



BLUEPRINTS

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church Newsletter

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May 2020

“Very well, by God’s decree the enemy has sent us poison and deadly offal. Therefore I shall ask God mercifully to protect us. Then I shall fumigate, help purify the air, administer medicine, and take it.

I shall avoid places and persons where my presence is not needed in order not to become contaminated and thus perchance infect and pollute others, and so cause their death as a result of my negligence.

If God should wish to take me, He will surely find me and I have done what He has expected of me and so I am not responsible for either my own death or the death of others.

If my neighbor needs me, however, I shall not avoid place or person but will go freely, as stated above. See, this is such a God-fearing faith because it is neither brash nor foolhardy and does not tempt God.”

—Martin Luther, “Whether One May Flee From a Deadly Plague,” Luther’s Works, Vol. 43: Devotional Writings II (ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann; vol. 43; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1999), 43: 131–132.

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Dear People of God,

Let's not go back to normal.

What was normal, after all, but a false assumption about the world and our place in it. Built on the flawed understanding that we are in control. We're not.

Normal was how we construct this worldview by holding on to certain conventions while dismissing others, all out of ego and an inflated sense of self-importance. Normal is a lie, a facade, a closed tomb. Let's not go back to normal.

To do so would mean we worship ourselves and not the Living Lord. To go back to normal would be to pretend that the virus was an exception, an unusual event, a blip in an otherwise understandable and manageable universe. To go back to normal would be to pretend that sin, evil, and death doesn't exist. To go back perpetuates the myth that it is all about us. It isn't.

It is the dawning of a new day, my friends, the birth pangs of a new reality. The stone is gone! All that we thought was possible, probably, predictable and permanent, changed on that bright morning. We have come face to face with our own mortality and the mortality of our worldview.

We are now at a moment of decision. Do we seek comfort in the former or do we move toward the future with Easter eyes, recalculate the possibilities of life amid illness, disease and death? Do we continue to admire an empty tomb, longing for what was or do we follow the Risen Lord?

The Christ of scripture says that if you want to be first, you must be last; if you want to live, you have to die; and if you want to hold on to anything – health, wealth, family, life - you have to do so with open hands.

So, now with Christ ahead of us, let's step out of normal into his resurrection life. Let's follow the living Lord by dying to self and by keeping our hands open for the amazing gifts and promises of God that flow to us unconditionally.

What will it mean for you to live as a baptized child of God in this new reality? And because there is no such thing as an individual Christian, what will it mean for you to live with others? Are you ready for a life outside the tomb, a life of surprises, a life of love and abundance?

Let's leave normal behind, cling to each other, and the God who has called us together to be Prince of Peace Lutheran Church. A new day awaits us, someplace better.

Can I get an Amen?



The Rev. Paul Lutz, Pastor.

VIRTUAL WORSHIP



Please join us whenever convenient for your household for virtual worship. Each Sunday service is posted by 8 a.m. on our website. The abbreviated virtual worship experience including hymns you can sing along with, a gospel story worth telling, a sermon that speaks to our current reality, prayers for the community and world and community announcements about what's happening at PoP. Check your email for the link or go our website (<http://princeofpeacebrookfield.org/>) and click on the date of the service you would like to experience.

OFFERING AND TITHES

Please help us stay current with our financial obligations during this difficult time.

We say "Thank You" to all who have mailed in their offerings.

We are now able to offer online giving here.



Now you can give a one time gift or a reoccurring gift through a checking account or a debit/credit card.

Please use this link to set up. <https://princeofpeacebrookfield.org/giving/>

REACHING OUT.....
.....
.....
..TO YOUR PASTOR?

HOW TO REACH THE PASTOR

And as always, Pastor Lutz is easily accessible. You can e-mail him

(poppastorpaul@sbcglobal.net), call him on his cell (609.578.7921) or post on his Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/plutznj>). Although there will be no regular office hours, the church phone is checked every couple of days for messages.

REPORT FROM COUNCIL

At the April 15th Zoom Council meeting the following items were discussed:

- Affirmed the building closure until further notice
- Applied (April 4th) for a Cares Act/Payroll Protect Program grant
- Reviewed virtual worship services, Fellowship/Coffee Hours, and the new online giving options
- Discussed current and projected deficit budget and agreed to reduce payroll across the board, (Preschool Director, Deb Nobes, Assistant Director; Heidi Riddle; Choir Directors, Laurie and Kevin Fay: and Pastor Lutz) by 20% effective May.1.2020 As an hourly employee Rene, our office administrator, gets paid only for the hours she works. She is currently working around 10 hours per week at home and in the office
- Heard a Preschool update
- Explored possible dates for Confirmation/Affirmation of Baptism for seven 8th graders
- Discussed possibilities of a social distancing congregational meeting in June



LET US PRAY

O God, where hearts are fearful and constricted, grant courage and hope.

Where anxiety is infectious and widening, grant peace and reassurance

Where impossibilities close every door and window, grant imagination and resistance.

Where distrust twists our thinking, grant healing and illumination.

Where spirits are daunted and weakened, grant soaring wings and strengthened dreams.

All these things we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen. (Evangelical Lutheran Worship, Additional Prayers, pg. 72-87)

IT'S NOON. LET US PRAY

Join Pastor Lutz each day at noon (until further notice) in prayer.
Set an alarm, mark your watch, etc.



May we who are merely inconvenienced remember those whose lives are at stake.

May we who have no risk factors remember those most vulnerable.

May we who have the luxury of working from home remember those who must choose between preserving their health and making their rent.

May we who have the flexibility to care for our children when their schools close, remember those who have no options.

May we who have to cancel our trips remember those who have no safe place to go.

May we who are losing our margin money in the tumult of our economic market remember those who have no margin at all.

May we who settle in for a quarantine at home remember those who have no home.

As fear grips our country let us choose Love.

During this time when we cannot physically wrap our arms around each other.

Let us find ways to be the loving embrace of God to our neighbors.

Amen.

(Cameron Wiggins Beld)

I'LL SAY IT AGAIN!!!

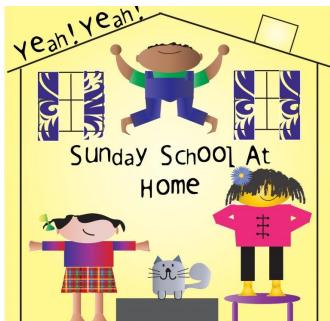
If the school closures have you concerned about your child not being able to eat breakfast or lunch let me know. I will do what I can to help. A box of cereal, gallon of milk, bread, pb&j- just let me know. Feel free to contact me - no judgement!

This also goes for the elderly! If you know someone in need -please reach out!

I have heard from several members also willing to help as needed. Please be in touch. It is what church is all about, helping each other,

P.S. if you are ever worried about how you are going to feed your kiddo(s) or yourself we will figure it out together.

FAITH FORMATION AT HOME



Parents of Sunday School children, we are supplying several options for faith formation at home. Download the Taking Faith Home insert from our website for daily family prayers, rituals and traditions. In addition on the web page there are Sunday School readings, questions, and activities that correspond to the bible story presented in the worship clip

Parents of Confirmants, we have moved to a Zoom class every Tuesday. Let me know if you have any questions.

Adult learners, I would like to also create an Adult Faith Formation blog to continue our learning. How many would be interested in such an experience? We could also hold the Woman's Bible Study online with Zoom. Ladies, are you interested?



As a friend of mine said recently, it is also a time to recall that our God is an abundant, enduring and fiercely caring God who responds to our prayers by reminding us we are all ministers capable of serving our neighbors and the common good at ANY time.

NEW WAY TO BE THE CHURCH

So, what ideas do you have for new ways to be the church at a time like this? Here are some thoughts that may trigger some ideas for you.



- Take care of yourself. Read. Try to relax. I've rekindled a new music listening habit that had gone away because of a busy life. Restoring the practice has been such a gift. Exercise 30 minutes a day if you can. Taking a walk works.
- Reach out to others in new ways. Social distancing does not have to mean social absence. Try a Zoom meeting. Stay in touch with PoP friends by cell phone, email or by writing a compassionate note.
- Renew or energize family relationships and relationships with other friends with whom you've lost touch. You may have "forced" free time now to build on relationships that have lagged.
- Check on your neighbors. You can still knock on a door and give the gift of a smile, showing that you care. (That would be a group of less than 5, right?)
- Have a grudge against someone? No time like the present to mend fences.
- Say thanks to a doctor or nurse or EMT volunteer you know who may be having a tough time right now.
- Keep your offerings to the church going. Thanks to you, the ministry of PoP continues in the hardest of times. Remember PoP, its pastor and faithful staff and leaders in your prayers
- Others?

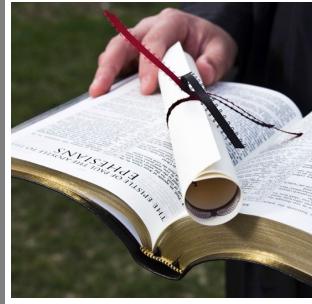
GRADUATION?

Have a soon-to-be graduate in your family? Consider the following resource as a way to help make it even more memorable.



“The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.”

—Eleanor Roosevelt



Graduation Milestone Moment Online

Sometimes it is not possible for families and friends to physically gather together to celebrate a special occasion. This Graduation Milestone Moment Online provides desired outcomes, suggestions, and a discussion guide to use for an online celebration of a graduation. A graduation gifting stone is shown as a possible inexpensive send-ahead gift to remind the graduate of the online celebration. Just because families cannot get together in person does not mean they can not still share the joy of this important life milestone and recognize God's presence in the moment.

Desired Outcomes:

- Provide a discussion guide for faith-filled conversations to have online with the graduate to recognize God in this moment.
- Celebrate this special time in one's life when graduation ceremonies are being canceled or rescheduled due to mandatory stay at home restrictions.
- Experience prayers and blessings from family and friends that provide a memorable moment for the graduate.
- Send messages of love and support by creatively using online resources that surround the graduate with the love and grace of God.

Suggestions:

- Be creative! Send gifts ahead of time to the graduate that can be opened while you are meeting.
- Use Zoom, Google, House Party or other online venues to meet with family and friends.
- Send a picture that all can use as a fun virtual background to celebrate this occasion.
- Design a slide show of pictures (maybe set to music) of the graduate.
- Invite all participants to pre-record a message for the graduate and show the videos during the time you meet.
- Build a gameshow with multiple choice questions about the graduate's life for all to have fun guessing the correct answer. A good site for this is kahoot.com.
- Provide a graduation cap and gown the graduate can wear or a special T-shirt.





“The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.”

— Eleanor Roosevelt



Graduation Discussion Guide

Begin by sharing a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your lives and then use the outline below to talk about faith and God's presence in this moment.



Caring Conversations

Discuss these thoughts and questions:

- What are some memorable stories of [graduate's name or "my"] previous years of schooling?
- What is something you look forward to within the next year?
- In 10 years, I predict [graduate's name or "I"] will be looking forward to ...



Devotions

Read the following:

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. Psalm 119:105 (NRSV)

- Where will you be "walking" in the next year?
- What word in this reading jumps out to you when you think of the coming year? Explain.



Service

God's love is shown through acts of service. Consider what acts of service you can do with friends and/or roommates while away from home. Whether you live at home or have moved away, consider what acts of service you can do with friends and/or family to help others.



Rituals and Traditions

Invite each person on screen to light a candle, or show a candle digitally on the screen. Ask each person to say a short prayer for the graduate by completing one of these, "God I pray for..." or "God I am thankful for..." or "God, I hope..."

Pray together:

GOD of creation, pour out your Spirit on as he/she enters a new period of life and faith. Be with as he/she begins new ventures knowing you have blessed him/her with hope and joy through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Conclude by all extending hands towards the screen for a blessing of the graduate:

May God be a light unto your path this day and always.

HOW TO BE A STEWARD IN TODAY'S ECONOMY: MONEY FROM THE GOVERNMENT

I want to give you something to consider. It is looking as many citizens will receive a check from the government sometime in the near future. Like with all of your income, I invite you to join with me in considering a tithe.



A tithe is the giving of a percentage (typically 10%) of salary, financial gifts, interest, winnings or other income to others out of Christian concern. Jesus taught that "tithing must be done in conjunction with a deep concern for justice, mercy and faithfulness" (Matthew 23:23).

I invite you to consider any payment from our government as subject to tithing. There are many worthy organizations, small businesses, and efforts that would benefit from your generosity. Supporting "Brookfield Recovers", the Dorothy Day House, your favorite local business, restaurant, coffee house, or favorite charity, to name a few.

To be clear, this is not a request to send money to Prince of Peace. This is an invitation to see this government payment as an opportunity to practice tithing. I am encouraging you to continue to be the church in the world by helping others in need with an act of justice, mercy, and faithfulness.

Let me know where you tithe goes. I will pray for the business.

~ Pastor Lutz



NAOMI CIRCLE

The Naomi circle will wait to schedule its next meeting until the church is open again. If you are home and would like to sew tops or cut fabric squares please contact Karen Muller at karmull@sbcglobal.net or 203 743 6750. We can arrange a no contact drop off.



UPDATE ON SUMMER 2020 VBS

There will be no Brookfield Ecumenical Vacation Bible School this year due to the COVID19 virus.

MASKS AND SCRUB CAPS



The mask and scrub cap group, sometimes called, "The Merry Mask Makers" has satisfied the needs of the Emergency Department at Danbury Hospital, but we will continue to make scrub caps and masks for nurses who work on the Covid-19 Unit.

We will be making items for the visiting Nurses, local nursing homes and Regional Hospice in Danbury. Although there are some medical supplies, there is never enough to meet the needs at this time. Staff frequently use a single mask for extended periods of time. The masks are frequently worn over the N-95 masks to extend the use. As a mask becomes moist from talking and breathing, it can transmit particles of the virus so extra layers can improve safety. Remember to wash your masks.

On Monday, Pastor Lutz blessed 80 scrub caps and 60 masks. The grand total is 300 scrub caps and 380 masks. This does not count the masks which have been made for individuals and families in the community. One member sent masks to Texas for her family. There's no limit to what we can do for others.

We continue to supply masks for our church and community. Let us know your needs.

STAY HOME and BE SAFE.

~ Nan Carlson

BROOKFIELD RECOVERS

“Brookfield Recovers” is a special fund created to assist residents impacted by the Covid19 emergency. Brookfield is an extremely generous town, so it’s not surprising that we’ve been overwhelmed with inquiries from residents about “how can we help?” This is how you can help Brookfield residents. Donations will be administered by the town’s Department of Social Services with 100% of all contributions directly benefiting residents in need.

Funds will be used to purchase items to resupply our food pantry and to assist clients impacted with basic needs to help them stay in their homes. Your gift will have a measurable and immediate impact on friends and neighbors. Please consider a donation to Brookfield Recovers.

All donations are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.

You may send a donation via check, payable to:

Town of Brookfield

(note Brookfield Recovers on the memo line)

Brookfield Social Services

100 Pocono Road

Brookfield CT 06804

Thank you for your support.



MAY BIRTHDAYS

2	Barbara Bruno, Bruce Macdonald Kim Weis
4	Emil Manka, Jr.
5	Ken Schulz Rebecca Adam
6	Joe Roginski
8	Ellen McRedmond Elizabeth Schretzenmayer Noah Schretzenmayer
10	Cynthia Nabozny
12	Heather Pontonio
14	Ernest Lehman Tim Maier
20	Patricia Fecarotta
21	Joe Cantone Tim Peterson
31	Andrew Koehm Bill Weis

CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY

Our thoughts and prayers are with the family of Kevin Fay on the death of his sister Joyce Ahearn.

Please keep the family in your prayers.

SOCIAL DISTANCING WITH SOCIAL SOLIDARITY?

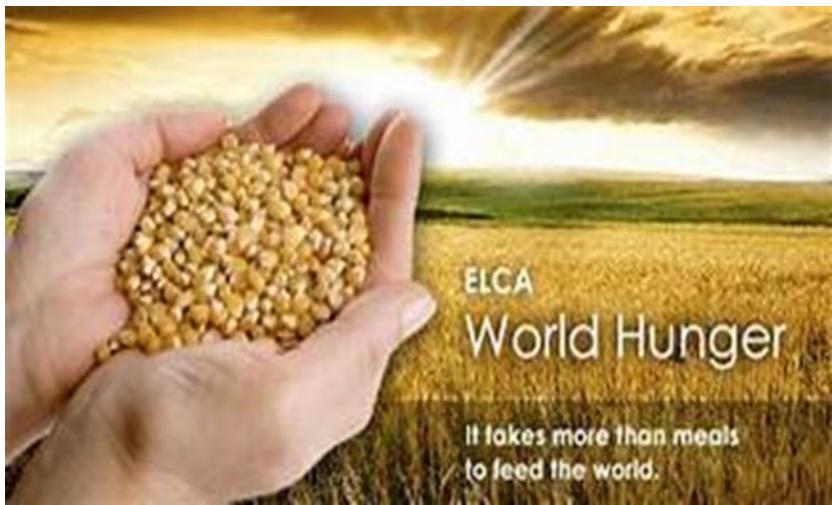
Every night from 7:00-7:02 p.m. go outside or open a window and clap, bang some pots, ring a bell, make some noise to show support for health care workers and everyone on the front lines and to remind us that we are united even as we are separated. This started in Ridgefield. Let the sound be heard all over Connecticut.



MAY ANNIVERSARIES

9	Anneliese & Anton Menrath
20	Pam & Ned McMillen Will & Sheryl Wagner
21	Michael & Margaret Nicolais
27	Richard & Joan Estey

If your birthday or anniversary is not listed in Blueprints and you would like it to be please contact Rene at the Church office.



***PRINCE OF PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH,
Brookfield, CT***

Thank you for your faithful service in sharing your God-given financial resources with the ELCA World Hunger Program! Your generosity is helping people have sustainable lives. Through gifts like yours, people in over 60 countries have better agricultural resources, access to clean water, nutritious food, education for children, effective ways to earn a living and better health care. According to the ELCA World Hunger Program, your church for fiscal year 2019 has given to the ELCA World Hunger Program: **\$6,180.**

This reflects # 5 in congregational giving in the New England Synod.

Pastor David Rinas and Doreen Rinas, Co-Chairpersons

New England Synod World Hunger Team

Virtual Worship Services

We are online for worship, study, giving and fellowship!

Go to our website to experience our virtual worship and giving opportunities.

Zoom confirmation happens on Tuesday evenings and a Zoom Women's Bible Study happens on the third Wednesday (5.20) at 10:00 a.m.

Join us each Sunday at 11:00 a.m. for a Zoom Fellowship/Coffee Hour.

For more information and a secure invite, please contact Pastor Lutz.

Contact Us

Pastor: The Rev. Paul Lutz

Website: www.princeofpeacebrookfield.org

E-mail: poplutheranchurch@sbcglobal.net

Phone: (203) 775-9070

Fax: (203) 775-9573

Our vision...

"Prince of Peace is a loving and caring family of Christians. We gather to hear the Christian story in word and song and to experience that story through the sacraments. The members of our family are involved in a mission of Christian unity. Through worship and Christian fellowship we are empowered to commit our talents in a way that makes a difference in our lives and the lives of those we touch."

PRINCE OF PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
P.O. BOX 5184
119 JUNCTION ROAD
BROOKFIELD, CT 06804

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

**DATED MATERIAL, PLEASE DELIVER
RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED
ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED**

May 2020