

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ!

As we continue together down this new and unknown road of being the church from a distance, one of the biggest challenges I and our other leaders face is how to best communicate. Praise God for the technology we have, because it allows us to communicate during this time. However, each medium provides challenges-- not only how do you best use that medium, but how you can share a message with as many people as possible.

Today I am trying a "Newsemail," which will feature a devotion and information. I'm going to try it today and then we'll go from there. Sorry-- I don't have graphics in here.

Please read this newsemail carefully. There are a few opportunities to respond. Please make sure you respond to the correct person so we don't lose your response.

DEVOTION:

Hebrews 12:2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

I've always loved this passage, which encourages us to stay focused on our Savior, who endured the cross for us so that we could have forgiveness of sins, eternal life and strength for today. Oh, ho we need strength for today!

Our text also reminds us that Jesus not only created (on the cross) a chance for us to be right with God through faith in Him, but he "perfects" our faith. Although we will never be perfect followers of Jesus because of our sinful nature, the Holy Spirit grows us through God's Word and Sacraments (Baptism and Communion.) The more we fix our eyes on Jesus, the more the Holy Spirit grows us.

I pray you take opportunities to fix your eyes on Jesus. May God's peace surround you and your family!

QUESTION (I encourage you to discuss this question with others):

How can you fix your eyes on Jesus during this time? What are some things you can do? What are some things you can avoid or eliminate because they're taking your focus off of your Savior?

21 DAYS TOGETHER

A group of LCMS pastors have put together a site (along with Facebook and Instagram pages) that intends to bring prayer, hope, encouragement and action during this time. It includes a family devotion.

www.21daystogether.com

WORSHIP.

We will have one livestream worship service this Sunday at 9:30. Please join us and invite others! Our Sunday School Director, Emily Clark, will be giving a children's message.

As we navigate online worship, we will tweak some things that we typically do in worship. We will try to be interactive. And we will vary the type of music we have.

Over the next few weeks, we are trying to play as many familiar songs that our members love to sing. Do you have a suggestion? PLEASE RESPOND TO THIS E-MAIL

Did you miss Wednesday's service? You can find it on our website.

CONTACTING MEMBERS

We almost have a plan in place on how to reach out to all families. If you would like to help make calls, please e-mail Julie Schmid at jschmid@abidingsaviorlutheran.org.

Do you have a need that we can help with (getting prescriptions, etc.?) We want to be the church for you! Please e-mail Julie Schmid at above address.

COMMUNION

We are in the process of figuring out how to provide communion for those who desire it during this time.

The first step of this process is to discover how many members desire to take communion,

If you would like you and your family to take communion, please e-mail our Head Elder, Kevin Kohm, at klkohm@charter.net. Please let him know how many.

RICHARD WALDEN ARRANGEMENTS (My Bonus Dad)

There will be a graveside service this Wednesday (March 25) in Bloomington and a memorial service on Saturday (March 28.) Because of the pandemic, both have attendance limits: 15 for graveside and 50 for memorial service. Also, please lift me in prayer as I will be officiating the graveside service.

CARD VISITATION:

Since we are unable to have a typical visitation, I am coordinating a Card Visitation. Whether you know my Mom or not, would you send her a card?

If you knew Dick, please share a memory.

You could share a Scripture passage or other words of encouragement.

My Mom loves cards and this would be a huge boost. Losing your husband is devastating enough, but to mourn in near isolation is another blow.

Why do I call Dick my Bonus Dad? Because I've known him all my life. He was my Dad's best friend before Dad met Mom. His wife was my Mom's best friend before she met Dick. Our families did everything together. They were like second parents to me. Pat died in 1998. My Dad died in 2002. And yada yada yada, Mom and Dick married in 2003. When my Dad passed away, my heart broke because my boys lost their grandpa. But God provided a phenomenal grandpa through Dick. And for that I am forever grateful.

Here's Mom's address:

17443 N. 2100 East Rd.

Towanda, IL 61776

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That's all for now. I intend to send another one in the next few days.

God's richest blessings to you and your family!

In Christ's hope,

Pastor David