

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

Weekly Update

*Our mission is to be more visible, to become more connected,
and to draw closer, with Christ as our center.*



Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



Wednesday, January 13, 2020

To the New England Synod,

Like you, I have been overwhelmed with what we have witnessed in our nation's capitol. As one of my colleagues recently put it, "we are all in a state of collective trauma." I have spent time in the Psalms where the range of human responses to world events are well articulated. Lament, anger, grief, despair, longing for justice, longing for peace; it's all there, in those Psalms and in my heart. Please know that I have great admiration for the sermons you have delivered this past weekend. You have spoken words that both articulate the gospel and speak to our times. Thank you. On Friday, the member denominations of the National Council of Churches (including Bishop Eaton and the ELCA) released this letter to the country's leadership, which I believe captures well my thoughts in these days.

Bishop James Hazelwood,
New England Synod ELCA

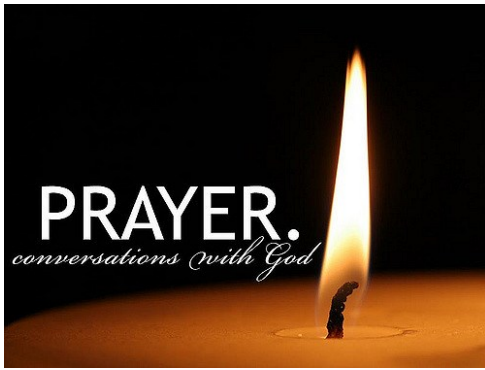
January 8, 2021

Our faith instructs us to take seriously positions of leadership, not to lead others astray and to be careful about what we say and do. In Philippians 2:3-4 we are taught to, "Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others."

President Donald J. Trump's actions and words have endangered the security of the country and its institutions of government by inciting a violent, deadly, seditious mob attack at the U.S. Capitol. His words and actions have placed the lives of the people he is supposed to serve in grave danger to advance his own interests. Further, he not only failed to stop or condemn the attack after the Capitol had been stormed but instead encouraged the mob by calling them patriots. This domestic terrorist attack resulted in at least five deaths, including a Capitol Police Officer, and more than a dozen police officers injured. The desecration of the Capitol building was also disgraceful and reprehensible.

For the good of the nation, so that we might end the current horror and prepare the way for binding up the nation's wounds, we, as leaders of the member communions of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA (NCC), believe the time has come for the President of the United States, Donald J. Trump, to resign his position immediately. If he is unwilling to resign, we urge you to exercise the options provided by our democratic system.

In addition, we recognize the need to hold responsible not only those who invaded the Capitol, but also those who supported and/or promoted the President's false claims about the election, or made their own false accusations. We grieve for our country at this difficult time and continue to pray for the safety and security, and ultimately the healing of our nation. Holding those who have abused their power and participated in these immoral and tragic actions accountable, in particular the President of the United States, is one step toward healing.



A Community of Prayer

For those in need of healing and comfort:

Members and Friends of the Congregation: Lauren, Ray, Tim, Joan, Marie, Audrey, Elizabeth, Gordon, Sarah, Miriam, Scarlet, Jason, Brian, David, Tricia, Cate, Cecilio, Donna, Anthony, Steve.

Military (on active duty), Fire fighters, and Police: Ryan, Teddy, Tyler, Ben, Kenny, Brian, Bill, Ken, John, Glen, and Vic.

Front Line workers in the COVID-19 pandemic: Diane, Alicia, Brittany, Loretta, Jay, Alyssa, Monica, Rachel, June.

He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

Psalm 147 vs. 3

Pour out your Spirit on all people living with illness, as well as their loved ones and caregivers. Help them to know that you claim them as your own and deliver them from fear and pain; for the sake of Jesus Christ, our healer and Lord. Amen.

Do you wonder how to put a loved one, friend, neighbor, or yourself on the prayer list?

Simply email the church office at office@gslc-ct.org. If you would like a prayer card sent to your loved one, friend or neighbor, please include the full name and address. Prayer requests may also be made by phone (203-268-7596) and will be included by the church office.

For privacy, only the first name of each individual will be listed.

Do you have something you would like to discuss with Pastor Doug?

Should you be in need of pastoral care, please contact Pastor Doug Ryniewicz by cell phone (860-595-9560—text if you like!) or by his email (dearynos@gmail.com).

Devotional for the week of January 10th, 2021



Was it wildfire nerve? Unchecked audacity? Holy purpose? The hammering of parents' expectations? Maybe the privilege of being kin to Jesus? Or was it eccentricity as peculiar as his diet and wardrobe? What desire drove John to the wilderness, into the water of the Jordan? What ignited his fiery proclamation of repentance and forgiveness? What current pulled crowds from city and country into the water?

One can say, rightly, that it was ordained by God, compelled by the Holy Spirit, predicted by an angel. Yet there is a hitch in the story. Four easily missed but utterly important words gum up the works of any timid or tidy explanations: "I am not worthy" (Mark 1:7).

Something in John's four words opens the baptismal story to torrents of wonder, floods of hope, drenching relief and recovery. For some years the two friends had been together through what we often call the thick and the thin. They knew this and that, bits and pieces, the here and there of one another's lives. And not only the trivial. They probed each other's shadowed corridors and crumbling edges. Still, there were secrets, withholdings. One day, for reasons wrapped with nothing but the ragged swaddling of unaccountable grace, one said to the other, "It has been such a long, lonely journey, carrying a suitcase filled with secrets, the shames and deceptions I've folded and packed." Then he began to tell. To confess. A repenting, a turning. His friend's eyes filled with tears that watered his cheeks and dripped into his lap. All he could say through the flood was, "I love you all the more." Born literally of grace, breaking the dam of John's four words, "I am not worthy," is one stronger word, the word of the more powerful one: *forgiveness*. To John and to us who say, "I am not worthy," Jesus answers, "Yes, yes, yes, you are."

Devotional message and art based on the readings for January 10th, reprinted from sundaysandseasons.com.

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To join us for Worship online:

There are several options for you to join us for online worship:

- 1) go to the Good Shepherd website www.gslc-ct.org. Click on youtube on the menu under News & Events to be directed to our church's YouTube page.
- 2) go to our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Good-Shepherd-Lutheran-Church-220717937953573/> Scroll down until you see the post with the current "Church Service (date)" click on this to be directed to our church's YouTube page.
- 3) To find us directly on Youtube <https://www.youtube.com/> enter Good Shepherd Monroe CT in the search field and you will be directed to our page, then select the worship video you would like to see. Subscribe to our channel to make it even easier.

To join us for Worship in person: This Sunday, January 17th at 10:00 am. We will have Drive In Church, weather permitting (If it is a steady rain, the service is cancelled).

This is how it works:

- Pastor Doug will be on a platform at the rear (east edge) of the large, main parking area.
- Cars should park facing that direction (east - towards the wooded area) with taller vehicles closer to the main road. This will allow shorter vehicles visibility by parking in front of the taller ones.
- The radio frequency of the broadcast is **FM 94.9**. Please tune your car radio to that station to hear the worship service.
- You should stay in your vehicle and keep your windows closed.
- Bring your own bread (as you did for Outdoor Worship) for communion.
- You must wear a mask if you exit your vehicle.
- Other recommendations of social distancing apply when you are outside your vehicle.



Offering Envelope Boxes for 2021

The boxes for the new year are on the table in the narthex. If you attend the Drive In Service, please stop in and pick yours up. If you would like to pick it up during the week, please make an appointment to stop by during office hours - Monday through Thursday, 9 am to noon. If those times are not convenient for you, just call the church office at 203-268-7596 or send an email so that other arrangements can be made.

Upcoming Events



The Book Club is meeting on February 2nd at **1:00 p.m.** when we will discuss "The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek" by Kim Michele Richardson. In March, we will discuss "The Vanishing Half" by Brit Bennett. We will either meet via Zoom or possibly indoors using the new handler system if the infection rates are low. We welcome new members!



Poinsettia Plants

If you would like a poinsettia plant for your home, please take one from the table in the narthex. They are free for you to take and enjoy! Stop by during the Drive In Service on Sunday or email or call the church office and set up a time to stop by and pick it up.

Reaching Out, Serving Others:



Food for Summerfield

There is an ongoing need for nutritious food for the kids at Summerfield. Protein is especially needed. GSLC Council has challenged the congregation to provide funds for the purchase of nutritious food. GSLC will match donations from members for up to \$250 per month. Pastor Gaston has told us that \$500 per month would meet their nutritious food needs. If you wish to donate please write a check to GSLC with the notation "Food For Summerfield" or place cash in the Summerfield box.



Table Prayers

Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest, and let these gifts to us be blessed. Blessed be God, who is our bread; may all the world be clothed and fed.

Give us grateful hearts, O God, for all your mercies, and make us mindful of the needs of others; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Blessed are you, O Lord God, ruler of the universe, for you give us food to sustain our lives and make our hearts glad; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Bless, O Lord, your gifts to our use and us to your service; for Christ's sake.

Every good and perfect gift comes from you, O God. Bless this food, and help us to receive it with thankful hearts. By your Spirit nourish our love for one another and for our neighbor in need; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

The eyes of all wait upon you, O Lord, and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing.

May your gifts refresh us, O God, and your grace give us strength, now and forever.

Give thanks to the Lord, for the Lord is good, for God's mercy endures forever.

Especially for Families with Young Children

One of the family speaks this or another similar Bible passage.

The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it. (Ps. 24:1 NRSV)

Then all who are able speak this prayer together.

All here gathered, food from the land,
all is gift from your gracious hand.
Feed us today; feed all those who hunger;
teach us to feed one another.

We ask this in the name of the one who is our bread, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Or

One of the family speaks this or another similar Bible passage.

Rejoice in the Lord always. (Phil. 4:4)

Then this prayer is spoken. All may speak it together, or it may be said responsively between one and all as indicated.

For our food, **we rejoice.**

For our friends, **we rejoice.**

For every good gift, **we rejoice.**

Thank you, O God, for this time to eat together.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Sunday, January 17 - Second Sunday After Epiphany

Prayer of the Day: Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ, most merciful redeemer, for the countless blessings and benefits you give. May we know you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly, day by day praising you, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

First Reading: 1 Samuel 3:1-10 [11-20]

Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18 (1)

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

Gospel: John 1:43-51



The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth." Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." When Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him, he said of him, "Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!" Nathanael asked him, "Where did you get to know me?" Jesus answered, "I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you." Nathanael replied, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" Jesus answered, "Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these." And he said to him, "Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

