

FIRST
LUTHERAN
CHURCH

OUR
MISSION
STATEMENT

The mission of
FLC Texarkana
is to disciple
and equip the
faithful to care
for all and
reach the lost
within our com-
munities and
world with the
Gospel.

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The Messenger

VOLUME 101, ISSUE 5

MAY 2020

Are you ready...? Part 4

A couple of months ago I started a series of articles dealing with the question, "Are you ready?" Of course, the rest of the question is "Are you ready for the time when the Lord calls you home to heaven?" First, we reaffirmed the confidence we have in the resurrected Son of God who paid the price for sin and opened the gate of heaven for us. We can be assured of our salvation and know through the power of the gospel that whenever Jesus calls us home, we are truly ready. Second, we talked of the confidence we have in Jesus, that we can trust Him to love and care for those we leave behind. Last month we discussed some of the legal issues including wills and end of life decisions. Now we will consider things involving the "Celebration of Life."

Let me begin with the concept of "Celebration of Life." We have gotten away from just calling it a Funeral or Memorial service partly to soften the hardness that we are ultimately dealing with the death of a loved one. Some ministers do not even like to use the Celebration of Life terminology. The confusion comes in consideration of who's life is being celebrated. Most believe we are celebrating the life of the individual, however, as a worship service we celebrate the life of Christ and our life in Christ. Within a Lutheran funeral/memorial service there is never a need to elevate the individual and their deeds to move them into the door of heaven. It is always very clear that we are all miserable sinners saved completely by grace. Most ministers, including myself, will share the ways in which the individual was a blessing to friends and family, however, those blessings always come through a life in Christ. Ultimately, the worship service is an opportunity to bring comfort and healing to the family through the message of the gospel. The primary focus of any worship service is on Jesus. This is also why the casket is always closed during the service and why we do not normally stand for the family as they

enter and exit. When we stand during worship it is normally for Jesus.

Let's drop back and talk about the initial decision concerning cremation, memorial, funeral and graveside. The Bible does not give specifics on what can and cannot be done. First of all, our salvation is not determined by our method of burial. Again, saved by grace through faith in Jesus. We can look to the Bible for examples. All through the Old Testament and following with the death of Jesus the body was preserved by burial. The church has historically followed the same practice. This was out of respect for God and His creation of the body; each fearfully and wonderfully made. Alternately, for a long time the burning of the body (cremation) was practiced by most pagan religions. Our current culture does not associate cremation as part of pagan worship, thus the cremation of the body has become a much more common practice in the church. No matter the form of burial it is still "ashes to ashes and dust to dust in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection."

"For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord." 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17

Next month we will talk more on what goes into the decision concerning the type of service, including current conditions (Covid 19) that have changed many things.

Blessings,
Pastor

We pray for...

People with special needs: everyone effected by the corona virus, Micah Cromer, Ruby Coats, Sharon Harris, Theresa Griggs, David Endsley, Brenda Smith, Jack Parry, Sandra Drautz, Kevin Rougeau, Holland Sturgeon, Annie Fahrni, Iris Wood, Terry Dahلمان, Brad Plattner, Jean Lowe, Barbara Smith, Houey Clement, John Hayes, Mary Lou Thamert, Chuck Poindexter, Mandy Gorham, Herman Smith, Jerry Rehkopf Allen, Tiffani Poole, Renee Biles, Newt & Lydia Arnold, Carol Cooper, Bobbie Hodges, Austin Taylor, Sheila Hensley, Ralph Drautz, Ellen Grant, Randy Fowler, Rigo Cortes, Luke Thomas, Bill Ellis, Brycn Hallowell, John Crawford Family, Lyla Follmer, Amelia Thomas, Zachary Thomas

Our nation and those who govern us: U.S. troops around the world would return home safely, terrorists do not attack again, World peace.

Those who are suffering from chronic illnesses: Tommy Brundrett, Sylvia Hendrix, Mike Fooks, Balbino Avila, Ralph Drautz, Shelia Oestmann, Georges Drautz, Sandra Drautz, Shirley Goll

People recovering from or preparing for surgery: Shelia Oestmann, Ron Jordan, Arland Tollefson, Rodney Sturgeon, Jennifer Holmes

In Military Service: Clara Vanhooose, Zack Coulburn, Dalton Vann, James Naron, Nole Coco Jr., Daniel Schwab, Chad Bowles, Barbara Rutter, Philip Davis, David Owens, Cpt. Tony Moritz, SMSgt Ben Carson

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Custodial Services
Eddie & Pam Wood

Sunday Services
Education Hour
9:00 a.m.

Worship
10:00 a.m.

Congratulations to...

... **Karson McDonald** and **Dane Sundbye**, who are graduating from Texas High.
... **Matthew Plattner**, who is graduating from Hooks High.

Thank you to...

... **Nancy & John Lanier, Pastor, Lisa, Dane** and **Blake Sundbye** for cleaning out the Sunday school area and getting it organized.
... **Pastor Sundbye, Matt Smith & Gwen Huffman** for all their hard work videotaping the worship services for us.
... to everyone who continued to send in their tithes and offerings during the period we've been unable to worship in church.

Meetings this month

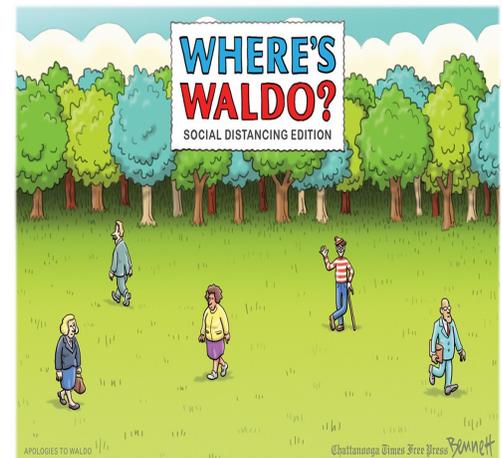
Bd. of Trustees will meet in the fellowship hall at 5pm on Monday, May 11th. The Bd. of Elders will meet at 6pm. If you do not want to come in you can video/conference call in for either meeting.

Church Council will meet in the fellowship hall at 7pm on Monday, May 11th.

Sunday school & adult bible classes

For now all Sunday school and adult bible classes are still on hold. Pastor will continue to video his Wednesday morning bible classes that you can watch on Facebook.

We will send out an email and phone members when this changes. Thank you!



May Milestones

Birthdays

- 4- Jimmy Curtis
- 5- Ray Bobo
Sheila Hensley
Korbyn Parry
- 8- Karson McDonald
Martha Robertson
- 14- Tripp Ayres
- 17- Jean Clement
- 19- Jake Sundbye
Collin West
- 20- Karen Bradshaw
- 21- Heidi McClure
- 23- Derek Huffman
- 25- Tommy Brundrett
Thomas Gardner
Norma McNeal
- 26- Maddie Edzards
Matthew Thigpen
- 28- Carlotta Endsley
- 31- Karah Bradshaw

Anniversaries

- 10- Bo & Kelsi Ayres (6th)
- 24- Bill & Judy Hegmann (49th)
- 25- Scott & Lisa Sundbye (24th)
- 30- Ron & Cathy Jordan (33rd)



Baptisms

- 1- Ken Gardner
Gwen Huffman
- 2- Jennifer Holmes
Lacey Williamson
- 3- Roger Hildebrandt
- 6- Kynzie Baldwin
- 10- Lynda Hildebrandt
- 12- Russell Edzards
Alexa Oestmann
- 13- Dani Stout
- 22- Melissa Plattner
- 23- Sheila Hensley
- 25- Sophia Hudecz
- 26- Karson McDonald



God's People at Work in May

Acolytes

- 3rd Harlee Edzards
- 10th Dani Stout
- 17th Marshall Hackworth
- 24th Harlee Edzards
- 31st Dani Stout

Altar Flowers

- M/M John Lanier
- M/M Matt Smith

Readers

- Courtney Bower
- Cherrie Curtis
- Jamie Baldwin
- Nancy Lanier
- Matt Smith

Children's Church

- Clara Ayres & Susannah Christian
- Lisa & Dane Sundbye, Ruth Lowe, Karson McDonald
- Tommy & Paula Wright, Kae Lever
- Dan & Karen Bradshaw
- Justin & Courtney Bower, Mallory Hackworth

Elders: George Boger & Kevin McDonald

Altar Guild: Gayla Fowler & Pam Wood

Responses to Our Lord



<u>Date</u>	<u>Offerings</u>
3/27	\$ 4,530.00
4/3	\$ 5,570.00
4/10	\$ 5,880.00
4/17	\$ 3,055.00



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From the Treasurer

In the month of March we received \$5,214.95 less in tithes and offerings than we had in expenses. The biggest cause of the drop in offerings was that we were not in the church building during the Sunday messages on Mar 22 and 29; we weren't able to put our offering in the "plate". I praise the Lord that many members have started mailing their offering to the church (4600 Texas Blvd, Texarkana, TX 75503) or delivering it directly to the mail slot on the church door.

One solution to giving at church is to set up "Bill Pay" at your financial institution. I recently set up Bill Pay where Elaine and I have our personal checking account. All I needed was the FLC (1) checking account number (available from the church office), and (2) the church address. You fill in the (a) amount you want to give, (b) whether the giving is "one time" or "recurring" (if recurring, how often), (c) and what day or days of the month you want to give. You can set Bill Pay up online or through a teller by phone or in person. The bank mails a paper check, with your name attached, to FLC

I think it is a great service, and most banks and credit unions don't charge a fee. (Be sure to ask your financial institution to insure they don't charge a fee.) If you are interested but have questions give me a call at 903-244-1920.

I pray you are healthy and that cabin fever is not causing you harm.

God Bless,
Wayne Cranfill

Randy Sams

On April 21 we took a meal of beef lasagna, whole kernel corn, salad and dressing, and homemade cakes to the Randy Sams Shelter. Cakes were made by Carlotta Endsley and Betty Hughes.



Due to the "Shelter in Place" policy at Randy Sam's we are not allowed to serve the meal, but at least we were able to continue the FLC Mission. We are one of the few churches/organizations that is still providing a meal at the Shelter.

Please pray for the residents and staff at Randy Sams. They are also having a difficult time dealing with the virus and it's ramifications, including lower monetary, food, and meal contributions.

God Bless,
Wayne Cranfill

Rummage sale

Youth still have plans for a rummage sale in the near future. Please keep them in mind with Spring cleaning. We'll take donations any time.