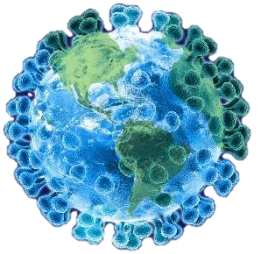
Navigating Life in a COVID World:



Assess Reality, Take Reasonable Precautions, Move Forward in Faith

Definition:

> **COVID-19**: A microscopic, viral bomb producing a sub-sonic boom experienced the world round, with ever-expanding and worsening aftershocks.

We find ourselves simultaneously in the wake of COVID-19's boom (with cases still increasing and impacting our communities) and its aftershocks (in rising anxiety, fear, and uncertainty as the shutdown impacts agriculture, education, businesses, social gatherings, ministry, and more).

What, then, do we do?

In a soundbite: rightly assess reality, take reasonable precautions, and move forward in faith.

Let's consider each in turn:

Rightly Assess Reality

Considering COVID, we know that the risk is real. It is a contagious virus. There is no vaccine. And it appears to be more deleterious to older adults. But this is only a small slice of reality. To rightly assess reality, we need to back up from the individual COVID tree and consider the entire forest. In other words, we need to look beyond the present pandemic. What is true about reality, about what Ecclesiastes calls "life under the sun"?

It's risky!

Life under the sun is characterized by risk, what Ecclesiastes calls "time and chance." Consider the words of Ecclesiastes' teacher:

> Again I saw that under the sun the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor bread to the wise, nor riches to the intelligent, nor favor to those with knowledge, but *time and chance happen to them all* (Ecclesiastes 9:11).

The teacher is saying that life under the sun is characterized by the aging process and by uncertainty. The aging process leaves us vulnerable to things like viruses, and chance afflicts the young and old alike. "Time and chance happen" to us all. This is reality.

As such, this new coronavirus isn't really new to reality. Yes, this particular viral strain is new to our experience, but deadly viruses are not new. Along with things like diseases and accidents, viruses are a part of life under the sun and have been since the Fall of Adam and Eve. Since the Fall, time has steadily weakened us, chance has unpredictably wounded us, and death has relentlessly killed us. This is reality.

The hyperventilating news coverage almost sounds like people discovering reality for the first time: "*Gasp.* This world isn't safe! *Gasp.* We could get sick! *Gasp.* We could die from this!" Scripture protects us from such breathlessness by revealing this sober truth: Life under the sun is risky.

Take Reasonable Precautions

Knowing this, we take reasonable precautions. We buckle our seatbelts. We make healthy eating choices. We pay attention to health guidelines, wash our hands, cover our coughs, practice social distancing, and may choose to wear a mask, but we know that nobody gets out unscathed. In fact, nobody gets out alive, which is why the world desperately needs a Savior. Even if we escape the initial boom of this pandemic, and even if we avoid its potentially bone-rattling aftershocks, nobody escapes time, chance, and death. You could seal yourself in an insulated bubble on a deserted island, and time, chance, and death will still find you. Nobody eludes life under the sun. Nobody.

None of this should scare us – because the world has a Savior! And let's make sure we don't shortchange this Savior: He's not merely a Savior of souls, He's the Savior of the whole show! The very creation itself is waiting on the edge of its seat for the revealing of the inheritors of the kingdom of God because it will mean creation's liberation from sin's curse (see Romans 8:18-25). In other words, creation can scarcely contain its enthusiasm for the return of Jesus and the resurrection and glorification of God's redeemed because it will mean creation's glorification. The creation will be shot through with the glory of God as Jesus makes it new, liberating it and us from the effects of the Fall.

Move Forward in Faith

Knowing the nature of reality – it's risky! – and taking reasonable precautions, we can move forward in faith, leaning heavily on the promises of God.

> Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
> I will fear no evil,
> for you are with me…(Psalm 23:4)
>
> God is our refuge and strength,
> a very present help in trouble.
> Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way… (Psalm 46:1-2)
>
> The LORD is on my side; I will not fear (Psalm 118:6).
>
> I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 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 (Romans 8:38-39).
>
> I am with you always, to the end of the age (Matthew 28:20).

With these promises in our hearts, even with them daily echoing from our lips (Try it! Speak them aloud.), we are able to live our lives under the sun without fear because we know our lives are secure in the Son, Jesus Christ.

This is how we navigate a COVID world. This is how we rightly assess reality, take reasonable precautions, and move forward in faith leaning heavily on the promises of God. – Pastor Conner

Congratulations, Confirmands!

Haleigh Elizabeth Alexander
Birthday: October 6, 2005
Baptized: December 23, 2009
Daughter of Michael and Megan Alexander
For 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. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. Ephesians 2:8-10

Brooklynn Elizabeth Booth
Birthday: June 23, 2006
Baptized: September 24, 2006
Daughter of Ben and Beth Booth
But now thus says the LORD, He who created you, O Jacob, He who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. Isaiah 43:1

Natalie Shayne Griesman
Birthday: September 11, 2006
Baptized: October 1, 2006
Daughter of Jason and Laura Irlmeier
and Ruben and Halie Griesman
For nothing will be impossible with God. Luke 1:37

Araya Kayann Hass
Birthday: February 21, 2006
Baptized: September 23, 2018
Daughter of Neil and Shala Hass
Godparent: Shelly Gruhn
And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." Acts 16:31

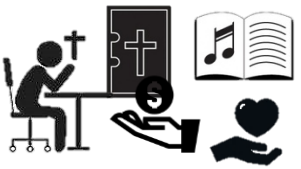
Tyler Eugene Heaton
Birthday: November 22, 2005
Baptized: January 8, 2006
Son of Mike and Robin Heaton
Commit your way to the LORD; trust in Him, and He will act. Psalm 37:5

Ross Bradley Kusel
Birthday: December 5, 2005
Baptized: February 11, 2006
Son of Brad and Heather Kusel
Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. Isaiah 41:10

Eryn Joanne Ramsey
Birthday: December 6, 2005
Baptized: January 8, 2006
Daughter of Eric and Jodi Ramsey
It is the LORD who goes before you. He will be with you; He will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed. Deuteronomy 31:8

Olivia Jo Beck
Birthday: July 11, 2005
Baptized: September 17, 2005
Daughter of Don and Trisha Beck
The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? Psalm 27:1

You need routines



I have a very simple point to make in this article: You need routines, especially spiritual routines, to be a mature follower of Jesus. And now is the time to establish them. Let me explain.

Let's start simple, in the everyday experiences of life. You are wired for routines. It's how you make sense out of life and how you're able to be an effective, productive person. Your toothbrush goes in a certain place. Your spoons go in a certain spot. Your socks have a certain drawer, maybe even a certain way they have to be folded! And when they move (or when somebody moves them!), your routines are thrown off. You are momentarily disoriented. For a few moments your world doesn't make sense.

On purely functional level, you need these regularities, these unmoved anchor points, to free up your brain to think about other things – which flowers you might like to plant in your new flower bed, which new recipes you'd like to try, what you think about the program you watched the night before. The regularities in your life free your mind to think, to be creative, and to imagine. This is a huge component in your ability to flourish as an individual.

People who are highly disorganized and whose lives are devoid of routine and regularities are bound in disorder and confusion, spending large amounts of their lives looking for something they lost or floundering about in confusion. Their minds aren't free to think or reflect or imagine. So, as strange as it might sound, you need to bind yourself to regular, healthy routines in order to free yourself to flourish.

As a side note, an ordered life with predictable regularities is one of greatest gifts parents can give to their children, because it frees children's minds to dream and to problem solve.

Now, let's consider how this applies to our spiritual lives and why now is the time to establish spiritual routines. For the past several months our world has been struggling through a pandemic. Its casualties are many: millions sick, thousands dead, a stressed health care system, a disrupted supply chain, unemployed workers, devastated business owners, discouraged farmers, fearful and isolated people, exhausted public health servants, struggling social service workers, and elevated instances of substance abuse, juvenile crime, and domestic violence, to name a few.

How are we supposed to process this? How should we think about it? These are the obvious questions. The less obvious ones, but the ones we need to be asking so that we can address the obvious ones, are *How do we learn* how *to think about these questions? And what should we be doing to process these realities?*

And this is where regular spiritual routines come in to play. When we say "regular spiritual routines," we're talking about consistently worshiping at the same time and on the same day (whether in the church building or through a livestream feed or, if you can't access these, through radio or printed resources). So, even if you're worshiping at home via livestream, you should join the church at the appointed worship times (if this isn't possible, establish a regular time that is). Say the responses and sing the hymns as best you can. The routine matters. The ritual matters. It changes the way you listen.

Regular spiritual routines would also include daily devotional routines. Zion and Trinity offer many –

daily streamed devotions and prayers, multiple weekly worship opportunities, Bible studies, the Zion App (that will read the Bible to you!), and more. Be regular with these and any that you establish on your own. If you can't participate live with Zion and Trinity, do it at a consistent time. If you relegate it to "whenever you have time," you won't ever have time. The routine matters. The discipline matters. You may think you have firm convictions about your faith, and that's great, but it is your regular and repeated actions that will actually make you into a person of conviction, a person who practices your convictions.

Spiritual routines would also include looking to the needs of your neighbor. Make a plan to call your neighbor and then do it. If it remains an ideal – something you think is important but that never gets translated into to a regular, repeated action – it won't happen. You have to lead your convictions.

Spiritual routines and discipline would also include your support of the mission and ministry of the church. It's important to find a way to make this happen consistently. Your regular and consistent giving not only blesses the mission and ministry of the church (and there is currently more ministry to be done than we have funds to do!), but it also blesses you by shaping you in real and profound ways. It was Jesus who said that your heart follows your treasure (Matthew 6:19-21). You lead your heart with your treasure. You put your treasure where you want your heart to be and your heart follows it. As mentioned above, having firm convictions is great, but it's the regular and repeated actions that make you into a person of lived conviction.

These regular spiritual routines, like firm anchor points, provide the stability you need in the midst of life's storms to be able to process things like pandemics without being lost at sea. Your repeated patterns, your habits, make you who you are. In fact, your regular and repeated actions actually reconfigure your brain! The full explanation is complicated, having to do with the plasticity of the brain, but your regular and repeated actions build highways in your brain that your thoughts will travel down. So what you do over and over literally affects the way you think!

The present pandemic has upended so many of the anchor points we took for granted (jobs, healthcare, groceries, school, sports, church, and more!), like somebody hiding our toothbrushes, spoons, and socks simultaneously. The experience has been jarring! And it may remain so for some time. So now is the time to establish firm spiritual routines. Now is the time to develop these disciplines as an individual and as a family. Now.

You need these disciplines. You need these routines. These are the disciplines and routines that will enable you to process this pandemic and its aftermath, which we are only now beginning to experience. These are the disciplines that will turn you into a mature follower of Jesus. These are the routines that will anchor you in the storm yet to come.

And these routines, these anchors, will hold you because they are ultimately anchored in the unmoved, unfading, and unwavering Word of God. "All flesh," all the things of the flesh (jobs, health, sports, etc.), all of it "is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever" (1 Peter 1:24-25).

You need these routines. – Pastor Conner

Darth Maul, Original Sin, A New Hope

Warning! I realize that this article has many references to movies you may have never seen, but I really appreciate how the *Star Wars* movies and their characters help us understand GOD's truth. No hurt feelings if you skip this article :) Rev. AJ

My 9-year-old self scarfed down chicken strips at Culvers during my friend Matt Heckert's birthday party. I had hoped that eating quickly would mean we'd walk over to the next-door theater sooner in order to see the premier of Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace.

The film blew my little brain away! Lightsaber sword battles; blaster guns; starships. What more could a little kid ask for? One of the most striking features of the film was the character Darth Maul. Decked in all black, Maul's alien species features a crown of thorns encircling their head and bear red and black stripes on their faces. His mere appearance said *bad guy*. His actions affirmed his demon-like appearance, but his demise came all too quickly. In the first film of the prequel saga, Obi-Wan Kenobi (first portrayed by Sir Alec Guinness in the 70's) literally and figuratively cut Darth Maul down. Maul fell down a seemingly endless pit to his demise…or so fans thought.

A little over a decade later…oh wait, spoilers ahead…Darth Maul reappeared in the animated Clone Wars show on a planet made exclusively of garbage. But he had physical deformities. His horns had grown out like a child who desperately needs a haircut. Since Obi-Wan dispatched Maul's legs in The Phantom Menace, Maul has somehow fashioned leftovers from the garbage planet to make new legs.

But what's kept Maul alive all these years? Here's the genius and horror of it all; the thing generating Maul's life is *hatred*. Maul hates Kenobi for what he had done to Maul. Revenge keeps Maul's pulse moving and his eyelids open.

And here's why Maul is such a compelling character for understanding GOD's truth…

Original Sin

As a viewer, you find out that an evil dark space wizard (a Sith), kidnapped Maul from an early age; Maul was targeted early on. To some degree, the lifestyle of hunting and killing Jedis (the good guys in the Star Wars universe) was thrust upon Maul. The doctrine of Original Sin states that every human inherits the status, responsibility, condemnation, punishment for our first ancestor, Adam. It's thrust upon us; inherited.[1] Adam ruined

[1] All analogies breakdown. Here, Maul is very much a victim; he was kidnapped at birth. We're guilty when it comes to original sin. We're responsible for the condemnation we receive. You might be wondering though, "How is that fair? I didn't go against GOD and eat the forbidden fruit! Adam should be held responsible. Not me!" True enough. A couple of responses to that: 1) maybe we have a problem with the doctrine of Original Sin because we're good Americans. That is, everyone should have a fair chance; you're your own person and you shouldn't be held accountable for Adam's mistakes. Problem with

us as much as bad roots ruin the rest of the tree, or as Pieper, a mid-twentieth century Seminary professor, argues a bad king ruins the lives of his people too. But on top of that we're equally responsible for corrupting the world.

The reality is we own the title of sinner pretty quickly in our lives (that's why we, in part, baptize babies). That couldn't be clearer in Maul's life. While the life of hunting down Jedis is thrust upon him, he owns it. He has opportunities to turn away from his life as a galactic criminal, but he doesn't. In fact, his anger towards Kenobi keeps him alive – if that's really living.

The reality is no matter how much sin is inherited, we have the ability to turn away, but we don't. In many ways Maul is so intriguing because he represents us in that we adopt a lifestyle in which we allow anger, revenge, and superiority to fuel our lives. That's why Paul says, "Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God…." Why are we so angry when we don't get our way at the potluck? Vengeance; Original Sin has corrupted us and we have owned Original Sin. Why are we hacking people down with our words like we're swinging a blade? We're demonstrating the reality of Original Sin.

A New Hope

After the rise and fall of Maul's criminal organization, Crimson Dawn, Maul hunts down Kenobi one more time in order to appease his inner anger and to achieve revenge. Lightsabers ignited, Kenobi strikes Maul down; Maul dies in the arms of Kenobi. Maul guesses Kenobi is protecting someone; he's right. Kenobi confides in the dying Maul that his ward is the Chosen One – Luke Skywalker – the one destined to bring peace and balance to the galaxy. Skywalker is the only one who can bring peace to both Kenobi and Maul's life. Maul's hope rests in the life of Skywalker.

The reason why Star Wars is so compelling is because it reflects the Christian story so well. Like Maul, we've inherited and owned sin, and we hope for a new way of life that comes from outside of us. Our hope, of course, isn't a Skywalker but Jesus of Nazareth…the Christ…the Chosen One. Paul writes: "For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Cor. 5:21; also check out Rom. 5 again). We inherit righteousness and become that which we couldn't be on our own because Christ enters our lives. – Pastor Johnson

Congratulations to St. Paul in Carroll!

Pastor Ryan Rhoerig (from St. Paul, Alta) has accepted the call to serve as St. Paul, Carroll's pastor! Installation is tentatively set for July 5.

Special thanks to Pastor Riggert for his faithful and loving service as vacancy pastor!

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that is we're being good Westerners when we think that way. When GOD tells Abraham that he must kill Isaac, Abraham isn't mad that GOD's being unfair; Abraham's main concern is how exactly will GOD keep His promises if Isaac dies. He doesn't take issue with GOD's justice. Why do we? 2) Paul argues that sin and condemnation entered through one man (deserved), but a new man, Jesus Christ, gives life to us (undeserved) [check out Romans 5]. If we take issue with GOD's justice, shouldn't we also take issue with His mercy and grace in order to be consistent?

Congratulations, Graduates!

Grant Thomas Behrens
Baptized: June 15, 2002
Confirmation Date: April 24, 2016
Son of Dan and Jennifer Behrens
For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. Romans 1:16

Renee Marie Grimm
Baptismal Date: January 20, 2002
Confirmation Date: April 24, 2016
Daughter of Ken and Rhonda Grimm
For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.
1 Samuel 16:7

Miranda Jo Benton
Baptismal Date: February 1, 2002
Confirmation Date: April 24, 2016
Daughter of Brad Benton and Amy Benton
Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart. Psalm 37:4

Adam Karl Gruhn
Baptismal Date: March 17, 2002
Confirmation Date: April 24, 2016
Son of Todd and Shelly Gruhn
[God] is my steadfast love and my fortress, my stronghold and my deliverer, my shield and he in whom I take refuge, Psalm 144:2

Lucy Marie Borkowski
Baptismal Date: August 5, 2001
Confirmation Date: April 24, 2016
Daughter of Steve and Holly Borkowski
For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Jeremiah 29:11

Kamryn Elizabeth Lesle
Confirmation Date: April 24, 2016
Daughter of Larry and Melissa Lesle
Godparents: Mindy and Robert Betzler
I can do all things through him who strengthens me. Philippians 4:13

Lillian Kae Genzen
Baptismal Date: March 9, 2002
Confirmation Date: April 24, 2016
Daughter of Tyler Heithoff and Becky Genzen
Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. Romans 12:2

Rylan Avery Hass
Baptismal Date: September 23, 2018
Son of Neil and Shala Hass

Running Commentary… *2 John:2*

1 *The elder to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not only I, but also all who know the truth,* ***2*** ***because of the truth that abides in us and will be with us forever:***

One reason we're willing to claim that John the Apostle (Jesus' Disciple) wrote this letter is due to the common phrasing that appears in 2 John compared to the Gospel of John. Remember Jesus' words in John 15: "If you ***abide*** in me, and my words ***abide*** in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you." On top of that, the Greek word for "truth" in verse 2 is the same word Jesus uses to describe Himself in John 14: "I am the way, and the **truth**…."

This truth is incredible! Why? John will go on in this short letter to identify the grace and mercy of the Father and His Son. The greatest evidence of that grace and mercy shows up in the life of Jesus at the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. Those are true events with significant implications; namely, grace and mercy from the ultimate Being of the Cosmos – GOD Himself. The truth is you've been connected to Him, and we abide in that truth! Right now and into the age to come.

Evening Prayer

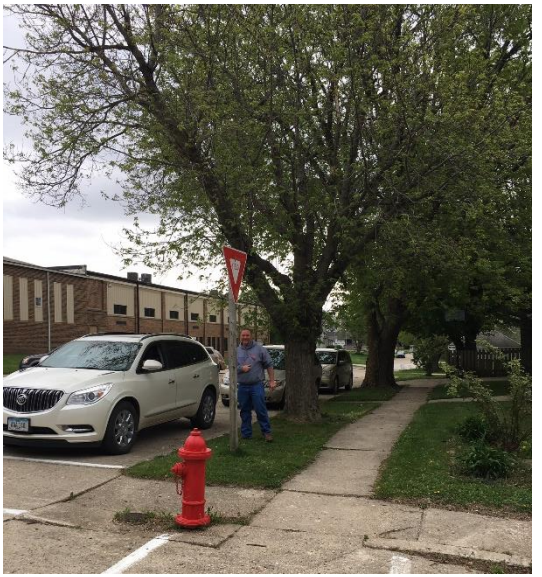
Liturgia Horarum

Thursdays @ 6:30pm

starting June 4

Taking Time to be with What is Holy…

Bob & Jean delivering meals to Jill Arp's van



To so many who helped lift me up through the benefit, thank you so very much!

With love, Janet Smith

"A friend loves at all times..."
(Proverbs 17:17)

Zion's Friendship Committee: Hospital Hospitality

The Friendship Committee has been busy over the past month, reaching out by phone to dozens of members, especially those who may be feeling the isolation caused by social distancing. We have truly enjoyed the chance to visit with so many of you!

But, given the committee's limited numbers and schedules, we were thrilled when Cheral Buhr agreed to coordinate a small task force of volunteers to continue connecting members to each other by telephone. These calls check for any needs that Zion could address, offer encouragement, and simply allow people to enjoy visiting during this time when human interaction is limited for many. What a wonderful way for Zion members to continue sharing Jesus' love!

And remember: You don't have to wait for a phone call—if there's some way that Zion can help you, whether that's connecting you to worship or study resources, or helping with your shopping, call or email the church office!

Another exciting May project grew out of our desire to offer some gesture of appreciation and encouragement to the staff at the Manning Regional Healthcare Center. Always a blessing to our community, they've experienced a lot of additional stress due to this pandemic. With perfect timing, Karl and Donna Rutz acquired a Thrivent Action card just as Ramsey's Market opened the beautiful new store in Manning. Donna and Junior Committee Member Brooklyn used the card to shop the new grocery store for items to stock the hospital's staff snack cart with nonperishable items. We also included home-baked goods, handwritten cards with Scripture verses, and a thank-you heart that featured a piece of chocolate, a prayer, and Zion's contact information. We hope and pray that our project not only brightened the day for hospital staff by providing appreciation and treats, but also reminded them of God's unfailing love and purposes for them during this uncertain time.

What will the Friendship Committee's next project be? Well, why don't you shoot us some suggestions? If you've seen needs, or have ideas for ways the committee can fulfill its mission of connecting and equipping members of the Body of Christ to serve, live, and give in the church and the community as the Body of Christ (We promise we won't make you join the committee…unless you want to.). You're also always welcome to donate toward future projects: Just mark your donation "Friendship Committee" when you mail it, put it in the offering plate, or drop it in the secure lockbox.

Mission Forward

Paul writes in 2 Timothy 1, "God gave us a spirit not of fear (timidity) but of power and love and self-control" (2 Timothy 1:7). These are important words. This is what God has given us. In a world often beset by fear, it's important to remember the spirit of power, love, and self-control God has given us. In the coming months, the aftershocks of the corona shutdown are going to be felt in very real and acute ways. I don't say that to scare any of us. I say it to motivate us to action now. Further, I am asking you to pray for a "mission forward" mindset for Zion and Trinity.[2]

Here's the reality: members of the Body of Christ are going to be hurting. People not yet included in the Body are going to be hurting. So I'll be bold and say to you, now is not a time for timid support of the mission and ministry of God's Church. When I say support, I'm not merely speaking of financial support, although I will address that in just a moment. I'm also speaking of prayer support and time support.

Please pray. Thank you to those of you who have been joining me every day for prayer. Please continue to invite people to join us. If you haven't joined us for prayer yet, I invite you to log on to Zion's Facebook page daily at 7:30 a.m. (you may also watch it later in the day because it is recorded). If you don't have internet, please commit to praying for the mission and ministry of the Church. The needs are only growing more pronounced.

I'm speaking personally when I say this, but I know I speak on behalf of many, many pastors in our churches: please ask what you can do to support the mission and ministry of the church. My list is always longer than my week (I'm sure Pastor Johnson's and Deaconess Tiffany's is the same!). There is always ministry I can't get to.

Let me throw a couple ideas out there for you to consider:

- Can you read? Do you have a cell phone? Can you have someone video you reading a Bible story for kids or could you come into church and have someone video you reading? Can you organize something like this? Wouldn't it be great if we had a story reader coordinator who could get the videos to the church office and the church office could publish periodically? Are you aware that Concordia Publishing House has a wealth of free digital resources for adults, families, and children? Can you help us organize an outreach plan to share these resources?

- Do you have kids or grandkids who like doing crafts or writing cards? Can you coordinate crafty kids? Think creatively. Set up your cell phone and teach a craft that several kids in different homes could do and then mail out or deliver to church members or neighbors.

- Are you good with technology? Do you know how much time it takes to manage the church's communication platforms? At Zion we manage the App, the website, the Facebook and YouTube pages, the announcements on the screen on Sundays, the newsletter, phone blasts, handwritten postcards, video messages to church

[2] This article is an adaptation of the morning prayer from May 17.

leaders, letters, phone calls, video stories, and all the streamed content. Maybe you have suggestions for improvement. Maybe you could offer your insights and expertise. We could use your help. There's so much I don't understand. Maybe you could help us improve our efficiency and expand our reach.

Maybe there's something else you can do. I'm asking you to think about it. Be creative. How can you support the mission and ministry of the church? Now, when you get creative, I'm asking that you also think about how to coordinate your creativity and manage it. Please don't just come up with an idea that you drop on me or Pastor Johnson or Deaconess Tiffany that I or they have to manage by ourselves. Your idea may be a one-time thing; that's fine, but it may require coordination. Think through this. This is one of the hardest and most time consuming aspects of ministry for pastors and church workers. People have fantastic ideas, but we don't often think through how to manage it and perpetuate it, so it just gets added to the pastor or worker's list and doesn't have the impact it could.

Let me speak now to the financial support. Now is a time to step into this. I'm speaking especially to members who are in financially stable situations. This is a call to step up in anticipation of the hurt that's coming for many people. I'm not just talking about the financial strain people are going to endure, although this will be particularly acute for some. I'm also talking about the effects on mental health and relationships. There are going to be struggles.

I'll be lovingly blunt: we will need dollars to provide resources to help people in their needs – marriage resources, parenting resources, financial education resources, and mental health resources. I think it would be absolutely tragic if the church was prevented from doing ministry for lack of funds. And my prayer is that we as the church could move from an "if only" mindset – "if only we had the funds, we could…" – to a "mission forward" mindset – "let's move this mission forward."

We have been given a spirit of power and love and self-control. Now is not a time for timidity. Now is a time for moving the mission forward.

Let's pray.

Lord God, many members of the Body of Christ and many of our neighbors have felt the effects of this pandemic and we know that the aftershocks are only now beginning to be felt. Embolden, energize, and mobilize Your Church to move the mission and ministry of Jesus forward. Open our eyes to see need and show us how You have equipped us to meet those needs. Drive fear far from us and empower us by the working of Your Spirit through Your Word to works of mercy. Move us into the lives of our neighbors in the name of Jesus to show love. Where You have blessed us financially, move us to step into our support of Your Church so that Your Church may not be limited by an "if only" mindset, but empowered by a "mission forward" mindset. Thank You for loving us. Thank You for giving us a spirit of power, love, and self-control. Thank You for Your bountiful gifts in Jesus and the astonishing promises of life, renewal, and co-reign with Christ. We love You Lord God, and praise You for Your goodness toward us in Jesus, in whose Name we pray, Amen.

So, What Do We Do Now?

As the state and country start "opening up," what is life going to look like? Will we ever go back to a pre-COVID normal? How will we live? Some, no doubt, will go to stores and restaurants without a mask, while some will be uncomfortable without a mask. Some will continue practicing social distancing, largely remaining home. And some will find themselves somewhere in between. As you move forward, it's important that you do so with a sober assessment of your physical and mental health.

Zion Cares

Estimates suggest that nearly half of U.S. adults reported a negative impact on their mental health due to worry and stress over the present pandemic and its ongoing aftershocks. There is a discernable link between social isolation and loneliness to mental health struggles. Negative mental health effects due to social isolation may be particularly pronounced among older adults, as these adults are already at risk for depression and suicidal ideation.

Older adults are the most likely age demographic to develop serious illness if they contract the new coronavirus. Therefore it is especially important for that population to continue taking reasonable precautions, giving special attention to hand washing, social distancing, and even considering wearing masks.

If you notice someone exhibiting signs of depression, it is very important to take action. Initiating a conversation may be difficult for some. Here are some conversation starters:

Senior Life Solutions®

1. Do you want to talk about it? I'm here when you're ready.
2. What can I do to help today?
3. How are you managing?
4. You're not alone. I may not understand exactly how you feel, but you're not alone.
5. You're important to me.
6. That sounds like it's really hard. How are you coping?
7. I'm really sorry you're going through this. I'm here for you if you need me.

There will probably be no going back to a pre-COVID normal, but that doesn't mean we resign ourselves to defeatism or that we yield to depression. No, we move forward in faith together, receiving help when we need it, as we trust Jesus for the grace sufficient for each day.

Janet Brus, RN
Psychiatric Medical Care
Manning Regional Healthcare Center
Program Director
712-655-8262

The safety committee is excited to share the news of a first aid area in the fellowship hall. You will note the AED is hung on the wall next to the family restroom, with a nice cabinet containing various medical supplies below. The drawer contains bandaids and other simple supplies. A medical bag donated by Bob Genzen with supplies for trained medical staff is located in the lower portion of the cabinet. Thank you to the trustees for hanging the AED and for all who helped make this project happen!

UPCOMING EVENTS @ ZION & TRINITY

Please Note! All times and events are subject to change

	June 2	**Where We've Come From (Resurrection to Reformation)** **2:00 at Zion (Tuesdays in June)**
MISSIONS	**June 14**	**Door Offering at Zion for Professor Oliver and Family** **Support Zion's Missionary in Taiwan after worship on June 14 or drop your contribution in the secure lock box outside the offices or mail it in.**
	June 25	**Thursday afternoon Communion Service at Zion (1:30 p.m.)**
	June 25	**Historic Trinity Summer Series** **7:00 p.m.**

ZION

June schedule:

- Morning Prayer via Facebook Live at 7:30 a.m. (viewable anytime)
- Sunday worship at 9:00 a.m.
- All Sunday services will also be live streamed
- Bible studies will continue to be offered via Facebook Live on Sundays and Thursdays (watch for specific dates for Thursday studies).

TRINITY

Summer Schedule:

- Thursday 6:30pm in-person & live-streamed on Facebook (different service than Saturday) Holy Communion on last Thursday of the Month
- Saturdays 4pm in person & live-streamed on Facebook @ Trinity-Manilla church building. Every last Saturday service will be outside at Manilla Manor during the summer (rear of property). In case of rain, we'll move to Trinity-Manilla Fellowship Hall. For July & August we may try to move to the Manilla Bandshell, but we'll keep you posted.
- June 27, July 25, August 29 bring a lawn chair or blanket for outdoor services.
- We have a new FM transmitter so if you prefer to sit in your car and listen to the service on your car radio you're welcome to do so.

The preschool staff and members of the preschool board would like to thank Zion for helping get our dream of an endowment fund off the ground this spring when $10,000 was transferred from the Zion Endowment fund to open the Preschool Endowment fund. The goal of the Preschool endowment is to ensure long term financial stability and potential supplemental funding for preschool families in the future. We will continue to grow the fund by committing 1% of all money that comes through the preschool, to the fund. Additionally, we are able to place gifts directed to the Preschool endowment in the fund. Through the endowment fund, we are able to build upon our program and look to the future and see the ministry of the preschool continue. Thank you to the Endowment Committee, Zion Council, and congregation for your continued support!

June Birthdays and Anniversaries @ Zion & Trinity

Birthdays (T = Trinity)

1. McKensie Bess
   Monica Christensen
   Jonathan Conner
2. Janice Ress
   Sylvia Saunders (T)
   Autumn Winter
3. Dara Jorgensen (T)
4. Kelli Grimm
   Alexander Lingle (T)
5. Warren Puck
6. Angela Albertsen
   Nyle Gruhn (T)
   Brandon Ranniger
   Jason Rasmussen (T)
7. Wyatt Bandow (T)
   Jarod Gruhn
   Easton Woebke (T)
8. Jacob Ewoldt
   Adalyn Stribe
   David Vetter (T)
9. Kristine Bunker
   Debra Blom (T)
   Jon Saunders
10. Amy Bradley
    Luke Doyel
    Deanna Hagedorn
    Neil Hass
    Judy Jacobsen
    Steve Page
11. Jerry Brus (T)
    Ron Bunker
    Luke Ramsey
    Nolan Ramsey
12. Andrew Ferry (T)
13. Nick Backhaus
    Travis Neumann
14. Richard Irwin (T)
    Jessica Lingle (T)
    Jessica Winter
17. Paul Boell (T)
    Lily Doyel
    Dale Reinke
18. Dan Kerkhoff
19. Wilma Bogatzke
    Daniel Vogel
20. Aubrey Alexander
    Lorrell Borkowski
21. Rodney Kurth
    Mason Vonnahme
22. John Blom (T)
    Duncan Hilsabeck
    Kim Wegener
23. Brooklynn Booth
    Bowen Bruck
    Mary Grimm
    Matthew Vogel
24. Holly Borkowski
    Lana Georgius (T)
    Dale Holmes (T)
    Cooper Kienast
    Kristine Lingle (T)
25. Tanner Hanson (T)
    Jared Rosener
26. Shirley Ahrendsen
    Dennis Barten
    Russell Bruhn
28. Jordynne Bauer
    Yvonne Klindt (T)
29. Lynn Schroeder (T)
    Hannah Willison

If we missed or misspelled your name, please inform the church office.

Anniversaries

2. Jacob & Mallory Dreier
   Duane & Janice Monson
5. Roger & Heather
   Rasmussen (T)
6. Ken & Gerry Stripling
8. Jason & Kimber Opperman
   Bill & Sheila Simonsen
10. Stan & Nancy Baack
    Brian & Deb Birks (T)
    Ron & Kristine Bunker
    Ryan & Heidi Crawford
11. Lyle & Arlene Bald
12. Stan & Joleen Spies (T)
15. Lynn & Sonia Nulle
    Dan & Lois Peters
16. Loren & Jeanette Ferry (T)
24. Jeff & Amy Bradley
    Curt & Debra Janssen
26. Mike & Robin Heaton
27. Jerry & Carla Backhaus
29. Larry & Adella Farley (T)
    Craig & Luann Langel

Official Acts

Transferred In:
Takara Rae Hoffmeier from Zion Lutheran Church, Denison, IA; May 1, 2020

Transferred Out:
Brian, Diane, Nathan, and Amelia Vetter to Trinity Lutheran Church, Manilla, IA, April 8, 2020

Funerals: (services at Zion unless otherwise noted.)
Lowell Lewis Schroeder; Died May 8, 2020; Funeral May 12, 2020; Pastor Jonathan Conner

Youth Confirmation:
May 24, 2020 by Pastor Jonathan Conner
Haleigh Elizabeth Alexander, Brooklynn Elizabeth Booth, Natalie Shayne Griesman, Araya Kayann Hass, Tyler Eugene Heaton, Ross Bradley Kusel, Eryn Joanne Ramsey

In Our Prayers

Patty Meeves (Laurene's daughter in law), Ron Brus, Sherri Steffes, Jim Deevers, Rick Spack, Natalie Mason (Bruce and Mary Grimm's daughter), Gage Carlson (great grandson of Russ and Virginia Mohr), Maridee Bohlmann (David & Joene Bohlmann's daughter-in-law), Janet Smith, Nancy Grimm, Dewayne Buhr, Rosemary Stamm (John Erich's sister), Nancy Walters, Ron Schilling, Connie Sorbe (Annette Hilsabeck's mother), Russ Mohr, Jean Kusel, Carolyn Werner