

From your Council President – January 19, 2022

Positivity rates for COVID test cases has reached an all-time high in Oregon, near 21% as of last week. Compare this with the 5.5% at Christmas which had grown from 5.0% the week of Thanksgiving. If you or your family is not ill, chances are you know someone who has been. That is the situation with my relatives, with both a sister and nephew spending time in quarantine at home fighting off the bug.

Responding to the current situation and keeping in mind the guidance we received last week from the Bishop's office, your church council affirmed at their meeting last night to **cancel in person worship for this coming Sunday, January 23rd**. We do this with heavy heart as we were looking forward to gathering in word and song and celebrating communion in our sanctuary with our church family. Worship is what ties us together as Christians, uniting us as one body, energizing us for God's work in the world.

Alternatives to in person worship this week are being investigated. A possibility of recorded elements posted online to YouTube or other churches streaming worship options may be available. Check the church website for more information this weekend. In the meantime, keep yourself safe and limit your exposure to others outside of your household. Continue to monitor your health and seek medical care as needed.

Your 2021 Giving Statements have been reconciled, printed and are available in the church office, along with your 2022 Giving Envelopes. Please call if you need yours sent to you prior to January 30th.

Everyone's opinion is needed during our transition journey and with that in mind we are going to again bifurcate our Annual Meeting, like last year, in the interest of our health and safety. It is the council's current plan to hold worship in person on January 30th, with a service of the Word and Sacrament led by Pastor Curtis Zieske. Immediately following we will hold a very short congregational meeting in the Sanctuary for the sole purpose of reviewing and approving the 2022 budget to allow staff to continue to perform their duties and pay the bills. We will be sending out the proposed budget in next week's mailing.

Reconvening the Annual Congregational Meeting on Transfiguration Sunday, February 27th should be enough time for the Omicron wave to pass. This will allow us to meet safely for a longer presentation and discussion with the newly appointed transition team and begin our journey of discernment to what God has planned for our next phase of mission in creation.

Serving you prayerfully in the body of Christ, Bryan Struve, Council President

**Worshipping at Home with Holy Cross Lutheran Church
January 23, 2022 – Third Sunday of Epiphany**

INVOCATION

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

We gather in the name of God, the Creator of Light; † Jesus, the Light of the World; and the Holy Spirit, the Light who illumines our path.

Amen.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who creates us, redeems us, and calls us by name. **Amen.**

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

Most merciful God,

**we confess that we have sinned against you
and your beloved children.**

**We have turned our faces away from your glory
when it did not appear as we expected.**

**We have rejected your word
when it made us confront ourselves.**

**We have failed to show hospitality
to those you called us to welcome.**

**Accept our repentance for the things we have done
and the things we have left undone.**

For the sake of Jesus Christ, have mercy on us.

**Forgive us and lead us, that we may bathe
in the glory of your Son born among us,
and reflect your love for all creation.**

Amen.

Rejoice in this good news:

In † Christ Jesus, your sins are forgiven.

You are descendants of the Most High,
adopted into the household of Christ,
and inheritors of eternal life.

Live as freed and forgiven children of God. **Amen.**

GREETING

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

And also with you.

KYRIE (An expression of God's constant mercy)

Have mercy on us Lord, and hear our solemn prayer.

We come to hear your living word; it saves us from despair.

Have mercy on us Christ, and wash away our sin.

Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may begin.

Have mercy on us, Lord; make sin and shame depart.

Renew us with your saving power; create in us new hearts!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Blessed Lord God, you have caused the holy scriptures to be written for the nourishment of your people. Grant that we may hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that, comforted by your promises, we may embrace and forever hold fast to the hope of eternal life, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

READINGS AND PSALM

Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10

Ezra reads the law of Moses before the people

Psalm 19

The teaching of the LORD revives the soul. (Ps. 19:7)

1 Corinthians 12:12-31a

You are the body of Christ

Luke 4:14-21

Jesus reads from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia. The Spirit of the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor, and to proclaim release to the captives. *Alleluia.* (Luke 4:18)

HYMN OF THE DAY ELW 886 "Oh, For A Thousand Tongues To Sing"

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

The Spirit of the Lord is poured out upon us in abundance; so we are bold to pray for the church, the world, and all that God has made.

A brief silence.

You reveal yourself to us in the reading of scripture. Fulfill your word through the faithful witness of your church. Send us out to bring your liberating good news to all people. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

All creation proclaims your handiwork. Teach us to love the intricate and beautiful bodies that you have created. Bless tiny insects, enormous whales, and every creature in between. Sustain species at risk of extinction. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

You desire that there be no dissension among us. Where we are divided in our society, nation, or world, come quickly to reunite us into one body. Ease conflict, dispel violence, and bring an end to war. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Anoint with your Spirit all who seek your favor. Grant provision and justice for people living in poverty, people living with disability, those living with pain, or those living under oppression (*especially*). God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Build up the body of Christ in this place. Bless the variety of ministries in this congregation (*especially*). Empower us to freely welcome and deeply value each person who enters into worship and ministry among us. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

In thanksgiving we lift before you the saints for whom the promise of salvation has now been fulfilled. Tend to those who mourn (*especially*). Bring us together in your everlasting glory. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Since we have such great hope in your promises, O God, we lift these and all of our prayers to you in confidence and faith; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

OFFERING PRAYER

Blessed are you, O God, Sovereign of the universe.

You offer us new beginnings and guide us on our journey.

Lead us to your table, nourish us with this heavenly food, and prepare us to carry your love to a hungry world, in the name of Christ our light. **Amen.**

✠ 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. Now we bring to you this same bread of life and this same cup of blessing, that you may be strengthened through your participation in the body of Christ.

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.

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

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,

now and forever. Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We give you thanks, gracious God,
for we have feasted on the abundance of your house.

Send us to bring good news

and to proclaim your favor to all,

strengthened with the richness of your grace

in your Son, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

LAMB OF GOD

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;

grant us peace, grant us peace, Lamb of God.

BLESSING

God, who leads you in pathways of righteousness,

who rejoices over you,

and who calls you by name,

✠ bless your going out and your coming in,

today and forever. **Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Go with Christ into a weary world.

Share the good news. **Thanks be to God.**