



LWMLC Capital Zone Rally 2020

"Faithful Women throughout the Centuries"



YOU

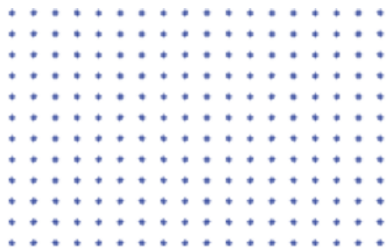


There he is once! Arrest him! He's the one who did it! It's him! He's the one causing all our troubles!

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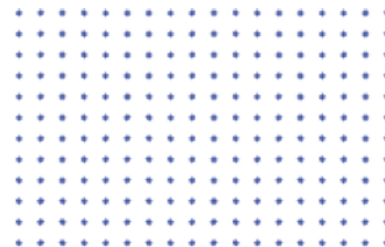
Introduction

The LWMLC Laurentian District Capital Zone Rally took place on Saturday October 24th, 2020. It was held online through Zoom, a first for the zone. We were blessed with the attendance of around eight participants who all helped make this unusual rally a success! But for those who were unable to attend, we want to encourage you that you are not alone. Thank you for reading this newsletter, and may God be with you.



Opening Prayer

Dear God, although we might be separated from each other during these times of pandemic, may we remember that nonetheless, in you we are together as one holy body. We are a house of living stones, of which your blessed son Jesus Christ is the cornerstone. May we rest on this firm foundation and know that you will carry us through even the most difficult of times. Be with us all, and may we someday be able to gather together in person again. In your name we pray, Amen.



Bible Study

“Faithful Women Throughout the Centuries”

Precedented Times

We are living through what people are calling an “unprecedented time” and in many ways that is true. We are dealing with a pandemic and environmental disasters and civil unrest and increasingly divided politics and it is scary. We really don’t know what the future will look like. Will we ever even be able to leave our houses again? What will happen to our country? Our minds are filled with anxious questions that we do not know the answers to. These are truly unprecedented times.

But I want to suggest that maybe in some ways it is not so unprecedented after all.

In Ecclesiastes Chapter 1 Verse 9, Solomon writes:

“What has been is what will be,
and what has been done is what will be done,
and there is nothing new under the sun.

Is there a thing of which it is said,

“See, this is new”?

It has been already

in the ages before us.”

Do you find this encouraging or discouraging?

In some ways it is discouraging. As human beings, we desperately long for things to get better. And some things have gotten better, and yet even so, humanity still struggles with the same sinful problems it always has. But on the other hand, I think it is encouraging to know that we are not alone. There have always been times of uncertainty, and yet somehow people managed to live through it. God was with them then, and God is with us now.

For this Bible Study, I want to look at the lives of several women throughout history. Even though we are separated by time, language and location, they also struggled through difficult times and were sustained by the same faith in God that sustains us today. I hope by looking at these women’s lives, we might be encouraged.

Hope in Despair

First, let's look at the very first woman: Eve.

You've probably already read the story, but you can read it again in Genesis Chapter 3. Eve disobeyed God, and seeing "that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate." (verse 6)

Because of this disobedience, the world is cursed. God tells the woman that she will have pain in childbearing and man that he will have to labour for his food in a cursed ground of thorns and thistles.

Thus, we should not be surprised when we look around outside us and see a hurting world. We should not be surprised that there are so many evil and terrifying things all around us. We even see that same disobedience and selfish desire that drove Eve in ourselves, and it leads only to more pain in our lives.

But despite all this evil around us, we do not have to give into despair, because even back then God gives a promise.

God tells Satan in verse 15:

"I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

In this way, he foreshadows Christ's victory. He tells us that ultimately, even though the world might seem to be burning up around us, evil will not last forever. Christ will triumph over sin! Evil will get what it deserves, and God will save us from sin and death and the devil. We see this in our own lives as God blesses and sanctifies us in our work, and we will see it even further in the world to come when God creates a new heaven and earth free of sin.

Discussion:

Where do we see sin in our life today?

What promises does God give us?

The Blessed Hereafter

The following story is taken from the book "Light in the Dark Belt" by Rosa Young in which the author describes how God worked through a difficult time of famine to help bring the Lutheran church to Alabama. The author uses this as an example of how our earthly struggles can lead to a "blessed hereafter". Even if we might not understand it at the time, God is able to work through even the hardest times for good.

In 1914, the Mexican Boll Weevil arrived in Alabama, destroying wide swathes of cotton. Many black tenant farmers, who were already poor, lost their farms and livelihood. Furthermore, World War 1 also broke out at the same time, a terrible and senseless slaughter that killed thousands across the world. Black people in Alabama already had to deal with racism and poverty, and these hard times only made things even worse.

Meanwhile, a young black woman named Rosa Young was trying to set up a school. She had grown up in the area and saw how difficult it was for young black children to get a good education. She wanted to help them by building a school. She had managed to raise enough funds to build the building and support two semesters, but now with the famine she did not have enough to continue supporting it. If she wasn't able to secure funds soon, she would have to close the school. But

throughout it all she kept praying. As she had throughout her whole life, she decided to entrust the matter to God.

“That night when I returned home, I prayed and prayed and prayed. Then I decided that I would write one more letter, and if no relief came then, I would close the school¹,” she described in her autobiography. She wrote the letter, and received in reply a list of organizations who might help her. She contacted all of them, but only the Lutheran church was willing to support her. Thanks to their financial support, the school was able to continue and new Lutheran missions were set up in the area, spreading the gospel to people it might not have reached before!

“God, who is able to do all things, could have used any of the other sources to whom I had so earnestly appealed for help to sustain the school, but He caused every other source to which I applied to refuse me help until I had applied to the right source. It was God who moved the hearts of Director Drewes and the sainted Pastor Bakke to take the steps they did. Yes, it was the hand of God. It was a direct answer to my prayer. Many a day I walked from my home to school, praying every step, asking God to take my school, not to let it die, to make out of it a great religious center. Mrs. J. Lee Bonner also prayed for me and my school. God answered these prayers by sending the Lutheran Church down into the Black Belt to lead us out of darkness into light. ‘What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter.’ Let us always wait for the blessed hereafter.”²

Our current world might look bleak. However, God can still work through these difficult times for good.

Discussion:

How has God used difficult situations in your life for good?

When things look hopeless, there is always one thing we can do. Pray. What things can we pray for during these days of Covid-19?

A Time Such As This

God is able to work through even difficult times for good. He is also able to work through us poor miserable sinners to accomplish great things.

Many years ago, the Persians had swept through Israel, killing many people and taking the rest as exiles back to Persia. Not only did they have to live far away from their homeland, one day a sinister plot was hatched by the king’s advisor, Haman, to kill their people! When Mordecai found out about this plot, he went to his cousin Esther.

Esther, as you probably know, was the wife of the king. Mordecai asked her to help her people, and Esther is given a tough choice. The previous queen had been banished for disobeying the king! If Esther speaks out of place, she could be killed. But here is what Mordecai tells her: ‘

“For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?” - Esther 4:14

Mordecai is firm in his faith that God will save his people. But he also tells Esther – what if you have been born just for this? God had placed her in the position of queen perhaps for a time such as this. These times are difficult, it is true.

Sometimes, we might even wonder – why are we here? Why did this have to happen to us, of all people? Why couldn’t we be living in easier times? I am sure Esther thought the same thing. But we

¹ Light in the Dark Belt, Rosa Young Pg 109

² Ibid, Pg 110-111

have been placed here by God, and there must be a reason for it. It may be to accomplish something that only we can do.

Perhaps we too, have been born for such a time as this.

Discussion:

What is the vocation that we are placed in? Who are we able to serve in this position?

What can we do to spread God's love and compassion during these critical and difficult times?

All Will Be Well

Of course, this is easier said than done. We are so easily disheartened. We don't love others as much as we should. We find ourselves giving way to fear and despair. Instead of loving our neighbour, we start despairing over their stupidity or ignorance. Or we might be so concerned with our own problems we don't think of our neighbours at all! The truth is, we are sinful beings. We do not have the strength to do the good that we should.

And I think, especially given the circumstances, it's rather natural to be discouraged. Everything seems to be going wrong at once, and it's natural to feel afraid. So, if you are feeling lonely and discouraged by everything that is happening, don't beat yourself up about it. Be kind to yourself, and remind yourself that God loves you and forgives you and will protect you nonetheless. Remind yourself that God is good, and that though we must suffer now for a little while, someday all will be well.

I would now like to look at some excerpts from a book by Julian of Norwich, a woman from 14th century England. In 1373 this woman became very sick and received several visions. In these visions, she contemplated Christ's holy suffering and the extreme depth of his love for us. Whether or not they were real visions received by God, I don't know, and I can't attest to how theologically correct they are either. However, I think that throughout her writings her faith in Christ is very clear and admirable, and where it does not contradict Scripture, I think we can still learn something from her work.

Just like today, 14th century England was a turbulent time. The country was still reeling from the devastating affects of the Black Death and the enormous death toll it had wrought. In the later part of the century there was also wide-spread unrest and inequality. Landowners extracted heavy taxes from the peasants, who had little rights, and finally in 1381 violent revolts flared up throughout the country.

Times were uncertain. And just like us, people were frightened. And just like anyone else, Julian at times struggled with uncertainty and despair. She confesses that at times she felt "all alone, deeply depressed and tired for my life, so fed up with myself that I could hardly bear to go on living".³ As the kids say, that's a 'Big Mood'.

By the way, an anchoress is a type of deeply religious woman who withdrew from society, generally enclosing themselves in an isolated room next to a church, where they dedicated themselves to prayer and fasting. That is to say – they were doing social isolation before it was cool!

That being said, anchoresses nonetheless did have contact with the outside world. However, we might today be able to relate to her long days spent inside a little building outside the wall of a church, unable to leave. It was not easy, and yet her faith remained strong and she trusted firmly in God's love.

³Revelations of Divine Love, Julian of Norwich, Chapter 15, pg 51

“Just as the body wears clothes and the flesh skin and the bones flesh and the heart the chest, so we, soul and body are clothed and enfolded in the goodness of God. Yes – and this is more comforting because all these other things will wear out, but God’s goodness is always whole, and incomparably closer to us. For truly our Lover desires that we should cling to him with all our might, and that we should for ever cling to his goodness. For, out of everything that we can think about, this is what most please God and helps us on our way. The love our supreme God has for us is so wonderful that it is far beyond our comprehension. Not created being can fully know the greatness, the sweetness, the tenderness of our Creator’s love for us. But, with his grace and help our spirits can gaze in endless wonder at this infinitely high, surpassing, immeasurable love which our Lord has in his goodness has for us.”⁴

In all things, she turned towards Christ. She focused her eyes on Jesus’ Passion, on His holy suffering and death. And though at times she questioned things, wondering how so much evil might exist in the world, she concluded that even so, God will make all things well because God is all-powerful and good. God is in control of everything, even the smallest, most humble and significant beings such as you or I, and he will make all things well.

“The pain [of sin] is real enough, but, it seems to me, it lasts only for a while: it cleanses us and makes us know ourselves, and ask for mercy. The Passion of our Lord is our strength in all this and that is his blessed will. Because of his tender love for all who are to be saved our good Lord quickly and sweetly comforts us saying, “It is true that sin is the cause of all this pain, but all will be well, and all will be well, and all manner of things will be well.”⁵

Discussion:

How can Julian say that “All things will be well”?

How does God show His love for us?

Conclusion

“What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun.”

We have seen that in the past people have also lived through terrible plagues and political instability. We have seen that people have lived through exile and economic uncertainty. We have seen that sin has been in this world since the very first woman and continues up to our very own times.

Though still fearsome, what we are facing now is not so entirely new after all. Nor is the solution new. Christ, then and always, is the promised one who has defeated death and the devil. He is our salvation. He has placed us in these times for a reason and his love for us is so great that He died for our sins. He is the one who forgives us, listens to our prayers and works out all things out for good.

All shall be well!

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Young, Rosa. *Light in the Dark Belt: The Story of Rosa Young*. Revised Edition. Missouri: Concordia Publishing House, 2014. Available for purchase on the cph website.

⁴Ibid, Chapter 6 pg 15

⁵Ibid, Chapter 27, pg 86

Julian of Norwich. *Revelations of Divine Love*. Edited by Halcyon Backhouse and Rhona Pipe. London: Hodder & Stoughton Ltd, 2009. An earlier edition can be accessed for free on Gutenberg.org

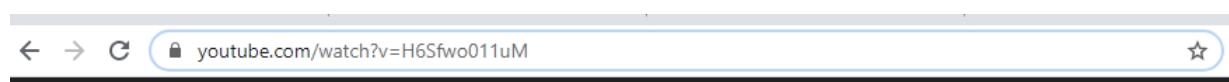
Music

Interested in listening to the music played at the rally?

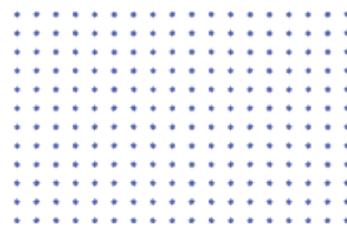
Check out the videos on youtube!

- <https://youtu.be/MD-NmB2-7hc>
- <https://youtu.be/s794ZLnv8uc>

To watch, please open your internet browser on your computer, and type the link into the top bar like so:



The Great LWMLC Mail Exchange



The Capital Zone is introducing a new initiative: The Great LWMLC Mail Exchange! It is our hope that this will help bring together woman in our zone and encourage them in this time of isolation, even those without access to internet or technology. In this initiative, participants will be matched with other another woman every few months. You then have to send them something in the mail (a card, a letter, or something of the sort), and in exchange, someone else will write to you!

Interested? Here is how it works:

Step 1: Sign up by sending your name and mailing address to Allison Kuhl at allison.kuhl@bell.net or 613-599-8418

Step 2: Wait to receive a name and address from the mail coordinator.

Step 3: Write your assigned match a letter or send them a card in the mail!

Step 4: Meanwhile, someone else is writing you a letter. Wait to receive it! Write back, if you want.





Step 5: In a few months, you'll be assigned a new person to write to, and a new person will be assigned to you.

And that's it! We will begin as soon as we have gathered together enough interested participants. Please spread the word.

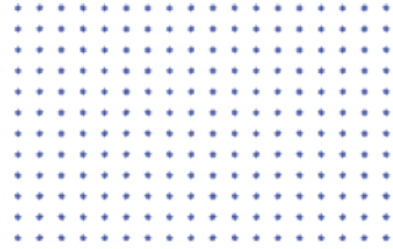
Prayer Requests

- for Rachel Kuhl's sister Judith and her daughter,
- for Eloise's sister's health
- for Allison Kuhl as she starts her new job as a Junior Developer
- Sheila Forhan from Our Saviour who recently passed away, and for her family
- the Laurentian District
- to be bold in sharing our faith
- for people who are isolated
- for people who have strayed from the church
- peace on earth

Zone Representative

Allison Kuhl was chosen to continue as the Capital Zone rep.

Potpourri



A Word of Encouragement

- submitted by Eloise Schaan

Even though the Laurentian District is small, and numbers continue to go down, we must never let ourselves think we are insignificant in LWMLC and the church. Here is a little story that says otherwise.

A mouse asked a wild dove, “Tell me the weight of a snowflake.”

“Nothing more than nothing,” was the answer.

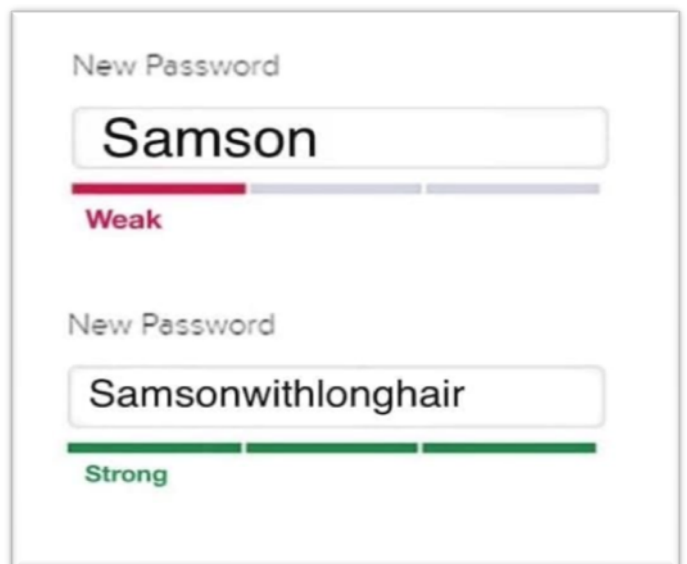
The mouse then proceeded to tell the dove a story:

“I sat on the branch of a fir tree, close to its trunk, when it began to snow. Not heavily, it wasn’t a raging blizzard. No, it was just like in a dream. Since I didn’t have anything better to do, I counted the snowflakes settling on the twigs of my branch. Their number was exactly 2,723,756. When the next snowflake dropped onto the branch – nothing more than nothing, as you say – the branch broke off.”

The dove thought about the story for awhile and mused, “If something as light as a snowflake can break a branch with the combined weight of many, perhaps the combined weight of people working together can also make a difference in the mission of the Church.

Some Millennial Humor

- submitted by Allison Kuhl



1 Corinthians 15:55-57 (Colorized)

