



THANK YOU

the word

November 2017 | Monthly News from Crown of Life Church

Mark Your Calendar

11/3
Pioneer Boys Fall Sleep Over
11/4
Adopt-A-Highway
11/5
DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ENDS
11/8 -11/9-11/12
Book Fair
11/9
Early Dismissal 11:30 am
Parent/Teacher Conferences
11/10
NO SCHOOL
11/15
Chick-fil-A Spirit Night
11/16
Pioneers Meeting
11/22
Early Dismissal 11:30 am
11/23
Thanksgiving Day - NO SCHOOL
11/24
Thanksgiving Break - NO SCHOOL
11/28
Blood Drive - WSP
11/30
Pioneers Meeting

The Attitude of True Gratitude

BY PASTOR ZACHARY PUDLO

The holiday season is upon us. It is a season of giving thanks. As we prepare our checkbooks for the upcoming expenses, it is worth the time to prepare our hearts as well for the continued blessings from our Lord. Whether you believe it or not, every one of us has reasons to be thankful. But the attitude of thanksgiving isn't always in our hearts. So let's examine our attitudes and consider true gratitude.

Defining and Examining Gratitude

Gratitude is an attitude that flows from the acknowledgment of blessings. Consider the parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector from Luke 18. **"The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people – robbers, evildoers, adulterers – or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'"**

Tim Keller posted this on his Facebook page on Thanksgiving a couple years ago. **"It's one thing to be grateful. It's another to give thanks. Gratitude is what you feel. Thanksgiving is what you do."** What's his point? True gratitude leads to action. It leads to living and active generosity.

The Pharisee certainly had an attitude of gratitude. He acknowledged the blessings in his life and publicly gave thanks to God for them all. His gratitude even led to active generosity. He fasted and gave 10% of his income back to the Lord. That's living active generosity.

continued

However, look closely at the real motivation and attitude behind this Pharisees' gratitude. Why is it that the tax collector was actively generous? Why did he fast and give 10% of all he owned? Was it because of true gratitude? No. He was only outwardly showing gratitude and generosity because he had something to gain from it all. He is an example of a person who outwardly was generous, but inwardly was extremely tight with his money. He only gave because he got something out of it. A sign of true gratitude is a person who gives and gets nothing out of it. Jesus says it this way in Matthew 6, **"So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret."**

The Source of Gratitude

A sign that a person's gratitude is not selfishly motivated is when someone gives with no expectation of recognition from others. That's not an easy thing to do. How do we foster that kind of selfless attitude? Consider the other man in the parable. **"But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'"**

The tax collector had an understanding of his place before God. In the Old Testament Ceremonial law the Israelites weren't allowed into the presence of God in the Most Holy place in the Temple. Their sins had separated them from the presence of a holy God. But on Yom Kippur the High Priest was allowed to enter that place. Why? When he came into the Temple, there was a covering on the Ark called the Mercy Seat. On that Mercy Seat the payment for sins was placed in the form of the blood of a sacrifice. It was the blood of a sacrifice that made this High Priest worthy to be in the presence of God. Ultimately, the blood on the mercy seat saved the High Priest's life. The tax collector knew it was mercy alone that would save his life.

If any person showed you the same lack of gratitude that you and I show to God, you would cast them out of your lives forever. That's why the ultimate show of God's mercy was on the cross. He doesn't cast us onto the cross. He doesn't make us shed blood. Instead, God himself goes on the cross. Jesus sheds the blood needed to make us worthy to come into the presence of God. He doesn't give us what we deserve. He gives us the opposite. That's where true gratitude starts. It stems from knowing what we deserve



NEW BIBLE STUDY!

Reformation: Grace, Faith, Scripture

In honor of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation, our Synod helped produce the film, *A Return to Grace: Luther's Life and Legacy*. As we view clips from the film, we will deepen our understanding of Reformation history and connect with what our church believes, teaches, and practices today.

SUNDAYS | 9:30 WSP & 10:30 EAGAN

Join Us! All are welcome!

by nature, and what God gives us instead. By nature we deserve hell, but God gives us heaven instead.

Fostering Gratitude

One of the phrases I underlined in a book I recently read called *Jesus Among Secular Gods*, was "The problem is... that we have lost the ability to disagree well." The author is getting at the pride in people's hearts that keeps them from seeing and admitting to their failures. The Pharisee in Luke 18 had pride, but he wasn't able to see it. It's no easy task to recognize pride in your own heart. Proverbs 20:5 says just that, **"The purposes of a person's heart are deep waters, but one who has insight draws them out."**

Take time each day to search your own hearts. If you give, why do you give? If you serve, why do you serve? If you are generous, what motivates you? The truth might hurt. But if the truth reveals any selfishly motivated gratitude, know this...you can take your failures to the mercy seat of God and find unconditional love and forgiveness in the blood of Christ. His blood alone can foster true selfless gratitude and thanksgiving. **"Gratitude is what you feel. Thanksgiving is what you do."** May the blood of Jesus give you a feeling of true gratitude, and lead to acts of thanksgiving.

Many Paths, Same Destination?

October 28, 2017 | PASTOR ZACHARY PUDLO

Perhaps you've heard someone say it before..."There are many paths to God." This is a Pluralist ideal. One of the cries of secular America is the cry to be inclusive to people of all faiths and beliefs. And anyone who claims there is only one path to God, that there is only one true faith, such a person is arrogant and close-minded. Behind these Pluralist ideas there is both good intentions, and at the same time, exclusive rationality. What follows is an examination of both.

Good Intentions

Behind this "many paths, same destination" idea there are good intentions. The intention is to give equality to all people. Every person should have equal value and equal opportunity to get to the destination of heaven. That motivation for equality for everyone is admirable.

As a Christian it would be hard for me to not admit that Christians haven't always done the best job of being inclusive. Religions in general haven't been the solution to peace on earth. And while I sometimes shudder to think about ways that I myself have given Christianity a bad name and have failed to show inclusive love to some people, I also don't want to turn a blind eye towards the immense good that Christianity has caused in the world (more on that later).

So what do we take away from the fact that there has been so much good and so much bad done in the name of Christianity? Before we answer this question, let's take a look at the exclusivity behind the good intentions of the "many paths, same destination" claim.

Exclusive Rationality

A few of the underlying thoughts behind this "many paths, same destination" claim are actually quite exclusive when investigated. One of the underlying thoughts is that fundamentally all religions teach the same thing. That couldn't be any further from the truth. Just take the two largest religions in the world as an example. In Islam, Allah only reserves love for those who "do good" (Sura 2:195, 3:134, 148, 5:93). Therefore, if you don't fight for Allah, you will not be loved by him. In fact, there are groups of people that the Koran says Allah does not love.

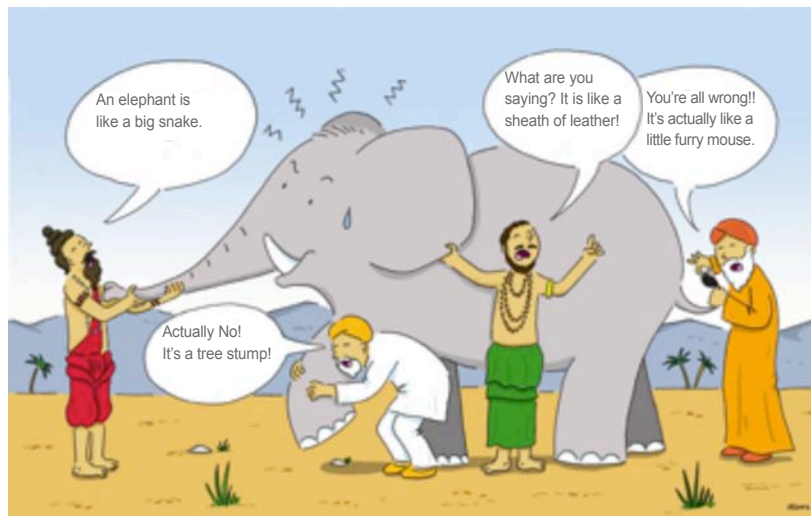
In Christianity, God is love (1 John 4:16). Jesus shows love to everyone, including those who don't "do good"...the prostitute in John 8, the thief on the cross in Luke 23, the crooked tax collector named Zacchaeus in Luke 19.

What's the point? Christianity is fundamentally different from Islam and every other major religion. How so? In every major religion, the love of God has to be earned through moral conformity. In Christianity, the order is reversed. God loves us even before we conform. Even more, God loves us and died for us before we even showed an ounce of love to him.

That's only one difference between Christianity and other religions. We could go on to evaluate the differences in many other areas as well including, where we go after death, how we get there, how to show love to others and many more. And if we were to evaluate each of those as well, we

would notice not just minor differences, but large-scale fundamental differences. To say that all paths lead to the same God is being very dismissive of the claims of each religion.

Pluralists also tend to claim that each religion sees only part of reality. The metaphor some Pluralists use to describe the different religions trying to grasp reality is the metaphor of a group of blind men feeling



the different parts of an elephant. Each one describes it differently because each one is feeling a different part of the elephant. That's what many Pluralists will claim about all the different religions. Each religion has only a partial grasp of the entire spiritual picture. The issue with this, however, is that the Pluralist is claiming to have the vision to see the entire picture of spiritual reality.

On its surface it seems inclusive to say that all paths lead to the same place. But upon further examination, it isn't respectful of the claims of each individual religion. Furthermore, this claim is extremely exclusive in its claim to have the vision to see all of spiritual reality.

Many Paths, Same Destination?... continued on page 4

An Inclusive Alternative

There are many things that make Christianity unique when compared to other religions, but one difference that seems to significantly stand out is its inclusivity. On its surface it seems exclusive. Jesus himself stated, "I am the way and the truth and the life." (John 14:6) Many have certainly noted how exclusive sounding that is. Oprah Winfrey has said on multiple occasions, "Jesus can't be the only way." While on the surface Christianity may seem exclusive, a further investigation points in the opposite direction. We will see how Christianity is inclusive not only from an historical perspective, but also from a Biblical perspective.

Historically, one could point to the fact that Christianity has been the most inclusive of all religions. Christianity has done more for civil rights than all the other religions combined. Consider how the early Christian church is responsible for the change in how women were viewed. In Roman times women were little more than property. But one of the main teachings of Christianity is the teaching that God has made each person unique and for a purpose. Historically, Christianity has done more for women's rights than the feminist movement ever has.

Christianity is also responsible for some of the greatest acts of selfless love recorded in history. Julian the Apostate complained that the Christian Church kept growing because of its care for the poor. He writes, "...it is disgraceful when no Jew is a beggar and the impious Galileans support our poor in addition to their own, that ours are seen to be in want of aid from us... Do not, therefore, let us allow others to outvie us in good deeds, while we ourselves are disgraced by sloth." The Christians were giving so much support to the poor of every tribe and culture that the Romans looked to be slothful in comparison to them.

It is maybe even more notable to consider the care of Christians for the sick. During the plagues of the first few centuries, Christians were the ones to step up and care for those who had no one to care for them. Bishop Dionysius recorded,

"Most of our brother Christians showed unbounded love and loyalty, never sparing themselves and thinking only of one another. Heedless of danger, they took charge of the sick, attending to their every need and ministering to them in Christ, and with them departed this life serenely

happy; for they were infected by others with the disease, drawing on themselves the sickness of their neighbors and cheerfully accepting their pains. Many, in nursing and curing others, transferred their death to themselves and died in their stead."

Many Christians were so willing to care for the sick and dying that they themselves became infected with the plagues and died. Finally, it was the Christian truths that influenced some of the more recent acts of inclusivity. Just consider the Christian influence behind the abolition of slavery, the civil rights movement, or even more recently, the Ebola Fighters being named Time Magazine's 2014 Person of the Year.



Historically, Christianity has been the most inclusive religion in history, showing no favoritism based on age, race or gender and even risking security for the well-being of others. The reason for this inclusivity has its roots in the Bible. The reader could just look back to earlier in this post where Jesus shows love and forgiveness to the prostitute, the thief and the crooked tax collector, but there is much more inclusivity than just that small sample size. Galatians 3:28 sums it up nicely, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." The first part of one of the most famous passages in all of the Bible illustrates this same point as well, John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in him will not perish but have eternal life." Notice what it says, "The WORLD". Not "some of the world, or "the good people" or "the inclusive people". GOD LOVED THE WORLD.

Conclusion

I would encourage those who think that Christianity is exclusive in its scope and claims to consider the exclusive results of Pluralism. On the surface it seems to be inviting and inclusive, but deep down it excludes the 90% of the world that is religious. That doesn't seem inclusive and it doesn't seem fair. The greatest test of whether or not someone is fair and committed to being fair is whether or not they make exceptions for themselves.

Jesus didn't make an exception for himself. He didn't exclude himself from suffering or death. He chose to accept what he didn't deserve. And he did that for all people regardless of their race, gender or socioeconomic standing. He got what we deserved so we can be certain that he won't exclude anyone based on race, gender, socioeconomic standing or any other arbitrary judgment. There's nothing more inclusive than that.

SCHOOL NEWS

6th Grade

As the first few months have passed, everyone is settling in to the new life as a sixth grader. The class lost a handful of their friends but that means this group is closer than ever. Every day we have fun and the room is full of laughter. After asking the students about the best and worst that they are experiencing, here is a list of what I got back:

- Having lockers gives us more space for everything
- We don't have to stick to one room and are able to move around during the day
- The reading chairs in literature are quite comfortable
- Science experiments make class fun and enjoyable

Everyone had similar ideas of what they enjoy and what they don't enjoy. Even though challenges arise every day, everyone works together to remind each other what assignments might be or what materials are needed for each class. The students are assigned classroom jobs which teach them some small responsibilities around the room. The sixth graders love to help wherever needed, and share a love for reading. The first thing they always ask if they finish work is if they can grab their book to read. It's just the beginning of the year, but this class shows so much potential to make this year great!



Scholastic Book Fair

Nov. 8th, 8:00 am – 3:30 pm
Nov. 9th, 8:00 am – 8:00 pm
Nov. 12th, 9:00 am – Noon

Looking for a Christmas gift?
This year's book fair is a great opportunity to find that perfect story. A portion of each purchase supports our school and classroom libraries.



SPIRIT NIGHT

Wednesday November 15
4:00 – 7:00 pm

Chick-fil-A West St. Paul will donate 20% of your purchase back to Crown of Life School! **Say Crown of Life when ordering.**

Let's see how many Preschool Playground Mats we can sponsor!



Preschool Playground Update

With over \$14,000 raised we have ordered playground equipment! Thank you everyone who has so generously donated! Our next goal is \$12,527.50 for playground mats. If you want to join in the fun you can sponsor a mat or join us at Chick-fil-A on Wednesday, Nov 15.

Members in Motion – WELS Mission for the Visually Impaired

BY DOROTHY HABERKORN



Volunteers from: Christ Lutheran - NSP, Crown of Life - WSP (Betty Frederick, Dorothy Haberkorn), Grace Lutheran - SSP, Shepherd of the Hills - IGH and St. James - WSP (WELS Mission for the Visually Impaired is located in South St. Paul)

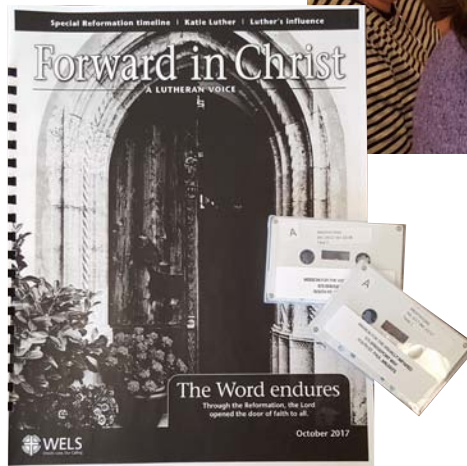
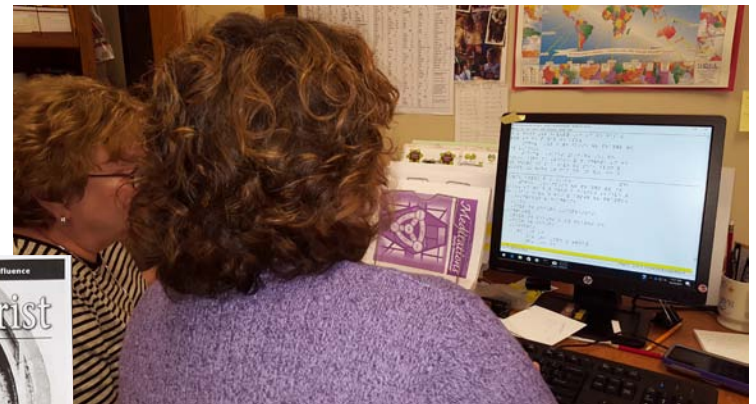
“That the Blind may See” was the theme of the LWMS convention in 1968. That concept began because a young man in the WELS needed *Luther’s Small Catechism* in braille. So, the task began for a group of volunteers in the Twin Cities to come into existence for that purpose.

In the 50 years since, with the assistance of volunteers from our local congregations, the Gospel has been shared to those who are visually impaired. Forward in Christ, done monthly, is shipped in cassette, large print and braille to people all over the world. Additional items translated are the Bible, daily meditations, school work, confirmation materials and Sunday school lessons.

This team effort begins with pastors recording, staff coordinating, translating, duplicating, address and mailing cassettes. If a braille translation is requested, one volunteer (visually impaired) is dictated the material, types the translation into a computer which is then sent to a special printer that prints in braille. The stack of paper is then packaged up and shipped off. The post office also provides assistance as a package shipped to a visually impaired person requires no postage.

Mission for the Visually Impaired has always been funded through the generosity of donations from individuals, congregations, LWMS groups, Sunday Schools and Christian day schools, making it possible for these products to be sent without charge to anyone with visual impairments.

We thank you for your assistance in this effort, and pray that you will continue to keep us in your prayers and in your support.



The annual budget for this ministry is only \$7000 and they are in need of your support!

If you would like to volunteer or donate, please contact the church office at 651-263-9167 or WELS Mission for the Visually Impaired at 651-291-1536. Thank you!

S'MORE Fun!

Over 100 people came to roast hotdogs and s'mores and watch Sing! Thanks to all who helped organize this awesome family event!



NOVEMBER CALENDAR

Wednesday, November 1

5:00 pm Confirmation Class WSP
6:30 pm Bible Class EGN
8:00 pm Praise Band Reh

Thursday, November 2

2:30 pm Southview Sr. Living Service

Friday, November 3

8:05 am Matins
7:00 pm Pioneers - Boys' Sleepover

Saturday, November 4

10:00 am Adopt-A-Highway - EGN
5:00 pm Worship EGN

Sunday, November 5

Daylight Saving Time ends
8:00 am Worship WSP
9:00 am Worship EGN
9:15 am Education Hour-WSP
10:15 am Education Hour-EGN
10:30 am Worship WSP
3:00 pm New Member Class-WSP
4:30 pm Area Reformation Service at St. Croix

Monday, November 6

3:15 pm Lego Club
6:30 pm Worship WSP
7:00 pm Mary/Martha - WSP

Tuesday, November 7

10:00 am The Commons on Marice Sr. Living Service
7:00 pm Evangelism Technology Team

Wednesday, November 8

Book Fair
4:00 pm PreK Parent/Teachers Conf.
5:00 pm Confirmation Class WSP
6:30 pm Bible Class EGN

Thursday, November 9

Book Fair
NO BUS SERVICE
11:30 am Early Dismissal
12:15 pm Parent Teacher Conferences
2:30 pm Southview Sr. Living Service
7:00 pm Elders-WSP

Friday, November 10

Teacher Inservice - NO SCHOOL

Saturday, November 11

Veterans Day
5:00 pm Worship EGN

Sunday, November 12

Book Fair
Praise Service
8:00 am Worship WSP
9:00 am Worship EGN
9:15 am Education Hour-WSP
10:15 am Education Hour-EGN
10:30 am Worship WSP

Monday, November 13

6:30 pm Worship WSP
7:30 pm Worship Committee

Tuesday, November 14

10:00 am The Commons on Marice Sr. Living Service
6:30 pm Education

Tuesday, November 14

6:30 pm Properties
Handbell rehearsal
7:15 pm Stewardship

Wednesday, November 15

4:00 pm Chick-fil-A Night
5:00 pm Confirmation Class WSP
6:30 pm Bible Class EGN

Thursday, November 16

2:30 pm Southview Sr. Living Service
6:30 pm Pioneers Regular Meeting
7:00 pm Riverview Cemetery

Friday, November 17

8:05 am Matins

Saturday, November 18

5:00 pm Worship EGN

Sunday, November 19

8:00 am Worship WSP
9:00 am Worship EGN
9:15 am Education Hour-WSP
10:15 am Education Hour-EGN
10:30 am Worship WSP
11:45 am New Member Orientation WSP

Monday, November 20

6:30 pm Worship WSP

Tuesday, November 21

10:00 am The Commons on Marice Sr. Living Service
7:00 pm Council-EGN

Wednesday, November 22

NO BUS SERVICE
11:30 am Early Dismissal

Wednesday, November 22

5:00 pm Confirmation Class WSP
6:30 pm Bible Class EGN
Worship WSP

Thursday, November 23

Thanksgiving Day - NO SCHOOL

Friday, November 24

Thanksgiving Break - NO SCHOOL

Saturday, November 25

5:00 pm Worship EGN

Sunday, November 26

8:00 am Worship WSP
9:00 am Worship EGN
9:15 am Education Hour-WSP
10:15 am Education Hour-EGN
10:30 am Worship WSP

Monday, November 27

2:30 pm Lilydale Sr. Living Service
6:30 pm Worship WSP
7:00 pm Youth & Adult Education

Tuesday, November 28

Blood Drive - WSP
10:00 am The Commons on Marice Sr. Living Service

Wednesday, November 29

5:00 pm Confirmation Class WSP
6:30 pm Bible Class EGN
7:30 pm Senior Choir practice

Thursday, November 30

2:30 pm Southview Sr. Living Service
6:30 pm Pioneers Regular Meeting

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1 Annabelle Kinsley
Susan Klessig
2 Abigail Kom
Will Sievert
3 Matt Berg
Ronald Kuecker
John Kwasniewski
4 Stephen Wolfrath
John Bejblik
John G. Wenker
6 Jennifer Koeppen
Heather Schroeder
7 Jackson Letendre
8 Susan Bejblik
Blaze Graves
9 Nathaniel Burkhardt
Heather Lander

10 Christine Kwasniewski
11 Emily Ahlman
Abigail Bejblik
Nicolas Lemmer
Jimmy Taack
12 Courtney Bluhm
Rollie Dohrn
Nick Krueger
Chet Lander
Erin Taack
Madelyn Wallace
Makenna Wallace
13 Steve Turbeville
14 Ann Coates
Sloane Larson
Bruce Schumacher
15 Taite Fischer
16 Suzie Gydesen

17 John Bejblik
Diane Krosting
Matt Otterstatter
18 Hanna Myrlie
19 Mathew Boehlke
Cameron Dietrich
Kent Uecker
20 Tammie Eichmann
David Mielke
Roman Olson
Ethan Pichardo
Beth Rupprecht
21 John R. Danner
Sheryl Duff
John Koeppen
22 Rick Hansen
Ryan Johnson

22 Justin Paul
Keri Solseth
23 Wayne Kurth
Emanuel Lange
Matthew Voigt
24 Richard Schindeldecker
Hans Schnobrich
Anna Spott
25 Sheldon Farley
26 Jamie Fischer
Henry Seidl
27 Wayne Danner
Sharon Kaniess
Dennis Klocow
Brooklyn Nied
29 Nikki Grunwald
Lucille Tako
Armin Vanselow

REPORTS

TREASURER Fiscal Year 7/17 - 6/18

September ended the fiscal year to date (FYTD) with \$404,450 in total income with expected budget income to be \$407,760 which was \$3,309 below budget. Expenses (FYTD) were \$379,675 which gave us a FYTD of a Positive \$13,565. Sept (FYTD) Envelope Offerings were -\$41,606 less than budgeted. We owe \$40,000 to our special funds account. Special Funds Account available balance is \$8,800.

BAPTISMS

- Landon Alexander Buysse son of Nathan and MaryJo Buysse on September 30, 2017.

Welcome New Members!



Bob, Christie, Max, Mia and Ivy Lawrence

We relocated to MN from KS, 5 years ago due to a company change. Bob is in finance and Christie is a stay at home mom. Mia and Ivy attend COL and enjoy basketball and tae kwon do, respectively. Max lives in Oakdale and works for HyVee.

New Members not pictured:

- Kelli Green and son Jacob
- Kayla Weber
- Ryan & Michelle Rathje, Caleb, Noah, and Alexis



Kingdom Kids

Join us the 3rd Sunday of each month
for singing, a story and center activities (Ages 3-7)

10:30 - 11:15 am | Eagan

Oct 15, Nov 19, Dec 17, Jan 21, Feb 18
Mar 18, Apr 15, May 20



Oct 15 Snippet - Learned about Creation



More Fun Coming Nov 19.
JOIN US!



CROWN OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

West St. Paul Campus – 115 Crusader Ave W, West St. Paul MN 55118
Eagan Campus – 4150 Pilot Knob Rd, Eagan MN 55122