

April 28, 2020

Christ is risen! Alleluia!
(He is risen, indeed! Alleluia!)

Our ZOOM COUNCIL MEETING went very well last night. I thank Council President, Doug Wright, for his leadership and all the Council members for their thoughtful questions and comments. Little did Doug, or any of the Council members, know they would be in these leadership positions during a pandemic that would close our church building and suspend "in-person" worship. I am deeply grateful for each of them.

BLOCK PARTY AND SCHOOL SUPPLY CELEBRATION Though August may seem far off, we have already begun considering this annual community event. Nothing is set in stone, but we are wondering if this year we need to shift all our resources to providing school supplies. The financial need of many families may be greater than ever this year and affording the required school supplies may be a real struggle. Might there be other things the families need to start off the new school year strong? Please be praying and thinking about this service event. You can send thoughts to havenoffice@havenlc.org or directly to me (l.alessandri1035@gmail.com) or Marge Cunningham. God's Work. Our Hands.

RED GERANIUMS FOR PENTECOST Each geranium cost **\$3.85. Deadline is May 11th.** So how do we do this without the envelopes we usually have for our orders, dedications and payment?

Step 1: Please e-mail your order to **havenoffice@havenlc.org** with the following information:

Your name _____

The number of plants you wish to order _____

In whose memory or honor do you wish to dedicate the plants

The total amount of payment _____

Step 2: Mail in your payment or drop it off in the offering box on the parsonage back porch.

Be sure to put "geraniums" on the memo line of any checks and/or on an envelope with cash **IF YOU DO NOT E-MAIL or YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO MIGHT BE INTERESTED WHO DOES NOT USE A COMPUTER, PLEASE TELL THEM** to call the church office with your order -- 301-733-5056 --- and leave the relevant information in Mary Grabill's voice mailbox. Please leave all the information so we don't have to do follow up calls.

What if we are not worshipping together in the church by May 31st? Pastor will enjoy riding around to drop them off and see your lovely faces. **REMEMBER --- DEADLINE IS MAY 11th**

GRATITUDE AND GODSIGHTINGS

From Charlotte Loveless

I was complaining to a friend about the weather. I texted, "is it me or is Spring on delay"? "We are in this cool, cloudy, damp, rainy mode; if the sun comes out it is between 4 and 5 pm when all the walkers take to the pavement." "How is it there, (Ohio)". I said.

She said, "oh and we get snow but if the weather were nice we'd be out milling around and probably would not be as healthy."

Oh, I said, "God in action". She said, "yes he is taking care of us."

I'll not complain about the weather again!

There is a reason.
Have a blessed day.
Charlotte

From Marge Cunningham

“How the Virus Stole Easter”

A Poem by Kristi Bothur

Inspired by Dr. Seuss!

Tw’as late in ‘19 when the virus began
Bringing chaos and fear to all people, each land.

People were sick, hospitals full,
Doctors overwhelmed, no one in school.

As winter gave way to the promise of spring,
The virus raged on, touching peasant and king.

People hid in their homes from the enemy unseen.
They YouTubed and Zoomed, social-distanced, and cleaned.

April approached and churches were closed.
“There won’t be an Easter,” the world supposed.

“There won’t be church services, and egg hunts are out.
No reason for new dresses when we can’t go about.”

Holy Week started, as bleak as the rest.
The world was focused on masks and on tests.

“Easter can’t happen this year,” it proclaimed.
“Online and at home, it just won’t be the same.”

Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, the days came and went.
The virus pressed on; it just would not relent.

The world woke Sunday and nothing had changed.
The virus still menaced, the people, estranged.

“Pooh pooh to the saints,” the world was grumbling.
“They’re finding out now that no Easter is coming.

“They’re just waking up! We know just what they’ll do!
Their mouths will hang open a minute or two,
And then all the saints will all cry boo-hoo.
“That noise,” said the world, “will be something to hear.”
So it paused and the world put a hand to its ear.

And it did hear a sound coming through all the skies.
It started down low, then it started to rise.

But the sound wasn't depressed.
Why, this sound was triumphant!
It couldn't be so!
But it grew with abundance!

The world stared around, popping its eyes.
Then it shook! What it saw was a shocking surprise!

Every saint in every nation, the tall and the small,
Was celebrating Jesus in spite of it all!

It hadn't stopped Easter from coming! It came!
Somehow or other, it came just the same!

And the world with its life quite stuck in quarantine
Stood puzzling and puzzling.
"Just how can it be?"

"It came without bonnets, it came without bunnies,
It came without egg hunts, cantatas, or money."

Then the world thought of something it hadn't before.
"Maybe Easter," it thought, "doesn't come from a store.
Maybe Easter, perhaps, means a little bit more."

And what happened then?
Well...the story's not done.
What will YOU do?
Will you share with that one
Or two or more people needing hope in this night?
Will you share the source of your life in this fight?

The churches are empty – but so is the tomb,
And Jesus is victor over death, doom, and gloom.
So this year at Easter, let this be our prayer,
As the virus still rages all around, everywhere.

May the world see hope when it looks at God's people.
May the world see the church is not a building or steeple.
May the world find Faith in Jesus' death and resurrection,
May the world find Joy in a time of dejection.
May 2020 be known as the year of survival,
But not only that –
Let it start a revival.

To that I say, "Amen! Amen!"

God's peace IS with you!
Pastor Linda M Alessandri

A Pause with God

Read: Psalm 23 (*Psalm for the Fourth Sunday of Easter, traditionally "Holy Shepherd Sunday"*)

¹The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.

²He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;

³he restores my soul.

He leads me in right paths
for his name's sake.

⁴Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil;

for you are with me;
your rod and your staff —
they comfort me.

⁵You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.

⁶Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD
my whole life long.

(New Revised Standard Version currently used in worship)

¹The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

²He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
he leadeth me beside the still waters.

³He restoreth my soul:
he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

⁴Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil: for thou art with me;
thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

⁵Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies:
thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

⁶Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

(King James version)

Reflections: *From Luther Seminary's daily devotions, "God Pause"*)

These are not words of death.

Like most pastors, I've read these words at countless burials, memorials, and funerals. These well-worn words have already become like a favorite go-to tool in my nascent [budding; evolving] craft of ministry. Yet even though these are words so often associated with funerals, they are not words of death.

Listen how these words brim with life! For sheep like you and I, green pastures are . . . delicious! Still waters are great spots to fill a belly without falling into dangerous rapids. And right pathways are *way* better than getting lost.

But the psalm writer knows that life brims with challenges, too. Yet even there, in the challenges, in the pain, in the fear, the Lord never stops seeking life for you. The Shepherd guides you to a table and promises cups brimming with abundant life.

These are words of life.

Prayer: Lord, lead us and guide us to delicious pastures, still waters, and brimming tables. Remind us that you walk with us in the dark places, guiding us to lives of goodness and mercy. Amen.

*Joe Natwick '15 M.Div.
Associate Pastor at St John Lutheran Church, Dickinson, North Dakota*

Music:

"My Shepherd" (Psalm 23) Michael Card https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M90cJs_8PyM

"The King of Love My Shepherd Is" Michael Card <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eUZAjkC48bY>

"Shepherd of My Soul" (Marty Nystrom, Praise & Worship)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9sv3e2cFcj4>

Sent by Charlotte Loveless:

Happy Day (Easter Celebration). Sung and signed by Tessa Volak who is deaf and with whom I worked few years ago. Enjoy her vibrant interpreting. <https://youtu.be/weLznqa7McA>