



Newsletter



November 2020

Volume 15 No. 11

From the Pastor by Pastor Mark Schulz

Every four years, the United States focuses on the national political arena, studies two candidates and two agendas, then decides between them in a presidential election. Leading up to the vote, Christians should consider what is best for the country, what agenda best reflects Biblical values, and most importantly, pray that God's will and His plan would be implemented in the United States.

So how do I determine who to vote for? Let me stress that both candidates are sinful human beings. They have shortcomings. But God can use even a godless leader to carry out his good purposes. Long ago, a leader named Cyrus, freed God's people from their 70 years of captivity in Babylon. He allowed them to go back and rebuild their city and temple. He even gave them monetary funds to do so. Cyrus was a womanizer, and one who worshipped pagan deities.

So whoever, is elected in November as President, rest assured that God will continue to watch over his people and keep us in His care. At the same time, we have the ability to voice our opinions thru the vote as to who would make the best leader for such a time as this. Obviously, we would want a leader who promotes Biblical values. So look at the Biblical values of each candidate. Does the candidate support the pro-life movement or the killing of the unborn? How does the candidate

view marriage? Is marriage viewed between one man and one woman as God intended it? Or does the candidate stress that marriage can be between man and man, and woman and woman? Does the candidate support the thinking that there are more than 2 genders?

What about the view of government? God says that the main purpose of government is to keep law and order in its society and to punish severely the wrongdoer. As you look at a candidate for the office of the presidency, does the candidate support our police and their work to keep us safe? Or does the candidate allow rioting, looting, and the destruction of property to be carried out to further the cause of a political agenda?

What about immigration. Does the candidate want to put together fair immigration laws, showing compassion, but at the same time not allowing an endless flow of illegal immigrants coming into our country? The United States already allows over 1 million immigrants to come into our country each year. If we don't set a number, it will not only hurt those who come in illegally, but our own citizens will find it difficult to find work.

When it gets down to it, we all need to get down on our knees and pray daily to our Heavenly Father. Prayer is one of the most important actions during an election, next to voting. A vote made due to worldly concerns, overpowering emotions, or with cold logic that does not seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit is one that risks being a foolish vote.

Throughout the Bible there are assurances that God will always guide us if believers turn to Him in prayer and ask for His help. "If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you" (James 1:5). So take it to the Lord in prayer this election season. May the Holy Spirit guide you to choose which candidate is best for America, that we might again be one nation under God.

President's Message

The year 2020 has been a difficult year for everyone, for some more than others. God has been merciful and we are thankful that we at Open Bible have not had to deal with a large number of Coronavirus cases. With the Thanksgiving Holiday rapidly approaching, the spirit of thankfulness should be the basis for an attitude adjustment toward all things in life. If you haven't taken the time to reflect on what you are grateful for, there is no better time than Thanksgiving.

We need to treat each day as a Thanks Living day dedicated to God. Even with the difficulties we are facing, we need to stop and give thanks for all that is good. It is important to continually remind ourselves to incorporate gratitude into our stream of consciousness. Find encouragement in the grace of God which he gives to us thru Jesus. By his undeserved mercy, the Father shares his love with sinners like us and encourages us to fearlessly face whatever challenges life brings.

On March 12, 2020 a woman named Heidi May posted the following on Facebook. She was feeling overwhelmed with the mounting unrest caused by the

Coronavirus and said Jesus spoke these words to her heart.

Satan: "I will cause anxiety, fear and panic. I will shut down business, schools, places of worship and sports events. I will cause economic turmoil."

Jesus: "I will bring together neighbors, restore the family unit, I will bring dinner back to the kitchen table. I will help people slow down their lives and appreciate what really matters. I will teach my children to rely on me and not the world. I will teach my children to trust me and not their money and material resources."

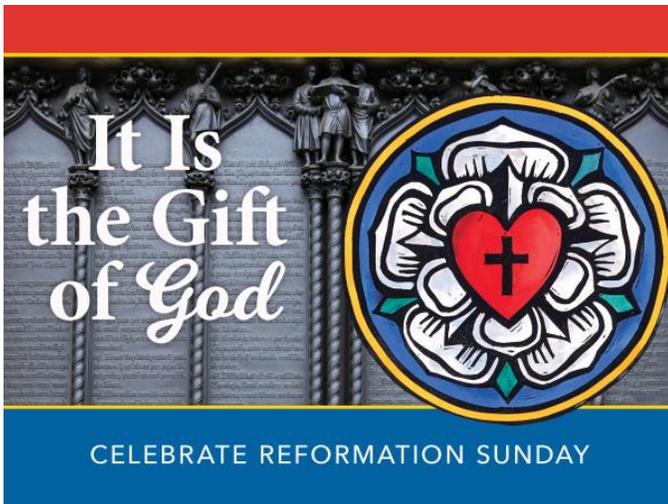
Heidi May summed up this pandemic as yet another struggle between good and evil.

We are all overwhelmed by the Coronavirus. Could this be a wakeup call from God? He may be telling us that our priorities are misplaced. God wants His children to repent and live in obedience to Him. Because of our faith, we know when you put your cares in God's hands, he puts His Peace in your heart. The true Christian trusts that God will provide. God reveals his mighty power in showing us his mercy and kindness. When we bring our problems to Jesus, he will richly supply everything we need.

God's word is the simple but surpassing wonderful good news that is at the heart of Christianity. May we never grow tired of hearing it but rejoice in it daily and share it eagerly. That is Thanks Living!

All God's Blessings,
Greg Wendorf

Reformation Sunday



Open Bible Lutheran Church will celebrate Reformation on Sunday, November 1st during the Worship Service. The theme will be "It Is the Gift of God Reformation"

Join us for our Reformation worship service, It Is a Gift from God, in which we celebrate the undeserved favor from God by which we are saved from sin, death and the devil through faith in our crucified and risen Lord Jesus. Just as Martin Luther was bold to proclaim this gift, we, too, should be bold to live out this gift by bringing glory to God alone.

Music & Education Report By Randy Cochran

WORSHIP

I will use this space every month to explain how worship services are planned at Open Bible. This month: **The Service Folder.**

You have noticed that the service folder is larger. Many of our WELS synod, district, and conference worship services use this same 8 1/2 by 11 format. It simply adds a bit of "gravitas" to our service, in that it gives a sense of something special happening. And it

is...we are gathering to worship Jesus!

Our worship committee meets once per month to plan and discuss worship. It is chaired by Fred Hainen. There are usually about eight of us in attendance.

THANKSGIVING WORSHIP

Worship will be held the night before Thanksgiving, Wednesday, November 25 at 5:30 P.M.

For our Thanksgiving worship, we are asking you to consider e-mailing the church a picture of what you are thankful for. It could be a pic having to do with family, faith, friends, or anything else that makes you feel blessed. The pictures will be shown on the sanctuary screens sometime during the Thanksgiving worship service. Please send your picture to karenopenbible@gmail.com by November 18, Wednesday.

Also, we are asking you to consider bringing any perishable items to the Thanksgiving worship. Sometime during the service, you will be directed to bring your gifts to the front of church. Items collected will be sent over to the Wildwood food bank.

Again, both of these requests are voluntary. Please do not feel obligated to participate if you so choose.

HANDBELLS

Handbells are meeting and will be playing about once per month.

CHOIR

Our small choir is meeting and will be singing about twice per month.

ASSISTED LIVING VISITS (CARRIAGE HOUSE)

My scheduled day is Mondays at 11 AM. We have a short devotion/Bible study, followed by singing time. I currently have a solid core of 8-10 people who are attending. I am limited to about ten guests due to COVID-19 guidelines.

466A BIBLE STUDY GROUP

Our Bible study topic: World Religions. All are invited...not just the 466A neighborhoods. Next study is October 27, Tuesday, 2-3 PM in the church fellowship-hall. Among other things, come learn about the 5 Pillars of Islam and the the Mormons' "sacred undergarments."

SPLASH (Single People Loving and Serving Him)

We are planning an outing to Singing River Tours on October 26th. We have decided on going to Edna's on the Green, November 9, 2:30-5:30 P.M.

CAREGIVERS

If you are a caregiver, it could be that you can't leave your spouse at home by themselves. Or, it is difficult to find someone to watch them when you need to leave the house.

I am willing, along with other members, to come sit with your spouse for a period of time so you can run errands, meet with friends, etc. Or, perhaps we can help by running errands for you...such as shopping or picking up meds. Maybe we can prepare a few meals and drop them off.

If you need assistance, call me at 407-637-4876 or e-mail me at randy.cochran78@gmail.com

CHRISTMAS FOR KIDS

We are hoping to conduct a Christmas for Kids on December 12, Saturday. I will need some help with preparing snacks, lunch, arts and crafts, etc. The idea is that parents can drop off their kids while they run Christmas errands. It would be for preschool (age 3) thru grade six children. I will begin seeking volunteers in November.

5TH SUNDAY

Our next 5th Sunday is November 29. **We will have a special outdoor service.** It would be a great opportunity to invite friends. Also, it would be awesome to have as many of our own members attend this special day. Food will follow.

2021 WORKSHOPS

I plan on offering two workshops during the first half of 2021. One will be for those who have recently lost a loved one. It's titled "Grief Share". The other will be titled "Planning Your Christian Funeral: What to do Before, During, and After."

BUS TOURS

Depending on how COVID behaves, I'd like to organize some motor coach trips in 2021 for our members and their friends. If you have any suggestions, let me know.

"Serving the Savior" This Month

This month we would like to acknowledge



Jennifer Mercer. This is hard working lady! Even before she joined Open Bible Church, she volunteered to be a greeter. Jennifer is

always willing to serve her savior with a joyful heart.

Jennifer is married with two children. Her youngest, Aiden was baptized by Pastor Schulz. Her daughter, Olivia is always willing to help when she can.

Thank you, Jennifer, for all you do to serve our Savior!

Small Group Ministry

Wednesday in the Word:

Led by Pastor Mark Schulz

Join us on Wednesdays from 4:00-5:00 pm & ZOOM 6:00 – 7:00 pm

Politics Is Driving Me Crazy

Red states. Blue states. Partisanship. Name-calling. Gerrymandering. Seeing the faces and hearing the voices of those who make our blood boil. And then, there are the unending cycle of elections and the rhetoric of social media posts that leave the average constituent frustrated and saying, "Enough already! Politics is driving me crazy!"

In *Politics Is Driving Me Crazy!* you will be offered a note of calm and a return to sanity as you are led to listen to God, who rules over all things. This four-lesson Bible study will help you understand and appreciate the separation of church and state and how we as Christians can best serve our fellow people.

The four lessons are:

October 28th- *A Tale of Two Kingdoms*

November 4th-- *The Imperfect State*

November 11th *The Separation of Church and State*

November 18th - *Our Messy Political World*

466A Group Bible Study

Led by Randy Cochran

This is a group is meeting on the fourth Tuesday of the month at Open Bible. In the Fellowship Hall.

TOPIC: World Religions

October 27th:

November 23rd:

December 28th:

Handbells

Facilitator: Pam Johnson.



Meets on Sundays at 11:00 am. We need two more people that would like to ring bells or learn to ring bells.

Small Choir: Music Director is Randy Cochran. Meeting on Wednesdays at 5:15pm.



Happy Hearts, Happy Hands Handiwork

Led by: Sandy Pawlowski



Meets on the third Friday of the month from 9:00 am – Noon. Next meeting will be November 20th.

This group creates quilts for those in need in our community. Also, many will bring their knitting, crochet, and embroidery to work on. So, if you have any craft project you are working on, please come and enjoy the fellowship.

WinGS:

Women in God's Service



WINGS
WOMEN IN GODS SERVICE

Led by: Genie Selvey

WinGS November

meeting will be

Wednesday, November 11th at 1:00 pm.

Save the Dates: Sunday, December 6th at 6:00 pm. WinGS will present

Advent by Candlelight. We will have a hostess for each decorated table that will each seat 3 guests. (social distancing). From 6:00 pm until approximately 6:45 we will have fellowship and a small dessert. Then we will adjourn to the sanctuary to celebrate "The Bells of Christmas" with songs, scripture readings, candle lighting and bell ringing! Come and prepare your hearts for the coming of Our Savior!

Also, **Friday, December 11th**, WinGS will have their annual Christmas Luncheon at a nearby restaurant. (Details will be announced soon) Please bring a decorated Christmas Bag with non-perishable items to donate to the food pantry. (Here's an idea: Maybe a complete dinner for a family, or a fun activity for the family like ingredients for baking cookies, etc.) We did this last year and the Wildwood Food Pantry Loved this idea!

SPLASH: *Single People Loving and Serving Him*
Led by: Randy Cochran



is an organization for singles. We have a Bible Study and brief meeting the second Monday each month. Next event, November 9th at 2:30pm. We will meet at church and then drive to Edna's on the Green.

Also, please consider recycling your 2020 Meditations to the WELS Prison Ministry. They are gathered and sent to the prison ministry office and from there, distributed to prison served by the ministry throughout the country. The Meditations can be placed in Peggi Carrier's mailbox or the box on the

counter labeled for Meditations. It is noted that they are snapped up by the Christians behind bars.

North Country Group

Facilitator: Alan Johnson
Continues Sunday, November 8th & 22nd at 6:00 pm at Alan & Pam Johnson's home in Ocala.
Topic: **"Twelve Ordinary Men"** by John MacArthur. All are welcome to join, contact Alan Johnson if interested.

Ladies Tuesday Bible Study

Led by Pam Johnson
Is planning on starting possibly in January 2021. Contact Pam (lambteach@cox.net), phone: 352-208-1271.

Men of Leisure:

Led by: Dennis Duessler



Next meeting will be Friday, November 13th 8:30 am at Bob Evans on CR466.
Topic: Nineteen Minute Bible Study.

Friday Fore-Giving Golfers

Facilitator is Sandy Fehlhaber



This group meets once a week on Fridays to golf the Executive courses in The Villages. Teams are determined by the Sunday prior to the golf date. Each golfer is equipped with a small plastic bag with extra-long tees and a business card from Open Bible to hand out to unchurched golfers.

Sunrise Saturday Morning Golfers:



This group is for those of you that would like to golf at The Villages executive golf courses in the morning. This group's coordinator is Doug Tharp. Please

contact him if you are interested in joining.

Golf Cart Ministry: If you are interested in driving the golf cart to pick-up people from the surrounding Independent Living Facilities and bring them to Open Bible Worship services.



Contact the Church Office.

Care for the Caregivers:

If you are a caregiver, it could be that you can't leave your spouse at home by themselves. Or it is difficult to find someone to watch them when you need to leave the house.

Please consider this. I am willing, along with other Open Bible members, to come sit with your spouse for a period of time so you can run errands, meet with friends, etc. Or, perhaps we can help by running the errands for you...such as shopping or picking up meds. Maybe we can help prepare a few meals and drop them off?

You might even have some other suggestions!

Please prayerfully consider this offer and get back with me if you are interested in these services.

You can e-mail me at randy.cochran78@gmail.com or call me at 407-637-4876. I look forward to hearing from you!

Randy Cochran, facilitator

Altar Guild: Leader: Diane Olsen

The Altar Guild welcomes any lady interested in serving with the guild. You may contact any member or

Diane Olsen or just attend the meeting. We will train you so you will feel comfortable in your service.

We are preparing for the fall and winter festival season with Thanksgiving, Advent and Christmas.

“Mornings with Mommy”

We had a nice group of children for our Mornings with Mommy session in October! Lots of energy! New People! What fun God has in store for



these children. Our next session is November 2nd theme is Instruments, and November 16th will be Thanksgiving. So spread the news! Please call or text to preregister 989-450-1937.

**LWMS NEWS
Out of Africa...**

We have two mission sites. I would like to share with you our North Florida Circuit Befriend a Missionary assignment. Assignment sounds so formal and doesn't really reflect the elements of excitement and interest it brings with it as we communicate with our missionaries and learn about their work, their concerns and needs, and their celebrations. I have had the privilege of emailing Pastor Phillip Birner who is serving in Lusaka, Zambia. As I mentioned earlier, he and his wife were in the process of adopting a child named Peggy who was a second grader. I will include some of his last email. “Thank you for your email from you and the LWMS ladies at Open Bible. It's hard to believe Sue and I've been married for 30 years except for the fact that 29 of those years have been spent together in

Zambia. Sorry your card won't make it here anytime soon. Zambia postal services suspended all international mail back in May. I mistakenly ordered a shipment of books for our seminary students here in Lusaka while on furlough this past June only to be told this when I got back to Lusaka in August that no mail or shipments are coming from the outside world into Zambia due to Covid-19.

Our daughter Peggy is legally adopted now by us. That became final around the end of December of 2019. What remains is getting Peggy a USA passport and citizenship. We were told that Peggy needs to be living with us for at least 2 years before we can start on this. God-willing beginning in November we will start working with the USA consular departments at our USA Embassy here in Lusaka to begin this process. Peggy has been to the USA several times now and has a USA visa in her Zambian Passport good through December of 2021. Hopefully we will have a USA passport for her by then. She will also be able to keep her Zambian passport which will put her one up on her parents by having dual citizenship.

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As hinted at above, my main work is teaching at the Lutheran Seminary here in Lusaka. My last visit to Rwanda was now almost two years ago. We had been planning on making a trip back in April at my Easter school break, but Covid-19 put a halt to that. Part of my problem is that I have to try and make any trips to Rwanda during school breaks. Rwanda Air I just read has now started to resume flights into Lusaka and is only a two- and one-half-hour flight away (4 hours if I have to go via Harare, Zimbabwe). Right now, though, the WELS World Missions still is not allowing us to travel. That may change soon. Really Covid-19 has

not been that severe here in southern Africa. Zambia has had fewer deaths from Covid-19 than Winnebago County in Wisconsin where I spent most of my furlough this past USA summer.

I'm glad you are able to keep up with OAT activities on the Web. I'm sorry to say I'm one of those tech dinosaurs that has not contributed much to what appears on the internet and Facebook. Thankfully we have some younger and more tech savvy missionaries on OAT who keep things coming out. Please keep reading and encourage others to do so.

Right now, we are eagerly awaiting our Seminary to open and resume classes. Back in September, the Zambian Ministry of Health opened up all schools in the country. Our problem is that over half our Seminary class is residing in Malawi. The borders have been open for residents and permit holders to cross into Zambia. This year we begin a new Seminary class which means our Malawi students are just coming over for the first time. They have to access a visitor visa and then have 30 days to obtain a study permit. Right now, the borders have not been issuing those visas. Also, the students and their families would require obtaining a negative Covid-19 certificate less than 14 days old. Those are quite challenging to obtain and if you do, they are quite expensive. So, we are waiting for things to open up a little wider before we can start our classes. In your prayers for us please pray that our borders would open fully to allow our students together with their families to travel. The same is true for our Zambian Pre-LBI (Lutheran Bible Institute) students who are traveling to Lilongwe Malawi to begin their 3-year pre-seminary

program. They are waiting to cross into Malawi with the same restrictions our Malawi Seminary students have coming into Zambia.

I pray you all are safe in Florida and the Covid-19 Pandemic will spare you and yours. Our God is gracious and protecting both now and in eternity.

Yours in Christ,
Missionary Philip Birner"

The reference to OAT is the One Africa Team. Look for them on their web address. OneAfricaTeam.com . There are pictures and stories of the work being done in Africa. A glance at their mission statement gives you picture of the extent of their goal.

Peggi Carrier, LWMS Reporter

Did You Know?



Can Collection: Bring your "crushed" & "rinsed" cans to church on the 1st & 3rd Sunday of the month. Put your cans in the back of the car parked out in front of church. Thank you from the Women of Open Bible (WinGS.)

Food Pantry Collection: Please bring non-perishable food items on the 1st Sunday of the month. A collection bin is located by the front doors. Jim & Eva Orcutt will take the items to the donation site for the Wildwood Food Pantry and Soup Kitchen.

The 2020 Flower Calendar has been placed on the bulletin board near the

water fountain. The cost is \$35.00 per arrangement or \$70.00 for both. Please indicate on your envelope payment is for "flowers". Two families may sign up for a Sunday and share the cost. If you have questions, please call Sheryn Daw 928-232-7730.

Emergency Contact Information

Open Bible can add an emergency contact person's information to your file. Please indicate the person's Name, Relationship to you, their phone number and the state/country that they live in.

Please give this to our church secretary, Karen Pearson and she will add it to your file. You never know when this will come in handy.

September Offering Report:

Year to Date Income:	\$246,359.00
Year to date Expenses:	\$214,806.00
September Offerings:	\$33,903.00
September Expenses:	\$23,359.00
Balance for month:	\$10,544.00
Balance for Year:	\$31,554.00

(In October we will have a payment of \$16,000 for insurance on the church)

Thanksgiving Services will be on Wednesday November 25th at 5:30 pm. There will not be any services on Thanksgiving Day.



Happy Anniversary

Gordon & Shirley Roback – 9
 Ron & Mary Helen Schultz – 16
 Rich & Dianne Kuhlman - 18
 Ron & Karen Dahm – 19
 Mike & Carol Benrud – 25
 Bill & Sally Stocks – 26



Happy Birthday

James Fehlhaber – 2
 Dave Gonia – 5
 Jennifer Mercer - 5
 Robin Otto - 7
 Janis Liermann – 11
 Jean Marshall - 12
 Jeri Leeper – 13
 John Liermann – 14
 Kathy Griffin – 18
 Sheryn Daw - 18
 Earl Schlicht – 19
 Steve Kuepker - 19
 Pat Kramer - 20
 Ron Stuedemann – 22
 Pastor Mark Schulz – 23
 Roger Otto - 28

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“Growing in Christ through the Word, Making His Salvation Known”

Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS)

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Listen to our Radio Ministry on Sunday’s at 103.5
 “The Shepherd.” Our time slot is 11:05 – 11:30am



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