



St. John's Newsletter

July 2020

Our Work Is Not In Vain

Therefore, my dear brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the Lord's work, because you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. (1 Corinthians 15:58 – EHV)

How many of you can relate to a mother trying to keep up with her four young boys? It seems at times like a never-ending battle in futility, doesn't it? You wake up in the morning to get them ready for school. You review memory work. You make sure that their clothes are somewhat presentable and you wisp the first round of kids out the door with minutes to spare before school begins. Then the next wave starts. The next child is hungry and is going to die soon if he isn't fed, or so he proclaims. The infant then wakes up and states with a very loud scream that he wants to eat right now. As you start to clear the morning dishes you realize that it is time to get your son ready for preschool, and also it is time to start the weekly ritual of trying to clean the house (which the boys always mess up anyway) and do the laundry (always wondering how four boys can make so much laundry). Before you know it, school is out and it is time to do homework with the kids and to get supper started, only to know that this same routine will begin again in 10 short hours. The picture of spinning your wheels seems very appropriate. All that energy expended and there isn't always much to show for it. Sometimes the work of a mother seems in vain, and I'm sure many a mom has felt this same way before, but when you slow down and take a step back and watch your children grow up you see that your work was not in vain. It was very important.

As we look at the work which God has given us to do while on this earth, we at times might feel just like the mother spinning her wheels. We may wonder to ourselves if we are doing any good while on this earth. We may think to ourselves that I have told so many people about God's salvation, but I don't seem to be making any headway. I have prayed so much, but I don't seem to be getting what I prayed for. I have worked so hard to tell others what the Bible says, but it feels like no one is listening. And just when we begin to see results, another setback or obstacle slows us down again, or so it seems. Has there ever been times when we have thought that it just isn't worth it to expend the energy it takes to live our faith and to present the truths of God's Word to those who need to hear it? Have there ever been times where we have felt like we are at the end of our rope and that we feel like our work as Christians is in vain?

It is at times like this that we need to remember that God never promised that things will always go smoothly in our lives nor that we will always see many outward fruits from all of our labors for the Lord. But there is one thing that God does remind us of and wants us to remember -- the fact that whenever we share the Good News of God's love with others, we can know 100% that our work is not in vain. God is working through us and the Word of God which we are sharing with others. While it may outwardly seem like we are spinning our wheels, we need to take heart that God promises that our labors are not in vain.

Whenever we get into thinking that our lives as Christians is like being in a rut of spinning our wheels, may we always turn back to the pages of God's Word which show us again and again the perfect death of Jesus on the cross of Calvary for the forgiveness of all our sins. With the message of forgiveness in our hearts, we will always know that our work is fruitful and is serving the purpose of giving glory to our Lord and Savior.

Pastor Mark Gartner

Pastor Gartner

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RETURNING TO PUBLIC WORSHIP: We rejoice that after two months we are able to return to the Lord's house to worship together, at the same time, we want to do so in a safe manner. We will continue to practice social distancing. Hand sanitizer is available at the doors. All items have been removed from the pews and will not be used for some time. Take extra care when using the restrooms. Consider letting one person use the restroom at a time. Please do not leave your worship folder on the counter, rather take it with you.

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION: Changes for the Lord's Supper will continue for June 28 & 29, July 5 & 6 and July 26 & 27.

- Pastors will sanitize their hands before each table.
- The wafers will be placed in a flat hand; the pastors will be careful not to touch your hand as they distribute communion.
- The common cup will not be used for a time.
- The communion tray for individual cups will be "loaded" with spaces between cups so that you do not touch other cups.
- Communicants will line up in front of the first pew, practicing "social distancing" unless they are from the same household.

BIBLE CLASSES: After taking a few weeks off, we are going to pick-up our online Bible study by looking at the book of Ecclesiastes. We'll pre-record these online studies and send them out via a youtube link along with a study guide. We'll send these studies to those who were on the list for the previous online classes. Please contact one of the pastors if you want to be included on the new list.

QUARTERLY VOTERS MEETING: Our regularly scheduled Voters' meeting for April 28 was held on **Tuesday, June 16th**. Copies of the agenda and first quarter reports are in the narthex.

WE ARE HERE TO HELP: We want you to know that we are here to help you through any troubles you might be facing. Please do not be afraid to call any of the Pastors or the Church Office with any of your questions. We will do our best to be of assistance. We ask for your prayers and patience as we go through these uncertain times.

Please also keep an eye on each other. Stay in contact with those who are elderly or living by themselves or those who may be going through medical issues. If you happen to run into some financial hardships or know someone who may need some financial help, please don't hesitate to call one of the Pastors and we will seek to provide some sort of financial assistance.

WELS APPLE VALLEY FOOD PANTRY: We have been blessed beyond words with the donations of food and monetary gifts that our congregations have given us for the support of our pantry recipients.

The food pantry needs these items: canned peas, peas and carrots are most needed of all the vegetables we stock, pork n beans/baked beans, spaghetti and pasta sauces, spaghetti noodles, healthy cereals like Cheerios, Rice Chex, etc., crackers, cookies, toilet paper, paper towel, napkins, hand pump soaps, dish soap and laundry soaps. Thank you for supporting the food pantry. Please drop items off at church by **Friday, July 10**.

GIFTS TO OUR LORD DURING MAY:

		<u>Expenses</u>
General Fund	\$36,279.00	\$26,883.00
General Fund YTD	\$173,956.00	\$162,946.00
Building Fund	\$660.00	
Land Development Fund	\$115.00	
Missions (WELS)	\$2,182.50	
Christian Family Solutions	\$410.00	
Institutional Ministry	\$265.00	
FVLHS Operational	\$550.00	
FVLHS Let the Children Come	\$1,025.00	

"On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income."
1 Corinthians 16:2

AN OPTION FOR GIVING YOUR OFFERING: VANCO, the company we use for online giving through our website, now offers an app that allows you to give directly to St. John through your smart phone, VANCO Give Plus. Simply download the app, login/create a username, and then find St. John. This app will allow you to give to whatever fund you so desire, as well as set a one-time offering, or a recurring offering with a specific frequency. For more information, contact Tim Springstroh or one of the pastors. Below are the links for the app.

Google Play:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.vanco.gpm>



Apple App Store:

<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/give/id1120840616>

