

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, July 1, 2020

National Distress (ELW p. 76)

Eternal God, amid all the turmoil and changes of the world your love is steadfast and your faith never fails. In this time of danger and trouble, be to us a sure guardian and a rock of defense. Guide the leaders of our nation with your wisdom, comfort all those in distress, and grant us courage and hope to face the future through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord, Amen.

The Fourth of July has so often been a summertime event of barbeques and fireworks, family and friends. How very different this year's American celebration will be. Covid 19 and pandemic and quarantine had barely taken hold as our focus when racial strife and great rips in our wholeness as a country began to appear everywhere in all aspects of life together. The word 'diabolical' comes from the Greek which literally means "to rip apart." Surely our nation feels ripped apart right now. Injustices current and past are awakened. Protests like we have not seen since the late 1960's. Red and Blue views on all major issues that seem irreconcilable at the present moment. If that which rips apart still has power in this world then we also know and believe that in the ripping the Wind of the Holy Spirit of God comes rushing in. The Spirit blows wherever it wants to Jesus says. If we keep our minds and hearts in an Advent "Stay Awake Now" mode we may see the Spirit gushing through the ripping not to put it back together as it was but to do "a new thing". What IS the new thing that the Spirit does? The whole of scripture bears witness to the Spirit bringing about the cleaning of old wounds so that new healing can take place. The Spirit is the Spirit of Truth. Telling the truth and facing the truth are promises Jesus gives his church. The Spirit gives courage to bring about restorative justice. Restorative justice is what makes peace possible. This courage from the Spirit also gives us strength to learn to tolerate our own anxiety, our fear.

The Spirit comes gushing in sometimes not in the ways we would have liked or predicted. But the Good News is that the Spirit IS with us. This year more than ever let us reflect on and pray for our nation. Let us pray for wisdom and discernment and patience. Let us pray, as Jesus taught, for our enemies. Let us pray not that God be on our side but that we be on God's side. I won't conclude "Happy" but wishing you a wise and reflective Fourth of July.

LV
PD

This **Sunday, July 5th at 9:30 a.m.** we will have an Outdoor Worship Service at Good Shepherd on the back lawn behind the sanctuary. We are committed to our goal of having no spread of the contagion due to our gatherings. With this in mind, we ask you to observe the following guidelines:

- 1) If you do not feel well, if you do not feel comfortable, or if you are in a high risk category, please stay at home. We will record the service and make it available online.
- 2) The building and restrooms will not be accessible. We anticipate that our worship service will be approximately 45 minutes long. Please plan accordingly.
- 3) Please put on your face covering before leaving your vehicle. You will be expected to wear it throughout your visit.
- 4) Please bring: a lawn chair, face covering, and portion of bread for communion for every person in your group.
- 5) Please plan to arrive between 9-9:15. There will be a table at the entrance where you may leave your offering.
- 6) Ushers will guide you to your worship space, starting with front rows and moving toward the back. You will be assigned the next available spot to set up your chairs. Your chair should be positioned so that your feet are on the white line in front of you and so that you cannot reach your neighbor (maintaining six feet of distance.) Please stay seated until worship begins.
- 7) Please refrain from unnecessary movement through the worship space to allow everyone to get set up while maintaining social distancing.
- 8) Please understand that singing has been shown to be one of the riskiest activities at this time. We will NOT be singing during this service. This will be very difficult for some, so if you must, please hum softly or mouth the words without using your voice.
- 9) We will pass the Peace without physical contact.
- 10) For Holy Communion, you will be asked to get out the bread you brought with you. Pastor will consecrate it from the altar and signal you when you should eat it. No wine will be available. As Lutherans, we believe that Christ is present to us in, with, and under both the bread and wine, so in times such as this when it is not safe to share a common cup, the sacrament is fully available and complete in the consecrated bread.
- 11) When the service has ended, you may stand and pack your chairs and belongings but please remain in place until directed by the ushers to leave. The back row will exit first, followed by remaining rows from back to front. Please do not linger to socialize; go directly to your vehicle and depart.
- 12) A recycling bin and trash can will be placed near the entrance to the worship space. Please deposit your disposable masks and any trash in the appropriate container.
- 13) In the event of inclement weather, the service will be cancelled. You may assume that if there are thunderstorms or torrential rain in the forecast, there will be no service. Check our Facebook page and/or the church website for updates if the weather seems questionable.



Please remember that we are all handling these unprecedented times in the best ways we know how given our unique circumstances. Some will feel more comfortable than others, some face greater risks than others. Please be respectful of these personal differences and lift each other up as we move into gathering in community again. We are taking a conservative approach so that as many people as possible may feel safe in joining us. Please follow any directions given by our ushers.

Devotional for the week of June 28, 2020

Jesus emphasizes many times that his disciples are his representatives in the world. When people encounter his followers, they encounter Jesus. This is a phenomenal calling that certainly points to God's grace in the lives of Jesus' followers. We couldn't possibly claim to be the presence of Jesus without the Spirit and God's grace poured on us in baptism.

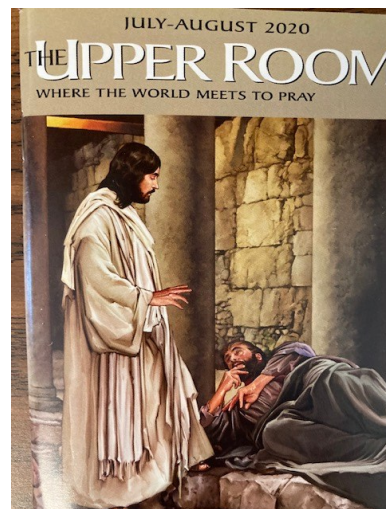
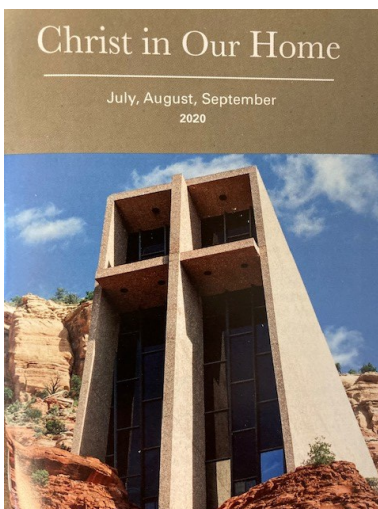
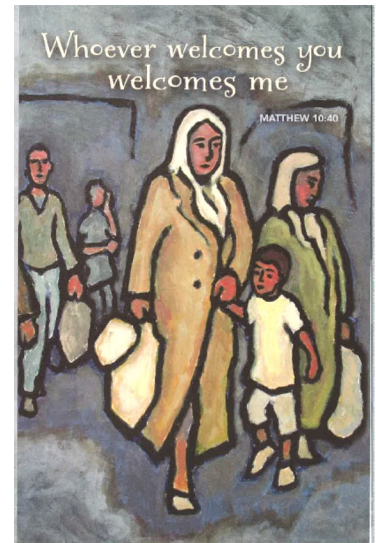
One way the church helps people to know God in Jesus is by showing up, being present, engaging authentically with others. When Jesus sent his disciples out to witness to the kingdom in words and deeds, he sent them out not only to welcome others but to be welcomed.

In a time when many of our human encounters are mediated by electronic social networks and distant forms of communication, we might lose sight of what it means to welcome others and to be welcomed in homes, at meals, or in another person's place of worship. It can be humbling to allow another person to welcome us and to show us hospitality and grace.

When we allow others to welcome us in whatever way they do, we allow some encounter with Christ to occur. Perhaps it is meeting for coffee or going for a walk. Maybe it means going into another person's neighborhood that is new to us. Maybe it's receiving dinner as another prepares it, humbly or extravagantly, in their home, or as we join them at their favorite restaurant.

Have you ever been invited to someone's home or event and turned them down? You may have had good reason, or maybe you just didn't feel like going. What does it mean to allow others to welcome us into their lives by accepting their invitations? It is a blessing to them. It is also, as Jesus tells us, a welcoming of God who sent Jesus and us to show love by letting others show us hospitality.

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Daily Prayer Guides are available. The latest issues of **Christ in Our Home** for July, August, September 2020 and **The Upper Room** for July-August 2020 have just been delivered to church. If you would like a copy, please let us know. We are happy to set up a time for you to pick one up or to deliver it to you.

The Upper Room is also available as a pdf and can be emailed to you. If you would prefer this, just let me know and I'll send it to you.



A Community of Prayer

For those in need of healing and comfort:

Members and Friends of the Congregation: Vicki, Peg, Marie, Karen, Pat, Billie, Audrey, Catherine, Elizabeth, Ray, John, Gordon, Miriam, Sarah, Chuck, Timmy, Bruce, Karl, Kendra, Mary Helen, Carolyn, Irma, Patricia, Cate, Misty, Julia, Sydne, Anna, Roy, Judy, Scarlet, Jason, Brian.

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.

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.

He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

Psalms 147 vs. 3

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

Simply email the church office at office@gsic-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).



Congratulations to Carolyn and John Remlin on the birth of their daughter. Roy and Eileen Remlin are her delighted grandparents!

May God's light shine on her, and fill her years with health, happiness, and walking always with her Lord.

Weekly Offering



As worship services are online and/or outdoor for the near future, if you have a chance, please submit your offering to help with our expenses. Thank you for your contribution!

There are different ways to contribute. You may bring it with you to the outdoor worship service or you may mail it if you are worshipping online with us or you may use your bank's online checking and have the bank issue the check and mail it—it's most often a free service offered by banks. Check with your bank to see if this works for you.

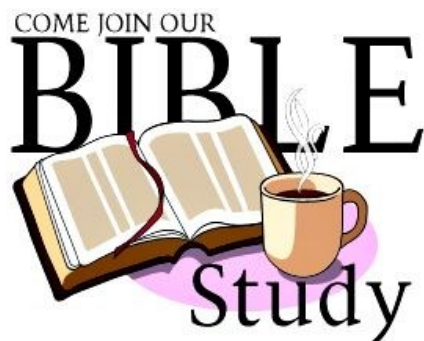
Let us know if you have any questions, we are always happy to help.



Upcoming Events

The Wednesday evening Bible Study is moving to Thursday evenings for the next 5 weeks and joining the Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport's Raise the Bar: Becoming Anti-Racist Summer Study and Discussion Series beginning this Thursday, July 2nd. Please complete and submit the online form at www.ccgb.org/bar and a Zoom invitation will be sent to you prior to each session. If you have any questions, please speak with Donna Duessel or Pastor Doug.

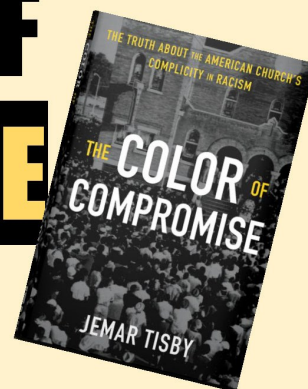
You're
Invited



CCGB's Raise the BAR: Becoming Anti-Racist Summer Study and Discussion Series

THE COLOR OF COMPROMISE

BY Jemar Tisby



What:

Video Presentation and Guided Discussion

Through five facilitated sessions of video clips and discussion we will be introduced to the "history of how the American church has helped create and maintain racist ideas and practices." In the videos Jemar Tisby "outlines the kind of bold action needed to forge a future of equality and justice" requiring us to think through "concrete solutions for improved race relations and a racially inclusive church." (Amazon and TCOC Video Series descriptions)

When:

Thursday evenings – 7:30 – 9:00 pm

July 2, July 16, July 30, August 13, August 27



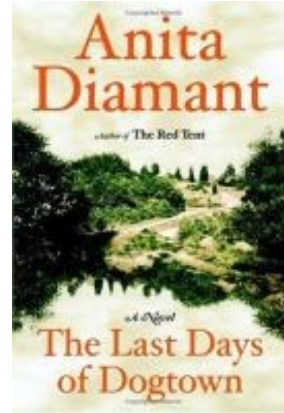
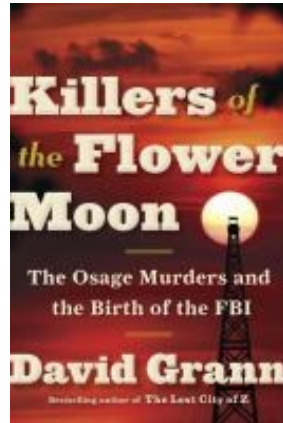
Registration:

Complete and submit the online form at www.ccgb.org/bar

The Zoom link and email reminders will be sent prior to each session.



The Book Club is meeting via Zoom and it is wonderful to "see" so many people! We will meet next on July 7th at 1:30 p.m. via Zoom and discuss "Killers of the Flower Moon" by David Grann. In August, we will discuss "The Last Days of Dogtown" by Anita Diamant. We welcome new members! Reply to this newsletter or contact Karen Jackson to be sure to be included in the discussion. The sessions are by invitation only to ensure internet safety guidelines are followed.



Readings for Sunday, July 5, 2020

The Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

First Reading: Zechariah 9:9-12 28:5-9

Psalms 145:8-14

Second Reading: Romans 7:15-25a

Gospel: Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

[Jesus spoke to the crowd saying:] "To what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another, 'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn.'

For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon'; the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds."

At that time Jesus said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

"Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

