



Worship Notes

Friday, February 19, 2021

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Dear Friends and Family,

This Sunday we resume our in-person worship at 9 AM. It looks like the weather will be warmer, and the snow will fall later on Sunday afternoon.

I hope you help spread the word to neighbors and friends that worship of God is a moment when our souls are cleansed and rejuvenated for the upcoming week. Whether we participate in worship in-person or on-line, God is praised in our song and our shared prayer.

Thank you for your generous support of our ministry

Your continued giving makes an impact in our community as our church continues to be a beacon of hope.

Mailing your donations to the church office and maintaining your automatic giving helps support ministries across the nation and around the world.



Please keep in prayer the following:



Bradley Anderson, Josie Blake, Bev Coulter, Nancy Dowell, John Ellison, Linda Ellison, Dave Erlandson, Jim Erlandson, Brad and Jodie Haist, Cassie Jern & Family, Delores Johnson, Graham Johnson, Bob Kerschke, Ila Roseberry, Norman Worthington, Evelyn Volz, Darrell Thirtyacre, Donna Larson, Beckie Bean, Joy Johnson, Pat Root, Diane Bradley, Anna Lovdahl, Kim Anderson, Matthew Council, Rose Youngquist, Kathi Cruce, Rob Kerschke

Please let the church office know any updates that are needed to our prayer list.

Resuming In-Person Worship

We will continue using liturgical hand motions for most of our congregational responses.

We will begin reciting the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer together.

We will begin singing the closing hymn together.

We will continue the communion practice using stations for receiving and consuming.

As the pandemic continues to wrap up and more individuals are vaccinated, we will continue to be in conversation about when to add more elements back into worship. It is quite possible that by late summer or early fall, we may be experiencing the full worship service as we did pre-pandemic.

This week in worship

Our Lenten sermon series focusing on Sin and Redemption intersect with temptation this week. Jesus is baptized and goes into the wilderness and is tempted by Satan there. The Gospel of Mark is really short, and doesn't tell us what temptations Jesus faced. Which leaves us to wonder—what temptations did he face? Did Jesus face temptations like we do? Do we really acknowledge all the temptations we deal with on a daily basis? And how does redemption come in the midst of temptation—for Jesus, and for us?

Join us Sunday morning (or by video link on Monday) as we explore: Sin, Temptation and Redemption



Living the Creed

Throughout Lent, our Living the Creed at-home Faith Learning Experience will focus on stories from the ministries of the ELCA World Hunger.

This week you will meet Kanchan from India. Download the PDF for the discussion guide. Watch a short video (link included in the email). Take time as a family to use the discussion guide to learn more about Kanchan's life and how the ELCA World Hunger ministered to her. Your financial support of the ELCA World Hunger throughout Lent will be one way a person like Kanchan will continue to receive the life-sustaining ministry of our church.

To find the video, use the link in the email or go to Elca.org; click on the word "resources"; click on "ELCA World Hunger", and then click on "Stories" and look for the video link to Kanchan's story.

Lent Challenge

Throughout Lent, we will not have our regular mid-week worship experiences. Instead, we will have a Zoom Bible study at 7 PM each Wednesday. The link will go out on Mondays.

As a part of our midweek Bible study, I am challenging each member to a special giving opportunity. Let's each set a goal to donate a matching amount to ELCA World Hunger and to the Jamieson Center Food Pantry.

For instance, Lent is 40 days long. I am going to donate \$40 to ELCA World Hunger and \$40 to the Jamieson Center for a total of \$80 to solving hunger issues. If we had 10 people commit to the same amount, that is \$800. If we have 20 people commit to the same amount, we can raise \$1600 to solve hunger issues. And the more who commit, and the more \$ that is committed, the greater the impact.

Will you join me in making that impact this season?

Blessings

"There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?" — John 6:9

When we consider there are over 800 million people who are chronically hungry, it is easy to wonder how a mere \$80 can make any difference at all. And really, it is hard to imagine what that large number really is. Even to say that is roughly 2 to 2.5 times the population of the US, we still can't really grasp that. It is hard to imagine the entire state of Texas facing a massive hunger crisis, let alone 2 to 2.5 times the population of our nation.

Yet we are not called to solve the entire problem. We are called to bring forward the gifts we have. The disciples questioned Jesus about the value of something so little as 5 loaves and 2 fish. They couldn't imagine that little having any impact whatsoever on a crowd that numbered 5000 men, and additional uncounted women and children. Really, 5 loaves and 2 fish barely feeds Jesus and his 12 disciples. And yet, Jesus took that gift, multiplied it, and after all were fed, there were leftovers to be shared for another meal.

The little bit that we offer is blessed by Jesus. It is combined with the little bit that comes from other churches and people of faith across our synod and becomes over \$400,000 donated to ELCA World Hunger. That little bit combines with the churches and people of faith from synods across our synod and turns into over \$23 million to fight the world hunger crisis. All of our donations to ELCA World Hunger become part of a national and global network that meets individual needs, develops community sustainability, advocates for public policies to create economic stability, and educates people about the crisis.

The little bit that we offer here at Jamieson Center meets daily needs for the many Warren County families that face hunger crisis right here in our own community. Again, maybe we wonder how our little bit can go such a long way. After all, more than 2,500 people receive some form of assistance from Jamieson Center each year. And with the pandemic continuing, food insecurity remains a significant problem for many in our community.

The opportunity before us is to choose one of two paths. To think we have too little to make a difference, and not try at all. Or to say to Jesus, here is our little bit for you to bless and multiply. The response our faith is teaching us is to trust that our little bit will be blessed by Jesus and will make a difference in ways we cannot yet fully imagine. Someone will receive a gift because of your donation. Someone will discover food security for today because of your gift. Someone will know God is at work in the world because of your gift. That someone may never know your name, the size of your gift, or the church you even gave it through. But they will know that someone is a blessing to them.

In Peace,

Pastor Jamie