

LIFELINES



LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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God Is in Control

I have a confession to make: I'm a news junkie. My main interest is in news and politics. I read news websites on a regular basis to find out what's going on in the world. For the most part, I think this is a harmless addiction, in fact, one could argue that staying well-informed is a duty for responsible citizens. But here's the problem, and it has to do with the way the news is reported: turn on the nightly news or scan the headlines and what you see is not good. What you see is scandal and tragedy, death and calamity, with the underlying implication that the whole world is falling apart! And when it is an election year, we also have the added noise of each side doing everything they can to tear down the other in an attempt to whip up fears about how awful it will be if their opponent is elected. Such is the world of news and politics.

If you spend a lot of time in this world, you can easily find yourself getting anxious over the sad state of the world. You start to believe the hype and suspect it might be as bad as they say. After all, when all you see and hear is bad news and threats from politicians of how it is only going to get worse, well, what else would you conclude? So in light of this, let me share a simple lesson from the prophet Elijah, as recorded in 1st Kings.

Elijah was a prophet of Israel at a time of rampant unfaithfulness, a time, you might say, not unlike ours. The people had abandoned their exclusive devotion to the Lord and made alliances with the Gentile nations around them. Talk about an upsetting political situation, Ahab, the King of Israel, married the evil princess Jezebel of Sidonia. As his queen, she proceeded to influence him and even got Ahab to introduce Baal worship in Israel.

In spite of the unfaithfulness all around, Elijah remained faithful. He stood fast against the ungodly culture. At one point, he even challenged many prophets of Baal to a memorable "prophet's duel" at Mount Carmel (chap. 18). Elijah humiliated the false prophets of Baal when the Lord sent down fire from heaven to consume the sacrifice Elijah offered, and in the aftermath of the contest, hundreds of false prophets were put to death. Surely, Elijah would be elated at the new development! Now Israel would turn back to the Lord. After this stunning victory, a renewal of faithfulness would spread throughout Israel. The Lord had shown His strength, now faithful Israelites would have nothing to fear! ... Or so you would think, but this is not what happened.

When Jezebel heard what happened to the prophets of Baal at Mt. Carmel, she sent Elijah a note threatening to do the same to him. And what did this great prophet of the Lord do? Did he laugh at the thought that this heathen whose prophets had just been slaughtered could possibly hurt him? Did he renew his faith and pray ever more earnestly for the Lord to display his power against the wicked? No, sadly Elijah did nothing of the sort. Rather than continue to stand firm, this great prophet was afraid and fled for his life. He ran for a day, then exhausted, prayed to God to take his life, but instead, God gave him food to sustain him for 40 days until he reached Mt. Horeb. There, he spoke to the Lord and complained. Saying: *"I have been very*

jealous for the Lord, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away.” (19:10) His words to the Lord are whiney and weak and display an utter lack of trust.

While God could have chastised Elijah for being a grumbler, instead, the Lord spoke words of assurance. Saying, *“Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus. And when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael to be king over Syria. And Jehu the son of Nimshi you shall anoint to be king over Israel, and Elisha ... you shall anoint to be prophet in your place. And the one who escapes from the sword of Hazael shall Jehu put to death, and the one who escapes from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha put to death. Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.” (1 Kings 19:15-18 ESV)*

The Lord assured Elijah that despite what Elijah thought he knew, the Lord knew better. He knew that in spite of all the unfaithfulness, Elijah was not the only faithful one left. Far from it! God reserved for himself 7,000 in Israel who had not bowed down to Baal. Further, despite Elijah’s complaints that the kingdom was overrun with corrupt and wicked officials, The Lord God informed Elijah that he was to go and appoint new kings and rulers and a new prophet to replace him, with the promise that these men would continue to clean up the mess in Israel. In other words, God told Elijah what he already knew, yet somehow forgot: The Lord is in control.

It seems like a simple lesson and it is, but what Elijah forgot, I too forget from time to time and perhaps you do as well as you look around at the decline in faithfulness, the decaying culture, the rampant paganism, the corrupt and unfaithful public officials and the endless fear-mongering you hear on TV. It’s easy to get caught up in all the hype. But despite all of this noise, rest assured, God is still in control. The earth is His and

everything in it. He directs it and guides it and He will not let the whole thing fall apart. And while wickedness may increase and kingdoms and nations may fall, nevertheless, the Lord and His faithful will never cease to be in the world—Christ even promised the gates of hell would not prevail against His Church. And what’s more, believers in Jesus also know that one day He will bring about an end to all wickedness and He will make right every injustice. We know that we will also join in the triumph of Christ and live in the new heaven and earth.

In conclusion, let me leave you again with this simple truth. I know you have heard it many times before, but it is also something that we can all be reminded of from time to time: GOD IS IN CONTROL.

PrS



I was overwhelmed by all the kind words, lovely cards, and gifts given for “Pastor Appreciation Month.” Thank you very much! It is my privilege to serve as your pastor.



prepare for worship in november

November 5: All Saints' Day

Texts: Rev. 7:(2-8) 9-17 1 John 3:1-3 Matt. 5:1-12

Hymn of the Day: "For All the Saints," 677

November 12: Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Amos 5:18-24 1 Thess. 4:13-18 Matt. 25:1-13

Hymn of the Day: "Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying," 516

November 19: Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Zeph. 1:7-16 1 Thess. 5:1-11 Matt. 25:14-30

Hymn of the Day: "The Day Is Surely Drawing Near," 508

Nov. 22: Thanksgiving Eve, 7 PM

Texts: Deut. 8:1-10 Phil. 4:6-20 or 1 Tim. 2:1-4

Luke 17:11-19

Hymn of the Day: "We Praise You, O God," 785

November 26: Last Sunday of the Church Year

Texts Ezek. 34:11-16, 20-24 1 Cor. 15:20-28 Matt. 25:31-46

Hymn of the Day: "The Head That Once Was Crowned with Thorns," 940



November 5th at 5:00 pm.

Coffee With Skeptics - Learn how to begin conversations with skeptics and unbelievers, what tactics we can use to share our faith, and ultimately how to comfort those who are lost with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Erick Sorensen is host of the Law & Gospel Devotional, co-host of the 30 Minutes in the New Testament and Field Guide to the Bible podcasts and is co-author of Scandalous Stories: A Sort of Commentary on the Parables.

Light snacks and refreshments will be provided.

Here is a link if you want to know more about Erick and the work he does.

<https://www.1517.org/contributors/erick-sorensen>



Give Thanks with a Grateful Heart!

Our Father in heaven has claimed us as His own. By the shedding of His Son's blood, by His death for our sins and His resurrection for our justification, God the Father has received us back into His family. By water combined with His Word, promise and name, the Holy Spirit has taken up residence in us. We belong to Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He is in us, and we are in Him. And being in Him, all things are ours. In Him, we are richly and abundantly blessed.

Our true treasure and wealth is that we belong to the most holy Trinity and everything that is His belongs also to us: righteousness, peace, eternal life. Even our temporal treasures are gifts from His fatherly, divine goodness and mercy.

We receive our treasures from Him, and thus, as good stewards of His varied grace, we manage them in such a way that they may be returned to Him. We bring them to Him, hallowed through prayers of thanksgiving and God's Holy Word, as a sacrifice. Thus all our possessions, as gifts from God, are also sacrifices to Him, from which we eat to nourish our bodies and share with our family, neighbors and fellow Christians, with the poor and even our enemies, as holy things given by our holy God. His temporal gifts are blessings to and for us, and bring blessing upon us even as they are pressed into His service for His kingdom and the souls that receive them.

Thus we place all that we have into God's hands. He never fails to remember us and pours out the fullness of His promises upon us. We give thanks for all that He has done, is doing and will continue to do. We give thanks by not taking for ourselves, but giving to all even as our heavenly Father has given to us.



As we prepare for Thanksgiving celebrations, may we all give thanks continually for all that we are and all that we have because of God's providential care. And may we be all the more diligent in bringing everything that we have received from God to Him, so that He may bless it and employ it for the good of all — even for us. For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance.

Lord of Life Small Groups

EPIC PARENTING

- † For 30ish couples with kids
- † For info contact Ben Scarth
BenjaminScarth@yahoo.com
- † Usually meet one Sunday a month in the afternoon or evening

FRUITS OF THE VINE CARE GROUP

- † For info contact Scott Peters at 972-898-3351 cell or speters@planolutheran.com
- † Usually meet one Sun. a month at 5:30 PM

GOOD NEWS CARE GROUP

- † For info contact Mike Kunschke at (847) 951-6974
- † Will meet Sat., November 11 at 6:30 PM for Bible study

COLLEGE GROUP

- † For students in college or recent grads
- † For info contact Pastor Shaltanis at PastorShaltanis@yahoo.com
- † Usually meet after the late service for lunch and Bible study



Thank you to everyone who brought meals after the birth of our son TJ! It was such a blessing for our family as we grew to a family of four. A special thanks to Jessica Reeves for organizing! —AJ, Tasie, Hannah, and TJ



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

- 1 Duncan Bennett
- 3 Jeff Loewecke
- 3 Sara Tweedie
- 6 Hannah Kade
- 9 Jacob Hacker
- 9 Brooke Wilkerson
- 13 Ken Tabor
- 21 Stephani Cramer
- 21 Al Martin
- 22 Linda Delzer
- 24 Tom Ashburn
- 24 Dick Hemingway
- 25 Melissa Kunschke
- 26 Evelyn Buckmeier
- 28 Russ Wilkerson
- 28 Al & Norma Martin (66)
- 30 Arlene McDuffee
- 30 Haley Moore
- 30 Arlene Munden



Every year we collect names and wish lists from Expansion Mission Network church plants. These LCMS church plants are across our Metroplex area, connecting with the Hispanic community, and are able to see first-hand the families that are in need. This year, they have adopted families from Dallas, Rockwall and Carrollton. Watch for our tree going up soon and *Thank You* for sponsoring a child.

Lord of Life Lutheran Church
Summarized Statement of Activity
9 Months Ending September 30, 2023

	Y-T-D Operating Funds	Y-T-D Budget	Variance	Jan-Dec 2023 Budget
Contributions				
Regular Offerings	\$426,574	\$417,018	\$9,557	\$560,692
Other	\$398	\$0	\$398	\$0
Total Income	\$426,972	\$417,018	\$9,954	\$560,692
Expenses				
Benevolences	\$29,738	\$29,191	\$547	\$39,248
Elders	\$285,449	\$289,728	(\$4,279)	\$386,297
Education	\$35	\$750	(\$715)	\$1,000
Outreach	\$245	\$450	(\$205)	\$600
Office Expenses	\$9,182	\$9,255	(\$73)	\$12,090
Utilities	\$29,275	\$26,380	\$2,895	\$33,415
Property Maintenance	\$32,897	\$21,530	\$11,367	\$34,440
Stewardship	\$0	\$350	(\$350)	\$350
Family Ministries	\$991	\$3,490	(\$2,499)	\$5,290
Youth Board	\$5,686	\$5,300	\$386	\$6,100
Children's Ministry	\$2,670	\$5,150	(\$2,480)	\$6,700
Admin Council	\$1,488	\$1,950	(\$462)	\$2,600
Total Operating Expense	\$397,656	\$393,524	\$4,132	\$528,131
Extraordinary Expense	\$2,435		\$2,435	
Mortgage Payment	\$12,036	\$23,220	(\$11,184)	\$30,960
Total Expenses	\$412,127	\$416,744	(\$4,617)	\$559,091
Surplus or (Deficit)	\$14,845	\$274	\$14,571	\$1,601
Other Information:				
Operating Fund Balance	\$137,201			
Restricted Funds Balance	\$129,466			