



April 2020



Should I Stay or Should I Go?

Perhaps the 1982 hit title song from the Punk Rock Band, The Clash, is fitting for our current circumstances: Should I Stay or Should I Go? With the uncertain lasting effect of COVID-19, our consciences are tested. We question ourselves on how to daily live out our lives in a time such as this.

Let us first be fair to ourselves and everyone else for that matter. No one presently living on earth has ever lived through something of this magnitude – no one. Therefore, it would be of great usefulness that we would be more charitable toward others. And for those of you who believe you are naturally charitable, more charitableness please. Rather than coming to condemning judgments of the decisions others make, let us become more compassionate with the difficult decisions we all have to make.

God’s word guides us in this way, “Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things” (Philippians 4:8). With these words, Paul commands that we should continually keep these virtues in the forefront of our minds, in our very consciousness, so that they inspire and guide all we do. They are the fundamental principles of life according to God’s design,

Up until a few weeks ago, nearly every decision we made was made with the purest of freedom. We could come and go as we pleased. We could plan an evening out without hesitation. We could go to the beach, Disney, a restaurant, a nursing home for a visit, take a cruise, or book a flight to almost anywhere in the world. But, that has all changed, hasn’t it?

What was once taken for granted has now become a daily challenge. Even the thought of going to church has become a contested decision. No doubt, we need to faithfully hear God’s word and frequently receive the gifts He gives in the Sacrament of the Altar. So then, you struggle with the question: “Should I stay or should I go?”

The correct answer to the above question is to know there is no incorrect answer to the question. It all comes down to your decision, made with a good conscience, to stay or go. Let me be clear. I am not discussing your eternal salvation here. I am merely bringing up the question regarding your decision to stay at home during this crisis or to go to church during this crisis. To be sure, your eternal salvation was accomplished on the cross of Calvary by the bitter sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

“By grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Regarding the decision of salvation, God has made it abundantly clear the decision of man (Decision

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Should I Stay or Should I Go? (CONTINUED)

Theology) is false teaching, a misguided doctrine taught by false teachers who “know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God.” (Matthew 22:29; Mark 12:24) Consider who the Lord God has chosen using His words:

“You are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for His treasured possession” (Deuteronomy 7:6).

“You are My servant, I have chosen you and not cast you off” (Isaiah 41:9).

Jesus said, *“You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in My name, He may give it to you”* (John 15:16).

“For we know, [children] loved by God, that He has chosen you, because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction” (1 Thessalonians 1:4-5a).

“We ought always to give thanks to God for you ... because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth” (2 Thessalonians 2:13).

“You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9).

While I'm on the subject of what God says, nowhere in Scripture does He say, "You need to choose Me." Nor does Jesus say, "Invite Me into your heart" – nowhere. We are dead in our trespasses (Ephesians 2:1; Colossians 2:13). We, who are dead, cannot make ourselves come to spiritual life. It is God who initiates, engages and brings dead sinners to life. Our Lord Jesus tells us plainly, *“It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life”* (John 6:63). The Apostle Paul confirms, *“The first man Adam became a living being; the last Adam [Jesus] became a life-giving spirit.”* (1 Corinthians 15:45).

Now returning to the question of whether you should stay at home during this crisis or you should go to church during this crisis, this is truly a matter which

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SERVING THE LORD

Pastor Rev. James Kress

Child Care Director Wendy Horvath

Office Admin Asst Caitlin Tilton

Organist Bill Bowers

Choir Director Collins Sita

Newsletter Editor Pat Finkenbine

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Vice President Bill Bowers

Treasurer

Secretary Caitlin Tilton

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Head Elder Mike Nagel

Christian Ed.

Human Care Lisa Kress

Outreach

Assimilation Anne Varone

School Board

Stewardship

Youth Alan Duburg

Financial Secretary Mindy Duncan

Property Mgmt. Bob Varone

GROUPS/GUILDS

Ladies Guild Sally Zierdt

Men's Group

Altar Guild

Coffee Hour

Should I Stay or Should I Go? (CONTINUED)

requires fervent prayer to Him who loves you and will guide you in the light of His Word. Upon this action in praying to God, you can, with a clear conscience, decide to stay or to go. No one should judge you, for the Lord has not given that for them to do. You will not be penalized, fined or placed in prison as a result of your decision. Your conscience should never be held in bondage. Your mind should never be burdened by the opinions of men. Your soul should never be oppressed by the ways of the world. You are set free – forever free – in Christ Jesus.

“Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time He may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on Him, because He cares for you” (1 Peter 5:6-7).

Now it is true, I cannot make the everyday decisions you’re faced with for you. However, no matter if you decide to stay or go I can provide you with options (*see below*) to hear God’s word and to receive the gifts of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of the Altar. Prayerfully consider using these options made available for you. And please remember, Jesus came to serve, not to be served. Therefore, as a called, sent, and ordained servant of our Lord, I am here to serve you - His little lambs - with His Word, which endures forever, and with the food of immortality, the true body and blood of Jesus Christ, given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.

Should I decide to stay at home:

- Call or text pastor (941-979-2976), to schedule a home visit from him, so that you may hear God’s Word and receive Holy Communion.
- Located on Redeemer’s Facebook page, you can view, listen and participate in our Sunday and Midweek Divine Services.
- Audio Sermons are available on Redeemer’s website under the tab for *Sermons*.
- Also located on Redeemer's Facebook page, Pastor is supplying a Daily Devotion of Comfort & Assurance.

Should I decide to go to church:

- Sunday Divine Services are scheduled for 7:30, 9:15, and 11 a.m.;
- Midweek Lenten Services are scheduled for 3:00, 4:30, and 7 p.m.;
- Holy Week Services remain the same (*please see schedule in bulletin or newsletter*);
- Drive-up service is available on Saturdays beginning at 10 a.m. until noon.

Sounds crazy, but this is a way in which you can safely leave your home, remain in your car, hear the word of absolution, Holy Scripture, a brief homily, and receive the Lord’s Supper all within a few minutes. Simply load up your household in the car and drive underneath the carport located at the front doors of the church building. You will see Pastor ready to greet you. (*Please do not bring your pets*)

Take note that many of these opportunities will change once it is safe to return to our daily living. Of course, for many of us a return back to normalcy may very well have some new challenges and perhaps even more difficult decisions to make. But fear not, *“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble”* (Psalm 46:1).

Chosen by God, Saved by Grace,
Pastor Jim Kress

Mid-week Lenten Service

Wed. Apr. 1st 3:00 PM —4:30 PM—6:00 PM
*Divine Service**

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

PALM SUNDAY/SUNDAY OF THE PASSION*

Sun. Apr. 5th 7:30 AM - 9:15 AM - 11:00 AM

MONDAY IN HOLY WEEK

Mon. Apr. 6th – 11:00 AM
*Divine Service**

TUESDAY IN HOLY WEEK

Tues. Apr. 7th – 11:00 AM
*Divine Service**

WEDNESDAY IN HOLY WEEK

Wed. Apr. 8th – 11:00 AM
*Divine Service**

MAUNDY THURSDAY

Thurs. Apr. 9th – 4:30 & 7:00 PM
*Divine Service**
The Stripping of the Altar @ 7 PM

GOOD FRIDAY

Friday Apr. 10th
Tre Ore Service
Preaching on the Last Seven Words from the Cross
*Divine Service**
12:00 PM (noon)
also
Tenebrae Service
Service of Darkness & Closing of the Book
*Divine Service**
4:30 & 7:00 PM

THE VIGIL OF EASTER

Sat. Apr. 11th – 9:00 PM
*Divine Service**

THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD/EASTER DAY

Sun. Apr. 12th 7:30 AM—9:15 AM—11:00 AM

HE IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN, INDEED! ALELLUIA!



LCEF's Response to COVID-19

Business Continuity Statement

Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) is closely monitoring the outbreak of Coronavirus (COVID-19) and preparing to carry out our daily operations in the event of any possible disruptions. These past days have seen unprecedented financial distress and growing concerns. While uncertainty abounds, LCEF exists precisely for such a time as this. Deposits are secure. We remain in a strong financial-capital position. LCEF has operated for over 40 years while having endured many events and obstacles. By God's grace, we have remained faithful and strong.

Questions can be directed to LCEF at 800-843-5233 or info@lcef.org.

Yours in Christ,
Rob Tilton, LCEF Congregational Advocate

PROPERTY APPRECIATION DAY

We sure could use some help on our Property Appreciation Days every month. There is outside work to do and cleaning and dusting that needs done inside the Church. If you can help, please come to the church and we will put you to work. **Our next Property Appreciation Day is Saturday, April 18th at 8:00 am.**



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ckcleanfl@gmail.com

YOUTH GROUP is hoping to have a Car Wash later in April.
Contact Alan Duburg for more information about this upcoming event.

***The deadline for the May Newsletter is April 20th
Please have all your submissions sent to patchas123@gmail.com
OR drop them off at the church office by the date indicated above. Thank You!***



On the topic of stewardship, one of the most common questions a person might ask is *not* whether a Christian should give to their church. Everyone knows this. Of course, Christians should give to their church.

The most common question: "How much should I give?" But what they really mean is this: "Should Christians give a tithe of their income to their local congregation?" So, let's look at why you should or should not tithe.

Following are some reasons often offered for why Christians *shouldn't* give a tithe to their church.

Some say you shouldn't tithe because it isn't expressly commanded in the New Testament. Lacking that command, there is no "Thus saith the Lord" and no "should" for giving a tithe to your congregation.

Others say that Christians give to their congregation in ways much broader than money. They give of their time and their talents, and these, together with treasures (money), add up to more than a tithe.

Still others say they give of their treasures to other things besides their congregation, and they want to support those things alongside their church.

And there are those who think Christians shouldn't tithe because of fear. If they tithe, they are afraid their gift will be misused, and they are afraid they won't have enough to get the things they use, want, or need.

Following are some reasons for why Christians *should* give a tithe to their church.

Even though the New Testament doesn't specifically command Christians to give a tithe, the Old Testament people were commanded to tithe and did. On top of this, St. Paul often describes the giving Christians are to do in similar terms as a tithe: a regular and generous proportion of the first fruits of their income (1 Cor. 6:1–2; 2 Cor. 8:7–23; 2 Cor. 9:2–7).

But here's another way to think about it. What was the point of the tithe in the Old Testament? Where did it go? The reason for the Old Testament tithe was to support the full ministry of the Levites. They were not given any land because they had no time to farm; their full-time job was the ministry.

What does it say in the New Testament? "The Lord has commanded that those who preach the Gospel should make their living from the Gospel" (1 Cor. 9:14). This is the verse that Luther put in the *Small Catechism's* Table of Duties to cover what Christians owe to the support of the ministry.

It seems clear from both the Old and the New Testaments that the tithe is the goal of Christians in their giving. But what if we're not there yet? How should we handle this? What are we to do?

Let's answer this by asking a different question about something entirely different. What would you say to your adult children who only attended church quarterly or once a month? There, is after all, no passage in the New Testament that requires Christians to go to church weekly. Hebrews 10:25 is the closest we have, and it states simply for Christians to not neglect gathering together. Even though there is no passage that

commands Christians to gather weekly, that is the implicit expectation throughout the Old and New Testaments. It is the goal.

So, what would you say to that son or daughter? I'd expect that conversation would be something like this: "I'm glad you're still going to church. It is a wonderful blessing to hear God's promises of forgiveness, life, and salvation, and to receive His gifts in the Word and the Sacraments. But you can do better, and it will only be a blessing to you. There is a better way, and I'd really like you to try to attain it."

This same conversation is how we should approach the topic of the tithe. It's not specifically commanded in the New Testament, but it sure seems like the implicit expectation of both the Old and New Testaments. So, the church is ecstatic that you're giving when you're giving in all these ways – time, talents, and treasures.



The Human Care Board will be making baskets for shut-ins for Easter. We are requesting bags of candy and or cash donations to be delivered to the church Narthex by Sunday, March 29, so that we may put the baskets together Saturday, April 4, 2020 and have delivery take place during Holy Week. If you would like to provide cash donations for the baskets, please see Mindy Duncan, Sandy Tandy, Caitlin Tilton or Lisa Kress. If you have questions please feel free to email Lisa at lisakress1968@gmail.com or call 941.889.8938. We appreciate your kindness and concern for the members of our church!

Treasurer's Report

As of February 29, 2020

	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>OVER/UNDER</u>
INCOME	22,201	14,618	7,583
<u>EXPENSES</u>	<u>16,403</u>	<u>17,644</u>	(1,241)
+/-	5,798	(3,026)	
YEAR TO DATE			
INCOME	48,599	29,204	19,395
<u>EXPENSES</u>	<u>42,048</u>	<u>35,336</u>	6,712
+/-	6,551	(6,132)	



Respectfully submitted,
Jean Clappe-Mixell
 North Star Bookkeeping LLC

PRAYERS

SHUT-INS: Judy Clasen, Susan Jahns, Rita Kaufmann, and Donna Weston

HEALING for Members: Neva Aldene, Carl Bertka, Jean Cote, Kathryn Demma, Ed & Jan DeTrow, Charlie & Pat Finkenbine, Don Garay, Mike & Judy Guastella, Bud & Jane Harty, Marva Jonas, Chuck Malecki, Angela Mannato, Ken Mielke, Lillian Miles, Glenn Mossner, Mariana Murray, Bob Payne, Leah Payne, Tom & Sue Poyer, Dorothy Sinowetski, Russ & Carol Spooner, Ron Tandy, Caitlin Tilton, Bob Varone, Robert Vickey, and Sally Zierdt.

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Hunter, Chelsea Hutchinson, Stanley and Lynne Jablonski, Larry Jackson, Bill Jaquest, Heather Johnson, Rachel Kagay, Daniel & Michelle Kalstrup, John Kearns, Parker Kern, Rev. Michael Kettner, Elizabeth Lynn Klopfenstein, Nancy Lake, Stacey Lampert, Rev. Rusty Leavitt, Ray Likowski, Janet Lixey, Victoria Malato and her unborn child, Joe Manson, Candace McGowan, Dave McMullen, Pete Mogg, Mike Morrissey, Rev. Herbert Mueller, Ron Mullins, Esther Murphy, Louis Nanni, Bill & Jean Nesbitt, Riley Emilia Paquette, Charles Pentecost Jr., Robin Potts, Rob Powers, John Purdy, Mary Raines, Elaine Reebe, Rev. Ronald Rock, Paul Rollo, Sandra Scheel, Ed Sheahan, Nancy Sly, Don Stewart, Charles Tolley, Gwyneth Tolman, George Vespa, Jim & Judy Wahl, Steven Walker, Christy Wallace, Helen Weishaar, Gene & Donna Wensel, Gordan Winkel, Wava Zeitlow, and Martha Zimpfer.

Military Personnel: Mark Baranowsky, Michael Broughton, Joseph Garay, Thomas Francis Stynes II, Brian Jackson, Jonathan Koen, and Charles D. Weishaar



Pastor and members of the church are always willing to pray for you, family members and friends. If a loved one appears on our prayer list above, please call Pastor or the church office to give us a health update so that we may either keep or remove their name. Thank you!

March came in like a lamb but is going out like a lion. We technically only had one week of school in March before spring break, but it was a busy week. The first week of March was Read across America Week. We celebrate reading in many different ways during the week. Dr. Seuss's birthday was March 2 so many of our reading activities have to do with one of his books. This year we focused on his books: "If I Ran A Zoo", "The Cat in the Hat Comes Back", "The Foot Book", "What was I Scared Of?", and "I Am Not Going To Get Up Today". Each day we focused on one book. After reading the book, we did many learning and fun activities around the theme. We built a zoo, wore slippers to school, dressed like our favorite characters, read with flashlights in the dark, and finished a chapter book about Mr. Rogers. The whole week was a success and the kids had so much fun reading.

We ended Read across America week with our school open house. We had a bounce house, horse rides, games, a food truck, and appearances by Cat in the Hat. Many people came out for the fun and food. We had several parents ask about the school and some have already registered for kindergarten next year. Please continue to pray for the school and students. It's exciting to see the school develop and grow!

Kindergarten and First grade finished their Social Studies unit on other countries. We learned about 12 different countries. We learned how the people in each country live, how they work, what they wear, what their cities and rural areas are like, what they eat, and what boys and girls like to do. We end by learning that Jesus loves all the children in the world. Even though we have some differences in our cultures we have many similarities. Children love to learn about others and embrace the differences.

In health, all grades just finished our manners unit. We learned how to set a table for dinner and how to use our manners while at the table. As a teacher I really appreciate this unit. Eating lunch with a room full of kids is not always easy. It's nice to have a unit that they get to practice using what they learn on a daily basis. It's funny how they will remind each other to have good posture, to chew with their mouth closed, or to get their elbows off the table. After they finished their unit and practiced a bunch we went out on a field trip to lunch. We went for Mexican food because we were studying Mexico at the time. It was a great time and our whole class did so good using manners. They have to show what they learned and even ordered their own food using words that were kind and pleasing. It probably was one of my favorite field trips because our class did so well. The restaurant owner came out and thanked us for coming and told us to come back anytime.

We have not made it back to school due to the Corona Virus. As of now, we will be physically out of school until at least April 30th. However that doesn't mean we can't find creative ways to teach and students to learn while away from the classroom. Teachers, parents, Administration, and especially the students are disappointed about the whole situation. We as a staff are doing our best to continue to educate and love on our students. We have set up a virtual classroom and will be meeting with our class every morning to get them started for the day working on their work at home. We are giving them 2 to 3 days' worth of work at a time. They turn in that work and then they get the next 2 or 3 days work. We have made ourselves available both online and over the phone if they need help. We have a distance learning private Facebook page that they are able to ask questions and receive messages from us. Abeka (our curriculum provider) also has given us unlimited use of their streaming services. So if a student doesn't know how to do their math they log in to abeka online, type in the lesson number, and a prerecorded teacher will go through the entire lesson in a classroom setting. This is so helpful and ensures that our students will not get behind. Most of all we want them to know that we are still here and this is a small season in their lives. We want

REDEEMER SCHOOL

them to know that we have a God that loves and cares for them. In this time of uncertainty, we can be certain of God's love for us and we don't have to fear the unknown.

2 Timothy 1:7 states *"that God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of sound mind"*. We as Christians need to stand on this. We are called to be that love and sound mind to the world in need right now.



EASTER WORD SEARCH

S R Y Q I I S Y M J D N Y S U C Q K B N
 B W J H L D Y I H F O U O P N B K P J C
 N L Q N G S J Y H I T B X R U Q F Y O F
 X F A D V U Z E T Z M I B I F A T C J P
 N L A M L V O A L A I C W N K Y A J Z U
 S O A P B N R F D L Y C V G A N K D I K
 A W T M S B M D M A Y P L F D G X Z P N
 T E A D E W T Z I U M B U Y C E H Q C P
 C R G L M E Y R O L B H E E T L B C I C
 Z S E Y Y W O F I L D N H A Y H U X C A
 O C J I A L M R I M Q X R T N N G C R H
 P Z F C H R I V U A G O P X I S P X F T
 I O Z F Z A I L G F C H L T H Q Q P K R
 S O E L S N O Z N E L H W E C I H M C Q
 N K X X N T L O D U H V K A T U D H I I
 A R E T S A E S W J K F S D N F O E H Q
 H O T E G G S K G R I W U T N C H B C R
 Y C U C Y A N O S C U X N T O F T S T U
 F B N N L V P Q B A R X D L I B Y X R Y
 S L B T P M E X F T B U A V W E X M V Y
 O V H W X P B R T L X T Y K A Q U O M C
 H P A R A D E K R D E B L B K X V W R Y
 M X B T I I Z W J Y X Y M I Z G W T X E
 X Q G B L C P J A L B U N N Y S C Q A F
 X M T E N N O B W K Y Y N Z N Y Q S Y B

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|--------|-------------|--------|--------|
| Easter | Jellybeans | Spring | Bonnet |
| Basket | Celebration | Candy | Fun |
| Bunny | Decorate | Hunt | Sunday |
| Hide | Chocolate | Lily | Parade |
| Eggs | Flowers | Chick | Lamb |



REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH,
SCHOOL & CHILD CARE
6970 Mineola Rd.
Englewood, FL 34224

ADDRESS SERVICE
REQUESTED - OPTION 1



REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH,
SCHOOL & CHILD CARE
6465 Mayport Street
Englewood, FL 34224
REV. JAMES T. KRESS, SR.
Pastor

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Church Fax: 941-475-9726
School/Child Care Phone:
941-475-2631
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REDEEMER REPORTER

Published monthly for members, Associate Members and Visitors of Redeemer Lutheran Church, a member congregation of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.

WORSHIP SERVICES:

Divine Service: 9:15 AM
Bible Class: 10:30 AM
Sunday School: 10:30 AM

The Redeemer Lutheran Church, School & Child Care Family are called into the service of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by His command (Matthew 28:18-20) to:

- ◆*Disciple all nations, that is, all people;*
- ◆*Baptize in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit;*
- ◆*Proclaim the Gospel and teach His Word in its truth and purity; and*
- ◆*Never be ashamed of the Gospel—it is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16).*