

January 21, 2024

CENTERPOINT – Part three



A Series from Colossians

Daily Bible Readings

Read through the New Testament with us!

Sunday, January 21

1 Thessalonians 3

Monday, January 22

1 Thessalonians 4

Tuesday, January 23

1 Thessalonians 5

Wednesday, January 24

2 Thessalonians 1

Thursday, January 25

2 Thessalonians 2

Friday, January 26

2 Thessalonians 3

Saturday, January 27

1 Timothy 1

Welcome

Opening Hymn Listen, God is Calling (LSB 833)

ref Leader: Listen,

**All: listen, God is calling Through the Word inviting,
Offering forgiveness, Comfort, and joy.**

1 Leader: Jesus gave His mandate:

All: Share the good news

Leader: That He came to save us

All: And set us free.

Refrain

2 Leader: Let none be forgotten

All: Throughout the world.

Leader: In the triune name of God

All: Go and baptize.

Refrain

3 Leader: Help us to be faithful,

All: Standing steadfast,

Leader: Walking in Your precepts,

All: Led by Your Word.

Refrain

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INVOCATION

P In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

CALL TO WORSHIP

P We cherish Christ-centered fullness.

C **The thief comes to steal, kill and destroy.**

P But Jesus says, "I have come so that you may have life."

C **"And have it abundantly."**

P For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form,

C **And we have been given fullness in Christ.**

P Let us pray: Lord God, Heavenly Father, we frequently tell ourselves that we don't have enough—enough time, enough love, enough wisdom. In this time of worship come, in the power of your Holy Spirit, to impart the fullness we have in Christ. Assure us that in Christ we have enough; indeed, more than enough, now and forevermore.

C **Amen.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

P In today's second lesson Paul writes, "For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and we have been given fullness in Christ." (Colossians 2:9–10)

C **And yet, O Lord, we live as though we have nothing.**

P Complaining about our lack.

C **Believing that we never have enough.**

P The thief has come,

C **To steal, kill and destroy,**

P The gifts given us in the Gospel.

C **And so we feel empty, alone and ashamed, yearning for fullness in Christ.**

P Believe and receive the good news! Paul announces that though you were dead in your sins, God made you alive with Christ in Holy Baptism. He forgave you all your sins, having canceled the written code, with its regulations, he took it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross. These promises are yours in Christ Jesus, now and forevermore!

C **We have fullness in Christ!**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Let us pray: Lord Jesus, you have come so that we might have life and have it abundantly. Fill us, we pray, with baptismal gifts so that we know, again, that we have absolute fullness in you; for you live and reign with the Father and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

First Reading

Colossians 2:6-15

⁶ So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, ⁷ rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. ⁸ See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather

than on Christ. ⁹ For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, ¹⁰ and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority. ¹¹ In him you were also circumcised with a circumcision not performed by human hands. Your whole self ruled by the flesh was put off when you were circumcised by Christ, ¹² having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead. ¹³ When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, ¹⁴ having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵ And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

Gospel Reading

Mark 1:14-20

¹⁴ After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. ¹⁵ “The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!” ¹⁶ As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ¹⁷ “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” ¹⁸ At once they left their nets and followed him. ¹⁹ When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets. ²⁰ Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.

Children's Message

Hymn of the Day Spread the Reign of God the Lord
(LSB 830)

- 1 Spread the reign of God the Lord, Spoken, written, mighty Word;
Ev'rywhere His creatures call To His heav'nly banquet hall.
- 2 Tell how God the Father's will Made the world, upholds it still,
How His own dear Son He gave Us from sin and death to save.

- 3 Tell of our Redeemer's grace, Who, to save our human race
And to pay rebellion's price, Gave Himself as sacrifice.
- 4 Tell of God the Spirit giv'n Now to guide us on to heav'n,
Strong and holy, just and true, Working both to will and do.
- 5 Enter, mighty Word, the field; Ripe the promise of its yield.
But the reapers, oh, how few For the work there is to do!
- 6 Lord of harvest, great and kind, Rouse to action heart and mind;
Let the gath'ring nations all See Your light and heed Your call.

Text: Public domain

Message

The Source of Life

Where can we find a source that truly provides what we need? It seems like every well runs dry. Every cupboard & pantry is emptied out. Our health (and our youth) runs out too soon. We don't have enough money, enough time, enough energy, or stamina. We compare our lives, our marriages, and our families, to unattainable, media-driven visions of perfection. Then we hold up our life against our own fictional account of how great someone else has it. Even our old times memories work against us. We compare our lives to a memory that nostalgia has so completely edited that it never really existed. "Remember when ...?" "Those were the days." Put it all together and we never have enough.

Paul's letter to the church in Colossae points us to the **Centerpoint** and the true source of *LIFE*. False teachers had infiltrated the Colossian church and their message was simple. "Even though you have Christ, you still don't have enough."

Paul is ready to confront that lie. He writes, "See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ." (Colossians 2:8) Paul warns us that there are hollow and deceptive movements, methods and messages that take us captive. How do they do it? They constantly say, "You'll never have enough. Ever." Paul clearly points to the ONE source of life that **is always** enough. Listen again, "For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form." (Colossians 2:9)

Everything that makes God, God, is in Jesus Christ. *Everything*. Listen, "... and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority." (Colossians 2:10) This fullness is delivered through Holy Baptism. Paul goes on to write: "... having been buried with him in **baptism** and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead." (Colossians 2:12) Here's the point: JESUS is the source of real, true life. When you were baptized and came to trust Him, you were connected to a source that is **enough!**

We have been given FORGIVENESS FOR OUR FAILURES! Paul wrote, "God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us **all** our sins."

(Colossians 2:13) Christ has it all. Christ forgives it all. Paul says there is forgiveness for all of our failures. There is enough!

Jesus is also the source of DELIVERANCE FOR OUR DEBTS "... having canceled the record of debt, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross." (Colossians 2:14) In Paul's day, when the debt was paid, it was nailed publicly in the city square where everyone could see it. The nail cutting through the record of debt was the seal of the debt's cancellation. That's what God did with our spiritual debts. He canceled them and nailed them to the cross. All of our debts have been paid, in full!

Jesus is the source of life... the center point of our lives because of what He has done. Listen again, "And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross." (Colossians 2:15) The picture is of a Roman victory parade where defeated armies were publicly marched to their death. At the end of the parade the enemies were stripped, humiliated, and then executed. It was the end. Paul uses this example & word-picture to refer to what Christ did to spiritual powers and authorities.

Jesus is the source of VICTORY OVER ALL TRAGEDY. And he did it by being part of one of these "Roman parades." Soldiers paraded Jesus from Pilate's courtyard to "the place of the skull." Christians call their route through the old city of Jerusalem the Via Dolorosa, or "The Way of Sorrows." At the end of this parade Jesus was stripped, humiliated, and then executed. It was ugly, violent, and barbaric,

but it was not the end. *It was not the end!* On Easter morning Jesus changed our world. He showed himself alive! He won victory over the enemy no one can beat: death. Heaven's best took hell's worst and Jesus won the victory. The master of death could not destroy the Lord of Life! So, life's tragedies—children who die, suicides, cancer & other disease, and death itself—are not the end! In Christ they are defeated—they are dead and done! We have ultimate victory for all our tragedies! Jesus *is coming back*, the dead **will** be raised up, and we **will** live forever together... because we are connected (by faith) to the all-sufficient source of life, Jesus. HE is enough.

Paul says, "... you have been given fullness in Christ." (Colossians 2:10) Baptized as his daughter or son, we have enough forgiveness, enough deliverance and enough victory! King David said it this way in Psalm 23, "You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows." We have enough now and forever because **Jesus** is our source of life. Amen.

For next week: Read Colossians 3:1–11. Our Centerpoint series continues with the topic, "The Center of our THOUGHTS."

Thanks to Rev. Dr. Reed Lessing (Concordia University St. Paul) for his writing and research of this SERIES on Colossians: Christ at the Center.

Offering (as you exit – offering boxes are available, or Give on-line, www.ehlc.org)

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH (We lift our hands up)

P God's own child, I gladly say it,
C **I am baptized into Christ.**
P He, because I could not pay it,
C **Gave my full redemption price.**
P Do I need earth's treasures many?
C **I have one worth more than any,**
P That brought me salvation free,

C Lasting to eternity!

+ Additional Prayers +

P Satan, hear this proclamation,

C I am baptized into Christ!

P Drop your ugly accusation,

C I am not so soon enticed.

P Now that to the font I've traveled,

C All your might has come unraveled.

P And against your tyranny,

C God, my Lord, unites with me!

P In Jesus' name.

C Amen

Lord's Prayer

(LSB page 162)

C Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

The Words of Our Lord

P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

Distribution of Communion

Communion Hymn Sent Forth by God's Blessing (LSB 643)

1 Sent forth by God's blessing, Our true faith confessing,
The people of God from His dwelling take leave.

The Supper is ended. O now be extended
The fruits of this service in all who believe.
The seed of His teaching, Receptive souls reaching,
Shall blossom in action for God and for all.
His grace did invite us, His love shall unite us
To work for God's kingdom and answer His call.

- 2 With praise and thanksgiving To God ever-living,
The tasks of our ev'ryday life we will face.
Our faith ever sharing, In love ever caring,
Embracing His children of each tribe and race.
With Your feast You feed us, With Your light now lead us;
Unite us as one in this life that we share.
Then may all the living With praise and thanksgiving
Give honor to Christ and His name that we bear.

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BENEDICTION

P Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and
admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms,
hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.

C **And whatever we do, whether in word or deed, we will do it
all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the
Father through him.**

EPIPHANY PLEDGE

**ALL: Heavenly Father, with David I say, "My cup overflows".
Baptized into Christ, I have more than enough! Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Leaders in Worship

Pastor Steve Benson

Vicar Bradley Asmus

Music: Mark Krause, Josiah Bode and the Band

Acknowledgments

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REMEMBERING IN PRAYER – 01/21/2024

Hospitalized/Transitional Care

Paule Ehmcke (Rushford), Kathy Hildenbrand (United),
Arnie Carlson (Regions), Karen Briseno (Cerenity, Humboldt)

Requests

Judy & Gary Holmes, Mary Jane Brahy, Julie Brooks, Mike Straley
Dave Hildenbrand, Fred Cropsey, Linda Straley,
Terry Lingofelt, Donna Ewalt, Jim Dornfeld, Dale Burbach, Sue James
Nora Krause, Lois McArdell, Julie Novak, Jeff Hendrickson,
Phyllis Boettcher, Jim Messick, Elsa Blomgren, Bob Pavel
Sandra & Dave Wilke, Tom Cropsey, Frannie Philbrook, Val Gebhard,
Helen Hagberg, Jim Emmons, Kathy Jacobson, Carole Kasal,
Sue Moore, Lynn Krause, Pastor Chuck and Karen and all who travel.

Requests (Beyond our church family)

Nicole (Rosanna Wunrow's Granddaughter), Rudy (Joyce Cropsey's nephew),
Nicole(Ardys Tallarico's granddaughter), Brian (Jim Messick's son),
Olivia (Judy Ketola's granddaughter), Carol (Kathy Petschl's mother),
Ginny (Ehmcke family friend), Christensen family (Lewandowski's friends),
Barb (Grace Beehler's sister), Stephen (Rosanna Wunrow's friends),
Tammie (Amanda Bivin's mom), Steve (Kathy Jacobson's nephew),
Mike (Steve Fischer's brother), Roland (Donna Ewalt's brother),
Molly (Bob Pavel's wife), Margaret (Mary Martinson's mom),
Sarah (Sandy Pizinger's friend), Nancy (Diane Herpolsheimer's sister),
Maureen (Sandy Pizinger's friend), Josh and Addison (Janet Hanson's family),
Darold (Kevin Rosbacka's dad), Steve (Bill Lanigan's brother-in-law),
Carol (Rick Urban's Aunt), Joe/Jessica (Joyce Cropsey's grandson & Wife),
Jim Krause (Mark Krause's brother)

Our Prayers: For God's Comfort

For the Oppenheimer family at Glen's homegoing.

Thanksgiving

Home-bound and Care Center Residents

Roy and Lois McArdell

Missionary of the Week

Rosen, Oksana, and Emma Klepel

Worship with us Sunday mornings
Live 8:30 AM, 10AM & 11AM
Online at www.ehlc.org or on your phone
at 8:30 AM & 11:00 AM

- 1) Dial 612-808-6338
- 2) When connected, enter in 990-6073-#
- 3) You will hear music until the service begins
- 4) When done, simply hang up.

Lutheran Women in Mission Winter Workshop

“Walking a New Path”

Date: Saturday, January 27, 2024

Registration & Refreshments: 9:30 – 10 a.m.

Workshop: 10-11:30 a.m.

Suggested Donation: \$5 plus a special mite door offering

Location: St. Peter Lutheran Church

880 Neal Avenue So., Afton, MN 55001

RSVP by January 23, 2024 to Joyce Banttari,

stcroixriverzp@mnslwml.org

Congregation Meeting

This Sunday, January 21 at 12:00 Noon.

All members age 18 and over will be asked to approve our EHLC
spending plan for the year.

2024 CONNECTED

NATIONAL LUTHERAN SCHOOLS WEEK

National Lutheran Schools week is January 21-27

An opportunity for our LCMS preschools, elementary, and high schools to publicly proclaim and celebrate the amazing education students receive, filled with the life-saving gospel message. This year's NLSW will run from January 21 - 27 with the theme, "Connected" based on John 15:1-5.

The themes for each day are:

- **Monday** - Baptism
- **Tuesday** – God made the world and us
- **Wednesday** – Fruit of the Spirit
- **Thursday** – Teamwork makes the dream work
- **Friday** – Share Jesus with others

Check out these numbers! The LCMS has

- 1677 Early Childhood
- 191 Elementary Schools
- 625 Middle Schools
- 103 High Schools

for a **total of 2594** educational institutions!

Open Arms will be collecting diapers (Specifically sizes 4.5 & 6) and wipes for Union Gospel Mission's women's shelter. All donations should be dropped off on or before January 28th. Contact MaryEllen Wunrow at maryellen@ehlc.org or 651-735-4202 ext 1 with questions.



GROW GROUP MEETING
THIS WEEK,
Thursday, January 25th at
10:00 AM

A.A. Open group Meets in the Meeting Room every
Wednesday evening at 7:00 PM. Everyone is welcome.

For more information call:

Mike 651-528-2667

Ways to Give

Offering boxes at worship, or

Mail to EHLC, 616 Ruth Street, St. Paul, MN 55119

On the website – www.ehlc.org – **GIVE**

CELEBRATE LIFE

Concordia University St. Paul




will host the **2024 Life Chapel Service** at Graebner Memorial Chapel on **January 22, 2024** at 10:30 am. Using the Lutherans for Life theme based on Charlotte Elliot's familiar hymn,

"Just As I Am," the service will testify to the sanctity of every human life.

After the Life Chapel Service, worshipers are encouraged to travel to the steps outside the Minnesota State Capitol for the [Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life \(MCCL\) March For Life](#) from 12-1 pm south of the Capitol building. Marches for Life are joyful and hopeful. Come to the party and be an advocate for life!

For further information on the MCCL March for Life or to download the event flyer visit: <https://www.mccl.org/march> or contact Pastor James Kroonblawd, MNS District Life Coordinator, at Trinity Lone Oak Lutheran Church, 651-454-7235.


EHLC is partnering with the St Paul Outreach Center at Jehovah Lutheran Church to write a matching grant from the LCMS as part of the Million Dollar Life Grant. The money raised will go to support specific women enrolled in the prenatal program at Options for Women in East St Paul. Further care and outreach to these brave women will be provided by wonderful Christians like yourself! If you are interested in finding out how you can volunteer for this exciting project, please contact Elsa Blomgren at erichardson@tutanota.com.

 LUTHERANS
FOR LIFE

Wonderfully Made

A Biblical conversation about abortion and end-of-life issues in our complex cultural landscape with Rev. Fred Hinz, LCMS MN South District Public Policy Advocate

Saturday, January 27 | 9:30 am
Trinity Lutheran Church
Fireside Room



NEW LUTHERANS FOR LIFE EVENT

Topics at this FREE event include:

"We're Not in Kansas Anymore."...A General commentary on our current cultural circumstance;

"What Modern Paganism Looks Like." An overview of the Life issues (abortion and doctor assisted suicide) in the Post-Dobbs Era;

"What Are They Teaching our Kids?!" An overview of the current status of education in Minnesota;

The event will meet in the Fireside Room at [Trinity Lutheran Church in Waconia](#). Please enter at Door J on the east side of the building.

Event contact info: Corinne Allen, Lutherans For Life,
Lifelines. narrfarm@aol.com 612-599-0021. Trinity Lutheran
Church, Waconia, MN. 952-442-4165



CENTERPOINT

Is the name of our series of messages. In Paul's letter to the Colossians he show us that JESUS is the "centerpoint" for everything!

Jan. 28 – The Center of our Thoughts

Feb. 4 – One Job

Feb. 11 – Real Change for Real People

Eastern Heights Lutheran Church

616 Ruth Street N., St. Paul, MN 55119

651-735-4202 – office@ehlc.org

"Connecting people to God through faith in Jesus"



**TELL A NEW GENERATION
ABOUT JESUS**
