

Blessed are they which are persecuted
for righteousness' sake: for theirs is
the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:10

November 1, 2020
ALL SAINTS' SUNDAY
9:30 AM Worship

First Lutheran Church
709 5th Ave. – P.O. Box 218
Washburn, North Dakota 58577
www.flcwashburn.com

PRELUDE AND BELLS

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Put Prayer requests on Yellow Cards)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Gathered together by the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives, we worship in the name of the Father, the Son, + and the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P God desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth, for there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and humanity. This one is Jesus Christ, who gave himself as a ransom for all who believe. Let us confess our sin and ask for mercy from the King of the ages. (1 Timothy 2:4-6)

(Silence for self-reflection and examination)

P Immortal, invisible, one and only God,

C we confess to you in the presence of our brothers and sisters, that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed. We have neglected the poor, we have overlooked those in need, and we have disobeyed rather than upheld your commandments. Forgive us, we pray, and restore us to a new and right relationship with you through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

P In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us so that we might have life abundant, here and now and in eternity. The Lord will rescue his people from every evil deed and bring us safely into his heavenly kingdom on the last day. Until that time, trust that your sins are forgiven, and that you are redeemed by Christ's sacrifice on the cross - to him be all glory and honor forever and ever. (2 Timothy 4:18)

C Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC Orlin Larson & LeAnn Richard
"Mansion Over the Hilltop"

CALL TO WORSHIP

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C Who made heaven and earth.

P In life and in death

C We belong to God.

P Baptized into Christ's death

C We live unto Him. Come, let us Worship God!

DIALOG FOR ALL SAINTS

P Praise the Lord, all you saints!

C Praise him all you heavenly hosts!

P Let us praise the name of the Lord:

C For his name only is exalted!

P Abraham, Isaac and Jacob:

C Isaiah, Jeremiah and all you Patriarchs and Prophets!

P Miriam, Ruth and Naomi:

C Elizabeth, Mary and all you Holy Women!

P Matthew, Mark and Luke:

C James and John and all you Evangelists and Apostles!

P Stephen, Thomas, Peter and Paul:

C Philip, Bartholomew and all you Holy Martyrs!

P Praise the Lord!

C O praise the name of the Lord!

P These are the saints whose robes are washed white in the blood of the Lamb.

C Praise the Lord!

P We are the saints who are the living body of Christ, the Church.

C Praise the Lord! O praise the name of the Lord!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Let us pray:

C Beloved God, in Christ you have drawn all your people into one, holy communion. Grant that as we remember the saints who have gone before us, we are strengthened for lives of faithful service to you so that the world will know your blessed presence. Bring us all at the last to the feast which has no end where all will be one; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

FIRST LESSONRevelation 7:2-17
(It is only right that the first Reading, the historical reading, for All Saints Day comes from Revelation. John writes of the future as though it were a thing already accomplished. The white-robed throngs of heaven are already there, the Lamb is on his throne, and the story of salvation is complete.)

²I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, with the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm earth and sea, ³saying, "Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads." ⁴And I heard the number of the sealed, 144,000, sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel: ⁵12,000 from the tribe of Judah were sealed, 12,000 from the tribe of Reuben, 12,000 from the tribe of Gad, ⁶12,000 from the tribe of Asher, 12,000 from the tribe of Naphtali, 12,000 from the tribe of Manasseh, ⁷12,000 from the tribe of Simeon, 12,000 from the tribe of Levi, 12,000 from the tribe of Issachar, ⁸12,000 from the tribe of Zebulun, 12,000 from the tribe of Joseph, 12,000 from the tribe of Benjamin were sealed. ⁹After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, ¹⁰and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" ¹¹And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹²saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen." ¹³Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?" ¹⁴I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

¹⁵Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence. ¹⁶They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat. ¹⁷For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be

their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

PSALM.....Psalm 149
(The weapons of the Church are not worldly. Thus, Jesus told Peter to put away his sword (John 18:10-11). The Christian’s weapon is nevertheless, a sharp, two-edged sword (Heb 4:12) that cuts deeper than any man-made blade. That sword of the Spirit, the Word of God (Eph 6:17), is what Christians are to become adept at wielding (2 Tim 2:15). With high praises to the Living God on our tongues, and his sword in our hands, we go forth into the world.)

- ¹Hallelujah! Sing to the Lord a new song;
sing his praise in the congregation of the faithful.
- ²Let Israel rejoice in his Maker;
let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.
- ³Let them praise his name in the dance;
let them sing praise to him with timbrel and harp.
- ⁴For the Lord takes pleasure in his people
and adorns the poor with victory.
- ⁵Let the faithful rejoice in triumph;
let them be joyful on their beds.
- ⁶Let the praises of God be in their throat
and a two edged sword in their hand;
- ⁷To wreak vengeance on the nations
and punishment on the peoples;
- ⁸To bind their kings in chains
and their nobles with links of iron;
- ⁹To inflict on them the judgment decreed;
this is glory for all his faithful people. Hallelujah!

SECOND LESSON1 John 3:1-3
(Neither history nor deliberation determine sainthood. Saints are the result of the love of God. His love adopts us and calls us his children. Just so, we will forever be in the family of our Lord. We know not what the future looks like, but we do know the future. We do not know what we will look like, but we know that we will be like Jesus. We will be pure, as he is pure. In such hope, we are already purified in Christ.)

¹See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

² Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. ³ And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

SPECIAL MUSIC Bell Choir
"For All the Saints"

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the fifth chapter.

C: Glory to You, O Lord.

GOSPEL Matthew 5:1-12

(Blessed are the inside-out. Those who trust the Lord are content with the reverse of what the world calls good. When bad things happen, Christians find their joy in the Lord. The Beatitudes are not logical but rather, mysterious. Nevertheless, they are spiritually sensible; an intrinsic truth calls out to us in each verse. While they teach of a blessed hope for the future, they also show us the way through the present. The saints of God are learning to be content in Christ, especially when the world turns life inside-out (Phil 4:11-13).)

¹Seeing the crowds, {Jesus} went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.

²And 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.

⁷ "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

⁸ "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

⁹ "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

¹⁰ "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you

and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.

¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to You, O Christ.

SERMON Pastor Curt Hanson

SPECIAL MUSIC Orlin Larson & LeAnn Richard
"Leaning On the Everlasting Arms"

NICENE CREED

**I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from
heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the
Scriptures
and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both the
living and the dead,
whose kingdom will have no end.**

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped
and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life ☩ of the world to come. Amen.**

PRAYERS

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER OF THE SAINTS

P Holy are you, O Lord, and great is your majesty. All the saints in heaven and on earth sing their praise of your eternal glory.

For in the beginning, you prepared the worlds by your holy Word, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible. You laid out your holy plan of creation and redemption, that all who might know you would have faith, not in things seen, but in things not seen.

By faith, Noah and his family built the ark and were saved from the flood to bring forth a new generation. By faith, Enoch of old was taken straight into heaven.

By faith, Abraham and Sarah obeyed your calling and went forth from their home to a place promised but not seen, to a family promised, but only later fulfilled. By faith, Moses brought forth your chosen people, the Israelites, from slavery into freedom and led them to your holy mountain to worship and to receive your law.

By faith, the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah held fast to your promise of a Messiah who would come to save your people from their sin. By faith, Mary and Joseph awaited the day of your promise, until you brought forth that savior, our Lord Jesus Christ, your only-begotten Son.

In him is the fulfillment of the faith and hope of all the saints.
In him is our salvation won and your love revealed.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

In heaven and on earth, O God, the saints and angels unite around your holy altar to proclaim the mystery of faith:

C Christ has died! Christ is risen! Christ will come again!

P We remember and hold fast to Christ's examples of faith and life as the saints before us have done. We remember his living among outcasts and sinners, his concern for the poor, his life of prayer and worship, and his teachings about your love.

But chiefly we remember his life-giving passion and death, his glorious resurrection and ascension, and his promise to come again to raise us and all the faithful departed to live together eternally in fellowship with him in his heavenly kingdom.

Send now your Holy Spirit upon these gifts of bread and wine, that they may be the body and blood of him who is the hope and salvation of the living and the dead. Send your Holy Spirit upon us also that we might know his presence in these gifts, and through them, be united in prayer and praise with all those who have gone before us.

With this feast, join us in one holy communion of saints, one great cloud of witnesses, with St. Peter and St. Paul, with St. John and St. Mary Magdalene, and with all the blessed dead whose lives of faith in unseen things continue to inspire us, as together we lift our voices to you, O God,

Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in eternal glory, now and forever.

C Amen

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For Thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.**

DISTRIBUTION

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

P God of life, you have refreshed us at your Holy Table with the body and blood of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Grant that the forgiveness and new life we have been offered through Christ's presence in, with, and under the bread and wine of the sacrament would strengthen us for the journey ahead.

C Amen.

BLESSING & DISMISSAL

P Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness and gentleness in the Lord. Fight the good fight of faith, and take hold of the eternal life to which you're called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of your brothers and sisters in faith. And may the Lord bless you and keep you, now and forever, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, + and of the Holy Spirit. (1 Timothy 6:11-12)

C Amen.

P Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

C Thanks be to God!

The "Dialog for All Saints" and the "Eucharistic Prayer of the Saints" are by
The Rev. Thomas L. Weitzel

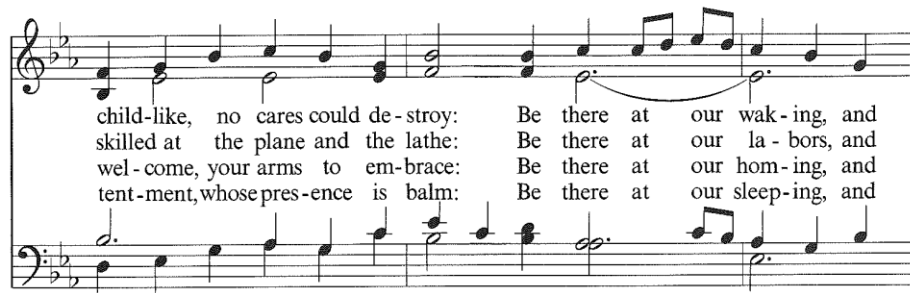
HYMN "Lord of All Hopefulness"

Lord of All Hopefulness

469



1 Lord of all hope-ful-ness, Lord of all joy, Whose trust, ev-er
2 Lord of all ea-ger-ness, Lord of all faith, Whose strong hands were
3 Lord of all kind-li-ness, Lord of all grace, Your hands swift to
4 Lord of all gen-tle-ness, Lord of all calm, Whose voice is con-



child-like, no cares could de-stroy: Be there at our wak-ing, and
skilled at the plane and the lathe: Be there at our la-bors, and
wel-come, your arms to em-brace: Be there at our hom-ing, and
tent-ment, whose pres-ence is balm: Be there at our sleep-ing, and



give us, we pray, Your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.
give us, we pray, Your strength in our hearts, Lord, at the noon of the day.
give us, we pray, Your love in our hearts, Lord, at the eve of the day.
give us, we pray, Your peace in our hearts, Lord, at the end of the day.

© Text: Jan Struther, 1901-1953
Tune: Irish folk tune

SLANE
10 11 11 12

CCLI #2465135

POSTLUDE

Today's Worship Leaders & Volunteers – Thank You!

PASTOR Pastor Chuck Mann
WORSHIP PASTOR Pastor Curt Hanson
COMMUNION ASSISTANT Melanie Beckman
READER.....Jeff Schmidt
ORGANISTLeAnn Richard
USHERS/GREETERSMike & Sharon Nelson
ALTAR GUILD Carla Bickert & Sonja Bergstedt
SERVICE GROUP COORDINATORSDick & Carla Bickert

Our Mission

“Working hand in hand to know Christ and make Christ known through Worship, Christian Education, Evangelism, Fellowship, Caring Ministries, and Service.”

Welcome to all who have come to worship.

Welcome to worship on All Saint's Day! Today we saints on earth join with the saints in heaven to sing praises around God's throne.

Visitors

We welcome all visitors to First Lutheran today.

Nursery

The nursery, located beside the narthex, is available for use for any parent feeling the need to use it during worship services with their child.

Thank you for your giving

Sunday, October 25th Attendance – 102
Facebook Online Viewing - 222
General Fund & Plate Giving - \$9,578.00

Thank You

We want to thank Pastor Curt for filling in today while Pastor Chuck is in quarantine. Nice to see you back!

Prayer Requests

Patricia Hanson – Sister to Dick Olson, Claire Boucher – Friend's of Aaron & Lexie Solomonson newborn, Weldon & Eunice Wagner – Brother & Sister-in-law to Arden Wagner, Jamie Baumann, Abe Nichols – Cousin to Steph Mann, James Tolbert, Brad Taylor – Friend of Pastor Chuck, Beryl Lonski – Brother-in-law to Mike & Sharon Nelson, Taylor Gardner, Virgil Wisdom, Harold Holtz, Elaine Renfrow – Mother to Lynette Sondrol, Sandi Femling – Cousin to Melanie Beckman, Laren Holznagel, Harlow Tatum – Daughter to Brea (Gutknecht) Tatum, Melisa Chrest, Ruth Lund – Mother to Doddie Kuntz, Derek Laning, Jacklyne Carlson, Amber Selken – Sister to Wendy Miller, John Krebsbach – Brother to Peggy Wollmuth, Arlo Omoth – Brother to Jeneen Loe, Shirley Nelson, Bob Miller, Rodney Jaeger

All Saints' Day

All Saints' Day is a universal festival of the Church. This festival day directs our attention to the richness of Christian history and the varied experiences of the grace of God by lifting up the lives of the saints.

The custom of commemorating all the martyrs of the Church on a single day goes back at least to the third century. All Saints' Day (Nov. 1) celebrates not only the martyrs and saints, but all the people of God, living and dead, who together form the mystical body of Christ.

Below are the names of the members of First Lutheran Church along with those nonmembers whose service was held here at First Lutheran who have gone before us since All Saints' Day last year. We remember them in our prayers today, and we give thanks for their lives. We remember and find strength in their faith and the faith of all the saints both known to us and known only to God.

Stan Goehring – 12/23/19

Vivian Merkel – 12/30/19

LeRoy Bender – 7/6/20

Wayne Christensen – 9/16/20

Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes

Shoebox gift suggestion lists, shoeboxes and boy or girls name tags with ages are on the table in the narthex. All boxes need to be returned to the church no later than November 14th as they will be dedicated at the church service on the 15th and taken to Bismarck that week.

Mutual Ministry Committee Volunteers Needed

Church council is looking for volunteers to serve on the Mutual Ministry Committee. This is a seven member committee that is chaired by the Church Council Vice President. The purpose of the Mutual Ministry Committee is to provide support for the staff of the church and serve as a conduit between the congregation and the church staff. The Call Committee nominated two members, so we are looking for four additional members. Members of the committee are appointed by the Church Council President and Pastor. The term of duty is two years with three members being replaced each successive year. If you are interested in serving please reach out to Matt Gardner, 701-315-0326.

Prayer Chain

Just a reminder that First Lutheran has a prayer chain. If you would like to be included on the chain to receive prayer requests, please either call the church office – 462-3775, email the church office at flc@westriv.com, or talk to Jeannette or Pastor Chuck. We will need your cell phone number and carrier to be able to text you the prayer. Likewise, if you have a prayer request or know someone that does, please contact Jeannette or Pastor Chuck to get the prayer request started.

Pastoral Care

Please call Pastor Chuck if you or a loved one are in the hospital or know you will be going to the hospital. The church does not usually get informed of your stay by any of the hospitals even if you are registered under our congregation's name. We want to make sure you get pastoral care. Thank you!

Phone Number Changes (Please note correction on Steph's #)

Pastor Chuck & Steph have changed their cell phone numbers. New numbers are: Pastor Chuck – 701-891-9443, Steph – 701-891-9413. Please make these changes. The parsonage number remains as 701-462-3774.

Connections

We are looking at ways to better connect our members, especially those who are participating online with those who are participating in-person. Many have expressed how much they miss the fellowship time between the service and Sunday School. This article is a brainstorm of potential ways that we could try to better incorporate the whole body of First Lutheran Church.

There are many opportunities through which we may be able to add a more participatory model where those online would be able to talk (live) and see people face-to-face via an online video platform.

Bible Studies:

- Join existing Bible studies via ZOOM to join in the conversation. Please let us know in advance if you would be interested or to get more details of what this could look like.

Prayer Service:

- We would meet online, either monthly, bi-weekly, or weekly for a short prayer service/devotional. The vision that to see is an online forum time that would allow those who are participating online or in-person to have fellowship time to catch up and pray together. We would provide the space and you can bring your coffee ☺. There would also be opportunities for smaller groups to break-off to pray together and chat. This would be especially helpful for those who have been unable to join the in-person activities at the church due to COVID. If you would like to find out more, please contact Jeannette (flc@westriv.com) or Pastor Chuck (PastorChuck@westriv.com) via email.

We would like to start these activities soon, so please let us know if you would like to join us!

Online Giving

Many of you have patiently been waiting for e-giving here at First Lutheran Church. I am happy to announce that it is up and ready to use!

We welcome all donations through any of the options we offer for giving. You can contribute anywhere, anytime right from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

- ⇒ Put your offering in the offering plate on Sunday mornings.
- ⇒ Mail your offering or drop it off at the church office.
- ⇒ Go to the church website: www.flcwashburn.com and click on the donate button on the homepage. Follow the instructions from there.
- ⇒ For our smartphone users, don't forget you can contribute through GivePlus Church, our mobile giving app. It's a convenient solution whenever you have your phone but don't have cash or checks with you.

See the two pages on GIVEPLUS MOBILE in the November newsletter or go to the App Store or Google Play and search for "GivePlus Church" to quickly find the app and download it for free. You can easily make donations anytime you're moved to give, or create an account to schedule recurring weekly, monthly, quarterly or yearly offerings and to the account of your choice. When you create an account, you can also securely and conveniently store debit/credit card or bank account information, manage donations and review giving history. You choose how you prefer to login - Touch ID/Fingerprint, PIN or password.

Find our church by ZIP code - 58577 or by searching our Church name - First Lutheran Church, Washburn, ND

- ⇒ Scan this code and it will take you directly to the app.



Get started today! Download our mobile app or visit www.flcwashburn.com to set up your online contribution!

Thoughts on the Readings

We've been hearing that people like the "Thoughts on the Readings". So instead of whenever there is room in the bulletin to put them in, we will now include them at the beginning of each reading. They will be italicized and in parentheses and not read with the readings. They are there for you to read on your own.

Christ in Our Home

The October/November/December issue of *Christ in Our Home* is in the magazine racks. Pick up a copy today to use with your daily devotions.

Clapping During Worship

At FLC, we are so blessed with many gifted musicians that have been so willing to share their gift of music during this unprecedented time of change due to COVID-19. We are especially thankful for their time and energy to share their beautiful music with us each week. To help focus our hearts and minds on Jesus, please refrain from *clapping* during the service as their special music is taking place of the hymns in the normal liturgy of the divine service. The musicians understand that in reverence to God, it is their honor and service to God and congregation to bless us with their harmonious music.

First Lutheran Church Updates as of October 16, 2020

UPDATE regarding Governor Burgum's continuing COVID-19 guideline changes over the upcoming weeks/months. Pastor Chuck, the FLC council members, and staff are making efforts to address these changes as they happen. In these trying times, we can hold fast that we serve a God that is in control despite a world that seems out of control.

"For God has not given us a spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." 2 Timothy 1:7

As such, with prayerful consideration we are moving forward with church services being offered both in person and online. A few recommendations moving forward:

- Every family is encouraged to attend church, Sunday school, or other activities in the manner that they feel most comfortable (whether on-line or in person)
- Social distancing will be observed, by family unit (maintaining six feet apart).
- Hand sanitizer is available at multiple locations within the church.
- Face masks are strongly encouraged but not required. Please bring your own mask if able, if you do not have one available a mask will be made available for your use.
- No food is to be prepared in the kitchen at this time, and there will be no coffee hour.
- Due to recent changes, if you are signed up as a worship volunteer moving forward and decide to join online instead, please contact Jeannette with your replacement.
- If you are joining online and would like the Sacrament of Holy Communion, please contact Pastor Chuck.
- It was determined that small groups of no more than 24 people are the only groups allowed to meet at the church at this time with the exception of Sunday School.
- After the service has finished, please fellowship outside for adequate space for social distancing.
- The FLC website (www.flcwashburn.com) and Facebook will be updated as we continue to monitor the situation and any new developments. Please check these sites for updates or concerns. If you do not see an answer to your concern, please feel free to reach out to Pastor Chuck or Jeannette.
- We ask that you remember your tithing for the church. Either send your payment to the church or drop it off at Farmers Security Bank in Washburn notating it is a donation for First Lutheran Church if you will not be attending worship at the church.

“May the Lord bless you and keep you; may the Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you; may the Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace.” Numbers 6:24-26

THIS WEEK AT FIRST LUTHERAN

TODAY	8:30 AM	Bible Study Led by Cathy Sheldon
	9:30 AM	Worship w/Holy Communion
	10:45 AM	Sunday School
		Bible Study Led by Alexis Solomonson
	7:00 PM	AA Meeting Al-Anon Meeting
TUES.	8:00 AM	Men's Bible Study
	10:00 AM	Mommy's Group
WED.	6:15 PM	Confirmation (by Zoom)
	6:45 PM	Bell Choir
	7:15 PM	FLY
	7:30 PM	Choir
SUNDAY	8:30 AM	Bible Study Led by Cathy Sheldon
	9:30 AM	Worship
	10:45 AM	Sunday School
		Bible Study Led by Alexis Solomonson
	7:00 PM	AA Meeting Al-Anon Meeting

The Simplest Prayer

An eccentric blind man nicknamed Joybubbles reportedly loved Mr. Rogers so much he listened to 10 hours of the TV show daily until he'd heard them all. One night, when Joybubbles was in a kind of awake dream state, he said Mr. Rogers visited him and offered to teach him how to pray.

Joybubbles protested that he couldn't pray because he always forgot the words. To which Mr. Rogers said not to worry; the prayer he'd teach had only three words. "What kind of prayer has only three words?" Joybubbles asked.

"Thank you, God," Mr. Rogers replied.

--adapted from *The Wired Word*

Listening for the Promise

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

All Saints Sunday – November 1, 2020

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

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

– Matthew 5:1-3 –

Jesus said a lot of things that are contrary to what we might expect if we didn't know him. We come to know him better and better as we dwell in the Holy Scriptures and let his words, like the teachings from the Sermon on the Mount here in Matthew, wash over us. When we were “in the world” (1 John 4:5) these words of his made no sense to us, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek, the merciful, and the persecuted.” But now that we are in Christ, they make all kinds of sense.

I don't know about you, but I'm guessing you haven't always felt particularly blessed when you were grieving or when you were trying to help others work out their issues, when you were being criticized for your faith or when you felt empty and yearned for more of God. But the truth of Jesus' words begins to make more sense to us the closer he draws us near, and when we are struggling is the precise time when he draws us the closest. Strange how we realize how much we need Jesus in times of trouble! In times of plenty and peace, we get so comfortable that we fail to reach for Jesus. That's exactly why Jesus says what he says! You will be blessed when you are down and out, when your life is turned upside down, when you don't know which way to go... then and only then are we ready for more of Jesus.

Someone may have told you all of this sometime in your life, and if you're like me, you probably didn't listen or understand. But when it happens, when you find yourself on the receiving end of sorrow, pain, spite, and even evil, then you come to understand what Jesus was speaking about. Why do we always have to learn the hard way? (Stubborn and prideful people that we are?!) But knowing how Jesus turns everything around means that when trouble comes next time, and it will come, we can recall our Lord's words and know for certain that our blessings are coming! He will draw us close to him, he will care for our wounded souls and helpless bodies, and he will remind us of his never failing love for us. Amen.