

“Worship & Ministry Transition Thoughts”

Brothers and Sisters in Christ at Holy Cross,

Grace and peace to you in our Risen Savior and Lord, Jesus.

After visiting over the phone, by text, email and even wearing a mask at Sam’s Club shopping for essentials, it has been a wonderful blessing to check in with almost every household. If I have not been able to get ahold of you, please feel free to call me. I will keep trying to reach everyone. I am beginning ‘round two’ to follow up on how everyone is doing since we last visited. I will be asking about any prayer requests you may have and then I am going to ask about “transition thoughts.”

Have you or your family been thinking, “What will we (or I) do for safety when the churches and social gatherings are thought to be alright again? How will we/I take part, and if so what will the limitations be for myself and my family’s health? . . . The time of when we can gather again for worship, when the Governor and the medical experts believe it is safe for gatherings with social distancing will come. It may be another month or two, but it is time to consider what we will need to do as a church family sharing in the blessing of our Christian faith, worship, education, outreach, mission, service and stewardship.

Our church elders and officers have been discussing this matter of transition and what it might look like. We would appreciate your input and for you to share any of your concerns. We do understand that some may have a need to stay at home. Even when allowed to worship together again in our sanctuary we know it will be a gradual process. It is also completely understandable if you cannot attend due to a certain type of health situation, an immune compromised condition, or just personally feeling safe and that staying at home would be the best for you until the concern of the virus is no longer an issue. This is probably the new normal that we should expect. Not everyone can, or will, return to worship in person, even with social distancing, until knowing or feeling safe from Covid-19.

Some things to consider as a church family as we attempt to transition back to worship in our church building when given permission by the Governor and Medical experts are the following:

1. Gradual return to worship is expected depending on each person’s health needs.
2. Because disinfecting will be especially important to follow a worship service, discussion for just one service is being considered until health concerns diminish and we could offer both services.

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Mother's Day Thoughts

Why God made Moms – brilliant answers given by 2nd grade school children to the following questions!

Why did God make mothers?

- She's the only one who knows where the scotch tape is.
- Mostly to clean the house.

How did God make mothers?

- He used dirt, just like for the rest of us.
- Magic plus super powers and a lot of stirring
- God made my Mom just the same like he made me. He just used bigger parts.

What ingredients are mothers made of?

- God makes mothers out of clouds and angel hair and everything nice in the world and one dab of mean.

Why did God give you your mother and not some other mom?

- We're related
- God knew she likes me a lot more than other people's moms like me.

What kind of little girl was your mom?

- My mom has always been my mom and none of that other stuff.
- I don't know because I wasn't there, but my guess would be pretty bossy.
- They say she used to be nice.

What did mom need to know about dad before she married him?

- His last name.
- She had to know his background.
- Does he make at least \$800 a year?
- Did he say NO to drugs and YES to chores?

Why did your mom marry your dad?

- My dad makes the best spaghetti in the world. And my Mom eats a lot.
- My grandma says that Mom didn't have her thinking cap on.

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May Sermons

May 3, 2020

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Theme: Fair? Suffering for Your Neighbor Yet Benefits Your Neighbor and More; Benefits You! The Shepherd Lays Down His Life for His Sheep.

Scripture: John 10: 1-10

Synopsis: Jesus is the gate of the sheep.

May 10, 2020

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Theme: The Mundane – Scenes of God at Work!

Scripture: John 14:1-14

Synopsis: I am the way, the truth and the life.

May 17, 2020

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Theme: No Longer Empty or Alone! Filled with Christ's Spirit! He's Real!

Scripture: John 14: 15-21

Synopsis: The promise of the Holy Spirit

May 24, 2020

SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Theme: When it rains it pours! Too much power to handle! help!

Scripture: Luke 24:44-53

Synopsis: Jesus is carried up into the heavens.

May 31, 2020

PENTECOST SUNDAY

Theme: Thirst Quencher! For You, For Me, For All!

Scripture: John 7:37-39

Synopsis: Rivers of living water



Sunday Schedule

Join us for worship each Sunday morning at 9:00am. Just go to our website at <http://www.holycross-pl.com/> and click on the link to join the Zoom meeting.

ZOOM EVENTS TO JOIN

Tuesday: Men's Bible Study 8:00am

Friday: Pray, Praise and Bible Study from 11:30am-12:30pm

Sundays: 9:00am Worship Service followed by Sunday School from 10:15am to 11:00am

Know of any other events missing or that you would like to share to keep us in the Word, please inform the church office and we will make sure to send out an email blast or include it in the next newsletter!

The Lutheran Hour

The Lutheran Hour can be heard each Sunday on WCCO (830 AM) at 6:05 am. And it can be streamed online too, www.lhm.org. Check-out LHM's daily devotions too.



May 3

"Rescue, Test, Rest"

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

God doesn't have to figure out something about you that He doesn't already know. He doesn't have to figure out if He loves you or if He's committed to you or if you're worth it. God's not testing you to figure something out about you He didn't already know. He's testing you so that you can figure out something about Him that you didn't know, so that you can figure out that you can trust Him." (Exodus 16)

May 10

"Stand a Little Taller"

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

When someone special pays you a visit, you stand a little taller in their presence. Dr. Michael Zeigler talks about dignity, humility, and life in the presence of God. (Exodus 18)

May 17

"Words Matter"

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

Words matter. People matter. You matter to God, and He will stop at nothing to get your attention. (Exodus 19)

May 24

"Life After Rescue"

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

(Exodus 20)

May 31

"Jesus Doesn't Babble"

Guest Speaker: Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison

(John 14)

Tuesday Morning Men's Bible Study

We welcome all men and young men confirmed to our **Tuesday Morning Bible Study at 8:00 AM**. Our study is on the Book of **Romans**. Since we can no longer meet at church our study will be held through Zoom. If you need help joining the meeting on your digital device, please give Pastor a call.

Mother's Day Thoughts

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Who's the boss at your house?

- Mom doesn't want to be boss, but she has to because dad's such a goof ball.
- Mom. You can tell by room inspection. She sees the stuff under the bed.
- I guess Mom is, but only because she has a lot more to do than dad.

What's the difference between moms and dads?

- Moms work at work and work at home and dads just go to work at work.
- Dads are taller & stronger, but moms have all the real power 'cause that's who you got to ask if you want to sleep over at your friend's
- Moms have magic, they make you feel better without medicine.

What does your mom do in her spare time?

- Mothers don't do spare time.
- To hear her tell it, she pays bills all day long.

What would it take to make your mom perfect?

- On the inside she's already perfect.
- Diet. You know, her hair. I'd diet, maybe blue.

If you could change one thing about your Mom, what would it be?

- She has this weird thing about me keeping my room clean. I'd get rid of that.
- I'd make my Mom smarter. Then she would know it was my sister who did it and not me.
- I would like for her to get rid of those invisible eyes on the back of her head

Happy Mother's Day!

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3. To care for each other in Christ with worship we would suggest sharing a Blended style, both the great Hymns that are very meaningful as well as wonderful theologically sound contemporary songs. A blended worship for a certain amount of time will probably be needed. Again, this would not be permanent. We are in a state of flux and believe flexibility to do our best in meeting the needs of all members who worship at Holy Cross would be accepted for a certain amount of time.
4. We would continue to broadcast/stream online worship services for all that would not feel safe, or comfortable, worshipping in a large group yet. We are considering that this would be something new to include weekly, even when a vaccine is developed as people travel for work, are on vacation. To be able to worship while unable to attend is a very beneficial blessing from this pandemic experience.
5. PPE - Personal Protection Equipment probably will be something we need for several months, if not longer, even after the stay at home order is lifted with the precautions followed in any group gatherings.
6. What will be the "Posted Plan?" The Governor is asking that all offices, and I would believe any future church gatherings, will have a plan for disinfecting, social distancing, furniture placement, and PPE that is needed. Washing hands if touching door handles to enter a building. Not touching anything that could cause infection or have a virus able to infect from any surface. Staying at home if you do not feel well. The Plan would give guidance to our congregation as well as be posted online to give peace of mind for any community concerns of large gatherings near their homes.

Please email the church, write a letter, or let me know as we visit during my phone call with you to share any concerns, ideas and thoughts. What you send, write or talk with me about concerning your **transition thoughts** will be communicated to me, the Elders and Church officers to consider for planning and preparation.

Finally, I want to share my appreciation and request your prayers for our church as we work through this time together. Each of you are an important part of the planning and process ahead of us at Holy Cross. That is why I am asking for your input. God bless you as we are apart physically, although not in spirit. I am sure we all look forward to being able to gather together again as a whole group, the body of Christ!

The Lord bless and guide us as we plan for the future, knowing that the "He will be with us always to the very end of the age". *Matthew 28:20* Pastor Jim

May 2020 Stewardship Article

Our Savior calls us to follow Him in generosity. "For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you." (John 13:15) We cannot give our lives for the salvation of the world, of course. Praise God – that job's already done!

But with hearts full of thanksgiving for what Jesus has given us, we can follow Jesus' example of generous giving. And this is not merely an example alone. It's also our Lord's command. "The one who contributes, (let him give) in generosity." (Rom. 12:8)

So, when we give to help others who are in need, and when we bring offerings to the Lord, we should strive to heed His command and follow the pattern He has established for us. Jesus did not give us leftovers. He gave His best. So, we should not give leftovers, either, but the first and best of what He has given us. Jesus did not give as an afterthought, but according to the plan of salvation God established from the foundation of the world.

So, when it comes to our offerings to the Lord, we should make a thoughtful plan to give generously, in proportion to the way He has blessed us. Like the Macedonian Christians, who gave according to their ability – and even beyond their ability (2 Cor. 8:3) – we can and should give a generous portion of the income that God provides us to honor the Lord.

So also, we should give freely, just as Jesus gave freely for us. There is no compulsion involved in our works of love and our offerings to the Lord. Nor do we give grudgingly. We should give freely and cheerfully because we want to out of thanksgiving. "Each as he purposes in his heart," as the Lord says. (2 Cor. 9:7) There is no New Testament ceremonial law involved here. Rather, we are free to give as generously as our Savior has given for us.

In the same way, our Lord teaches us to give generously out of love – love for Him and for our neighbor. Genuine love is always love in deed (1 John 3:18), love such as Jesus showed us all. It is love that sees our neighbor in need and gives generously to help him. It is love that hears the Word of the Lord and does what it says. If we truly love, we give generously. If we give without love, our giving is not truly following Jesus.

Finally, we follow Jesus in generosity when we give for a good purpose to thank the Lord and support His gospel ministry and other works of mercy. The people of Israel gave generously for the service of God's gospel purposes, to construct and support the operation of the tabernacle. For that was the place where the Lord received the Old Testament sacrifices, through which He bestowed the forgiveness of sins on His people. So, they gave abundantly – so abundantly that they had to be told to stop giving. (Ex. 36:5-6)

In the same way, we should bring generous offerings to support the Lord's work of bestowing His gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation in our congregations through the preaching and teaching of His Word, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper. We should support the Lord's work of caring for those who are poor and needy.

Our Savior calls us to follow His example in generous giving. Let us then, with thankful hearts, rededicate ourselves to following Him in generosity.

"God Is at Work"

Lamentations 3:17-26 - My soul is bereft of peace; I have forgotten what happiness is; so I say, "My endurance has perished; so has my hope from the LORD."

Remember my affliction and my wanderings, the wormwood and the gall! My soul continually remembers it and is bowed down within me. But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: the steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness. "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in Him." The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, to the soul who seeks Him. It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD.

No matter how tough things may look, the mercies of God are new every day. They are new every day of the year for those who put their trust in Him. Things don't look good in our world right now. In fact, they look bad enough to make some people wonder whether there is a God at all. Others wonder if there is a God does He really care about the world we live in.

When one looks at circumstances and nothing more, it's very easy to get in the frame of mind of the author of Lamentations. For the most part, today's headlines are filled with bad news, and if we're not worried about that, we have our own little worlds to fret about—our families, our jobs, our relationships with the people we work with and live with. It can be overwhelming and oftentimes is.

Sadly, but not surprisingly, the true malady behind all our worldly woes is sin. While crises in the world will come and go, leaving their impact on our lives, the sin we carry from birth must be dealt with. This means whether times are good or bad, our sin persists like a cancer that will not go away—unless it is somehow addressed and eliminated.

That's where Jesus comes in. Like a ray of sunlight in the midst of the storm, like the sharp clear note of the trumpet in the howling wind, there is always hope for the nations of the world. Great is the faithfulness of our God. The love of God for the world has never been clearer than in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord. In Christ everyone can see the love of God at work.

God acts in Jesus Christ. He was raised from the dead and today He lives. He was raised for you so that you might put your faith and trust in Him, so that you can receive forgiveness for your sins—every last one of them—and so you can know God's full and unconditional pardon for your rebellion.

God's mercies are new today and every day. In Christ there is a new start, a fresh start. There is forgiveness and the power to be what you could never be without Him—a new creation redeemed by God and given hope to face whatever you encounter in this world.

THE PRAYER: Heavenly Father, we have a lot to deal with in this life. Give us courage to face the day and a heart of faith to weather the storms of this world—through You. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.

From "New Mercies for the New Year," a sermon excerpt from Rev. Dr. Oswald Hoffmann, former Speaker of The Lutheran Hour

Reflection Questions:

1. Do you find yourself overwhelmed sometimes by things going on in your life?
2. What do you think was going on in the life of the author of the Bible text above?
3. Do you arise with hopeful anticipation at the day ahead, or are you often kind of bummed out as soon as you get up? Why?

