

THE OLIVE PRESS

GETHSEMANE LUTHERAN CHURCH

DECEMBER 2020

COUNCIL

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Vice President:

Ernie Butenschoen

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Worship:

Jay Rec-tor
tor

STAFF

Pastor:

Suellen Bahleda

Choir Director:

Ben Schumacher

Custodians:

Dale & Ann Van Horn

CYFM:

Jasmine Anderson

Finance Mgr.:

Nursery Atten:

Maeson Dochow

Organist:

Brooke Benfield

Parish Admin.:

Anna Lewis

From the Pastor

Greetings, church, how are you? I'm guessing you are dealing with a whole mix of feelings, after my announcement of leaving for a new call. Not being able to come together to have a conversation makes everything harder. Still, I want you to know some very important things:

1. You have done nothing wrong. I am not leaving for a new call because of anything you did. In fact, I believe I can move to a new call **because** you have done so many things right. You have demonstrated your capacity to worship, to learn, and to serve in new ways. We have walked through some challenging transitions together. We have broadened our faith practices with prayer candles, Change for Good, and Grown-Up VBS. We have connected to one another and the cluster with 5th Sunday worship, God's Work, Our Hands, and shared youth activities. You have been a faithful together/apart church during these Covid-19 months, supporting this congregation and its staff with your offerings, your phone calls to one another, running errands with and for one another, and your faithful commitment to online Bible study and music and messages. You are a Spirit-filled, growing congregation that will continue to thrive, and continue to be made new with every pastor who is part of the story of Gethsemane.
2. I wasn't looking. My papers were not in. I had no intention of making any changes. Then the bishop from Alaska called, out of the blue, and asked me to consider the possibility of serving this little congregation in SE Alaska, a congregation I know well. Island of Faith is, well, on an island, in the only town on the island, population 3,000. The parsonage is a little apartment built on to the back of the church. They aren't a big congregation, and the only way they can call a pastor is if that pastor has her own health insurance. There just aren't a lot of available pastors for a place like that. Gethsemane has the capacity to call a variety of pastor types. But who will serve a place like Island of Faith? So, I did what the bishop asked me to do: I considered. I prayed. Even though it feels so unexpected, I do believe God has prepared the way for me to go to this very particular place, in this very particular time.
3. I talked to a colleague about the emotional weight of leaving a congregation, and she spoke of the sense of 'betrayal.' And in that moment, I was flooded with understanding and joy. Remember, my brothers and sisters, how I have written, taught, and preached about the Greek word for 'betray,' *paradidamai*. It means 'handed over,' and is used in all kinds of contexts in the New Testament: the Pharisees hand over coins to Judas, Pilate hands Jesus over to Herod, John the Baptist was handed over to prison, all things were handed over to Jesus from the Father, God handed over his Son, Jesus handed himself over for the sake of the Church...in none of those instances was there overtones of 'betrayal.' It only gets translated that way in relationship to Judas' act, and is a translation choice that really does not serve the text well. The bottom line: this

new call is not about betrayal, but about the faithful act of you, the people of Gethsemane, handing me over to the people of Island of Faith, for the sake of the gospel. This is a mighty thing, and It Matters.

You have been a great blessing to me. You are loved. You will be missed.

Peace, Pastor Suellen

From Cathey Myers:

- 1) Thank you to everyone for your good thoughts, prayers and cards while I was in the hospital and rehabilitation facility. I am home and still working with my PT and getting stronger and better every day. It will be a long recovery, but it is going well and thank all of you. Praise the Lord!
- 2) Thank you to our wonderful quilters group for all they do, from all the quilts they make to share with our community and worldwide, plus all of the masks they have been making this year. That makes the quilt they gave me this summer as a thank-you for the 23+ years service as the financial manager at GLC all that more special to me. I will cherish this quilt always. God Bless!

December Lectionary

Sunday, Nov. 29, First Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 64:1-9
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 (7)
1 Corinthians 1:3-9
Mark 13:24-37

Thursday, Dec. 24, Nativity of Our Lord I (Christmas Eve)

Isaiah 9:2-7
Psalm 96 (11)
Titus 2:11-14
Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]

Sunday, Dec. 8, Second Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 40:1-11
Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13 (13)
2 Peter 3:8-15a
Mark 1:1-8

Friday, Dec. 25, Nativity of Our Lord II (Christmas Day)

Isaiah 62:6-12
Psalm 97 (11)
Titus 3:4-7
Luke 2:[1-7] 8-20

Sunday, Dec. 15, Third Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
Psalm 126 (3) or Luke 1:46b-55 (52)
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
John 1:6-8, 19-28

Friday, Dec. 25, Nativity of Our Lord III (Christmas Day)

Isaiah 52:7-10
Psalm 98 (3)
Hebrews 1:1-4 [5-12]
John 1:1-14

Sunday, Dec. 20, Fourth Sunday of Advent

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16
Luke 1:46b-55 (52) or Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26 (1)
Romans 16:25-27
Luke 1:26-38

Sunday, Dec. 27, First Sunday of Christmas

Isaiah 61:10-62:3
Psalm 148 (13)
Galatians 4:4-7
Luke 2:22-40

Gethsemane Lutheran Church Annual Congregational Meeting

November 29, 2020

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

I am writing to invite you to the Gethsemane Lutheran Church Annual Congregational Meeting.

Please set aside time in your calendars for **11:00 am on Sunday, December 13**. The meeting should last about one hour.

Given the restrictions placed upon us by the ongoing coronavirus epidemic, our meeting will be a video conference held via Zoom. Those of you without internet access will be able to join the meeting by phone. A meeting packet, including our agenda, annual report, and proposed 2021 budget will be sent to you by mail prior to the meeting. We will include information for how to join the meeting in that packet. Instructions will also follow by email for those of you with access. We will make every effort to ensure everyone who wishes is able to attend and participate.

Though I know we would all rather be able to gather in person, I still look forward to seeing you all.

Philip Dochow
Church President

Notes

- ⇒ **As for the Rummage Sale** we really don't know how or when that's going to happen. If you have donations, please keep them stored at home for a while yet!
- ⇒ **The Winter Coat Drive** is just about completed; around 30 coats have been shared with Hartley School, Lilac Meadows Family Shelter, and Boxes of Love. Thanks to Patty Olson and all who worked to keep children in SE Portland warm this winter!
- ⇒ **More staff and volunteer appreciation:** Thanks to Dale & Annie Van Horn: for a church that is in limited use, there is a lot of trash and recycling, messy carpets, fingerprints, and dirty toilets. In addition to keeping us spic and span, Dale also makes sure the sanctuary banners and paraments reflect the season. Also thanks to Todd Sloan for his contributions in tending the grounds and property. You are appreciated!
- ⇒ **SnowCap's winter needs** include the following food items: canned fruit, hearty soups/chili/stew; canned tuna, peanut butter, ground coffee, can openers. They are also collecting stocking/gift bag items for children, including hot chocolate packets, art supplies, socks, and card games. The donation drive-through is open Monday-Friday between 9 am -3pm at 17788 SE Pine Street.
- ⇒ **If you come into the church for any reason, please remember to wear a mask!**

Gethsemane Youth Happenings

We have together-apart made it through many months of social distancing; waves in place of hugs, blown kisses, window visits, drive by birthday parties, worship services online, and comprehensive distance learning. Sunday School kiddos spent an entire month studying "Discipleship – 5 W's", and we discussed that even in this time of what feels like being kept apart and pulled apart we can still spread Good News! Jesus' disciples walked MILES with no phones, Zoom, pagers (what are THOSE!?), or cars to spread Good News, and there is always something good to share; leaves changing, birds flying, a new sticker (you never know what you'll get with these kids!), and most importantly Jesus's love us! Living your life as a disciple, not considering it a chore to cross off of a checklist.

For the Advent season this year we will spend our Sunday School Zoom sessions looking to **magnify** our senses: touch, taste, smell, hear, and see. Much as Mary's song states her soul **magnifies** the Lord, we will look at what it is to magnify, how we can do that, and what happens when we do that. Finally, we'll look at what it means to magnify our own faith and how we can do that.

How can we grow our faith even when things seem so distant and so difficult? Even when we have to meet in separate buildings and rooms? How can we **magnify** peace and hope this year when everything seems extra hectic?

- Say "I love you"....a lot!!! (John 13:34)
- Limit our wish lists this year. Forgiveness of sins. Healing. Joy. Gladness. Strength. Grace. (Galatians 5:22, Mark 11:25)
- Make Jesse Tree ornaments for our trees this year! (Isaiah 46:9)
- Craft our own greeting cards...and mail them! (Avoid licking...!) (Galatians 6:2)

This is a new year full of firsts for all of us. Please do not hesitate to reach out to the church office or staff emails if you are in need of anything, even if it's just an ear. Let us all magnify each other; our hopes, our anxieties, our fears, our frustrations but more importantly our joys, our successes, our accomplishments, our love and our **FAITH**. We will all get through this together-apart.

Jasmine Anderson

CYFM@GLCPDX

December Anniversaries

Cory & Lauren Cumming

December Birthdays

Arloa Hurt, December 1

Elaine Walter, December 1

Grace Johnson, December 12

Karyn Van Horn, December 16

Gloria Kelsay, December 17

Melissa Natasia, December 17

Jo Nelson, December 19

Becky Keiper, December 21

Christy Hurlman, December 22

Peggy Sloan, December 27

Carol Steele, December 27

Patsy Edwards, December 27

Micah Morton, December 30

Carol Law, December 31

Sharon Magnuson, December 31

Homebound

Wynn Stafford, Virginia Haacke, Virginia Karin, Harvey/Carol Steele, Carol Law, Jo Nelson.

Concerns—Ongoing: Those who are ill, homebound, or in need of other prayers: Wynn Stafford; Ginny Barton's friend Golda; Linda Babcock's grandson Josiah; Aiden Lindstrom; Sharon Lee's relatives Connie and Terri; Matthew Green; Virginia Haacke, Randy Treanor.

Urgent: *Those who are ill or in need of other prayers:* Colleen Barnett and her niece Linda; Shirla Rapp's cousin Julie; Kim Butenschoen's sister-in-law Rita and friend Randy; Virginia McCormick's son Gary and relative Veronica; Becky Keiper and her daughter-in-law Becky; Michelle McBride; Kim Stoffregen's niece Lona; Marion Burgess' daughter Vo; Carol Law; Jo Nelson's friend's son, Jeff; Jack Bateman; Jan Brown's daughter Elizabeth; Kim and Ernie's relatives Glen and Sherry Butenschoen who lost their house in the fires; and Roberta Vidlund's friends Jim and Sue.

Those who are grieving: Friends and family of Linda Babcock.

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Church Office Hours: Mon-Thurs. 8a-3p