

S E P T E M B E R 2 0 2 0

Friends Bringing Friends to Christ

Friends in Christ News

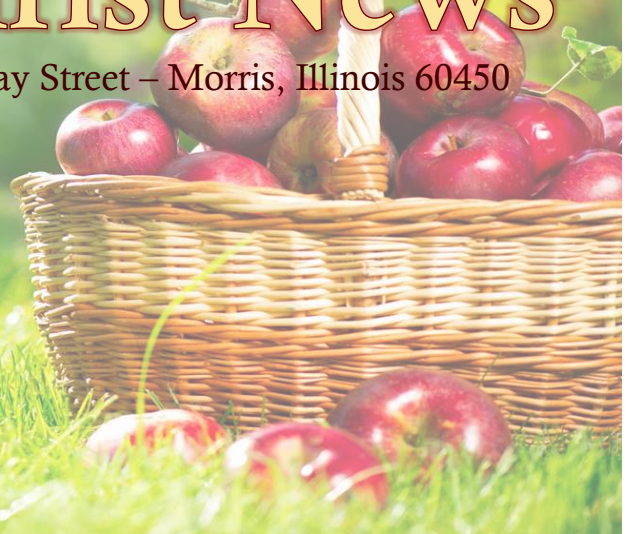
Friends in Christ Lutheran Church – 1338 Clay Street – Morris, Illinois 60450

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'What *IS* Normal, Anyway?' (p. 4)



20-20 A Year for Seeing Clearly

Part 9: "I'm More Me, Than I Could Ever Be" (An Unexpected Bonus)

My iPad wants to update. It wants me to plug it in tonight. If it is connected, someone, somewhere has updates. They will update the operating system and it will work better. I forgot again last night. I do seem to forget a lot. If I keep forgetting maybe it will stop asking. What then? Will it be what it was designed to be? Will some of the programs have trouble working like they are supposed to? Can I go it alone and just ignore the programming they want to send me?

But then again, I have had computers that stopped being "supported." They worked fine for a while. And then things started to go wrong and not work. I guess it needs to be connected to be what it is supposed to be.

I need the word of God. I need to connect. There are upgrades, new coding that will (Continued on p.2)

Currently serving at FICLC*

<u>Pastor</u>	<u>Christian Education</u>
Rev. Mark Willig	Sabina Woods
<u>Office Secretary</u>	<u>Elders</u>
Deb Carter	Jerald Van Heiden
<u>Organist</u>	<u>Finance</u>
Kris Farber	Georgette Walker
<u>Music</u>	<u>Outreach/Missions</u>
Bonnie Nelson	Vicki Kahn
<u>Council Chair</u>	<u>Properties</u>
Carol Hansen	Mike Kahn
<u>Recording Secretary</u>	<u>Stewardship &</u>
Cathy Thompson	<u>Christian Life</u>
	Eileen Tondini

*Board Chair Persons only are listed here

Come worship with us!

Saturday Evenings	...	5:30 p.m.
Sunday Mornings	...	8:15 a.m.
	...	10:45 a.m.

Online at www.facebook.com/ficlc

Live Stream (Sundays)...	8:15 a.m.
Recorded 8:15 Service...	9:30 a.m.

...& study God's Word with us!

On Tuesdays...

Adult Bible Study	...	9:00 a.m.
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(2020: A Year for Seeing Clearly... continued from p.1)

change me. Deep within me there will be some rewriting. When I think about it, I guess I need that rewriting. Over time, I will think differently. I will have different desires. The world will look different to me. My neighbor will seem different as well, and I will see him more and more as a child of God. The whole purpose is to bring into harmony all the different parts of who I am; and bring me into harmony with reality and with my Creator. I may not see or feel how I am being changed. It is that way with the deep changes inside. (I didn't notice much different the last time my iPad updated either.) But when I look back, I am not what I was. How did that happen?

There are other attempts to rewrite things in my iPad. They are called viruses and malware. We have software to block them.

There are other attempts to rewrite things deep inside me. My friend Jared told me there are thoughts that pop up, suggestions for how to think about yourself. When you realize some of them might be coming from the devil, "it might not be a good idea to listen." (Well said!)

I need the word of God. I need to connect, because there are a lot of things going on all around that do not just affect my life. They affect who I am. There is malware inside me. Paul said, "I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate." (Romans 7:15) I need the word of God to face down and block the evil malware the devil keeps trying to pull me into. I need the word of God to expose them for me. I need the word of God to tell me where there is forgiveness. And I need the word of God to bring the promises once again. (Colossians 2:8)

I need to connect frequently. Again, last night, I forgot to plug in my iPad. I have done the same with my computers – ignoring the updates. There was this one time, after months of ignoring, it insisted. The update took about 4 hours.

I need to connect with the word of God frequently. That's part of why God surrounds us with His Word: through the simple Word (written, spoken and heard); the Wet Word (in baptism the word is splashed over me and brings God's own name to me); and the Tasty Word (Jesus giving us His living Body and Blood joined together with His promises). That's also why Paul tells us to "speak to one another in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs". (Ephesians 5:19).

And then there is an unexpected bonus.

"I'm more me than I could ever be." This is one of the unexpected things of being a Christian. A whole lot of people think being a Christian means giving up being yourself. They think it means giving up things that fulfill and that it means setting aside "what you would have liked to have done." (Not everyone who thinks this way is outside the Church. For some, it makes being a Christian a lot harder; but they press on and struggle to make it work.)

The fact is that God has made you and me each with a unique set of skills, perspectives, and joys. He knows every detail of what is within us. "O Lord, You have searched me and known me! ... Even before there is a word on my tongue ... You know it altogether," says David in Psalm 139.

Would He, then, come along and start messing up His own artwork? Who better to trust? Who else could do a better job working deep inside me? Could I? I don't even understand myself! I need the one who designed me to be amazing.

He's still got a lot of work to do. But with every little rewrite He is working and fashioning me to be me, fully and completely me. Not someone else. Not stripping away who I am, but bringing me to the full realization of who I am. I know I will not be finished until this life is done. But even now -- as God has done His work, year after year, I have been amazed at the things He has done. I would not have expected them; and frequently there have been surprises.

Faith and virtues need to grow, and there are sins and vices I need to let go. But as God deals with each part, day by day, I actually feel like I am more me.

Press on then. There is a lot of work still to do. But there is something glorious coming. Paul says, "forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:13-14) There at the end is "the glory that is to be revealed ... the revealing of the sons of God." (Romans 8:18-19)

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

1 st	Paige Thorson
2 nd	David Smolich Sabina Woods
4 th	Arik Applebee Phyllis Lund
10 th	Ethan Duvick
11 th	David Halkyard
17 th	Norma Carlson Gary Schultz
27 th	Amber Brown
28 th	Mark Willig



Anniversaries

1 st	Greg & Deidre Carlson	28 years
17 th	Doug & Jeannine Halkyard	42 years



THERE WILL BE NO IN-PERSON MEETING FOR LWML IN SEPTEMBER

On Saturday, August 29th Norma Carlson and Bonnie Nelson, serving as delegates for the Virtual Convention, submitted ballots for selection of officers in the LWML-Northern Illinois District. The ballots cast will be revealed at the convention on September 12, 2020.



LWML NID Convention

September 12, 2020

Because of COVID-19, there will only be a virtual convention after the August vote. The link to watch the convention online will be posted on or before September 12. Check back for more information and the link. Or, sign-up to receive the NID-Bits to receive the link by email. The online convention manual will be available at that time also.

What IS "Normal", Anyway?

By Deb Carter

... but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love; by truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; through honor and dishonor, through slander and praise. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true;

(Corinthians 6: 4-8 ESV)

The “new-normal” everyone is talking about in the wake of Covid-19 is anything **but** what I consider normal. Wouldn't you agree? Most of us have had our lives turned upside-down in one way or another – no doubt! But the ones I see struggling the most are families with younger, elementary-school aged children. Layoffs and job losses have devastated families across the nation, yes – but what about the people who *haven't* lost their jobs? Those that have young children at home are now being forced to deal with a totally different kind of problem. For them, a monkey wrench has been thrown into the well-oiled machine of the necessary [sadly-more-often-than-not] two-income way of life. Perhaps you've witnessed this dilemma in your own family.

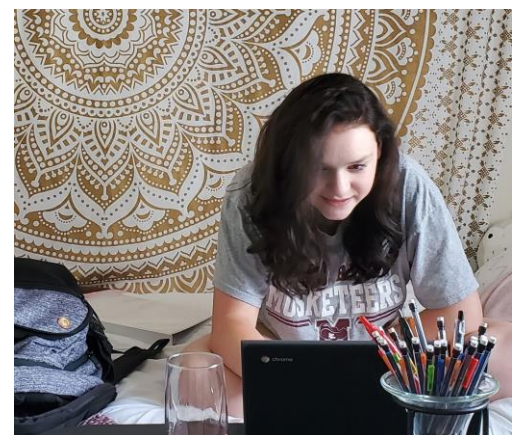
To be fair, the schools weren't exactly sure how they would have the kids return to school given the 'new-normal' state mandates. Some schools have set up a “split attendance” to adhere to the safety of social distancing; which means some days kids attend class in person; some days they “e-learn” on a computer from home. Other schools, however, are strictly having the kids stay home full-time – signing in on a laptop (which the school provides) and e-learning from home *every* day. This is the current situation at Morris High School where our youngest daughter, Signey, attends. Her school day begins at 7:40 am. Signey goes into her bedroom, closes the door, sets up her tray table (complete with 21 pencils and a glass of chocolate milk,) and sits crisscross style on her bed. (She *has* a desk but she says she's more comfortable this way. Hey! Whatever works to keep those 'A's and 'B's coming.) So, as it turns out, Terry's and my job as parents during these Covid times really isn't that difficult. (By the way, if she doesn't sign in or is late, the school notifies us.) With no giant school supply list to shop for, no school clothes to buy and a 15-year-old who is basically getting some early training for college, life for Terry & I is not so bad. As an added bonus, I don't have to drive her to school anymore so she's ALWAYS on time!

But for our oldest daughter, Alexis, and her husband, David, the scenario is much different. Because the schools themselves weren't sure about how things would run, school supply lists, class times and bus schedules were distributed late. It was a last-minute scramble to get, Joey (4), and Aubree (6), ready for 'back-to-school' – only to find out that the learning would be happening from their own living room 3 days out of the week. On top of that, they found out that the afternoon preschool, where

(Continued on p.5)



The entryway of a modern home in 2020



Signey signs in for her first day as a high school freshman...from her bedroom.



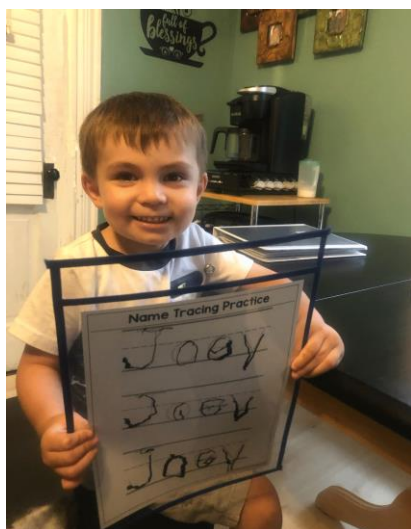
Covid may have an impact on how we meet with teachers...

What IS Normal, Anyway? ... continued from page 4

Joey attends for help with his delayed speech, lost its funding and had to be shut down. And, of course not surprisingly, their regular babysitter is not taking in kids (and rightly so,) during the pandemic.

So, what to do? How can they be at 2 places at once? Kids can't be alone; jobs are needed to keep everyone fed. It's stressful! I truly believe that each parent IS their kids' primary teacher, not all of us were cut out to be school teachers on a daily basis as a career. It's a daunting task Alex and David face! I, myself, had trouble getting my brood to load the dishwasher. Teaching them scientific algorithms and how to diagram sentences would be one thing, but keeping their attention for an extended period of time ... especially when they were younger and could care less what I was showing them? ... Well, that's WAY out of my league.

But all of this chaos really isn't new. Every generation has had its stop-the-world, what-are-we-gonna-do "pandemic" of problems, hasn't it? Jesus flat out said, *"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."* [John 16:33] Look at that! Jesus SAID we would have problems as long as we're walking around on this planet. NO getting out of it. We don't find it hard to believe those words Jesus spoke, right? Phhhft! Not at all! We're LOADED with problems. I, for one, surely have that part down pat! So why then, do we often doubt His words in the very next two sentences? I think it's because we zip over too quickly a very important part when reading it. Jesus said the peace comes from being in Him. He's got this – all of it – under His mighty control! We may have to step up the game with our 'knee mail', though. We gotta sign in, connect and download His words and promises every day – locking them in our heart on a regular basis. There's a common denominator across the span of history of what is needed to endure: to be grounded in God's Word. And if our problems leave us speechless? God's taken care of that, too. *"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express."* [Romans 8:26] What an awesome God we serve, indeed!



David and Alexis are doing fine. God has seen to it. Alexis works full time and is home by 3pm. David, laid off from his original job because of Covid, took a job working 4pm - 11pm which starts next week. Each takes their turn as teacher – and so far, are enjoying wonderful results.

So, to answer this article's title question – wasn't it normal 150 years ago that most schooling took place on the home front within [usually] one-income households? Seems 'normal' may be something that is ever changing. Yet, with Jesus, Who NEVER changes, at the helm of my life, I know I'm safe no matter what (*Ha! There it is, Pastor!*) society calls ... or I deem ... 'normal'.

Joey practices tracing his name during class time ... at his own kitchen table. How sweet of the teacher to take the time to stop during the lesson and take a picture of my grandson. I MUST meet with this teacher soon and tell her how much I love and admire her positive teaching methods!

Financial Report

Friends in Christ Lutheran Church 2020

9/2/2020



THANK YOU FOR CONTINUING TO SUPPORT OUR CHURCH DURING CORONAVIRUS

\$9,516 OF TOTAL INCOME ARE MEMORIAL DONATIONS

General Fund	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	YTD Actual	BUDGETED
Income	\$ 12,785.00	\$ 16,611.00	\$ 10,609.15	\$ 15,990.00	\$ 12,128.00	\$ 86,881.63	\$ 94,836.00
Expenses	\$ 12,899.32	\$ 10,817.38	\$ 12,524.37	\$ 11,580.91	\$ 10,132.00	\$ 81,818.95	\$ 95,221.00
Net Income (Loss)	\$ (114.32)	\$ 5,793.62	\$ (1,915.22)	\$ 4,409.09	\$ 1,996.00	\$ 5,062.68	\$ -

Prayer Calendar

SEPTEMBER 2020



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		<p>Please pray 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>God, teach us to worship You in spirit and in truth. John 4:24</p>	<p>God, show us ways to help nurture youth and young adults so they follow You in a world full of so many other options. 2 Corin. 5:17</p>	<p>Lord, we thank You for the simple things in life. 1 John 4:9-10</p>	<p>Lord during our challenging times on this earth please bring us to trust You more deeply.</p>
<p>By Your bruised body, precious blood, and bitter agony, have mercy on me a sinner. I praise You, bless You and adore You because by Your death and resurrection You redeemed the world.</p>	<p>Pray for those who have heard the message of God's love through Jesus that it would work faith in their hearts and move them to share the love of Jesus with others.</p>	<p>Help Deaf Ministry to come to areas where it is needed. Spark a hunger in Pastors to want to have Deaf Ministry in their churches.</p>	<p>Lord, as we seek to follow Your example, please bless us with a humble servant's hearts. John 13:1-17</p>	<p>We pray for those suffering from the Corona Virus.</p>	<p>Father, I pray for forgiveness for my sins and for the ability to accept Your forgiveness. Matthew 6:12</p>	<p>God, help me to overcome doubts and accept that I can rely on Your grace. 2 Cor. 12:9</p>
<p>We pray Lord that You would help us not to love worldly things but set our minds on Christ. 1 John 2:15-17 Phil. 4:8</p>	<p>We pray for our President, Vice President, Congress and Judiciary. We pray for Governors and Mayors.</p>	<p>Lord help us to get along with those we are home bound with. Give us an understanding of each other and help us in our everyday lives.</p>	<p>Lord, bless Your children that pray. Let prayer time be a wonderful time for us to talk to You like we would a friend.</p>	<p>Be with teachers, children, and parents as school looks different this year. help them to work things out for the good of the children.</p>	<p>Lord, give those working on a vaccine for the Corona Virus special help so they can come up with a vaccine in the near future that will work for everyone.</p>	<p>Be with food banks and help them to get extra donations so they can help those in need. The need is great. Help the money coming in to help match the needs.</p>
<p>Help the children and young adults going back to school to stay safe in the learning environment they are in.</p>	<p>Be with Pastors and give them the words You want them to say to bring more people to You O Lord. Help open the hearts of those who hear Your Word.</p>	<p>God, give us the gift to be able to see all the blessings You give to us in each day. Thank You for blessing us with the gift to see You in our every day lives.</p>	<p>We pray for leaders of nations around the world.</p>	<p>Thank You for the many ways that You have us hearing Your Word O Lord. Open our minds and hearts to Your Word. Help us to believe with all our hearts.</p>	<p>God, grant peace to anyone who is struggling to pay their bills this month. So many are hurting at this time. Please help them. Isaiah 35:10</p>	<p>Lord, strengthen my relationships at church, with my family, with friends, and with my faith community. Help me to be a light for You so others can come to know You.</p>
<p>We pray that God would comfort those that are going through difficult times.</p>	<p>God help me to always have a spirit of appreciation and thanksgiving. Psalm 16:11</p>	<p>Lord, Your Word is like something precious buried in a field. Help us to dig into Your Word deeper and wait patiently to get Your full revelation for our lives. Matt. 7: 7-8</p>	<p>We thank You Lord for everything You have done for us. Help us to graciously accept the gifts You have given us and to use them to Your satisfaction.</p>			

September, 2020 – Friends in Christ Lutheran Church

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.
→ Events Cancelled are Printed with Strikethrough ←		1 9 AM – Bible Study 7:00 PM – Elders	2 10:00 AM – Lutheran Women's Missionary League	3	4	5 COMMUNION 5:30 PM – Worship
6 COMMUNION Pentecost 14 8:15 AM – Worship & Live Streamed 9:30 AM – Worship Put On-Line 10:45 AM – Worship	7 (Labor Day)	8 9:00 AM – Bible Study	9	10	11	12 5:30 PM – Worship
13 Pentecost 15 8:15 AM – Worship & Live Streamed 9:30 AM – Worship Put On-Line 10:45 AM – Worship	14	15 9:00 AM – Bible Study	16	17	18	19 COMMUNION 5:30 PM – Worship
20 COMMUNION Pentecost 16 8:15 AM – Worship & Live Streamed 9:30 AM – Worship Put On-Line 10:45 AM – Worship	21	22 9:00 AM – Bible Study	23	24 7:00 PM – Church Council	25	26 5:30 PM – Worship
27 Pentecost 17 8:15 AM – Worship & Live Streamed 9:30 AM – Worship Put On-Line 10:45 AM – Worship	28	29 9:00 AM – Bible Study	30	October Notes:		