



FEBRUARY 2021

Page 1-3 Pastor's Message

Page 3 Bible Study,
Stewardship

Page 4 LWML

Page 5 PPC, Lent

From the Pastor...

The Sanctity of Life and the Responsibility of Government, Society, and Church (Speech given by Rev. Eli Lietza, January 16, 2019 at Rally for Life at the State Legislature building in Santa Fe, NM)

Somewhere along the way we lost something. That “something” was innate, intrinsic, and what set us apart from the rest of creation. Goodness, it still is, even if we as a society can’t recognize it anymore. That “something” is why there is no comparison between killing a spider and harming your neighbor. It’s understood, and can and should be seen, through our conscience and by natural law. ... But at some point, our society lost this “something”, or at least won’t allow it to be applied to all of us; from the weakest to the strongest, from the smallest to the biggest.

I speak about our humanness, this flesh and blood and soul and spirit, that which sets us apart from the birds of the air and the beasts of the field. And with this humanity of ours comes natural rights; rights that aren’t granted by government but instead are endowed by our Creator. ... But when our humanity is lost, these rights are taken away from us. When society or the government is able to define what is human, they are also able to define who has human rights as well.

The argument keeps changing on us, like the shore that is altered with each new tide. The problem is that a society can’t be built upon the shifting sands of political correctness or subjective movements. Eventually such a society crumbles and is left in a huddled mess by the wayside of history; but not before it has thrown the weakest and most vulnerable on the trash heap to cushion its fall.

The unborn are now seen as un-human, for if they were human then we would have to do a much better job at explaining why we can rip them limb from limb out of their mother’s wombs. ... We want to place on a pedestal the ridiculous notion that we are allowing the aged and infirm to “die with dignity”; but the reality is, we are just snuffing out their life because it’s more expedient to do so. Tell me, how is that any different than putting down Old Yeller. (At least with Old Yeller everyone left the theater in tears.) It would be funny if it weren’t so tragic...

Goodness! At least we used to pretend that ending a life, that being the bringer of death, had heavy and weighty consequences for all involved. But now, women are encouraged to “Shout their abortions,” as if there is no shame that covers this whole macabre charade. ... Now, grandma is encouraged to throw a “death party” for her family and friends while she drinks a cocktail of poison that not only steals away her breath, but also robs away her humanity.

When did society start plunging ahead deaf, dumb, and blind without a care in world to the intended or unintended consequences of our actions? “Ethics be damned,” is the new battle cry, followed by the evermore disturbing, “Onward! Forward!” We are so concerned with being able to accomplish something that we never stop to ask if we actually should. ... And so the child is vacuumed away, the mother is ushered out the door with a pocketful of condoms, the medical worker is forced to end a life or lose her job, and the death of the elderly is seen as a common good.

Our government has failed us: from top to bottom, both sides of the aisle. It has failed the shame-covered mother, the conflicted medical worker, the disrespected elder, and the dead baby. ... And so we come here today to demand of the government what we have given to them to do: We demand that they protect the innocent. ... Perhaps they will... I pray that they will... But they probably won't... So then we return home and do what is given us to do: we do for those who can't do for themselves. ... What that looks like, I don't know. It will look different for the state senator than it will for the father of the frightened teenage girl. But, in whatever vocation we find ourselves, it is given us to do no harm to our neighbor in his body. To recognize the humanness of the unborn and sick and elderly and the rights that come with that humanity. To help and support them in every physical need. And that help doesn't include ending their life while claiming that we are doing good.

We speak for the silent. We comfort the guilt-ridden. We bring forgiveness to those covered in shame. We hold our government accountable. We proclaim life, not death. ... Here we stand! We can do no other!

Rev. Eli Lietzau

Something Worth Reading

(All books are available in our church's library or may be borrowed from the pastor)
Holy People Holy Lives: Law and Gospel in Bioethics
By: Richard C. Eyer

As technology increases, so do the number of ethical questions facing God's people. How do we decide between right and wrong when we continue to delve into biological arenas and life issues formerly left only in God's hand?

In east-to-understand language, Holy People, Holy Lives informs readers of the issues and dilemmas of this high-tech age and leads readers through the process of ethical decision-making, incorporating both Law and Gospel. Amid all the question marks, readers are encouraged to focus on God's Story in Christ, and in His Good News to live holy lives.

What We Believe—Augsburg Confession

Article XVIII—Free Will

Note: By the time of the Reformation, the Roman Church had fully developed a false and potentially damning doctrine, one that stated that a person is able, to some degree, to strive for and receive God's mercy. Article XVIII asserts Scripture's teaching that people, apart from God's grace, are wholly incapable of perceiving spiritual things. The longest quote from a Church Father in the Augsburg Confession occurs here. It demonstrates Lutheranism's continuity with the Church catholic—in contrast to Roman error on this doctrine. Augustine echoes the Bible's teaching that while we humans can perform acts of civil righteousness, which may be called "good," spiritually we are evil and enemies of God. However, in Christ, our loving God breaks down the wall of hostility separating us from Him. By His Spirit, through His Word, He gives us Christ's perfect righteousness as a gift. In external, worldly matters we do have the freedom to make decisions according to human reason, but this does not mean, apart from God's grace, that we have similar powers in matters of eternal life. (See also Ap XVIII: FC Ep II and SD II.)

Our churches teach that a person's will has some freedom to choose civil righteousness and to do things subject to reason. It has no power, without the Holy Spirit, to work the righteousness of God, that is, spiritual righteousness. For "natureal person does not accept

the things of the Spirit of God” (1 Corinthians 2:14). This righteousness is worked in the heart when the Holy Spirit is received through the Word (Galatians 3:2-6).

This is what Augustine says in his Hypognosticon, Book III:

We grant that all people have a free will. It is free as far as it has the judgment of reason. This does not mean that it is able, without God, either to begin, or at least to complete, anything that has to do with God. It is free only in words of this life, whether good or evil. Good I call those works that spring from the good in nature, such as willing to labor in the field, to eat and drink, to have a friend, to clothe oneself, to build a house, to marry a wife, to raise cattle, to learn various useful arts, or whatsoever good applies to this life. For all of these things depend on the providence of God. They are from Him and exist through Him. Works that are willing to worship an idol, to commit murder, and so forth, I call evil.

Our churches condemn the Pelagians and others who teach that without the Holy Spirit, by natural power alone, we are able to love God above all things and do God's commandments according to the letter. Although nature is able in a certain way to do the outward work (for it is able to keep the hands from theft and murder), yet it cannot produce the inward motions, such as the fear of God, trust in God, chastity, patience, and so on.



BIBLE STUDY

Join us for Bible Study every Sunday in between Divine Services (10:05am). Currently, we are studying the book of Revelation. If you have not had the chance to join us for Bible Study, and if you are comfortable with gathering together, please use this opportunity to begin fresh with all the rest of us as we delve into this often misunderstood book.



THANK YOU for using the loyalty card: King Soopers has sent us \$396.77 from their Loyalty Card Program for the period October 1st through December 31, 2020. Altogether 29 households participated.





“Be Still”

***Be still and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth. Psalm 46:10***

Rocky Mountain District Mission Grant....

Interns at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, Navajo, NM - \$9,000

Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church in Navajo, New Mexico, has been blessed by summer interns the past two summers and want to continue this ministry. Interns have participated with other volunteer teams from across the country to lead VBS, re-roof the parsonage, and hold sports camps. In 2019, 57 children participated in VBS – that’s 9 more than the previous summer. Without the leadership of interns and volunteers, those needy children would have missed out on this life-changing event. This year the intern program expanded to include Prison Ministry, where the interns witnessed to the inmates by sharing a devotion. This grant will help continue this important ministry.



MITE BOX SUNDAY - FEBRUARY 14

The Mite Box

Based on the Biblical account of the widow’s mite (Luke 21:1–4), the Mite Box is intended for regular contributions of “mites” — offerings above and beyond the support given to the congregation and the Synod. Mite Box contributions amount to millions of dollars that fund district and national mission grants and implement the LWML program.

The Mite Box is available in the narthex for your MITES.

Thank you for your continued support!

Wheat Ridge Evangelical Lutheran Church LWML is beginning 67 years!

The Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) is an official auxiliary of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). It has as its "mission heart" thousands of volunteers who are daily dedicating their lives to making a difference in this world.

A short summary of the Parish Planning Council Meeting:

Just a few items from the Parish Planning Council meeting on Wednesday, February 10, 2021. The Lay Board discussed plans for having soup suppers resume this year for Lent. We are working to resume normal procedures for services including using hymnals and regular bulletins. It was discussed that when, and how we can return to a single service and that we will continue to stream services. Church Relations reported that we will resume having coffee and wrapped snacks in the Narthex between services. An AD Hoc committee will be established to establish procedures for dispersing funds from our non-budget accounts. Meeting minutes will be published.

Sincerely,
Larry Mathews



UPCOMING LENTEN SERVICES:

Ash Wednesday is Wednesday, February 17th
9:15am – Morning Prayer
6:30pm – Divine Service with Communion
The imposition of ashes will be available at both services.

Sunday, February 21st
The First Sunday in Lent
9am and 11am – Divine Service with Communion
10:05am – Bible Study and Sunday School

Wednesday, February 24th
9:15am – Morning Prayer
6:30pm – Divine Service with Communion