

THE WITTENBERG DOOR

NOVEMBER 2023

EMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

ELCBREMERTON.ORG

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Pastor's Message

Thanksgiving in the midst of a seemingly crazy world or less than perfect life: (Matthew 5:1-12)

Seeing the crowds, (Jesus) went up on the mountain, and when he sat down his disciples came to him. ² And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

³ "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

⁵ "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

⁶ "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

Now picture yourself out on the streets, feeling like all the securities of life; food, shelter, clothing, health, family, history, and future are up in the air. It really could go either one way or another, and the truth of this fragility and fear is more real to you than it's ever been! If you had one reality you will always face, and cannot be free of in your own power, it may be the conditions on the left part of this divide: Poverty in Spirit, and uncertainty that you will travel anywhere except into the pages of hopelessness, fear and darkness (poor in spirit). What would be happening for others on the other side of this reality who have heard of and trusted Jesus of Nazareth and the words of promise – in who He is, and the Life that is available to all who follow Him, Obey Him, and believe in Him (Mark 4:19-20)?

What about those of you who have emotionally been laid low with a gut-wrenching grief? It seems that you have lost your life, and your reason for living, because you have lost the loved one most dear to you? On one side of this reality, the grief may be addressed with psychology that can name your pain, and seek to schedule the steps to survive it. These are the *poor in spirit*, who rightly need help in every way and from all good and caring sources when they are so stricken with sorrow. Will these steps and resources bring them the true comfort that can hope in a life and promise beyond the grave? What is the alternative for those in such heartache?

What about the timid, *the meek*, the shy or the scared that we know? Having been told that they are better followers than leaders, and truly feel happier to be behind the scenes and not on the front stage? What will they get out of an otherwise, "dog-eat-dog" world, that looks past them many times and offers thanks or appreciation very rarely? Who will be their champion, when they have done so much and been seen or recognized so little?



Contact Pastor

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Pastor's Message continued.....

Finally, what about being hungry for the truth of God's righteousness and justice? Those who ask, "who and where God is in our world" (Thirst for righteousness)? This is not just a philosophy of religion class in a community college somewhere. It is a desire to know with certainty, where God is when people need God the most? If God is real, then why would the world be, and look like it is? If God is present, loving, all knowing, and all powerful, why do so many people suffer?

When you see the reality of our lives, families, neighborhoods and world, and its needs, hurts and longings, below, how did Jesus respond to all these real-life situations?

He Announced to them, Blessed are they who (are).... For (theirs, they shall) Find Hope in God through faith and life in Christ:

3. Poor in spirit

For theirs is the kingdom of heaven

4. Mourn

For they shall be comforted

5. Meek

For they shall inherit the earth.

6. Hungry and thirst for righteousness

For they shall be satisfied

This Holiday Season, (Advent, Christmas, New Year, and moving toward Easter) take heart in the response that Jesus has given. He hears your cries, sees your suffering, feels your pain, and aches with all who are broken in spirit and body. Only He can give the true blessings that our bodies and spirit need, and the hope of life in this world today and in Him for all eternity. This is ours by God's unmerited grace and through faith in Jesus Christ, according to Scripture. This is the Gospel of hope in all seasons of life, suffering, dying, and even death itself (Romans 6:4-6). So that all those believing and being baptized into Christ, we shall live! (Mark 16:16). By His Holy Spirit, we can hear Him in the Gospel, know Him by His grace and believe in Him always!



Pastor Gary Koutsopoulos

Thanksgiving Worship Service

Our Thanksgiving worship service will be held November 25th at 12:00, Noon. We have so much to be thankful for.



Our Advent Decorating Party will be held on Saturday, December 2nd at 10 AM.



Operation Christmas Child

Packing Party

Saturday, November 11th at 10 am we will be gathering to pack our shoeboxes. This is great fun for all ages. Please consider coming and helping with this ministry. I guarantee you will be blessed.

Special Thanks to all of you that have contributed already to this ministry. Whether it be prayers support, monetary donations or your shoebox gifts, you all are appreciated.



Sharie, coordinator

Is There A Solution?

U.S. child poverty has doubled in 2023. That is so hard to believe. We wonder what has gone wrong. Cost of living has gone into orbit. Washington state has the highest gas prices in the entire U.S. Rent is out-of-sight and it seems grocery prices increase every week! Is there a solution? We can throw up our hands and just give up. But, that is NOT the solution. Everyone deserves a meal and we at ELC are doing what we can to confront this issue. Every single month, we load up the food basket on First Fruits Sunday. It doesn't matter "what" we put in the basket, what matters is that we put something in...showing that we really care for the hungry in our community. First Fruits Sunday is the first Sunday of each month. Thanksgiving and Christmas is coming and following that...winter! Do our neighbors pay the heat bill or, do they roll-up in blankets and have something to eat? Jesus tells us to, "love our neighbors as ourselves".—Sally Farner, coordinator



Next First Fruits Sunday is Sunday, December 3rd!

Opportunities to Help our Own!!



Mid-November you will have the opportunities to help some families in our own child care center. Each year our childcare staff identifies a couple of families that could need some help to provide a nice Christmas for their families. Right in our own childcare we have families that are hard working essential workers but still have difficulty caring for their families. We will have our little giving tree out soon with their needs and wants displayed on the tree. Please consider taking a tag or two off the tree and bringing in some gifts for these families. Before Christmas we will gather together and wrap the gifts.

Sharie— Coordinator

Progress?

Is there really anything new under the sun? Following, is a record of debates conducted at Yale College between 1750 and 1795: Is the Bible the actual word of God? Should polygamy be lawful? Do miracles prove a Devine revelation? Is deception ever lawful? Ought a person be punished for a crime committed when in a state of intoxication? Should a person be imprisoned for debt? Would fore-knowledge increase our happiness? Should property ownership be required in order to vote? Is raising money by lotteries politic? Should a representative be directed by their constituents? Can universal salvation be proved from scripture? Are theaters beneficial? Here it is over three-hundred years later and we still have made very little...if any, progress.
-Larry



**Here is an opportunity to support Lutherhaven
and have fun playing Bingo all at the same time.**

Where? McClouds Grill House

When? Sunday, December 3rd from 4:30—7:00 pm.

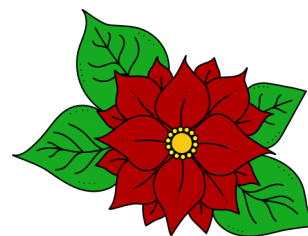
Deal With It!

Notable quotes from the past can sometimes be a great source for help with the everyday struggles with trials and tribulations. They can also cause us to face reality. Here are a couple to consider. Paul wrote to the Romans; "Suffering produces perseverance, perseverance produces character and character produces hope." Romans 8:16-27. Paul was sharing with us how to deal with life in the Spirit. Thomas Aquinas, trying to deal with the attitude of, "don't confuse me with facts, I've already made up my mind;" had this to say in his best Latin..."ignorantia affectata." (A willful ignorance). - Larry



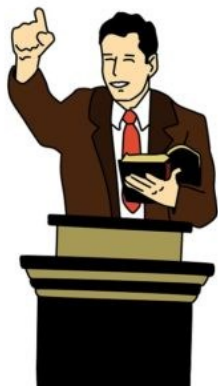
Ordering Poinsettias

Yes, it is that time of the year already. Soon we will be taking orders for Christmas Poinsettias to help adorn our altar at Christmas. Order forms will be available soon.



The Sermon

How many sermons have we actually listened to? Rather than, how many have we just sat through? Why do we have sermons anyway? What is the purpose of a sermon? Why has our Lord chosen to speak to us in-part by way of a sermon? Those of us raised in the Church just accepted the teaching of the Word delivered to us via our Pastors. Then, some of us began to doubt, to question. We didn't leave the Church or actually reject the word-we instead began to search. We searched the word, we consulted commentaries, we investigated other religious doctrines. We even enrolled in College studying Religion, only to realize that even Christian leaders who we would expect to be like minded were anything but. And then, we came to that reasonable conclusion that; If God was real, if everything in the Bible was true, then, logic demanded that somewhere along the line we would discover proof. We were looking for reason... the very evidence of proof! God knows all about our futile struggle, our search, because we are human and we are His human. There finally does come a time, His time, when we come to understand that "faith begins when human reason leave off". A time when we are really listening to a sermon and realize that while the Pastor is speaking to our minds-our reason, the Holy Spirit is speaking to our hearts. Even Martin Luther in his wisdom had come to the conclusion that he could not possibly live-up to the expectations of God. That he was doomed to fail, simply because of his own human weakness. Then, brother Martin discovered IN THE WORD, that it is God who works in our lives, it is His Holy Spirit that saves us and guides us in our faith journey. Salvation is not something we earn and being a true believer is not based on a survey of the NT and OT - it is the Holy Spirit, that still small and persistent voice that speaks to our heart...it is the will of God. So, why the sermon? Because the sermon isn't just a story or a list of rules...it's our story, our journey and God's rules.



Helping with Coffee Hour

There are several ways you can help with coffee hour. 1. You can sign up to host a Sunday. 2. You can put money in the offering and designate it for coffee hour. Or 3. You can talk to Rose Link or Teresa Prange and ask what you can bring to help supplement the coffee hour refreshments.



Prepare for Battle!

“A man’s foes shall be they of his own household” (Matthew 10:36). Whenever they investigate a murder or an assault, the police first set out to investigate relatives or close friends. When we are almost overwhelmed with the news of armed conflict between Israel and Palestine, we tend to scratch our heads and ask, “Aren’t they related, don’t both sides serve the God of Abraham”? Then, there is the war between Russia and the Ukraine-both sides following the Orthodox Christian Church. What is happening with these evil conflicts is tragic in so many different ways. And, most tragic is that people; men, women and children on both sides of these conflicts will become the ultimate victims. However, other than praying for the victims, we need ourselves to be vigilant and prepare to confront the evil that is overtaking our own nation-the rejection of Christianity in America. The author Auden, clearly warns us, “Evil is unspectacular and always human, and shares our bed and eats at our table.” Be prepared!

Larry

Bible Study and Sunday School for all ages!!

Thursday Bible Study—10 AM
taught by Pastor Rob Stroud

Sunday Children’s Bible School—9 AM
taught by Judy Armstrong and assisted by
Chelette Williams

Sunday Bible Study—9 AM
taught by Pastor Gary Koutsopoulos



November Birthdays

- 1-----Victoria Boisjolie
- 1-----Lyn Herr
- 1-----Larry Farner
- 4-----Delores Stroud
- 6-----Pastor Tim Cartwright
- 13-----Carmen (Childcare Staff)
- 22-----Callie Woodward

November Anniversaries

- 3-----Patrick & Victoria Gehring
- 16-----Jay & Stephanie Johnson
- 19-----Josh & Rosie Armstrong
- 20-----Bob & Cheryl Fox (missionaries)
- 24-----Larry & Sally Farner

December Birthdays

- 2-----Brian Boisjolie
- 6-----Mollie Erickson
- 7-----Bonnie Mace
- 19-----Emma Atienza
- 20-----Matthew Johnson

If you have any additions or corrections to our birthday or anniversary list please let our editor, Sharie Adrig, know at gadrig@comcast.net



Thank You, LORD!

Men's Fellowship Breakfast

Men's Fellowship Breakfast is being held at 8:30 am the second Saturday of each month at All Star Lanes in Silverdale. If you would like to receive email updates on this please let Glen Adrig know so that your name and email can be added to the contact list.



Members Serving in November

- Altar Guild-----Sally Farner
- Reader-----Judy Armstrong
- Acolytes- 5. Tiffany-12, Bella
19, Nathan--26, Tiffany

Members Serving in December

- Altar Guild-----Teresa Prange (Sat)
Carol Henning (Sun)
- Reader -----Maurine Simons
- Acolytes -----to be announced

What's Coming Up?

November

- 5-----9 am---Adult Bible Study
Children's Sunday School
- 6-----6 pm ---Kitsap Peninsula
Knitting Guild
- 8-----12, noon---Women's Lunch
- 9-----10 am---Bible Study
- 11-----10 am---OCC packing party
- 12-----9 am ---Adult Bible Study
Children's Sunday School
10 am ---Worship Service
- 15-----Noon ---Women's Lunch
- 16-----10 am ---Bible Study
- 19-----9 am---Adult Bible Study
Children's Sunday School
10 am---Worship Service
- 22-----12, noon---Thanksgiving Service
- 26-----9 am ---Adult Bible Study
Children's Sunday School

December

- 2-----10 am---Advent Decorating party
- 3-----9 am---Adult Bible Study
Children's Sunday school
- 4-----6 pm-----Kitsap Peninsula
Knitting Guild Christmas Party
- 6-----12, noon---Women's Lunch
- 7-----10 am ---Bible Study