

# THE CHURCH ON THE HIGHWAY

*Where Life and Jesus Intersect*

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## St. Paul Lutheran Church

April 2020 Edition

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### From Our Senior Pastor

Rev. Larry Krueger

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#### COVID-19 and Christian Love

As I sat down to write this article, I was thinking that during my pastoral ministry how I have never been through a time like we are experiencing in our country right now in regard to the virus labelled, COVID-19. However, this does not mean our country has not been through some serious times in regard to contagious diseases. There has been polio, tuberculosis, measles, whooping cough, flu epidemics, etc. during the decades and centuries of the past, many of these occurring before my time on this earth. The thing in my lifetime that seems different to me now is the aggressive diligence being given to prevent the spread of COVID-19, especially as opposed to the flu viruses that impact our country every year.

Every year during flu season we hear about the importance of washing our hands, not touching our face, avoiding public places, and avoiding contact with those who are sick. In response to COVID-19 we have received directives from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and local public health and government officials about group gathering sizes, avoiding non-essential gatherings, and “shelter in place” enacted on March 23. As I have reviewed the necessity of all of these actions, I have come to understand that these actions are being taken for the common good of our fellow citizens, as well as ourselves. It seems to me the goal of preventing the spread of COVID-19 to minimize the number of people affected by the disease is worthy and falls in the category of such Christian commands as “love your neighbor” and “love one another.”

So, we follow our sense of Christian duty and love remembering how Christ loved us and gave Himself as a sacrifice for our sin...which is a far greater sacrifice for a far more serious condition. I figure if Christ loved me so much that He was willing to be sacrificed for my sin, then I should be willing to love my neighbors enough to be ready and willing to sacrifice some of my regular, normal behaviors on their behalf. The words of Christ come to mind, “Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.” (ref. Matthew 25:40)

*continued on page 2*



**Sunday Worship**  
Streamed online at  
10:30 a.m. at  
[www.splcwaco.com](http://www.splcwaco.com)  
or the church  
Facebook page.

### Pastor Krueger continued:

The means by which we express this love for each other in the case of COVID-19 has taken some turns that are different for me and our congregation, especially as it has impacted our meeting together in worship and other occasions. Hopefully, these efforts we are being asked to follow and are now incorporating will help save the lives of many. Resultantly, a by-product of these actions may also achieve a return to our regular patterns of behavior sooner rather than later. Thus, we follow the guidance being given by our health authorities and pray that God will spare many from this and other diseases.

Some of you may have seen the following words of Martin Luther, as this quote has been floating around on social media. But, I thought these words he wrote when dealing with a recurring epidemic of The Black Death plague are fitting for consideration today. He wrote:

"I shall ask God mercifully to protect us. Then I shall fumigate, help purify the air, administer medicine and take it. I shall avoid places and persons where my presence is not needed in order not to become contaminated and thus perchance inflict and pollute 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 place or person but will go freely as stated above. See this is such a God-fearing faith because it is neither brash nor foolhardy and does not tempt God."

*(Luther's Works Volume 43. page 132. The letter "Whether one may flee from a Deadly Plague" written to Rev. Dr. John Hess)*

Love God and love your neighbor,  
Pastor Krueger



The Men's Club applied your donations from the 2019 Easter Pancake Breakfast to purchase ceiling fans and folding tables for the church in Guatemala during the Mission Trip in February 2020!

Your generosity is serving the Lord in this community!





## A Message From Our Associate Pastor

Rev. Matthew Hardaway

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### Jesus In The Psalms - Psalm 20

God's timing is always perfect. Almost two years ago I landed on (or rather, the Holy Spirit led me to) the idea of going through the Psalms chronologically for my newsletter articles. Could I have ever imagined where God would lead or what life would like today at that point in time? Not at all.

Yet here we are, trying to figure out how best to deal with COVID-19. Some of the most basic, simplistic parts of life are in turmoil - schools and businesses are closed and we are supposed to be avoiding each other at all cost for the next 8 weeks. Who knows? This could last much longer than that. There is much uncertainty in the world these days. Or at the very least, we are more aware of the unknown than we usually allow ourselves to be.

So how does God's timing fit into all of this? The next Psalm for my newsletter article is Psalm 20. I could not have timed this any better - some of the very words that Jesus prayed when He faced times of trouble and uncertainty as the Son of Man are here for us to pray today.

Yes, there is uncertainty ahead - but we need not fear. Our God is with us, and promises that "He will answer him from His Holy Heaven and rescue him by His great power!" In this time of uncertainty Jesus gives us these words to pray.

#### Psalm 20 (NLT)

- 1 In times of trouble, may the Lord answer your cry. May the name of the God of Jacob keep you safe from all harm.
- 2 May he send you help from his sanctuary and strengthen you from Jerusalem.
- 3 May he remember all your gifts and look favorably on your burnt offerings.
- 4 May he grant your heart's desires and make all your plans succeed.
- 5 May we shout for joy when we hear of your victory and raise a victory banner in the name of our God. May the Lord answer all your prayers.
- 6 Now I know that the Lord rescues his anointed king. He will answer him from his holy heaven and rescue him by his great power.
- 7 Some nations boast of their chariots and horses, but we boast in the name of the Lord our God.
- 8 Those nations will fall down and collapse, but we will rise up and stand firm.
- 9 Give victory to our king, O Lord! Answer our cry for help.



**“The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them;  
He delivers them from all their troubles.” Psalm 34:17**

## *Lord, Hear Our Prayers:*

- † We pray for continued healing for all those who have suffered physical problems in the last month, including: (a complete list is available through the church office). We pray the Lord lay His healing hand upon them.
- † We pray for all who struggle with ongoing health concerns, including: (a complete list is available through the church office). We pray the Lord keep His healing hand upon them.
- † We pray for all who are home-bound, in nursing care or assisted living facilities, including: (a complete list is available through the church office). We pray the Lord give them comfort and peace with their living situation.
- † We pray for those who have lost loved ones in the last month; including: (a complete list is available through the church office). We pray the Lord give them comfort in their time of sorrow.
- † We pray for all nations as the battle to combat Coronavirus (COVID-19) continues. We pray for world leaders, healthcare workers, public service workers, and all those who have been affected by this disease. We pray for healing, patience, and calmness during this time of uncertainty.
- † We pray for those serving in our Armed Forces (a complete list is available through the church office). We pray the Lord keep them safe in their stead as they defend our freedom and safety.
- † We pray for those serving in the mission field ... may God continue to bless and keep them safe as they minister to the world as an extended outreach of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Waco, Texas.

Please contact the church office if you, someone in your family, or a family friend is in need of prayer. Please keep the church office advised of the status of those you add to the prayer list, so that our list remains up-to-date. If you have any questions, please contact the church office by email: [wecare@splcwaco.com](mailto:wecare@splcwaco.com).

*How can we Pray for you?*

In light of the COVID-19 Coronavirus guidelines, we have condensed the April 2020 newsletter. This page contains some items to encourage family time for adults and children to learn and grow together. Even though Easter activities have been cancelled at church, we can still rest assured in the promises of our Risen Lord!

# Easter Cake

Celebrate our risen Lord with this uniquely decorated cake.

## What you need:

- Adult help
- Box of cake mix (any flavor)
- Tub of brown frosting
- Shredded coconut
- Green food coloring
- Chocolate Hostess Ding Dong cupcake
- Donut hole
- Pretzel sticks
- M&M's candies

## What you do:

1. Bake cake in rectangular pan. When cool, frost it.
2. Pour coconut into bowl. Add drops of green food coloring. Mix until coconut resembles grass.
3. In one corner of cake, set Ding Dong upright to resemble a tomb. Place donut hole in front of it, to one side.
4. Make three crosses with six pretzel sticks and some frosting. Arrange on opposite corner from tomb.
5. Use brown M&M's to make a path from the crosses to the tomb.
6. Use other colors of M&M's to spell out "Jesus lives!"

## Children's Worship Bulletin™

Ages 7+

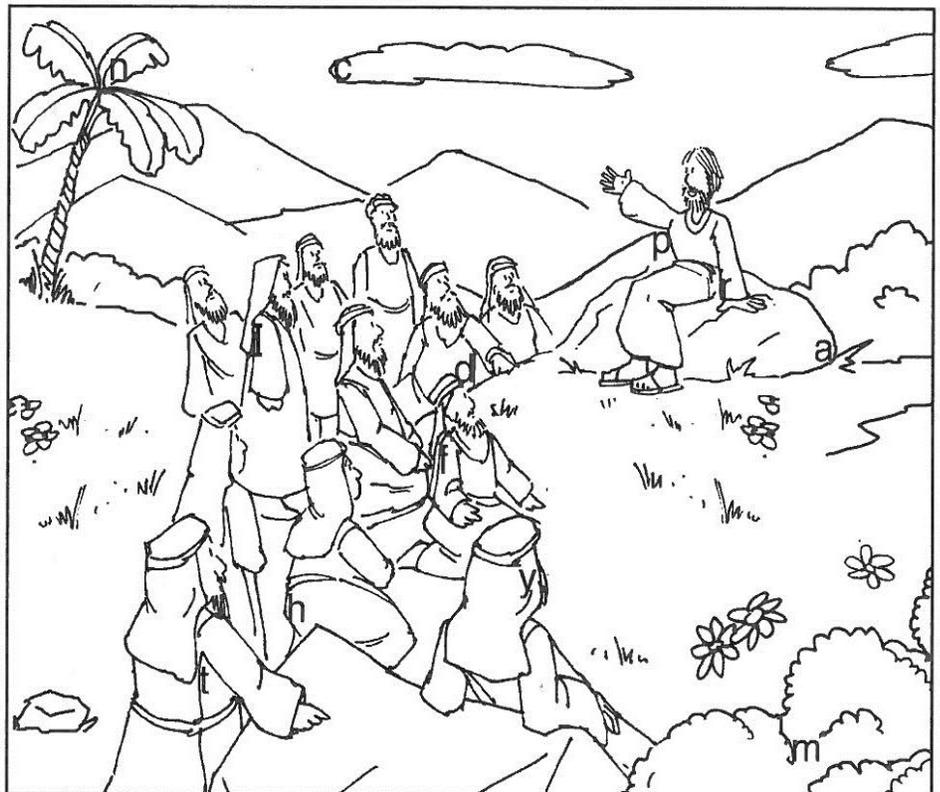
Matthew 6:25-34

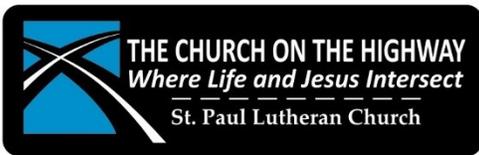
### God Cares for Us

Jesus told His followers not to worry so much about food and clothes. How did He say it?

Find the underlined letters in the picture below.

"Is not life more important than food,  
and the body more important than clothes?"





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Visit our Web site for news, information,  
worship guides and worship streaming!

[www.splcwaco.com](http://www.splcwaco.com)

Live-stream Worship on Sunday morning at 10:30 a.m. at  
[www.splcwaco.com](http://www.splcwaco.com) or on Facebook ([StPaulWaco](https://www.facebook.com/StPaulWaco)).

Watch the "Countdown to Easter" devotions on our  
Facebook page, Monday - Friday, until Easter!