



# Lutheran Church of the Cross & Lutheran Child Development Ctr.

LUTHERAN CHURCH-MISSOURI SYNOD

*A Christian family who cares for you!*

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September 8, 2017

Dear Lutheran Church of the Cross friends,

Last night I could not sleep well and awoke very early. The anxiety that had went away while working the past two days had returned. So I journeyed at dawn's light to the Cross Monument and Prayer Park to read Scripture and to pray. What came out were jumbled petitions and requests mixed with hopes and wishes. Thankfully the Bible promises that, "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words" (Rom. 8:26 ESV). Thankfully in my hands today is not a book of empty promises of hope or wishes that things will work out alright, but the living words of the creator God. And even though my daily reading through the Bible brought me today—of all days—to the story of Noah and the flood; I read again about God's promise in a rainbow to never again destroy the whole earth by a flood. I read his promise that "As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will NEVER cease." And I am reminded that by my baptism I too am saved by the cleansing blood of Jesus and part of his kingdom. And in that identity, I can turn and face the challenges of today.

As promised, the elders have reviewed the forecast and path of hurricane Irma and decided to cancel Sunday Church, Bible Class, and Sunday School for September 10, 2017. Lord willing the opening of our Sunday School year and commissioning of teachers will take place the following Sunday September 17, 2017. It is unlikely that our church or LCDC campus will be open Monday or Tuesday, Sept. 11/12 depending on the amount of damage and cleanup necessary. During the hurricane and immediately following the hurricane our primary communication source will likely be our Facebook page or direct inquiry to my cell phone at (941) 979-7490. Depending on power and damage we will then attempt to update our church voicemail.

Please tune in on Sunday to The Lutheran Hour to join their worship and hear a sermon by Pastor Seltz. The program is broadcast on WENG 107.5FM at 10:30 a.m., WENG 1530AM at 10:30 a.m. and WHNZ Tampa 1250AM at 10 a.m. You can also listen online at [lutheranhour.org](http://lutheranhour.org) at any time. In your prayers please remember all who are effected by Irma, those who are out on the roads, and the first responders who are out protecting us.

Finally, please remember that when Jesus taught us to pray he began with the petition, "Hallowed be Thy name." In other words Jesus taught us that praise to God comes first. Pastor and author Timothy Keller offhandedly told his congregation that since praise and adoration comes before asking for daily bread in the Lord's Prayer then maybe we out to spend time praising and thanking God first before listing our own needs and requests. ...well one lady took him seriously and came back a few weeks later and told Keller it had made a difference. "Before I would run right to my prayer list and the more I went through all the problems and needs, the more anxious and burdened I would get....Now I've started spending time thinking about how good and wise he is, and how many prayers he's answered of mine in the past....And when I get to my own needs--now I find I can put them in his hands and I feel the burden coming off me rather than on me."

Her testimony makes me think of you who will be reading this message and about all of your prayers and overwhelming needs that are right in front of your eyes and in need of God's help. Please remember to pray Hallowed Be Thy Name. The same God who rescued his children out of Egypt, the God who brought them safely through the wilderness, the God who stood with Daniel in the lions' den, the God who defeated Goliath with a pebble, the God who made the heavens and the earth with his powerful Word, is the God who hears and who will answer your prayer. May God's will be done, may his kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven. And may he give you your daily bread, and forgive you your trespasses as you forgive others who trespassed against you. May he lead you not into temptation but deliver you from evil. For His is the kingdom. For His is the power. His is the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Yours truly,  
Pastor Stolarczyk