

Cast your cares on
the LORD and He
will sustain you; He
will never let the
righteous fall.

Psalm 55:22

*The April Newsletter has been completed as if we are not currently practicing social distancing. Please be aware that all services will be
ONLINE ONLY*

*until Council has deemed it safe for all worshipers to follow the
printed calendar. Updated information
will also appear on the website;*

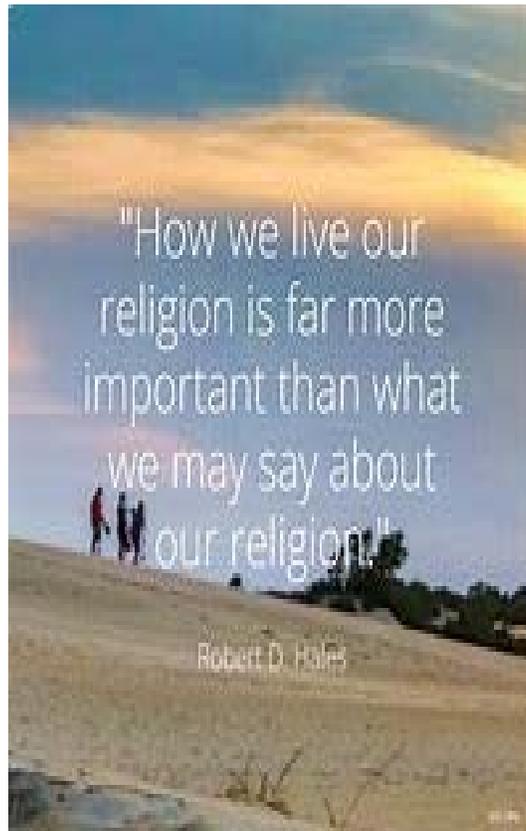
www.thefriedenslutheran.com

Amid this trying time, it might help to think of changes this way:

Christ
Has
A
New
Gift
Every
Second

*Prayers & Blessings... Your Church Secretary,
Tammy*

FRIEDENS FLYER
April 2020



Pastor's Message

By the time you read this message the coronavirus pandemic will have grown. The scare over this new scourge is being compared to the influenza outbreak of a century ago. Except this time the fear is driven by a world that is much more closely linked by television, the internet, and a huge web of social media. The result is that the rumors and attendant fear spread as fast as the disease itself. There is a lot of information out there. The Center for Disease Control has issued multiple statements and has worked to provide accurate and reliable updates to the public. On the other hand, we have heard many false statements and plenty of unreassuring remarks from people who should know better.

It is a tough time to be a believer. A crisis like this can be a challenge to faith as we struggle to find where God is through all of this. Satan once tempted Jesus to jump off the temple, assuring the Lord that should anything bad happen it must be God's fault for not lifting him up to safety. You can bet that Satan is lurking somewhere, ready to convince us that God has bailed out on us again. Satan loves fear and rumors. Anxiety and ignorance go hand in hand. The more we are kept in the dark, the more we fall prey to a sense of terror and foreboding. So, is coronavirus the end of civilization as we know it? Probably not. Will a lot of people get sick? Yes. Will some die? Yeah, that will happen too. But more people die from preventable illnesses like heart disease, because they eat fatty foods and don't exercise. Yet, I still eat my share of pie and cake and never stop to consider the terror that I am killing myself. More people die each year in car accidents, but no one is calling for an end to motor vehicles. Once the problem becomes a common, everyday occurrence the fear fades into the background. That doesn't mean we should be cavalier and pretend the problem doesn't exist. No, I will still wear a seat belt, and try to cut down on unhealthy foods and I highly recommend following the good advice that we should wash our hands.

This strange new virus has become our latter day plague, a scourge that terrorizes the world because it has come from nowhere. The unknown is scary and uncertain; we can't get a handle on what will happen next. Fear, enflamed by rumors, makes matters worse. So, I bid you stop and think a moment. A little lesson from Catechism Class is worth remembering. Luther taught his students that in the middle of the Apostles' Creed is the simple phrase, "Jesus is my Lord." We confess those words every Sunday in worship. We say it from our own lips. We declare that Jesus is the Lord of all things. A lord is a leader, the one in charge, the boss, the overseer. Jesus is the one who oversees all of creation. And, if I remember rightly, he is also the one who has conquered death and all its power. Surely, then, he has the coronavirus under this authority as well. Which is to say that even if the world were collapsing under the weight of this dread disease, Jesus will still be Lord and master of all things and has promised to deliver his people from every calamity and bring them into his presence forever. "There is nothing in all creation that can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus". Nothing. And that, my friends, is news of which we can be certain.

Pastor Swanson



A word from the Pastor

March 27, 2020

Dear friends:

As this is being written the coronavirus continues to expand across our land. Soon we will surpass all other nations with the most people afflicted by this dread disease, a distinction that no one will boast about. The uncertainty of all this can lead to fear and doubt, perhaps even a loss of faith, which I talked about in my earlier letter to you.

Now, questions arise about what we should do as we wait for this trouble to end. The human need to act, to get busy, to take charge and assume control of our lives, has caused some among us to insist that we get “back to normal” sooner rather than later. I confess that I admire such courage. Those who are bold, while others sit and watch, are people that act decisively and get things done. In this day and age, there is a tendency to put such a leadership style up on a pedestal and bestow upon it a sort of saintly virtue. I’m not so sure. Being bold should never be reckless. And making decisions without consulting advisors and people who are better informed and who possess a greater degree of common sense is more likely a prescription for disaster.

For this reason I am very reluctant to rush back to our usual activities, as if we can scare away coronavirus and the wiles of the devil by our brash displays of grit and fortitude. I think neither disease nor the devil is much impressed by our rugged individualism. Shouldn’t we be asking why we need to rush back to our old ways? Is this for us? Who is being served by our actions? Is it not the purpose of the Church to serve our neighbor? Scripture is clear in stating that the Church is God’s mission, the embodiment of Christ, to live and die for the world. Simply, the Church lives to serve as Christ served. We do not exist for ourselves, but for others.

This means it would be wise for us to consider how our actions will affect those most vulnerable in our community, yes, even in our own congregations. I know this is a very trying time. The financial strain is enormous. Savings and retirement accounts have plummeted. Churches will face an uphill climb to recover. Our congregation councils approach this with eyes wide open.

I know some will remain unconvinced. I appreciate that you want to gather again in assembly and worship as God’s people. I want the same. Yet, we need to think of how others may be at risk. So I remind you that our worship service is on-line at www.thefriedenslutheran.com. You can watch me and Pastor Laura leading worship at Friedens. Pray, sing, and listen to the word of God. The promise of the Gospel is never silenced.

I leave you with a portion of a letter from Martin Luther, who, with the residents of Wittenberg, Germany, faced a deadly bout of the plague in 1527. Luther’s eloquent words were written as though he were among us today, firm when necessary, but always reminding the reader that our God—the Lord Jesus Christ—is hidden in all things, even in suffering and dying...and raising us to life.

“Whether One May Flee form a Deadly Plague” by Martin Luther, 1527

What else is the epidemic but a fire which instead of consuming wood and straw devours life and body? You ought to think this way: “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. See, this is such a God-fearing faith because it is neither brash nor foolhardy and does not tempt God. Moreover, he who has contracted the disease and recovered should keep away from others and not admit them into his presence unless it be necessary. Though one should aid him in his time of need, he in turn should, after his recovery, so act toward others that no one becomes unnecessarily endangered on his account and so cause another’s death. “Whoever loves danger,” says the wise man, “will perish by it” [Ecclesiastes 3:26]. If the people in a city were to show themselves bold in their faith when a neighbor’s need so demands, and cautious when no emergency exists, and if everyone would help ward off contagion as best he can, then the death toll would indeed be moderate. But if some are too panicky and desert their neighbors in their plight, and if some are so foolish as not to take precautions but aggravate the contagion, then the devil has a heyday and many will die.

May Christ our Lord and Savior preserve us all in pure faith and fervent love, unspotted and pure until his day. Amen.



April



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p><i>All scheduled church services, functions & meetings subject to change during this time...</i></p> <p><i>For Girl Scouts-Rule; no school no meeting...</i></p>			<p>1 8:30am-W&M</p> <p>6:30pm-Council</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Bulletin Deadline</p> <p>5pm-Choir</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>5 Palm Sunday 9:00am-Sunday School 10:30am-Worship w/ Communion & Palms</p> <p>4pm-conf. @ St. James</p>	<p>6 Holy Week</p>	<p>7 Holy Week</p>	<p>8 Holy Week</p>	<p>9 Maundy Thursday</p> <p>Bulletin Deadline</p> <p>7pm-Service w/ Communion @ Friedens</p>	<p>10 Good Friday Noon Crosswalk</p> <p>FLYC-Egg decorating & organizing Egg Hunt @ Friedens</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Easter Vigil</p>
<p>12 Easter Sunday 8-10am Sunrise Breakfast 10:30am-Worship w/ Communion</p> <p>NO SUNDAY SCHOOL !</p>	<p>13</p> <p>WELCA</p>	<p>14 8:30am-Christian Ed</p> <p>6:45pm-Execs 7:00pm-Council</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Bulletin & Newsletter Deadline</p> <p>5pm-Choir</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p>
<p>19 2 Easter 9:00am-Sunday School 10:30am-Worship</p> <p>4pm-Conf. @ Friedens</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Bulletin Deadline</p> <p>5pm-Choir</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>
<p>26 3 Easter 9:00am-Sunday School 10:30am-Worship</p> <p>Special Congregational Mtg</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Bulletin Deadline</p> <p>5pm-Choir</p>		

<u>April 2020</u> Sunday School-9:00am Worship-10:30am <u>ALTAR GUILD</u> Kathryn, Darlene & Jean NOTE TIME CHANGE!	<u>April 5th</u> -Palm Sunday 9:00am-Sunday School 10:30am-Worship w/ Communion & Palms	<u>April 9th</u> -Maundy Thursday 7pm-Service @ Friedens w/Communion	<u>April 12th</u> -Easter 8-10am-Sunrise Breakfast 10:30am-Worship w/ Communion NO SUNDAY SCHOOL !	<u>April 19th</u> -2 Easter 9:00am-Sunday School 10:30am-Worship	<u>April 26th</u> -3 Easter 9:00am- Sunday School 10:30am- Worship w/ Children's Anthem	<u>May 3rd</u> -4 Easter 9:00am-Sunday School 10:30am-Worship w/ Communion A.G.-Jean Morris
ACOLYTES	Volunteers	Volunteer	Volunteers	Volunteer	Volunteer	Volunteers
COUNTERS	Nancy Kline & Lee Kiefer	Kathryn Otto & Palmer Geist	MaryJane Allvord & Julie Klinger	Jean & Gary Klinger	Kathryn Otto & Palmer Geist	Nancy Kline & Lee Kiefer
FELLOWSHIP			<i>Men's Group</i>			
GREETERS/*E.E.	Jean Morgan *Nancy Kline	Ruth & Ralph Wetzal *Sue & Mike Deiter	Janet & Ron Radel *Linda & Lee Kiefer	Kathryn & Renee' *Heather & Ed H.	Cindy & Rick Herring *Joan Smith	Jane & Ed Tietsworth *Dolores Huntsinger
LAY ASSISTANT	Ron Radel	Mary Carl	Melody Schwartz			Ruth Wetzal
LECTOR	TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA
USHERS *Head Usher April.: Ed Tietsworth	* Rick Herring Larry Klinger Andrew Allvord	* Mike Deiter Kathryn Otto Rick Herring	* Damaris Merwine Julie Klinger Dave Henninger	* Scott Allvord Michael Allvord Jason Wolfgang	* Jeff Klinger Christy Leiter Ed Hornung	*HU-RodneyTroutman Rick Herring Dave Henninger Kathryn Otto

April 2020

1 Ann Miller

1 Ayla Allvord

10 MaryJane Allvord

11 Ryan Herring

12 Rick Herring

13 Alexis Neugard

25 Bruce Miller

25 Brooke Henninger



SPECIAL CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

March 18, 2020

Attendance: Damaris Merwine, Amy Allvord, Scott Allvord, Vicki Troutman, Rick Herring, Kathryn Otto, Jean Morris, and Pastor Swanson.

Excused: Ed Tietsworth, Gary Klinger, and Mike Deiter.

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m.

Devotions: Pastor Swanson read Psalm 121, which is the Psalm of Hope, followed by prayer.

Pastor Swanson explained that we need to decide on worship services and how the situation of COvis-19 is affecting all our lives beyond the church boundaries. As a church we are called to serve; however, we do not want to put anyone in danger, so we need to think carefully as to what our actions will be. He also explained when Martin Luther was faced with the plague the people were asked to act accordingly, plant the seed and harvest it in season, as well as take care of those in need.

He noted that the Synod offices are closed and their recommendation is to cancel services for two weeks. The Synod has moved the Synod Assembly from June to October.

St. James has voted to close for two weeks, and requested that Pastor Swanson not attend the Wednesday Lenten service this evening.

After this evening the Midweek Lenten Services have been cancelled as well as Good Friday crop walk and evening service. There will be 1 more Sunday service at Benigna Winery this coming Sunday. We will need to discuss our Maundy Thursday Service as well as Palm Sunday and Easter. The congregational meeting will need to be rescheduled.

The meeting was then opened up to thoughts by the members present. Thoughts included:

Canceling service for either one or 2 weeks.

Feeling of this being a time when parishioners need God and feel a need for unity and worshiping together to support one another by praying for all in church. It was hoped that those who felt they were sick would know not attend and self-quarantine themselves.

Other churches in the area have cancelled for two weeks.

We have also made a recommendation to not have meetings when school is not in session. School has been cancelled until March 30, 2020.

We realize that this situation will cause a financial hardship: however, this was not a question in our decision. We would hope that the congregation would continue giving when services resume.

SPECIAL CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

March 18, 2020

Concerns about persons being carriers and not knowing that they are, thus unknowingly spreading COVID-19. There are no cases in Schuylkill County at this time.

After much thought, a motion was made by Vicki Troutman and seconded by Amy Allvord:

MOTION: Friedens Evangelical Lutheran Church will cancel Sunday services for the next two weeks, March 22 and March 29, 2020, and then evaluate and review the situation weekly.

Motion carried.

ALTERNATIVES TO WORSHIP: Pastor Swanson indicated that he and Pastor Laura will meet with Gary Klinger weekly to video a worship service that will be put on the Friedens, St. James, and Christ Lutheran websites. Pastor Swanson will be available for any pastoral care issues that arise. Contact him via phone.

Actions needing to be taken:

Damaris will call the Shepherds to activate the list by calling their flocks.

Kathryn Otto will contact the Christian Education Committee members and Jean Morris will contact the Worship and Music Committee members.

Members will also be reminded of the April Sunday Service time change.

The Congregational Meeting will be rescheduled to Sunday, April 26, 2020.

The newsletter will be published as usual.

OTHER ACTION: A concern was raised regarding staff members not receiving their monthly pay. It was voted that we agreed to help and support others in this situation, that even though services are cancelled, all staff members would receive their monthly salary. If a staff member had concerns receiving money, they could donate the money back to the church.

Aldonna Knorr will be permitted to clean the church during this time. It will give her an opportunity to thoroughly sanitize the church for when services are again held.

Worship and Music Committee will meet on April 1, 2020 at 8:30 a.m. as scheduled.

Meeting concluded at 7:15 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: Council will meet April 1, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

JEAN L. MORRIS, Secretary Pro Temp

~Many Thanks To All~

Friedens Evangelical Lutheran Church, Hegins, wishes to thank the members and the community for their generous support of our recent Spring Bazaar. The heartwarming response is greatly appreciated. The time, talents and treasures of our members was overwhelming. Much dedication was shared in various areas including: advertising and orders; making soups of numerous variety; baking a huge assortment of pies, cakes, cookies; creating yummy candy; crafting holiday items; cashiers; assembling dozens of hoagies in the early morning; setting up work areas; organizing orders; cleaning areas and doing dishes. As the old adage goes, "Many hands make light work". This was surely evident at our bazaar. The variety of soups, baked items and hoagie choices could please any palate.

The response of our community and the diligent work of our members certainly made our event successful.

Again, many thanks to everyone who helped in any way to make our Spring Bazaar a great success.

Gratefully,

Friedens Evangelical Lutheran Church



*Thank You Friedens members for
your cards prayers and well wishes
during our recent bereavement. Your
thoughtfulness was helpful in our grief
and sincerely appreciated.*

The Family of Violet Rebeck...

Hands, Merwines, Lombels, Rothermels & Geists

