



The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

The Taiwan Times

Spring 2020

Andrew and Noel Schaff Missionary Newsletter from ChiaYi, Taiwan

“Now when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet, saying to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. “When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled.”

“Jesus said to her, “Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?” So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me.” When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out.” The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go.”

John 11: 32-33; 42-46

Confidence in Uncertain Times

What is coming next? What should we do? How concerned should we be? People all over the world are united right now by a name – Coronavirus. It is difficult to pinpoint what exactly makes the virus most intimidating. A person can carry it without ever knowing or expressing symptoms. It makes some people extremely ill. It has infected an entire nation overnight. It has no known cure or treatment. It can kill people.

No one seems to know exactly what to do. Concerns of the virus cause fear and a variety of responses in the world. Some people have been put into quarantine removed from the world, while some choose to stay home for protection and quarantine themselves in a way.

I traveled back to the States to see family about a week after the virus began. Several countries had already been banned from entering the States. I was drilled with rigorous questioning by quarantine and immigration upon arrival. By the grace of God, I was allowed in and have remained healthy.

I will be returning to Taiwan next week for at least several months. It already took nearly acrobatic planning by my airline to get me on all flights with direct points of contact between the States and Taiwan. I know that all people on the flight will be in masks. I know that I am going into a zone of the world surrounded by areas currently prohibited from travel. It feels a bit

intimidating at times, but I know just as in the nearly 30 hours of travel, God is in control.

Andrew provided me a picture of what to expect in Taiwan upon my return. Everyone wears masks in public. All business workers are expected to wear masks. Larger businesses have temperature guns and gauge people upon entering. If a person displays signs of illness, that person is immediately asked to leave. The government has requested that people remain home other than for necessary daily tasks.

Schools are taking things with equal care. When the virus was first found, the government shut all schools for a month. The new school semester began in late February and will go until July 15th.

At school, students *must* wear masks and teachers are encouraged to do so. Every morning before school and after lunch ALL student's temperatures must be taken and recorded online. If a student is found with a fever, the student must be sent to the nurse and then home immediately for a minimum of a week. Students are required to wash hands regularly. The sharing of any food or drink is forbidden. Doors and windows to all classrooms must be left open for ventilation. Alcohol and hand sanitizer must be kept in all classrooms and used regularly throughout the day for wiping down surfaces, doorknobs and light switches.

Worldwide, people feel the sensation of what makes the situation most frustrating and scary – uncertainty and a sense of helplessness. Coronavirus is out of our control. According to most news agencies each nation struggles to deal with it differently, doctors are puzzled, and no one knows what the CDC or WHO will do next. It begs the question, *who* or *what* IS in control?

Brothers and Sisters, it is at times like this that I love all of the ways God has spoken words of comfort, certainty and hope to us in His Word. The account of Lazarus jumped out at me particularly in our Bible study today. What a wonderful picture Jesus has given us. Real people Jesus loved were experiencing fear at the potential of losing a loved one to illness, and then the grief of losing him. Even when Jesus knew this was happening, he mentions that it is BECAUSE of his care for his people that he did not immediately go and heal Lazarus. We also see the measure of Jesus' care in his grieving at the sight of the pain of his friends. He then revealed to all present who He is and the authority that the Father has given Him to raise the dead to life.

Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead in the way that he did was not just for the people there at the time. He was revealing the exact same things to us. He IS calling out to us in the pages of His Word that He IS the Son of God. He knows exactly everything about us down to the number of hairs on our head. He spoke our DNA into existence. He also reminds us that he cares about us as deeply as a father does his children. He reminds us that he suffers and hurts alongside us when we experience fear and pain, so much so that he willingly experienced the ultimate most extreme fear and pain on our behalf in his sacrifice of taking all the punishment of the world with a gory death on the

cross. He reminds us who He IS in rising from the dead just as He raised Lazarus after four days, reassuring us that He IS going to raise us someday.



I think my first grade nephew Hunter made the point of who IS in control of it all when we were having a conversation about what it was like to travel to Taiwan by jet going over 500 mph in the air above the sea and experiencing turbulence. His eyes grew wide as I waved my arm up and down to show the effect on the plane and he replied, "You don't need to be scared. You know why?" He held his hand out to mimic the waving motion and said, "Because God can just take the plane and do this." He held his arm still. "You know God has the power to do everything!"

Hunter is right. Even in scary or uncertain times God is in control and reassures us it is all for his glory and our ultimate good. Romans 8:28 reminds us, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

So what will come next? We pray that God will grant us the peace and comfort of knowing HE IS in control. We pray that God will grant us the encouragement and endurance of knowing he cares and hurts with us. We pray that God will grant us the boldness to share His Words of comfort, peace, and control to others in this time. May He be glorified even in uncertain times!



7th Grade class all wearing masks.



10th graders taking temperatures after lunch, before the nap time.





Prayer Requests



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Pray for Us
Andrew and Noel Schaff

- Please continue to pray all people suffering from Coronavirus in various ways worldwide. Pray that God would bring Himself glory and grant swift relief.
- Pray for Noel's protection and safe travel as she returns to Taiwan.
- Please pray for Andrew's continued tutoring work and outreach with students Leonardo, Sarah, Melody and their families that the Lord would use the class as a chance to share the Gospel with them.
- Please pray for Andrew's classes at CMS that students' hearts and ears would be open to the message of the Gospel heard often for the first time in their Bible classes and chapel messages.
- Pray that we would all experience boldness to witness Christ's powerful Word in these times.

We Thank God for You!

Your prayers and encouragement are greatly appreciated! If you would like to financially support the ministry in Taiwan, please make checks payable to LCMS World Mission, clearly designating for Andrew and Noel Schaff, and send to:

The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod
1333 S. Kirkwood Road
St. Louis, MO 63122-7295

Or adopt us as missionaries through Mission Central in Mapleton, IA. You can contact our friends at Mission Central using the following address:

Mission Central
40718 Highway E 16
Mapleton, Iowa 51034
Phone: 712-882-1029

You can email Gary at Gary.Thies@lcms.org

"I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers, because I hear about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints." Philemon 2:4

Email us at:

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