



THE SERVANT

The monthly newsletter of Servants of Christ Lutheran Church, a congregation of The North American Lutheran Church serving the Cedar Rapids area

Meeting at Robins City Hall Community Room, 265 South Second St., Robins, Iowa 52328
Worship: 9:00 am; Fellowship & Coffee: 10:00;
Bible Class and Sunday School: 10:15
Ronald Voss, Pastor cell: 563-206-4611; land: 563-682-7359

***** August 2021



Hey God, Can You HEAR Me???????



Dear Servants,

You are listening to the news and you learn that the Supreme Court is going to “hear” thus-and-so case. You know that the Court “hearing” a case has little to do with an auditory capability. “Hearing” a case means that a legal case is going to be studied by nine justices. The “hearing” will include studying the proceedings of the original trial, following the trail of the decision at that original trial through the appeals process, then comparing the carefully studied facts and procedures of that case against the Constitution and precedents of previous decisions. The tedious process will involve the research and minds of many Court aides as well as the discussion among and arguments by the nine justices. What will NOT be “heard” by the Courts are the opinions, wishes, expectations, and demands of the public. Voters who want liberal or conservative justices, voters who want a court that has a liberal or conservative majority, are often dis-even outraged, when “their’ liberal or conservative justices don’t render the expected decision. What the voters so often forget is that a justice, once appointed, focuses on Lady Justice. And if you remember her image, she is blind-folded. And although we can’t see them, perhaps she even has plugs in her ears! Each case “heard” by the Court seeks a decision that is lawful, respectful, focused on the merits of that particular case. Though imperfect, American rely on the wisdom, knowledge, prudence of the nine Court appointees.



Now, before you toss this page aside with a “thanks very much but I’m not looking for a Court review” sigh, let me connect this to prayer. Prayer. We hear about it so much; for many Christians, prayer has been a part of their lives for as long as they can remember. But as I listened to decisions of the Court for 2020-2021 session and the outrage and dismay expressed by both major political parties, I couldn’t help but think of prayer and our attitude, at times, towards God.

We believe what Psalm 66:19 says, "For truly God has listened, He has attended to the voice of my prayer." Sometimes our "interpretation" of this verse is a) God loves us (too many Bible verse to quote); b) God cares for us (He has even numbered the hairs on our head); c) God says to ask anything and He will give it to us; d) THEREFORE since I have *chosen* to believe in Him, when I pray to Him, I will get what I want, when I want it, at the time and in the place where needed. IF I DON'T, has God heard my prayer? Is He really listening to me?



God does listen, He does hear, He does answer. But let's take a quick review of the facts. The Supreme Court is the ultimate court of the land; there is no place else to go, no higher group to render a verdict. But as "supreme" as our nation's court, our God is THE supreme ruler of the universe. He created and sustains/maintains His world. He created us in His image (no higher compliment). Unlike our earthly courts, God's wisdom is perfect; His knowledge is perfect; His power is perfect; His presence is from everlasting to everlasting (no term limits, no death limits for Him). And above all, His love is perfect. "I have loved with you an everlasting love" (Jeremiah 31:3); "I know the plans I have for you...plans to prosper you, to give you hope and a future" (Jeremiah 29:11). So let's remind ourselves that because God is perfect in all ways, He will provide what He knows we need . . . and withhold what we don't. Isaiah 55:9: "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my thoughts and ways higher than yours." We did NOT choose God so He could do our bidding; He chose us (John 15:16) that we might serve and glorify Him.



So, when we turn our eyes to heaven and shake our heads and yell, "Hey God, can you HEAR me?" be assured that He does. Be assured that He only wants the best for you . . . and the best is a personal relationship with Him, to love Him and serve Him, and to spend eternity with Him. Whether God's answer to prayer is "yes", "no", "wait", "here's the alternative", be assured that it is the perfect decision from the Court of Heaven.



Do you hear what I hear? It's the voice of your loving Father answering your prayer.



In Christ's love,
Ron

Pray for the delegates and pastors of the NALC as they meet in Corpus Christi, Texas August 4-6. May their actions build up the body of Christ and further the outreach of our church.

Mission Giving for August

NALC General Fund: \$667 (2021 support for this outreach is \$8,000)

Our 2021 Mission Spending Plan has been expanded to \$24,550, a \$10,000 increase from 2020.

Remember in prayer our missionaries in Madagascar Tsaramana Daniel and Fagnaky Josoa Omena.

The NALC 2020 Vision: a 10-Point Plan

The NALC is a mission-minded, mission committed church.

The following represents a 2020 Vision for the North American Lutheran Church. The development of this Vision has included input from NALC Staff, Executive Council, Mission District Deans, the NALS President and Board of Regents, and other appropriate parties. This was approved by the NALC Convocation this past August.

This plan supports the Four Core Values of the NALC. It also represents the commitments we are striving to accomplish withing the nest four years. By the year 2023, we see . . .

8. A Church body with the financial strength to support its God-given Vision. Immediate Goal: a balanced budget that fully supports the Vision Priorities 2022. Develop a Vision to inspire and expand financial support; reduce and refocus current spending allocations wherever possible; challenge congregations and Mission Districts to increase their financial support b 1% per year for 4 years; consider a “Ten-Year Anniversary Appeal: in 2020 (thankoffering).

The Book of Esther

Study continues in August

An intensely personal look at God’s providence in difficult circumstances, this study will take us through the often overlooked book of Esther to make sense of God’s silence. The author discusses the uncommon features of this fascinating Old Testament book and how they apply to our lives. First, Esther makes no mention of God; second, the book makes no reference to miracles of God. And yet the events recorded there can only be attributed to God, and the books outcome is clearly miraculous.



Plan to attend and marvel how God ordinarily works in our daily circumstances

MISSION

There is a new, free, online magazine called *Celebrating Global Mission*. Four excellent Lutheran mission ministries write the articles and offer guidance in how to make global mission a greater priority in your life and the life of your church. Check it out at www.cgmmag.com.



We have no mission but to serve
In full obedience to our Lord;
To care for all, without reserve,
And spread his liberating Word.

LBW 433, verse 5




 **MISSION ENDOWMENT SUNDAY** 
 Mission Endowment Sunday is the 4th Sunday of each month. Donation envelopes will be in the bulletin **August 22**. Use the envelope any time, including as a memorial gift or to honor a special occasion. 
         
         



This newsletter page is about mission—spreading the good news of Jesus Christ. That happens when we invite locally, when we pray, when we give. Mission and Money are partners. Invite frequently, pray constantly, give generously.



Review the enclosed giving grid. Does your financial giving reflect first fruits giving? Is Christ and the Church first in your budget?

Something to think about.



Ongoing thanks to Mary Collins for her commitment to providing us flowers to enhance our worship.

ON-LINE SERMONS!

Our bi-monthly brunch will be August 29. Following the meal we will assemble our school kits. Items to be purchased are listed on the enclosed NALC Disaster Response sheet.

August Servants



Greeter/Usher: Lyle Gerdemann

Communion Assistant: David Hosch

Snacks:

**August 1—Mary Collins

**August 8—Linda Drake

**August 15—Judy Waugh

**August 22—Rhonda

Achenbach

**August 29—Brunch:

Flowers: Mary Collins

A big thank you to Tami Gerdemann and Ray Collins who are working together to weekly post Sunday's sermons on-line. Our hope is that people visiting our webpage will listen to the sermon and find Biblical strength for their daily lives. Might even encourage them to visit us!

Legacy Gifts Matter!

Prayerfully consider including the North American Lutheran Church and/or the Seminary in your will or estate planning. Pass on the love of Jesus to future generations.

Ron Voss, Lenore Heckart, and Cliff Waugh rotate leading worship at Emory Place each Tuesday at 2:00 pm. Attendance varies from 4-15. This service is a blessing to residents who are no longer able to attend their own churches.

Please join us some Tuesday. A specific way to reach out with love and