & Brodie Stenzel.

7th Grade- Honors: Ava Clifford, Jack Crafton, Emmett Heller & Grayson Herriman. High Honors: Addie Meyer, Luke Quintin & Kerrigan Zeiger, Highest Honors: Emma Kiefer, Evan Kiefer, Addyson Piel & Alexa Wagener.

8th Grade- Honors: Gavin Baldwin, Summer Luttmann & Lucas Schwartzkopf. High Honors: Taylor Guebert, Sofia Jones, Christine Liefer, Karson Liefer, Tori Muench, Hailey Proctor, Cadin Voss & Derek Whelan. Highest Honors: Jakob Biffar, Chloe Cowell, Emme Deterding, Blake Henry, Eva Kinney, Sam Roscow, Daniel Stapleton & Crewe Wagner.

Preschool and Kindergarten Registration

Registration is now online and open for Preschool and Kindergarten. Please log on to the addresses below to sign up for the 2021-2022 school year. Sorry, we are not able to have an open house or soup dinner this year, we hope to have it again next year.

Here are the web addresses for the registration forms.

Kindergarten: <https://forms.gle/A8vEHAXcHyz9GcCV9>

Preschool: <https://forms.gle/TDK3QKmnMMBUXjcY9>



January 26 was favorite sports team day for our National Lutheran Schools Week. Pastor Nebel and Grayden Schloemann dressed for the two teams opposing each other in the upcoming Super Bowl. Grayden is a championship wrestler so Pastor knows better than to mess with him!

Senior Youth

Our elected officers are Ethan Fritsche, President; Annelise Quinn, Activity Director; Dylan Roscow, Treasurer; and Hannah Sievers, Secretary.

We will meet on Sunday, February 7, at noon in our church basement hangout. Say cheese, please! Deliveries of Hemme cheese are on their way soon.

The LCMS National Youth Gathering for 2022 will be in Houston. Adult volunteers are needed to work at the gathering. Ambassadors and Team Leads (formerly known as Community Life Builders) application deadline is March 15, 2021. These folks serve full time during the gathering. If you cannot serve the full gathering, those age 19+ can apply for a Team Flex position. These volunteers are part time. Their application deadline is April 2022. YAV Squad Leader (ages 19-25) - application deadline is March 15, 2021. Later this year, the application process will open up for YAV Team Captains and YAV's (watch for info July 2021). All applications can be found on the gathering website <https://lcmsgathering.com/volunteer/>

Zoom Bible Class Offering

Seminarian Wade Waterstreet is offering a Zoom Bible Class on Saturdays from 4-4:40 p.m. To be part of “Stump the Seminarian” please send an email to him at waterstreetw@csl.edu and he will send you a Zoom link.

Evening Guild News

On Tuesday, February 16 at 7 p.m. all are welcome to join in gathering with the Evening Guild in the Fellowship Hall for an activity night of tying quilts and a short business meeting with the collection of mites. Cindy Steele will lead our devotions based on Ephesians 5:1-2. During the 40 days of Lent, the guild will collect donations for the Musketeer Market at Red Bud High School. Hostesses are Jeanne Stamm, Chairman, Cindy Steele, Wanda Steele, and Lucille VanHoy.

Quilting continues in the Fellowship Hall on Tuesday afternoons and Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Join them for some social interaction at a distance across a quilt!

Website Bible Studies

Bible studies topics under the Media tab of our website www.stjohnsredbud.org are Amen, Angels, Antichrist, Apostles, Apostolic Preaching of the Resurrection, Baptism Q & A, Church & Homosexuality, Communications Skills, Cremation, Christian Citizenship, End of the World, Discussing Homosexuality, God’s Will in the Lives of His People, Haggai, Having the Right Attitude, Heaven, The Justice of God, Justification and Sanctification, Islam, Live By the Spirit, Malachi, Meditation, Philemon, Purses, Was Jesus a Vegetarian?, Word Dwellers, and more to come! I have added our most recent study, “Fear or Faith? Terror or Trust? Worldly Worry or Christian Living.”

February Servers

Flowers: Kathy Valleroy and Skylar Valleroy
Paraments: Carol Turner; Cloths: Lynn Langrehr

The Prayer Chain

Our Prayer Chain Coordinator is Vickie Heller. If you would like to be part of the Prayer Chain or if you have a prayer request, please call her at 618/521-7417. Please call the church office if you would like to add someone to our worship prayers. *Pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective* (James 5:16).

FYI: University Lutheran Church in Champaign is the LCMS congregation next to the campus of the University of Illinois, doing ministry to the dear LCMS people who are here and outreach to the rest of the campus community and the immediate area. Check out <https://uniluchampaign.org>

What Is A Steward? From LCMS Stewardship

“I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich” (2 Corinthians 8:8-9).

Without commands or even arm-twisting, St. Paul encourages, even challenges, the Church in Corinth to demonstrate the sincerity of their faith by their generosity in giving. He does this because giving generously is a gift of the Spirit given to us through the Gospel.

St. Paul wrote: “But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving” (2 Cor. 8:7). In other words, just as we grow in faith and speech and knowledge of eternal things by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God, so also do we grow in giving from the same Spirit through the same Word.

The problem is that the grace of generosity often grows cold in us. It’s not so much that we stop giving, but we don’t put it first. We treat it like all the other bills that must be paid. It becomes a chore, just one more thing to check off a list of things to do. That empties it of its spiritual power and robs us of the joy that Christ and the Scriptures assign to it. On top of that, since this generosity is linked to faith and knowledge of divine things, a lack of excelling in giving is sure sign that our faith and knowledge of God are under attack as well.

Thus St. Paul points to the foundation of generosity: the generosity of Christ Himself. Even though He was rich, He became poor so that we who are poor might become rich. Thus, the incarnation, suffering, and death of our Lord on the cross is the reason, source, and driving force for our generosity in giving to the church.

And since Christ who was rich became poor so that we might be rich in His grace—of which generous giving is part—so we also who are rich in His grace can excel in pressing His grace into service toward the gracious work of the church.

Pay attention to what you give to the church so that you may excel at it. And if you find that your heart has grown cold or indifferent toward it, immerse yourself in God’s Word. Read it at home. Attend Bible Class. Hear and listen to it preached in the Divine Service. Be reminded of what Christ has done for you in His incarnation, suffering, and death. For this will strengthen your faith and knowledge. And where that excels, so will the grace of giving excel also.

LCMS Foundation

Frank and Katherine were raised to be thrifty, hard-working, God-fearing, children of God. They raised their children in the faith as well and enjoyed sharing Bible stories with their grandchildren.

Frank and Katherine were known to not waste a thing, washing, and reusing disposable items, ripping off the bottom half of a piece of mail that came, to use for scrap paper. They had been diligent savers, putting a portion of weekly income into an investment account.

Years ago, their advisor had directed them to put investments in annuities. Since that time, all growth on their investments had grown tax deferred. They never planned on spending any of it. They planned on giving it all to their children as inheritance. Little did they know that a large portion of that inheritance would simply be paid in taxes.

An LCMS Foundation Gift Planning Counselor had presented at their church and raised the topic of wise tax planning. They brushed it off. They did not see the value. This couple that rejoiced about saving pennies at a time by reusing old things, threw away tens of thousands of dollars in taxes that could have enriched their children's inheritance or created a nice bequest to their Church, enabling more people to hear about Jesus.

We often put off such work, because it intimidates us, as we venture into topics that we have never discussed before. Yet the story of Frank and Katherine illustrates for all of us, that a few hours of conversation and planning could potentially magnify the effect of a lifetime of careful stewardship of God's gifts. Your LCMS Gift Planning Counselor can help. Contact Scott A. Radden at (618) 977-4049 or Scott.Radden@lfnd.org for more information.

Music CDs Available

St. John's member Joan Voges is offering the latest, and last, music CD from her Lilyfields Collection to us for a donation to our school's ministry. "Peter's Song" tells the story of Jesus through the eyes of His disciple Peter. The seven tracks of this CD include beautiful narrations from the late Chris Bergmann along with Joan's texts and tunes. All of her Lilyfield CDs are available on the table in the entryway for a \$10 donation to our school ministry.

Former St. John's member Bryan Perdue has made his latest CD of music, "Freely Given, Freely Received," available for us to purchase. The \$10 will be used for our congregation's Debt Reduction. They are on the table in the church entryway.

Event Reminders On Your Cell Phones

Remind Me.com is a free system that will allow us to send text messages to you reminding you of what is happening in our family of faith here at St. John's. However, it does not allow for group discussions so that there will not be continued unwanted messages from anyone in the group receiving the text. To join this remind system for St. John's, text the message @8243ad2 (new code) to the number 81010. Please contact our office at 282-2394 with your questions.

Set Up Direct Payments Thru ACH

Routine payments to St. John's can be made by direct electronic withdrawal for offerings, school lunches, preschool tuition, and daycare securely from the bank account you designate at either bi-weekly or monthly intervals. Fill out a form in the school office and select each payment account you want automatically withdrawn. It is free. You can make changes or cancel any time. If there are insufficient funds in the account at the time of payment, no funds will be withdrawn. You will be notified. We hope this option offers convenience to users and greater efficiency for our funding. If you feel more comfortable making payments by cash/check, please do!

Acolyte Schedule

Sat. Jan. 30	5 p.m. Summer Luttman
Sun. Jan. 31	8 a.m. Eve Schwartzkopf 10:30 a.m. Natalie Korando
Sat. Feb. 6	5 p.m. Emma Kiefer
Sun. Feb. 7	8 a.m. Christine Liefer 10:30 a.m. Macee Brown
Sat. Feb. 13	5 p.m. Jack Crafton
Sun. Feb. 14	8 a.m. Daniel Stapleton 10:30 a.m. Kerrigan Zeiger
Wed. Feb. 17	8:30 a.m. Brody Stellhorn 7:00 p.m. Ayden Wiegard
Sat. Feb. 20	5 p.m. Grayson Herriman
Sun. Feb. 21	8 a.m. Noah Kassing 10:30 a.m. Emme Deterding
Wed. Feb. 24	8:30 a.m. Lily Kent 7:00 p.m. Olivia Gerald
Sat. Feb. 27	5 p.m. Morgan Kent
Sun. Feb. 28	8 a.m. Jakob Biffar 10:30 a.m. Addyson Piel
Wed. March 3	8:30 a.m. Connor Jordan 7:00 p.m. Luke Kennedy

If you are not able to serve when scheduled, please switch with another acolyte and contact our office with the change. Thanks!

Happy Valentine's Day!

February Church and School Calendar

SUNDAY, January 31-

8:00 a.m. Divine Service with Holy Communion
9:25 a.m. Sunday School & Faith/Pandemic Class in new gym
9:30 a.m. Adult and Youth Bible classes in the Fellowship Hall
10:30 a.m. Divine Service with Holy Communion
6:00 p.m. Sonshine Visitation meeting in the Fellowship Hall

Monday, February 1-

6:00 p.m. Volleyball (ABC) at home versus Valmeyer
7:00 p.m. Board of Elders meeting in the Fellowship Hall
7:00 p.m. Choir practice in the school music room

Tuesday, February 2-

10:00 a.m. to 3 p.m. Circuit Pastors' Conference at Chester
12:30 p.m. Quilting in the Fellowship Hall
4:15 p.m. Volleyball at Steeleville
6:30 p.m. Board of Parish Education meeting in school library

Wednesday, February 3-

8:20 a.m. Grades 3-8 School Chapel in the new gym
9:00 a.m. Quilting in the Fellowship Hall
9:30 a.m. Office Staff meeting
2:15 p.m. Public School Confirmation classes in FH
7:30 p.m. Bible Class in the Fellowship Hall (1st Samuel)

Thursday, February 4-

8:10 a.m. Bible Class in the Fellowship Hall (Luke)
6:00 p.m. Bell Choir practice in the church balcony
6:00 p.m. Volleyball at RBC/Trinity

*Friday, February 5- Pastor Nebel is out of town today
B Team Volleyball tournament this weekend at Rocher*

8:30 a.m. Early Childhood Chapel Service

Saturday, February 6-

7:00 a.m. Men's Bible Breakfast in the Fellowship Hall (Job)
5:00 p.m. Divine Service with Holy Communion

SUNDAY, February 7-

8:00 a.m. Divine Service with Holy Communion
9:25 a.m. Sunday School & Being Lutheran classes in new gym
9:30 a.m. Adult & Youth Bible Classes in the Fellowship Hall
10:30 a.m. Divine Service
Noon Senior Youth Gathering in church basement hangout

Monday, February 8-

6:00 p.m. Volleyball at home versus Prairie du Rocher
7:00 p.m. Choir practice in the school music room

Tuesday, February 9-

12:30 p.m. Quilting in the Fellowship Hall
6:00 p.m. Boys' Basketball (ABC) home vs. Prairie du Rocher
7:00 p.m. Parent-Teacher League meeting in school cafeteria

Wednesday, February 10-

8:20 a.m. Grades 3-8 School Chapel Service in the new gym
9:00 a.m. Quilting in the Fellowship Hall
9:30 a.m. Office Staff meeting

2:15 p.m. Public School Confirmation classes in FH

7:30 p.m. Bible Class in the Fellowship Hall (1st Samuel)

Thursday, February 11-

8:10 a.m. Bible Class in the Fellowship Hall (Luke)
2:00 p.m. "At-risk/Vulnerable" Holy Communion service
6:00 p.m. Bell Choir practice in the church balcony
6:00 p.m. Volleyball away at St. John Lutheran in Chester
7:00 p.m. Men's Club Gathering in the Fellowship Hall

Friday, February 12- Remote Learning Day

6:00 p.m. Boys' Basketball (ABC) at St. Mary's Chester
Volleyball A at St. Mary's tourney & C at RC Catholic tourney

Saturday, February 13- 5:00 p.m. Divine Service

SUNDAY, February 14-

8:00 a.m. Divine Service
9:25 a.m. Sunday School & Being Lutheran classes in new gym
9:30 a.m. Adult/Youth Bible Classes in the Fellowship Hall
10:30 a.m. Divine Service with Holy Communion

Monday, February 15- Presidents' Day; School & Office closed

7:00 p.m. Choir practice in the school music room

Tuesday, February 16-

12:30 p.m. Quilting in the Fellowship Hall
6:00 p.m. Volleyball at home versus Evansville
7:00 p.m. Church Council meeting in the school library
7:00 p.m. Evening Guild Gathering in the Fellowship Hall

Wednesday, February 17- Ash Wednesday; Lent begins!

8:30 a.m. Holy Communion Service at church

9:00 a.m. Quilting in the Fellowship Hall

9:30 a.m. Office Staff meeting

2:15 p.m. Public School Confirmation classes in FH

5:30 p.m. Lenten Supper in the Fellowship Hall

7:00 p.m. Holy Communion Service at church

Thursday, February 18-

8:10 a.m. Bible Class in the Fellowship Hall (Luke)

6:00 p.m. Bell Choir practice in the church balcony

Friday, February 19- B team Volleyball tournament here

8:30 a.m. Early Childhood Chapel in the new gym

1:00 p.m. Geography Bee at school

Saturday, February 20-

7:00 a.m. Men's Bible Breakfast in Fellowship Hall (Job)

5:00 p.m. Divine Service with Holy Communion

SUNDAY, February 21-

8:00 a.m. Divine Service with Holy Communion

9:25 a.m. Sunday School & Being Lutheran classes in new gym

9:30 a.m. Adult & Youth Bible Classes in the Fellowship Hall

10:30 a.m. Divine Service (Alternative)

Monday, February 22-

3:00 p.m. School faculty meeting in the library

6:30 p.m. Sunday School teachers meeting in the school library

7:00 p.m. Choir practice in the school's music room

Tuesday, February 23- Spring Picture Day

12:30 p.m. Quilting in the Fellowship Hall

6:00 p.m. Volleyball (ABC) at home versus St. Libory

Wednesday, February 24-

8:30 a.m. Midweek Lenten Service at church

9:00 a.m. Quilting in the Fellowship Hall

9:30 a.m. Office Staff meeting

2:15 p.m. Public School Confirmation classes in FH

5:30 p.m. Lenten Supper in the Fellowship Hall

7:00 p.m. Midweek Lenten Service at church

Thursday, February 25-

8:10 a.m. Bible Class in the Fellowship Hall (Luke)

4:15 p.m. Volleyball away at Coulterville

6:00 p.m. Bell Choir practice in the church balcony

Friday, February 26- Remote Learning Day

11:00 a.m. Senior Meal service in the Fellowship Hall

Volleyball A at St. John/Chester tourney & C at tourney here

Saturday, February 27- 5:00 p.m. Divine Service

SUNDAY, February 28- 8:00 a.m. Divine Service

9:25 a.m. Sunday School & Being Lutheran class in new gym

9:30 a.m. Adult & Youth Bible Classes in the Fellowship Hall

10:30 a.m. Divine Service with Holy Communion

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In recent weeks, I have received a number of inquiries from concerned members of the Synod about the COVID-19 vaccines, as they seek to maintain their support for the sanctity of life and for religious freedom. These questions have come not in the interests of politicizing the matter, but out of sincere Christian moral convictions. Having consulted with our district presidents and other agencies of the Synod, I requested that the staff of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations, in collaboration with the Office of National Mission's Life Ministry, draft "The LCMS and COVID-19 Vaccines: Facts and Considerations." On the basis of this counsel, let me address a few of your most pressing questions.

1) Are COVID-19 vaccines related to abortion? The science regarding this is complex. The two vaccines currently approved by the FDA — Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna — were not designed, developed or produced using cell lines derived from aborted human fetal tissue. Other vaccine candidates — including the UK-approved Oxford/AstraZeneca — did use human fetal tissue, however. The Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna vaccines did perform laboratory tests using cells derived from abortions (one from 1972 and another from 1985) to confirm the final vaccine quality (as, surprisingly, do many other commonly used medications and vaccines). For more information on how the COVID-19 vaccines relate to abortion, I encourage you to consult the website of the pro-life bioethicists at the Charlotte Lozier Institute and the list they maintain there. According to their assessment, neither the Pfizer/BioNTech nor Moderna vaccines contain any substance derived from aborted human fetal cells.

2) Does the Synod have a position on the reception of vaccines using human fetal tissue? The Synod does not have an official position on such vaccines at this time. Official decisions of this nature come through the Synod acting in convention, and no convention action has yet been taken. However, our church body remains firmly committed to the sanctity of life, and we continually seek to advocate for pro-life positions in the public square.

3) Can I obtain a religious exemption for the COVID-19 vaccine? Religious or personal belief exemptions are based on conscientious objection and do not require official support from the denomination. The absence of an official Synod stance does not impact your ability to seek an exemption. Please consult your local lawmakers or public health officials for more information on how to proceed should the need arise.

4) Should I take the COVID-19 vaccine? This is a question only you can answer. Some may choose not to take

the vaccine because of concerns over its relation to abortion or fear of possible health complications. Others may take it in spite of such reservations out of concern for their own health or that of their neighbor. Since neither Scripture nor the Synod has explicitly addressed this issue, it remains a matter of Christian freedom where you must choose according to your individual conscience.

5) How should I talk about the vaccine with others who disagree with my view of it? In a sensitive issue of this nature, we remember the words of St. James: "Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger" (James 1:19). Listen carefully and openly to the points of others. Consider them. Share your positions patiently and objectively. Reflect upon your own penchant for error. Forgive others where they sin against you and ask for forgiveness where you wrong them.

In this contentious issue, we must respect the consciences of fellow believers who share our same commitment to Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, as well as our life together as a Synod. As St. Paul urges us regarding matters of conscience, "let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor" (1 Cor. 10:24), and "let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother" (Rom. 14:13). At a time of cultural upheaval, I would encourage you not to allow disagreement even over undoubtedly important matters such as this to take precedence over the faith that unites us in Christ. In all things, we should heed the call to "maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3).

Please study the document linked here. It provides a summary of what we know about the COVID-19 vaccines, their relation to the issue of abortion, and what we can (and cannot) say about these matters from the Synod's perspective. I hope it proves useful to you as you wrestle with how to bear Christian witness in this world through your love of both God and neighbor.

"Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen" (Hebrews 13:20–21).

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison

President, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

PS: "The LCMS and COVID-19 Vaccines: Facts and Considerations" document is available online at lcms.org/doc/covid19-vaccines-fact-sheet.

Elder Zones for 2020: (Chairman, Stuart Langrehr)

Zone 1: D. Adams thru R. Collins-
Elder Eric Fritsche (618/410-5989)

Zone 2: S. Conboy thru D/K Grohmann-
Elder Stuart Langrehr (282-2736)

Zone 3: N/E Grohmann thru R/K Herriman-
Elder Jacob Arbeiter (618/615-1108)

Zone 4: R. Herriman thru T/E Krick-
Elder Adam Guebert (618/920-2403)

Zone 5: Wil/Martha Krick thru Janel Maes-
Elder David Reinhardt (618/967-7967)

Zone 6: Pat Malik thru Lanie Pensoneau-
Elder Quentin Stenzel (282-4661)

Zone 7: A/A Piel thru Don Schrader-
Elder Mike DeRousse (282-3066)

Zone 8: J/D Schrader thru B/C Turner-
Elder Stanley Langrehr (282-3481)

Zone 9: D/K Uffelmann thru Doug Zschiegner-
Elder Kirk Liefer (618/559-7950)