THE EAGLE

MAY 2024

Why does God Allow Evil?

God's good blessings to you St. John's Family! In our adult Bible study class, we have often bantered around various forms of the question, "Why does God allow suffering or darkness of despair to impact our lives?" This question confronts us far too often and challenges our belief in the God who is gracious and all-powerful. C.S. Lewis in his short book *The Problem of Pain* asked, if God is love (and He is) then the Lord will want to do good things for us; and if God is almighty then He will do what He wants; so, Why is there Evil? The Word of God gives us many reasons why God may allow evil and His people to suffer. Below, I summarize twelve reasons.

1. Suffering is a part of the curse of sin.

In the beginning, there was no sin, no suffering, no evil. This is not my opinion. Consider: Gen. 1:31 "God saw every-thing that He had made, and behold, it was very good." But when Adam and Eve fell into sin, God's original warning came into the world, "on the day that you eat of it, you will surely die." Gen. 2:17b There-fore, sin and evil are as cause and effect. cf. Gen. 3:15-19 But why do **we** suffer evil? Not only have we inherited the sin sickness of Adam and Eve but we too have sinned, Eccl. 7:20 "There is not a righteous man on earth that doeth good and sinneth not." Rom. 3:23 "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

2. Evil comes from the "trinity of evil": namely, the devil, the world, and our own sinful flesh. I Peter 5:8 "Be sober, be vigilant; your adversary the devil, prowls around as a roaring lion, seeking those he may devour..." (f.t.)

1 John 2:15ff "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world."

Matthew 15:19 "For out of the heart come evil thoughts-murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander."

3. Some of the evil we suffer is the fitting punishment for sin.

For example, Gen. 4:10ff "The LORD said (to Cain)," Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground... Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth." Gen. 6:5ff (the Flood) "The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. The LORD regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled. **So** the LORD said, "I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created—and with them the animals, the birds and the creatures that move along the ground—for I regret that I have made them."

4. Suffering as the result of living in a sin filled world.

cf. Gen. 6:9ff Noah and the Flood; Gen. 19:12ff Lot in Sodom and Gomorrah. Noah was judged righteous but suffered. cp. Jesus

5. Evil can come as the result of the sins of others.

Gen. 20:4 "I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God. Visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of them that hate me." Children can suffer for sins of parents, just as children are blessed because of parents.

6. Satan tempts to get us to deny God and sin.

Job 1:9-12 *Satan said to the Lord,* Does Job fear God for naught? ... But stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face..." Note: Satan has no power apart from God allowing. Job 2:6 The LORD said to Satan, "Very well, then, he is in your hands; but you must spare his life."

7. God can use evil to bring us to repentance.

Hosea 5:15-6:1 *God says:* "Then I will go back to my place <u>until they admit their guilt</u>. And they will seek my face; in their misery they will earnestly seek me. Rom. 8:20 "Creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of him who subjected it in hope."

8. God can use evil as a test of faith, the refiner's fire.

1 Peter 1:6ff "In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. ⁷These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith, of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire-may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed." cp. John 15:1-4

9. God can use evil and our suffering for a greater good.

Gen. 50:20 *Joseph said to his brothers, "*You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good; to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives." cp. James 1:12-14

10. God can use evil to reveal His power and grace.

John 9:1-3 "As He went along, He saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked Him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents that he was born blind?' 'Neither this man nor his parents sinned,' said Jesus, 'but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life.'

11. God can use evil to teach us to rely on Him and prevent sin.

II Cor. 12:7-10 "To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me... But He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me..."

12. Our suffering may allow us to witness to others.

Ps. 50:15 "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will glorify me." II Cor. 1:4 (God) comforts us in all our afflictions, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

The above is intended to lubricate discussion about how we interact with God and one another. Can you think of other Biblical citations? Would you add additional points for consideration? Share your thought with a friend and please join us for adult Bible study every Sunday morning at 9:30 a.m. We grow better together!

With Much Love,

Rev. Jason Shaw

LENTEN & EASTER THANK YOU!

We are deeply grateful and thankful for the people who helped to make our Lenten and Easter worship opportunities meaningful experiences. So many people and families made an impact in helping to make our worship experience very special. Thank you for stepping up and touching us with the heart of Jesus.



CONFIRMATION

Four of our young people will renew their Baptismal vow through the rite of confirmation on Sunday, May 5, in the 10:30 am worship. These young people will also receive their first communion that day.

Those confirmed are:

Brogan Keltner Chloe Mapes

Elizabeth Murphy Colton Paulsen

If these young people are to remain faithful in Worship, Bible Study, and Youth Ministry—they need the support and encouragement of their parents, extended family, church staff, and congregation. Pray for these young people daily that they might remain faithful and continue growing in the faith.

BLESSING OF OUR HIGH SCHOOL ON MAY 19th!

During our Weekend Services we will be celebrating with our Seniors, their accomplishments, and a milestone in their lives. We will also have the opportunity to share in a service of blessing. Our graduating seniors this year are:

MOLLY AMENDT Le-Win High School
BRADY AURAND Le-Win High School
CAMDEM BURKE Le-Win High School
CIERRA HATELACKLe-Win High School
NATALIE MCNUTTLe-Win High School
FAITH OFFERMANN Le-Win High School
ARI PAISLEYLe-Win High School
OMAR PAISLEY Le-Win High School
ISABELLE PAULSEN Le-Win High School
JACOB SCHUMACHER Le-Win High School

PHONE DIRECTORY We are currently working on a new Church Directory for 2024. Please check the current Directory for your information and let the church office know if there are any changes. Please include email addresses.



THANK YOU FOR BEING THERE!

It's awesome to see the congregation going about the Lord's work and doing ministry and mission together. Our reports showed a congregation busy doing ministry and mission in our Lord's name. We've done a lot, but as always, we've got a lot of work to do as our missions continue.

Monday night, April 29, the Voter's elected a Vice-Chairman to serve on each Board—

Vice-Chairman of the Congregation: Craig Kroeger Vice Chairman of the Board of Elders: Tom Bannon Vice-Chairman of the Board of Education: Amy Jones

Vice-Chairman of the Board of Evangelism: Nick Leiendecker Vice-Chairman of the Board of Stewardship: Angie Bamberg Vice-Chairman of the Board of Trustees: Derek Tessendorf

Vice-Chairman of the Board of Youth Ministry: Maycee Bamberg

Vice-Chairman of the Board of Finance: Anita Mau

Board of My Friend's Closet: Karen Spinhirne and Diane Paulsen

These folks will serve as Vice-Chairman for one year and then become Chairman. They are eligible for two terms as such, after which they must take a one-year break from any office. Those serving on the My Friend's Closet Board serve a three-year term.

Thank you to all who serve our church family and our Lord Jesus Christ by giving of their time and talents.

Thank you for being willing to serve. Special thanks to those who agreed to be nominated, and we hope that you will consider serving in an appointed capacity. These people and the many others who serve on our Boards are carrying out our responsibilities as a congregation to serve our Lord and build His Kingdom. They need our support, our participation, and willingness to serve when called upon to pitch in. It begins with our active participation in worship and our ongoing financial support that allows follow through on our mission and ministry. Special thanks go out to all the people who give of their time, talent, and treasures to make our ministries happen. It's great to serve with you!

<u>BIRTH</u>

CHARLOTTE STAFANI GANZER, infant daughter of Lauren & Mitchel Ganzer, born April 23, 2024. Grandparents are Mike and Anita Parkinson, great-grandmother is Pat Fuchs.

Blessings to Charlotte and Family!

PARISH HEALTH NOTES

PLAY IT SAFE IN THE SUN – May is Skin Cancer Awareness Month

Outdoor fun does wonders for the body and soul, but we must remember that our skin needs extra protection from the sun. Of course, we all know that the sun can cause a

painful sunburn. Sun damage also causes premature skin aging, including wrinkles, spots, and dry, leathery skin texture. It can also lead to skin cancer.

Did you know you can get sunburned even on a cloudy day? Up to 80% of the sun's rays can penetrate light clouds, mist and fog! Snow reflects the sun like a mirror. Fresh snow reflects nearly 90% of the sun's rays. Dry surfaces even reflect some of the sun's rays – concrete reflects up to 85% of those rays.

Protect yourself during any outdoor activity with a sunscreen that has an SPF of at least 15. Sunscreen should be applied 15 to 30 minutes before going outdoors to allow the lotion to penetrate the skin. It should be reapplied after 2 hours. Protecting skin during the first 18 years of life can reduce the risk of some types of skin cancer by up to 78%.

"The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night." Psalm 121:6

FROM THE BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP

What does the Bible say about Stewardship?

According to scripture, God created Earth for mankind and we are now stewards of His creation. This means it is our responsibility to look after and take care of this world. We should accept this responsibility and appreciate God's gift of creation for being our home. Our stewardship of creation involves the caretaking of the environment and animals as well as our families and communities.



MAYBE NEXT TIME YOU'LL TRY A LITTLE SUNSCREEN...



FROM THE LENA LIVING CENTER OUTDOOR CONCERT PLANNED FOR AUSTUST 21ST, 2024

Various artists to perform, refreshments for sale including cakes, pies, and ice cream from the Udderly

Delicious Ice Cream truck from Stockton, IL. Save the date on your calendar. More detailed information to follow.

ST. JOHN'S ON THE MOVE---WORSHIP FOLDERS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED FROM:

Fritz & Betty Werhane: Zion Lutheran Church & Early Childhood Center Ft. Meyers, FL

HELP NEEDED AT THE FRIENDSHIP CENTER

We have some staffing challenges that need to be addressed. Please spread the word; we need a CNA for every Wednesday, every other Friday and to Sub. We also still need Bus and Van Drivers, and volunteers for Bus Aides. Please pray about this and see if you can plug in somewhere or know someone with just the right qualifications for any of these posted positions. Even if you can only do 1 day a week, we'd love to have you on the team. Every little bit helps.

DEAR CHURCH FAMILY, IT'S TIME FOR A NEW DIRECTORY

Celebrating faith.

Connecting families.

Sharing hope.

When people enter the doors of our church they are looking for a place to belong. Our directory brings us together to develop new relationships, connect with our own families and reconnect with those we haven't seen in a while. Join us for this "Connections Event" and be part of what God is doing right here at our church!

Directory Committee

Connections Event

Our church directory will not be complete without you. Join us to celebrate faith and family with our new church family album.

- Schedule your professional photography session when you stop by the sign-up table at church or simply go online and follow the instructions below.
 If we don't see your name on our list of appointments, you will receive a phone call inviting you to participate.
- Everyone who is photographed by Universal will receive a complimentary 8 x 10 portrait and a directory!
- Universal provides a complete professional portrait studio right here at our church!
 You'll enjoy a variety of poses, backgrounds, portrait sizes, finish and framing options AND have the opportunity to purchase portraits to give to family and friends.

Set your appointment with Universal today!



Gathering families, Connecting generations.



Online Scheduling Available!

To schedule your photography appointment online, simply go to **www.ucdir.com**, click on photography appointment scheduling login on the right side, enter <u>il368</u> in the Church Code field and enter <u>photos</u> in the Church Password field. Follow the prompts to schedule your family's appointment time. If you have 6 or more in your family please use 2 consecutive time slots. The online scheduling option is available Monday through Friday. **Appointments fill up quickly, so schedule as soon as possible to secure your preferred date and time.**

A SPECIAL BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION!!

Please help celebrate the 90th Birthday on May 3rd of **Fred Tessendorf**, (aka Junior) by sharing your memories with a card shower. 6286 IL Rt. 73 North, Lena, IL 61048. Let's make his 90th extra special!



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

SHUT-INS: We visit with our shut ins both in their home or in local facilities. Would you please pray about becoming a part of this ministry? We rotate and each volunteer's turn comes up about once every other month. Please contact

the church office if you have any questions. If you have a heart for our shut-ins and would like to get to know them a little better, join our team.

MAKE-A-SMILE CARDS FOR LENA LIVING CENTER - We are hoping to have MAY

Cards, using an MOTHER'S DAY & FLOWERS theme, donated next. If you are creative and are a card maker, please be a part of this wonderful venture and please include a sentiment or Bible verse inside the card. A basket will be placed on the table, outside the office, your beautiful creations and we will get the cards to Good Shepherd Church who in turn will get them to the Activity Director at the Living Center around the 10th of each month. Thank you in advance for your

willingness in being part of this venture. For questions, please contact the church office.



THANK YOU -AGAIN, to **Donny Fox** for the continued sharing of your time, talents and treasure in the bus ministry. You are much appreciated. Reports from the drivers are that the bus feels and drives like a new Bus!

for

THANK YOU ALSO TO JIM COX (AS I LOOK OUT MY OFFICE WINDOW), as once again, the mowing season begins. Thanks for all You do Jim.

HELP NEEDED AS MANY OF YOU MAY KNOW, we are having some staffing concerns as Linda, our secretary is experiencing some health issues. She has determined that she will be stepping down soon so that she can focus on healing with the hope that she can return in the future possibly in a bit different capacity. With that being said, we now need to hire a new staff member to learn and take over Linda's responsibilities. Her current position is 15 hours a week, with the main tasks of producing the weekly worship folder, the weekly Shine, answering the phone, making calls, and greeting people entering the office. Please, if you or someone you now would be interested in a part time position to serve St. John's, please call the office. The staff would be happy to answer any questions.

LIFELINE COALITION

Thanks to everyone that has been dropping off their baby bottles full of change and bills. It all adds up so fast. This past week, St. John's was able to send almost \$400 to Lifeline Coalition. Each patient with a positive pregnancy test receives an ultrasound the same day in their clinics, allowing her to connect with her baby immediately. Your support provides that life-saving connection! Many women, when they see the ultrasound pictures and are told the truths about abortion, choose LIFE!



When a woman finds out she's pregnant the first place she often turns to is her phone. When searching for help she is most likely to click on one of the top three search results to appear on her phone. Search engines give these top three spots to the abortion provider or life-affirming clinic willing to pay the most for top placement. From the first quarter of 2023 to the last quarter of 2023, the cost to reach one woman online increased 66%. Despite the deep pockets of abortion providers, we are not discouraged in the fight to reach women who are most vulnerable to abortion!

SUNDAY, MAY 4TH, IS THE ANNUAL WALK FOR LIFE, Bring your family & friends and join us as we celebrate life at 10 AM at the Koenig Shelter in Krape Park in Freeport IL, on Saturday, May 4th!

NORTHERN ILLINOIS FOOD TRUCK

May: 14th Orangeville, Jane Adams Trail Parking Lot 3-4:30pm

June: 11th St. John's parking lot 3-4:30

July: 9th Orangeville, Jane Adams Trail Parking Lot 3-4:30

August: 13th St. John's parking lot 3-4:30

CURRENT NEEDS FOR THE STEPHENSON COUNTY VA PANTRY

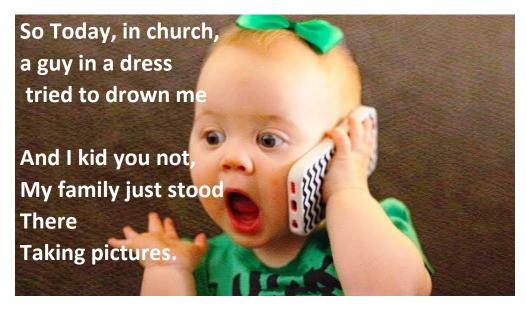
Men's and Women's body wash Shampoo & Conditioner Kleenex Q-tips Laundry Detergent **Body lotion** Mouthwash Small bottles of laundry soap shampoo toilet paper toothbrushes Paper towels canned goods with pop top lids canned fruit Donations can be brought to the Lena American Legion Home on Saturdays from 10:00 to 11:00 at 316 W. Main St., Lena. Donations are greatly appreciated. Questions: call 815-369-4684.

LENA AMERICAN LEGION

A breakfast is being held on Memorial Day, Monday, May 27, 2024 at the Lena American Legion Home, 316 W. Main St., Lena, sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary. It is being served from 7:00 am to 9:30 am—come eat breakfast and then attend the memorial service. **Serving:** Scrambled Eggs, French Toast, Biscuits and gravy, sausage, ham, coffee cake, fresh fruit, juice, milk and coffee. \$5.00 under 10 and \$10.00 over 10. Carryouts available.

COMMUNION UPDATE: Beginning in May, for communion, we will be using white wine and grape juice.

A LITTLE CHURCH HUMOR
SUBMITTED BY
JIM KETELHUT





It's o-FISH-al! St. John's will be hosting Vacation Bible School (VBS) August 5-9th from 2:30-5 p.m.

Our theme this year is *SCUBA*: Diving Into Friendship With God. At *SCUBA VBS*, kids will explore what it means to have a friendship with a real, loving, trustworthy God–a friendship that lasts forever! You can expect a full week of

faith discoveries, memorable music, and epic adventures that help kids grow in their faith! Ages 3 (potty trained)-5th grade are welcome to attend. VBS is FREE and open to the public, so please INVITE your friends and family! Registration will begin June 1; look for more information to come. We are currently seeking volunteers to help direct stations, be crew leaders, and be general helpers. Check out our Amazon Wish List for needed supplies; the link is posted

here, on our church website at stjohnslena.org and on our

church Facebook page at "St. John's Lena". Other needed donations include liquid school glue, scotch tape, bulk drink mixes, 3 oz. plastic drink cups, and empty toilet paper/paper towel rolls. Please talk with Lindsay Bader or Lindsey Calow if you are interested or have any questions!





THE FRIENDSHIP CENTER—ADULT DAY CARE



The clients at The Friendship Center get excellent care; participate in activities, med checks, exercise, and great food. They receive nutritious and tasty meals daily to promote good health and equip their bodies for their daily activities.

Along with the physical care, there is the spiritual care. Daily devotions and prayer are led by pastors, or The Friendship Center staff. Jesus is at the forefront of what we do, and it is His ministry which we are blessed to be a part of.

An important part of The Friendship Center is our Bus/Van Ministry which helps make it all possible. These vehicles head out in different directions every morning and evening taking people to and from. What a tremendous asset to have these tools to use for ministry. Thanks for supporting this ministry with your donations as well.

If you would like to be a part of this ministry—please give Jenny IIs a call at 815.369.2690 or call the church office at 815.369.4035.

MY FRIEND'S CLOSET THRIFT SHOP

Thank you for all the challenging work that goes into the items—from the time they come in the back door until they go out the front door! There is sorting, either storage or out to the store front, pricing, cleaning, check out, display, trash take out, recycling, and



loading the semi-trailer. Your time is turned into dollars that go to support ministry and mission locally and throughout the world. Keep up the splendid work and service to our Lord. Thank you to all who serve, donate, and buy! All are necessary! If you would like to be a part of this ministry, please call the church office at 815.369.4035

OPPORTUNITIES KNOCK

TO GIVE: You can contribute to St. Johnn's missions several way; dropping your offering in the box on Sunday morning, signing up for online giving by simply filling out a auto/withdraw form available in the office, mailing your contribution to the office, and coming in the future, direct online donations can be made.

TO SERVE: Look where you can plug in-by ushering, greeting, running soundboard and video, and serving on various boards when asked, volunteering at the Friendship Center or Thrift Shop.

TO LEARN: Bible Study on Sunday mornings at 9:15

TO WORSHIP: -with us on Saturday night at 5:30, Sunday mornings at 8 & 10:30, online livestream worship can be accessed from www.stjohnslena.org, YouTube recordings of worship services and cross talks on our YouTube channel, Christian music stations listed in the Shine.

REMEMBER OUR MISSIONARIES: (A card of encouragement is always welcomed)

L.W.M.L./WOMEN'S SOCIETY TIM (Together In Mission)

†Supporting: **Danelle (Putnam)** Apartada 1356, Santiago, Dominican Republic, Danelle.Putnam@lcmsintl.org

L.W.M.L./WOMEN'S SOCIETY ADOPT A STUDENT:

† New student Peter Ross, Campus P.O. Box 801 Seminary Pl. Clayton, MO 63105, (rossp@csl.edu)

ST. JOHN'S TIM (Together in Mission):

†Re. Carl & Chenhsi Hanson with Emma, Andrea and Lydia serving in Seoul, South Korea as Pastor at International Lutheran Church, 148 Hannam-daero, Yongsangu, Seoul, South Korea 04417

ST. JOHN'S ADOPT-A-STUDENT:

† New students Daniel Hampton, (wife, Christie, son William, daughter, Abigail) 326 Winter Lake Ct. Fenton, MO 63026

Tristan Jones (and wife Carolyn) Campus 801 Seminary Pl., Clayton, MO 63105-3196 jonest@csl.edu 7 Founders Way, Unit A, St. Louis, MO 63105

Blake T. Brockman (wife Hannah, son Judah) 801 Clayton, Mo. 63105-3196, brockmanb@csl.edu 6227 Southwood Ave., Apt #35, St. Louis, MO. 63105

MY FRIEND'S CLOSET THRIFT STORE TIM (Together in Mission)

†Mark & Megan Mantey c/o The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, PO Box 66861, St. Louis, MO 63166-6861 serving in Uganda (US mailing address), Lutheran Theological College Uganda c/o Mark & Megan Mantey, P.O. Box 565, Jinja, Uganda (Ugandan mailing address)

†Rev. Samuel and Erica Bobby with Judah, August, Benjamin, Simon and Pax Vīlandes iela 10, Dzīvoklis Riga, Latvia, 1010. serving in Riga, Latvia.

†Ted & Rebecca Krey, with Esther, Matthias, Natalia Anna, Evangeline, Azariah c/o The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, PO Box 66861, St. Louis, MO 63166-6861 serving in Latin America, Dominican Republic

Rev Carlos Schumann (husband of Deaconess Danelle (Putnam) Schumann)

El Ayudante Misssion, USA, Inc./Shick Family, serving in Honduras, ryan@aehonduras.org Ryan, Angie, Abigail, Mandi & Jacob

MY FRIEND'S CLOSET THRIFT STORE ADOPT-A-STUDENT:

†Alexander Allsing Campus P.O. Box 801 Seminary Place, St. Louis, MO 63105-3196, Allsinga@csl.edu

ST. JOHN'S MISSION STATEMENT

As called Disciples of Christ, the Family of St. John's, founded in God's Word and Love, is empowered by the Holy Spirit to build disciples of all people through Worship, Nurture, Fellowship, and Service.



Christian Radio available at the following stations:

106.9 WHRD FM Freeport
K-Love 91.1FM and 98.9 FM; Life 102 - 102.5
Lighthouse WFEN Rockford 88.3 FM;
KAID – AFR Inspirational Dubuque, IA 88.5 FM;
WDFB Dubuque, IA - 88.1 FM