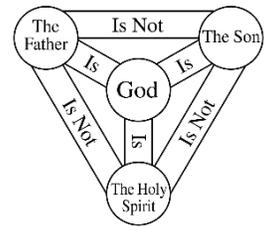


# St. John's Newsletter

August 2020



## Christ's Unconditional Love for Us

**Husbands, love your wives, in the same way as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, by cleansing her with the washing of water in connection with the Word. He did this so that he could present her to himself as a glorious church, having no stain or wrinkle or any such thing, but so that she would be holy and blameless. (Ephesians 5:25-27 – EHV)**

What was the first vehicle that you ever owned? If yours was anything like mine, it was an ugly beater! My first vehicle was a rusty 1981 Chevy C-10. With a "three on the tree," no radio (until I installed one), and a maximum speed of less than 75 mph. Even if your first vehicle could be classified as an ugly beater, you still loved and cherished it because you had a lot of good memories with it!

We, to the Lord, are that ugly, beat-up car. But instead of rust and dents, we are stained by sin, which completely corrupts every aspect of who we are and what we do. We have flaws and imperfections (wrinkles), but not just on the outside, but inside as well—our souls are a far cry from perfect as God demands. We don't deserve any love, we don't deserve anything from the Lord but to be thrown away in the fires of hell forever.

But that's not what happens to us. Christ loves us—so much so that he gave himself up for us! He sacrificed himself on the cross for our sins so that his righteous blood could cover over all our imperfections and sins, making us holy in the eyes of the Lord. Through the waters of baptism he washes away our sins and works faith into our hearts, which receives the forgiveness of sins and eternal life he has won for us. Baptism is used in connection with the Word and it is also through the Word that the Lord strengthens our faith and keeps us in the one true faith!

Because of what Christ has done and through the faith we have through baptism and the Word, we don't have to be afraid of what God is going to do with us. We can stand before him without any fear, because he loves us and he has removed our stain and wrinkles—or any such thing! We are pure and holy in his eyes, blameless even though we are sinners!

See how much God loves us! He loves us only in a way that a gracious and merciful Savior could! He loves us more than anyone else—a love that is beyond comprehension. Only you can understand the love that you have for your first vehicle despite all its ugly imperfections. Christ's love for us is far greater and incomprehensible—how he can love us so despite all our ugly and sinful imperfections!

And it is this love that leads us to love one another. As you can see, it is Christ's love that leads us to love, not our vehicles, but our spouses. We love our spouses—and others, as Christ loved us. With a selfless and unconditional love, we love one another. At least we try. And when we fail, we know that in Christ we are fully forgiven.

Pastor Frey

## August 2020

**RETURNING TO PUBLIC WORSHIP:** We rejoice that we are able to return to the Lord's house to worship together, but 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 Aug. 2 & 3 and 30 & 31.

- 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 filled 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 have picked-up our online Bible study by looking at the book of Ecclesiastes. We are pre-recording these online studies and sending them out via a youtube link along with a study guide. We are sending 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.

**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL:** Join us for a one-day Vacation Bible School (VBS) on Wednesday August 12, 2020 from 9:00am-noon. Parents/teens are invited to stay with their children. Weather permitting, most of our VBS will be taking place outside together as families so that we can "socially distance" as much as possible. Everyone is invited to join us for a meal afterward.

Please bring one blanket per family and a plain white t-shirt for each participant for tie-dying. REGISTER NOW--you may sign-up in the entryway at church OR go to <https://forms.gle/jgRtCUHMiFwxUedg8> and complete a VBS registration form.

**2020 CONFIRMATION CLASS** The following young people will be confirmed on August 16, 2020 in the 10:30 am service:

- Elaine Elizabeth Hofacker
- Ashlyn Ann Kurey
- Bennett Shaun Lecker
- Keira Jane Leitermann
- Tori Kristine Lemke
- Natalie Hope Raschka
- Kyler K. Rettler
- Natalee Faith Springstroh
- Laken Ella Tuma
- Lauren Grace Wilson

Jack Stephen Liebert was confirmed at Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Appleton. Faith Marie Pomeroy and Emma Luehring were confirmed at St. Paul Lutheran Church, Appleton.

**QUARTERLY VOTERS MEETING:** Our second quarterly Voters' meeting will be held on **Tuesday, August 11<sup>th</sup>** at 7:00 pm. We encourage all members to attend. At this meeting, you'll be able to review and discuss our fall worship plan.

**WELS APPLE VALLEY FOOD PANTRY:** The food pantry thanks everyone for their generous support these past four months. For August, the food pantry needs these items: shampoo, conditioner and body washes, pasta sauces, chunky soups, pork n beans/baked beans, canned tomato products, packaged rice and noodle side dishes, canned fruit and toilet paper and paper towels. Thank you for supporting the food pantry. Please drop items off at church by **Friday, August 7.**

**WE ARE HERE TO HELP:** We want you to know that we are here to help you through any troubles. 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.

## August 2020

**NEW ELDER:** At our June Voters' meeting Matt Bonson was approved to serve as a new Elder. This was by way of recommendation of the Church Council. He replaces Bill Rickert who is stepping down after many years of service, for which we thank him! Keep both of these men in our prayers.

**CENTRAL AFRICA MEDICAL MISSION (CAMM) – MALAWI NEWS:** What a strange and difficult few months for both the staff and patients in Malawi. The pandemic is spreading quickly now in Malawi to 1,742 cases and 19 deaths in early July. The cases have been imported from people returning from countries such as South Africa and are also being transmitted locally throughout mainly urban areas. Kamuzu International Airport in Lilongwe has been closed to commercial air traffic. The relatively low death rate is most probably due to the young average age of the population (19 years) and the lifestyle of people being mainly out of doors. The CAMM staff has remained well and are following preventive measures, e.g., staying at home, washing hands, wearing masks and social distancing.

God has blessed Malawi with a fair and peaceful presidential electoral process. Lazarus Chakwera, a former pastor, defeated the incumbent Peter Mutharika in a rerun election June 23rd by winning 59% of the vote. He will have a five-year term as president of a nation of 18 million people. We pray for strong leadership and God's guidance in a time of a poor economy, corruption in government and a spreading pandemic.

Gary (CAMM's manager of operations) and Beth Evans (nurse in charge) have been in Wisconsin since April 1 due to the coronavirus and having to close the mobile clinic operation to safeguard both the staff and the patients in the villages. They communicate regularly with the Malawi and Zambia staff, watching the development of cases in both countries, and learning about this virus, treatment of complications, and how to prevent its transmission. Beth is working to find out where to obtain PPE in Malawi and stateside and making plans to be well supplied when they restart their work. Gary and Beth will be meeting with the CAMM committee and speaking with clinic staff to make decisions about the safe reopening of the clinics. Pray that flights resume and Gary and Beth will be able to continue their work in Malawi soon.

We praise God for what is now the 50th anniversary of the Lutheran Mobile Clinic in Malawi. The medical work was started in 1970 near Salima, close to Lake Malawi. It is amazing how the Lord has used this clinic, providing countless Malawian children with vaccines and nutritional support, pregnant women with antenatal care, the sick with needed health care and medicine, and they all hear of Jesus, their Savior. Thank you for your prayers and support.

### GIFTS TO OUR LORD DURING JUNE:

		<u>Expenses</u>
General Fund	\$28,411.00	\$23,224.00
General Fund YTD	\$202,367.00	\$186,170.00
Building Fund	\$810.00	
Land Development Fund	\$240.00	
Missions (WELS)	\$1,322.50	
Christian Family Solutions	\$345.00	
Institutional Ministry	\$345.00	
FVLHS Operational	\$1,360.00	
FVLHS Let the Children Come	\$1,175.00	

***"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>

