



Worship Notes

Friday, February 5, 2021

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Dear Friends and Family,

Another winter storm, another blast of cold air, another Groundhogs Day when we wonder if a random woodland creature can really predict the weather. However we look at it, winter sure isn't going anywhere. I hope you are staying warm and safe this weekend.

At least this weekend's cold blast doesn't impact your decision whether to go out to church or not. With online worship, you can stay in your comfy pajamas, wrapped in your favorite blanket, and worship God as you sing along and participate in worship right in your own home.

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

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

T-shirt and Canvas Tote Orders

Did you get your order form for a T-shirt and Canvas Tote bag? Becky Terpening has made these available for order. She designed the logo and is prepared to give \$5 of every order to the church as a fundraiser.

Take a moment to order your T-shirt now. When we resume in-person worship, we will wear our new T-shirts as we gather once again in the sanctuary.

When we will return is still open for debate. Our council meeting in February will revisit the subject and reflect on the mitigations for our State and other recommendations to make a determination that honors our commitment to keep our community safe.

This week in worship



Jesus takes his healing ministry out of the synagogue and into the home of Simon, where Jesus heals Simon's mother-in-law. This experience helps us to understand we do not need to be in church to experience God.

So, where do we experience God today? It is not only our church, it is our homes as well, and if we experience God out in the world, others do as well. We are called to help people see where they can experience God in the world, not just within our sanctuary but where they are as well.

Black History Month

It is Black History Month, a time when contributions of people of African descent around the world is highlighted. Our denomination, the ELCA, is overwhelmingly white. Some of that is based on our church roots in northern European churches. Some of that is based on the demographics of the communities our churches are located in. Being so predominantly white, many of us do not feel impacted by the plight of our siblings of color.

This month gives us a chance to learn that we truly are impacted by the plight of our siblings of color. They are our neighbor, we are a part of the same family of God. When one part of the family of God suffers, we are to all suffer. When one part of the family of God rejoices, we are to all rejoice. May this month inspire us to learn more about our neighbors of color, and lead us to new ways to engage ministry with them, so that all may rejoice as the family of God.

The Season Lent Approaches

The season of Lent begins this year on Wednesday, February 17. Ash Wednesday will be different for us, following along with how everything for almost a year has been different.

Pastor Jamie is looking for a volunteer to help prepare swatches of black cloth and safety pins to be mailed to members. You will be invited to wear this swatch on Ash Wednesday, instead of coming to church to receive the traditional ashes on your forehead.

An online worship service will be available for Ash Wednesday. Ideas are still being considered for a mid-week Lenten experience.

Blessings

but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint. — Isaiah 40:31

We wait, and we hate waiting. Just look at Groundhog's Day, a moment when we lift up a small woodland creature, hoping it tells us Spring is coming sooner, because we can't wait to be done with winter weather. We wait for our spouses to get ready so we can go out for a drive, we wait for our kids to get ready so we can take them home after their activities. We wait for the pandemic to end, we wait for our turn to receive the vaccine, we wait for the day we no longer need to wear masks every time we are out in public.

Our faith journey is a journey of waiting as well. The season of Advent has us waiting for the return of Jesus, an event we anticipate by reminding us of his birth. The season of Lent has us waiting for the resurrection, a resurrection Easter tells us we will one day all be a part of. The season after Pentecost has us waiting the longest, for the age of the church began with the inrush of the Spirit and there is no date marked on the calendar for its end ... we simply don't know how long we are waiting.

The Old Testament prophet Isaiah offers us hope in our waiting. As we wait for the Lord, our strength shall be renewed. We shall run and not be weary. That is good news. Because most of our waiting is quite exhausting. Often as we wait, our impatience wears us down and our excitement for what is to come wanes. But in faith, the opposite happens. The more we wait, the more energy we receive, the more vigor we have for what is to come. The more joy we have in all the activities that lead up to the grand event we are waiting for.

Waiting for the Lord means worship offers us strength for each day. Waiting for the Lord means we run towards the ministry needs of our community and world. Waiting for the Lord means we do not grow weary of providing for the ministry needs of our community and world.

So, if someone asks why you watch your worship online and not just take the weekend off from church—you get to respond by saying, the Lord is renewing my strength. If someone asks why you help out with a church meal even when you don't know how many people are going to be helped, you get to say, because of the joy of running to help others doesn't depend on how many are helped, it happens because the Lord is at work within us.

We might be tired of waiting for many earthly things, but when we set our minds on heavenly goals, we discover the joy of waiting and the renewed strength and energy that comes with it. In Peace, Pastor Jamie