

Sunday Notes

December 20, 2020

RESTORE: now for tomorrow trusting God and each other

Advent Sunday Worship – Sundays at 9:00 am we will celebrate the Coming of Christ through the lens of a sermon series titled, *“Ornaments of Grace.”* Each week will explore a different ornament from God’s tree, the Jesse Tree. Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace will be the ornaments for our reflection. Worship will be in the Sanctuary and online.

Do you want Communion

And are not coming to church?

I have been asked if people who are not worshipping live at St. Luke’s can pick up a communion packet from Church and join us on-line. This is a reasonable question but poses many theological challenges. Without getting too deep in the discussion, our belief is that the Lord’s Table is a community event where God’s real presence is shared by God’s baptized and confirmed people publicly together. Our public confession of “sharing a common thing,” the definition of the Greek word *koinonia*, is a statement about the forgiveness we who eat together share.

We have made accommodation in the church for people physically unable to attend through private communion administered by a Pastor or church Elder. At St. Luke’s we consecrate elements on the altar every Sunday anticipating their use as an extension of the table at that service.

COVID-19 poses unique challenges to the definition of who is unable to attend worship. While the temptation is to set aside our long-standing theological position, we must be careful that we don’t act in ways that reduce our faithfulness of God’s intent and the proper administration of the sacrament as the Confessions intend.

To balance the need to be faithful to our theological foundations and to honor God’s intention to make His grace available to as many of His people as we can,

we will set aside an opportunity this coming **Sunday, December 20 from 11:00 am – 11:30 am** for those who are not attending live worship to receive God's gifts.

I will be in the South Parking lot at 11:00 am. Any St. Luke's member who desires to take communion may come to the parking lot and be communed. You will not have to get out of your car. Simply drive into the queue line where I will deliver absolution, extend the gifts of Christ and give you a blessing. I will wear a mask. This will be a touchless exchange.

While not perfect this is the best that I can think of to provide what you need in a way that is safe and promotes good health. What we do in the New Year is always under consideration as we continue to fight against this terrible disease. Thank you for your understanding and may God be with you. See full statement below.

Christmas Eve – We will celebrate the birth of Jesus in one public worship service on Christmas Eve at 5:30 pm with a Service of Lessons and Carols. The service will be livestreamed on our Facebook Group page, *St. Luke's Montgomery*. If you do not currently subscribe to the group page search for *St. Luke's Montgomery* and ask for an invitation. Hint, this is the page with a lobster dinner as the header. Please share with family and friends as well

Sunday Worship – As we continue to meet in the Sanctuary, we will observe all recommended health and safety protocols such as masks and social distancing. While it is difficult, please refrain from physical contact while at church to maintain the good health of you and your neighbors. In the event we have too many people in attendance to adhere to social distancing protocols, we will add seating in the Narthex and balcony.

Connecting – If your group or ministry is resuming public gathering, send your info to Chris Hansen at churchoffice@stlcfamily.org by Thursday and she will include it in the Friday issue of Sunday Notes.

PREPARATION TO COME TO COMMUNION

Please examine yourself as instructed by St. Paul with the following questions and the Biblical answers. If you are in certain agreement with all of these, then we invite you to join us at the Lord's table.

Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself.

Corinthians 11:27-28

In preparation to come to the Supper of our Lord, I ask you, are you a Baptized believer in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?

Yes, I have been baptized into the name of the one true God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Matthew 28:16-20)

Have you been instructed about the Lord's Supper and understand why God gives us his gifts?

Yes, I have been instructed concerning the meaning of Holy Communion, and I understand the importance of self-examination prior to coming to the Lord's Supper.

1 Corinthians 11:27-29

Are you a sinner and sorry for your sins?

Yes, I confess that I am a sinner in need of forgiveness. I am sorry for my sins.

1 John 1:8-9

Who do you say Jesus of Nazareth is?

I believe that Jesus is the Christ, God's Son, He is my savior from sin, death, and the power of the devil.

Romans 3:21-24

What do you believe about this Supper?

I believe that the body and blood of Jesus Christ are really present in the bread and wine of Holy Communion, and I desire to receive Christ's body and blood, by receiving both the bread and the wine, given and shed for the forgiveness of sins.

Matthew 26:26-28

Do you have unreconciled relationships where you are withholding forgiveness from a brother or sister?

As far as I know, I am at peace with everyone. I harbor no hatred or vengeance in my heart.

Matthew 6:14-15

Is it your intention to abide by the pledge of your confirmation of faith to follow Jesus Christ and obey his commands?

By the power of the Holy Spirit, I desire and intend to lead a more Godly and Christ-like life, trusting in God's promises and obeying his commands.

Colossians 3:1, 5, 12

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