



Worship Notes

Friday, March 12, 2021

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Janice Algren
Jamie Reynolds

Dear Friends and Family,

I entered the sanctuary to retrieve the laptop to prepare for the next worship service. I paused a moment and I could have sworn I heard the refrain of a familiar hymn being sung, and maybe my eyes were fooling me but I could see where everyone sits, and the smiles on everyone's faces as they share the response "And also with you" to our greeting. I know I am not alone in yearning for this vision to be full reality. I am so thankful we have been patient together, lamented together, dreamed together, been creative together. This pandemic year has been all the easier because we did it together.

Please keep in prayer the following:



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

kill

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

Resuming In-Person Worship

One year ago in March, we were confronted with a major shift in how we participate in worship. Online videos became standard, and when in-person worship was allowed, there were great adjustments to our usual patterns.

We hoped this time all would be normal, and we are not quite there yet. We are anxiously waiting for the day all is normal. But to get there we will take baby steps. In April, we will begin including more spoken responses and slowly introducing more sung hymns.

As more vaccine become available for our community and as the pandemic numbers continue to trend downward, we will rejoice knowing all the protective steps we have taken have been a part of protecting our community.

Thank you for your generous support of our ministry

Regular offerings, designated offerings, special gifts—can all be brought to worship and placed in an offering plate. OR you can sign-up to automatically have your offerings given from your bank account. OR you can mail your offerings to the office. Thank you, for however you choose to support the ministry of our church.



This week in worship

Our Lenten series on Sin and Redemption continue this week as we deal with the consequences of sin and seek the healing only Christ can provide.

Sin has very real consequences. Just look at the sin of racism and how it hurts the whole world. The consequence of sin is felt by hardened hearts, by economic injustices, unequal access to food and education and so much more. Just as the bronze snake was lifted in the wilderness to be healing from sin's consequence, so we too need to lift up what ails us that we may find the healing in the redemption of Christ. Join us Sunday as we lift up our sin, face the consequences and experience 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 the Kafley family. They were refugees who were welcomed by the Lutheran Church of the Ascension in Northfield, IL. The story of the refugee is one we know here from our recent study on the topic and our work with our neighbors. This story will show us once again how important our work welcoming refugees is as we strive for the day all are fed.

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 Kafley family story.

This Sunday's Worship Helpers

Worship Assistant: Chip Algren
Usher: Linda McGuire
Organist: Janice Algren
Flowers:



We are back in our sanctuary, and it is time to sign up once more to sponsor flowers for worship. The sign up board is once again located outside the office. Call the office or stop by to select a Sunday to sponsor flowers.

Blessings All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Acts 2:44-45

The earliest Christians recognized that their faith in Jesus led them to living life very differently. It was a life of radical care for one another, where the group was focused on how everyone was able to thrive. This vision in Acts stands in harsh contrast to our modern era where the individual is expected to take care of himself/herself and to rely on public help is frowned upon, bringing great shame. Yet the vision cast in Acts by the earliest followers of Jesus was not a fluke moment, it is a vision we can still strive for today.

Take for example in Washington, DC where a listening campaign by Luther Place Memorial Church, supported by ELCA World Hunger, led to the development of community cooperatives. Within these cooperatives, residents would use their skills and talents to build their wealth and income that would stay within the community. One of the first cooperatives featured women providing cleaning services for home and businesses. These women learned how to run a business, how to pursue just employment, and how to develop their own skills as leaders.

One member of the cooperative said this: “The vision of the cooperative is that all eight of us are well-paid and well-trained, and that we get to invest money in our families and in our community.” This is the vision of Acts being lived out in our modern age. A group of people striving for the betterment of the whole.

In our own community of Monmouth, the Open Table project which our church has several members working with also is an example of the vision of Acts. The members of the Table are there to support a family, making sure the family is able to find the resources it needs to thrive. It is not about simple handouts, though there may be temporary needs met by the Table, but over all it is about educating, supporting, nurturing, mentoring, and assisting with long-term stability.

The vision of Acts may feel like a relic of a by-gone era. The vision of Acts may feel in deep contrast to our modern world. But our faith in Jesus opens us to this vision, to see how it can be lived out within our world today. When we step into the vision with full confidence, we become a blessing to our neighbors in ways we cannot even yet imagine.

In peace, Pastor Jamie