

CASL *Communication*

While we are not gathering in person, each week there are opportunities for spiritual growth, reflection, discussion:

- Pastor Paul sends a devotional each week on Tuesday
- Evening Prayer is held on Tuesday evenings at 7:00 p.m.
- Bible Study is held on Wednesdays at 11:30 a.m. The scripture lessons for the upcoming Sunday are sent each week and used for study and discussion.



FROM PASTOR PAUL



“On this mountain the Lord Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine—the best of meats and the finest of wines. 7On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; 8he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign Lord will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove his people’s disgrace from all the earth. Isaiah 25:6-8

There are days when we look around and think, "How can this culture be called a Christian culture?" Most people in America probably think that, in some sense, we are a Godly nation because we were founded by a group who left England to escape religious persecution. But running from one form of persecution does not guarantee that those hierarchical values will not follow us. We can say this because it didn't take long for the colonizers to destroy the way of life of the Indigenous people on this continent for the sake of their own values. It did not take long for the scourge of slavery to infect the lives of those "religious" folks who just wanted to live life in the way they saw as right. In Isaiah 25, the prophet speaks the Word of the Lord when he says, "The Lord Almighty will prepare a feast for ALL people..." This understanding does not exclude those who look differently; it does not exclude those who think differently; it does not exclude those who understand sexual or gender identity differently; and it does not exclude those who seek God differently. All means ALL. God is in the INCLUSION business. And if there is any exclusion to be done, it is God alone who has that prerogative. This week, I invite you to ponder what it means that God is inclusive. Think about the group or individual to whom you would say, "You are only welcome here if..." and allow God to soften your hearts by the grace of Jesus Christ, so that we can all be part of ALL.

Holy God, in your mercy, you have set a feast of the rich food of diversity and joy in our world for us to enjoy. Help us to see the other as a sibling, rather than a project; help us to know that it is you alone who called the world into being; help us to remember that you call all people to you, and we are simply invited to witness your glory. Amen.

KEY DATES

All Ministry Meeting - TBD
Book Study – August 25th
Dinner at Urban Ministries of Durham – August 29th
Breakfast at Urban Ministries of Durham – August 31st

Sunday School for All Ages Returns – September 12th
God’s Work Our Hands – September 12th
Stewardship Sunday – October 17th
Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting – November 14th



Online Worship

The congregation council decided to move back to online worship via zoom. This decision was made based on the uncertainty surrounding the virus and hopeful start of the expansion to the church building. In response to the rising Delta Variant, Durham officials have announced a state of emergency with an indoor mask requirement effective August 9. Abiding Savior is anticipating a September start to the expansion project.

Plans are to worship online for the next 2-3 months. The congregation council will revisit online and in person worship at its October council meeting

HOLY COMMUNION DURING ONLINE WORSHIP

The gift of Holy Communion, The Lord's Supper, is central to our faith. As we move back to online worship Pastor Paul and members of the worship ministry committee discussed celebration, consecration and distribution of Holy Communion.

Since we cannot, with certainty, plan for the time when we will return to in-person worship the group considered ways to make Holy Communion available while we worship online. Beginning in September, communion will be available on the first Sunday of each month. During October, Holy Communion will be available on the first Sunday in October and again on October 31st, Reformation Sunday.

Our understanding of Holy Communion is that it takes place in the assembly. On Holy Communion Sundays, Pastor Paul will preach and preside on zoom from the sanctuary. The worship assistant will also be in the sanctuary. Consecration of the Bread and Wine will take place during the zoom worship service. The Bread and Wine are pre-packaged in kits. Following worship service, the communion kits will be distributed to the congregation who will be invited to "drive by" and pick up a communion kit.



Status of the Expansion Project

The building permit for the expansion project which includes the addition of accessible restrooms and two small conference rooms at the front of the building, has been submitted to the city of Durham for approval. Frank Reade has agreed to be the project manager. Once the permit is approved, the project is expected to take around 90 days to complete.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School for youth and adults is on hiatus for the summer. Both will resume on Sunday, September 12th using zoom. Adults use the "Wired Word", a resource connecting current events and scripture. The Youth gather in a zoom breakout room. For additional information or to volunteer, please contact Paula Kelly.

Outreach

During the pandemic, our Outreach ministry has continued to provide Dinner and Breakfast at Urban Ministries of Durham. Dinner is prepared and served on the 5th Sunday of months with 5 Sundays and breakfast is provided on the 5th Tuesday of months with 5 Tuesdays.

Things have changed, the number of persons served has decreased and the rules have changed. The need still exists and this is still an impactful ministry. We adapt to the protocols and guidelines at Urban Ministries but continue to serve our siblings who are hungry and in need.

Whether you plan, shop, cook, serve or write a grant to support this important ministry, your efforts and support are needed and there is work to do. There are 2 opportunities to serve in August, Sunday August 28th and Tuesday, August 31st.

Gardening

Work in the Small Community Garden has continued during the summer. Produce is abundant and has been shared with the congregation and with our neighbors. Tomatoes have been canned and hot pepper sauce has been prepared using peppers from the garden. There are opportunities to work in the garden on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday mornings from 8 – 10 am.



The youth and Faith Formation Ministry had 2 days where the youth were invited to paint signs to identify the vegetables in the garden. Each youth received a basil cutting and a flower pot to grow basil in their homes. Their next project will include using the basil in a cooking project.

God's work. Our hands.

September 12, 2021

This day is an opportunity to celebrate who we are as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America – one church, freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor. Abiding Savior members continue in the rich tradition of sharing the love of Jesus in our local community. Service activities offer an opportunity for us to explore one of our most basic convictions as Lutherans: that all of life in Jesus Christ – every act of service, in every daily calling, in every corner of life – flows freely from a living, daring confidence in God's grace.

You will receive details regarding Abiding Savior's "God's Work. Our Hands" projects with opportunities to participate.

Reformation Sunday October 31, 2021

On this day we celebrate the heart of our faith: the Gospel of Christ, the Good News, that makes us free! We have the assurance that humans may reach salvation by their faith and not by their deeds.



All Saint's Sunday – November 7, 2021

The day on which we remember with thanksgiving those who have lived and died in the faith. It is also a time when we are reminded to make an offering toward the Mary Holeman Fund. This fund is used to provide assistance to those who are terminally or chronically ill or who are identified with special needs related to acute illness.

Weekly News

During the pandemic, sharing announcements following worship has been challenging, especially when livestreaming to YouTube and to a zoom session. We want to keep all in the congregation updated, yet need to be conscientious and prevent sharing personal information during online worship. As we learn more and become aware, changes are implemented. Pastor Paul now uses first names only during the prayers and announcements are not shared on YouTube. Announcements and weekly activities will be sent out on Monday of each week. Also included will be known activities and meetings with associated links. To have your announcements included please send them to: abidingsavior.news@gmail.com by 8:00 a.m. on Monday morning

Holden Evening Prayer on Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m.

This contemplative prayer service is held each week via zoom, using resources developed for Holden Village. Holden Village is a year-round Lutheran renewal Christian center in the Northern Cascade mountains in the state of Washington. Each year Holden invites persons from all across the globe to create community through participation in the Holden Evening Prayer.



Semi-Annual Meeting

The 2021 Fall Semi-Annual Meeting of the congregation will be held following worship via zoom on November 14th. At this meeting, the congregation will vote on a 2022 spending plan.

In Reach Book Study

The in-reach ministry will have their second book discussion about *The Coming Revolution in Church Economics* by Mark Deymaz and Harry Li on Wednesday, August 25 at 6:30 pm. The discussion will be held on Zoom. In reach is buying a few copies of the book, so if you would like one, please contact Jared Ericson or Robert Starr.

Coloring Page



Dear God,
Help me to use my hands to
do your work in the world.

Amen