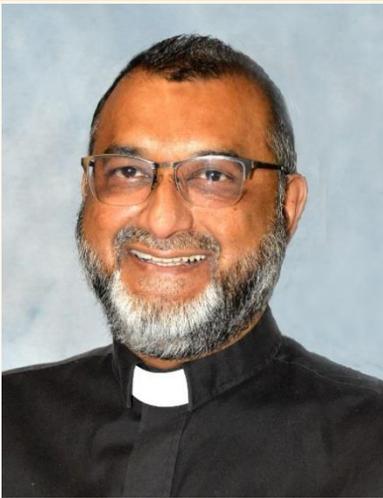


# CASL *Communicator*



## *From the Pastor's Desk*

### **Don't Look For The Saintliness, Give Thanks No Matter What**

November starts with "All Saints Day" in many traditions. Who is a saint? In the Roman Catholic tradition, there are specific criteria for canonization as an "official" saint. Besides being a devout Christian, and serving others and God in an exemplary and extraordinary way, one has to have performed verifiable miracles. In 2016, the Albanian nun commonly referred to as Mother Teresa of Calcutta, was canonized as Saint Teresa of Calcutta by Pope Francis. Following that, there



were studies done to reveal the side of Mother Teresa that the world was largely not aware of; for example, her alleged disdain for the low castes in India. One study was led by an Indian who was also from Calcutta, but moved to pursue studies in the UK. This and other studies claim that Mother Teresa was not as "saintly" as she was made out to be. This remains a controversy, so I will not quote details of the research here.

In the Lutheran tradition we remember all those who have died on All Saints Day. While recognizing many of the named Saints, Lutherans also choose to remember those who have not been canonized. This practice too, is controversial, since it is often interpreted as sanitizing (deliberate use of this word over "sanctifying") all the dead, even if their lives lacked devotion to God and/or service to people. So once again, who can be a saint? I will not answer that.

Later in November, we celebrate "Thanksgiving Day". This day too is fraught with controversy. Some say that it's a harvest festival of thanksgiving for the crops, others say it is to celebrate the coming together of the colonialists (pilgrims) and the Native Americans; and still others say it should be a day of mourning since the so-called "coming together" celebration was really cultural genocide for the Native Americans.

*in all things*  
**GIVE**  
*thanks*

I am not going to pronounce on Thanksgiving Day, just as I did not on All Saints Day. However, what I do know is that we are simultaneously saint and sinner, and it feeds the soul to be able to give thanks for what is good, and lament, if we must, the shortcomings of those we have lost. In our own little lives, if we focus on the things we can be thankful for, rather than complain about the things that we see as lacking or reason to complain about, we become miserable. So let's see the saintliness in those we love – the living and the dead – and we will have every reason to give thanks "in all things" as Paul says in 1 Thess. 5:18.

This season, be gracious and have a Happy All Saints Day and Happy Thanksgiving!

Peace be with you,  
*Pastor Terrance*

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

**Fall Semi-Annual Meeting of the Congregation** – November 20, 2022

**Construction Begins**– November 9, 2022

**Congregation Council Meetings** – 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays, following worship

**Advent Begins**– November 27, 2022

**Adult Sunday School** - The Wired Word, **Sundays** at 9:30 am onsite and on zoom

**Youth Sunday School** – Sunday Mornings before worship in a Zoom Breakout Room

## What are your thoughts?

With the availability of vaccines and as Covid guidelines are relaxed and many restrictions lifted, the congregation council would like to get information to help with planning. The information would generally provide the current pulse of the congregation and will help the congregation council with visioning and in considering ministry ideas.



- How are you doing?
- What do you think the congregation should be doing?
- What would be helpful to you?
- During this time, what might you suggest for prayer, fellowship and spiritual growth opportunities?



## CONGRATULATIONS Dr. Jennifer Webster-Cyriaque

Recently, the National Academy of Medicine (NAM) announced the election of 90 regular members and 10 international members during its annual meeting. The newly elected members included our own Jennifer Webster-Cyriaque.

Election to the Academy is considered one of the highest honors in the fields of health and medicine and recognizes individuals who have demonstrated outstanding professional achievement and commitment to service. “This extraordinary class of new members is comprised of exceptional scholars and leaders who have been at the forefront of responding to serious public health challenges, combatting social inequities, and achieving innovative discoveries,” said National Academy of Medicine President Victor J. Dzau. “Their expertise will be vital to informing the future of health and medicine for the benefit of us all.”

# INSTALLATION OF PASTOR TERRANCE JACOB

## IT WAS A SIGNIFICANT DAY

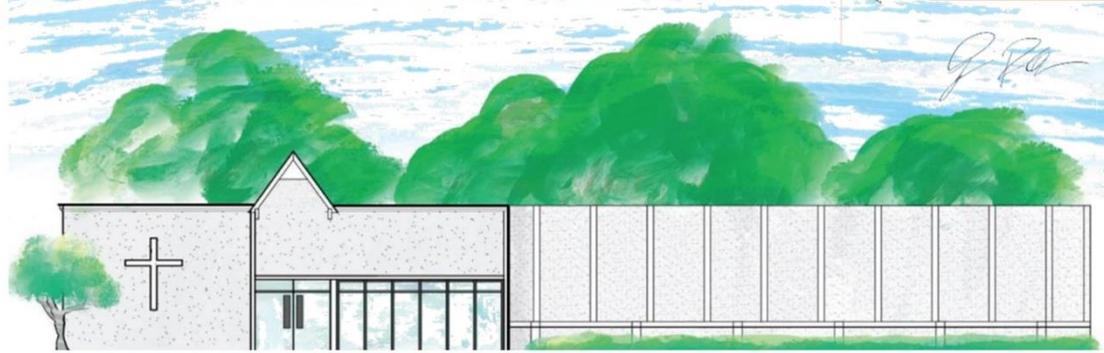
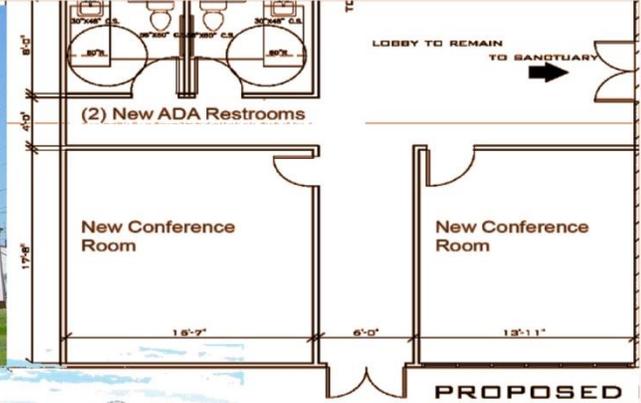
- ✚ It was a time to gather for worship and fellowship
- ✚ It marked the formal start of Pastor Terrance's ministry at Abiding Savior
- ✚ Bishop Smith presided and shared in the celebration
- ✚ Many clergy came out and participated in the worship service



## CONTINUING TO SERVE OUR NEIGHBORS

In months with 5 Sundays, Abiding Savior provides dinner at Urban Ministries of Durham (UMD). This includes menu planning, shopping, preparing the meal and serving. October 30, 2022, was not different. Many thanks to all who helped to make the spaghetti dinner at Urban Ministries' Community Café happen. With donations of food and time from the congregation and the help of a Thrivent Community Action Team grant from Linda Warren, we provided a meal to our homeless neighbors and siblings. For all the hands and hearts that shopped for ingredients, cooked, delivered food, provided assistance, and did everything needed to make this meal possible, "THANK YOU!" You are an example of God's love and you are appreciated!

## PERMITS ARE ISSUED AND CONSTRUCTION WORK IS STARTING



CHURCH OF THE  
ABIDING SAVIOR  
LUTHERAN

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

1625 S. Alston Avenue  
Durham NC 27707

*This is an important time in the life and ministry of  
Church of the Abiding Savior, Lutheran*

It has taken a while to get all of the approvals and legalities satisfied to begin the expansion project.

**Thanks be to God, we are ready to start.**

The work is already beginning and safety measures for accessing the building are being put into place. Since changes will be made to the existing front of the building, the current entry will change. A walkway will be added for side entry. Some changes will likely be in place by Sunday, November 13, 2022.

**Our worship will not change. Please come out as in-person will continue.**

## SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION

The fall, semi-annual meeting of the congregation will be held on Sunday, November 20, 2022. Each ministry has creatively considered ways to engage the congregation and has submitted plans for 2023 expenditures. The finance committee used the ministry plans to prepare a proposed budget.

The congregation council will review the proposed budget and send a 2023 proposed budget/spending plan to the congregation before the meeting.

If you have not yet submitted a pledge for 2023, please prayerfully consider making a pledge.

## REFLECTIONS FROM BISHOP TIMOTHY SMITH

It's that time of year again. Yes, the strange conflation of Thanks-oween-mas, but also election time. I'm always bewildered that so few people vote—almost always fewer than half of the eligible voters and often for local elections even fewer than 20%. County, district, and state elections matter—a lot—especially as there is growing momentum for pushing critical decisions down from federal control to the state level. This is particularly evident in immigration and refugee policies, health care funding (including accepting and allotting Medicare dollars), abortion access, gun rights, business incentives, and environmental implications, just to name a few.

I get that many of us are past frustrated with political systems, posturing, and divisions. It's hard to know whom to believe anymore, whom to trust, if anyone. Is anyone able, and does anyone prioritize over political party allegiance the best interest of all or the constitutional premise that all are created equal with certain unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness? Or is it just a game of lobbyists, donors, power, spin, and re-election above all else? Even more pressing is how we who profess to be claimed by and to follow in the way of Jesus live out our core convictions in the day-to-day world of community and relationships—which is to say, in our *politics*—which is further to say on what basis we make decisions that affect others, including the distribution of wealth?

*Politics* comes from the Greek for “affairs of the cities.” You know that Greek word *polis* for city, because you've heard of Kannapolis (Cannon City), Indianapolis (Indiana City), Minneapolis (Minnesota City), and even Superman's Metropolis (Mother City). Politics is the process of how decisions are made in groups, including how and where power resides, and can include decisions about how wealth and resources are distributed. Families, congregations, institutions, and communities all have politics, because somehow or other (assuming short of violence) decisions must be made.

People joke that if you want to get along, avoid talking about religion and politics. But that's not really possible for those of us who call ourselves Lutherans—a religion—whose first commandment insists that there will be no other gods before the one true God. Lutheran historian and theologian Martin Marty and Anglican priest Sam Wells both remind our generation of an ancient observation about politics; namely, that in any relationship over time politics are unavoidable and that as frustrating and ineffective as politics may be, the only alternative is violence. As evidenced by the attack on Speaker Pelosi's husband last week, the shooting of Rep. Steve Scalise during a congressional softball game a few years back, the violent storming of the Capitol on January 6, and endless random mass shootings, the worrisome trend seems to be bypassing the politics and opting for the violence.

On my seminary internship, I was in Berlin in 1984-85; The Wall still surrounded the city. We traveled fairly extensively in both East Germany and even in Russia. The politics in those countries at that time was of course communism. In Moscow, in March of 1985, I had a revelation. In this political system of supposed sharing equitably among all, people waited in lines for hours downtown, waiting for their one pair of shoes for the year, few had vehicles or any hope of ever having one, and citrus fruits were non-existent. But in the Outer Ring of Moscow, people lived in opulent mansions with Rolls Royces in the driveway. Capitalism and communism, no matter how they're designed in theory, have the same core problem. Greed! Sin! Why? Because both have people, and people are captive to sin and cannot free themselves.

If we can theologially as Lutherans own that sin is pervasive no matter what our form of governance, I still—after having lived up close and personal, surrounded by communism—am most grateful to cast my lot with the politics of democracy. Created in the image of God with the responsibility to deliberate morally, allowing each citizen to vote keeps us accountable to one another and to the faith we profess. If we are happy with our elected leaders, we cannot become complacent, and if we are unhappy, we always have hope in the next election.

I urge you, if you have not already, to vote. My Grandmother Smith, born in 1888, could not vote until she was 32 years old when women were granted that right with the 19th Amendment. A great majority of African Americans in the South when I was born in 1960 could not vote due to literacy tests and poll taxes intentionally designed to keep them from doing so. Voting for our leaders is a privilege in which we all bear responsibility not only as patriotism but even more as our enacted prayer for the future.

I remind you of the 1774 advice of John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, about voting, confessing that I have fallen short on items 2 and 3. I also would add that we pray for ALL candidates and for our nation and that we pray for God's wisdom and guidance as we prepare to vote.

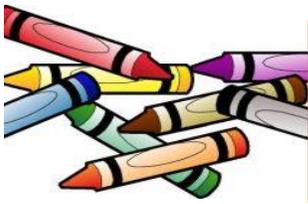
“I met those of our society who had votes in the ensuing election, and advised them:

1. To vote, without fee or reward, for the person they judged most worthy.
2. To speak no evil of the person they voted against.
3. To take care their spirits were not sharpened against those that voted on the other side.”

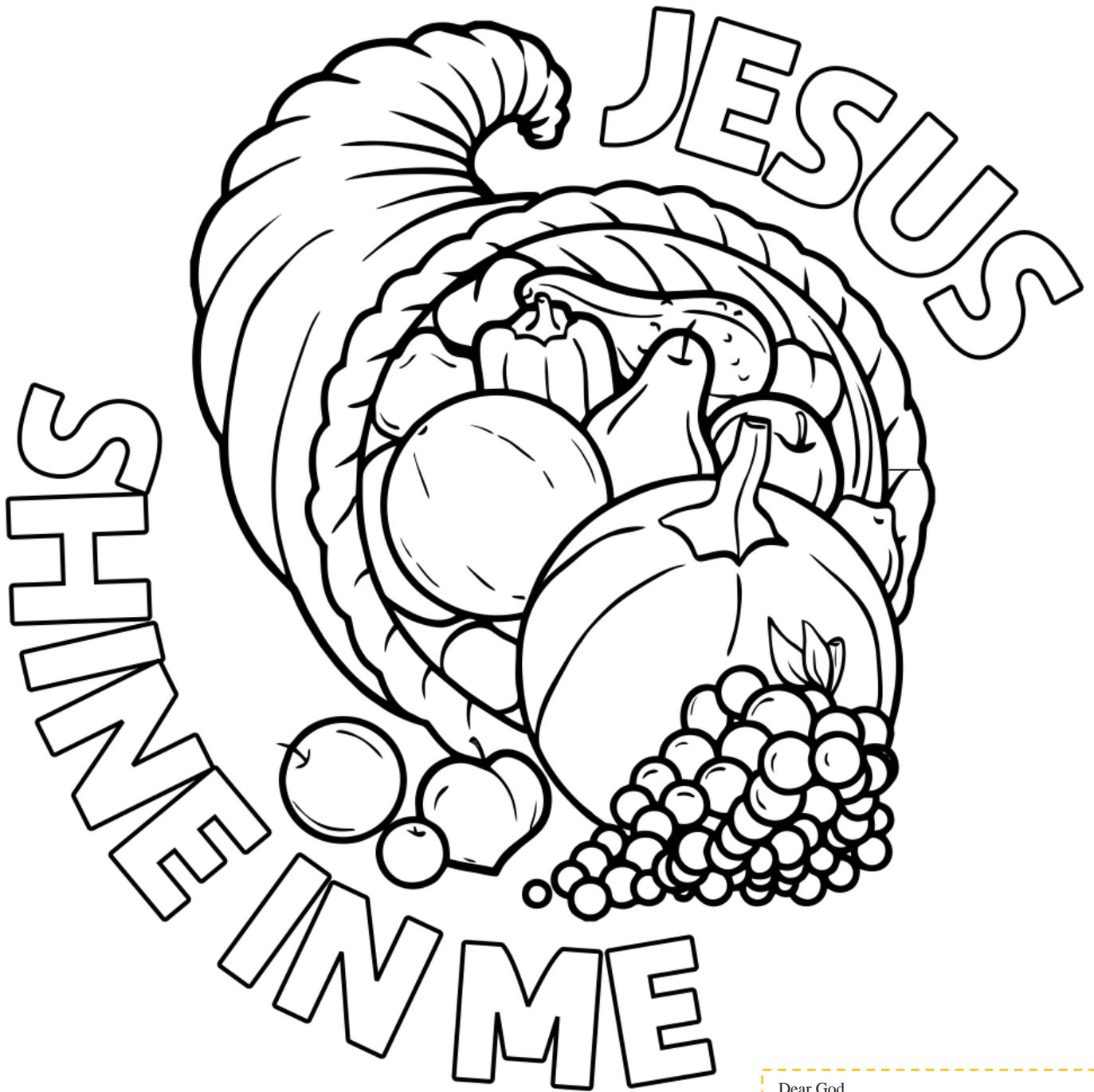
Blessings to you, and God bless America that we might be a blessing to others.

**Walking with you,**

**NC Synod Bishop**



**COLORING PAGE**



Dear God,  
Thank you for

Amen.