



Christ's Messenger

August 2019

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH
The American Association of Lutheran Churches
A fortress of safety in a post-Christian frontier.



"To know Christ,
and make Him known."

Misunderstanding Affliction

Some of you attend Wednesday evening Bible study, and for those who do not, you're missing a lot! Anyway, during the 8-week study of Martin Luther's "7 Marks of the Church," the last installment was called "The holy possession of the Holy Cross." What this means is that Christians must endure all hardship and persecution, all kinds of temptation and evil (as the Lord's Prayer says) from, the world, the flesh and the devil. Martin Luther called it *anfechtung*. We become inwardly sad, timid, terrified; outwardly poor, despised, sick, weak; and from these experiences, Christians are transformed and become like Jesus Christ. With this holy possession the Holy Spirit makes His Church, not only holy, but blessed.

Anfechtung is affliction, temptation, tribulation, failure, and sin, compounded by self-examination, condemnation, struggle with faith, fear, attack by Satan, and the terror of deserved judgment. Martin Luther describes *anfechtung* as "an overwhelming feeling of having been abandoned by God's grace and of being lost forever." *Anfechtung* is depression, fear, anxiety, panic, and loss of faith. *Anfechtung* is a break in a person's relationship with God.

What is affliction or *anfechtung*? Affliction is God's work in suffering. It's medicine to wake us from "slumbering self-sufficiency." It's medicine to repent us and instill Christ-sufficiency. It is acknowledging that the Devil does work in suffering. It is where the Devil attempt to turn God's medicine into poison. It causes us to doubt God's goodness. It creates a breach in our relationship with God.

Does this resonate with you? Do you believe that you have experienced such testing of your faith? Sometimes you cannot distinguish what you're going through until after you've been through it. During the affliction our mind races and goes places that we don't want it to go. Our faith is challenged. Our character is challenged. Sometimes, we become despondent and lose hope. You wonder why this has happened to you. You wonder where God is in your affliction. We fail to

realize that even our suffering come to us from the hands and heart of our gracious Father.

Satan can twist our affliction and whisper in our ears that what God intends for good is really evil. That God is getting back at us rather than God getting us back to Him. In the trial of faith, Satan tempts us to put God's heart on trial. When we experience afflictions or trials of faith it is important to get the perspective of faith. Our growth as a Christian is the development of a "faith perspective." It can reshape our perspective on our life situation. It aids us to consider God's plan rightly, and see how greatly we are favored by God. When we suffer, we should consider Christ's heart as He hung on the cross to make death contemptible and dead for us. Also, it is important to understand that delight in suffering comes as the image of Christ's resurrection finds its way into our hearts. God's mercy in our infirmity shows that though death could not be taken away, it is a mere shadow of the promise of the resurrection.

We are to glory in our tribulations, scarcely feeling them for the joy we have in Christ. Romans 5:3-5 says, "Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us." We walk by faith and not by sight 1 Corinthians 5:7, "For we live by believing and not by seeing." All of life is to be perceived through the lens of Christ's victory. We live in the days between Christ's victory over evil and evil's end. Open your eyes of faith!

The source of our consolation is the scriptural context of faith. Our consolations are to be drawn from scripture. Romans 15:4-"Brethren, whatever was written, was written for our instruction, so that through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures we might have hope." The Bible is: 1) God's narrative of and explanation for the human condition; and 2) The

Every Month:

Join us for prayer
Every Tuesday at Noon

Every Wed. at 6:30 PM
Adult Bible Study

Mary Circle
First Thursday of each month
at 9:30 AM

Esther Circle
First Thursday of each month
at 6:30 PM

Dorcas Circle
Second Monday of each
month at 1:00 PM

Lutherans for Life
Second Sunday of each
month at 6:30 PM

Council Meeting
Second Thursday of each
month at 6:30 PM

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source book for developing a faith perspective concerning suffering. A scriptural focus encourages people to grieve deeply and honestly, and cling to scriptural hope. Take it to heart that the Word of God is the pre-eminent comforter. The crucified Christ is the Gospel content for discovering or renewing the faith perspective.

God tells us in 2 Corinthians 1:3-5, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.” When life is bad, we defeat satanic doubts about God’s goodness by facing our suffering face-to-face with God in the face of Jesus Christ. 2 Corinthians 4:6 says, “For God, who said, “Let there be light in the darkness,” has made this light shine in our hearts so we could know the glory of God that is seen in the face of Jesus Christ.” As your pastor, I am your Soul Physician, and I am concerned about your “internal bleeding” as your heart struggles for faith to believe in God’s good heart. I’m here to help you with your afflictions.

I write this for August’s Messenger after a long week of spiritual struggle while Sue, Mark, Andrew, Pam and the kids were in Colorado. Sue struggled too in Colorado physically as well as spiritually. However, Sue realized that God was working in her heart as she reflected

on her way back to Duluth. Then, she began to suffer greatly from an angry gallbladder, and finally gave in to trusting God for the outcome of a conclusive ER visit and subsequent removal of that testy organ. Now she is recovering and yet she feels better. She feels better because of your prayers and the prayers of her family and friends. Most of all, she feels better because she could sense the mighty presence of God refining her, enabling her to grab ahold of God more tightly than ever before.

Remember, you are a sinner; however, you are borne by His righteousness which is given to you as a free gift. You are unclean, but He clothes you in His holiness which is your sanctification. Thus, if you believe it, you may glory in the merits of Jesus Christ and in all His blessings as though you yourself had won them. Such a great thing is faith, such blessings does it bring us, such glorious sons of God does it make us. Therefore, just as it is impossible for Christ with His righteousness not to please God, so it is impossible for us, with our faith clinging to His righteousness, not to please Him. It is in this way, as a Christian, you become Christ-like, having all things and doing all things, wholly without sin. Even if you sin, it cannot do you harm! Sin is forgiven for the sake of the inexhaustible righteousness of Jesus Christ that removes it! Jesus Christ and the Church suffer with us. You are not alone!

Blessings,
Pastor Gary

Just a short maintenance update –

The parking lot has been crack filled and restriped. The new cement slab for our basement door entrance is scheduled for early fall. A big thank you to Jim Carlson for keeping the grass mowed and grounds looking so nice. Thanks too to our Esther Circle ladies for caring for the gardens. The flowers look beautiful! Also want to thank Mike Pickar and Gary Lofald for finishing up the landscaping around the playset. Thank you too to Bruce Wells for posting the signs on the playset for us. Please let us know if there are any other maintenance items that need attention so that we can get them addressed! Blessings on your summer!!

PLEASE PRAY FOR...

Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. James 5:14

Our Pastor & the Leadership of the Church
Youth Group Kids & Leaders
Open Arms Daycare
Mission of the Month: *Lutheran Bible Translators*
Our Country, Military & Police

The teachers and students at all schools
Persecuted Christians throughout the world
Piedmont Elementary
Summer safety for students

THOSE WITH HEALTH NEEDS:

Don Olson	Katie Lund	Diane Malander
Carol Schneeberger	Susan Johnson	Mary Jenny
Bryan Goepfinger	Gerald & Aletha Bartels	Marlene Stauber
Brian MacDonald	Carol Johnson	Mark Malander
Vi Boder	Rev. Tom Stover	Leo Plewa
Shirley Kern	Kaylea Guddeck	Kathleen Randa
Dennis Peterson	Shirley Randa	Melanie Saeland
Bill & Jane McLean	Russell & Carol Schramm	Darlene Saaf
Jean Sundstrom	Ruth Dahl	Evelyn Johnson
Judy Stocke	Florence Kubiak	

If there are any people who have been accidently overlooked, please contact the church office. We apologize for any oversights.

August 2019 Serving Schedule

Ushers & Greeters

August 4

Ushers: Carolyn Lofald; Grace Wells; David Wood; Jim Carlson

Greeter: Volunteers

August 11

Ushers: Mike & Pam Wendling; Laura Melander; Jim Carlson

Greeter:

August 18

Ushers: Mike & Wendy Pickar; Gary & Carolyn Lofald

Greeter: Volunteers

August 25

Ushers: Keith Youngren; Mark Youngren; Gabe Wiita; Jim Carlson

Greeter: Marge Youngren

Trustees:

August 4: Sandy & Laura

August 11: Jim & Wendy

August 18: Grace & Bill

August 25: Sandy & Laura

Coffee Servers:

August 4: Mary Circle

August 11: Luther League

August 18: Council Group 2

August 25: Esther Circle



Do you need a ride to or from church?
Please call the office if you are in need of transportation
and we will connect you to someone that can help!

Office: 218-722-7537

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Wednesday Night Bible Study continues throughout the summer at 6:30 PM in the Fellowship Hall.
- Sunday School starts September 15.
- Save the Date - Saturday, September 14 from 4-5:30 Sarah Mae and the Birkeland Boys will be here. There will be a BBQ following the concert.
- Messengers will be available to pick up at church, any newsletters not picked up after 2 Sundays will be mailed. They will also be emailed. If you have not received an email copy and you have an email address, please contact the church office: church@clcduluth.org to be on the list.



Everyday is a blessing at Open Arms!

Happy Summer Everyone!

*Psalm 100:1,2 Make a joyful noise unto the Lord . Serve the Lord with gladness,
Come before His presence with singing.*

Special thanks to the church for the air conditioner. We appreciate it so much. Thank you Jim for installing it for us. We are so grateful for all you do for us. You're great!

This month we will be making a joyful noise everyday. Music is our theme for the month. We will be playing and making our own fun instruments. We will also be painting murals to music. If you have the amazing talent of playing the piano or another musical instrument we would love to have you come and play for us. Our songs this month are *Only Jesus* and *Shine Jesus Shine*.

It is so exciting to hear the church chimes again it makes for some happy dancing when we are outside! I just love it too! I especially like it when it is playing the tune *What a Friend We Have in Jesus*.

We are still in need of a part time assistant for fall. If you or someone you know loves to care for children and is able to complete the necessary training please contact the daycare for more information. Thanks!

We welcomed Gabriel to Open Arms in July and also Belinda our wonderful summer assistant. We have one full time opening for a Preschool age child for fall.

*Psalm 5:11 Let all who take refuge in you be glad, Let them ever sing for joy
May you all be blessed with what makes you happiest!*

Mary Jo

FINANCIAL UPDATE:

2019 Annual Budget: \$230,899; Weekly \$4,440; YTD Need \$124,320

	<u>Offering</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Daycare</u>	<u>Total</u>
7/14/2019	\$2,559	\$0	\$0	\$2,559
Year to Date	\$83,554	\$5,534	\$27,479	\$116,567

Full Financial reports are posted in the Narthex after each council meeting.



AALC National Youth Conference

What a pilgrimage we took to the YMCA of the Rockies, Estes Park CO!! As we gathered together in the mountains with AALC youth from all over the United States, God met us and blessed us in ways we could not have asked or imagined.

On Saturday July 13th, we left for Ascension Lutheran Church in Ames IA where we would meet new friends and join them on a beautiful charter bus heading West! On the bus we enjoyed devotions, games, movies, prayer and each other. Special thanks to Faith Baptist Church for loaning us a 15 passenger van and to Gary Lofald for including his sled trailer to haul our stuff.



Highlights of the conference include the amazing natural beauty of the Rocky Mountains and Estes Park, three delicious meals each day, white water rafting, and making new friends both near and far.



Yet, these blessings can't match how God poured out His Holy Spirit on us through teaching, worship, communion and prayers for students on the last night, and "Hang Time" each day where all participants chose a quiet spot on the grounds to meet our Lord in Bible study and prayer.



Every adult and student got back on the bus to come home changed by the love of God, the power of His Word and Spirit, and the affection and support the students gave to each other. At our last sponsor meeting, a veteran sponsor commented that in past years they had never seen the level of love and support that students shared.

I was also so proud of our CLC Duluth students. They conducted themselves impeccably during every part of this great experience. Students who attended were Abby Allen, Ally Jurek, Bryce Schriber, Devon Johnson, Jackie and Jessica Stumpf, Lydia Wiita, and Zach Carson; along with sponsors Pam and Andrew Virkus, Mark Wiita, and me. I also want to recognize Mark and thank him for serving as our representative on the AALC Youth Council, for driving the van, for playing on the worship team, and for helping me as I struggled with altitude sickness!



Thank you church for supporting the youth in this incredibly valuable discipleship experience. Another veteran sponsor spoke with great confidence by saying he believed many youth who attended this year would be called into the ministry!



Next Youth Gathering

All students in 7-12th grades are invited to a youth gathering in The Loft on Wednesday, August 21st at 6:30 pm to worship and talk about ways we can serve our congregation.



August Mission of the Month: *Lutheran Bible Translators*

Lutheran Bible Translators (LBT) has been bringing the Scriptures to people without the Bible for 50 years. An independent Lutheran mission organization, their missionary efforts are funded completely by the generous donations of churches and individuals.

Starting in Liberia and Sierra Leone, they have grown to 78 missionaries serving in 17 countries on 5 continents. LBT missionaries, working with local churches and partners, have helped translate over 30 New Testaments, making God's Word available to more than 7 million people. But there are still more than 4,000 languages in the world have no portion of the Scrip-

tures translated into their language. This represents over 350 million people.

As people use, study, and share Scripture, their lives are transformed through God's grace and the Holy Spirit. LBT believe all people should have the opportunity to understand God's Good News as presented in the Scriptures. No language or cultural barrier should prevent people from having access to God's Word.

Please prayerfully consider a donation to this month's chosen mission. You may make checks payable to Christ Lutheran Church. Thank you for your continued support in our mission "To know Christ and to make Him known."

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Russell Schramm
August 13

Jean Sundstrom
August 20

Jane Sommerfeld
August 26

Lorna McLean
August 29

So teach us to number our days that we get a heart of wisdom.

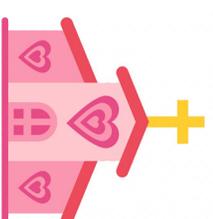
Psalms 90:12

When you need peace, God promises to provide a peace that passes understanding. The best thing you can do when you are filled with anxiety and worry is to find a quiet place to pray, read scripture, and even take time to write out verses that speak to your soul. God's desire for you is to have perfect peace! Write one of these verses and passages out each day to help you reflect on peace.

- | | | | |
|--|----------------------|--|-------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 1 | Colossians 3:15 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 17 | Psalms 37:37 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 2 | Galatians 5:22 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 18 | Psalms 85:8 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 3 | Hebrews 12:14 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 19 | Romans 12:17-21 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 4 | 1 Peter 3:11 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 20 | Psalms 119:165 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 5 | 1 Peter 5:7 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 21 | Isaiah 9:6 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 6 | 1 Thessalonians 5:15 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 22 | Isaiah 26:3 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 7 | James 3:18 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 23 | Philippians 4:6-7 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 8 | Philippians 4:7 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 24 | Isaiah 54:10 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 9 | Proverbs 12:20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 25 | Isaiah 55:12 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 10 | Proverbs 16:7 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 26 | James 2:14-24 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 11 | Psalms 29:11 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 27 | Matthew 11:28-30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 12 | Romans 12:18 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 28 | John 16:33 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 13 | Romans 14:19 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 29 | John 14:27 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 14 | Psalms 34:14 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 30 | Luke 7:5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 15 | Matthew 10:34-36 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 31 | Romans 14:17-19 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 16 | 1 Peter 3:9-11 | | |



AUGUST 2019



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				12:00 Mary Circle Picnic		
9:30 Worship/Comm. 11:15 Bible Study <i>Coffee: Mary Circle</i>	10:00 Hookcrafters 6:00 AA 7:30 AA	12:00 Prayer Time National Night Out at Piedmont Dental 5 - 7 PM	6:30 Bible Study	5:30 Deacon/Trustee Meeting 6:30 Council Meeting		
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9:30 Worship 11:015 Bible Study 6:30 Lutherans for Life <i>Coffee: Luther League</i>	6:00 AA 7:30 AA	12:00 Prayer Time CITY VOTING	6:30 Adult Bible Study			
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
9:30 Worship/Comm. 11:15 Bible Study <i>Coffee: Council Group 2</i>	6:00 AA 7:30 AA	12:00 Prayer Time	6:30 Adult Bible Study			
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
9:30 Worship 11:15 Bible Study <i>Coffee: Esther Circle</i>	6:00 AA 7:30 AA		6:30 Adult Bible Study			
25	26	27	28	29	30	31