



# Worship Notes

Friday, January 22, 2021

## FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Dear Friends and Family,

I had a blessed week at our church camp, LOMC. I am thankful to be home, but this week was refreshing and rewarding. I was with a group of 9 colleagues using Zoom to develop worship resources for the Season of Creation. Four weeks with an emphasis on our relationship with God as Creator, our broken relationship with the earth around us, and our call to work to renewal.

It is good to be home, and I look forward to sharing the worship service with you as I recorded at various places around the camp this week.

*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.*

### Online Worship

Online worship does present great opportunities for us. For instance, this week while the hymns were recorded in our sanctuary, all the rest of worship was recorded outdoors at LOMC near Oregon, IL.

Pastor Jamie recorded elements of worship on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. You can see there are differences in the clouds and sunshine, some days are windier, and Pastor Jamie tried his best to take out the wind noise, but wasn't always successful.

There is even one blooper moment Pastor left in, when the camera fell over during the readings. Always the trooper, Pastor picked the camera back up and kept reading the lesson.

Watch for pictures from LOMC that feature Pastor, his family, and also Collin Nuckles.

### This week in worship



Our Gospel lesson has Jesus walking the shore of the Sea of Galilee and calling out to brothers Simon and Andrew as well as brothers James and John, inviting them to follow him.

Join us for worship as Pastor Jamie brings the message standing on the frozen Paul's Pond at LOMC, connecting Jesus' call of the disciples to how Jesus calls us today.

LOMC is a beautiful natural setting, and many locations are featured in this week's worship service. Enjoy the travelogue interspersed with our worship.

## Congregation Meeting

This year's annual meeting will look very different than year's past. We are not able to gather in person for this meeting. We will be able to meet by Zoom.

A letter will be sent by our council president, Rose Sandstrom, sharing all the details. Here is a brief recap:

**Sunday, January 24th at 9 AM, we will have a practice Zoom gathering.** This will be a chance to figure out how we visit with everyone all at once on Zoom.

**Sunday, January 31st at 9 AM we will have our actual Annual meeting** on Zoom. We have items to be discussed, and your input and questions are valued. Please make sure you are able to join us for this meeting. Zoom has an option for using the phone to call in, if you do not have computer access.

**Then voting will happen on Sunday, January 31st from 10:30 AM to 11:30 AM** in the church parking lot.

## Hybrid Annual Meeting

The Zoom portion of our annual meeting allows us to take attendance of who all joins, helping establish quorum and making our annual meeting official.

The drive-in voting allows us to have ballots to demonstrate the votes for our budget and our constitutional amendment. Those driving to the church will also be counted and will help establish quorum. No one will be counted twice.

When you arrive, pull up to the day care door. You will be marked on our attendance sheet and handed a ballot. You will be asked to pull forward to mark your ballot and hand it to a person standing by the rear entrance to the sanctuary building.

If you cannot drive to the church and would like a ballot, please call the church office. A council member will come to you on Sunday, January 31st, to ensure you are able to vote.

## *Blessings*

“Who knows? Maybe God may relent and change his mind; he may turn from his fierce anger, so that we do not perish.” The King of Nineveh, in Jonah 3:9

One of my favorite Bible stories is the book of Jonah. It is a short story, and some scholars even refer to it as a children's story. It has great mythical elements, such as the prophet Jonah being swallowed by a great fish and staying alive in the fish for three days. It has great suspense—will God bring his planned destruction to the foreign city? It has a happy ending, well at least for Nineveh. It has an abrupt and inconclusive ending, at least for Jonah, the prophet.

See Jonah hears God's call and doesn't want to go to Nineveh. He knows God will change his mind because he knows Nineveh will repent and change their ways and God will respond to that repentance. So Jonah initially runs away. After his encounter at sea with the great fish, Jonah is reoriented to his task and goes to Nineveh. There he gives the least heart-felt sermon of all time. And yet, the people of Nineveh do hear the message; they do respond; they do turn from their evil ways. God's steadfast love and unending mercy prevail as God does not bring the planned destruction after all.

This bothers Jonah. He saw the Ninevites as enemies. He hated them with a passion. He really wanted God to wipe them off the face of the earth. Jonah really felt the world would be better if there were no Ninevites ever again. He did not want to preach to them. He did not want them to know God's mercy. He only wanted them to know God's wrath.

Jonah could not escape God's mercy, though, and so Jonah relented and went and prophesied in Nineveh. And there Jonah learned that Nineveh, that great city that had for so long tormented God's holy people Israel, also could not escape God's mercy. This is the power of God's mercy. The story ends, though, with Jonah regretting his choice to follow God's call and prophesy in Nineveh. Jonah regretted God's decision to relent from destroying that city. And as the story ends, Jonah is pouting on a cliff overlooking a city celebrating God's mercy more upset that a shade bush was destroyed than he was happy at a city being saved.

In the VeggieTales movie about Jonah, as the story ends, the kid veggies ask, “So what did Jonah learn?” Pa Grape replies, “The point is what did you learn.”

So what do you learn when God said to you that God's steadfast love and mercy will always win? So what do you learn when God called you to proclaim this good news even to the people you wish were not on this earth? So what do you learn when God worked mercy in you, reorienting your life to the ways of God's steadfast love and mercy? When we rejoice in God's steadfast love and mercy, we will have learned the right lesson and we will be the blessing to the world, reflecting the light of Christ that has been placed within us at baptism.

In Peace,

Pastor Jamie