

# St. John's Newsletter – Lent 2012

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## From His Word ...

“Now I lay me down to sleep. I pray the Lord my soul to keep ...” For most of my life I simply understood those words to say: “I pray to the Lord that I may keep my soul and wake up in the morning.” But might they really mean: “I pray that the Lord keeps my soul safe from harm”?

What harms does your soul face? As we ponder David's evening prayer in Psalm 4, consider these two dangers that we ask the Lord to keep our soul safe from.

First, the danger of despair when others belittle our God. David writes, “How long, O men, will you turn my glory into shame? How long will you love delusions and seek false gods?” (Psalm 4:2 NIV). Have you felt the sting of being labeled unloving when you stand up for what the Bible says is right? Have you been accused of being too religious when you place God's Word and worship first? Our God and his Word are our glory, yet the world tries to make us feel ashamed of them. They've deluded themselves into thinking that they know better. How the world's ridicule can threaten our soul, tempting us to give up or to give in! I pray the Lord to keep my soul safe from despair.

Second, the danger of sinful anger. A righteous anger, as Jesus showed toward the money-changers at the temple, certainly takes affront when others attack God's glory. But how often doesn't our anger slip into a selfishness that wants to lash out because my honor or my feelings were injured? That selfish anger eats away at our soul. We toss and

turn in bed, frustrated, wishing to get even. King David admonishes us, “In your anger do not sin; when you are on your beds, search your hearts and be silent ... trust in the LORD” (Psalm 4:5 NIV). Yes, dear Christian, leave your anger in the Lord's hands. He will carry out his justice at the proper time. I pray the Lord to keep my soul safe from sinful anger.

Our soul struggles because we wonder what good can come when evil attacks. That's why despair and anger tempt us. “Who can show us any good?” (Psalm 4:6

NIV). But then the light of the Lord's

face shines on us through his Word and Sacraments. How brightly Christ's cross shines with God's love, penetrating even the darkest clouds of despair and anger. His head once crowned with thorns now shines with his glorious mercy that declares our sins forgiven. This Lenten season, we walk again to the darkness of the cross to see the light of the Lord's face. Look at the great good he worked for you

through the cursed cross. Many times we may not be able to see what good could come, but keep believing that your heavenly Father works all things for the good of you, whom he has called to faith in his Son.

So no matter what presses down on your soul or tries to corner you in, call out to the Lord, your God, “Give me relief from my distress; be merciful to me and hear my prayer” (Psalm 4:1 NIV). Keep my soul safe, O Lord.

And if I die before I wake, won't I wake to the greatest joys of all? Will he not take my soul, redeemed by his blood, to my heavenly



home? Won't my body await the resurrection to glory on the Last Day when Jesus returns? Could anything be better than that? How great that joy! So much greater than any harvest or earthly celebration can bring. Does not the thought of what awaits bring a foretaste of that joy to our hearts even now? "You have filled my heart with greater joy than when their grain and new wine abound" (Psalm 4:7 NIV).

So with our faith firmly founded on Jesus and our joy built on his resurrection, we can pray with David, "I will lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety" (Psalm 4:8 NIV). Read Psalm 4.

## Midweek Lenten Schedule

Lent begins this Wednesday, February 22. A light supper is served each week at 6:00 pm. The service is at 7:00 pm.

The sermons this year are based on a series by Rev. John Braun under the theme: *See His Cross: Surprising Words from Our Savior's Passion*. As in previous years, we'll rotate pulpits with St. Paul's of Morris and with Trinity of Johnson and Mt. Olive of Graceville.

- **Feb. 22** – It's God's Plan From Beginning to End! (Mark 14:61, 62), Pastor Bitter
- **Feb. 29** – Put Your Sword Away! (John 18:4-11), Pastor Andrus
- **Mar. 7** – It's No Secret! (John 18:19-24), Pastor Main
- **Mar. 14** – Our King Is Crucified! (John 18:36,37), Pastor Bitter
- **Mar. 21** – Shed No Tears for Jesus! (Luke 23:26-31), Pastor Andrus

- **Mar. 28** – Glory Be to Jesus! (John 17:1-5), Pastor Main

## Holy Week & Easter

- **Maundy Thursday**, April 5, 7:00 pm. We celebrate our Lord's last will and testament in his Holy Supper. Such great love gave himself up for us, so that we love one another even as he has loved us. The service closes with the stripping of the altar, reminding us of how on this night he was betrayed and abandoned.
- **Good Friday**, April 6, 7:00 pm. We contemplate the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. In his cross is our redemption, forgiveness, and salvation. We meditate on his cross as the candles our extinguished. But in the darkness hope shines out, for Jesus rose from the dead.
- **Easter: The Resurrection of our Lord**, April 8, 9:00 am. "He is not here. He has risen, just as he said." What great good news the angel spoke to the women that morning! What celebration for you and me! Death has been swallowed up in victory. Jesus lives! He lives, he lives who once was dead; he lives, our ever-living head. This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it. Easter breakfast begins at 7:30 am.

## E12

### Easter 2012 – Outreach

Jesus lives! The victory's won. But many do not believe. Without faith in Jesus, the inheritance and life Jesus has won for sinners is lost. "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will

be condemned" (Mark 16:16 NIV). No wonder Jesus tells us, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation" (Mark 16:15 NIV).

The whole world is too big of a place for any one of us. But what about our small corner of the world? Is there any neighbor or acquaintance of yours who does not know the peace Jesus brings?

Why not invite them to the Easter service this year? In the weeks ahead we will have postcards available for you to send or hand-deliver to people you know who may need to hear the Good News of Jesus. Start thinking about whom you could invite. The likelihood of someone coming is much greater when they receive a personal invitation rather than a mass mailing. But don't get discouraged. People often need to be invited to several events before they come. So wouldn't it be a good time to get started?

This is part of the E12 (Easter 2012) program sponsored by the WELS Commission for Congregational Counseling. They are providing customized postcard invitations for congregations at a very low cost. Stay tune for more information in the bulletin as Easter approaches. Your E12 committee is Justin Flaten, David Paul, Phyllis Joos, Gloria Zeltwanger, and Pastor Bitter.

## Confirmation

The tentative date for Confirmation this year is May 6. Examination would be two weeks earlier on April 22. Our confirmands this year are: Collin Brown, Ryan Gray, and Morgan Nelson.

## Weather or Not?

That's not a misspelling. Rather that's the title of the *5<sup>th</sup> Pew from the Front* video we're viewing in Bible class. As a storm moves into Willow Bend the Taylor family faces some trying situations. What promises of our Savior help us cope when the floods of life rush at us? What doors of opportunity does the Lord open for us as he works good out of the tragedies in life? Come join us Sunday mornings at 9:30.

## St. John's Trivia Question

When St. John's started, the members spoke German at home. Services and classes were conducted in German. All the business of the congregation was carried on in German. When were the minutes for the annual voters' meeting first taken in English?

Last month's question: Who was the longest serving pastor at St. John's?

Answer: Pastor H. C. Duellmeier served for 17 years from 1938 until 1955. During his time here the church was lengthened by 28 feet. The current parsonage was also constructed for a cost of \$14,677.52.

**St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church -- Hancock, MN**  
**March 2012**

"He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities" (Isaiah 53:5 NIV).

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <b>Church Cleaners:</b> Barry &amp; Sandy                      Nelson, Chuck &amp; Lisa Nelson                 </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <b>Ushers:</b> Duane Hausmann (capt.), Tom                      Mohr, Harvey Flaten, Scott Boettcher,                      Ryan Flaten                 </div>			<b><u>Easter Festival</u></b> <b><u>Worship 9:00 am –</u></b> <b>April 8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4<sup>th</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Lent</b> (purple) 9:15am Sunday School 9:30am Youth Bible Class 9:30am Video: <i>5<sup>th</sup> Pew – Weather or Not</i> 10:30am Divine Service and Lord's Supper	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> 4:00pm Catechism Class 6:00pm Supper <b>7:00pm</b> <b>Lenten Service</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>11<sup>th</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Lent</b> (purple) <i>Day Light Savings Time: Spring Ahead</i> 9:15am Sunday School 9:30am Youth Bible Class 9:30am Video: <i>5<sup>th</sup> Pew – Weather or Not</i> 10:30am Divine Service <b>11:30am Church Council</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 4:00pm Catechism Class 6:00pm Supper <b>7:00pm</b> <b>Lenten Service</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>18<sup>th</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent</b> (purple) 9:15am Sunday School 9:30am Youth Bible Class 9:30am Video: <i>5<sup>th</sup> Pew – Weather or Not</i> 10:30am Divine Service and Lord's Supper	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> 4:00pm Catechism Class 6:00pm Supper <b>7:00pm</b> <b>Lenten Service</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>25<sup>th</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent</b> (purple) 9:15am Sunday School 9:30am Youth Bible Class 9:30am Video: <i>5<sup>th</sup> Pew – Weather or Not</i> 10:30am Divine Service	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> 4:00pm Catechism Class 6:00pm Supper <b>7:00pm</b> <b>Lenten Service</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>