

Christ's Messenger

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH The American Association of Lutheran Churches



"To know Christ,
and make Him known."

April 2022



In the Hands of the Refiner

Do Not Be Fooled!

I am writing this on April Fool's Day. No kidding! April Fool's Day is an annual custom on April 1st consisting of practical jokes and hoaxes. Jokesters often expose their actions by shouting "April Fools!" at the one they've fooled. Mass media can be involved in these pranks, which may be revealed as such the following day. The custom of setting aside a day for playing harmless pranks upon one's neighbor has been relatively common in the world historically. However, can being fooled only be considered a harmless prank or a joke? Did you know that Satan is the great deceiver? Does Satan work harmless pranks or jokes upon humanity, including Christians?

"And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds." (2 Corinthians 11:14-15)

"The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved." (2 Thessalonians 2:9-10)

"And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him." (Revelation 12:9)

"And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea." (Revelation 20:7-8)

There is a Slavonic word which is translated into English as "prelest" for lack of a precise equivalent, although it is often translated as spiritual delusion or spiritual deception, accepting a delusion for reality in contrast to spiritual sobriety.

Prelest carries a connotation of allurement in the sense that the serpent beguiled Eve by means of the forbidden fruit. Here prelest is defined in greater depth and explained the two ways in which it is applied.

Spiritual deception is the wounding of human nature by falsehood. Spiritual deception is the state of all men without exception, and it has been made possible by the fall of our original parents. All of us are subject to spiritual deception. Awareness of this fact is the greatest protection against it. Likewise, the greatest spiritual deception of all is to consider oneself free from it. We are all deceived, all deluded; we all find ourselves in a condition of falsehood; we all need to be liberated by the Truth. The Truth is our Lord Jesus Christ (see John 8:32-14:6).

Let us assimilate that Truth by faith in it; Let us cry out in prayer to this Truth, and it will draw us out of the abyss of demonic deception and self-delusion. Bitter is our state! It is that prison from which we beseech that our souls be led out, that we may confess the name of the Lord (see Psalm 141:8).

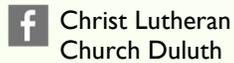
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Christ Lutheran Church

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President:
Quitdee Carson

Vice President:
Carolyn Lofald

Treasurer:
Sandy Carlson

Every Month:
Wednesdays:
6:30 PM Adult Bible Study

Esther Circle:
First Thursday of each
month at 10:00 AM

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

AA meets at the church
every Monday at 6:30 PM

The enemy that hates and pursues us has cast our life into that gloomy land. It is that carnal-mindedness (Romans 8:6) and knowledge falsely so-called (see I Timothy 6:20) where the entire world is infected, refusing to acknowledge its illness, insisting, rather, that it is in the bloom of health.

It is that *“flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God”* (I Corinthians 15:50). It is that eternal death which is healed and destroyed by the Lord Jesus, Who is *“the Resurrection and the Life”* (John 11:25). Such is our state. In addition, the perception thereof is a new reason to weep. With tears, let us cry out to the Lord Jesus to bring us out of prison, to draw us forth from the depths of the earth, and to wrest us from the jaws of death! For this cause did our Lord Jesus Christ descend to us, because He wanted to rescue us from captivity and from most wicked spiritual deception.

The means whereby the fallen angel brought ruin upon the human race was falsehood (Genesis 3:13). For this reason did the Lord call the devil *“a liar, and the father of lies..., a murderer from the beginning”* (John 8:44). We see that the Lord closely associated the notion of falsehood with the notion of murder; for the latter is the inevitable consequence of the former. The words *“from the beginning”* indicate that from the very start the devil has used falsehood as a weapon in murdering men, for the ruination of men. The beginning of evil is in the false thought.

“Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ...” 2 Corinthians 10:5 (KJV)

The source of self-delusion and demonic deception is the false thought. By means of falsehood, the devil infected humanity at its very root, our first parents, with eternal death. For our first parents were deceived, i.e., they acknowledged falsehood as the truth, and having accepted falsehood in the guise of truth, they wounded themselves incurably with mortal sin, as is attested by our ancestor Eve, when she said: *“The serpent deceived me, and I ate”* (see Genesis 3:13). Thenceforth, voluntarily, or involuntarily, our nature, infected with the poison of evil, inclined toward evil that, to our perverted will, distorted reason, and debauched heart, presents itself as good.

As human beings, we do not have the freedom to choose good. Before God regenerates us, we can only choose evil. The freedom we have does not function as complete freedom, but rather under the unavoidable influence of the wound of sin. Thus is every human born and cannot be otherwise; and for this reason we all, without exception, find ourselves in a state of self-delusion and demonic deception.

From this view of man’s state with regard to good and evil, the state that is necessarily characteristic of each human being, we arrive at the following definition of spiritual deception, which explains it satisfactorily: spiritual deception is man’s assimilation of a falsehood that he accepts as truth.

From the time of man’s fall, the devil has had free access to humanity. The devil was entitled to this access, for; through disobedience to God, man has voluntarily submitted to Satan’s authority and rejected obedience to God. However, God has redeemed man. Jesus Christ defeated Satan and has bound him in chains. Now, Satan is not entitled to free access any longer. To the redeemed man He has given the freedom to submit to God, yet can still be deceived by the devil. The Christian’s freedom may manifest itself without any compulsion, and the devil must be permitted access to the Christian. It is quite natural that the devil makes every effort to keep man in his former subjection to him, or yet to enslave him even more thoroughly. To achieve this, he implements his primordial and customary weapon—falsehood.

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He strives to deceive and delude us, counting on our state of self-delusion. He stimulates our passions, our sick inclinations. He invests their pernicious demands with an attractive appearance and strives to entice us to indulge them.

However, he that is faithful to the Word of God, submitting to the power of the Holy Spirit, will not permit himself to do so; through faith he will restrain the passions and thus repulse the enemy's assaults (see James 4:7); struggling against his own self-deception under the guidance of the Gospel, subduing his passions, and thus gradually destroying the influence of the fallen spirits on himself, he will through faith pass from the state of deception to the realm of truth and freedom (see John 8:32), the fullness of which will be given through the overshadowing of divine grace.

He that is not faithful to Christ's teaching, who follows his own will and knowledge, by submitting to the deception of the enemy, passing from a state of self-deception into a state of demonic deception, may fall in grievous sin, and yet, by God's gracious mercy, in the end he will not become totally enslaved to the devil.

"You can be sure that no immoral, impure, or greedy person will inherit the Kingdom of Christ and of God. For a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world. Don't be fooled by those who try to excuse these sins, for the anger of God will fall on all who disobey Him." (Ephesians 5:5-6)

"Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall." 1 Corinthians 10:12 (NKJV)

Pray to be kept from Satanic deception. Don't be fooled!



Pastor Gary DeSha

Quilting: April 26 from 10 AM - 2 PM

Bring a willing spirit and a sewing machine if you have one. I will have plenty of tools, rulers, rotary cutters and best of all fabric to get us started. Beginners more than welcome. Stay for whatever time you can, bring a bag lunch and beverage if you plan to stay for the day. Contact Sandy Carlson (349-2786) with any questions you have. This is a great time for some fun and fellowship.



April Maintenance Report

April sure came quickly! We should have a contest to see when the last pile of snow will melt behind the church! We had the snow banks pushed back around the perimeter of the parking lot and by the parsonage driveway; needing more room and a concern that a quick spring thaw might cause issues by the church garage. Not sure if we will be getting more snow in April, but in the event we do, we will have a place to plow it. A special thanks to Jim Carlson and Gary Glad for all their help keeping the walks cleaned off for us. The Esther Circle is already planning for the flower beds! We had a new part placed in the heater in the church basement back hall so the fan will shut off and communicate with the thermostat. We will be making some changes to the outdoor lighting on the parking lot side of the church and redirecting the light on the pole to point toward Ensign Street. Everything else has been running smoothly! Thankful for that! Praise God for all the blessings we have been given.

In Christ,
Carolyn

Discipleship Outfitters

The One Who Stayed

There was a man who had two sons. One took his share and left. The other one stayed and continued to serve his father (Luke 15:11-32). The parable of the prodigal son is so familiar we may approach the story thinking, "Oh, I know what this is all about," like I did last Sunday. The story is about the selfish son who left home, wasted all his money, and ruined his life. The story is about a loving father who freely gave his son all he asked, and then received him back with open arms when he repented and came home. The story is about how we are all sinners who need to repent and return to our loving Heavenly Father, right? Well, yes, the story is about the prodigal son and his father; but what about the other son, the one who stayed?

Here's another view into this story that came to mind as I listened to Pastor's message last Sunday. When the son who left came to the end of himself and his resources, he came to his senses. He admitted that he was a sinner, unworthy to be called a son, and that it would be better to return to his father's home as a servant. However, his father received him not as a servant or an unworthy son. He restored his son with great joy as one who was dead and now alive; one who was lost and now found.

The older son was the one who stayed. He was responsible and hardworking, but he was resentful toward his gracious father's reception of the prodigal. He didn't believe his bad brother deserved to be restored. He compared his brother's service to his own and believed he did a better job. "Look, these many years I have served you and I never disobeyed your command." The older son was trapped in the mindset of a servant who has earned his place and was owed payment.

In every family there are those who stay and those who go. Were you the one who stayed? Perhaps you were the one who was always responsible, the one who was always there to take care of an ailing parent or the one who couldn't or wouldn't say no to ever-increasing demands of family, work, church and community. Have you struggled feeling resentful toward those who leave without a care? Similarly, in every church family there are those who stay and those who go, and it can be very tempting to compare our service to others and judge by outward appearances.

This parable gives us ample opportunity to compare and contrast two sons by their service, but perhaps all sons and daughters would be better served by comparing themselves to their gracious, patient, generous, and forgiving Father who looks past outward appearances to the heart. He waits for those of us who stay and those who go to come to our senses because in Christ we are not servants, but sons and daughters who are loved who love and serve in return.



Shall I stay or will I go, with my feet or my soul
A child and an heir or a servant will I be
Is there a way to serve and still be free
What kind of freedom do I seek
The freedom to know and be known
The freedom to give love and receive
Gracious Father, draw me near and keep me there
When I stay and when I go

... For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart." 1 Samuel 16:7

Faith, hope and love to all sons and daughters,

Sue

320-815-1561

suedesha@gmail.com



Palms & Pancakes!

Palm Sunday Worship

April 10 @ 9:30am
plus a yummy

Pancake Breakfast

Hosted by our own
CLC Band of Brothers



The Seventh Watch

Noon Prayer & Praise
April 11-13 (Mon-Wed)



The Seventh Watch

Noon Prayer Vigil April 16 (Sat)

The Upper Room Supper

We will share a light
Mediterranean meal and explore
the signs and symbols
of the Last Supper

FELLOWSHIP HALL
April 14 @ 5:00pm

R.S.V.P. by April 7th
Office phone: 218-722-7537
Office hours: M-F 8:30-12:30

Maundy Thursday Worship
following at 6:30pm



Christ Lutheran Church
2415 Ensign Street
Duluth MN
www.cleduluth.org
Pastor Gary DeSha
320-237-7448

Good Friday
Tenebrae Service
The Liturgy of Shadows

April 15 @ 6:30pm



Come Celebrate

Jesus

**Our Risen
Savior**

Resurrection Sunday
April 17 @ 9:30am





From Pastor Scott &
Lena Yount
in
Velky Slavkov,
Slovakia

“Prayer update, over the next few days we have 5 different groups coming to us here in Slovakia. Prayers for safe travels for everyone on the road. Prayers we will have enough room for everyone. Prayers for those who are here who will be leaving for other countries in the near future and for those who are deciding where they should go from here. Prayers for Anya Radchuk, a young lady with special needs who has been sick with Covid. Prayers for the Slovakian team who has been working so hard to house and feed everyone here and so much more. Prayers for all those who come through here, that as they hear the gospel their spirit would be restored, they would know God’s love and most importantly believe and trust in Jesus in this difficult time. We have nearly 60 people staying at the center and more on the way, and have housed over 120 people altogether here since the war began. Pastor Vlado is the director of this international youth center. God bless you and thank you for your prayers.

Our ministry church partners from DELKU and SELCU are working around the clock in continuing to organize and provide transports for families to safer borders, deliveries of food and necessities to shut-ins and others who cannot leave, spiritual care, leading regular worship services, and finding safe lodging and support for those displaced.

Ukraine Relief Fund:

Thanks be to God for your faithful and selfless giving. To date, SON has been able to distribute over \$500,000 in direct relief support. The total fund continues to grow far beyond anything we thought possible (but, we also know we serve a Big God!) and so SON staff and the Board is planning and strategies are being formed in order to meet future needs in the near-term, mid-term, and in the long-term support of efforts to provided relief and support in Ukraine. We are confidant that the Lord will provide for those needs that have yet to reveal themselves. Thank you for your prayers and generous support.

The Church Council approved giving \$1,000 and so far congregation has put in \$1,875 Donations will still be accepted, please make checks payable to CLC with designation of Ukraine mission.



April Mission of the Month: Union Gospel Mission

In 1922, 22 churches of different denominations came together during the Great Depression with one unified goal...to provide FOOD, SHELTER and HOPE.

UGM has seen many changes throughout the years, but what remains are those same three main goals. There has always been a need for these services, and in recent years, the need has grown in all three categories. The onsite meal program serves over 93,000 hot, nutritious meals yearly. The majority of these households have children, or are seniors or vulnerable adults on limited incomes. These clients simply cannot afford groceries, or worse yet, are homeless and have no shelter, let alone, nowhere to keep or prepare food. Thus, they rely on the meals served at the Mission - it is truly what stands between them and hunger. Also, the UGM open food shelf contributes thousands of meals a year as well.

UGM offers good Christian values by providing a hand up, not a handout. There are church services, bible studies, various support groups.

They provide hope so people, even during the darkest of times, know there are many people that care. Hope... it does take a village - it takes us all of working hand in hand.



A Success Story from Minnesota FCA

Denfeld High School is the most culturally and socio-economically diverse high school in the Duluth area. Many students have experienced childhood trauma, causing discipline issues, academic challenges, and difficulties in the sports programs.

At the end of the 2021 basketball season, there were eight girls in the program, eight girls total in a school of 850 students. Erik Lofald is the head football coach and serves Denfeld coaches and athletes as an FCA staff member. He knows God is the answer to all of the challenges and has been asking God to raise up Christian coaches at Denfeld for the last nine years.

When the previous basketball coach retired, Erik Reinertsen, Erik Lofald's pastor, wondered if God had something for him in this. He prayed and listened. He said, "I felt like God had given me a heart to make a change and had equipped me to do so. It seemed like God was opening the door." He applied for the position – and got it.

In only one season, the program has grown fivefold. Forty girls - some who have never played basketball or any other organized sport, some who can't afford the fees or even basketball shoes - are experiencing life transformation through sport. And it's because God has been orchestrating the events to get to this place for years.

These events set the stage for what happened with the program this year. Forty girls came out for tryouts, and they decided not to cut any of them. The simple core values of the program are: Do unto others - Do your best - Be positive - Build up - Keep things in perspective

The greater school community has noticed a difference, and the community has shown up for the team. Coach's wife organized a Go Fund Me to provide better equipment, shoes for those who need them, travel gear, individual and team photos, and other things they need. The community gave \$8,000.

Coach is thrilled with the progress, but his greatest prayer for his players is this: "That they would feel loved, special, valued, wanted, that they would know that this team is a safe place, a good place, where they can grow as people. And ultimately, that they would see Jesus, that they would see that we are the way we are because of what Jesus has done."



Featuring
REND COLLECTIVE
Special Guest
ANDREW RIPP

**Thursday, April
21 @ 7pm
Amsoil Arena**



FOR TICKETS VISIT www.life973.com/event/mercyme-in-concert

Join us in attending the concert! Come by and see us at our booth!

Center Stage Tickets \$25.00

General Seating Tickets \$15.00

April Ushers, Trustees & Scripture Readers

April 3

Ushers: Keith Youngren; Mark Youngren

Trustees: Wendy & Carol

Scripture Reader: Sue DeSha

April 10

Ushers: Wendy Picker; Bill Arezzo

Trustees: Laurie & Laura

Scripture Reader: Sandy Carlson

April 14 Scripture Reader: Jim Carlson

April 15 Scripture Reader: Mark Wiita

April 17

Ushers: Mike & Wendy Picker; Gary & Carolyn Lofald

Trustees: Laurie & Jim

Scripture Reader: Keith Youngren

April 24

Ushers: Bill & Jan Arezzo

Trustees: Bill & Grace

Scripture Reader: Sue DeSha

*If you have a conflict with these dates,
please contact Jim Carlson at 218-343-6755*

Financial Update

February Income: \$8,620

Expenses: \$10,300

Monthly income was under
expenses by \$1,680

YTD Income: 17,358

YTD Expenses: 23,471

YTD income was under
expenses by \$6,113

February Mission The AALC:
\$840



*Thank
you!*

Dear Pastor,

Thank you for allowing the
Gideons to make a presentation
at your church in recent months.

The gifts your members donated
will be used to purchase Gideon
Testaments and Bibles that will be

distributed locally and around the world.

Your partnership with us in spreading the Word of
God is greatly appreciated.

In His Name,

Jerry Hess, Secretary

CLC Food Share

The next food packing date is

Tuesday, April 12.

April distribution is

Thursday, April 14 from 11:30-12:30.

Thank you so much for all of your prayers
and support of this ministry!



Sunday services are livestreamed on our Facebook page:

Christ Lutheran Church Duluth at 9:30 AM

You can also log onto our website clduluth.org



Christ Lutheran Church Duluth

You Tube

Christ Lutheran Church Duluth

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
The ministry at Union Gospel Mission
All of our students from pre-school to college
Our country, military & police
The teachers and students at all schools

Mission of the Month: Union Gospel Mission
Persecuted Christians throughout the world
The steadfastness of our faith
Lutheran Vicar Mwavu Ronald and his
two churches in Uganda

THOSE WITH HEALTH NEEDS:

Dick McLean	Barb Hanson	Mary Jenny
Carol Johnson	Jane McLean	Mark Malander
Florence Kubiak	The Lund Family	Donna Swanson
Brian McDonald	Carol Schramm	Carol Schneeberger
Judy Stocke	Carol Sogard	Darlene Saaf
Del Sandberg	Tom & Marlene Stauber	Bethany White
Kathy Stevens	Maggie Kaptonak	

Linda Anthony (Dick McLean's Daughter)

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



Our sympathies to the families of those who have passed away recently. Please remember the families of our departed brothers in your prayers:

Dean Sundstrom who passed away March 7.
Dr. Doug Berry who passed away March 16.
Eli Miletich who passed away March 21.

Happy Birthday!

*All the days ordained for me were
written in your book before one of them
came to be. How precious to me are
your thoughts, O God!
How vast is the sum of them!*

Gary Lofald	April 5
Carol Schneeberger	April 6
Jim Maruska	April 10
Jillian Brula	April 10
Ethan Wiita	April 17
Don Olson	April 20
Priscila Olson	April 27
Grace Wells	April 29