

The Dove

Newsletter of Zion Lutheran Church—Anchorage, AK (LCMS)



OCTOBER
2020

Rev. Kyle Mietzner, Pastor

Masks

I don't like these masks. We use our faces as our primary method of communication with other human beings. Many deaf people are able to read lips even though they do not hear. I've been attending a pastor's respite retreat in Kansas this week, and there was a small amount of talk about how smiling makes so much of a difference, which would be great advice if we were living in any other time. It does not matter if you are smiling while you wear a mask. This might be my problem, but it looks like people are angry all the time now. You could be smiling or you could be angry, and I will never know unless you speak to me and directly say how you feel.

Of course, I understand that the use of these masks is one of the only ways to prevent the spread of this virus, so I'll wear one when asked. I'm not against the masks, but I lament what we've lost with them. Of course, we'll be back to an unmasked world in a little while, and we'll quickly forget what it was like to use them. For now though, we will continue to use them in church, especially since they've been mandated by our municipality. I want you to be, and feel, safe in church. It is a strange thing to preach to a crowd of people whose faces you cannot see.

We wear these masks because our mere presence is threatening. I might breathe on you and you might get sick and die. It is a strange thing to be thought of as a sort of biological weapon. It is dangerous for us to get too close. Is that really who we are?

There is a beautiful thing that happens to us when we are enveloped and bathed in Christ's Word and Sacraments. We see who we really are. The Word of God dignifies you, and brings you into the presence of the Lord. You hear the Lord Himself when you hear the Word of God. (Luke 10:16) He speaks to you. He is not frightened by your presence. (James 4:8) The Divine Service is nothing but the Word of God flowing in, around, and through you. From beginning to end, you are lifted up and your true identity as a baptized and forgiven child of God is on display for all to see.

And then, a remarkable thing happens at the altar; you remove your mask in order to receive the Lord's Supper. There is no hiding and there is no threat. There is no disguise. You are one who has been brought to the rail to receive the very body and blood of Jesus. You are seated at the king's table. You are loved. You are redeemed. You are forgiven. You are perfect and holy. You cannot hide here. We know who you are. We see you in Christ, baptized and holy. We see you as one worthy of hearing the beautiful words of forgiveness. We see you as one who will not be turned away, but brought near.

This holy identity does not fade away when you go back to your pew and back out to the world. You take it with you. You are always a royal heir of the Kingdom of God. The Queen of England doesn't always wear her crown, but she is always queen. This is how things go for you too. Hide your face again, and you are still the one who has received the Lord's grace and mercy. Hide from the church, and you are still the one who has received God's love. These masks won't last forever, but the Lord's word does. Take heart! Your sins are forgiven!

+Pastor Kyle Mietzner

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CHURCH NOTES

Christian Education Opportunities

Children's Sunday School—Sundays at 11am
Adult Bible Study—Sundays @ 11am
—Wednesdays @ 7pm
Women's Study—C.S. Lewis's The Screwtape Letters—Thursdays @ 11am and 6:30pm
Youth Catechesis—Wednesdays @ 4pm

Helping Hands Meal Prep

Our outreach program to help feed residents at Brother Francis Shelter and Clare House has resumed at a reduced level. Due to social distancing guidelines, Helping Hands are recruited as needed.

Pioneer Home Christian Fellowship

Suspended temporarily.

Offerings

You are welcome to mail your offerings to the church to be presented during the next Sunday worship service. This can also be done through your financial institution's BillPay service.

Birthdays

Nora Wateland	10/10
Erik McBride	10/13
Gannon Schommer	10/15
Gene Murphy	10/18
Jacque Dickerson	10/24
Logan Wilkens	10/28
Steven Randel	10/31



Anniversaries

Pedro & Casey Davila	10/7
William & Marion Lampert	10/15



Church Contacts

Church Office:	338-3838
Preschool Office:	222-3838
Pastor's cell phone:	(336)944-2394
Church address:	2100 Boniface Pkwy Anchorage, AK 99504

Worship Services

We have returned to having in-person worship services at 9:30am Sundays. For those not yet comfortable with gathering together, Livestream video is also still available via Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/zionalaska/live/>. There is an order of service PDF for each service posted on our website, ZionAnchorage.org. You will need a Lutheran Service Book for hymns and liturgy.

October is Pastor Appreciation Month!

While we should always pray for and support our Pastor, it is customary to take a special effort this month to reach out and show our Pastor how grateful we are for him and his service to us and God's church. So take a moment to send Pastor Mietzner a card, or a gift, or just give him a call to say "thanks".

CURRENT STUDIES

The **R**ite Stuff

Sunday 11AM Bible Study—At church and Facebook Live

What do I do now that I'm a godparent?

What will my funeral look like?

Can I get married at the courthouse, but still have something in church?

Can we renew our vows?

Do Lutherans do exorcisms?

The Christian life is lived from font to the grave, and beyond. Throughout your life, you'll experience various rites, such as Holy Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Matrimony, and finally, your funeral. Join us on Sunday mornings during the 11o'clock Study Hour for a look at the many and various ways in which the church has given us to join our lives to the life of Christ through these rites. We'll look at some of the well known rites (marriage and baptism) as well as those which are hardly ever used (excommunication and laying of a cornerstone). This study will be held simultaneously in person and online.

Women's Study on C.S. Lewis's The Screwtape Letters

Thursdays at 11am and 6:30pm

September 10, 17, 24

October 1, 8, 15

It doesn't matter if you've missed a few—you can jump in anytime.

There are still a few books available, or you can bring your own.

STEWARDSHIP

We celebrate the Reformation at the end of each October. The Reformation began on All Saints' Eve in 1517, which was when Martin Luther posted the 95 Theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg. So, let's hear from Luther himself on the topic of giving and stewardship.

In the Small Catechism under the Table of Duties, Martin Luther gives specific Bible passages to help Christians know their duty in their various vocations as members of their family, society at large, and in God's family, the Church. Under the heading "What Hearers Owe Their Pastors," Luther lists five passages from the Bible, three of which have to do with giving to your local congregation. They are these:

- "The Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel." (1 Cor. 9:14)
- "Anyone who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with his instructor. Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows." (Gal. 6:6-7)
- "The elders [presbyters, i.e., pastors] who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially whose work is preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, 'Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain,' and 'The worker deserves his wages.'" (1 Tim. 5:17-18)

Luther comments on these passages in his 1535 Lectures on Galatians. He wrote:

"When Paul says 'all good things,' this is not to be taken to mean that everyone should share all his possessions with his preacher. No, it means that he should provide for him liberally, giving him as much as is needed to support his life in comfort. ... The apostle is so serious in advocating this topic of support for preachers that he adds a threat to his denunciation and exhortation, saying: 'God is not mocked.' ... All this pertains to the topic of support for ministers. I do not like to interpret such passages; for they seem to commend us, as in fact they do. In addition, it gives the appearance of greed if one emphasizes these things diligently to one's hearers. Nevertheless, people should be taught also about this matter, in order that they may know that they owe both respect and support to their preachers. Christ teaches the same thing in Luke 10:7: 'Eating and drinking what they provide, for the laborer deserves his wages'; and Paul says elsewhere (1 Cor. 9:13-14): 'Do you not know that those who are employed in the temple service get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in the sacrificial offerings? In the same way the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the Gospel should get their living by the Gospel.' It is important for us who are in the ministry to know this, so that we do not have a bad conscience about accepting for our work wages ... it happens when those who proclaim the glory of God and faithfully instruct the youth derive their livelihood from them. It is impossible that one man should be devoted to household duties day and night for his support and at the same time pay attention to the study of Sacred Scripture, as the teaching ministry requires. Since God has commanded and instituted this, we should know that we may with a good conscience enjoy what is provided for the comfortable support of our lives from church properties to enable us to devote ourselves to our office." (LW 27:125-126)

Lutheran Social Services of Alaska

It has been a very busy time at LSSA ever since the shelter in place order was issued on March 13, 2020. We have been operating daily since the start of COVID-19, distributing food and rental assistance to our neighbors in need.

On March 30th we began distributing AK-Can- Do Funds for rent or mortgage and/or utility assistance. We shared over \$413,000 to over 450 Anchorage households. Beginning June 15th we became the fiscal agent for the Cares Act Funds that were given to United Way of Anchorage from the Municipality. As of this writing, we have helped over 4,300 households with close to \$4 Million dollars of rental or mortgage assistance.

The Food Pantry continues to see large numbers of households seeking assistance, and many of them are first-time families that have never had to navigate the social service network. We continue to have need for food items such as chili, soups, Ramen, Spam, tuna, canned fruit and vegetables, spaghetti sauce, oatmeal, cereal and jelly. Food distribution will be changing as the colder weather comes, and we will have people wait in their cars until their number is called before coming into the Food Pantry to continue social distancing. We are working on going to a digital client-choice food pantry later this year.

Thank you to everyone who donated school supplies for HUGSS this year. We did not do the usual distribution at East High School, but we have distributed school supplies from our office and with ASD's Child in Transition program.

The preparations for the annual Thanksgiving Blessing are underway, and we will again be asking for your help in collecting green beans, corn, and turkey stuffing. We are planning on serving 1,350 families from our site at Central Lutheran Church on Monday, November 23rd. This year, distribution will be completely different and will be modeled after the Mobile Food Pantries. All dry foods will be pre-boxed on Saturday, and then on Monday, we will add the frozen and fresh items. The clients will not leave their cars but will drive by in a continuous line. More information will be coming shortly after the Blessing planning committee finalizes the details.

We are planning to continue the tradition of Christmas Stockings to young children of our Food Pantry clients, so we ask for your help in supplying stocking filled with a Nativity story book and goodies. Distribution of the stockings will begin December 1st.

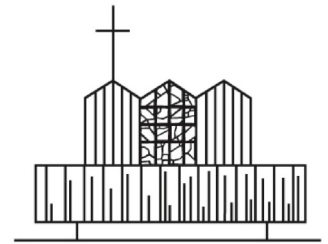
The LSSA staff has been working very hard, and we are taking time next week to participate in an Emotion & Spiritual Care class through Lutheran Disaster Response. Since this COVID 19 crisis is becoming the largest public health disaster in the history of the world, we need to take a break and talk about our mental health. Please keep our ministry and staff in your prayers.

Together caring for others,

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OCTOBER

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27 9:30am Divine Service 11am Bible Study via Zoom	28	29	30	1-Oct 11am Women's Study 6:30pm Women's Study	2	3
4 9:30am Divine Service 11am Bible Study via Zoom	5	6 7pm Elders' Meeting	7 4pm Youth Catechesis 7pm Zoom Bible Study	8 11am Women's Study 6:30pm Women's Study	9	10
11 9:30am Divine Service 11am Bible Study via Zoom 12pm Bike Jamboree	12	13 7pm Council Meeting	14 4pm Youth Catechesis 7pm Zoom Bible Study	15 11am Women's Study 6:30pm Women's Study	16	17
18 9:30am Divine Service 11am Bible Study via Zoom	19	20	21 4pm Youth Catechesis 7pm Zoom Bible Study Sue off	22 Sue off	23 Sue off	24
25 9:30am Divine Service 11am Bible Study via Zoom	26 Sue off	27 Sue off	28 4pm Youth Catechesis 7pm Zoom Bible Study Sue off	29 Sue off	30 Sue off	31