

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 21, 2020



We are winding down our Outdoor Worship as winter begins its journey back to us. This coming Sunday we wear red because it is Reformation Sunday. The week after is All Saints Sunday. You know by that - Advent is right 'round the corner.

Rhythms once brand new have now become familiar. Vic, Reed and I recording Worship on Thursdays, camera work, etc. Sundays a process of moving furniture and speakers and wires to the back yard. Carrying them back in. Banners up. Banners down.

After church last Sunday, a member wondered what has Worship in new forms meant to everyone since March, since pandemic? So I thought that I would ask **you. I'd love it if you'd send in short simple responses emailing me or Nina.**

I'd like to share those responses with you in next week's Newsletter.

So whether you participated through the recorded Service or the Outdoor Service or a combination, what has Worship meant to you in these past seven months? Faith witnessed by one another is nourishing. sharing our experience is nourishing. Thanks in advance!

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Council Update

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I am excited about how Good Shepherd has met the challenge of 2020 and COVID-19 and I look forward to the challenges of 2021. We have worked hard together to live the love of Jesus: caring and praying for one another, figuring out how to safely worship together, providing money for the ministries of The Good Shepherd Foundation in Haiti (clean water, medical clinics), and partnering with Summerfield to provide food, school supplies, quilts, and mental health services to those in need. You have responded generously to all needs that have been brought to you. I am thankful for that.

We continue to work to minimize the risk of worshipping inside together. We have been cautious because your health is important to us. We are installing a system in the air handling system thanks to an anonymous donor. This system will help to "clean" the recirculated air in the sanctuary. It is not a medical grade system but is designed to help purify the air.

Our challenges for 2021 include finding effective ways to engage our youth and Sunday School kids, meeting increased budget needs for a videographer and Pastor Doug's health insurance, and continuing to act together as we are apart. I ask for your prayers and ideas.

Yours in Christ,

Donna Duessel

Church Council President

Devotional for the week of October 18th, 2020

The Pharisees and Herodians come to Jesus with a seemingly simple question: "Is it lawful to pay taxes or not?" In a deft move characteristic of his ministry, Jesus refuses to pick a side. He doesn't debate them, but reframes the whole question. In doing so, he creates space in which they are open to hear a new possibility and be amazed.

The imperial coin bears the image of the emperor, just as our currency bears the image of our nation's favored leaders. What bears God's image? You! In the first chapter of Genesis we learn that all of humankind is created in the image of God, blessed, and entrusted with caring for every living creature.

When Jesus says, "Give . . . to God the things that are God's" (Matt. 22:21), we are reminded that there is nothing in this world and nothing in ourselves that is beyond the scope of God's care. Like the money stamped with the ruler's image, we see what God treasures in the face of every person on the planet: ourselves and our neighbors, those we love and those we fear. God's own image is in every race, every age, every gender identity, every ability. Each of us shines forth a unique facet of who God is. All that we have and all that we are is from God and for the sake of the whole world.

The sacred image in us is reinforced every week when we take part in the celebration of Holy Communion. As we are fed with the body of Christ, we pray that we too might "give ourselves away as bread for the hungry" (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, p. 114). Nothing is ours to keep. All is gift from God, freely given and constantly renewed. Set free by the promises of God's steadfast presence and generosity, we may live with open hands and open hearts.

Devotional message and art based on the readings for October 18th, 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: On October 25th and November 1st, we will have the Outdoor Worship Service at 10:00 a.m. On November 8th, we will have Drive In Church (details will be coming soon).

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.



A Community of Prayer

For those in need of healing and comfort:

Members and Friends of the Congregation: Joan, Marie, Audrey, Elizabeth, Gordon, Sarah, Timmy, Scarlet, Jason, Brian, David, Tricia.

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.

Psalm 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).

Reaching Out, Serving Others:

Summerfield Methodist Update



Donna Duessel and Billie Flaherty delivered 20 quilts and several boxes of gently used clothing to Summerfield Methodist Church in Bridgeport this past week. Pastor Gaston was very grateful for the donation to his church and the community.



Upcoming Events



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!



Greetings Women of New England!



We are in the thrust of the warm days, crisp air, cool nights and unsettling social and political events that rival the weather around here. (Let alone the current health and safety precautions caused by a tiny Coronavirus interrupting our habitual socialization) We are in the midst of change. Change is scary, yet adventurous. Adaptation to change is the message Christ bears. Living in the Kingdom of God is the purpose of the Women of the ELCA. We are living in a society that ignores God's call and His invitation to real love that surpasses understanding.

Adapting to the myriad of physical, social, and emotional changes around us is hard. This is why it is so important to keep connected with our spiritual nature. God is consistent; Jesus showed the way to live.

The epistles tell about lots of real-life struggles, managing to live as a Christian in times of change and stress. The lessons in this time after Pentecost can be adopted by us today.

To stay connected and have a relationship with others is vital to our faith. Following Christ is all relationship and community. Please continue to do Bible Study, Book reviews, emails/ phone calls, comedy clips, happy hour and prayer with each other. Every Tuesday at the noon hour take time to pray as an individual or with friends...join the national time for prayer for whatever is your concern. Join as a big women's prayer group that might be invisible to the eye of man but very visible to the eye of an Almighty God.

If you don't get the Gather magazine, get it (or ask for it as a gift) - join hundreds of women in the Bible Study or just reading the great articles.

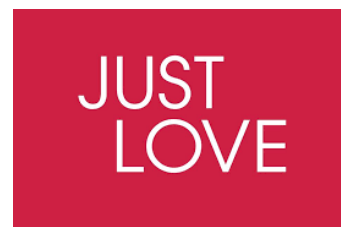
Support the Thankoffering of the Women of the ELCA. Intentionally be aware of God though the day, ... everyday. Start dropping coins into a container as praise, gratitude or as a "God happy" moment occurs. (See Doris Norman's can cover in this newsletter.) Every month or two count your coin blessings and send a check to Donna Hudson our synodical Treasurer. These monies, along with those of women from throughout the ELCA help to support the missions and ministries of churchwide Women of the ELCA.) A few dollars from each of us in New England will become a lot sent to churchwide.

Stewardship of our time and resources is part of our faith discipline to support each other. Let's unite - "praise God from whom all blessings flow". Let New England woman help others find the love of God by our commitment to Christ with each other.

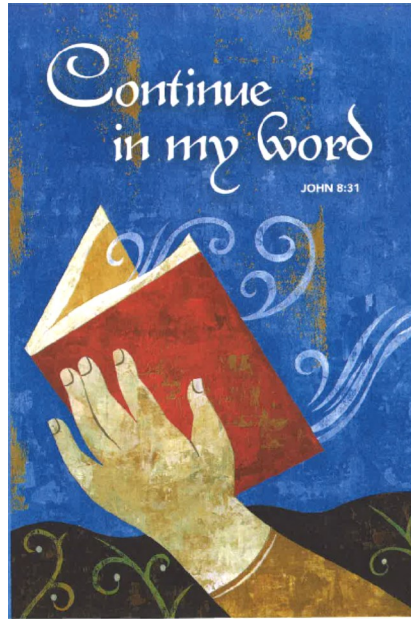
Read the WELCA Purpose Statement again. Thanks for your support and prayer.

May the grace of God continue working within you.

Alice Carlson



Gracious Father, we pray for your holy catholic church. Fill it with all truth and peace. Where it is corrupt, purify it; where it is in error, direct it; where in anything amiss, reform it; where it is right, strengthen it; where it is in need, provide for it; where it is divided, reunite it; for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



Readings for Sunday, October 25, 2020

Reformation Sunday

First Reading: Jeremiah 31:31-34

Psalm 46

Second Reading: Romans 3:19-28

Gospel: John 8:31-36

Then Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." They answered him, "We are descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves to anyone. What do you mean by saying, 'You will be made free'?" Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not have a permanent place in the household; the son has a place there forever. So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.