

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church  
June 6, 2021

Greetings brothers and sisters in Christ.

## **Worship News**

On June 6<sup>th</sup>, we will begin to worship in the sanctuary at 9:30 a.m. (summer hours).

### **Procedures and Requirements for In-Door Worship**

- Masks and social distancing required at all times while in the building
- Sign in on sign-up sheets that will be on a podium as you enter the Gathering Area
- Pick up your bulletin and communion kit at the table in the Gathering Area
- Place your offering in the offering plate at the table in the Gathering Area
- Sit only in designated seating places (if you are sitting with more than two people, please sit on the sides)
- Greet and visit with people before or after worship outside
- The windows will be open and the large ceiling fan will be on to move the air instead of the air conditioning, so please dress accordingly
- The service will be on-line for those not yet comfortable being inside.
  - In order to not overload the internet, please either power down your phones or put them on Airplane Mode.
  - Also, so that the people who are joining us on-line can hear the congregational responses and announcements, a worship leader/reader will lead the congregational responses and all announcements must be made at the pulpit.

Social Ministry – We will begin collecting can and dry goods for the Muhlenberg Churches Food Pantry in June. Please, put your donations on the white shelves in the Gathering Area.

Property – We have old metal folding chairs that need new homes. If you would like some, see Lynn Shollenberger or just go into the Sunday School Room (aka Teddy Bear Room) and take some.

Worship Leaders – As we move inside, we will be in need of people to help lead worship by reading both the congregational responses and the lessons. Please let Pastor Denise know if you are willing to volunteer.

If you have prayer requests, please send them to me so that I can include them in my weekly newsletters.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Denise

Home Phone           610-750-6432

Cell/Text Phone       610-858-8187

## Psalm 100

### A reading of the 100<sup>th</sup> Psalm

<sup>1-2</sup> On your feet now—applaud God!  
Bring a gift of laughter,  
sing yourselves into his  
presence.

<sup>3</sup> Know this: God is God, and  
God, God.  
He made us; we didn't make  
him.

We're his people, his well-tended  
sheep.

<sup>4</sup> Enter with the password: "Thank  
you!"

Make yourselves at home,  
talking praise.

Thank him. Worship him.

<sup>5</sup> For God is sheer beauty,  
all-generous in love,

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

## Sermon

Grace and Peace to you from God our Father  
and Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. AMEN.

It is good to be here in this place  
again.

It is good to hear the organ.

It is good to look to around and  
see the familiar surroundings  
that we missed so very much.

It is good to see familiar faces  
and hear familiar voices.

It is so so very good to be here  
this morning.

Although I have been reflecting  
on Psalm 100 for this morning's  
message.

As I attended the Synod  
Assembly this past Friday and  
Saturday another text kept

popping into my head, and that  
is the text from the 43<sup>rd</sup> chapter  
of Isaiah. Listen to God speak to  
the prophet Isaiah and to us:

<sup>16</sup> Thus says the Lord,

who makes a way in the sea,  
a path in the mighty waters,

<sup>17</sup> who brings out chariot and  
horse,

army and warrior;

they lie down, they cannot rise,

they are extinguished,

quenched like a wick:

<sup>18</sup> Do not remember the former  
things,

or consider the things of old.

<sup>19</sup> I am about to do a new thing;

now it springs forth, do you  
not perceive it?

I will make a way in the  
wilderness

and rivers in the desert.

<sup>20</sup> The wild animals will honor  
me,

the jackals and the ostriches;  
for I give water in the  
wilderness,

rivers in the desert,  
to give drink to my chosen  
people,

<sup>21</sup> the people whom I formed  
for myself  
so that they might declare my  
praise.

<sup>18</sup> Do not remember the former  
things,  
or consider the things of old.

<sup>19</sup> I your Lord, your God am  
about to do a new thing; now it  
springs forth, do you not perceive

it?

And for most of us, who are just  
exhausted from all of the new  
things that we have encountered  
for the past 14 months, we might  
be thinking (at least I know I  
am) really God I cannot handle  
one more new thing, can't we  
just return to the way things use  
to be.

But the truth is, although the  
surroundings are familiar as we  
sit here this morning and  
although the faces we see and  
the voices we hear are familiar  
and a welcoming reconnection to  
brothers and sisters in Christ,  
we are not the same people we  
were in March 2020.

We will never again be the same  
church, the same body of Christ,

the same faith community that we were pre-pandemic. For we the people of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church have been transformed, renewed and reshaped.

For me at least, it seemed like every minute of every hour of every day for the last 14 months, God was up to something; working in me, through me and around me to do a new thing. And if you really take time to reflect on the blessings and the growth that you encountered this past year, I believe you too will confess that God was up to something new, in you, through you or around you.

Perhaps God's working in you was just so that you could

survive the loneliness and isolation and cabin fever.

Perhaps God wanted to teach you how to reach out and connect with one another in new ways to create deeper and more meaningful relationships

Perhaps God wanted to push you beyond your comfort level to show you that with God at your side things beyond your wildest dreams are possible.

As the Psalmist wrote – God was just doing what God does best – being a loving and faithful God to his beloved children who woke up to a strange new world that they needed to figure out one step at a time.

And so now we return to this sacred place transformed, reshaped, renewed and prepared for the next new thing that God is up to. The new thing that will not return us to the past but push us into the future.

Into a future, where we are better equipped to deal with instability and uncertainty.

The future where we are better at living in the present, because things most likely will be different tomorrow.

The future where we just might have learned to trust that God will lead us through the darkest of times.

Each and every one of us is different today than we were pre-pandemic – and since the church is not about this building but about how we as God’s beloved children love one another through the good times and the bad. We go forward as a faith community renewed, refreshed and reshaped, perhaps better prepared to love one another than we were in March of 2020.

So I wonder, what is God going to do in us, through us and among us now, with all we have learned about loving and caring for one another, with all we have experienced, with all we have suffered this past year.

What is the new thing that God is going to do with this renewed and transformed faith

community that God's Spirit has planted here on this corner.

I wish as your pastor, I knew.

I wish as your pastor I could say to you this morning – God wants us to do x or y or z. But in all honesty, I don't have a clue.

But I do believe that God has held us together in new ways over the past year for a reason.

I do believe that God has revealed to us that it is our relationships with one another that have survived and in many cases have thrived in spite of all the chaos and uncertainty of this past year.

And don't get me wrong – I longed to be back inside the church building and I am thrilled to be back inside this sacred space this morning.

But, this year God showed us it is not this building that makes us God's beloved church on this corner, but it is each and every one of you sitting here this morning and each and every one of you who are with us through technology that are bound together by the faithfulness of Christ that makes us God's beloved church on this corner.

And it will be God working in us, through us and among us as God's beloved church that God will again do new things,

AMEN



***Blessing***

May  
The love of God,  
The light of Christ,  
And the joy of the Holy Spirit  
Abide with you on this day  
and forever more.  
**AMEN**