

October 12, 2020

Today is my grandmother's birthday. She was born in 1915 and died in 1964. She was a great lady, at least from a 5-year-old perspective. She had a heart for giving and sharing, there was always room at the table for anyone who came to the door. She always made me my own batch of cookies when she baked because I did not like nuts in anything and everyone else did. Maybe it was a ploy on my part to get more cookies but somehow, I always had the opportunity to share with someone.

Those early years of guidance and being treated special have been a huge contributor to how I view the world and in this year of chaos from many directions there have been many opportunities to carry them forward. I have viewed Holy Cross Lutheran Church as a giving, sharing, supporting and I could go on forever with similar descriptions. We have recently had the opportunity to provide those things to 2 families affected by the recent wildfires.

The families are staying in the church parking lot on the east side of the church building. The Aho/Bean family is staying in a small 5th wheel trailer with 2 adults and 2 children. They have been in contact with Family Promise and hopefully will be assisted by that program to find larger more permanent housing. Jennifer works at Applebee's on Commercial and the Parkway and Mike stays home with Orien and Lily.

Annie and Joseph (Jay) Wilson are in a motorhome that they drove up to Oregon from Texas to take a position in an RV park east of Clackamas, I don't think they have been in Oregon more than 2 months. They were first evacuated to Clackamas somewhere and within a couple of days were sent to the State Fairgrounds. During the evacuations process they have had a car stolen and the electrical system in the motorhome has been blown, luckily no fire to the vehicle itself. Since locating to Holy Cross they have had their cell phone stolen – hopefully, that is the last thing that is negative, and they can begin a healing process. They are working on getting estimates for repairs and then start working on a plan for their future. It will be a long and arduous process for them. Jay is applying for jobs locally to fill a gap until January when he will begin a job with the Attorney Generals office here in Salem.

As a congregation we are supporting with the space to park their HOMES, electricity, and water. Many individuals and small groups have coordinated food, showers, laundry money and freezer space. Annie and Joe do not have refrigeration so food storage is difficult for them.

Both families are very nice, respectful and grateful. Please pray for each family and wave when you see them out in the parking area. Covid says we should keep a distance even – especially when we want to literally run up and wrap our arms around them to comfort and support.

Thank you to Gary Bogstad, Loran & Peggy Sell, Kathy and Jerry Barker, Bryan Struve, Pastor and Janet. You have all been great. Moral support, cleaning, sharing money for laundry, gathering food, getting better cords for running electricity to the RVs, coordinating repair contacts and information, printing resource information sheets to share with the families and the list goes on.....

I would also like to share with you what connections Holy Cross has gained through this as well. We are now linked the Salem Leadership Foundation (SLF), to Safe Parking, which is an off shoot of Church At The Park. John Marshall is the person in charge of Safe Parking and he has been very helpful. DJ Vincent from SLF/Church At The Park has been connecting us to United Way with a possible donated replacement RV for the Wilson's if theirs is not repairable.

Please keep the families in your thoughts and prayers. Also for MY anchors from Holy Cross – Bryan, Gary, Loran, Peggy, Kathy, Jerry, Pastor and Janet. And watch for further updates and possibly requests for donations.

From an extremely grateful person, excited with the new opportunity God has provided for us to learn and grow.

Karen

Newsy things happening at Holy Cross

The Readings are changing!! We followed the semicontinuous readings all summer (Genesis and exodus) which is always fun because it means the readings are almost a bible study in themselves. This year, we followed them all the way through October too, but we will switch back to our 'usual' readings beginning October 25th (Reformation Sunday). Here's why. The Gospel is something that Lutheran congregations have focused on for many years. The saving words of God are evident in the Gospel, at least 80 percent of the time – encouraging, uplifting and about Jesus and his ministry! That's very Lutheran. So, as we enter the fall focus at Holy Cross, we will shift back to readings where the focus is more on Jesus (rather than the Old Testament stories we have enjoyed these summer and fall months).

Did you know you can look up the readings for Sundays on the internet? Yep. Two places I recommend – Vanderbilt University has a great website - <https://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/> and the Elca has info too (not as easy to use as the other one) <https://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Congregations-and-Synods/Worship/Lectionary/YearB>

Bible Study is shifting, too! “What is God Saying today?” is our focus ever since the pandemic hit, trying to find some footing for our worries and concerns. Genesis and Exodus has been a good place to land for that. Beginning October 22, we will shift to studying the gospel for the upcoming Sunday. I think that will be interesting to all of us. We meet Thursdays – at 12 noon in purpose (as long as that number stays under 8 we can do it safely in the skylight room) and at 5 pm on zoom. See you there. Patricia Hughes is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting. Topic: What is God Saying today?

Oct 15, 2020 05:00 PM – Exodus 33:12-23

Oct 22, 2020 05:00 PM – John 8:31-36

Oct 29, 2020 05:00 PM- Matthew 5:1-12

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84055018008?pwd=SlJHN0lkcWhlUVF3aWE4MkEzV1BRdz09>

Meeting ID: 840 5501 8008

Passcode: 569519

The Frightened People of God – Sermon Oct 11, 2020 Moses is up on the mountaintop communing with God, and the people, the Hebrews are left at the foot of Mt. Sinai. They are worried, they are stressed, they are confused. They have been told they must not even touch the mountain, it is so holy, and so they wait, cut off from the only information stream they have – Moses – to find out what’s next for them. They’ve escaped slavery in Egypt only to find no food or water available, until the all powerful God sends them water from the rock, and manna quails. The fear they carry is palpable. I cannot help but compare how they felt those 4000 years ago, to how we feel today in the days of Covid-19, when people are sick and dying, and some are spreading misinformation and fear, so many have lost livelihoods, and there is no end in sight. That mountain the Hebrews can’t touch? It dominates the landscape and yet they can’t go there. This disease dominates our life, our conversations, and our choices, and yet, we have no concrete idea of how we will get through this time, and who will sicken, and possibly die in the process. Do you feel differently for the Hebrews now? They’re not so bad. They are frightened. Moses and God are having a very high level meeting (there’s a pun in there). It feels like God is playing favorites. If God loves all the children of Israel, the Hebrews, why is God treating the people differently? And the results are not good. While Moses and God are talking on the mountain, the people turn to Aaron, Moses’ brother who speaks so well, the man who will be the founder of the Priests of Israel, and they complain. Moses has been gone 40 days speaking with God before he returns with the commandments. That’s a long time. The people are frightened, they are confused, and they decide to come up with their own plan for worshipping God. Remember when I told you that this journey in Exodus is about changing the Hebrews from being slaves in Egypt for hundreds of years, to being people dedicated to God, with a vision for creating a nation to honor their Lord. That’s a long journey to make metaphorically. A journey that will take 40 years in the desert. That said, I am not crazy about the way God treats them – like unruly children – don’t touch this, wait and I’ll tell you what I want you to know – it feels like rough parenting sometimes. So, let’s look at how the Hebrews react – they have been fed at God’s hand, and guided by God’s man Moses, but they yearn for God to show up in their lives – That’s what I think, because they Ask Aaron to make gods for them. They are beginning to wonder if God is really there for them – its been a hard journey, and now a hard time of waiting. So Aaron wants to comfort them. Why not make a few gods out of the gold they got in Egypt during their years of slavery? If it will give them (and him) some peace? But you know how that ends. God is angry, and Moses pleads their case. And this is the part I like best in our reading, Moses implores God, “turn from your fierce wrath, change your mind and do not bring disaster on your people. Remember Abraham, Isaac and Israel, your servants, how you swore to them by your own self, saying to them, I will multiply your descendants like the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your descendants and they shall inherit it forever.” And the Lord changed his mind. Moses has been pretty frustrated with these Hebrews for a while now – but all those troubles are forgotten as Moses pleads his case with God. God, **remember your people**. Moses. Moses has reason to be frightened too, he did not live in slavery all his life, raised in the palace, and then hides in the desert as a shepherd for years until God calls him. He speaks to the pharaoh and leads the people out of slavery, following God’s instructions and plans the whole time. But now, now we see Moses come into his own. God has been pouring his life and his care into Moses since that moment when God was the holy fire, and called Moses to this new life of leadership. And now, at this moment, Moses becomes a leader we can be proud of. God shows real anger towards the Hebrews, and even threatens their destruction. What does Moses do? Cower and beg? No. I see Moses stand tall, offering a reason for God to change his mind. Because the Hebrews are His people – since Abraham, their ancestor hundreds of years ago, he has nurtured and raised them up. And now, they are on the cusp of a life change a new land, a new beginning, and they have screwed up big time – big enough to make God almighty angry. And Moses defends them, not on their innate goodness or anything like that – but Moses defends them because of Gods’ great love for them. God’s great love is here for us today, too. We worship together in different ways, our lives are upended, but God’s love prevails. I think you and I could follow Moses’ lead – proud, and ready to defend our fellow men and women as they try to figure out these new covid times. We can do this. Maybe things aren’t going so well at each moment, but kindness is happening, caring and reaching out has been present throughout our current disaster. Look to these for your encouragement my friends, as God encourages you to find your caring center, your loving and forgiving nature. We are beloved of God, my friends. Remind yourselves of this, won’t you? As you care for the beloved of God who need our help in the world around us right now. Amen. – Pastor Patricia Hughes

WORSHIPPING AT HOME WITH HOLY CROSS
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2020 – TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the Holy Trinity, One God, who creates, redeems and sustains us and all of creation. **Amen.**

Faithful God, have mercy on us. We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We turn from your loving embrace and go our own ways. We pass judgment on one another before examining ourselves. We place our own needs before those of our neighbors. We keep your gift of salvation to ourselves. Make us humble, cast away our transgressions, and turn us again to life in you through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen

God hears the cries of all who call out in need, and through his death and resurrection, Christ has made us his own. Hear the truth that God proclaims: Your sins are forgiven in the name of Jesus Christ. Let by the Holy Spirit, live in Freedom and newness to do God's work in the world with our own hands.

GATHERING HYMN – The God of Abraham Praise ELW 831

- 1 The God of Abr'ham praise,
who reigns enthroned above;
Ancient of everlasting days,
and God of love--
"I Am the One I Am"--
by earth and heav'n confessed;
I bow and bless the sacred name
forever blest.

- 2 The God of Abr'ham praise!
At your supreme command
from earth I rise and seek the joys
at your right hand.
I all on earth forsake--
its wisdom, fame, and pow'r--
and you my only portion make,
my shield and tow'r.

3 The God of Abr'ham praise!
Your all-sufficient grace
shall guide me all my pilgrim days
in all my ways.
You deign to call me friend;
you call yourself my God!
And you will save me to the end
through Jesus' blood.

4 Your promise you have sworn;
I on your oath depend.
I shall, on eagle wings upborne,
to heav'n ascend.
I shall behold your face;
I shall your pow'r adore,
and sing the wonders of your grace
forevermore.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts. Created by you, let us live in your image; created for you, let us act for your glory; redeemed by you, let us give you what is yours, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

READINGS AND PSALM

Exodus 33:12-23

The glory of God revealed to Moses

Psalm 96:1-9 [10-13]

Ascribe to the LORD honor and power. (Ps. 96:7)

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Thanksgiving for the church at Thessalonica

Matthew 22:15-22

A teaching on giving to the emperor and to God

APOSTLES' CREED

**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 to the dead.*
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 (see attached prayers)

OFFERING PRAYER

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. You have set before us these gifts of your good creation. Prepare us for your heavenly banquet, nourish us with this rich food and drink, and send us forth to set tables in the midst of a suffering world through the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Christ, our strength and our song. **Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

When our congregation gathered for the celebration of Holy Communion, we heard again the story of God's mighty acts and of the love shown us in the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. With thanksgiving we remembered that "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 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 all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me."

The people of our congregation were given assurance of our Lord's presence through the gift of his Holy Spirit. As you worship in your homes, we remember the gift of communion that we share.

Jesus said, "I am the bread of life, whoever comes to me shall never hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst."

At this time, you may remember the gift of holy communion with your own bread and cup.

Communion Blessing The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace. **Amen**

COMMUNION BLESSING

God of the welcome table,
in this meal we have feasted on your goodness
and have been united by your presence among us.
Empower us to go forth sustained by these gifts
so that we may share your neighborly love with all,
through Jesus Christ, the giver of abundant life. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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.**

BLESSING

The God of compassion, hope and joy,
Our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer,
Bless your feet to carry you into places of need.
Bless your lips to proclaim love and mercy.
Bless your heart to love and listen to those you encounter.
Bless your hands to care for the needs of your neighbors.
Bless you to be a blessing to others.
Now and always.
Amen.

Praying together at Holy Cross – October 11, 2020

A season of “God’s Work: Our Hands”

With open hands and open hearts, let us pray for the needs of all the world.

Generous Provider, renew the strength, energy and courage of your church. Through our acts of service, may your love overflow and your grace be proclaimed for us, for our neighbors and for all the world. God of abundant grace,

Open your healing hands.

Generous Provider, we are blessed with your gift of this world, and all its creatures and plants. Make us better stewards of this bounty, and show us how we can protect the gift of the natural world. God of abundant grace,

Open your healing hands.

Generous Provider, we thank you for those who serve our nations, our states and our cities. Thank you for officers of the law, and firefighters. Help us each to shoulder our own burden in writing good laws and governance for us all. God of abundant grace,

Open your healing hands.

Generous Provider, our hearts are heavy with the great need around us. Give us a vision of our own bounty, and show us how to share with all those in need. Give us hearts to see the need around us without making judgments about lifestyle choices. God of abundant grace,

Open your healing hands.

Generous Provider, be our healer in this time of pandemic. Give doctors and nurses and all health care providers great wisdom and patience. Protect them from disease as well. Give us a vaccine, and a community of people willing to protect their neighbors. God of abundant grace,

Open your healing hands.

Generous Provider, in the midst of this life we are acquainted with death. Be with all the grieving, and give each of us a vision of the life to come with you in heaven. God of abundant grace,

Open your healing hands.

We commend these and all things to your gracious care, trusting in Christ Jesus, our Savior. **Amen.**

