



GOODNEWSletter

Proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout Europe



April – 2020

WHAT SHOULD A CHRISTIAN ACT DURING A DEADLY EPIDEMIC?

In 1527 Martin Luther wrote a letter as the Black Death raged through Germany. He was criticized for not leaving the plague ridden city of Wittenberg. Luther was silent on the subject for a time but eventually responded with a letter.

Luther says that it is foolish, even sinful, for one not to take preventative measures against the spread of the plague (for one's own sake and that of others), one cannot simply ignore the needs of others. God says to love our neighbor as our self. Luther stayed in Wittenberg, not to foolishly risk his life and that of others he might infect, but to help those in need.

Portions of Luther's letter were published by the Asian Lutheran Seminary (in fellowship with WELS). For the full article see <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1u6odw9XXrfAebuUjKgFOtC2AjcNDwUzQ/view>

In this time of uncertainty, danger, loss, and even death, these words are most helpful. Here are some of Luther's comments:

"If one makes no use of his intelligence or medicine when he could do so without harming his neighbor, such a person is harming his own body and must be careful that he does not commit suicide in God's eyes.It is even shameful for a person not to take care of his own body and to fail to protect it against the plague the best he is able, and then to infect and poison other people who could have remained alive if he had taken care of his own body as he should have. In this way he would be responsible before God for his neighbor's death and

would have committed multiple murders. Indeed, such people behave as though a house were burning in the city and nobody was trying to put the fire out. Instead they allow the flames to spread until the whole city burns down, saying that if God wanted to, he could save the city and put out the flames without water.

No, my dear friends, that is not good. Use medicine; take treatments which can help you; fumigate your house, yard, and street; keep away from persons and places wherever your neighbor does not need your presence or has recovered, and act like a man who wants to help put out the burning city. What else is the epidemic but a fire which instead of consuming wood and straw devours life and body? You ought to think this way: "Very well by God's decree the enemy has sent us poison and deadly garbage. Therefore, I will ask God mercifully to protect us. Then I will fumigate, help purify the air, give out medicine, and take it myself. I will avoid places and persons where my presence is not needed in order not to become contaminated and thus perhaps infect and transmit it to others, and so cause their death as a result of my negligence. If God should wish to take me, he will surely find me and I have done what he has expected of me and so I am not responsible for either my own death or the death of others.

If my neighbor needs me, however, I shall not avoid any place or person but will go freely, as stated above. See, this is such a God-fearing faith because it is neither rash nor reckless and does not tempt God....

If in the Old Testament God himself ordered lepers to be isolated from the community and forced to live outside the city

to prevent spreading it to others (Leviticus 13-144), we must do the same with this dangerous epidemic so that anyone who becomes infected will stay away from other persons, or allow himself to be taken away and given speedy help with medicine. Under such circumstances it is our duty to assist such a person and not forsake him in his need, as I have repeatedly pointed out before. Then the poison can be stopped in time, which benefits not only the individual but also the whole community, which might become contaminated if one person is permitted to infect others. Our epidemic in Wittenberg has been caused by nothing but filth. The air, thank God, is still clean and pure, but some few have been contaminated because of the laziness or carelessness of some. As a result, the devil is enjoying himself as he sees the terror and flight which he is causing among us. May God prevent him! Amen. This is what we think and conclude on this subject of fleeing from death by the plague. If you are of a different opinion may God enlighten you. Amen.”

(This exert provided by the faculty of: Asia Lutheran Seminary (Hong Kong) www.als.org.hk)

WORSHIP INFORMATION

As it stands now, travel and group meeting restrictions run through Monday, April 20th. I believe travel limitations for military would still be in effect. I hope to resume service at Wicker and Ramstein on April 26th. My flights for May to London were cancelled by British Air. The retreat on the week-end of May 10th in England was cancelled and rescheduled for next year. As it stands now, our next service in London would be on June 7th.

Tentative schedule for April follows:

Wicker, Germany (Frankfurt area)

April 26th – Sunday

Meeting in at the Evangelische Gemeindehaus (Friedenstraße 13, Flörsheim am Main, Wicker). Worship is at 11:00 AM followed by fellowship and Bible study.

Ramstein Air Force Base, Germany

April 26th – Sunday

Contact Pastor for more information.

Worship Opportunities

During these days of personal distancing, worshiping together is not possible. The Synod's Yearbook directory has a list of services you can watch live on line or download. We have been watching services on Sunday afternoon between 2 and 4 p.m. Your home church in the States may have a broadcast. The list has been updated to reflect changes necessitated by current restrictions on the gathering of groups for worship. Be sure to check it out. If you need assistance, please let me know.

<https://yearbook.wels.net/streaming>

Jerry Galow – called to glory!

Jerry was called home to his Lord on March 16th after an extended stay in the ICU in Rudesheim. We praise the Lord for this blessing. Jerry was weak in body but now is strong. He was almost blind, now he sees the glory of heaven and his Savior perfectly. We ask the Lord to comfort Marilyn and all who mourn Jerry's passing.

Marilyn has a good German friend who is helping her with all the paperwork that she must complete. We are working on getting her a simple cell phone. Her home phone number is 49 6131 466182. Her address is Friedenstrasse 5, 55124 Gosenheim-Mainz.

LOOKING AHEAD - RETREAT SCHEDULE

6-08 November - 2020 – Augsburg

1-4 April – 2021 - Heidelberg

30 April – 3 May - 2021 - Bude, Cornwall, Eng

Martin Luther College president hospitalized

Please add to your prayers Pastor Mark Zaring, the president of Martin Luther College. Having experienced symptoms consistent with COVID-19 for about seven days, he tested positive. He has been admitted to the hospital. Please pray that our good and gracious God of wisdom and life guard and keep him and all who are sick and all who care for them.

Martin Luther College worship help

At the MLC web site, you will find some materials to use from Palm Sunday through Easter. They can be read, downloaded as a PDF or listened to as a podcast. You can also receive daily devotions to your website.

<https://mlc-wels.edu/publications/seasonal-devotions/>

Christ in the Tabernacle

consists of eight devotions for Palm Sunday through Easter, each explaining a component of the tabernacle and how Christ fulfilled all that was foreshadowed there.

SUBSCRIPTIONS TO DEVOTIONS, INF, AND MORE!

The information for subscriptions is below. The Synod has so many resources available. Don't miss out. Go to the following email to get them delivered to you.

<https://wels.net/subscribe/>

Go to the Synod's site to stay updated on even more. <https://wels.net/>

PASTOR JOHN HARTWIG

Pastor Hartwig is scheduled to arrive around June 22nd. With travel restrictions, we will have to wait and see how things work out. Marge and I were planning on leaving around July 2nd. As we move forward, these plans will become confirmed or changed as needed.

OFFERINGS

On April 2nd our bank account balance was €52.853,35 The balance in the church account on April 30th was €73.981,99. During last month, we received worship service offerings of €493,00. We also received gifts of €24.532,92 in direct bank deposits. The gifts given to our ministry in Europe are amazing! We thank and praise the Lord for moving the hearts of our people to make such gifts. To God be the glory!

Confessional Lutheran Christian Ministry

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Direct Deposit Information

Designate: WELS European Chaplaincy

IBAN: DE98 5519 0000 0938 6260 25

BIC: MVBMD55

Sunday School

Sunday School materials are now available ONLY for those who are part of our European church.

The copy masters and teacher's guides can be found at the available links at Dropbox. Contact Pastor Stuppy if items are needed.

THINGS TO KNOW – SYNOD WEB SITES

ONLINE REFERRAL – SPECIAL MINISTRIES

Special Ministries can supply devotions and other spiritual help to members of the military, prison inmates, and special needs individuals. Click on link to make an online referral or subscribe. wels.net/refer

SUBSCRIPTIONS TO DEVOTIONS, INF, AND MORE!

If you don't receive any emails, devotions, etc., from WELS, go to wels.net/subscribe and choose all the communications that interest you.

If you already get those emails, choose "[Update your subscription preferences.](#)"

Here are three communications I strongly recommend:

Together - *The official WELS email newsletter and video featuring synod news and ministry updates. Twice a month*

His Hands - *A email newsletter from the WELS Commission on Special Ministries, highlighting several areas of compassion ministries. This site includes information on the chaplaincy work done in the US and in Europe.*

E-Bulletin Board *A monthly email update detailing available WELS resources and events.*

WELS SPECIAL MINISTRIES (INC. MILITARY)

Check out the Special Ministries area of the WELS website – wels.net/special-ministries. If you scroll down to "Who We Serve" you will see a host of links that take you to many different WELS ministries.

WELS CHURCH LOCATOR, LIVE STREAMING

Use the following link to obtain information on WELS workers, congregations, schools, and the live streaming of worship services.

<https://yearbook.wels.net/>

- [People](#) - All active and retired WELS called workers and synod employees
- [Organizations](#) - All WELS churches, schools, and related organizations
- [Livestreaming](#) - All WELS churches who offer live internet broadcasts of their worship service

MILITARY DEVOTIONS – by Rev. P. Ziemer

- <https://wels.net/serving-you/devotions/military-devotions/> -

COMFORTER MINISTRY

Susanne Hanson, mother of Reid Hanson, oversees a ministry of Christian love for women who have been diagnosed with cancer. It is a quilt ministry. Please notify her if you know of someone in that situation. Like to help? Go to the web site:

www.comforterministry.com