



Week Five; April 20-26
Theme: Provision

God's Everlasting Love

³¹ What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² **He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?** ³³ Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ³⁶ As it is written,

*“For your sake we are being killed all the day long;
we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”*

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Devotion from Rev. Don Johnson, Executive Director, Lutheran Indian Ministries

We have two natures. One born of sin as a result of our connection with our earthly parents, Adam and Eve. It is earthly, it is flawed, and it will die. Then there is our Divine connection with God, who because of the sending of Jesus, means we are eternal. We take on an eternal nature because God in Christ has reconciled us to Himself.

This is so profound. How is it that God would love us so much that He would send His son to die a horrific death on the cross? And why would He do this while knowing from before the foundations of the world that we would reject Him?

That, however, is Divine love. That is how God commends His love towards us even while we reject, spite, and ignore Him. And so, the question is, “How will He not, with Jesus, freely give us all things?” God’s graciousness ever abounds to every one of us no matter our life circumstances, no matter how we feel or whatever may be our current state. The evidence is in what He has done in sacrificing Jesus for us.

While this unfathomable love of God is beyond our human comprehension, we can find comfort and assurance knowing that God intends good for us and freely offers to meet our temporal and eternal needs.

If God so loves us, may we in turn, through His grace manifest in our lives, demonstrate that same love to our neighbor and even those who may spitefully use us. This kind of love is unnatural, unusual, and unfathomable. It is a reflection of the Divine.

Gracious Heavenly Father,

We give You thanks and praise for sending Your Son Jesus to save us. Grant us the confident assurance that through Him You will freely provide all that we need so that we might in turn love others as You love us. In Jesus name, Amen.

Prayer suggestions – You can use these or lift up your own. We encourage you to pray these prayers each day. In addition, we urge you to add the names of those printed at the bottom of the page. These are individuals connected in some way to the ministries of Berea and Agape Hill. If you would like someone added to the list, make sure they approve having their name included and email the information to Pastor Jeff.

Monday – Shelter: Dear Heavenly Father in these challenging times we know there are many who will not be able to afford their rent or house payments. Where will they live and what will they do? We pray that you and your Holy Word guide us to know that all we have is under the wings of Your divine protection, "He who dwells in the shadow of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. May our prayer always be, My refuge and my fortress, my God in whom I trust." Psalm 91:1-2 We pray this in the Savior in whom we trust. Amen

**Consider how the birds above Feed day by day with care-free ease
Does God not keep them in His love? Are we not worth much more than these?**

LSB 736:1

Tuesday – Food and Clothing: Glorious creator God, You are the creator of all the earth; the animals, magnificent flowers and the growth of fertile fields of food. You know all there is to know about us and You know what we need. "I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows full well." Psalm 139:14 "The Lord upholds all who are falling and rises up all who are bowed down. The eyes of all look to you, and you give them food in due season. You open your hand; you satisfy the desire of every living thing. The Lord is righteous in all his ways and kind in all his works. The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. He fulfills the desires of all who fear him; he also hears their cry and saves them." Psalm 145:14-19. Lord, may we trust that You will provide for the needs of us and all Your creation. We pray this in the confidence of faith provided by Your Spirit and in the powerful name of Your Son, our Savior Jesus. Amen.

**The lilies grow, they do not toil; How fair is their fragility
If God clothes these, which quickly spoil, will He not clothe both you and me? LSB 736**

Wednesday – Work: Gracious Lord, there are many who currently have no work to provide for their family due to this plague of coronavirus. We are confident in Your abiding love and that no matter what we face at this time you are greater. Help us remember your words of Your Son, "Do not labor for food that perishes, but for the food that endures eternal life, which the son of man will give to you." John 6:27 "I will give you the treasure of darkness," He whispered, "riches stored in secret places, so that you may know that I am the Lord, the God of Israel, who summons you by name." Isaiah 45:3 We pray along with Katie Davis Majors in Daring to Hope who said "He summoned me. He called me to come find rest in Him alone. Why had I believed my whole life that ease and success, gifts and miracles, smiling faces and my plans fulfilled, meant the Lord's blessing and favor? The blessings also abound in the darkest night and the deepest valley if we have eyes to see them." Lord help us to see and trust in you. Provide opportunities according to Your will for those in need to return to gainful employment. Replace their fears with Your gracious peace, found only in our Savior, the Prince of Peace. Amen

***Set not your heart on food or drink, nor be weighed down by worldly care;
About such things the godless think, yet never thank the Lord in prayer.***

LSB 736:3

Thursday – Finances: Father what are we to do? How will we pay our bills? Holy One, where are you in this mess? We are confident that You are in control, we trust in the inexplicable reality that you are here right beside us and will be our guide. We find our confidence in the words of our Redeemer, "Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me," John 14:1 and also, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For wherever your treasure is there your heart will be also." Matthew 6:19-21. We pray for a peaceful and confident trust that You will provide in Your great and perfect timing. Ease our minds. Keep us steadfast in our faith as we wait upon You. In the name of our Savior Jesus. Amen.

***Be on your guard against all greed, for life is more than what we own.
Our Father knows our every need before our needs to us are known.***

LSB 736:4

Friday – Sharing Our Provision: All good gifts are from you Gracious Father. May we always look to share the gifts and provision you have given to us. Help us remember to share our time, talents, and all the treasure You provide, to encourage one another and be content in all situations as the Apostle Paul teaches us. We trust in Jesus' words, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst." John 6:35 We pray this in our mighty Savior, who gave His life for us and we ask of You to lead us as your dear children to provide for those in need with thankful and joyous hearts. Amen.

***Be not afraid to suffer loss of all the things for which you pray,
For He who faced for you the cross will give you strength to live each day.***

LSB 736:5

Saturday – Our Father Knows Our Needs: Triune God, You and You alone are all we need for our temporal and eternal life. Give us this day our daily bread. We pray with Luther that "Daily bread includes everything that has to do with the support and needs of the body, such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, land, animals, money, goods, a devout husband or wife, devout children, devout workers, devout and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, self-control, good reputation, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like." Your inspired words of Solomon teach us to, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths." Proverbs 3:5-6 We lay all our concerns, needs, and hopes at the foot of Your Son's cross and we place our trust in You, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to provide all we need at the appropriate time. In Jesus' name. Amen.

***Seek first God's reign, His boundless grace, His holy name in all you do;
Christ first and last in ev'ry place; all else will then be given you.***

LSB 736:6

Lord's Prayer: *Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.*

***Come my soul, with ev'ry care, Jesus loves to answer prayer;
He Himself has bid thee pray, therefore will not turn away.***

***Thou art coming to a King, large petitions with thee bring,
For His grace and pow'r are such, none can ever ask too much.***

***With my burden I begin; Lord remove this load of sin.
Let Thy blood, for sinners spilt, set my conscience free from guilt.***

***Lord, Thy rest to me impart, take possession of my heart;
There Thy blood-bought right maintain and without a rival reign.***

***While I am a pilgrim here, let Thy love my spirit cheer;
As my guide, my guard, my friend, lead me to my journey's end.***

***Show me what is mine to do; ev'ry hour my strength renew,
Let me live a life of faith; Let me die Thy people's death.***

LSB 779

Some wise advice for this time of quarantine...

Did you realize that humans are the only creatures that God gave the ability to cry and to laugh? When we cry we are able to cleanse the pain and challenges of life. Laughter lightens our day and can change our perspective. Science has studied how laughter can help reduce stress hormone levels, works facial and abdominal muscles and can distract our focus away from anger and negative emotions. Our God always provides!

*Parish Nurse **Joanie Kolton**, Family Connections Director*

PRAYER REQUESTS as of the date of the printing: *Welcome! It is not by accident that our Lord has led us here to this moment. We pray with you for His guidance and encouragement as we strive to be His disciples and share the message of salvation with others. Amen.*

Cancer: ***Carol Spatzek**, breast, **Judy Branson**, breast, **Tom Brueckner**, prostate, **Julia Grau**, granddaughter of Chet & Marge Grau, eye, **Eli Kessler**, great nephew of the Heckerts, leukemia, **Kathy Schmid**, aunt of Robin Mueller, liver, **Randy Clinard**, former Berea member, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, **Gordy Fabry**, cousin of Pastor Jeff, **Sharon Beay**, step-sister of Ray Leidy, eye melanoma, **Ron Schroeder**, former member, Stem-cell transplant T-Cell lymphoma, **Diane**, friend of Shannon Biedenbender (former member), lung,*

Sympathy: *Family of **Carol Timme**, who entered eternal life on April 15.*

Hospice: ***Linda**, Dearest friend of Sally Goelz (Agape Hill), brain tumor/cancer, **Bill Schoeller** one of our Luther Manor bible study and church regulars, Luther Manor*

Rehabilitation: ***Lorraine Biang**, Luther Manor, fall, **George DeJarlais**, Terry's husband, heart surgery, home*

Ongoing needs: ***Maxine Dudley**, severe back pains, **Lane Branson**, multiple health challenges, **Lavonne Biedenbender**, multiple health concerns, **Steve Biedenbender**, lung disease, **Henry Klaves**, epilepsy, **Irm Tewes**, Luther Manor Monday attendee, severe and continuous pain, **Mady**, daughter of Megan Wylie's friend, torn ACL, **Shirley McMahan**, Aunt of Robin Mueller, transferred to Brookdale Memory Care*

Homebound: ***Rev. Richard Borchers**, Lutheran Home, **Dorothy Britton** Brookdale Assisted Living, **Rose Eisner** Home, **Elinor Heitman** Harwood Place,*

Birthdays: *4/23 **Erica Britton***

Anniversaries: *4/25 **Dave and Tammy VanderWoude***

If there are any additional names you would like to see added to our prayer list or if we have forgotten someone, please email Pastor Jeff at jmueller47@yahoo.com