

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, June 17, 2020

Truth and Lie meet one day. Lie tells Truth that "it's a beautiful day today". Truth looks up to the skies and sighs. For truly, it was a beautiful day. Truth and Lie spent the whole day together, exchanging stories and having fun. During their stroll, they reach a well. Lie tells Truth, "the water looks very nice. Let's take a dip together." Truth, once again suspicious, tests the water and discovers that indeed, it was very nice. They undress and start bathing. Suddenly, Lie jumps out of the well and puts on the clothes of Truth and runs away. The furious Truth comes out of the well and runs everywhere to find Lie so she could get her clothes back. The World, seeing Truth all naked, turns its gaze away, with contempt and rage. The poor Truth returns to the well and disappears forever, hiding therein, its shame. Since then, Lie has traveled the world dressed as Truth, satisfying the needs of society, because the World, in any case, harbors no wish at all to meet the Naked Truth.

As Christians we do not accept that all views, beliefs and opinions are equal! Hard and difficult as it is, we have the responsibility to discover truth through facts and values. We have moral responsibility to learn and to think critically. Rarely ever in the world of ethics and moral theology does "I'll do me and you do you." "well, that's just my opinion" apply. Perhaps this works best in arguing flavors of ice cream or best songs. Maybe it can apply there. Congregations of Christians don't seek to smooth over or avoid the honest search between Truth and Lie. Even if this search is upsetting to some. We are communities of moral deliberation. Our following of Jesus includes an ethical imperative. Not all opinions are equal. Avoiding lazy thinking, the Christian seeks honestly after the truth to better serve the Kingdom of Jesus.

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Devotional for the week of June 14, 2020

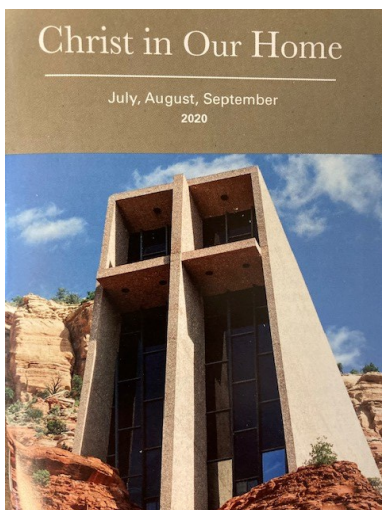
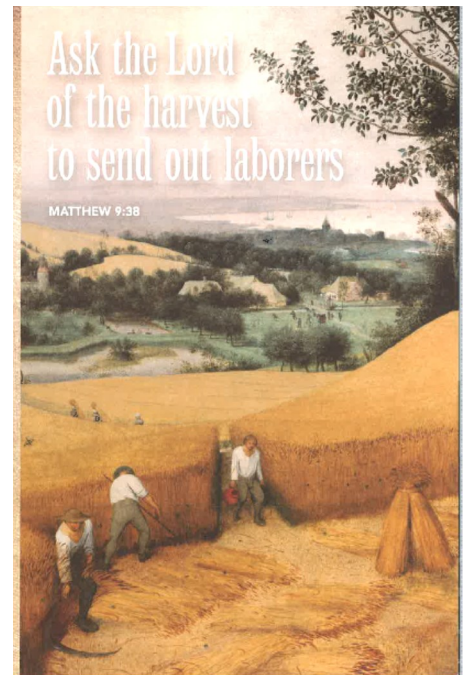
Jesus sends out his disciples to labor for the kingdom. He uses the metaphor of a harvest and says there is plenty to harvest but that there are not enough workers. The church has seen itself throughout the centuries as being sent to labor for the harvest. Most often, the assumption has been that the harvest is people, and the goal is making them members of the church. Much of the missionary impulse and institutional focus of the church have been about increasing numbers and making more members.

But notice how Jesus describes the labor of the harvest: proclaim, cure, cleanse, raise, cast out. The focus is not on making people a part of the church (although welcoming others is certainly part of the good news). The goal of the labor—the harvest—is healing, helping, liberating, renewing. The world is full of great unmet needs, and many people are suffering; hopelessness and despair abound. The harvest of the kingdom is a harvest of compassionate deeds.

What happens when no one is available to harvest the crops? They sit in the field and eventually go bad. What happens to people when no one joins in the harvest of compassion? People continue to suffer, lives are diminished, and God's intentions of abundant life for all are left to rot. Jesus is inviting all who are willing to join in the harvest of compassion, and the time is now.

What happens when the church shifts its mission from harvesting people to harvesting acts of compassion? The witness of the church becomes rooted in concrete acts of care for others, and suffering is alleviated. The good news of Jesus is known in the great ingathering of compassion and justice done in Jesus' name. It begins at the table every Sunday, when we celebrate the feast of the kingdom that Jesus himself brought to fruition through his own life, death, and resurrection. May that gift now bear fruit in our lives by his grace.

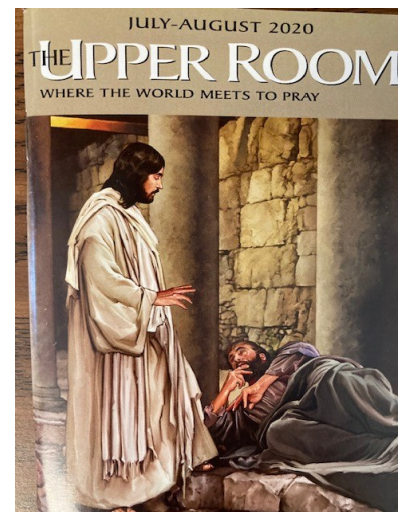
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Daily Prayer Guides are available. The latest issues of **Christ in Our Home** for July, August, September 2020 and **The Upper Room** for July-August 2020 have just been delivered to church. If you would like a copy, please let us know. We are happy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

The Upper Room devotional guides are available online as well.

Go to <https://www.upperroom.org/devotionals> to download the prayer guide for each day.





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, 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

We bring before you, O Lord, the troubles and perils of peoples and nations, the sighing of prisoners and captives, the sorrows of the bereaved, the necessities of strangers, the helplessness of the weak, the despondence of the weary, the failing powers of the aged. O Lord draw near to each; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Audrey Heim news - our dear friend Audrey is now in Room A207 panda floor of the Jewish Home. Audrey wants me to thank all of you for sending cards. She greatly appreciates them and would love to keep receiving cards. Audrey has "some good days and some bad days". Her sense of belonging to Good Shepherd means a great deal to her. Please keep her in prayer. - PD

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).

Weekly Offering



As worship services have been cancelled for the near future, if you have a chance, please send your offering to the church to help with our expenses. Thank you for your contribution!

There are different ways to contribute. You may write a physical check and mail it via the post office. If you write a check, please include your offering envelope to help the counters process it correctly.

Another option is to 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 the bank you use to see if this works for you.

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



Upcoming Events

ELCA Prayer Service

An **ELCA Prayer Service for Commemoration of the Emanuel Nine** will be available for online viewing at 12 noon Eastern Time on June 17, the fifth anniversary of the evening nine people were shot and killed during a Bible study at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, S.C. The service will include leaders from around the ELCA and ecumenical partners, including episcopal leadership from the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton will preach the sermon. We join in a time of repentance, mourning and prayer as we remember these nine martyrs and renounce the sins of racism and white supremacy. The service can be viewed on the ELCA web page www.elca.org.

You're
Invited



Where: Zoom

need to RSVP to Donna Duessel for Zoom invite anytime before 7 pm on Wednesday.

dduessel@hotmail.com

When: Wednesday at 7 pm

What: **PD's Potluck Bible Study** - tonight we will begin with a bible study on the gospel stories about the people who influenced Jesus, that is, how God formed Jesus and how God might form us.

Join us at 8:15 pm on Wednesday, **June 17th** to commemorate the Emanuel Nine who were killed five years ago while they were having a Bible study.

We will use pages 5-9 in this litany [https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Prayers Litanies Laments Emanuel Nine Commemoration.pdf?ga=2.108967618.1532745326.1591747213-1265636381.1564608160](https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Prayers%20Litanies%20Laments%20Emanuel%20Nine%20Commemoration.pdf?ga=2.108967618.1532745326.1591747213-1265636381.1564608160)

EMANUEL NINE, MARTYRS, 2015

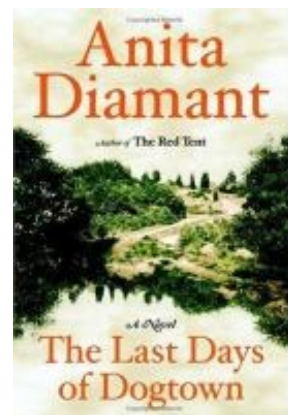
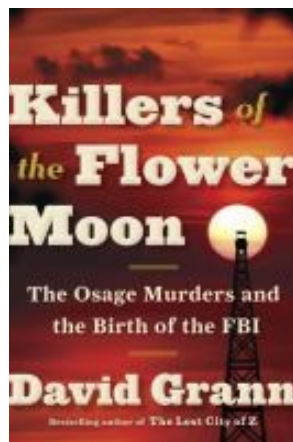
On June 17, 2015, Clementa C. Pinckney, Cynthia Marie Graham Hurd, Susie Jackson, Ethel Lee Lance, DePayne Middleton-Doctor, Tywanza Sanders, Daniel Lee Simmons, Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, and Myra Thompson were murdered by a self-professed white supremacist while they were gathered for Bible study and prayer at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church (often referred to as Mother Emanuel) in Charleston, South Carolina. Pastors Pinckney and Simmons were both graduates of the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary. A resolution to commemorate June 17 as a day of repentance for the martyrdom of the Emanuel Nine was adopted by the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on August 8, 2019. Congregations of the ELCA are encouraged reaffirm their commitment to repenting of the sins of racism and white supremacy which continue to plague this church, to venerate the martyrdom of the Emanuel Nine, and to mark this day of penitence with study and prayer.



We are planning our first **Outdoor Worship Service** for Sunday, **July 5**, weather permitting. A great deal of careful planning is going into this event. An email will be coming that will contain important information about what we will need to do to keep each other safe. Any Worship gatherings from now on will feel quite different from what we have always known! Please watch for further information.



The Book Club is meeting via Zoom and it was 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, June 21, 2020

First Reading: Jeremiah 20:7-13

Psalms 69:7-10 (11-15) 16-18

Second Reading: Romans 6:1b-11



Gospel: Matthew 10:24-39

Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

Then Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness. These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, also known as Peter, and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him.

These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. As you go, proclaim the good news, 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.' Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. You received without payment; give without payment. Take no gold, or silver, or copper in your belts, no bag for your journey, or two tunics, or sandals, or a staff; for laborers deserve their food. Whatever town or village you enter, find out who in it is worthy, and stay there until you leave. As you enter the house, greet it. If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town. Truly I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.

"See, I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. Beware of them, for they will hand you over to councils and flog you in their synagogues; and you will be dragged before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them and the Gentiles. When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you at that time; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next; for truly I tell you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.