

THE PARISH CONNECTION



**Tri-County Lutheran Parish
Issued on November 18, 2020**

Christ the King Sunday

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From the Bishop

November 13, 2020

Dear Siblings in Christ,

Grace to you and peace from the One who makes all things new, Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and tomorrow.

It's been a while since I last sent a letter to you and thought that now might be a good time to pause and reflect on where we are as well as what we are doing. As you know, the pandemic has reared its ugly head once again only this time it appears to be stronger and more pervasive across this country. As I write this, we are reaching all-time highs in the number of cases daily as deaths continue to mount. Experts such as Dr. Anthony Fauci suggests the worst is yet to come in the next six to eight weeks as we enter the holiday season, heavier travel realities and more people moving inside where the virus is more easily spread.

As of yesterday, the U.S. had reported 10,642,218 COVID-19 infections and 243,044 deaths. The U.S. daily tally of coronavirus infections topped 140,000 on Wednesday, a new record and ninth consecutive day of 100,000-plus new cases.

In New York State Governor Cuomo has already begun taking actions announced on Monday. Restaurants must close by 10 pm while still allowing for takeout. Gyms must close at the same time. Recent research suggests that those two entities create the greatest opportunity for the virus to expand its reach. Indoor gatherings are being limited to 10 people and zones have been set up to clarify where the virus is raging most effectively in New York State. The following is a link to help understand where those zones are, and the statistics involved with them.

<https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-announces-updated-covid-19-micro-clusterfocus-zones-1>

The zones are colored and fluid. As increases and decreases take place colors change. There is indication that Erie County may move from Yellow to Orange which will further limit gatherings and realities. A move to Red will cause a shut down. Monroe County remains at yellow. You can find the other counties on the NY State website if interested. All of which is to say it appears that we are currently moving backward not forward in the major metropolitan areas of this state as well as some rural areas.

In light of the above it may be time to reassess where you stand in relation to worship and numbers and technology. I just received an email (2:25 pm on 11-12-2020) from the Episcopal Dioceses of Western New York & Northwestern Pennsylvania indicating that worship in all congregations will be moving to virtual effective immediately.

So, what to do? First, pay careful attention to the reports and numbers, they drive where we are and where we are headed. Second, take a serious look at how you are worshipping and consider whether or not you need to move back to virtual worship. My strong belief is that it would be a prudent move at this moment in time until this abates a bit.

As this pandemic began so it continues, different people in different places will answer this question differently. But, in all things, err on the side of caution and safety. Follow the protocols in place: Wear a mask, wash your hands, social distance and be kind to one another recognizing this is not about 'me' rather it's about 'us'. We've been there before and as much as we don't want to go back, we know how to do what needs to be done. I'd much rather be heading in the positive direction yet also know that the majority of our communities are in the high-risk range for this virus and we need to care for them.

Unlike the first time around the older population may not be the largest target audience for this virus. The largest group at the moment is young

people, floating around the age of college students. Fortunately, science and medicine have learned from the past months and fewer people are dying and the length of hospital stays is decreasing. That's the good news, the challenge is avoiding that possibility all together and, in the process, making certain that we don't overwhelm our medical systems.

I know that this is not the space you want to be in yet also know that you are called to this time and this space to offer leadership and direction. Have the conversations, look at the facts, watch the data, it's what's driving much if not most of life these days.

And, be safe, compassionate, caring and careful. Wear masks, socially distance wherever you find yourself and especially in worship if you continue in that direction, take deep breaths. We are in this together and we will get through it, that I promise.

There is much hope on the horizon regarding vaccines which seem to be showing great results thus far. Unfortunately, those vaccines appear to be months away for most of us. And, we've made it this far together. The One how has called us is faithful and accompanies us on this journey; of that I'm certain. If I can be of any assistance in these days, please don't hesitate to be in touch with me.

One more thing. I will be moving back to a monthly Zoom Meeting with rostered leaders in early December to gather us, share in conversation and ask and answer questions that might exist. You will find that information next week on the synod web site. I will also be gathering lay leadership once a month moving forward in the hope that it might be of benefit to gather for conversation. In the meantime, may our God keep you and hold you with compassion, peace love.

In Hope and Expectation,

John S. Macholz, Bishop

From Pastor Sam and Pastor Beth

November 14, 2020

Siblings in Christ,

We pray this letter finds you healthy and safe. It has been a joy to see many of your faces at worship services recently. We appreciate how you have all worked together to help create a safe environment for worship. However, even as we have exercised caution in worship and in the communities where we live, the numbers of those infected with Covid are rapidly increasing. After receiving advice from Bishop Macholz, reviewing reports from medical experts, and prayerful conversation, we are reaching a stage where it would be pertinent and Christ-like to suspend in-person worship services.

We are not making this decision lightly, nor are we acting out of fear. Rather, we are choosing to love one another, to show compassion and respect to one another. Martin Luther offers this advice in his writing *Whether One May Flee from a Deadly Plague*, "Therefore I shall ask God mercifully to protect us. Then I shall fumigate, help purify the air, administer medicine, and take it. I shall avoid places and persons where my presence is not needed in order not to become contaminated and thus perchance infect and pollute others, and so cause their death as a result of my negligence. If God should wish to take me, he will surely find me and I have done what he has expected of me and so I am not responsible for either my own death or the death of others."

With this in mind, the best way we shall show love to one another is to do our part to prevent further spread of this virus. As of November 22, we will transition back to **only virtual worship via Zoom on Sunday mornings at 10AM**. We will continue to carefully monitor the

situation, so that we can return to in-person worship as soon as it is safe to do so.

Looking ahead, we are already brainstorming ways that we can celebrate Christmas in creative and safe ways, and we are looking forward to working together with you on that endeavor.

We know this is not the news any of us want to hear, especially close to the holidays. We ask that you continue praying for one another and reach out to support and encourage each other. Should you have any questions, please let us know.

Blessings and peace,

Pastor Beth George

Pastor Sam Perret

From Vicar Care

Grace and peace to you all in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

The word 'evangelism' comes from εὐαγγέλιον (euangelion), the title of the four Gospels in our New Testament. To be an evangelist means to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with all.

Evangelism is part of our mission as Christians. We have been given such a priceless gift of grace and new life, and we ought to share that experience with others! Yet...very few Protestants know how to evangelize well. A study by Lifeway Research found that more than half of those who attend church at least once a month say they have not shared with someone how to become a Christian in the past six months. This is especially true for older members: 62% of Christians 65 and older are most likely to say they had no evangelistic conversations recently.

As we now live in a digital age, evangelism looks differently than the door-knocking of the past. This past week, I created a public Facebook page for the Tri-County Lutheran Parish: <https://www.facebook.com/tclparish>. On it, we will be posting our worship schedules, public events, and more! I encourage you to 'like' and 'follow' our page. This is different from our private TCLP Facebook group, which is used for internal communication and intra-parish discussions.

With this new page, sharing the Gospel of Christ means sharing our posts and events! You can be an evangelist with the click of a mouse, sharing what's going on at the TCLP to your friends and family on Facebook.

This may be the beginning of your work as an evangelist, but it should not be the end. What are ways you can reach out to a friend who may need Jesus' Good News in their life? How can you spread the Gospel message in your community? It may be as simple as an invite to church, or as transformative as a whole new missionary vision for your church and the parish.

Please 'like' and 'follow' our new page, but above all: share the news of God's unconditional love and grace with those around you. We all need that Gospel right now. You can be the bearer of that glorious Good News to your friends, your family, and the world.

In Christ's Peace,

Vicar Carolyn

312-538-3044

News and Information

Please feel free to reach out to Pastor Sam (whiteginger20@gmail.com) or Pastor Beth (chellman4557@gmail.com) should you have a pastoral care concern. If you would like to reach both pastors at the same time, please email clergy@tclparish.org.

- If you have a congregational concern, please contact your council president.
- If you have a parish concern, please contact TCLP board president Harry Avery (harryavery@yahoo.com).
- If you have an HR concern, contact Phyllis Keeler or Jeannette Wilber at: hr@tclparish.org.

November Holiday Time

Please note....

Pastor Sam will be on vacation from November 16-November 22.

Vicar Care will be on vacation from November 24-November 27.

Pastor Beth will be on vacation from November 26-November 29.

We hope everyone has a happy and healthy Thanksgiving Season!

November Worship Schedule (all on Zoom)

11/18 Midweek Service 6pm led by Vicar Care
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7700997419>

11/22 Sunday Worship
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7700997419>

11/25 Midweek Service 6pm led by Vicar Care
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7700997419>

Worship service videos can be found on YouTube:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8kJUJTm_PrA-l1qlv8PJ-g

Do You Hear What I Hear? Could it be Christmas music already??

I know it seems far away, but Christmas will be here before you know it and with Covid restrictions, we must plan creatively. Because singing in person together has been shown to be dangerous (there was a recent

outbreak in Spain with a church choir who was masked and socially distant) we are going to lean into technology and try something new. I know there are some fabulous singers and musicians all around the Parish. I would love to receive digital recordings of Parish members (either families or individuals) singing or playing a Christmas song. Can't carry a tune, but still want to participate? Go ahead and record a Christmas poetry reading! I'll take it! These recordings will be compiled into one video that we will share on our YouTube channel and can make DVDs for those at home. Is anyone interested in singing, playing, or helping to coordinate? Please contact Pastor Sam.

The Parish Prayer Group is meeting the first and third Tuesdays at 4PM via Zoom. If you would like to join, please contact Pastor Sam.

Also – Pastor Sam has been hearing some thoughts around to start **an all-parish Sunday School** (likely on Zoom, due to distance/Covid). To make this happen **we need volunteers to teach and lead**. Do you have a gift for teaching and like to work with kids? Please let Pastor Sam know so we can try to get something started!

If you need food, necessities, masks, or help of any kind, please reach out to one of us. We have plenty of resources available to us in our parish and we are excited to be God's hands and feet for each other!

Opportunity to Help!!! Columbia County Meals on Wheels program is looking for volunteers. Most volunteers do one or two days a week. Most routes take about an hour to an hour and a half at the most. The volunteers do not enter the individual's home, they place the meal on a table or chair outside the door, knock, back up 6 feet and wait for the individual to answer the door. Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer should contact Amy Anderson, Nutrition Program Coordinator @ 518-672-5323.

Pr. Sam's MMC (Mutual Ministry Committee)

Do you have any comments, questions, or constructive critiques concerning Pr. Sam? Perhaps you really enjoyed the way she did

something, or perhaps you have a suggestion. Your feedback is very much desired and appreciated. You may either contact her directly, or if you wish to remain anonymous you may contact the MMC using this email distribution list: mmcps@tclparish.org, which will automatically send an email to the entire team (except Pr. Sam.)

OR you may contact individual members:

Anne Philipp annie2919@gmail.com (C) 518-610-1335

Patty Bervy pbervy@yahoo.com (C) 518-598-7609

Karen Schubert kara3215@juno.com (H) 518-731-6751

Duane Keeler oneservantofgod@gmail.com (C) 518-610-0164

A Note from your Parish Admin, Sharon Smith:

Send me your prayer additions, questions, Parish Connection updates, and anything else you may need to ask me to the new email: parishadmin@tclparish.org. Please submit for the bulletins and the Parish Connection as soon as possible, however by Monday, noon is preferred.

My hours are: 9 am - 3:45 pm. My lunch time is 1pm -2 pm and I will not be available during this time. You can however, always leave a voice mail at: (518) 758-6526 or send an email to: parishadmin@tclparish.org

Should I have to leave the office for any reason, I will leave a note as to when I will be back. Peace, Sharon

From Vicar Care –

Our midweek services continue in November. We are having a hymn Sing-a-long! Please let Vicar Care know your favorite hymns for the parish to sing together! Please send these to the vicar as soon as possible, either by email (carolyn.lawrence@lstc.edu) or text (312-538-3044).

We meet every Wednesday at 7:00pm on Zoom, If you are interested in attending, please use the following Zoom ID: 880 9165 9945.

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TCLP Board for 2020

Harry Avery	President	harryavery@yahoo.com
Jackie Menagh	Vice Chair	jamspirit@hardsdisk.net
Duane Keeler	Recording Secretary	oneservantofgod@gmail.com
Chuck Race	Treasurer	ctracejr@tclparish.org

If you have additions, deletions, changes, etc. for the Parish Connection, bulletins, etc., please either call the Parish office at 518- 758-6526 or email: parishadmin@tclparish.org.

Thank you!

Congregation Announcements

For all congregations: We will be having worship on Zoom only.

Time of worship is 10 a.m.

Use this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7700997419>

EMANUEL, STUYVESANT FALLS

Contact -- Duane Keeler oneservantofgod@gmail.com

Zoom worship 10 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Duane Keeler	President	
Leslie Dumont	Vice-President	
Linda Frick	Co-Treasurer	
Dick Frick	Co-Treasurer	Not on council
Chuck Albertson	Secretary	Not on council
Pr. Sam	Ex Officio member	
Pr. Beth	Ex-Officio Member	
Karen Albertson	Harry Avery	

Committees

OUTREACH (Joint committee with St. Luke's) Teresa Avery, Karen Albertson

WORSHIP (Joint committee with St. Luke's) Phyllis Keeler

PARISH SPECIAL WORSHIP SERVICES TEAM Karen Albertson, Duane Keeler
(Chair)

ST. LUKE'S, VALATIE

Contact -- Kara Udvary Karap1969@aol.com

Zoom worship 10 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Kara Udvary, President	518-821-0437 Karap1969@aol.com
Barbara Slater, Corresp. Secretary	518-392-7798
Ken Schomaker, Treasurer	518-758-1246
Linda Dickson, Financial Secretary	518-610-8056
Ethan Race	518-209-7829
Tim McGlauflin	518-756-4644
Mike Schunk	518-610-8201
Janis McGlauflin	518-828-1857

Want to see how the St. Luke's Council works? Do you want to make a difference? We have an opening for a Council member! Contact Kara Udvary at 518-821-0437 or email her at Karap1969@aol.com

Hey Everybody!!!

Marietta Dreessen is turning 100!!! Let's help her celebrate by sending her cards! Here is her address:

MARIETTA DREESSEN

11 GURLEY AVE, APT. 301

TROY, NY 12182

Committees

Education	Ethan Race	
Outreach	Kara Udway, Linda Dickson, Janis McGlaufflin	
Parish Care	Janis McGlaufflin	
Property	Larry Eleby	518-929-1432
Safety and Security	Sharon Smith	518-929-9765
	Chuck Race	518-917-3547
Stewardship & Finance	Ken Schomaker, Linda Dickson, Tim McGlaufflin	
TCLP	Tim McGlaufflin, Jon Strodl	
Worship & Music	Ted Fiebke	518-794-779
	Janis McGlaufflin, Kara Udway	

Women's Group - Stay tuned!!

Any questions, contact Barbara Slater - 518-392-7798.

EMANUEL/ST. JOHN'S

Contact -- Richard Fitzgerald rfatbellspond@yahoo.com

Zoom worship 10 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Pat Brundage	President
Dick Fitzgerald	<u>Treasurer</u> (not a Council Member)
Debra Garrison	Secretary
Linda Baker	
Kirk Dixon	Sexton

ZION, ATHENS

Contact -- Gethen Proper gethen7@gmail.com

Zoom worship 10 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

William Darling	President	518-943-4293
Tim Mercer	Vice President	518-859-1356
Bob O'Leary,	Treasurer	845-797-6084
Gethen Proper	Church & Financial Secretary	518-755-8395
Carol Serazio		518-731-9050
Karen Schubert		518-731-1190
John Wais		518-719-5754
John Van Valkenburg		518-945-1184

The many outreach projects of Zion are made possible in large part by grants from Thrivent Financial Every Thrivent member is eligible to apply for 2 action team grants per year. These are easy to apply for, and if you need help please ask Carrol Mercer Or Christine Wanek. If you are not a Thrivent member, but would still like to help apply for a grant, you can become a Thrivent Associate Member.

Associate Membership is \$19.95 and with that membership you are able to apply for a one-time Thrivent grant for \$250.00 for our congregation's outreach projects.

Contact Thrivent either by Phone at 845-849-1267, or at Thrivent.com.

Five Loaves Project -- MEALS FOR THE HUNGRY AND THOSE IN NEED Thursday's @ 4:30 pm

ST. PAUL'S, OAK HILL

Contact – Jackie Menagh jamspirit@hardsdisk.net 518-256 2496 (cell)

Zoom worship 10 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Jackie Menagh President 518-634-2026 home -- leave a message
(TBA) Treasurer
Sally Lord Secretary

A Big Thank You to all those who have been sending their Offerings in by mail or dropping them off at the church. We really appreciate your faithfulness. The work of the Church and God continues and in this time of crisis, is more important than ever.

CHRIST OUR EMMANUEL, CHATHAM

Contact – Jeanette Wilber tam20kfw@aol.com

Zoom worship 10 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Jeanette Wilber President
Kurt Hoelter Vice President
Heidi Brennan Recording and Corresponding Secretary
Cate MacPherson
Richard Mac Donald (Mac)
Henry Bartel

Did you know there is a new way to send your offering? We have an online donation portal! Please visit our website at www.chathamLutheran.org to get started!

ST. STEPHENS, E. SCHODACK

**Contact – Alice Senrick Asenrick29@gmail.com
518-479-0819 or 518-852-1504**

Zoom worship 10 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Alice <u>Senrick</u>	President	
Charles <u>Senrick</u>	Treasurer (Non-Voting member)	
Cathy Teeter	Secretary	
Brian Schell	Vice President	
Deborah Deerfield	Diane Middleton	Charles <u>Mayrer</u>

St. Stephen's has a collection basket for non-perishable foods, that are given to the Anchor in Castleton, and Doors of Hope in Sand Lake, to help people in need.

TRINITY, CASTLETON

Contact – Nicole Gardner scullynik@yahoo.com

Zoom worship 10 a.m.

Council Members

Anne Philipp	President		
Eric <u>Knodler</u>	Vice President		
Rik Cosgrave	Treasurer (not on Council)		
Nicole Gardner	Secretary		
Mike Wiley	Flo Ball	Joseph Fahd	Lois Bult

The Castleton Girl Scouts are still collecting bottles and cans and will continue to collect them until July of 2022. They can reach out to Nicole Gardner with questions or to make arrangements for pick up. She can be reached at 518-336-4077 (home) 518-312-8603 (text) or via email scullynik@yahoo.com.

Financial Secretary Needed Wondering how you can help your church. A Financial Secretary is needed. Training is available. if interested please see Rik Cosgrave or anyone on the council.

What would you like to see in “The Parish Connection?” Drop a line to the TCLP office at parishadmin@tclparish.org

Parish Administrator OFFICE HOURS: 9 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Monday through Friday. Lunch is from 1-2 pm Call any time!

If you have questions regarding the Tri County Lutheran Parish or for any other church issues or pastoral concerns, please call Sharon at 518-758-6526 or email her at: parishadmin@tclparish.org and she can help direct you to the right person!

CONTACT US:

Tri-County Lutheran Parish, PO Box 158, Valatie, NY 12184

Phone: (518) 758-6526

Pastor Samantha Perret (*Parish*) Phone – 518-229-4128

E-mail: whiteginger20@gmail.com

Pastor Beth George (*Parish*) Phone – 717-364-4557

Email: chellman4557@gmail.com

Pastor Dan Hahn, (*Intern Supervisor*) Phone – 518-281-8127

E-mail --pastordanhahn@gmail.com

Vicar Carolyn Lawrence E-Mail: Carolyn.Lawrence@LSTC.edu

TCLP Website: www.tclparish

CHATHAM WEBSITE: www.chathamlutheran.org

VALATIE/STUYVESANT FALLS PARISH WEBSITE: www.slelc.com

Devotions and Prayers for the Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost - curated by Vicar Carolyn

“We Thank You” by Jan Struther

We thank You, God of heaven,

For all the joys that greet us,

For all that You have given

To help us and delight us
In earth and sky and seas;
The sunlight on the meadows,
The rainbow's fleeting wonder,
The clouds with cooling shadows,
The stars that shine in splendor—
We thank You, God, for these.

For swift and gallant horses.
For lambs in pastures springing,
For dogs with friendly faces,
For birds with music thronging
Their chantries in the trees;
For herbs to cool our fever
For flowers of field and garden,
For bees among the clover
With stolen sweetness laden—
We thank You, God, for these.

For homely dwelling places
Where childhood's visions linger,
For friends and kindly voices,
For bread to stay our hunger
And sleep to bring us ease;
For zeal and zest of living,
For faith and understanding,
For words to tell our loving,
For hope of peace unending—
We thank You, God, for these.

Thus says the Lord God: I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. As shepherds seek out their flocks when they are among their scattered sheep, so I will seek out my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited parts of the land.

I will feed them with good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture; there they shall lie down in good grazing land, and they shall feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord God. I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with justice.

--Ezekiel 34:11-16 NRSV

“The Moment” by Vivian Pomeroy

O God, our home and also our long way; our rest and our ongoing courage; our haven and our saving hope, we praise You for this mortal life.

We praise You for the flow of time on which all things pass;

We praise You for the spirit in us greater than the flowing tide;

We praise You that there are grand moments better than a thousand days;

We praise You that in the greatness of life, the hearts of young and old come very close together, and even the distant ones come back.

We praise You that in high moments, when hearts are full, there is Someone to praise.

“Eternal and Infinite Power: may I, meditating on You, be delivered from timidity.

Eternal and Infinite Wisdom: may I, contemplating You, be delivered from wavering.

Eternal and Infinite Love: may I, being united with You, love other people, not only myself.”

--Gerald Heard

“The Cross Made the Change” A Praise Song by Common Hymnal

From songwriter Justin Gray: “I had been meditating on the tension between Christ's humanity and deity and how hard it must have been for common people to see him as the son of God...This song celebrates the simple human dignity of our savior, showing us that God's miraculous power is revealed in a humbly incarnate Christ.”

When they saw Jesus
They saw a teenage mother
They saw an unbelieving brother
Just a man in poverty
But when I see Jesus
I see the Sovereign and the Savior
I see the Healer of the nations
I see the stone rolled away

Nobody thought that this Son of sorrow
Would be broken for love, to fix our tomorrows

But it's the Cross that made the change
It's the Cross that made the change
And I'll let everybody know
That it's the Cross that made the change

And when they saw Jesus
They saw a rebel and a problem
And they did everything to stop it
Even put him on a tree, yeah
But when I see Jesus
I see the Sovereign and the Savior
I see the Healer of the nations
I see the Glory of Galilee

Now when we see Jesus we become like Jesus
When we know how he sees us, we will never be the same

It's the Cross that made the change
It's the Cross that made the change
And I'll let everybody know
That it's the Cross that made the change

Sermon from 11-15-20 written by Pastor Sam. Based on 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

The people are scared, and they need to be reassured. Paul has received word from the Thessalonians, and they have some concerns. They are a new community, just started by Paul and are new to the faith. They understand that they are waiting for Jesus to return and believe that it will be at any time. Some of their church family are starting to die. They worry that because Jesus has not returned, then those who have died will not be with them in Heaven.

They are afraid and they are at risk of letting their fear get the better of them.

In last week's reading we learned that those who have already died will be raised to heaven when Jesus returns. In this week's portion, we learn that we have no idea when Jesus will return. There will be no warning, but suddenly things will be different.

Things will be better because Jesus will be coming and the Thessalonians have been persecuted terribly for their faith in Jesus. Relief and freedom from persecution would be wonderful - but the uproar will be inescapable.

This message of hope in the coming of our Lord cannot be understood without the warning that comes with it: Stay alert! Stay focused! Watch and wait!

Waiting for something good to come (like a Covid vaccine, maybe, or for life to return to a time of hugs, visits, singing together and no masks) is so hard. We know it's coming, but the waiting is the hardest part.

It is all too easy to seek an escape from the stress of it: to lose ourselves in a book, to binge watch an entire series on Netflix, polish off a pint of Ben and Jerry's, drown ourselves in drink, or indulge in actual excessive sleeping.

These are some of the ways we "sleep" when we should be "awake."

Anything to distract ourselves from the reality of waiting and watching.

Because really, what else are we supposed to do when we are waiting and watching?

Well, it turns out it's the same thing that the Thessalonians do while waiting for Jesus to come. Paul reminds them that Jesus died for all "so that whether we are awake or sleeping, we may live with him." God's grace will save us even if we succumb to temptation and distract ourselves from our duty. And what is that duty that the Thessalonians saw to? That we ourselves should be doing?

"Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing."

Encourage one another. Build each other up. While we wait, we work. While we wait, we serve. While we wait, we look for opportunities to shine the light of Christ in the world. If someone is having a hard time, we can send them a card, give them a call, drop off a meal. We wear our masks out of love. We honor the health of our neighbor by sending love from afar.

It's so easy to be sarcastic and negative at a time such as this, and believe me, I struggle with that myself. I threw myself a pity party the other day when I realized that for the first time in my entire life, I wouldn't be spending Thanksgiving or Christmas with my parents. I was crushed. I let myself be sad, because losses like that should be recognized and mourned - but then I got creative. I ordered a webcam for my parents so that we can do video chats instead. I am under no illusions that it will be the same, but we can use that to share mutual support and love. Offering a little bit of encouragement and hope really does go a long way - and might even make you feel better, too!

We are in a situation that is largely outside of our control. Covid does not care about holidays, family time, or our desire to be close to one another.

We cannot control whether others around us are following safe practices and we have no idea when a viable vaccine will be ready.

But we can control some things: we can control our own safety precautions. We can control how we respond to the negativity around us. We can control what we focus on. Do we distract ourselves until it's safe or do we take this opportunity to get creative? Keep alert to new ways to support and encourage one another? To challenge ourselves to think outside of our "what we have always done" mindset and approach outreach in new ways?

I encourage you to keep your focus - keep alert and keep awake! "Put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation." And give thanks to God for the blessings and gifts we have received that we might be equipped and inspired to use them to build up our neighbor. Amen.

Tri-County Lutheran Parish
November 22, 2020, Christ the King Sunday
Based on the ELW, Setting 1 Worship Leader: Pastor Beth George
Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7700997419>

Announcements

Call to worship

L: The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

Confession and Forgiveness

L: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation. **C: Amen.**

L: God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **C: Amen.**

L: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

L: Most merciful God,

C: we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

L: God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith. **C: Amen.**

Hymn All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name ELW 634



1 All hail the pow'r of Je - sus' name! Let an - gels pros - trate fall;
2 O seed of Is - rael's cho - sen race now ran - somed from the fall,
3 Hail him, you heirs of Da - vid's line, whom Da - vid Lord did call—
4 Sin - ners, whose love can ne'er for - get the worm - wood and the gall,



bring forth the roy - al di - a - dem and crown him Lord of all.
hail him who saves you by his grace and crown him Lord of all.
the God in - car - nate, man di - vine—and crown him Lord of all.
go spread your tro - phies at his feet and crown him Lord of all.



Bring forth the roy - al di - a - dem and crown him Lord of all.
Hail him who saves you by his grace and crown him Lord of all.
The God in - car - nate, man di - vine—and crown him Lord of all.
Go spread your tro - phies at his feet and crown him Lord of all.

5 Let ev'ry kindred, ev'ry tribe 6 Oh, that with yonder sacred throng
on this terrestrial ball we at his feet may fall!
to him all majesty ascribe We'll join the everlasting song
and crown him Lord of all. and crown him Lord of all.

Greeting

L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

L: Let us pray.

C: O God of power and might, your Son shows us the way of service, and in him we inherit the riches of your grace. Give us the wisdom to know what is right and the strength to serve the world you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

First Reading: Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24

¹¹Thus says the Lord GOD: I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. ¹²As shepherds seek out their flocks when they are among their scattered sheep, so I will seek out my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. ¹³I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited parts of the land. ¹⁴I will feed them with good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture; there they shall lie down in good grazing land, and they shall feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. ¹⁵I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord GOD. ¹⁶I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with justice.

²⁰Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD to them: I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. ²¹Because you pushed with flank and shoulder, and butted at all the weak animals with your horns until you scattered them far and wide, ²²I will save my flock, and they shall no longer be ravaged; and I will judge between sheep and sheep.

²³I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. ²⁴And I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them; I, the LORD, have spoken.

R: The Word of the Lord. **C: Thanks be to God.**

Psalms 95:1-7a

¹Come, let us sing to the LORD; let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation.

²**Let us come before God's presence with thanksgiving and raise a loud shout to the LORD with psalms.**

³For you, LORD, are a great God, and a great ruler above all gods.

⁴**In your hand are the caverns of the earth; the heights of the hills are also yours.**

⁵The sea is yours, for you made it, and your hands have molded the dry land.

⁶**Come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the LORD our maker.**

^{7a}For the LORD is our God, and we are the people of God's pasture and the sheep of God's hand.

Second Reading: Ephesians 1:15-23

¹⁵I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason ¹⁶I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. ¹⁷I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, ¹⁸so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, ¹⁹and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. ²⁰God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. ²²And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, ²³which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

R: The Word of the Lord. **C: Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation

C: Alleluia Lord, to whom shall we go? Alleluia. You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia, Alleluia.

Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46

L: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, in the 25th chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ³¹“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. ³²All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, ³³and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. ³⁴Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; ³⁵for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ ³⁷Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? ³⁸And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? ³⁹And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ ⁴⁰And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family you did it to me.’ ⁴¹Then he will say to those at his left hand, ‘You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; ⁴²for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ ⁴⁴Then they also will answer, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?’ ⁴⁵Then he will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ ⁴⁶And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

L: The gospel of the Lord. **C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

Hymn**Crown Him with Many Crowns****ELW 855**

1 Crown him with man - y crowns, the Lamb up - on his throne;
 2 Crown him the vir - gin's Son, the God in - car - nate born,
 3 Crown him the Lord of love— be - hold his hands and side,
 4 Crown him the Lord of life, who tri - umphed o'er the grave
 5 Crown him the Lord of years, the po - ten - tate of time,



hark, how the heav'n-ly an - them drowns all mu - sic but its own.
 whose arm those crim-son tro - phies won which now his brow a - dorn;
 rich wounds, yet vis - i - ble a - bove, in beau - ty glo - ri - fied.
 and rose vic - to - rious in the strife for those he came to save.
 cre - a - tor of the roll - ing spheres, in - ef - fab - ly sub - lime.



A - wake, my soul, and sing of him who died for thee,
 fruit of the mys - tic rose, yet of that rose the stem,
 No an - gels in the sky can ful - ly bear that sight,
 His glo - ries now we sing, who died and rose on high,
 All hail, Re - deem - er, hail! For thou hast died for me;



and hail him as thy match-less king through all e - ter - ni - ty.
 the root whence mer - cy ev - er flows, the babe of Beth - le - hem.
 but down - ward bend their burn - ing eyes at mys - ter - ies so bright.
 who died, e - ter - nal life to bring, and lives that death may die.
 thy praise and glo - ry shall not fail through-out e - ter - ni - ty.

L: Let us proclaim our faith using the words of the Apostles Creed.

Apostles Creed

C: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended into hell; On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

Prayers of Intercession

Longing for Christ's reign to come among us, we pray for the outpouring of God's power on the church, the world, and all in need. ***A brief silence.***

Sovereign of all, train our ears to hear your cry in the needs of those around us. Bless all social ministries of the church through which we seek to serve others as we ourselves have been served. We pray especially for our Bishops, Synod Staff, Conference Deans, Pastors, Vicars, Seminarians, and Lay Leaders. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You cause rain to fall on the just and unjust alike. Direct our use of creation to provide for the needs of all people in ways that are sustainable for the earth. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Bring peace to every place where conflict rages (*especially*). Grant opportunities for ending divisions among us and usher in your reign of unity and reconciliation. We pray also for active duty personnel, especially

John Schatzle, Matt White, Aldan Race, Daniel Main, and Angela Silliman.
Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Heal the sinful divisions we erect between us and release us from systems of oppression and prejudice. Restore our capacity to see your image in those whose dignity we have stripped away (*especially*). Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Pour out the gifts of your Spirit on children and youth throughout the church. Sustain those who work in children's ministry, youth ministry, and campus ministry as they nurture the gifts of young people. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Lord of all in need, search out all who cry to you in distress. Scatter the heavy clouds of depression, chronic illness, unemployment, and loneliness with your radiant light. We pray especially for Michelle Majercsik, Barbara Ritrovato, Burma Cavanagh, Bishop John Macholz, Carmel Micalizzi, Mary Keefes, Season Hublely, Judy Paine, Bunny Otterbeck, Catherine, Cindy D., Jackie Bachman, Pat Brundage, Claus Marzahl, Arlene Zahn, Al Zahn, Margot Petersen, Vickie Achenbach, Sheri Patterson, Bill S., Kyle Stickles, Bonnie Walsh, Ivan Morales, Jacob Race, Linda Taliaferro, Grace Balint, Karen Mc Neff, Sara Scott-Fluentes, Edward Lyons, Debbie Hammond, Christi Wright, Frank Ball, Doris Hatfield, Angela & Jake; Doris Smith, Barbara Slater, Lynn LaFave, Joy H., Ed Schomaker, Pat Kingsbury, Kayte Ware, Karen Schubert, Jim Trimmer, Bill Duke, Matt White, Dorothy Teeter, Richard Springstead, Tom Sanford, Adeline Carr, Mary-Ann Hipwell, Xavier Schmidt, Nancy Lansing, Bob Bedell, Kirt, Tonya, the Pfrommer family, Jack Lyons, Millie Sparks, Robert Millius, Lisa Freeman, Billy Freeman, Patty Westover, Pastor Paul Rees-Rohrbacher, strengthen caregivers, doctors, medical care workers, and all who see to the needs of the weary or ill, and those we name before you....Send us as encouragement and signs of your healing. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Thank you for saints now departed who fed the hungry, clothed the naked, and tended to the sick. We pray for the family and friends of George Flanders, Margaret Schmidt, Vivian Von Schenck, Richard Hutchinson, Steven McMurray, and Karla Tyson. We pray for comfort and peace for their families and all who mourn them. Inspire us by their example, that we may see your presence in those in need around us. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We pray for all those who are infected, as well as those parish members who due to COVID-19 are unable to attend in-person worship. We pray for those serving in the COVID-19 front lines...Allison White, Ted Fiebke, Amy Fiebke, Justine LaValley, Jason Vernon, and Jared Frick. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.'

Hear our prayers, O Lord, whether we speak them aloud on our lips, or in the silence of our hearts. [Pause for prayers.] Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Receive our prayers in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior, until that day when you gather all creation around your throne where you will reign forever and ever. **Amen.**

Peace

L: I will give you all a moment to unmute yourselves... The peace of Christ be with you always. **C: And also with you.**

Offering

We offer prayers of thanksgiving and ask blessings on the offerings sent electronically or by mail for the mission of the church including the care of those in need.

Offertory

L: Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord,

C: and fill to the brim our cup of blessing.

L: Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown,

C: that we may be fed with the bread of life.

L: Gather the hopes and the dreams of all;

C: unite them with the prayers we offer.

L: Grace our table with your presence,

C: and give us a foretaste of the feast to come.

Dialogue

L: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

L: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Preface

L: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, Holy, Holy

C: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Thanksgiving at the Table

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Lord's Prayer

L: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

C: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

*** Distribution of Communion**

L: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: Amen

Post Communion Blessing

*** Prayer After Communion**

L: Let us pray.

We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. **C: Amen.**

*** Blessing**

L: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and † give you peace. **Amen.**

Hymn

Soon and Very Soon

ELW 439



1 Soon and ver - y soon
2 No more cry - in' there, we are goin' to see the King,
3 No more dy - in' there,
4 Soon and ver - y soon



soon and ver - y soon
no more cry - in' there, we are goin' to see the King,
no more dy - in' there,
soon and ver - y soon



soon and ver - y soon
no more cry - in' there, we are goin' to see the King.
no more dy - in' there,
soon and ver - y soon



Hal-le - lu - jah, hal-le - lu - jah, we're goin' to see the King!

Coda after stanza 4



Hal - le - lu - jah, hal - le - lu -



jah, hal - le - lu - jah, hal - le - lu - jah.

Dismissal

L: Go forth into the world to serve God with gladness; be of good courage; hold fast to that which is good; render to no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honor all people; love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

L: Please unmute yourselves... And all God's people say:

C: **Thanks be to God. Amen and ALLELUIA!**

PEOPLE IN OUR PRAYERS

For the Bishops, Synod Staff, our Conference Dean Jo Page, Pastor Dan, Pastor Samantha, Pastor Beth, Vicar Carolyn Lawrence, Seminarians, and Lay Leaders.

For the families and friends of... George Flanders, Margaret Schmidt, Vivian von Schenk, Richard Hutchinson, Steven McMurray, Karla Tyson.

For our parish members who due to COVID19 are unable to attend In-Person worship, and especially for those serving in the COVID-19 front lines...Allison White, Ted Fiebke, Amy Fiebke, Justine Shultis LaValley, Jason Vernon, and Jared Frick.

For those serving in the military: John Schatzle, Matt White, Aldan Race, Daniel Main, and Angela Silliman.

For those in need of physical, mental, or spiritual healing: Barbara Ritrovato, Burma Cavanagh, Bishop John Macholz, Carmel Micalizzi, Mary Keefes, Season Hubley, Judy Paine, Bunny Otterbeck, Catherine, Lucinda & Sharon DeFlumer, Roberta Wormuth, Lincoln Page, Cindy D., Jackie Bachman, Sheri Patterson, Pat Brundage, Claus Marzahl, Arlene Zahn, Al Zahn, Margot Petersen, Vickie Achenbach, Kyle Stickles, Bonnie Walsh, Ivan Morales, Arlene Taylor, Joan Crow, Billy Crow, Robin Crow, Jacob Race, Linda Taliaferro, Sasha Shultis, Robert Millius, Shirley Bryan, the Pfrommer family, Jack Lyons , Millie Sparks, Tom Sanford, Grace Balint, Karen Mc Neff, Sara Scott-Fluentes, Christi Wright, Frank Ball, Doris Hatfield, Angela & Jake, Robert and family, Etta Shultis, Doris Smith, Barbara Slater, Vivian Becker, Lynn LaFave, Joy H., Kirk Dixon, Jean Bruce, Ed Schomaker, Dave, Pat Kingsbury, Kayte Ware, Karen Schubert, Jim Trimmer, Joyce, Frank Johnson, Bill Duke, Patty Bervy, Carol Voeks, Matt White, Dorothy Teeter, Richard Springstead, Adeline Carr, Mary-Ann Hipwell, Xavier Schmidt, Nancy Lansing, Bob Bedell, Kirt, Edward Lyons, Debbie Hammond, Tonya, Lisa Freeman, Billy Freeman, Patty Westover, Pastor Paul Rees-Rohrbacher, Richard Fitzgerald, their caregivers, and our parish members who due to COVID19 are unable to attend In-Person worship.