

MARCH 2021

Friends in Christ News

Friends in Christ Lutheran Church – 1338 Clay Street – Morris, IL 60450 www.ficlc.org Office: (M-F) 10:00 am–1:00 pm (815/941-1255)

“Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God . . .” - Rev. 19:1b

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Come Worship with us!

Saturday Evenings	...	5:30 p.m.
Sunday Mornings	...	9:30 a.m.
Wed. Evenings (March 3 rd – 24 th)	...	7:00 p.m.
Maundy Thursday (April 1 st)	...	7:00 p.m.
Good Friday (April 2 nd)	...	7:00 p.m.
Easter Sunday (April 4 th)	...	6:30 a.m.
	...	8:30 a.m.

(Sunday morning and Lenten services are live-streamed at www.facebook.com/ficlc)

(Tuesday Bible Study ... 9:00 a.m.)
(Online via ZOOM)

“Until Christ is Formed in You!”

And some lessons from the Page-A-Day Calendar of Riddles & Problems

By Rev. Mark Willig

It is what Paul says to the Galatians: **“My little children for whom I am again in the anguish of childbirth until Christ is formed in you!”** (Galatians 4:19)

Formation – that’s the word. In Seminary they talk about “Pastoral Formation.” It means more than learning the details, reading books and taking pencil-and-paper tests. It has to do with character. And part of forming character includes other kind of tests.

(Every morning Paula & I turn the page on our Page-a-Day Puzzle Calendar of riddles and problems. Some are math problems, some word problems, and some are other kinds.)

This is not a rare or curious idea. **Schools all over teach “Character Formation,”** teaching about and encouraging what they believe are positive character traits, such as honesty, empathy, and hard work.

And the most important **task of a parent** is not in providing a wealth of material things for their children.

It is in forming the character of their children. The formation Paul was talking about is for every Christian. It is called **“Faith Formation.”** It is when God forms and fashions our faith and our souls, and He does it according to very specific plans. It is to form us in the pattern of Christ. **“Those whom He foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son ...”** (Romans 8:29)

(A few weeks back there was a math problem on the Puzzle Calendar’s page. I did it fast, and then handed over the calendar. Paula took a little longer and so I proudly announced, “I won!”

“So?” she said.

“So ... you didn’t realize it was a competition?”

(Continued on page 2)

Save the Date:

MAR 2:	Elder’s Meeting	7:00 p.m.
MAR 3:	2 nd Wed. in Lent	7:00 p.m.
MAR 14:	Daylight Savings Time begins	12:00 a.m.
	Stewardship Board Meeting	10 30 a.m.
MAR 10:	3 rd Wed. in Lent	7:00 p.m.
MAR 17:	4 th Wed. in Lent	7:00 p.m.
MAR 24:	5 th Wed. in Lent	7:00 p.m.
MAR 28:	Palm Sunday	7:00 p.m.

Looking Ahead...

April 1 st	Maundy Thursday	7:00 p.m.
April 2 nd	Good Friday	7:00 p.m.
April 4 th	Easter Sunday	6:30 a.m.
		8:30 a.m.

(Continued from cover page)

"No."

"Well, it always is!"

(A few days later it was a problem about 'words associated with Valentine's Day'. I got smoked!)



Through the centuries Christians have talked about and devoted themselves to Faith Formation. In 1427 a monk named Thomas a Kempis published "The Imitation of Christ." In the 1500's **Martin Luther talked about the formation of faith** involving:

- "Oratio" (reading, hearing and speaking the words of the Bible);
- "Meditatio" (dwelling on, pondering and meditating on those words); and
- "Tentatio" (having the words and promises of God tested and challenged through the difficulties, sufferings and temptations of life).

Luther understood that it would be easy to coast along with the name Christian as long as there are no problems. But it is exactly when it is **not** as easy - when we face challenges - that we grow in faith. I have often said it is like a body builder. In his training he will do exercises to isolate a particular muscle. In faith formation God isolates the "faith muscle." For a time, we do without some of the pleasant parts of being a Christian and simply work on "believing the words and promises of God." It can be hard but that is how our faith grows stronger.

*(I am, by nature, **oriented toward problem solving**. I remember having to learn a different pattern when I heard, "Sometimes I don't want you to **solve** the problem. Sometimes I just want you to listen." That one took a while to learn.)*

Faith is (as Luther says), "to believe the words and promises of God." We read them. We think on them. And then comes the time when they are tested. (Which happens to be every day.) In the testing God is forming our faith.

(Our Page-a-Day Puzzle calendar often requires us to take things we have learned from previous puzzles and figure out how to apply them to the problem at hand; and that's when things cross over.)

Every day is a test, because every day has its own tests. Every one of those days will be different in some way; but the test remains the same. (1) Believe the words and promises of God and (2) Figure out how do I apply them to the tests of the day.

How it looks is the same whether those tests are only a little different or a whole lot different.

- Learn to say in the face of today's problems, "I know that God loves me";
- In the face of today's temptations, learn to follow Jesus; and
- At the end turn to Jesus and know that I am forgiven.

It might sound simple, but simple is not the same as easy. Again, it might be simple, or I might have to search the Scriptures and struggle to figure it out.

(There are times when our Calendar of puzzles gives us problems neither one of us has a clue how to solve. Then we struggle along, trying to figure out what we have to learn.)

There are parts of life where I am not yet formed in faith. There are rough edges and parts that are definitely not formed and fashioned as they should be. I am not that good.

But I have a Friend who is absolutely perfect in faith. He is the "Author and Perfector of faith." (Hebrews 12:2) He faced every problem and every temptation and held on to the words and promises of God. Even in Gethsemane before being betrayed and arrested He prayed, "Yet, not My will but Your will be done." Even in the darkness of Good Friday Jesus held on to the promises. He prayed, "Father" and "My God." He knows the walk of faith, and He is my Shepherd and Friend.

We have a promise from God, given through Jesus. Right now we are not all that good at faith, but when God is done with us, we will be "**conformed to the image of His Son.**" (Romans 8:29)

Meanwhile ... **while God is working on me**, I get to look around and see how He is doing absolutely amazing work in the lives my fellow Christians!

And let me tell you, it is amazing what He is doing.



Pastor Mark
(2 Corinthians 2:2)



PLEASE NOTE: LWML will **NOT** be meeting in March



2019-2021 Biennium

Mission Goal:
\$2,100,0002019-2021 LWML MISSION GRANT #20
*A Joyful Noise Unto The Lord*Mission Grant:
\$98,400

MUSIC OUTREACH, CLASSES, AND RESOURCES ON THE BORDER

Ysleta Lutheran Mission Human Care, El Paso, Texas — \$98,400

For 17 years, the music ministry at Ysleta Lutheran Mission (YLM) has been a witness of the mercy and grace of Christ while building relationships with music students and training leaders. One success of this music outreach ministry is a performing group, *Mariachi San Pablo*. Their mission is to reach their community through music that inspires and touches the lives of those who hear it. To expand this life-changing ministry of reaching out to new students and to increase their services and resources, Ysleta Lutheran Mission Human Care (YLMHC) needs to better equip their classroom and rehearsal space.

It also is essential for them to purchase new equipment to enable future recording projects.

The mission grant "Music Outreach, Classes, and Resources on the Border" will assist in funding this expansion.

eNews | LWML News & Events

that you don't want to miss!

LWML eNews issue #321 – SPECIAL EDITION

LWML Reaches 2019-2021 Mission Goal!

Sing the Doxology, "Praise God from Whom all blessings flow!" The LWML, by God's grace, has reached the mission goal of \$2.1 million set for the 2019-2021 biennium. This means that all mission grants selected for this biennium can be funded! God has great plans for spreading His Gospel story through those ministries. He has great plans for the 2021-2023 mission grants as well. Of the 65 completed mission grant submissions, 34 were selected for the 2021 LWML Convention ballot and approved by the LWML Board of Directors (BOD) and Presidents Assembly in January.

The LWML BOD and Presidents Assembly will meet in March to approve the 2021-2023 mission goal – and after the end of the biennium (March 31, 2021) – any surplus mite offerings not given to mission grant recipients in this biennium will be added on top of the allocation for the 2021-2023 mission grants. What a joy and privilege it will be to pray, consider, discuss, and vote for those recipients!

LWML Treasurer Karla Koehler wrote, "We thank God for the many women and men who have generously shared their material blessings so that the LWML can share the love and forgiveness of Christ!" Let the trumpets sound and the cymbals crash, in praise to the Lord!

2021 LWML CONVENTION

Lexington, Kentucky

June 24-27, 2021



For more questions, or to learn more about us
1-800-252-5965 www.lwml.org





Gifts from the Heart



2021 LWML Convention in Lexington, Kentucky

Gifts from the Heart selected recipients and requested items.
Your donations mean the world to them!

Assurance for Life Ministry

"Christ's love, offered freely, one-on-one, to envision the unique and sacred value of each human being". Assurance is a specialized health clinic serving Lexington and the surrounding areas providing free medical services, compassionate counsel, and support to individuals facing unplanned and often crisis pregnancies. They also minister to those experiencing issues from past abortions.

Please bring new or gently used items for the Assurance Ministry's REACH boutique. Items in bold are highest need.

Bed and Bath Items:

Baby Toiletries—shampoo, soap, lotion, etc.
Baby Bath Towels
Baby Wash Cloths
Burp Cloths
Crib Sheets
Laundry Baskets (small or collapsible)

Diapers and Clothes:

Disposable Diapers—size 3
Wipes
Clothing (New) — Sizes NB-12 months (onesies, sleepers, outfits, gowns, coats, etc.)
Diaper bags

Books and Toys

Baby Toys—**Rattles, Teething Rings**, etc.
Small "First" Christian Books—board books, vinyl books, Arch books*

Concordia Publishing House is offering a special on Arch Books for Convention. Books will be delivered directly to Lexington. **The deadline to place an order is May 23, 2021. Use the promo code "GFTH" at checkout to receive the discounted prices. Visit <https://books.cph.org/lwml-gifts-from-the-heart> and click "Order Online" to go directly to the registry and select the books.*

Food Bank Support—Concordia Seminaries Fort Wayne and St. Louis

Gift cards to stores like Walmart and Target in denominations of \$10, \$20, and \$25 are most appreciated.

MOST Ministries provides vision testing and recycled prescription eyeglasses to impoverished people living in developing nations around the world. This eyeglass ministry allows team members to reach out with Christ's love and engage in sharing the Gospel. **Donations of your used eyeglasses will support this mission outreach.**

Thank you for your support of the 2021 Gifts from the Heart recipients & sharing the love of Christ!

*... So faith comes from hearing, and
hearing through the Word of Christ.*

(Romans 10:17)

Let's define the word 'faith' even more clearly.

The Bible says faith is *'the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen'* (Hebrews 11:1)

Your faith must be in God, not in your faith!

In and of itself, faith has no creative power; it just affirms what already exists in the unseen world and in what God has promised, knowing that in His time it will come to pass because it's His will.

Abraham didn't speak Isaac into existence, God did! Abraham simply believed God, acted on His promise, and as a result, Isaac was born. *'He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, convinced that God was able to do what He had promised'*

(Romans 4:19-21)

Whatever you claim by faith must be based on what God has clearly promised you in His Word. So how do you develop that kind of faith? Read His Word!

- The above devotion was written/compiled from multiple sources by Tim Hetzner, President / CEO of Lutheran Church Charities and author of WORD Bible Studies.

March Anniversaries

2nd Gary and Terri Gillette 15 years
Pat & Ann Oslakovich 25 years

19th Mitchell & Mary Kinzie 2 years

Faith
is not hoping
God can . . .

March Birthdays

1st Laurie Applebee
Greg Carlson
4th Bonnie Rydell Nelson
5th Alora Carlson
8th Deb Carter
9th Pat Schultz
11th Greg Johnson
15th Susan Seidler
Paula Willig
16th Aaron Applebee
19th Dick Enervold
23rd Austin Applebee
Georgette Walker
30th Scott Halkyard
Amanda Krugler
Amelia Sarto

. . . it is knowing
He **Will**

Faith...

*is believing
the words
and promises of God.*

~ Martin Luther

Financial Report Friends in Christ Lutheran Church 2021



THANK YOU FOR CONTINUING TO SUPPORT OUR CHURCH DURING CORONAVIRUS

General Fund	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	YTD Actual	BUDGETED
Income	\$ 9,719.67					\$ 9,719.67	\$ 11,650.00
Expenses	\$ 9,409.76					\$ 9,409.76	\$ 11,690.67
Net Income (Loss)	\$ 309.91	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 309.91	

Prayer Calendar

MARCH 2021



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	<p>1</p> <p>Please pray daily for Pastor Willig, Deb Carter, Kris Farber and their families. Pray for Missionaries, Deaf Ministry, Doctors, Nurses and anyone working in the medical field, Police, Fire and EMT's. Those working everywhere.</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Lord, help us to step up and be a light for You in such a confused world. Let our everyday actions show others that we are part of Your family. Phil. 4:11-13</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Lord, Thank You for allowing us to carry out Your Word. Eph. 2:10</p>	<p>4</p> <p>We pray for our President, Vice President, Congress and Judiciary.</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Thank You God for giving us the Bible. Happy is the man who finds wisdom and who acquires understanding in reading the Bible. Prov. 3:13, 17, 18</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Lord, teach us to be more outwardly focused and engaged so that we can more often encounter people seeking faith. Phil. 3:8-9</p>
<p>7</p> <p>I praise You Lord that You are intimately acquainted with my ways and that You always love me and have my best interest at heart. Luke 2:8-10</p>	<p>8</p> <p>We pray for those that are working on developing treatments for the Corona Virus.</p>	<p>9</p> <p>God, help us to remember that Jesus is able to do for us what we are not able to do for ourselves. John 15:9-13</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Satisfy us in the morning with Your unfailing love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days. psalm 90:14</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Lord, bless our children and help them to grow daily in You.</p>	<p>12</p> <p>We pray for Governors and Mayors.</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Dear Lord, everyday of my life is a journey with You. Help me take time to pray and study Your Word.</p>
<p>14</p> <p>Help us to come to You Lord when we are feeling stressed. Psalm 94:18</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Lord, Thank You for unending love and mercy. 1 Chron. 16:34</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Lord we Thank You for the sunshine and ask that You bless us with more of it during the winter months.</p>	<p>17</p> <p>We pray for those suffering from the Corona Virus.</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Lord as Christians all over the world are being persecuted help us to stand firm in our faith in You.</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Lord, we pray that the Holy Spirit will be at work through the ministries of the church. 1 Thess. 5:19</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Lord, be with those in deaf ministry. Help this special ministry grow in all areas so we can all be fed Your Word.</p>
<p>21</p> <p>Lord, Thank You for the hope of the resurrection. May I delight in Your Word and serve the needs of others. Romans 12:13</p>	<p>22</p> <p>We pray for leaders of nations around the world.</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Lord, may I regard Your Word as more precious than gold and sweeter than honey. Psalm 19:10</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Father, grant that I will learn to live a life of love, through the Spirit who lives in me. Eph. 5:2</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Lord, may I always be strong and courageous in my character and their actions. Deut. 31:6</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Lord, grant that I would be full of mercy and compassion as You are. James 5:11</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Lord, teach me the secret of being content in every situation, through Him who gives me strength. Phil. 4:12-13</p>
<p>28</p> <p>Lord, help me to fight the good fight of faith, taking hold of the eternal life to which I am called. 1 Tim. 6:12</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Lord, I pray my soul would pant for You as a deer pants for streams of water. Psalm 42:1</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Lord be with missionaries as they work to bring others to You. Bless them with the right words that others hear to come to know You.</p>	<p>31</p> <p>So many in our congregation have friends and relatives that need so much. Be with those that need You Lord. Help them to get through each day with You.</p>			

March 2021 – Friends in Christ Lutheran Church, Morris, Illinois

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.
	1	2 9:00 AM – Bible Study 7:00 PM – Elders	3 2 nd Wednesday in Lent 7:00 PM – Worship Live Streamed	4	5	6 COMMUNION 5:30 PM – Worship
7 COMMUNION 3 rd Sunday in Lent 9:30 AM – Worship & Live Streamed 10:45 AM – Posted On-Line	8	9 9:00 AM – Bible Study	10 3 rd Wednesday in Lent 7:00 PM – Worship Live Streamed	11	12	13 5:30 PM – Worship
14 4 th Sunday in Lent Daylight Savings Time Begins <u>Set Clocks Forward One Hour</u> 9:30 AM – Worship & Live Streamed 10:45 AM – Posted On-Line	15	16 9:00 AM – Bible Study	17 4 th Wednesday in Lent 7:00 PM – Worship Live Streamed	18	19	20 COMMUNION 5:30 PM – Worship
21 COMMUNION 5 th Sunday in Lent 9:30 AM – Worship & Live Streamed 10:45 AM – Posted On-Line	22	23 9:00 AM – Bible Study	24 5 th Wednesday in Lent 7:00 PM – Worship Live Streamed	25 7:00 PM – Church Council	26	27 5:30 PM – Worship
28 Palm Sunday 9:30 AM – Worship & Live Streamed 10:45 AM – Posted On-Line	29	30 9:00 AM – Bible Study	31	In April: 4/1 Maundy Thursday 7 PM Worship with Communion 4/2 Good Friday 7 PM Worship 4/4 Easter: Sunrise Service – 6:30; Morning Worship – 8:30		