



In the Hands of the Refiner

"With the hand of the LORD upon me, The LORD carried me out by His Spirit and set me down in the middle of the valley, and it was full of bones.

He had me pass by all around them—there were so many bones lying in the valley, and they were so dry!

He asked me, "Human being, can these bones live?" I answered, "LORD GOD! Only you know that!"

Then He said to me, "Prophecy over these bones! Say to them, 'Dry bones! Hear what the LORD has to say!'

To these bones the LORD GOD says, "I will make breath enter you, and you will live.

I will attach ligaments to you, make flesh grow on you, cover you with skin and put breath in you. You will live, and you will know that I am the LORD."

"So I prophesied as ordered; and while I was prophesying, there was a noise, a rattling sound; it was the bones coming together, each bone in its proper place.

As I watched, ligaments grew on them, flesh appeared, and skin covered them; but there was no breath in them.

Next He said to me, "Prophecy to the breath! Prophecy, human being! Say to the breath that the LORD GOD says, 'Come from the four winds, breath; and breathe on these slain, so that they can live.' "

So I prophesied as ordered, and the breath came into them, and they were alive! They stood up on their feet, a huge army!

Then He said to me, "Human being! These bones are the whole house of Israel; and they are saying, 'Our bones have dried up, our hope is gone, and we are completely cut off.'

Therefore prophesy; say to them that the LORD GOD says, 'My people! I will open your graves and make you get up out of your graves, and I will bring you into the land of Israel.

"Hopeless without God"

Ezekiel 37:1-14 (CJB)

Then you will know that I am the LORD—when I have opened your graves and made you get up out of your graves, my people!

I will put my Spirit in you; and you will be alive. Then I will place you in your own land; and you will know that I, the LORD, have spoken, and that I have done it,' says the LORD."

How can this story be true for us? Ezekiel was a prophet to God's people, Israel, who had been taken into exile by Babylonians after the destruction of Jerusalem.

This is a story about Israel's despair at their captivity. What is despair? *Despair is a state in which all hope is lost or absent.* Depression leads to despair. Have you ever felt that way? I have. I can truly say, we are all hopeless without God. What despair means, is that a person is willing to be absorbed with themselves and at the same time have a defiant attitude toward God. Sometimes, even resent God!

Sometimes, we get to the point where our own self-perception is one of total hopelessness. We do not look outside of ourselves to God. Sometimes, we cannot understand the consequences of our own behavior and wonder why we suffer from those consequences. We become despairing of our own weaknesses. That is how the people of Israel felt.

Three years ago a funeral director told me that within several months he dealt with handful of funerals that were related to suicide. Suicide is the result of total despair. Is that anyway to live? Sometimes we ask, "what is life, anyway?" It is not simply a physical life; but, it is a life that God gives us, it is an emotional and spiritual life, which includes love, joy, peace, hurt, pain, suffering, sickness, and even death.

(continued on page 3)

Christ Lutheran Church

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President: Ouitdee Carson
V.P.: Carolyn Lofald
Treasurer: Sandy Carlson

Every Month:
(All ministries postponed until further notice)

Every Wed. at 6:00 PM
Prayer Meeting & 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 Tuesday 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

Sunday services livestreamed on our Facebook page:

Christ Lutheran Church Duluth at 9:30 AM

You can also log onto our website clcduluth.org



Christ Lutheran Church Duluth



Christ Lutheran Church Duluth

PACTevised Services

Duluth: Charter Ch.180 -

Sat. @ 9AM & 9PM; Sun. @ 7AM

Superior: SCMC 180 -

Sun. @ 10:00am; Wed. @ 6:00pm

Hermantown: MediaCom Ch. 7 -

Sun. @ 8AM Thur. @ 2 PM Sat. @ 8 AM

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
CLC Lighthouse & CLC Clubhouse- kids & leaders
All of our students from pre-school to college
Open Arms Daycare

Mission of the Month: Project Timothy
Our Country, Military & Police

The teachers and students at all schools
Persecuted Christians throughout the world
Piedmont Elementary
The steadfastness of our faith

THOSE WITH HEALTH NEEDS:

| | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Vi Boder | Bill & Jane McLean | Ruth Peterson |
| Bob Johnson | Jean Sundstrom | Ruth Dahl |
| Mary Jenny | Katie Lund | Carol Schramm |
| Lorna McLean | Susan Johnson | Florence Kubiak |
| Marlene Stauber | Judy Stocke | Evelyn Johnson |
| Laura Melander | Carol Johnson | Bryan Goeppinger |
| Dennis Peterson | Carol Blair | Donna Swanson & Family |
| Mark Malander | Barb Hanson | Darlene Saaf |
| Diane Malander | Brian McDonald | Del Sandberg |

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

("Hopeless without God" continued from page 1)

It's interesting that God would call a man to preach God's Word, and then ask him to speak over lifeless dry bones. It seemed pointless. However, what the preacher discovers is the **promise** from God, that He will perform the impossible—and bring the dry bones back to life.

In Germany, I was trained as a life guard for our community pool at 5th General Hospital. I was certified as an American Red Cross life saver. I had the skills to resuscitate those who stop breathing. However, with the breath of God, resuscitation comes quickly and gives life powerfully.

Ezekiel's vision alludes to God's creative work in Genesis; how God creates, and how God re-creates. There is a very important and fundamental lesson to be taken from Ezekiel's vision: when the Spirit is present, God's people are enabled to live. This is the only basis for the hope given to a despairing person, community, church, or people like the nation of Israel.

How do you know the Holy Spirit is in your life? How do you know the Holy Spirit is present in our church? We get the answer from this passage in Ezekiel.

It is God's **promise** to give the dry bones (His people) new hearts and a new spirit. It is the magnitude of a miracle; it is how God is mighty to save! When God saves us, it is indeed a miracle, a miracle of His mercy and grace.

The bones Ezekiel sees are "very dry," emphasizing the fact that there is no life in them whatsoever. The chance that they will ever live again on their own is zero. Then, God asks the preacher, "will these bones live?" The preacher says to himself, "looking at their current state, um, no." However, the preacher has learned never to presume on God's power and intentions. So, he answers, "O Lord GOD, you know."

God wanted the preacher and the people to know that it is His Word alone that brings life. God wants us to know, that in the most hopeless of situations—even in a valley full of death—God's Word is powerful to bring resurrection life.

What is resurrection? What is new life? It is the same as when God **spoke** the creation into existence, the same as Jesus **calling** Lazarus out of the tomb with only a word, the same as Ezekiel **preaching** to the dry bones, God's Word always gives life. God **promises** to give us life! It is that our confidence is in God alone, in any situation, even in our darkest struggles.

The supreme Word from God, the Gospel message itself, tells us **not** what we must **do** to **earn** life, but what God has **done**, in Jesus Christ, to **give** us life. Jesus said, "The thief comes only in order to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance [*to the full, until it overflows*]. John 10:10

There is always hope that God will bring restoration and renewal to our lives. Whether it is a long struggle with sin, or broken relationships, hard affliction, trials, temptations, or even illness, life's circumstances can often blind us to God's life-giving power.

The vision of the dry bones, however, is a **promise** to us, and should remind us that our God will truly give life and purpose to everything that seems hopelessly dead. Remember John's Gospel, where Jesus declares to Martha: "I am the Resurrection and the Life. Whoever believes in Me will live even if he dies; and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?" John 11:25-26.

Beloved, do **you** believe this?

Thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ! Amen.

FINANCIAL UPDATE:

2020 Annual Budget: \$231,390; Weekly \$4,450; YTD need \$73,336

| | <u>Offering</u> | <u>Other</u> | <u>Daycare</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|------------|-----------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|
| YTD | \$49,791 | \$1,920 | \$14,199 | \$65,910 |

YTD income thru March 31: \$45,955.36

YTD expenses thru March 31: \$38,775.90

Collection for March Mission of the Month - EEMN \$1,102.00

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Matthew 6:21

Everyday is a blessing at Open Arms!



Happy May Everyone!

Jesus said *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.”* Matthew 22:37

It's been a different kind of busy at daycare this past month. I have been very busy doing lots of extra organizing, cleaning and planning around the daycare. We will have a fun new look for the kids to come back to!

I have been keeping in touch with the children by sending them little craft packets in the mail, sharing songs and some really fun story time videos. I have been so blessed to be receiving fun pics, adorable videos and even cute cards from the kids in the mail. We are all missing our fun times together. We are excited to be welcoming a new full time 3 year old boy to our daycare this summer.

One little boy was walking by with his mom the other day and he said “Mom remember when I played there one time and I was really shy? Can I go and play there again sometime?” We are so happy to say he will be joining us in the fall.

Once the world is better we can all rejoice and gather together again. That will be a blessing indeed. *“Trust in the Lord with your whole heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths.”* Proverbs 3:5-6

Trusting our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for peace and protection and healing for all of you wonderful dear members of Christ Lutheran Church. I'm so looking forward to happy times and hugs again sometime soon.

I'll be praying for all of you. Remember Jesus loves you so much!

Mary Jo

May Mission of the Month: Project Timothy

We are part of an unbroken chain. Paul - Timothy - faithful pastors - and on and on through the years. This pattern of carefully passing on the faithfully entrusted message is the heartbeat of the Christian church and her mission. The death of Jesus Christ has made a way for God to bring sinful men back to a right relationship with Him— by grace alone through faith alone. This is the message to be proclaimed!

From its inception the Christian church has sent teachers into the world with this message. Well-trained pastors are critically needed in Kenya. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya is the fastest-growing Lutheran church in Africa today. But the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya has a mere 140 pastors to serve 700 congregations with 100,000 members. Project Timothy-Kenya is dedicated to providing a remedy for this need, equipping leaders for the dramatically growing church in Africa.

Please prayerfully consider a donation to either of this month's chosen missions. 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.”*

CLC LIGHTHOUSE MAY 2020

Hello CLC Duluth!

What is the first and greatest commandment? You know that you know this one!

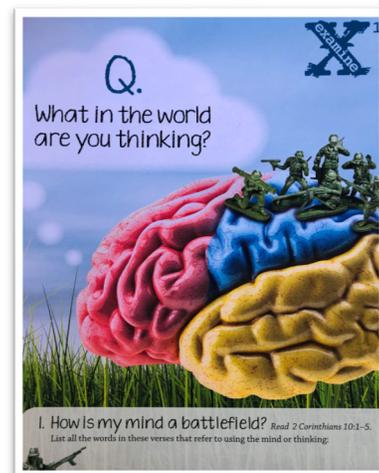
You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind. **The Youth and I are starting a new Bible Study this week called “The Christian Mind.”** Sounds kinda deep, and it is! Our objective is to learn how to love the LORD with our mind, and our first lesson asks this **BIG QUESTION:** “What in the world are you thinking?”

We’re going to dig into 2 Corinthians and Romans to grasp how the mind can be a battlefield, how we can win the battle, and how to think in a way that pleases God.

Other **BIG QUESTIONS** in our study include:

- What makes life hard for you?
- Why should I think differently than the world?
- How would you describe a happy person?
- How are Christians like salt and light?

*We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God,
and take every thought captive to obey Christ. - 2 Corinthians 10:5*



YOUTH WEBEX WEDNESDAYS

STARTING 4/29/2020

Confirmation 3-4pm with Pastor Gary

Youth Bible Study 4-5pm with Sue

(In my home office getting ready to tackle The Christian Mind and WEBEX!)

Love and blessing in Christ Jesus!

Sue DeSha

320-815-1561 / suedesha@gmail.com

*Dan Jezierski
May 14*



*Ryan Kent
May 17*

May 2020 Maintenance Report

Greetings! Our hope is that this finds everyone cozying up in their homes and staying healthy! We have been blessed that our custodian, Gary (who is also a custodian for St. Louis County) is continually being updated with cleaning procedures and products to use with the COVID-19. He has been keeping busy at the church with regular cleaning of touched surfaces while Judi and Pastor are there working. He has also taken on a few more painting projects for us. The old copy room and the storage room between the fireside and Sunday School rooms have been painted. Judi also helped Gary with organizing these rooms. Gary has also painted out the shelves and the janitor's closet walls downstairs and is tidying that up. He has offered to paint the kitchen for us also. He has been over at the parsonage and has cleaned through the laundry room. While there he noted the boiler was having issues. We called and had it inspected. The circuit board on the boiler had failed and we had to have that replaced. We have that serviced each fall and it checked out fine in October. Comfort Systems was in the neighborhood checking out the gas meters and has installed a new meter at the parsonage. Gary patched and primed a few nicks in the living room and hallway at the parsonage and repainted the hall there. He will also be repainting the living room. Some rooms at the par-

sonage have not been painted since the Schrodgers moved in. Gary has an eye for detail and always lets us know if something is in need of attention. There is a small leak in the pipe that runs along the ceiling in the church boiler room that we will have addressed as soon as it warms up in the event we need to drain the system down. We will be purchasing a wet/dry vac and Gary will strip and re wax our basement floors here in the near future also. We are hoping to have the church parking lot swept by the people that plow for us again. They will remove the salt and sand to stockpile again for next year. Jim Carlson has been busy tidying up around the perimeter and doing some sweeping. He purchased a new battery for the lawn mower and is getting that ready to go for the upcoming season. We are thankful Jim loves to mow! Our next project will probably be getting out in the garage and seeing what we can organize out there once the weather gets warmer. Hoping we will all be able to gather and worship in our sanctuary again soon with our church family.

In Christ,

Carolyn Lofald



Friendly Reminder
Parking Lot Communion services
will be held on the 1st and 3rd
Sundays of the month at 10:30 AM.
Feel free to bring your offering
at this time also if you wish.

May

Everyday Faith from CPH

Sunday



Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

3

Read
Luke 11:3.

Make a list of what you need to live each day.

4

Read
Luke 11:4.

Talk about a time that you were forgotten. What happened?

5

Read
Luke 10:2.

Make a list of people you know who work for churches or ministries and pray for them by name.

6

Read
Jonah 2:1.

Tell God one thing that you are anxious or scared about.

7

Read
Psalm 88:13.

Say a prayer in the morning!

1

Read
Romans 12:12.

Pick a time of day to pray together as a family, and pray at the same time every day this week.

2

Read
Luke 11:2.

Look up the word hallowed. What other words could be used to mean the same thing?

10

Read
Hebrews 5:7-8.

Talk about a time when you were sad. What helped you feel better?

11

Read
Daniel 9:17-18.

Rewrite this prayer in your own words.

12

Read
Proverbs 15:29.

Say, "Thank You, God, for listening to me!"

13

Read
Psalm 3:3-4.

Make a list of times God has answered your prayers.

14

Read
1 Samuel 2:2.

Memorize this verse.

15

Read
2 Kings 19:15.

Talk about what you remember from the creation story. Hint: It's found in the Book of Genesis.

16

Read
1 Samuel 9:10.

Say, "God always listens to me! I can talk to God about anything."

17

Read
Nehemiah 1:4.

Have your parent share about a time when they prayed to God during a time when they were sad.

18

Read
Acts 12:12.

Say the Lord's Prayer together as a family.

19

Read
Psalm 54:2.

Write down everything you want to talk to God about today.

20

Read
Psalm 69:13.

Talk about a time when you had to wait for something. How did you feel when you were done waiting?

21

Read
Isaiah 26:16.

Try whispering when you pray today.

22

Read
1 Chronicles 29:10-11.

Draw a picture of God based on what you hear in this prayer.

23

Read
Proverbs 30:8.

Look at the Lord's Prayer and find similar phrases in this verse.

24

Read
Nehemiah 1:5-6.
Confess a sin when you pray today and ask God for forgiveness.

25

Read
Psalm 119:37.

Memorize this verse.

26

Read
Ephesians 1:16-18.

Make a list of people you are thankful for and pray for them by name.

27

Read
Philippians 1:9-11.

Look up any words in this prayer that you do not know.

28

Read
Colossians 1:9-11.

Where else in the Bible is bearing fruit talked about?

29

Read
1 Thessalonians 1:2-3.

Pick one person to pray for all week. Pray for them constantly.

30

Read
2 Thessalonians 2:11-12.

Pray this prayer for someone you know.

31

Read
2 Thessalonians 3:1-2.
Pray for people who do not know Jesus.