

St. Andrew Lutheran Church

Heartbeat

April 2020



Message from the Pastor:

THE PRAYER OF JABEZ

In Chronicles 4:9-10, there is a little narrative about Jabez, whose name means “pain”. His mother had a great deal of pain when Jabez was born, so that was the name given him to help his mother and perhaps even him to remember. (What a great thing to be reminded of your entire life—the pain you caused to another!) Jabez, however, didn’t let that name define him. We are told that “Jabez was more honorable than his brothers”. And Jabez prayed---well, “cried out to the God of Israel” is the way the Bible puts it—this little prayer that I love:



Oh, that you would bless me and enlarge my territory! Let your hand be with me and keep me from all harm so that I will be free from pain.

This little prayer has been on my heart a lot lately as we walk though this journey together (observing appropriate social distancing at the same time). I find this prayer to have great value for me as we face these days and explore new ways to be the people of God in a difficult time. At first read, it may seem rather self-serving, but actually it isn’t. Let me share why.

“*Bless me and enlarge my territory.*” Okay, that is kind of self-centered. Jabez is asking for more. He wants more blessing so that he can “enlarge my territory.” The meaning of that last phrase is important, though. “Territory” refers to his sphere of influence: family, job, neighborhood, church. It is everything and everyone that God places under his care. So Jabez is asking that he might be blessed so that he can bless others in God’s name. And then he asks that his influence might expand so that, though him, God’s blessing might be a blessing to more and more people.

Rev. Jeffrey Nelson
Pastor

Elissa Mitzen
Director of Youth & Family Ministries

Randy Guiaya
Organist/Choir Director

Matthew James
Praise Team Director

Kathy Mitzen
President

Chris Allen
Vice President

Barbara Revueltas
Council Secretary

Betty Dagen
Treasurer

Marie Jorgenson
Stewardship

Suzanne Thompson
Mission and Service

Isla Holmes
Hospitality

Vicki Linta
Worship and music

Len Bobier
Evangelism Leader

Jennifer Oertel
Congregational Care

Art Revueltas
Property

Daniell Crocker
Gillian Simmons
Youth and Family

I think about this as we try to provide ministry, certainly to our members and neighbors, but moreover that it might flow to more and more people. How can we help and bless others? How might what we're learning grow so that God's gifts of love and mercy might reach increasingly more people?

"Let your hand be with me." Here, Jabez asks that it be God who directs his life and his decisions. Jabez knows the source of his blessing and states here that he wants God to guide how he uses those God-given gifts for others. The Bible has many examples of what happens when people tried to do it their own way? When God promised Abraham that he would be the father of a great nation, Sarah, who was well-past childbearing age told Abraham to have a child with Sarah's handmaid, Hagar, rather than simply trusting that God would provide them a child. The son of Abraham and Hagar was named Ishmael and he became the forefather of the Arabs; whereas the child God provided to Abraham and Sarah—Isaac—became the forefather of the Jews. And we all know how well things are work out today between the descendants of those two sons of Abraham. If only Abraham and Sarah had trusted a little more. Yet the Bible also is filled with stories of those who allowed themselves to be led by God and the tremendous blessing that resulted flowing down even to today. How might God lead us as we seek to be faithful in this difficult time? What is God's desire for us as seek to strive to bless and inspire in God's name?

"Keep me from all harm." I'm sure many are praying this today as we seek protection from the coronavirus. Additionally, though, asking for God's protection is a way of acknowledging that we are part of God's strategy for living a life that blesses others. Often, I've found that the closer we come to doing great things for the Kingdom of God, the more we come under attack from Satan. I don't know what great thing God is about to do, but perhaps what is happening in the world is a way for Satan to try to distract, deflect, or undermine that. At the same time, I also believe and trust that God always brings good out of difficulty or tragedy—not always in the same measure, but God always brings good. As we ask God to protect us, we can be looking as well for the good God is doing. Might the separation from our church that we feel today also be felt by those who have drifted from the church and help to bring them back? Might improved and more diverse communication show us new ways to reach others for Christ?

"So that I will be free from pain." Again, this makes sense based on the name Jabez was given. But here he is not asking that he be spared from pain. That's included in his request that he be kept from all harm. Now Jabez asks that he cause no pain to others. Jabez remembers the pain that his mother felt when he was born, and he wishes to be sure to not give pain again. Isolation, though difficult, is a way that we can keep from giving pain or illness to others. Letting God lead us into new ways of connecting with folks can bring the blessing of support and caring that others need, even from a distance. How might we live so that less harm and hurt is experienced by those with whom we come in contact? How can we be more present with those around us in order to build bridges of peace and joy?

We are told that Jabez was "more honorable than his brothers". Perhaps that's because his focus was more fully on serving God. Jabez put God first and focused on serving God in the present. It's easy to get absorbed in the future. When will this be over? How will things be then? Perhaps now is the season for us to learn more about the precious present—the time God gives us now to be God's people in this time and place. May God bless us and protect us as we seek to be a blessing to all with whom we interact.

In Christ's love,
Pastor Jeffrey

Note from the Evangelism Team

If you plan to travel either abroad or in the USA, travel insurance and information is available from our church insurance provider Church and Casualty of Newport Beach. They partner with AIG World Risk. For more information please visit:

**Https://
www.churchmutual/114in
ternational-Travel-tips.**

For more information
please email
Hello@ccia.com

For any questions please contact Len Bobier at (562) 947-4919. Knowing most of us will not be traveling, but if we need to we need as much information and tips we can obtain.

Len Bobier
Evangelism Team Leader

SPECIAL NOTICE: Due to technical difficulties, St. Andrew Lutheran Church has changed its email address. Our new email address is: office.standrewlutheranchurch@gmail.com

Food Drive Collection is on Hold

Our monthly food collection is temporarily on hold until May or further notice. Thank you all for your generous contributions and participation.

We've Gone Viral!



Please visit our website for weekly sermon videos and updates.

Please also make sure to sign up for weekly emails and special messages from the Pastor. Email or call us to stay connected digitally.

Email: office.standrewlutheranchurch@gmail.com

Phone: (562) 944-1148

Check out our YouTube channel: St. Andrew Lutheran Church, to view our sermon videos and catch up on weekly devotions. Don't forget to also subscribe to our channel so you don't miss out on any uploaded videos! Please also share these videos with family and friends. See you on the web!



**How are you today?
I am grateful!**

Being the Church in Troubling Times



Dear Friends in Christ,

Though we are not together as a congregation in these days, we are still a church. Your leadership regularly discusses how we can best be available to you as members of the family of Christ at St. Andrew Lutheran, Whittier. We seek to find ways to meet the needs of our people, both physically and spiritually. We are trying to find new way to be the Church together. Frequent devotions, video worship opportunities, and the reviving of the phone tree are just some ways we are seeking to stay connected with you. It was a difficult decision for your council to suspend services through March 29.

It was made with thoughtful concern for the safety and well-being of everyone with whom we seek to serve. The recent decision of Governor Newsom has now pushed us to at least after April 12 before we can again worship as a community, and based on the plans of schools and other businesses and organizations, it may be longer. I want you to know, however, that thought we will not meet for Easter on the prescribed Sunday, the first Sunday we once more gather for worship together will be our Easter celebration! I'm already looking forward to that day, and I hope you will be, too.

During these uncertain times, we remind you that our Church life continues, and so do the expenses. Just this past Sunday, a large acoustic tile fell from the ceiling of the worship center. There was no damage apart from the loss of the tile and we are working to replace it and to double-check the ceiling and roof. The Little Learner's Exploration Academy has been hard hit with their enrollment dropping from 57 a few weeks ago to 15 this week. They are looking at different options to continue their operations and to pay rent, and we pray for their ministry, staff, students, and families.

We know that face-to-face gathering is discouraged, but there are several ways you can continue to give your offerings to St. Andrew to help us during this time:

1. Mail to the church at 11345 Miller Road, Whittier, CA 90604.
2. Drop it off at the church – there is a mailbox outside the office door into which you can drop it. (You will need to lift the lid to get to the slot.)
3. Use Tithely to donate online. (see below)
4. Pay through your bank. You may use the bill pay option or direct deposit.
If you need more information or account numbers, contact Betty Dagen.

Give anywhere, from any device—from your computer or from your phone, from your bank or from a credit card – your choice! First, get the Tithely app and then search and install in less than 30 seconds from Google Play or the App store. Then, search for St. Andrew. Once you’ve found us, simply click “Give” to start. Or, you can go to Standrewlutheranchurch.org and click on the link there.

There is a small charge for each transaction – you have the option to pay it at the time you make your donation, or have it deducted from your donation.

Bank Account – 1% + \$.30

Credit Card – 3.5% + \$.30

It is easy and fast – and your choice.

Thank you for your prayers and continued support. With God’s blessing, we will come through this together. On behalf of your church leadership,

Pastor Jeffrey

Special Note from the Office!

If you, or someone you know aren’t receiving “Staying Connected” messages from the Pastor, weekly updates, and devotional sermons, please contact the church office to sign up. We want to stay connected especially during this time with all our church family members. **Please call and we will be happy to add you or someone you know to this list!**

(562) 944-1148



Prayers for April 2020

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." Philippians 4:6

Members of St. Andrew

Kenton Chong Justin Linta Vicki Linta Lorel Morgan Valerie Olguin

Members of St. Andrew (Long Term)

Leslie Barr Grace Gundell Shirley Kellison Sally Sauer Lorraine Tunburg
John Biddle Doris Johnson Krystal Martin Jasmine Simmons Sandy Wicker
Barbara DuBois Lois Kalla Mickey Rosario Jan Wolverton

Family & Friends

Beth Blackburn Emily Ehlers Laci Massaro Margaret Jorgenson Mario Moreno
Talitha Nelson Kevin Suarez Cyndi Lindgren Desiree Shelly Garrison
Brad Pollard Betty Fowler Renee

Family & Friends (Long Term)

Jeralyn Ehlers Chiari Eliazarras Grant Eyles Don Spurr
Christine Fantz Marcus Glidden Shirley Loveless David Uken
Judy McNeill Matthew Muldown Osvelia Revueltas Eric, Kurt, and Bill

Note: *While we continue to lift up everyone on our prayer list to God's love and care, we want to stay as up-to-date and current as possible. Please remember you can add anyone to our prayer list at any time, or call the church office or the pastor with updates about how to pray for them. Prayers of praise for answered prayers are joyfully welcomed. Thank you for your faithful prayers. We will keep each person on the list for 3 months, unless you request otherwise. Long term requests will be kept until there is a request to remove them.*



4/3 Jerry York 4/10 Sue Biddle 4/22 Orma Lee Stiltz 4/29 Jasmine Rodriguez
4/4 Joyce Sunahara 4/10 Dolores York 4/26 Ardis Scotvold 4/30 Ken Sipple
4/6 Judy Gerlach 4/16 Richard Gale 4/27 Tom Harwood
4/7 Mya O'Camb 4/21 David Klyde 4/28 Gloria Morse



4/1 Jeffrey and Janece Mann
4/1 Michael and Stephanie Sipple
4/7 Scott and Leslie Barr
4/9 Harlow and Eileen Hurley
4/24 Tom and Jean Harwood

Home is Where My Heart is

One of my favorite places to be at is my home. Why? Because it's a place where I can be myself and build life long memories with my family and loved ones. I can spend time with my pets and self reflect at home. I can sing loudly in my shower without a care in the world at home. I also have the lovely privilege of going to my backyard to plant and garden veggies. I enjoy the simple things in life, as cliché as it sounds.



Some of my best memories were made at home, like when I lost my first tooth, when I began praying at three years old, when I got my first dog, when I went through a Betty Crocker stage (my friends and family enjoyed that one the most), and when I began graduate school online. I am grateful that I have somewhere to call home. I am grateful that I have somewhere to build great memories with laughter and closeness. I am also grateful that despite this pandemic I have a warm bed, food in my fridge, and a roof over my head. I love my Home. I hope you can all find the most comfort and love for your homes, especially during this time. Your homes are special! Blessings.

-Julie
Office Administrator



What Can You do at Home?

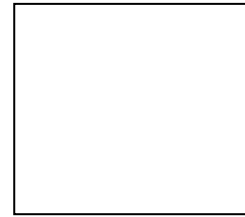
- Read the Bible
- Connect with old friends and family members
- Take on a new hobby- painting, sketching, gardening, sewing, and more
- Try new recipes and be food adventurous
- Learn a new language! Many programs are online
- Play an instrument, sing, dance, and work out at home
- Use connective apps, such as ZOOM to start a new book club, or play bingo!



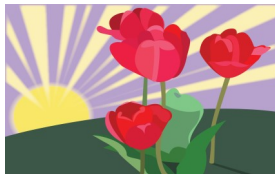
The list is endless. Please share with us how you are passing the time! You may also share any ideas and creative suggestions with us.

Email us at: office.standrewlutheranchurch@gmail.com

St. Andrew Lutheran Church
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Happy Easter, until we meet again friends!

Sunday Worship Hours

8:30 a.m. Liturgical Service with Organ

9:30 a.m. Education Hour all ages

10:30 a.m. Contemporary Service with Rejoice Band

Ministers: Every Member and Our Staff

Pastor: Jeffrey Nelson

Director of Youth & Family Ministry: Elissa Mitzen

Organist/Choir Director: Randy Guiaya

Praise Team Director: Matthew James

Adult Education: Marsha Ehlers

Our Mission Is Local and Global

Local ministries include supporting:

The Interfaith Food Center (562-903-1478),

Cold Weather Shelter ministry with the homeless and Lutheran Social Services.

Global ministries include WAM Quilters, KIVA, and Bread for the World.