



The wicked flee
though no one pursues,
but the *righteous*
are as bold as a lion.

PROVERBS 28:1, NIV

In this Issue:

World View	3
Quarterly Meeting	4
WELS Investment	6
Outreach News	7
July / August Birthdays	7
Reporters & Meetings	8
Parking Lot Info & Special Meeting	8

The Reporter

August 2021

The Reporter

Volume 19, Issue 06

“Here We Go, Again?”

by Pastor Proeber

This past week we witnessed a resurgence of the COVID-19 virus. Almost immediately mandates were issued and new orders were reinstated. At the same time, there was a collective sigh from many people who responded, “Here we go again!”

What the next few weeks, or months will offer is hard to determine. We do know it will have an effect on how we live, and particularly on our psychological state. Probably the most prevalent question will be, “how long will we have to endure this?”

I can’t say for certain, but there is one thing I do know. What the Lord requires of us as we live in these challenging times never changes.

Unfortunately there have been too many aspects of ministry which have been affected, or which have been dramatically altered. Only time will determine whether we made good choices. Yet in our day to day lives what our Lord expects never changes. We can walk around masked or unmasked. We can practice social distancing, or not. We can be vaccinated or remain unvaccinated. Regardless of the decisions we make the Lord’s will continues to stand. This is never subject to mandates or personal choices.

What the Lord desires is clearly explained by Paul as he writes to the Christians in Thessalonica. Each of these exhortations is included for a reason, and each helps us recognize how we are to live. Listen to his words:

Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks. For this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus. Do not extinguish the Spirit. Do not treat prophecies with contempt. But test everything. Hold on to the good. Keep away from every kind of evil. May the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.
(1 Thessalonians 5:16-23)

When we read through each of these exhortations I’m sure there is a part of us which questions, “how can I be this way when there is a pandemic going on?” However, the Lord never includes an asterisk or an exception for a pandemic. This is our sinful nature being manipulated by the devil. Who, by the way, delights in the fear he has inflicted in the hearts of many. Fear to such a degree that the open and confident practice of faith is affected. This should never be!

Recall what Paul writes as the Lord’s inspired apostle: “Rejoice always.” This is more than being happy. It is the joy that the Lord gives in his providence and protection. It is especially apparent in his Son and the gift of forgiveness. This joy in the Lord should never become a casualty of any pandemic or mandate. God is always in control and he works everything for our good.

Paul also encourages us to look at our prayer life. We need to pray without ceas-

Continued on page 2

Cont'd from page 1

ing, and we need to give thanks for everything. God hears and always answers our prayers in the proper way, and at the proper time. This is why we need to pray in keeping with God's will for us in Christ Jesus. Those prayers may appear different from what we tend to pray. Yet, what an encouragement it is to pray with boldness and confidence, "Lord, your will be done!"

The next exhortations are beneficial in our day to day walk in the faith. If anything has been hindered or hampered by COVID, this is it. It is good to be cautious. At the same time we need to understand the danger of withdrawing ourselves from Word and Sacrament. Streaming is a good tool. Still, it does not help us in our walk together with those of the household of faith. Our living rooms may be comfortable, but can that comfort compare to what is offered by other believers who struggle with the same issues we do? There is also the unfortunate absence from the Lord's Table. If we separate ourselves from this heavenly feast, where else can we receive the spiritual food which strengthens, supports, and reassures us? What we further need to remember is when we separate ourselves from the Word, how do we accomplish the last three exhortations—test everything, hold on to the good, and keep away from every kind of evil? We can't, and we won't.

COVID might possibly be the least of our worries and our fears. You may disagree with this assessment, but consider what our Savior said, "Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, fear the one who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (*Matthew 10:28*). Fear is a First Commandment issue. We know we should have no other gods, but what does this mean? "We are to fear, love and trust in God above all things." This doesn't mean we become reckless and throw caution to the wind. If we fear God above all things, we will give him the awe and respect he deserves, which by the way, should supersede our fear of COVID.

Trusting in the Lord and putting him first in all things is not blind or foolish. We are relying on a God who has sanctified us completely, and who keeps us blameless until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Even more, there is the final assurance we receive. "The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it." It is important to remember our God is eternally faithful. He has always been, and will always be. In that faithfulness he tells us he loves us with an everlasting and uncompromising love. In that love, he promises to watch over us—so closely that not even a hair will fall from our heads without him knowing. In that same love, he even promises to keep us set aside for his holy purposes in this life, and for a holy life with him in heaven.

This is why we put our trust in the Lord, and follow him without distraction and compromise. Will this put us at odds with what others are saying and mandating, possibly. In the end, who must we faithfully follow and fear without rival? It must be the Lord!



My son, do not forget my teaching. Let your heart keep my commands, because they will add long days and many years to your life, and peace and prosperity will come to you.

Do not allow mercy and truth to leave you. Fasten them around your neck. Write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will find favor and approval in the eyes of God and man.

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

(*Proverbs 3:1-6*)

World View Fundamentals

by Al Todd

Understanding someone's worldview is extremely important when trying to understand his/her beliefs and thus the decisions that result from those beliefs.

Pastor David Thompson (ELS) in his book "What in the World is Going On" holds up Confessional Lutheranism as the "gold standard" of worldviews because it is based on God's inerrant word –the Scriptures. Understanding and internalizing the Confessional Lutheran worldview will help Christians in many respects. Here is a list excerpted from Pastor Thompson's book:

1. Equips the Christian to look at life and the world from God's perspective
2. Ability to spot false worldviews and how they conflict with God's word.
3. Knowledge about how false worldviews manifest themselves in culture
4. Better able to guard your faith and help others guard theirs
5. Ability to better defend the truth of Christianity
6. Better prepared to aptly proclaim law and gospel within the cultural context of false worldviews
7. Knowledge of how to better love your neighbor who may be caught up in a trendy but false worldview.

Here are the fundamental questions which help to understand worldviews and the Confessional Lutheran response. See if you agree that this is also your worldview as a member of a Confessional Lutheran Church – Our Redeemer.

1. How does a worldview understand the Prime Reality – that which has always existed and explains all other things? Answer: The Christian God – Three persons in one God –infinite, personal, uncreated, omnipotent, loving, just, and eternal – the creator of all things.
2. How does a worldview understand the source of knowledge and truth? How does it claim to know truth and right from wrong? Answer: natural knowledge and special revelation (the Bible, Holy Scriptures) with the latter having the higher authority.
3. How does a worldview understand and explain the universe – how and why it exists? Answer: God created and preserves the universe.
4. How does a worldview understand man and his relation to the Prime Reality and the universe? Answer: Man was made in the image of God.
5. How does a worldview understand and explain evil? Answer: The Fall into sin.
6. What is a worldview's solution for evil? Answer: Justification through Christ and sanctification by the Holy Spirit.
7. How does a worldview understand the future, the final reality, or the "end game"? Answer: The historical reality of the second coming of Christ, the resurrection of all flesh, the final judgment, the end of the universe, and either a believer's glorification or an unbeliever's damnation in eternity.
8. How is a worldview reflected in various disciplines (theology, ethics, philosophy, science, history, art, music, sociology, and politics)? Answer:
 - a) Theology: Christianity as revealed in God's word.
 - b) Ethics: The Ten Commandments (more simply stated in the two Great Commandments: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, and soul; and love your neighbor as yourself).
 - c) Science: reason and observation must be filtered through special revelation (the Bible) since human reason has been corrupted by the Fall.

Continued on page 4

Continued from page 3

- a) Philosophy: Complete and lasting wisdom and truth can only be found by special revelation (the Bible). Apart from Christ, philosophies will end up to be hollow and deceptive.
- b) History: History has a beginning (creation) and an end (the second coming of Christ); that is, it is linear therefore not meaningless.
- c) Art and Music: Art and music are unique to Man because Man was made in the image of God. The highest form of art and music is that which expresses a transcendent beauty, goodness, nobility, or some other characteristic of God.
- d) Sociology and Politics: The origin, development, behavior, and structure of human societies and individuals are to be understood from the perspective of the divinely instituted estates of marriage, government, and the church.

This outline of the fundamentals of worldviews and then, specifically, the Confessional Lutheran answers to those worldviews shines a light on how much we differ from alternate, false worldviews. It can provide a basis for giving an answer to those holding false worldviews for the: “.....hope we have, but to do so with gentleness and respect.” (1 Peter 3:15).

Minutes from Congregational Meeting

The Quarterly Congregational meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Greg Grunewald, following the worship service, and begun with prayer by Pastor Proeber. God has shown us rich blessing and has given us many opportunities to serve him. We need to be good and faithful stewards. Fourteen members were present at the meeting.

The minutes of the April 18, 2021, meeting were approved as read, and there was no unfinished business.

Monthly reports and updates were presented by the Committee Chairmen.

• Outreach

While there was no written “outreach report,” it was noted the video streaming continues with a number of regular viewers—both member and non-members. Goals for the end of the year will concentrate on advertizing which leads people to the website, while also announcing upcoming programs, services, and activities.

• Pastoral

We continue to see God’s grace in many ways, particularly in the Baptism of Henley Leighton Schroeder, and the reception of Jan and Larry Scheffler into Communicant Membership through the Profession of their faith. The status report indicated that ministry is slowly progressing in the right direction. There were several Sunday School classes before the summer break. Sunday morning Bible Class was restarted with a study considering one of the lessons for the day. Wednesday evening Bible Class continues with a study on the end times. The handbell choir is on summer break, but will restart in the fall, as will the mixed voice choir. The Outreach / fellowship committee did meet after a long break. Plans are being considered for the late summer and the fall. The pastor also reported on the growing demands for his time which keeps him from completing several projects between the sanctuary and the parsonage. Jury duty and two vacancies in the Los Angeles Circuit, as well as increased hospital calls have absorbed much of his time. He finally informed the congregation his trips to Arizona will be scheduled about every 8-10 weeks.

Continued on page 5

Continued from page 4

- **Property**

The property is in good repair. We thank Saxon for his efforts to weed, mulch, and do whatever is needed to keep the planting areas looking good. Mowing has also been done on an “as needed” basis. A work day will be scheduled to catch up with some much needed cleaning. Also, bids will be received from three contractors for the resurfacing of the parking lot. Short and long term projects will be evaluated and completed when time and funding permit.

- **Financial Secretary**

For the Second Quarter of 2021 the following offerings were received —

CLHS	500.00
Cleaning / mowing	410.00
General Fund	29,489.00
<u>Pass thru</u>	<u>439.52</u>
Total Offerings	\$30,838.52

- **Treasurer**

Income and Expenses for the Second Quarter of 2021 were —

Beginning Balance	36,627.00
Income	29,489.00
<u>Expenses</u>	<u>34,427.00</u>
Ending Balance	\$31,689.00

- **WELS Investment Fund Report**

The following tracking report was presented by the Treasurer —

Beginning Balance 04.01.2021	\$445,259	
<u>Change in Value</u>	<u>25,761</u>	(5.8%)
Ending Fund Value 06.30.2021	\$471,019	

There is a more comprehensive report on the Endowment Fund on the following page.

- **New Business**

A brief report was offered regarding two of the three bids on the parking lot. The Property Committee will evaluate all of them and bring a report to the next Council meeting, as well as a recommendation to the Voters with a funding plan.

Announcements regarding upcoming meetings were presented, and the meeting closed with the singing of the Doxology at 11:45 am.

Please note

If written reports are needed, please contact either the Chairman or the Secretary. They will be able to forward them to you. Please inform them if you would like electronically or hard copy. Thank You!

WELS Investment Fund Report

By Al Todd

Your church, Our Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church (ORLC), invests in the WELS Investment Fund (WIF). Our account is managed by the WIF Board comprising eight (8) men chosen by the WELS Synodical Council to serve four (4) year terms. The Board is advised by Vanguard Institutional Advisory Services (VIAS). The VIAS consultant (currently William Burns, CFA) is responsible for making investment recommendations which the Board then considers. Once approval is given, VIAS implements and manages the investments. It should be noted that over 230 WELS congregations and affiliates invest with WIF which is a support services subsidiary of WELS incorporated in 1997.



Once per Quarter, normally 25-30 days after the Quarter end, James Holm, CFP, and the Executive Director of the WELS Investment Funds, produces a webinar which features William Burns from VIAS speaking about that quarter's results and providing an outlook for the next quarter and the year ahead.

The webinar began with remarks by Jim Holm speaking to the investment cost reductions WELS congregations and affiliates achieve by pooling their resources in WIF. The investment and management costs are significantly less than the costs to congregations of investing individually. WIF currently oversees a portfolio of \$300 million. Note that the WIF is only open to WELS congregations and affiliates and not to individual investors.

ORLC is currently invested in the WELS Endowment Fund and has a 2021 2nd Quarter balance of \$471,000. The Endowment Fund is invested 75% in equity and 25% in fixed income and is meant for long term (5 years +) investments. Mr. Burns noted that the returns so far in 2021 are:

- 3 months = 5.73%
- 6 months = 8.56%
- One year=32.27%

During the Outlook portion of the webinar, Mr. Burns noted the strong performance of the Endowment Fund this year but cautioned that as the pandemic goes through a cycle of subsiding and then expanding it will cause volatility in the stock markets as supply chains are affected. He noted a rise in the inflation rate caused by too much money chasing too few goods which is the result of supply chain disruption. This is expected to continue into late 2021 or early 2022 before supply chains begin to stabilize.

Mr. Burns expects the United States, Great Britain, and China to lead the way for future economic growth as these countries have the best track record for emerging from pandemic related restrictions. He closed by praising the WIF for having an excellent Asset Allocation strategy and sticking with it instead of trying to "time the market" which almost always leads to disappointment.

Please let me know if you would like any more information about ORLC's WIF Investments.



“**A** farmer went out to sow his seed.”

Outreach Opportunities

The Outreach & Fellowship Committee is meeting to consider events to provide opportunities for members to invite friends and relatives to Our Redeemer. Some events are conducted outside the formal worship service. There are also special worship services with food and fellowship afterwards. We hope these events will encourage you to invite people you know to learn more about our church and to hear the message of Grace we proclaim. Please plan to participate, and to serve!

Upcoming Events include —

The Annual Beach, Bike and Barbeque is scheduled for September 19th at Goleta Beach. We will meet at our regularly reserved area—C around noon. Games will be provided and there will be fun for all. Please bring along your favorite chair, and either a dish to pass or dessert. Everything else will be provided. If you are biking, we will leave the church parking lot around 11:15 am. Friends are always welcome!

The events for the rest of the year will be planned this coming Tuesday evening. Certainly there is some hesitation because of new mandates and restrictions. At the same time, ministry may need to be reconsidered to allow us to keep doing the work the Lord has placed us here to do. If you have an idea, submit it to the committee before the 10th.

Birthdays for July and August



We rejoice in the many blessings God has given the members of our family of faith. May the Lord continue to bless them richly.

July

- 7th - Emily P.
- 8th - Elijah D.
- 10th - Mark G.
- 13th - Janessa S.
- 18th - Sally K.
- 20th - Barb F.
- 21st - Marieta E., Michael F.
- 25th - Devon J.
- 31st - Justin S., Susan T.

August

- 14th - Brittany G.
- 24th - Jonathan Y.

Serve the Lord with Gladness

Reporters Wanted

Book review? Personal Story of Faith?
Event report? Potluck–gathering? Party? Field Trip?

Half-page to three pages
Reviewed for scriptural consistency
Due by 25th of month to appear in next issue

Email to Pastor Proeber (pastor.orlcsb@gmail.com)

A simple and rewarding way to serve!

Thanks to Al Todd for his articles this month. There is always a standing invitation to provide material for the *Reporter*. Throughout the past volumes, articles authored by members have really made every issue more interesting. We pray that every member will try to provide an article for 2021. If you have an idea, and you are not sure whether to act on it, please don't hesitate to speak to Pastor Proeber for advice. Thanks!

Meetings for August

Church Council	Tuesday, August 3rd at 7:00 pm
Committees	Tuesday, August 3rd at 8:00 pm
Outreach Committee	Tuesday, August 10th at 7:00 pm

Congregational Meeting August 15th after the worship service!

If you have a question regarding a specific area of ministry, please contact a member of the appropriate Board. He will be happy to help.

Parking Lot Repair and Maintenance

Maybe you have noticed, maybe you haven't, but the parking lot is in need of extensive repair. About 16 years ago we resurfaced the parking lot with a 2 inch overlay. After years of resealing and filling in cracks, normal maintenance cannot resolve some of the issues. The Property Committee took the initiative to obtain bids for another overlay, another seal coat, or a full replacement. While the seal coat would be the cheapest route to follow, the cracks would soon reappear and the parking lot would look the same as it does now. Doing another overlay is moderately expensive. It would entail grinding off part of the current parking lot and relaying 2 inches of new material. While it would be a longer term solution than seal coating, in about 2-3 years the cracks could reappear.

This is why the Committee is recommending a full replacement. It is the most expensive option. At the same time it allows us to address long standing problems, and even some future ones. There will be a **Congregational Meeting on August 15th** following the worship service to discuss the work, and to seek permission to cover the cost from the Endowment Fund. Plan to be present to share your insights and concerns. Also, if the Lord has blessed you with the ability to provide a gift for this work, it would be received with joy and thanksgiving to the Lord.

Please speak to Jim Brown or Al Todd if you have any questions.