

Jesus Cares for Both Our Body and Soul

In a TV commercial years ago an actor proclaimed: "When you have your health, you have just about everything." Many people think like that in our world. It's understandable. When your body is hurting it affects your attitude and emotions. Some think if they can just protect their body and keep it healthy and pain-free, everything will be fine.

The coronavirus has swept over our world and done a lot of damage to many bodies. For those in our culture who only think of the physical it's a scary time. Sadly many feel if they don't have their health, they have nothing. They fear their physical health being taken away because they have nothing else to give them hope and security.

God created us as more than just physical beings. Our hope and meaning for life is not taken away if a virus attacks our body. Jesus said, "I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more" (Luke 12:4). He follows that by saying the One who is to be feared is the One who determines our eternal destiny. A virus can only harm the body. It can't kill the soul. Jesus is the Lord over both our body and soul.

We want bodies to be well. We pray for that and we serve one another and do what we can to help bodies to be healthy. We also want souls to be healthy. We care about the whole person as expressed in III John 2: "Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well."

Our society devotes vast amounts of time, energy and resources to making bodies well. Sadly, though, many give little attention to the health of their soul and the health of their relationship with God. Some bodies are hurting these days because of the coronavirus, but even more souls are in great pain and danger. People are being overtaken by fear and panic. Jesus is the One who can bring healing to hurting souls.

This time of year, as we remember Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, we are thankful that He knows better than any of us what it means to have a body that hurts. "Surely he took up our infirmities" (Isaiah 53:4). His body was crucified but risen again. He won the victory over death and lives forever. Because of His resurrection we no longer fear death. "Death has been swallowed up in victory. Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" (I Corinthians 15:54-55).

When you have faith in the crucified and risen Lord Jesus, then you have everything. Our bodies are temporary, earthly tents that get damaged and perish, but our souls are made alive in Christ. We have the great hope of one day receiving new pain-free bodies. Viruses and diseases come and go, but the love of Christ and the new life He gives remains forever.

—Pastor Craig

Find Us Online

Our congregation has been respecting the request to not gather in groups and possibly cause the spread of the coronavirus. For that reason we have not been having our regular worship services in our building. We have been livestreaming the Sunday morning services at 11:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings on Facebook Live. Those videos can be found on Bethany Free Lutheran Church's Facebook page and then click on videos. Devotional videos and videos of messages have also been posted to the congregation's You Tube channel. That is found by searching on You Tube for Bethany Free Lutheran, Astoria, Oregon. Links to these sites are available on our website: bethanyfree.com.



Vesper Services

During this time when we're unable to meet together, we'll livestream evening vesper services on Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.



Maundy Thursday Service

We will livestream on Facebook Live our Maundy Thursday service on April 9 at 7:00 p.m. It is a time when we remember Jesus going to the cross and giving His life for our sins. We will be looking at His declaration from the cross that "It is finished" (John 19:30). Sin's mastery over our lives is finished. The need to pay for our sins is finished. The fear of death and judgment is finished.



Easter

Even though it appears that our Easter service and celebration of the Resurrection will not be held in our building as usual, Easter has not been canceled. Death has been defeated and Jesus still lives! We will celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus with our livestreaming service on Easter morning at 11:00 a.m. Information on how to view it is above. In these days when many are looking for hope and peace, you're encouraged to invite others to watch the services and seek after the risen Lord Jesus.

Contacting the Pastor

We will resume services in our building and our regular schedule as soon as we are able. Until that time you are welcome to contact the church and Pastor Craig with prayer concerns or questions. Church phone number is 503-325-2925. Pastor Craig's number: 503-440-3131.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”

John 3:16-17



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Save the Date!

Family Bible Camp

Family Bible camp will be June 21-25 at Cedar Springs Camp, Lake Stevens, Wash. Camp is a great time for all members of the family to get away from the day-to-day routine and get into God's Word. Pastor Jason Holt, Director of AFLC Youth Ministries, will be the guest speaker at camp this year. You're invited to mark the dates and plan to come along.

Vacation Bible School

Vacation Bible School is being planned for June 29-July 3, 9 a.m.-Noon, for kids 3-years-old to 6th grade. You're encouraged to mark your calendars and start praying for this special time of reaching kids with the good news of Jesus. Volunteers to help in preparation and during the week of VBS are appreciated. Areas in which you can volunteer include decorating, crafts, snacks, games, publicity, registration and assisting in the classes.