



The Messenger
St. John Lutheran Church

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October



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October

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PASTOR'S OFFICE HOURS

Monday and Thursday: 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Tuesday and Wednesday: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

No appointment is necessary – just stop by! Please call the office and make an appointment if these times are not convenient (345-0120).

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Dear members and friends of St. John,

One of the greatest controversies in Lutheran Church history has been the introduction of **alternate worship forms**. These have come to the LC-MS in the last fifty years, including contemporary worship, praise worship, and various forms that blend traditional worship with modern music and dance. How are we to look at alternate worship in the Church?

First, we must look at the culture we live in. In many ways, the 1960's led to a total upheaval in a person's freedom to express oneself. This postmodern worldview states that each person has a right to *challenge* the norms of society – what is right and wrong, what is practiced and what is rejected. This notion of **total individual freedom** has greatly impacted the Christian church. Couple this to the hedonism of this age which boldly claims that there are **no absolute truths**. From a Christian perspective, the culture is racing to embrace sin, while rejecting God's holy word.

Another societal change is growing isolationism. Our society has become increasingly isolated from **group culture identity**, meaning computers and the Internet have allowed people to avoid direct involvement in a group setting, in favor of privacy and isolation. For example, fifty years ago clubs and organizations thrived throughout our culture. Today they're becoming increasingly rare. People can be coerced into spending a limited amount in time public service or in public protests for a cause that concerns them, but getting them to commit to help organize and run the operations of a group is very challenging. Social media posts may get them to flock to a rally, but that's the extent of their involvement.

An important teaching of Jesus Christ is His command that we be "in, but not of" this world (John 17:11-18). But today's young adults choose very limited avenues in which they will be "in" this world, allowing themselves to be close to a limited number of friends or family. Therefore, organized religion is antithetical to today's culture because it requires that we "join in" with complete strangers in a group setting, and commit to this on a weekly basis.

Today's postmodern, isolationistic culture therefore runs headlong into Jesus' desire for His Church. The Church necessarily is countercultural. By this I mean that Christ's central teachings are in nearly complete opposition to our American culture. First, there *is* real "truth" in the world. Jesus says, "I am the way, **the truth**, and the life" (John 14:6). Indeed, God's Word points to the only absolute truth that exists in the world – God's demand for justice, and His unfailing love.

Next, there's the requirement that **we work with others**, combining our gifts and talents with theirs, to accomplish a **greater good**. God has given us unique talents and, we must combine ours to have the greatest impact on the world around us. This notion of **shedding our individual rights, and privacy, to be part of something greater than ourselves**, is central to Christianity. St. Paul refers to this as being a member of the **"body of Christ."** Each individual, isolated from others, is weak and ineffectual. Together, the sum is vastly greater than the parts.

So, how do these cultural and societal changes affect the way people chose to worship? The answer is in dramatic ways. Today's individualistic, isolated American wants worship to meet their demands for freedom: choosing what they believe and rejecting what they dislike, while

remaining disconnected from messy entanglements of sharing with others. Worship must satisfy the individual's basic emotional and "spiritual" needs and wants, or else.

And how has the American church (including churches in the LC-MS) answered their demands? Alternate worship forms. Interestingly, the greatest demands for change in worship does not come from our youth, or even millennials; it comes from **baby boomers** (those born between 1946 and 1962).

Baby boomers have been the change agents in the American church, beginning with the placement of limits on what is communicated from the pulpit. When I first arrived at St. John, a few leaders approached me and told me what topics were "off limits" for my sermons. **Abortion** and **cohabitation** were **not** to be discussed. Too many people will be offended. My reply was not well received. I would not allow limits to be placed on what I communicate from the pulpit. This demand to limit God's word is not uncommon in the LCMS. It stems from the idea that worship must **not be offensive** to the worshippers. But God's demands, in the form of His laws and decrees, are always going to be offensive to those who demand Christianity on *their* terms.

The next change demanded of the church is **music that is satisfactory to the "audience."** Contemporary praise songs largely focus on "me." "My" feelings, "my" walk with God, "my" needs being met. They border on entertainment. They may include mantras, statements repeated over and over again to change our mood or thinking through repetition of thought. However, the power of God's word is not found through pop psychology, but the Spirit working through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

In response to these pressures from the world, the **Church's worship must take up the task of opposing the culture. This makes worship countercultural.** In reply to the demands that the word be limited to that which is not offensive, we must be resolute in our worship to proclaim the **whole counsel of God**, both God's terrifying judgment of sinners and His comforting forgiveness for the sake of Christ. Though the world will forever persuade the Church to soften its prophetic message, we remain determined to proclaim the truth, fully aware that the Gospel-indeed, Christ Himself-is a stumbling block (Matt. 21:42; 1 Cor. 1:18-25).

Our worship will also strive to resist other trends that have come to characterize our society. For example, the perception that **everything we do in worship must be relevant** should **not** be an excuse for allowing our wants and needs to dictate the agenda of the service. **The genius of the Church's historic liturgy - and why it has found continued use in diverse cultures over centuries — is its ability to focus on the heart of the matter, namely, our condition as sinners in need of a gracious God.**

Removing or changing the liturgy must be done with the utmost care, for all of worship is designed to **kill the old Adam in us, replacing it with the new person in Christ Jesus.** This process began in our Baptism, and is called Sanctification. Our selfish desires must give way to the desire to serve our neighbor out of love. Our love of entertainment and self-satisfaction must give way to the discipline of God's holy word, found in the liturgy, readings, sermon, and hymns. **Hymns focus our hearts and minds on God's word**, instead of feelings and emotions that **do not** build up the soul. **Ultimately, each parishioner should expect worship to be an attack on what our**

culture says is “good,” with a strong proclamation of the Truth that kills the old sinful self, and grows and sustains our new life in Christ. Yes, worship is going to be “other worldly.” And that’s a good thing! May God help us seek that which builds-up, yes, that which is contrary to what the world holds as precious – as we worship our Living Lord.

Pastor Travis

SOCIAL MINISTRIES

FOOD TRUCK – Our next truck will be on October 20th at 10:00a.m. Volunteers are needed. Set-up is at 8:00a.m., clean-up at noon. We are collecting donations of personal hygiene items and cleaning products to distribute at the Food Truck give-a-ways. Individuals in need cannot purchase items such as shampoo, soap, deodorant, toothpaste, or household cleaners with their Bridge cards even though they are needed.

RONNEY MOORHOUSE has raised most of the funding needed for this truck. Thank you Ronnie!! A collection basket will be in the fellowship hall for donations. We very much appreciate the support we get from all of you! Very blessed to be a part of this church family! Questions can be made to Lisa or Bev.

Pastor appreciation and Harvest Dinner is on October 28th. Lunch will be provided that Sunday.

PRAYER MINISTRIES

Prayer Warriors are always needed!

Prayer Angels...You should have received, in the mail or in your church mailbox, the names of the children and students that you will be praying for this year. Please keep them in your prayers and drop them a note to let them know you’re praying for them. Any questions or concerns? Contact Adele Travis, at 343-9088.

Praying for you...Have you received a postcard in the mail recently that said, “The Congregation has prayed for you”? As part of the ongoing prayer ministry here at St. John, we pray for the spiritual, emotional, and physical wellbeing of our members. We also lift up the ministries and outreach of this congregation on a daily basis. If you are interested in praying for these concerns, October Prayer Sheets are available in the Narthex on the cart next to the Portals of Prayer.

LADIES AID

SCHOOL KITS– Thanks to your donations of lots of school supplies and Thrivent Action Team Seed Money, an enthusiastic group of children and adults was able to fill 62 backpacks with school supplies for Orphan Grain Train on September 23rd after church during Coffee Hour. The backpacks

were sewn by members of the Ladies Aid. The school supplies in excess of what was needed to fill the backpacks will be donated to local schools to benefit those children that may not be able to afford to purchase what is needed. Thank you to all who donated school supplies to this project!!! The response has been wonderful!

FALL RALLY – The LWML Timberline Zone Rally will be held in Harrison, MI on Thursday, October 4th at St. Luke Lutheran Church. See Norma Vecellio or Lois Hernandez for details if you would like to attend.

BLANKET PROJECT – The ladies are working on making fleece blankets similar to fleece blankets with tied edges. We have a newer method of securing the edges and could really use some help! We invite any ladies or men that would like to help, to please join us on Mondays at approximately 12:00 Noon. The project requires no standing or bending over. It is totally a sit-down project!

LWML SUNDAY – LWML Sunday will be celebrated on Sunday, October 7th. The pews of our church will be draped with quilts and blankets made by the ladies which will be blessed during the service. The ladies will present a short skit during the Fellowship Hour which will help you to understand the purpose of saving mites for LWML Mission Projects.

DIAPER PROJECT – Thanks to all of you that have donated T-shirts for us to make diapers for Orphan Grain Train. We have completed over 10 dozen diapers and are running out of T-shirts! We especially need used men's extra-large t-shirts so that we can give them a new life. Stained collars and minor small stains are OK.

FAMILY FARE "Direct Your Dollars" - As of September 18, we have collected 34,598 dollars in receipts. Remember, you must use your "Yes Rewards" card or give them your phone number for the purchase to count as a "Direct Your Dollars" receipt. We have had some receipts recently that didn't count due to not using the "Yes Rewards" card!

MEETING– Don't forget we have changed our meeting day to the 2nd Tuesday of the month instead of Thursday. Those of you who have been unable to attend the Thursday meetings are especially invited to attend. For any other ladies, if Tuesday is a better day for you, we would love to have you. The October meeting will begin at The Highway Brewing Company at 11:30 A.M. for lunch with the meeting to follow at the church at 1:00 P.M.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Listen, listen God is calling, through the Word inviting,
Offering forgiveness, comfort, and joy.

September was Christian Education month! *Invitations to Bible Study were offered.* Did you see them in the bulletins or newsletter? *Have you joined one?*

Opportunities await you, now is the time ...

Sunday Mornings

8:30 a.m. - A Longer Look at the Lessons – Prepare for worship by taking a closer look at the Bible readings for that Sunday's service.

Monday Mornings

10:00 a.m. - We are taking an in-depth look at **1 Samuel**. We will see our Lord's continuing, faithful care for His people, despite their weaknesses and unfaithfulness. Our Lord hears their prayers and calls them to repentance again and again. Ultimately uniting them as a nation under His servant, King David, and ultimately pointing them and us to Jesus our Savior and King.

Tuesday Evenings

7:00 p.m. - **Women's Bible Study at Jane Tennant's home**. They are taking a deeper look at Baptism through the Lutheran Difference Bible Study series.

7:00 p.m. - **Men's Bible Study on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday**. They continue to dig into God's Word and will start a new series in October

Wednesday Mornings

9:00 a.m. – **Men's Breakfast and Devotional** - 3rd Wednesday at the church.

Choose a study...

And, come grow in God's Word with us!

SUNDAY SCHOOL HAPPENINGS

All the promises of God find their in Him.

2 Corinthians 2:20

"Let there be...and there was!" God spoke, it happened.

We started at the beginning with God's account of creation, and we continue to dig into the book of Genesis found at the very beginning of God's Holy Word. His message of hope, forgiveness, and eternal life through Jesus, the promised Savior.

We begin the month with the true story of God's covenant promise with Abram.

Remember the story? God tells Abram to leave his homeland and go to a new land. And, Abram goes, living by faith since he doesn't know where God will lead him. And, God promises to bless others through him and his offspring. God chose Abram and gave him faith to trust His promises to save His people. We also walk by faith. God gives us faith, a precious gift from Him, to trust in Jesus our Savior.

We continue the month with Abraham's visitors from heaven in Genesis 17 ... and God's promise of a son. Remember those three visitors who appeared at Abraham's tent and announced that by this time next year, Sarah would bear a son. *Even in her old age!* God would ultimately fulfill His greatest promise to Abraham. He would bless all the families of the earth with salvation by sending Jesus, "the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham" (Luke 3:34), "the Son of God" ((Luke 3:38), to be our Lord and Savior. *With God, all things are possible!*

This week we will hear from Genesis 21-22 how Sarah did bear a son ... and he was named Isaac which means laughter. And, God's test of Abraham. Remember how God asked Abraham to take his only son, Isaac, to Mt. Moriah and offer him as a sacrifice. What a difficult journey, what a difficult task. Abraham, trusting God, placed his son, his only son Isaac on the altar. And, the Angel of the Lord said, "You have not withheld your son from me." Then, God provided a ram as a

sacrifice for Abraham and Isaac. Just as God provided a ram for them, God provides the perfect sacrifice for our sin, His Son Jesus, the Lamb of God.

Finally, from Genesis 24 we will hear how God provided a wife for Isaac. And, how God worked His plan of salvation through the lives of Isaac and Rebekah. Ultimately God's plan for our salvation is fulfilled through Jesus, their descendant.

The eyes of all look to You, and You give them their food in due season.

You open Your hand; You satisfy the desire of every living thing.

Psalm 145:15-16

COULD YOU HELP SUPPORT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION?

We are providing Student Leaflets instead of Arch Bible Story books to our Sunday School students this year. We are looking for donations to cover the cost of the student packets. The cost will be \$8 per quarter or \$32 for the entire year. Please put your check or money in an envelope, label it "Sunday School Student Packets", and place it in the offering on Sunday or put it in Jolene's mailbox

EVANGELISM / OUTREACH

Prayer cards are being sent letting you know that we are praying for your well being. I would like to challenge each of us to invite our family and friends to visit us for a Saturday evening or Sunday morning worship service and invite them to enjoy some fellowship with us after service Sunday morning. Who knows one invitation could potentially lead to another member joining our church family. Wouldn't that be wonderful!!

There are plenty of car window decals still available. Check with Dennis if you are interested and would like one or two.

There has been a Thrivent Grant applied for and approved to help purchase advent devotions for our Sunday school children.

Spiritual Blindness and the Cure

Dr. Martin Luther emphatically states that **unless you have a clear understanding of Original Sin, the rest of Scripture will remain a "sealed" book for you.**

Furthermore, unless you understand how the power of Original Sin-a horrific demonic power now working silently within you- intends to eventually destroy your faith, you have no way to protect yourself. **Thus, the following article could be the most important information you will ever read in your life.**

Luther admitted human illustrations could not fully explain God's mysteries. Yet, he said illustrations often provide a "faint understanding:" Such is the case with the following article, which uses the eye disease "glaucoma" to explain the deadly spiritual disease God says is now working silently within you.

Glaucoma is an eye disease affecting 65 million people around the world in every age group. While glaucoma is incurable, it is treatable; however, if left untreated, glaucoma can lead to blindness. The good news for you is that glaucoma can be controlled and damage to your eye can be stopped.

QUESTIONS FOR CLARIFICATION

QUESTION: What is glaucoma and what part of the eye does it attack?

ANSWER: The human eye, with its optic nerve, contain two small tubes. One tube brings necessary liquid into your eye. The other tube drains off excess liquid so that too much pressure does not build up within your eye. If the excess liquid is not drained from within your eye, damaging pressure will slowly build, eventually causing you to develop "tunnel" vision. If untreated, glaucoma will close in your vision entirely and eventually, you will become completely blind.

As already stated, glaucoma is NOT CURABLE. Previous damage is NOT REPAIRABLE; however, your physician can provide eye drops which, when applied daily, will prevent any further damage.

A STRIKING SIMILARITY!

There is a striking similarity between the eye disease called glaucoma and the demonic disease God says you now have working deep within you-the power of Sin.

You do not feel glaucoma working in your eyes. You also do not feel the spiritual infection, or disease, the Bible calls Original Sin. Like glaucoma, which must be revealed to you by your earthly physician, you can only know Original Sin when your divine Physician reveals it to you through His Word.

Glaucoma slowly closes in your vision, eventually blinding you. ***Spiritual glaucoma*** does the same damage. Your heavenly Father urges you to "[fix your] eyes on Jesus, the Author and Perfector of [your] faith" (Hebrews 12:2). The devil, however, seeks to divert you from Christ as he tempts you to skip worship, to not take Holy Communion, and when you fail to pray regularly. This is like failing to put the glaucoma eye drops in your eyes. The consequence? Spiritual glaucoma begins to close in your spiritual vision, eventually blinding you so that you no longer see Christ and His blessings clearly. You no longer have direction in life because you cannot see and follow the Good Shepherd (John 10:14, 27). When spiritual glaucoma sets in, you no longer see Jesus, the Bread of Life, from whom you receive spiritual nourishment (John 6:35). When spiritual glaucoma begins its destruction, you begin to lose track of where to find Jesus-who offers you the water of life (John 4:14). When spiritual glaucoma sets in, you can no longer see the bloody crucifixion cross and the Good News Jesus has for you through His suffering and death: "*By His stripes you are healed*" (Isaiah 53:4-6 KJV).

Every Christian family can tell tragic stories about family members who have permitted spiritual glaucoma (Original Sin) to slowly blot out their spiritual vision. Their vision of Jesus and all He has to offer them becomes increasingly closed in and eventually invisible. No longer seeing all the blessings Jesus has to offer them, these pitiful sheep turn away from their loving Shepherd. They begin to follow other voices and disguises of the devil. These same sheep attend church less and less,

eventually dropping completely out of the faith. The devil uses his tool of Original Sin, the power of Sin, to slowly blind people and eventually take their soul into the eternal bondage of hell.

THE BAD NEWS FOR YOU!

The above paragraphs are not simply general religious information. God is speaking specifically to you. The bad news is that God says *you* have incurable spiritual glaucoma. If untreated, this spiritual glaucoma will slowly blind you from seeing Jesus, thereby causing you to follow false gods and misleading messiahs.

GOOD NEWS FOR YOU!

Here is God's Good News. In the first five verses of Romans 6, one-fifth of the chapter, God explains Baptism, the miracle He has for you to stave off spiritual glaucoma and spiritual blindness. To ensure that you have clear spiritual vision, God first gives you His miracle of Baptism to "unite" you to His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 6:5). After God explains that He has united you to Christ, He then devotes the remaining four-fifths of the chapter not to the specific "miracle-event" of Baptism, but to the ONGOING POWER OF BAPTISM! God wants you to know that His miracle of Baptism is His ***ongoing power***, working to fight spiritual glaucoma in your life.

Why do many clergy, especially in non-denominational churches, avoid these important and life-saving sections of God's Word? They avoid them because they come to God's Word insisting that, before they can believe, things must be logical and reasonable. To say God's miracle of Baptism fights against our evil thoughts and actions is not very logical. Yet, God's miracles for His children are above reason. Consequently, Evangelicals and many other non-denominational Protestants disagree with Lutherans and other Christians around the world who believe in the power of God's Baptism. They argue that Baptism is not necessary, completely rejecting God's teaching that the ***ongoing power*** of Baptism is the key to their sanctified life. Nowhere in God's Word does He speak more clearly and emphatically about the Antidote to the power of Sin than He does in connection with Baptism (Romans 6; Colossians 2). Even if you cannot feel or see the power of Baptism at work in you, trust God's promise: "Consider yourself to be dead to sin and alive to God in Christ" (Romans 6:11).

LUTHER EXPOSES THE DEVIL'S DECEPTION

But even many Lutherans are not aware of the need and the power of Baptism to *daily* fight the power of Sin. See how Dr. Luther explains how clever the devil has been at misleading people regarding the ***ongoing*** and daily power of God's miracle of Baptism:

"I say this to correct the opinion, which has long prevailed among us, that Baptism is something past that we can no longer use after falling back into sin. This idea comes from looking only at the *act* that took place a single time ... This takes away the value of Baptism, making it of no further use to us" (*The Book of Concord, Large Catechism, Part IV, 80, 82*).

HOW DO YOU RESPOND TO GOD'S DIAGNOSIS OF YOUR SPIRITUAL GLAUCOMA?

What is God offering you as daily Medicine, a remedy to insure that Satan does not slowly constrict your vision of God's grace in Jesus so that the devil cannot spiritually blind you and prevent you

from seeing Jesus, who is your forgiveness and salvation?

God ensures your **spiritual** vision by working in every generation through the Medicine of His living, creative Word. Your heavenly Father is, at this very hour, working to ensure light in your life (John 5:17). Through the prophet Isaiah, God told His Old Testament children not to fear spiritual glaucoma: "*The people who walk in darkness will see a great light*" (Isaiah 9:2). Jesus stated: "*I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of life*" (John 8:12). Without Jesus, the Light of the World, you will become a slave to the powers of darkness and to the power of Sin. However, when you are united to Christ through God's miracle of Baptism, "*Sin shall not be master over you*" (Romans 6:14).

In Romans 6, God tells you the Good News of how He has, through Baptism, delivered you from spiritual glaucoma, blindness, and slavery to darkness. By uniting you to the Light of the World, He has removed your spiritual glaucoma. As your Baptism is renewed daily through His Word, God will prevent spiritual glaucoma and the powers of darkness from overcoming you.

YOUR NEW LIFE: FREEDOM FROM THE POWER OF SIN

As His Spirit, through His Word, works to prevent you from becoming enslaved to the powers of darkness, He speaks of this new power for you to walk in newness of life by describing it as a garment you put on.

Through the apostle Paul, God says: "*For all of you who were baptized into Christ have **clothed yourselves** with Christ*" (Galatians 3:27). St. Paul repeats the idea of "clothing yourself" or "putting on" the Lord Jesus Christ for protection from the power of flesh and sin: "But **put on** the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts" (Romans 13:14).

Again, to the Ephesian Christians, Paul writes: "*And **put on the new self***" (Ephesians 4:24). To the Colossian Christians also, Paul writes: "***Put on the new self***" (Colossians 3:10). It would be foolish for your 10-year-old child to **put on** clothes one morning and never take them off, hoping they will serve his needs until the end of life. In the same way, it is foolish and unbiblical to think of having **put on** Christ once, and this is **putting on** is complete for the rest of one's life. As noted throughout the New Testament, this **putting on** is an everyday activity.

QUESTION: In a very practical sense, what does it mean to **put on** Christ, so that "the old Adam" or "Original Sin" in us should, by "daily contrition and repentance, drown and die with all sins and evil lusts, and, again, a new man daily come forth and arise?"

ANSWER: This **putting on** means that, each morning, when you read God's Ten Commandments, this living Word of God's Law acts as a mirror, showing you the sin in your life, "*I would not have come to know sin except through the Law*" (Romans 7:7). Then, when you speak the Apostles' Creed (a short summary of God's saving work for you), you receive the sweet balm of God's healing and life-giving Gospel. All of this efficacious Medicine, this divine Remedy, this Balm of Gilead comes to you as, each morning, you pray the Lord's Prayer.

This entire cleansing and healing process, this spiritual procedure of **putting off** the "flesh," the power of Sin (Colossians 2:11), and **putting on** Christ, also takes place every Sunday in the worship service where you confess your sins, your pastor announces God's forgiveness in the Absolution,

where Christ is received in the Holy Supper, and God's Law and Gospel are proclaimed in the liturgy, the hymns, and the sermon.

Luther sums up how God prepares you to fight the devil. The first step is **putting on** Christ in Baptism:

"Thus we see what a great and excellent thing Baptism is, which snatches us from the jaws of the devil and makes us God's own, overcomes and takes away sin and daily strengthens the new person, and always endures and remains until we pass out of this misery into eternal glory" (*The Book of Concord, Large Catechism, Part IV, 83*).

LUTHER NEXT STRESSES YOUR NEED TO DAILY CALL UPON GOD'S CONTINUED POWER OF BAPTISM TO FIGHT ORIGINAL SIN

Thousands, if not millions, of Lutherans-and other Christians-would like to lead a more godly life. They need to reacquaint themselves with Luther's Bible-based advice regarding the ongoing power of Baptism for the Christian life. With a question and answer Dr. Luther explains:

"What then is the [ongoing] significance of such a Baptism with water?"

It signifies that the old creature (Old Adam) in us with all sins and evil desires is to be drowned and die **THROUGH DAILY CONTRITION AND REPENTANCE**, and on the other hand that daily a new person is to come forth and rise up to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.

Where is this written? Answer:

St. Paul says in Romans 6:4, "*We were buried with Christ through Baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we, too, are to walk in a new life*" (*The Small Catechism, Part IV, 12-14*).

No section of God's Word is more challenging to understand and apply to daily life than the final words of the above verse of Scripture. God promises that, in Christ, you are free from the slavery to sin and that you can now "walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4). Why is this simple but powerful phrase, "walk in newness of life" so often ignored? All of us, including you, want to be in the driver's seat of a new life. The devil misleads you to believe your new life is something you do. This is wrong. **The new life** God is speaking about is **not what you do**, but **what He does through Christ in you** (Galatians 2:20; 1 Corinthians 1:30). This new life happens when, as Luther explains above, you live a life of daily repentance. Daily contrition and repentance means you daily review the Ten Commandments where God shows you your sin, recite the Apostles' Creed to confess your rescue from sin by Christ, and then pray the Lord's Prayer, the daily channel through which God desires to bless you, His child.

Renew your Baptism each day. The water of God's Word will enable you to fix "*your eyes on Jesus, the Author and Perfector of [your] faith*" (Hebrews 12:2).

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CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

2018 FLOWER CHART — A new flower chart for 2018 is posted. There are many opportunities to sponsor flowers for the altar. Please take a few moments to sign up for a special date. Remember, flowers are \$15.00 and the Ladies Aid would like them paid for when you sign up.

DECALS — Been noticing St. John window decals in the cars in the parking lot or around town? Want one for your vehicle/vehicles? There is no charge . . . just ask Patty Rohman or stop by the church office to get one.

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT — St. John Lutheran has entered into an agreement with AuSable Valley Community Mental Health that allows them to use our facility for certain activities during the week. Part of this agreement is that our congregational members will keep confidential the names of people that are using our facility. Please observe this agreement by never mentioning the names of people that you may have seen. Also, remind others of this agreement if you hear of a visitor's name being mentioned. Thank you for your cooperation. Executive Council.

Reminder: There is a box in the Narthex for giving to the **Ogemaw County Clergy Association**. This money is collected hygiene items, for the purchase of food, personal home heating fuels, and funeral expenses for people in Ogemaw Country that are unable to afford these necessities. Make checks payable to Ogemaw County Clergy Assoc. Thank you!

EMERGENCY PRAYER REQUESTS — St. John has developed a system that allows us to rapidly contact all members when a life threatening situation develops, requiring immediate prayers. We are requesting cell phone numbers (for text messaging) or e-mail addresses for all members. For those who don't use e-mails or text messaging, phone calls will be made. Please request a salmon-colored form the office and return it when completed. Thank you.

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

10/09 – Beverly Pourcho
10/15 – Margaret Mozak
10/21 – Audrey Moeggenborg
10/22 – Dennis La Tulip



OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

10/01 – Brian & Karyn Randall
10/02 – Robert & Ashley Tennant
10/04 – Michael & Aimee Fritz
10/05 – Lindy & Eleanor Hanft
10/15 – Dino & Norma Vecellio
10/17 – Ken & Candace Fowler