

!!PALM SATURDAY!!

-Come to the Church Parking Lot on Saturday morning between 10 and 11 a.m. to pick up your Palm Branches for this Sunday's service on ZOOM. We will have a Blessing of the Palms during the service on Sunday. So you will all want to have a palm to raise up and wave.

-ALSO you are invited to a "Palm Sunday March" across the Old Stillwater Bridge this Saturday beginning at 2:00 p.m. It will start downtown with prayers at the bridge and then go across and back. Bring your palm branch, or you can get one from me or Mary Pilquist. Bring a bright scarf or cloth to wave also. We go rain or shine!! Sponsored by the First United Methodist Church of Stillwater.

BETHLEHEM NEWSLETTER FOR APRIL - 2021

From Pastor Rich

Dear Bethlehem Friends,

Our Office Administrator, Lori Gergen, is under the weather this week. So I'm getting out the BLC news for April to you this month. Just the facts. Sorry, no fancy graphics or layout.

Our biggest news is our plan for re-opening the church over the next couple of months. First of all, here is the worship schedule for Holy Week, 2021.

March 28 – Palm Sunday

We will worship on ZOOM as usual at 9:00 a.m. We reflect upon the Triumphal Entry of Jesus into Jerusalem as the people waved their palm branches. The rest of the service is devoted to deep reflection on the Passion Story of Jesus in order to prepare us for Holy Week. Melanie Ohnstad and Chappy Gibb will provide stirring music to enhance our experience of this sacred narrative as presented to us by St. Mark.

(Wednesday, March 31, no mid-week service)

April 1 – Maundy Thursday 12 noon and 7:00 p.m.

You are invited to come to the sanctuary for in-person communion at either 12:00 noon or 7:00 p.m. There will be quiet music on the piano, along with a brief remembrance of the Last Supper and Holy Communion.

April 2 – Good Friday – 7:00 p.m.

Worship will be presented on ZOOM at 7:00 p.m. We will join the People's Congregational Church for this solemn service. Seven members of our two churches will each present their own reflection upon one of The Seven Last Words of Christ from the Cross. New pastor, Clare Gromoll, and I will collaborate to lead the service. It will be nice to do something together once again.

April 3 – Easter Vigil – 7:00 p.m.

You are invited to come to this service in person. We will meet outside around the fire for the first part of the service, and then proceed into the dark sanctuary for the Service of Light. After the readings from the Bible that lay out God's plan for the coming of Jesus, we will have a remembrance of baptism followed by Easter communion. Music will be provided by Chuck Davis and Susan LaCasse. This service will not be recorded or broadcast.

April 4 – EASTER SUNDAY – 9:00 a.m.

We will celebrate the Lord's resurrection on ZOOM. We are not prepared to handle the number of people that might come. So in order to be safe we ask that you stay home. Melanie Ohnstad and Chappy Gibb will be our musicians once again. I let Melanie pick out her favorite Easter music, so be prepared for a dazzling performance of some great music. It will sound wonderful. (You may come, if you wish, for in-person communion between 10:30 and 12:00 noon in the sanctuary.)

After Easter Sunday

- Each week we will alternate worship indoors in the sanctuary with worship outdoors on the church lawn.
- 1st and 3rd Sundays will be outdoors with Holy Communion.
- 2nd and 4th Sundays will be indoors in person in the sanctuary.
- 5th Sundays will be outdoors.
- All services will be recorded and posted on our church website and on YouTube.
- Indoor services will also be on ZOOM.

It will be a blessing for me to walk with you through the progression of Holy Week worship services over the coming days. Watch for ZOOM invites and click on the link FROM WHEREVER YOU ARE to join your worshipping community. Even if you're travelling, on vacation, or out of town, you can still be with us!

A blessed Holy Week and Easter to you all.

Pastor Rich

NEW DISHWASHER

Many thanks go out to the Bethlehem Lutheran Church Women (BLCW) for organizing and funding the purchase of a new dishwasher for the little kitchen off of the Connection. Special thanks goes out to Mike Knox for installing the new machine. Now we will be ready for that day when we can start serving coffee and goodies out of that kitchen again.

BENEVOLENCE THANK YOUS

We continue to receive letters of appreciation from the Lutheran Social Services of MN, Valley Outreach Foodshelf, and the Stillwater Young Life group for our regular benevolence support of their ministries in the community.

UPCOMING CELEBRATIONS

CONFIRMATION - We congratulate our three confirmation students who will be Affirming their Baptism on Sunday, May 16. It has been an absolute pleasure to work with these three young women and watch their faith develop and grow. They have all faithfully participated in their classes during a very difficult year. The confirmation service will be held, weather permitting, outdoors on the church lawn. God's peace and blessings to...

Violet Dahl, Addyson Preuss, Jenna Ellis

Thanks also go out to confirmation teachers, Jenny Schoolman and Mary Pilquist, and mentors, Bob Johnson, Tony Lesicka, Janet Radke, and Mary Pilquist.

FIRST COMMUNION – We congratulate our six young people who will be partaking in their First Communion on Sunday, June 6. This has been postponed for over a year. Each family has done instruction in their own homes and they have patiently waited for the right time when we can all be together safely.

Madalyn Martin
Clara Oachs
Abby Prichard
Anna Crowder
Cora Sawyer
Elaine Lesicka

SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

The Second Sunday Supper team recently provided a meal for eight people at the “Hope for the Journey Home” homeless shelter. The shelter continues to provide housing for families in transition. It is operating under 50% capacity under very strict Covid-19 guidelines. So far they have not had a single case of Covid-19 in their facility. Interested in volunteering at the shelter? See Pastor Rich for more information.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH AND LEARNING

Tuesday Bible Study – Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m.

BLC Contemplative Prayer Group – Fridays at 8:00 a.m.

Please contact Pastor Larson if you would like to receive a ZOOM invite.

Sunday Connection Conversations – Sunday, April 18, at 10:00 a.m. Join us after worship on ZOOM for our final presentation and discussion on racial injustice in our society.

STEWARDSHIP

Our giving took a significant drop in January and February of 2021. We are still ahead in our income over expenses year to date. But if the trends continue we will be in a deficit mode soon. If you can do something to help prevent the downward trend of our giving over the last two months it would be a blessing to the church. Thank you and God bless.

CREATION CARE TEAM

See the attachment or use the link for dates and times for the Stillwater Collection Day, Saturday, May 15, from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Lily Lake Rec. Center. Sponsored by Washington County.

<https://www.co.washington.mn.us/DocumentCenter/View/45316/Stillwater-Event-Flyer-Spring-2021>



Join us for scripture, prayer, music and a

Palm Parade

Saturday, March 27, 2021
2pm

Meet on the MN side of
Stillwater's Lift Bridge

Hosted by:

First United Methodist Church of
Stillwater, MN
813 W. Myrtle Street
651-439-1880

Please call for more details if needed.

ALL ARE WELCOME!

For the safety of all involved, please wear a MASK! Thank you!

Thank you!