



GE + HSEMANE

LUTHERAN CHURCH

News from 4040 N. 108th Street, Omaha, NE 68164
January, 2020

This is the eighth installment of a ten-part series on the Lord's Prayer.

Lead us not into temptation.

1. Address
2. 1st Petition
3. 2nd Petition
4. 3rd Petition
5. 4th Petition
6. 5th Petition, pt. 1
7. 5th Petition pt. 2
- 8. 6th Petition**
9. 7th Petition
10. Doxology

As we pray the perfect prayer our Lord has taught us and as we have processed through the petitions that he invites us to pray with patience and with grace, we have come to realize how difficult this is for us. Not because the Lord's invitation is too complicated for us to grasp or decipher; not because these requests, if granted, would lead to pain and destruction. Rather, the difficulty arises because of our sinful minds and hearts. That God's name be made holy above all else, that his will and not ours be done in us and through us, that he would provide all we need instead of all we selfishly want, that he would lead us to see our sin and repent of them while at the same time forgiving and forgetting the wrongs others have done to us—all this opposes the sinful desires we have carried with us since birth.

So, once again, we recognize that left to ourselves, these petitions and requests would not enter our minds. Left to ourselves we would seek the opposite of what he wants and plunge headlong into our favorite sins and countless others that we dismiss as of no importance. The Lord, too, knows this all too well and for this very reason he invites us to make yet another boldly confident request: "Lead us not into temptation."

He knows all too well how we consider everyone else's sins serious and our own quite trivial and in this way we easily play with temptation. He knows all too well that we even enjoy some of the temptations that plague us. We didn't get even with so and so—but we wanted to; we've never committed the more flagrant sins of murder, rebellion, adultery, robbery and the like, but he knows all too well that we don't recoil against the temptations to gossip and hold grudges. He knows all too well that we are more than happy to pick and choose which laws of the state we violate if we can get away with it. He know all too well how we clutch so closely to our bank accounts and fear that we may be giving away too much of what it holds. He knows all too well how wide is the path of temptations that lays before us and how we are fascinated by it and long to run down it to our eternal shame.

In short, the Lord knows all too well that we simply cannot bear the responsibility for our own salvation and have any hope of fleeing these temptations and find eternal life. Thus, we ask him, as he has graciously taught us to do, to cast this responsibility upon him. We have already asked for his will to be done on earth as in heaven and so we confidently ask that his will be done in guiding and leading us away from the temptations that would only serve to destroy us. We ask that he would keep us from the temptations that would cause us to perish forever. We ask that he would put a hedge around our hearts so that we are not condemned even when we shove to the side the guidance that he so eagerly gives. We even ask that, if it is his will, he would lead us away from temptation through the suffering and shame and consequences that result from our unbridled passion.

We ask especially that he would keep temptation away by pouring upon us his unfathomable and unending grace and forgiveness. This, after all, is what leads us away from the temptation to despair. We must see our Father's heart in the cross of Jesus so that in spite of our selfish nature, we strive to follow his Word and flee temptation in a way that truly expresses our heartfelt gratitude and thanks. The more he leads us to see the cross, the more he causes his will to be done in our lives.

As we ask our Lord to lead us not into temptation, we cast ourselves entirely at his feet. We declare total dependence on him—on his mercy and on the trustworthy guidance that his Word provides. When he leads and guides by his precious Gospel, by his loving forgiveness, hell is put far, far away and heaven draws nearer to us and in us. We ask our Lord to remind us of this each and every day so that by his strength we flee and avoid temptation, we are uplifted by his compassion and we yield to his good and perfect will.

Pastor John Koester



FOCE

(FRIENDS OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION)

December was a busy, fun month for FOCE! We helped with bussing for GLS caroling, bowling for the annual Christmas field trip, and a special pizza party for the students. A huge thanks to the additional treat contributions for the students that day! Treat bags were distributed to all the children who participated in the wonderful Christmas service that same weekend.

As we embark on the New Year, we want to thank everyone for their support of our FOCE. Cheers and blessings to a great year ahead!

FOCE Ladies

HY-VEE CASH FOR STUDENTS

Please bring in your HyVee receipts dated between September 1 and December 31 and place them in the collection boxes located on the table in the southwest corner of the fellowship hall and in the school hallway. Receipts outside of these dates are not eligible for this program.

OWLS

(ORGANIZATION OF WELS LUTHERAN SENIORS)

Showing the warmth of the holiday season, a collection of winter garments donated from our congregations was transported to Omaha's Open Door Mission.

December ended on a high note as well with a contingent from our chapter delivering beautifully wrapped Christmas gifts to the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging Center on December 9th to conclude the 2019 Santa for a Senior project. The donations for 49 adopted seniors were contributed by 36 volunteers from the Omaha WELS congregations. The Organization of WELS Lutheran Seniors (OWLS) who coordinated this effort would like to extend a sincere thanks to all participants in giving gifts and more importantly giving from the heart, remembering how unselfishly our Savior gave to us all.





At our final meeting in December, plans for next year were discussed, the election of officers took place for 2020 and items were collected for the area Food Bank. Our chapter is looking forward to a great new year down the road focused on Christ centered work and fellowship. Our wish, too, is that more members will come and join us.

Our next meeting will be January 12th at Gethsemane. We will start at 2 p.m. Please come!

*Dick V, President
Sandy T, Secretary*



CARD/MEDITATION RECYCLING

The OWLS would like your old Christmas cards and Meditations booklets! They use them to make book marks and provide devotionals for Prison Ministries. There is a box on the table in the fellowship hall in which you can put your items. Thank you for your help!

LWMS

(LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY)

**“See what great love the Father has lavished on us,
that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!”**

This was the reoccurring phrase that both the children and the congregation recited throughout the Children’s Christmas Service. It has something that rang in my head throughout the remainder of the Christmas season. God willing, it will take us into the new year as well.

This is the Befriend a Missionary month! Beginning on Sunday, January 12th through the remainder of the month, there will be a display board of information in the fellowship hall regarding our current Befriend a Missionary. You will be able to find out more information regarding our missionary, and ways that we, as a congregation, are able to help them. This is such a fantastic way to support our Home Missions!

The CAMM (Central African Medical Mission) is also a fantastic way to spread the Gospel-just in a different form! Through the work of the nurses and medical team, they are able to provide not only help with their physical needs, but also their spiritual needs. Look for a brochure update on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall.

Looking ahead...The 2020 LWMS Convention will be held in Athens (Atlanta), Georgia on June 25-28, 2020. Several ladies from Good Shepherd are interested in attending and would like to travel there via a chartered bus. If this is something that interests you, please contact me and I will connect you with the Good Shepherd ladies!

January Prayer Requests

- The start of a fresh, new year!
- The President of our Synod, President Schroeder.
- The work being done by the presidents of the Seminary, and Martin Luther College.

~Leslie B

DEACONS

Not much happened property-wise in December. There are a few little fixes needed here and there, but the building is in pretty good shape!

A layer of dirt, sod and rocks was added on top of the sand on the east side of the building to encourage water to run away from the building rather than toward it. We are hoping this alleviates the wet floors in Pastor Helwig's office.

Thank you to the folks who spent some of their valuable time decorating the church sanctuary for the season and to our landscaping friend who provided the beautiful Christmas arrangements for the pots outside the church doors and the wreaths for the doors. The building looks so festive, inside and out!

As the snow falls and the ice forms, please be careful in the parking lot. Since we only have a hired person to plow the lot and scoop the walks after snowfalls, we appreciate anyone's help in making the lot and sidewalks safer to walk on. Please use the ice melt located near the building entrances whenever it's needed and let the church office know when it is getting low so more can be ordered. Ice melt is to be used as a melting agent and not for traction. A little goes a long ways and doesn't get tracked into the building as much.

We welcome new members to the board of Deacons for 2020—Jeff S and Kurt B. Other members of the Deacons are Paul H, Bruce D, and Jeremy J.

If you see anything that needs to be attended to, please contact the church office.

DISCIPLESHIP

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS



Happy New Year!

Sunday School is ready to kick off 2020 with all students in preschool through 9th grade. Guests are always welcome, too. Join us for songs, stories, games, crafts and discussions that teach us God's Word.

Sunday School starts each week at 9:15 a.m. Preschool through 6th grade will meet in the sanctuary from 9:15 to 9:30 for the opening, offering, and songs and then will proceed with their teacher to their classrooms for their lessons. 7th-12th grade students will report to their classroom for their lesson.

Every student is important to our Sunday School classes. Every student brings their own questions and understanding of the Bible lessons and brings each of us new things to think about. Please help your child to be on time and attend as often as possible. We carefully prepare lessons each week and look forward to sharing God's word with as many students as possible.

January Sunday School Lessons for Preschool-6th Grade:

- 5 - "The Unforgiving Servant"
- 12 - "The Ten Lepers"
- 19 - "Jesus Visits Mary and Martha"
- 26 - "Jesus' Ascension"

A big thank you to all our teachers, helpers and substitutes who put in time, talents, and resources to have lessons and activities planned for their classes.

See you Sunday!

Nickie L, Sunday School Coordinator

THE VINE

A place where children grow in faith.



"I am the Vine; you are the branches."-JESUS
(John 15)

Happy New Year!

The month of December was a fun and busy one! We wrapped up the year by learning about the Letters I and J. We celebrated the birth of Jesus by wrapping gifts in the wrapping sensory station, making playdough Christmas cookies, puff painting pot holders for our Christmas gift to our parents, making letter "J" beaded candy canes, playing with the nativity scene, and also creating one out of construction paper. It is truly a blessing to be able to spend each Wednesday morning together!

As you can see, each session of The Vine is busy, as we learn a new letter each week. Each morning consists of fine and gross motor skill activities, along with a craft, snack, a devotion, and story time. We even eat a snack that begins with the letter that we are learning. We will learn about the letters K, L, M, and N during the month of January.

Each session is held every Wednesday from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. in Mrs. Roberts's classroom. The Vine is open to children ages birth-age 4 and their parents, grandparents, guardians, etc!

If you have never been to The Vine, NOW is your opportunity to jump in and to see what it is all about!



NEW SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

The book of Psalms provides the message of God's grace through the use of poetry and song. It has always been invaluable to the Christian Church as it not only provides a foundation of our doctrines and teaching, but it also provides insight into God's gifts of words and music that proclaim the gospel.

Join us as we study this important book, gaining a better understanding of Hebrew poetry and the different types of psalms that have served God's people for centuries.

The class will begin on January 19 and will run for 6 weeks.

STEWARDSHIP

Offering envelopes for 2020 have been distributed. If you didn't receive envelopes and would like one, please contact the church office. If you got them and won't use them, please return them to box #21 (Sloan) or to the church office so they can be used for someone else. Please discard any from last year as your number has changed. Thank you to those folks who are using the Give+ app. If you need information on this app, please contact the church office.

Please look for your offering statements by the end of January.

Service schedules for 2020 are in progress and will be distributed soon. It takes all of us to keep our ministry going! Thank you for being willing to serve here at Gethsemane.

HOCKEY FELLOWSHIP NIGHT



The 2nd Annual Gethsemane Hockey Night will be held on February 8th, 2020. Join your friends from church as the Omaha Lancers take on the Lincoln Stars at 7:05 p.m. at the Ralston Arena. Tickets are \$12 per person. Tickets can be reserved via the sign-up sheet in the fellowship hall. To ensure group seating tickets must be reserved by January 26th, 2020. Please contact the church office with any questions.

BOOK CLUB

Book Club will meet in January on the 28th at the home of Sue H. We will be discussing the book *Dad is Fat* by Jim Gaffigan.

We'll also take a look at suggestions for next books to read.

We'll have three get-togethers left - February, March and April to round out our 2019/20 "season." If you've picked up a good one lately please let me know. We'll be needing hosts for the upcoming months!

Join us for a great evening of fellowship!

Becky G



CALL NEWS

Miss Hunt announced her decision to return the call sent to her from St. Paul Lutheran School in Lake Mills, Wisconsin, to serve as their fifth grade teacher and undertake some music-related responsibilities. We are thankful for her and her faithful service and her decision to remain among us. We pray that the Lord would continue to bless her and her ministry here.

Miss Veith received a call from St. John Lutheran School in Watertown, Wisconsin, to serve as their fourth grade teacher and undertake some technology responsibilities. Their school currently has an enrollment of about 200 students in grades PreK-8th.

She announced her decision to accept this call. We wish her God's peace on her decision. We pray that God would bless her final months here at Gethsemane and that God would bless her and her new ministry in Watertown.

SCHOOL NEWS

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The Babe of Bethlehem has come! Our long wait (since last Christmas) is over! What a blessing it was to celebrate with you on the weekend of the 21st/22nd! We are so grateful to the children of our congregation and school for sharing the message of God's lavish love for us! What a blessing it was to worship with you on the 24th/25th as this family of believers again returned to hear the greatest message ever shared! For both sets of services, what a blessing it was to have the church stuffed to overflowing! I think we all can agree that fills our hearts in a special way!

And now...and now what? The presents have been opened, the company has left town, our holiday travels are done. And now what? We debate just when the tree and lights should come down. We consider if the post-holiday diet/exercise regimen is going to work or last.

But I surely pray that our “now what?” doesn’t include any question about our Christmas. Somewhere along the line, we will be asked “How was your Christmas?” Dear Christian, don’t hesitate to say the truth!

It was joyful - filled with the joy of the Savior born to save us all!

It was Christ-centered - distractions and side-stories never stole the spotlight!

It was just what you needed - peace, comfort, salvation - all ours to have!

God bless you and yours as we transition from Christmas into the new year! We pray for perfect 20/20 spiritual vision in 2020!

Mr. P

Dear friends,

On behalf of my family, I would like to take up some space in this month’s newsletter to offer a heart-felt THANK YOU! We have seen tremendous support in thoughts, prayers, cards, and gifts at this time of year. And not only for the Christmas season, but also on behalf of Kelsey, her injury, recent surgery, and recovery. God is good! He has given our family all of you to be our support system, our dear friends, and our church family. We honestly could never repay Gethsemane for all the support, love, and care we receive all year round! God bless you all for being such a blessing to us!

We pray that we can be a blessing to you in the new year!

The Ps