



## Pastor's Reflections

### FROM MY HEART TO YOURS

There are many people and things for which I am thankful. Each of you are among those people. Thank you for honoring me by allowing me to bring God's Word to you and worship with you.

We are in a transition period. We are changing from what we have been into what we will become. My father often used the expression, “if a frog had wings, he wouldn't bump his rump.” The frog plainly did bump his rump, just as all of us and our church have experienced “what if we had done this and what if we had done that?”

The past cannot be changed, but the future for us and our church can be formed by God with our help. In order to “help” God, there are things to be done. Doing these things WILL make a difference. Some are listening to each other, working together, talking together, and praying together. This is not an exhaustive list, but by doing this we WILL come out this transition and chaos with a stronger voice for Jesus Christ in our own lives, the lives of our church, and the lives that we impact in our community.

**God bless you all as we journey together.**

Your servant, John Wilkinson



### Prayer of St. Francis

*Lord, Make me an instrument  
of your peace;  
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
Where there is injury, pardon;  
Where there is doubt, faith;  
Where there is despair, hope;  
Where there is darkness, light;  
And where there is sadness, joy.  
O Divine Master,  
grant that I may not so much seek  
to be consoled as to console;  
To be understood as to understand;  
To be loved as to love;  
For it is in giving that we receive;  
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;  
And it is in dying that  
we are born to eternal life.  
~Amen*

## CHRIST CARE...

*Reflecting Christ's love in our community of faith!* His inspiration! **Please, if you...or someone you know... could use some Christ care, some concern, some prayers, or some expression of the love of Christ in his/her life, LET US KNOW.**

You may do so by calling:

Pastor John (319) 481-2970-c

or the church office (956) 447-1337

We at LOC want to care for you, for your friends, and for all who want to know the love of Christ in their life.

## PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

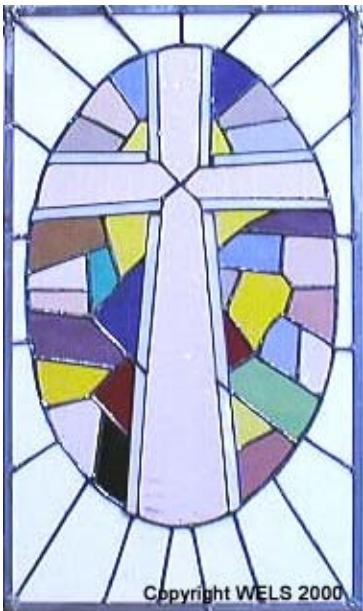
Prayers are offered while shawls are created. Then the shawls are given to the sick and those needing comfort. Shawls have been distributed to many within the community and they have been mailed to numerous locations within the United States and Canada as requests for those needing prayers and comfort are filled. We are pleased to fill requests.

Contact Betty Bentson

701-371-6631

or email

bettybentson@aol.com



## PRAYER SQUARES

We have a "Prayer Squares" project. A square is quilted and tied with loving strings of embroidery thread. Then when one of our members of Love of Christ (or a friend) is having surgery or is in a hospital, each of us say a prayer, tie a knot, and then give the patch to them. We want our prayers with them. Contact Betty Bentson 701-371-6631 or email bettybentson@aol.com

## **Are Prayers Always Answered?**

If you are like me, there are times when you wonder why your prayers have not been answered. There are times when you feel that God just did not respond to your prayers, and you feel that God has abandoned you. Maybe it was the early death of a family member or a close friend. Maybe it was due to some financial difficulties. Maybe it was your own personal health. Whatever the reason, it is likely you have wondered why your prayer was not answered.

I recently prayed for my personal health. I also know that others were praying for my recovery and for that I am very grateful. My prayers were answered, your prayers for me were answered, and I am on way to better health.

Does God always answer your prayer? Yes, he does! At times it may seem like he did not answer the prayer but remember an answer is a solution to a problem. God has a much better understanding of our problems. God has a plan for all of us. The answer to a prayer may not seem like God has responded but his response is his solution to the problem. God does respond!

Bob Chaloupek

## **Coat Closet**

We Lutherans and Presbyterians are "working together in the neighborhood" to provide coats for all students in the WISD. All sizes are needed, even for preschoolers. First Presbyterian Church in Weslaco distributes coats to the needy twice during the fall season at their church located here at 709 S Iowa. Donations are needed, preferably clean and mended coats. You may drop them off at Love of Christ and we will deliver them to First Presbyterian. All donations are deeply appreciated.

SKN



**June Anniversaries**

- 3 Gloria & Lyle Jaegler
- 4 Don & Amy Van Deest
- 7 Mike & Sharon Shull
- 8 Ed & Wendy Haught
- 9 Sharon & Tom Newcomer
- 16 Lee & Mary Nelson

**July Anniversaries**

- 8 Ann & Will Baker
- 12 Joe & Bonnie Moore
- 26 Darla & Robert Chaloupek

**August Anniversaries**

- 8 Lois & Ken Tanula
- 12 Raye & Richard Chandler
- 21 Bette & Sam Learned
- 22 Dean & Marilyn Garnett
- 24 Rod & Nancy Karg
- 28 Lynn & Marvin Hedlund

**READING MACHINES**

If you, or a loved one, have a vision difficulty that could be helped by the use of our reading machines, please contact Julie Knutson at the Church office (956) 447-1337. Three reading machines are available to be used by anyone in need of help. The machines are “checked out”, much as a library book and returned to the office when no longer needed, or if the user does not remain in the Valley during the summer months. There is no charge for this use. If you have a problem picking up the machine from the church office, please make it known to the secretary at the church office, and the machine will be delivered to you. This is another ministry of the Love of Christ Church!

**June Birthdays**

- 2 Kathy Whitney
- 7 Jerry Gieseke
- 11 Harlan Thompson
- 19 Donness Dietz
- 25 Gene Johnson
- 30 Marvin Hedlund

**July Birthdays**

- 4 John Egan
- 8 Tom Young
- 24 Shirley Bowen
- 24 Chuck Wolff
- 25 Tom Newcomer
- 27 Robert Slade
- 28 Jenna Gutierrez
- 29 Jo Degener
- 29 Donna Lidtke
- 31 Ann Thompson



**August Birthdays**

- 1 Will Baker
- 1 Rich Klindt
- 2 Jan Slade
- 2 Richard Twait
- 3 Nancy Karg
- 4 Ed Puder
- 6 Sharon Shull
- 8 Betty Bentson
- 8 Doug Blanshan
- 27 James Whitney

**Love of Christ has some items that are for sale:**

Thirty-two white choir robes with 2 sets of reversible collars, and wooden cross neck pieces. Do you know of a church or school or organization that may be interested in these robes? Our contact person is Jon Schwartz, phone 712 540 3555.

**Thank you.**

**Drop a personal note to one of your brothers or sisters in Christ at LoC who celebrates a special occasion this month and let them know how much their presence in our family of faith at LoC means to you.**



**THE LIBRARY**

Come and check out the Love of Christ Library! Folks have donated some great reading, videos, and audio tapes. Come and browse or come and bring your donation to the Library, and be an encouragement to the folks at Love of Christ church. The Library is located in the church office.



## *We Have a Choice*

May 6, 2022

By Elizabeth A. Eaton



Browsing through my work journal recently, I noticed the date when my entries stopped: March 19, 2020. The next week the Chicago-based churchwide staff began sheltering in place. I remember moving the magnets on the Office of the Presiding Bishop's

attendance board to “out” for all of us, wondering when or if we would all return.

In the early days of the pandemic there was confusion, uncertainty and some fear. But there was also a sense of adventure as I stocked up on dry goods (no flour or yeast) and laid in a supply of dried beans and lentils (which I still have—I wonder if I can use them for pie weights). How long could this last? It was like a global snow day. Until it wasn't.

Pretty quickly reality began to set in. The numbers of infections, hospitalizations and deaths started to rise. Hospital staffs were overwhelmed. We all worked to “flatten the curve,” hoping to keep enough of us out of the hospital so there would be enough beds and ventilators for the sickest. Personal protective equipment was scarce. Space in morgues was filled, and refrigerated trucks had to be brought in to meet the grim demand.

Large gatherings were discontinued. Our congregations had to adapt to online formats. I was concerned that three Sundays in a row without in-person worship would force many of our congregations to close. How would we stay connected? What would our worship look like? We have congregations where dial-up is the only way to connect to the internet—if there is internet at all.

I thank God for the creativity and resilience shown by our congregations. I thank God for the dedication and faithfulness of our pastors and deacons who have been stretched to the limit. They quickly adapted to make sure that the gospel was proclaimed and found ingenious ways to care for their communities. People checked on the homebound in their congregations and in their neighborhoods. Hunger ministries continued providing food. Bible studies and prayer circles dwelt in the word. We started a COVID-19 Appeal to shore up outdoor ministries, increase bandwidth, and provide technical assistance and equipment for worship. The church wasn't closed as some insisted. We had moved to another platform. We know that online attendance, even if for only for five minutes, was greater than in-person attendance and that people who had never set foot in our churches were hearing the gospel. We were all in this together. Until we weren't.

“Essential workers,” many of whom had low-paying jobs, couldn't work from home. The inequity of our health care system had deadly consequences. Communities of color suffered disproportionately. People were out of work. Businesses closed. The country came to a moment of racial reckoning after the murder of George Floyd. We went through a divisive election. Masks, social distancing and vaccines were politicized. We withdrew into smaller and tighter groups of like-minded people.

After two years of pandemic precautions, the effects of isolation, chronic anxiety, loss and grief have taken their toll. Research shows that we are angrier, more depressed and less patient. We are all experiencing unprecedented and extended trauma. Frayed relationships take effort and time to mend. There is no quick fix. Care must be taken now so that actions and decisions aren't born solely or mostly out of reactivity. How we deal with real and critical issues now will have consequences in the future.

“So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation” (2 Corinthians 5:17-18). We have a choice—we can be conformed to this world and remain isolated and reactive, or we can live as the new creation in Christ and be a witness to the world of the reconciliation we have received from God.

## TRAFFIC LIGHTS

There are approximately 300,000 traffic lights in the United States. There are 22,000 in the City of Dallas. (For we that still drive, I think there are that many in Hidalgo County.)

When properly located and operated, traffic signals are an invaluable tool for the safe and efficient movement of vehicles and pedestrians. Traffic signals assist traffic engineers in controlling traffic in a safe, orderly and efficient manner. They benefit the traveling public by providing orderly movement of vehicles, improved safety, reduced travel times and an increase in the amount of traffic that an intersection can handle.

As I was stopped at a traffic light recently, I thought about how our lives are controlled by traffic lights. Fortunately, it is not the Department of Safety that installs, maintains and controls them.

Now just think back on a glorious plan you had and all of a sudden it falls apart. Could that have been one of God's red lights? How about another plan that is just as wonderful, but it seems to take forever to be completed. Oh, no, yellow light. And lastly that tiny plan that seems to be of no value and lo and behold, green light.

I would suggest to you that in God's special plan for you and me, he often puts traffic lights in our paths so that His special plan for us can be completed. So the next time you are stopped at a red light, give Him thanks for the traffic lights he has for you.

**"You're my cave to hide in, my cliff to climb. Be my safe leader, be my true mountain guide. Free me from hidden traps; I want to hide in you. I've put my life in your hands. You won't drop me, you'll never let me down."** Psalms 31:3 (The Message)

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

### Let us pray especially for:

**Carrie Andersen** (Cousin of the Garnett's)  
**Reb & Heather Baker** (son and daughter-in-law of Will & Anne Baker)  
**Bill & Gail Brandt** (Faith Lutheran Church)  
**Arlys & Harold Buland**  
**Renate Chamberlain**  
**Jo Coyle**  
**Arlene Crawford**  
**Pastor Sylvia De La Garza**  
**Dean Garnett**  
**Marilyn Garnett**  
**Jerry Gieseke**  
**Peg Kapke** (niece of Bette Learned)  
**Maria Mendoza**  
**Evelyn Nelson**  
**Betty Piper**  
**Ed Puder**  
**Gwen Rose** (niece of Thelma Dutenhoeffer)  
**Sanford Sill**  
**Betsy Sutton**  
**Staff and children of North Bridge Elementary**  
**Don Van Deest**  
**Elaine & David Wisely** (daughter and son-in-law of Lou Vitek)  
**Tom Young**  
**people experiencing violence in their lives, all the men and women of the police, fire, EMS, and all the men and women of the Armed Forces and their families.**



# What Eastertide Resurrection Tells Us about Healing from Trauma



By Kendall Ellis  
Originally published in  
[Good Faith Media](#)

April marks the unofficial beginning of summer in the Southwest of the U.S.

As I've started wearing summer clothing again, there's a part of me

that has resurfaced that I *almost* forgot about in the winter months, even though it has been with me every day for five years.

Previously covered by pants and leggings, the quarter-size scar on my right leg is again fully visible in my summer wardrobe.

I've looked at my scar hundreds of times, yet by grace, this week God used my unsightly scar to usher me into spiritual reflection. One morning, looking at my scar while putting on sandals, I found myself surprisingly comforted: Jesus has scars, too.

There's something about John's Easter account that speaks to my soul. To me, [John 20:19-30](#) feels like the most honest depiction of the "squirrely" events surrounding Jesus' life, death and resurrection.

When we read this text, we find the disciples suffering from trauma in the aftermath of the crucifixion. The disciples had watched — helplessly — as their leader was unjustly taken from them in the Garden of Gethsemane, beaten as a prisoner of war, and ultimately murdered in the most brutal way that the Romans could fathom.

As if this traumatic loss of their beloved wasn't bad enough, they had the added threat of being targeted next due to their association with Jesus. One could argue that the disciples were also wrestling with unique spiritual trauma due to their persecution stemming from their fellow Jewish siblings.

In response to this complex trauma, many of the disciples fled together in hopes of finding somewhere they could feel safe again. They ran away to someone's house, locking the doors in fear.

Thomas, however, responded by isolating himself. He was the only disciple separating himself from the group by not seeking refuge in the house.

When the other disciples did finally come to find Thomas, he could not bring himself to believe their good news — perhaps not because he "doubts," but because distrust is another common trauma response, such as fear, restlessness and isolation.

In the face of such trauma, an important question rises to the surface: Is it really possible to heal from such distress? If so, what does this healing even look like?

Thankfully, the story doesn't end with the disciples' staying trapped by their trauma. Otherwise, we wouldn't have the rest of the Christian Testament or a Christian tradition today!

After victoriously rising from his own traumatic death, Jesus did not leave his disciples alone in their isolation. Jesus sought them out. He understood their fear and was patient with their questioning. Jesus spoke

# What Eastertide Resurrection Tells Us about Healing from Trauma

words of peace to them and, most importantly, showed the disciples his scars.

Scars are complex, marking the site of a wound that was deep enough to damage the deepest parts of our skin. But the scars *are not* the wound. Wounds are active sources of pain and damage. Scars, on the other hand, only form when a wound heals.

By revealing his scars, Jesus showed that no power — no religious faction, world government or even death itself — was any match for God’s resurrection power and reconciling love.

The disciples didn’t have to stay hidden behind locked doors. They saw Jesus’ scars and found the peace they needed to re-emerge and travel the world with the good news.

Thomas didn’t have to remain isolated or untrusting. By God’s grace, Thomas saw Jesus’ scars and regained his hope and belief for life anew— even after all that had happened.

As it turns out, Easter is the gospel of the scarred. Easter is good news because Jesus has the power to heal all wounds into scars.

Similarly, trauma is a wound, but God can heal it into a scar.

One may not ever fully forget the painful memories associated with the traumatic event and there may be certain triggers to avoid. But over time and with intentional self-work, “[recovery from trauma] in-

volves placing the event behind you and living joyfully, so that the event is no longer in control of your emotions or your life.”

This is what it means to be healed from trauma.

Furthermore, each type of wound requires different treatments. Healing from trauma is an individual process, and God can work through a variety of means to bring this healing.

Generally, there are three phases of trauma recovery through which survivors journey: safety and stabilization; remembrance and mourning; reconnection and integration.

There are many treatment methods that one can use through their healing journey, including exercise, mindfulness practices, taking care of your body, connecting with loved ones, engaging with creative expressive outlets, participating in a support group with other survivors, and seeking professional help from a licensed psychologist.

The scar on my leg doesn’t hurt anymore, though it reminds me of the pain I felt when the wound originally formed.

Now my scar reminds me how God has gifted me with strength and resiliency to get past that injury and the disease that caused it.

My scar has become part of my story, baptized with Christ, moving with me towards the promise of new, abundant and eternal life.

*Kendall Ellis is a soon-to-be graduate of Baylor University’s Master of Divinity and Master of Social Work dual-degree program. She currently serves as an Intern at The Center for Church and Community Impact (C3I).*



## Spend A Magical Afternoon At The National Butterfly Center, Texas' Largest Butterfly House

If you love butterflies and would like to see them in their natural habitat, it's time to plan a trip to the National Butterfly Center. This South Texas hidden

gem features nearly 250 species of these majestic winged creatures, and you'll remember your visit for many years to come.



Nestled way down near the U.S.-Mexico border in Mission, Texas, the National Butterfly Center is a 100-acre preserve that brings a little piece of the rainforest right here to the Lone Star State.

You'll find it on Butterfly Park Drive.

Upon stepping inside, you'll be awestruck by the perfectly manicured gardens.

Several miles of trails wind through the landscape, and

there's always something beautiful in bloom.

The butterfly house is by far the most popular attraction at the center.

All of the butterflies are wild, so it's truly amazing to see such a high concentration in one place.

Almost 250 species have been identified, and you can print out a checklist to bring along and see how many you can spot.



Just be sure to visit on a day that's at least 70 degrees for the best viewing opportunities.

Since the NBC is right next door to the World Birding Center, you'll also see tons of feathered friends.

There are nearly 300 species, from owls to hummingbirds and everything in between.

Don't leave without taking advantage of the adorable photo-ops!



You'll definitely want to have some pictures to remember your visit by.

Address: 3333 Butterfly Park, Mission, TX 78572.

Hours are 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. daily.

Visit the National Butterfly Center

[website](#) or [Facebook page](#) to learn more.







# Fourth of July Word Scramble



Unscramble the words, then use the highlighted letters to write out the scrambled secret message.



ASTSET

--	--	--	--	--	--

ENDDEEPPNICN

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

DEARAP

--	--	--	--	--	--

LUEB

--	--	--	--

TENIUD

--	--	--	--	--	--

TWEHI

--	--	--	--	--

AEQTIULY

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

ERIRFKWOS

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

ARLANCDITEO

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

FDREOME

--	--	--	--	--	--

DER

--	--	--

ILBEYTR

--	--	--	--	--	--



--	--	--

--	--	--

--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--



**Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.



**Love of Christ Lutheran Church**  
**914 W Third Street**  
**Weslaco, TX 78596**

Corner of Border & Third Street

We worship in the Facilities of Faith Lutheran Church

Phone: **956-447-1337-Office**

Email: [locmailbox@yahoo.com](mailto:locmailbox@yahoo.com)

**WWW.LoveofChristelca.com**

Office Hours: Tues-Fri 9:00am-2:00pm

Office Administrator: Julie Knutson 956-447-1337 - o

**PASTOR JOHN WILKINSON**

**319 481-2970-C**

## **2021 Church Council**

**President - Robert Chaloupek 501-253-1232- c**

**Vice President - Jon Schwartz 712-540-3555- c**

**Secretary - Kent Campbell 612-787-7966-c**

**Treasurer - Lauren Coyle 651 434-1694 - c**

**Associate Member at Large - Rex Kirchhoff 402 469-0176 - c**

**Finance Secretary/Prop. & Fin./Stewardship - C.B. Shields 956 330-7426 - c**

**Music/Worship & Discipleship/Prayer - Dean Garnett 956 463-5941 - c**

**Social Ministries & Outreach – Lou Vitek 956-968-5607-c**