

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

Weekly Update

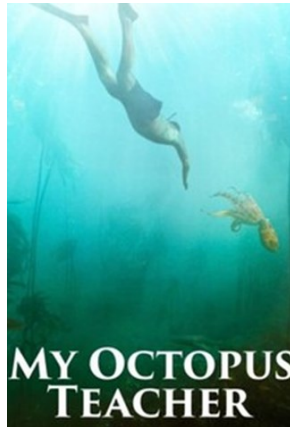
*Our mission is to be more visible, to become more connected,
and to draw closer, with Christ as our center.*



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



Wednesday, October 7, 2020



My Octopus Teacher

I know, this is a weird sounding phrase right? Last week both daughters told me I HAD to watch a Netflix documentary with the title: My Octopus Teacher. That sounded so bizarre that I put off watching it until the past weekend. Now recall that last weekend was the Commemoration of St. Francis.... The film truly surprised me and edified me. Beautifully photographed underwater, the film told of the real life experience of a filmmaker who found renewal of spirit in his forming a bond with this beautiful undersea creature. The bond grew and lasted almost a full year as the man sea - dived every day to document this relationship. I won't give away any more; I've had some of you get irritated with me for spoiling a movie you hadn't seen yet by talking about it as a sermon illustration! Sorry. Spoiler Alerts from now on!

My take away from the film was, again, how much we can miss God's grace and glory when we do not attend to the love shown in all creatures great and small. Our souls are refreshed watching and listening to birds, fish swimming in a bowl and squirrels performing acrobatic antics in the treetops. (One got in my house a year ago and lived in there for two days until we finally got him/her out.) Here is a great hymn "All Creatures of our God and King" to read or sing at home. It can of course be easily found online or in an old hymn book. Enjoy it. Enjoy creation as we move into Autumn. Allow yourself to be enjoyed by God.

LV
PD

This Sunday morning and throughout October, we have changed the time for the Outdoor Worship Service to 10:00 a.m. to help keep us warm. 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 these *updated* guidelines:



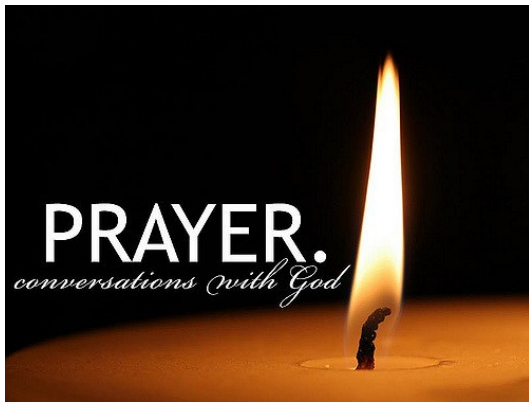
- 1) If you do not feel well or if you do not feel comfortable, please stay at home. The service is available online for those who do not join in person.
- 2) Please put on your face covering before leaving your vehicle. You will be expected to wear it throughout your visit.
- 3) Please bring: a lawn chair, face covering, and portion of bread for communion for every person in your group.
- 4) Please plan to arrive between 9-9:15. There will be a table at the entrance where you may leave your offering.
- 5) *Please choose a spot at least six feet from other family groups. Your chair should be positioned so that your feet are on the white line in front of you. Please stay seated until worship begins.*
- 6) Please refrain from unnecessary movement through the worship space to allow everyone to get set up while maintaining social distancing.
- 7) 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. Please hum softly or mouth the words without using your voice.
- 8) We will pass the Peace without physical contact.
- 9) 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.
- 10) When the service has ended, please do not linger to socialize; go directly to your vehicle and depart.
- 11) *The church is now open if you need to use the bathroom. Please use the designated bathroom and sign in to help us ensure the bathroom is cleaned regularly.*
- 12) 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 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.

To join us 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.



A Community of Prayer

For those in need of healing and comfort:

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

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@gscl-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.

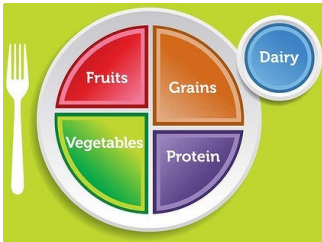
For privacy, only the first name of each individual will be listed.

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).

Reaching Out, Serving Others:

Kids at Summerfield Methodist Need Our Help



Pastor Gaston has made us aware of a critical need for nutritious food for the kids at Summerfield. Protein is especially needed. GSLC Council has decided to challenge 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. We are hoping to begin the program in October as the need is critical. Pledge card, specific envelopes and a box for directed contributions will be available in the coming weeks. If you wish to donate without making a pledge, please write a check to GSLC with the notation "Food For Summerfield" or place cash in the Summerfield box. More detailed information on the program will be available shortly.



Blessing of the Quilts

Pastor Doug blessed 20 quilts during worship and they will be given to individuals in need at Summerfield United Methodist Church in Bridgeport. The quilters have been busy making quilts during the pandemic but have been unable to send them to Lutheran World Relief because the shipping collection sites for the quilts are on hold during the pandemic. Lutheran World Relief is working on this issue as the need for quilts is great.



Upcoming Events



MEETING NOTICE!

October 12 - Worship & Music meeting at 7 pm
 October 12 - Finance Committee meeting at 7 pm
 October 19 - Church Council meeting at 7:30 pm



The Book Club met outdoors in October. On November 3rd at **1:00 p.m.** we will discuss "The One" by John Marrs. We welcome new members!





RAISING THE BAR -BECOMING ANTI- RACIST JOIN THE MONTHLY DISCUSSIONS

Our Anti-Racism Work Begins a Whole New Chapter!

The Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport's 5-part series discussing Jemar Tisby's *Color of Compromise* drew over 180 participants this summer! Our Raising the BAR (Becoming Anti-Racist) team led deep and thoughtful discussions each night, and many participants have told stories of small but significant transformations in their perspectives and understanding. Now we invite you to join a monthly conversation, on the 3rd Thursday evening each month.

[Click here to register](#)

Devotional for the week of October 4th, 2020

Throughout his ministry in Matthew's gospel, Jesus draws in people at the margins of society. As the leader of a reform movement, Jesus spoke as a Jew to fellow Jews. When we read these stories centuries later, we must remember that his intent was to condemn exclusion and abuses of power—*not* to reject Judaism. His critiques still ring true for the power structures of the religious institutions of our time.

Jesus' parables stirred people up, provoking questions, doubts, even hostility. When his listeners recognized themselves in the parables, it was rarely comforting or affirming. Do we have the honesty and vulnerability to see ourselves critically in the stories as the chief priests and Pharisees did?

There aren't any clear heroes in this story, as in any story of class warfare. Perhaps the tenants turned to violence out of frustration with the economic injustice of their situation. The Pharisees were quick to side with the powerful landowner, asserting his right to kill the tenants and crush their revolt, yet Jesus does not affirm this escalation either.

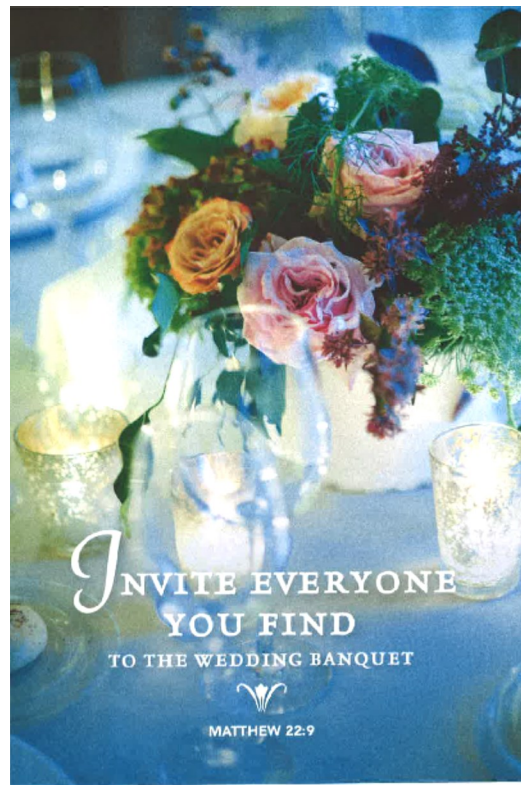
We begin worship with a prayer of confession, recalling the image of God's goodness in each of us and yet honestly admitting our shame and guilt. Today's parable also issues a call to confession, alluding to the vineyard of Isaiah 5, which yielded wild grapes instead of sweet. God has created a world that can provide abundant life for all. What are the fruits of our congregations? God's heart longs for justice for all people. How might we unintentionally and unknowingly cultivate the sour wine of exclusion, discrimination, and injustice?

In the prayer of the day, we ask: "Beloved God, . . . lead us . . . to know those things that are right, and by your merciful guidance, help us to do them." Empowered by God's grace and forgiveness, we set to work removing the blinders that keep us from recognizing ourselves in parables' antagonists and repenting of the injustices that we perpetuate.

Devotional message and art based on the readings for October 4th, reprinted from sundaysandseasons.com.

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Lord of the feast, you have prepared a table before all peoples and poured out your life with abundance. Call us again to your banquet. Strengthen us by what is honorable, just, and pure, and transform us into a people of righteousness and peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.



Readings for Sunday, October 11, 2020

The Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

First Reading: Isaiah 25:1-9

Psalm 23

Second Reading: Philippians 4:1-9

Gospel: Matthew 22:1-14

Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. Again he sent other slaves, saying, 'Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet.' But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his slaves, mistreated them, and killed them. The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. Then he said to his slaves, 'The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.' Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests.

"But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, and he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?' And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' For many are called, but few are chosen."