



February 8, 2019 Issue

Come Experience the Power of Grace

The Toxic Trash of Our Lives

Life has a way of unloading its junk on us. Due to our sins, circumstances, and also because of things others have done to us, either intentionally or unintentionally, we get burdened by the weight of trash. Over time this trash can become toxic. It produces the fumes of anger, guilt, pessimism, fear, and bitterness. Contamination grows out of the stagnation and rots us away.

We don't want our trash, so we go to counselors to try and get rid of it. But we notice that when we leave, we still have it with us. So then we go to church to get rid of it, and we feel good for the moment, but a few sniffs after the service and we discover that we still have our trash.

If you can identify with this, then you know what it is like to feel aimless and weary under a heavy burden. Weary is different than sleepy. You can fix sleepy with a bed or a nap in an easy chair. But weary dictates to you how you feel and what you will do. Weary means you can no longer relax. You have lost your joy. You need relief from yourself.

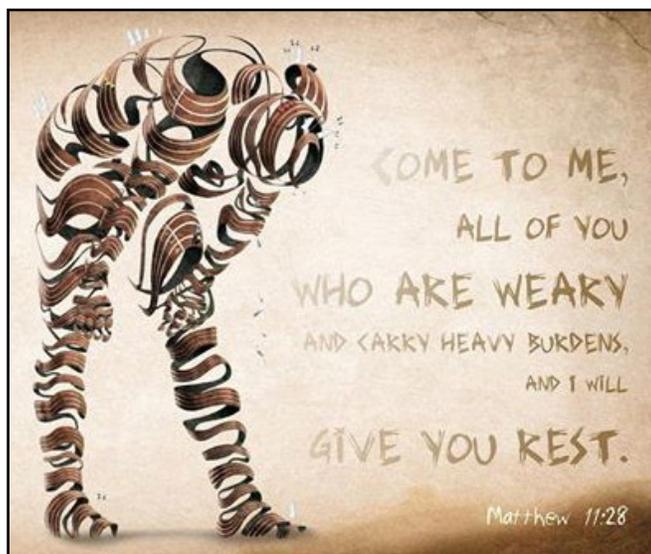
If "weary" describes you, then I have good news for you. Living as a kingdom disciple has a way of unloading some of the weight from your shoulders. Jesus says that He offers kingdom disciples victory from what weighs you down. Jesus doesn't want to be just living in you but to rule in your life so that you are an overcomer. This victory comes through one of the greatest words in Scripture—"Rest".

Jesus invites all burdened individuals to come to Him for rest, yet so often we misunderstand what He is offering. When stresses and problems weigh us down, the most natural response is to ask God for relief, "Lord, I can't carry this anymore. I'm going to leave it here with You." Having dumped the burden like a bag of garbage, we walk away but remain unchanged inside.

God doesn't operate that way. Christ's invitation is to join Him in the yoke so you can walk and work together. He doesn't want just your burden; He wants you. The yoke of Christ is a symbol of discipleship, characterized by submission and obedience to Him. God's goal isn't simply to give relief by removing a weighty trial or affliction; He longs to draw you to Himself in a close and trusting relationship. Those who take Him up on His offer will turn from their old ways and be transformed.

The process of lightening the load begins with learning to know and understand the Lord. The burden is not necessarily removed, but our thoughts and responses are changed as we begin to love Him, trust Him, believe His promises, and rely on His power. Then, as the weight of the affliction shifts from our shoulders to His, we will discover relief, although the situation may remain unchanged.

Being yoked with Christ results in rest for your soul. Life's pressures may not lessen, but if you are intimately linked with Jesus, your soul is free from churning anxiety and His peace is ruling in your heart. You have nothing to lose—except your weariness—and much to gain.





We Care and Pray for One Another

HEALTH CONCERNS:

Irene Ahl; Sharon Algar; Bill Amspaugh; Richard Ashbaugh; Linda Bennett; Carroll Boettcher; Maun Boettcher; Joel Bott; Scott Brister; Heidi Buchholz; Arthur Buehler; John & Joan Burns; Ralph Chambers; Linda Cirelli; Mary Couture; Moose Creighton; Richard Dahl; Dianne Ewald; Harriet Feree; Ed Fowler; Libra Gill; Walt Goedecke; Richard Greene; Gizelle Hayes; Katie Hayes; Jane Heine; Evelyn Horst; Annette Idso; Christopher Idso; Donna Koelling; Doreen Leikel; Philip Lenharth; Alice Masherella; Donna McCullough; Tom Mortson; Chris Murphy; Rhonda Nash; Lily Navarro; Tanner Nelson; Wayde Nelson; Ben Petersen; Anne Pingo; Virginia Potter; Martin Radloff; Shirley Radloff; Antonia Rafter; Esther Riesen; Kristin Thelen; Nathan Thompson; Annie Walsh; Joe Wells; Wally Wentzel; Eleanor Wood; Marie Wood; Pat Zanta

MILITARY:

Isaac Jackson; Tim Mace

CALLED HOME:

We give prayers of sympathy and compassion to the family and friends of Beth Jensen who was recently called home.

TRAVELS:

We Pray for safe travels for the Riester's as Kathy begins new job at Indiana University.



Callie needs your cardboard!

We will be hosting a drive-in movie night in which children get to make cars out of cardboard boxes on February 23. Please save your large cardboard boxes and bring them in for Callie.



Do you have a 3 year old or 4 year old? We will be holding a bible distribution event on Saturday, February 16. We will start with a class on how to make reading the bible with your children meaningful at 4pm in Grace Hall (Child care provided). The children will be presented a bible during the 5pm service and dinner will follow the service. Please RSVP to Callie at c.baker@alcs-az.org by February 13.



BUY A KEY! Help us pay for our new organ. Please make donations to the MUSIC fund and not "organ". Anyone donating \$1,000 or more can have a hymn or song of choice plus recognition in the program at our fund raising concert. Put your name on a key or piston on the poster in the atrium.

A "key"	\$100 (you can buy more than one)
An "Octave" (8 keys)	\$750
Piston (sound stop)	\$1,000
Bench	\$5,000
The whole organ	\$25,000

Baby Bottle Bounce Back

It is great to see the Baby Bottles coming back with pocket change, bills, or checks in support of the life-saving work of Hands of Hope. Our gifts help to pay the bills that keep the new Pregnancy Medical Center open for business. Please remember to bring them back before the end of February. They can be left at the Church Office or at the Visitor Desk.



Every day, women visit the beautiful new facility seeking care and support as they experience the new life they carry in their body. How great that almost 9 out of 10 who view their baby in Ultrasound make the choice to continue the pregnancy and to give the gift of life to their child. It was the good pleasure of the Ascension family that enabled us to provide funds to acquire the new Ultrasound equipment, and now we are there with the team at Hands of Hope providing funds to sustain the ministry. Thank you for your generous giving. If you would like a tour of the new Pregnancy Medical Center, please contact any member of the Beautiful Feet Life Team.

How Luther Nailed It On Life Issues

By Michael W. Salemink

Life issues didn't arise overnight. Their frequent connection to medical technology can make them seem like recent developments—and advances in understanding physiology and pharmaceuticals have made abortion and euthanasia more efficient and available of late. But these circumstances have been causing society's difficulties—and providing opportunities to proclaim the Gospel—since ancient times.

The Hippocratic Oath explicitly forbade both aborting and assisting suicide...

Martin Luther also applied his voice to life issues... His view of family matters proved revolutionary in its time. Luther promoted marriage, encouraged childbearing, and praised parenting. He concluded even unborn babies qualified as full-fledged human beings.

Look at your infancy, and give thought to whether you remember that you were in your mother's womb, that you lay in a cradle, that you sucked your mother's breasts, cried, ate pap, grew, etc. Yet we are certainly alive even during the first year, when the fetus is carried in the mother's womb. (LW 5:75)

For no one of those who are alive today knows where he was during the first two years, when he lived either in the womb... Yet he lived at that time, and he was a body joined to a soul—a body adapted to all natural functions. (LW 8:316)

Luther derived this truth directly from God's Word. He observed how Holy Scripture testified about the prenatal humanity of Jesus and John the Baptist. "Moreover, when Christ, the Son of God, was to be conceived in his mother's womb and become incarnate, he certainly had to be already present in essence and in person in the Virgin's womb, and had to assume humanity there" (LW 37:62)

God's limitless grace convinced Luther to regard life with such respect. Both Bible and experience led him to behold human beings and their bodies as gifts and privileges of infinite preciousness imparted by the Lord Himself...

I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them... He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life... All this He does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me (Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation [St. Louis: Concordia, 2005], 15-16).

Finally, Luther found this grace great enough to forgive even evils against life. Jesus Christ died and rose to save sinners from just such guilt. "That is why all those should be absolved whose sins are hidden, whether they are sins of the flesh, or of every kind of lust, abortion, and the like" (LW 39:42).

When the devil throws our sins up to us and declares that we deserve death and hell, we ought to speak thus: "I admit that I deserve death and hell. What of it? Does this mean that I shall be sentenced to eternal damnation? By no means. For I know One who suffered and made satisfaction in my behalf. His name is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Where he is, there I shall be also" (Tappert, Theodore G, trans. and ed. Luther: Letters of Spiritual Counsel.)

Excerpts from Lutherans For Life LifeDate magazine, Spring 2018, article posted by Beautiful Feet Life Team at Ascension. Join us on Wednesday, February 13 at 6:30pm in Grace Hall for our monthly meeting.



IN THE KNOW

Follow what's going on with our children's and youth ministries at Ascension!

Subscribed to communications from Callie about what is happening in Children's Ministry:

Text @ALCSCM to 81010

Subscribed to communications from Callie about what is happening in Junior High School Ministry:

Text @ALCSJH to 81010

Subscribed to communications from Callie about what is happening in High School Ministry:

Text @ALCSHS to 81010

Please note: Contact Callie at c.baker@alcs-az.org if you would prefer to receive notifications via email instead of text messaging.



LADIES—SAVE THE DATE
Saturday, March 23!

That is the day of the LWML Spring Retreat at Peace in the Valley, Benson. If you attended the get together in Sahuarita last fall, you know how great these are! If not, this will be your chance! More details to follow.

ALCS PRESENTS

DADDY *daughter* DANCE



February 8 | 6pm-8pm
in the ROC
Tickets \$5 per person

Purchase tickets in the school office
This is for both school and church families
Make some memories!



1220 W Magee Rd
Tucson, AZ
520.297.3095

VALENTINE'S DAY CARDS

For sale in Grace Hall, in the Blanket Circle card rack
Where else can you get a Love-ly card for only \$1.00?
Please deposit money in the "strong box" next to the rack
Thank you for supporting the Ascension Blanket Circle
In 2018 we made and donated 225 quilts,
34 prayer shawls, and 108 handmade pillow cases
to many organizations and individuals

Twin Peaks



TWIN PEAKS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SNACK DRIVE

Ascension has established an outreach mission partnership with Twin Peaks Elementary School by sponsoring a snack drive for children whose parents need help sending snacks to school with their children. We will be collecting snacks during the month of February. All snacks must be individually wrapped servings such as boxed raisins, pretzels, goldfish, animal crackers, fruit snacks, etc. PLEASE DO NOT BUY ANY PRODUCTS WITH NUTS due to allergic reactions. The school also requested no drinks. Please consider helping in any way you can. There are collection bins in the hallway across from the nursery. For questions or additional information, call Carol Colton at 520-344-9649.

MEET & GREET

7-9PM

All High School Youth get to know Callie Baker your new DCE

SATURDAY, MARCH 2

DEVOTIONS | PIZZA | A FIRE | S'MORES | FELLOWSHIP

RSVP to Callie at c.baker@alcs-az.org by February 28

Keep an eye out for information on our other First Saturdays High School Youth Events coming monthly.



1220 W Magee Rd | 520.297.3095
ascensiontucson.org | facebook.com/ALCStucson

DRIVE-IN MOVIE THEATER!

Cruise on in!

We will be hosting a drive-in movie night for our children's ministry event this month. Join us February 23 at 5:30pm in the ROC where your kids will get creative designing their own car out of cardboard boxes and then relax in their cars and watch **Small Foot** while snacking on pizza and popcorn. Pillows and blankets are welcome. Cost is \$3/person or \$10/family. Please RSVP to Callie at c.baker@alcs-az.org by February 20.

Articles for **Connections** & announcement slides are due by **Noon** each **Tuesday**. Articles & slides will run for only **2 weeks** at a time.

All articles submitted will be published at the editor's discretion. Submit articles via email to: connections@ascensiontucson.org or turn in hard copy to the church office. Submissions **will not** be taken over the phone.

Electronic version (via e-mail) of this Newsletter are available on request by e-mailing the church office at: connectionssubscription@ascensiontucson.org.

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