A few weeks ago I was invited to read a poem by Ann Weems from her book *Kneeling in Jerusalem* titled “Come unto me”

When the journey gets too hard,
when we feel depleted,
    when our compassion turns to complaining,
    when our efforts toward justice and mercy seem to get us nowhere,
    it’s time to remember the humility part -
    that it is God who has made us and not we ourselves;
    that the saving of the world or even one part of it is not on our shoulders.
It is then we come unto him, and he will give us rest.
With rest we’ll remember what it is we are about.

“I Have Mercy on Us”

O God, who calls each of us by name to be the church, give us love enough to make a difference, give us vision enough to follow, give us endurance enough to hold steadfast in the face of the unholy.
O God, who claims us as disciples, bless us now and touch us with your holiness that we might have commitment enough to be good news to the poor.
O God of the bruised, we pray for healing. Comfort those who cry in dark corners: the lonely, the strangers, the weary, the fearful, the disappointed, the anxious, the depressed, the forsaken, the dispirited, the grieving, and those who lie in sickness and in pain.
O God who gave us the rainbow and parted the Red Sea, we dare to pray for miracles for the powerless.
O God of the hungry, we pray for those who have not bread. Remove, O God, the bondage of hunger by removing our shackles so that we might share our bread.
O God of the homeless, we pray for those who have no land. We pray that you will open the doors of our hearts and let your wandering people in.
O God of the captives, have mercy on those who must live out their lives enslaved to someone else because of race or politics or economics or faith. Loose our bonds that we might risk our own securities on their behalf.
O God of peace, give peace to our hearts and to our nation and to our world.
O Lamb of God, have mercy upon us!

May your Lenten journey have space for worship, prayer, contemplation, action and the awareness that God is journeying with you.

Blessings,

Pastor Shelley Willem

PS: Psalm 141 has the line “Let my prayers come before you as incense.” So for the season of Lent, at the Baptismal fount, the ceramic bowl with water has been swapped out with a stainless steel burn bowl and little bits of purple paper are on the table in the narthex. The invitation is that you write your prayer on the paper and then light it on fire at the Christ Candle and drop it into the burn bowl. Only you and God know your prayer but the gathered community is supporting you. You can do this on Sundays & Wednesdays, before or after services, during the prayers, the passing of the peace or communion. Blessings as we all pray our way through Lent.
Sunday Morning Small Group
“Life’s Healing Choices” by Pastor Rick Warren

This will be an 8-week Video Presentation with small group discussion around 11:15 am. The workbook costs $7.50.

We are all broken. The good news is that God loves broken people. Through his Son we are made whole. Find out God’s plan for recovery and self-discovery through bible study, discussion and application.

3/8 Week 2 Getting Help – The Hope Choice
3/15 Week 3 Letting Go – The Commitment Choice
4/19 Week 4 Coming Clean – The Housecleaning Choice
4/26 Week 5 Making Changes – The Transformation Choice
5/17 Week 6 Repairing Relationships – The Relationship Choice
5/31 Week 7 Maintain Momentum – The Growth Choice
6/14 Week 8 Recycling Pain – The Sharing Choice

See Heidi DuPuis with questions.

Budget Update
by Congregational President Gwen Carr

Just a few days ago we received word from the Mission Investment Fund (our mortgage holder) that our request to temporarily reduce our mortgage payment by about $2,000 per month was considered but approved for only $1000 per month for the next 6 months beginning with the February payment. As part of the agreement to reduce the payment, several conditions (primarily administrative reports) were included. The most important however were: to maintain capital campaigns for debt reduction through the maturity date and to work with the synod on best practices for stewardship.

The immediate impact to our 2020 budget is that our income numbers will be adjusted to reflect this change making our projected deficit $21,121. The Executive Committee and then Council will be addressing a strategy for a capital campaign (including fundraisers) in collaboration with the synod; at our March meetings. As always, you are welcome to attend the next Council meeting on Tuesday, March 17th beginning at 6:00 PM to contribute to this discussion.

Meantime, I have met with our Treasurer, Virginia Mohr to begin the process of reviewing our congregational giving and providing ongoing communication to you about its status. Please be sure to review her article in this newsletter and prayerfully consider how you can help to reach a goal of wiping out our deficit and our mortgage. Even as we reach out to find a new pastor, it is as important that we address our financial stability so that we can focus our future resources on ministry and not just paying off our mortgage and maintaining the building.

I see this challenge as a turning point for this congregation. We can do this!!! We have to, or we face a bleak future of continued decline and inability to do ministry in this community.

Again, WE CAN DO THIS!!!
Treasurer’s Budget Update
by Virginia Mohr, Treasurer

2020 Budget figures have been adjusted to reflect the Mission Investment Fund temporary loan which reduces our monthly mortgage payment from $6,598 to $5,598 for 6 months beginning with February. This amount is $1,164 less than what we requested.

- This adjustment moved the projected deficit to $21,121
- To create a balanced budget however, our total income would need to be $21,787 a month. This is our goal and if each giving unit increased their giving by at least $27/month we would be close to a balanced budget.
- In order to keep you well informed about our progress; and because our monthly newsletter goes out before month end numbers are available, we will report in the newsletter for the previous month’s totals and report again mid month as numbers are available.

January YTD
- o Income $13,001
- o Expenses $15,353 (does not reflect mortgage payment of $6598 as this was being reviewed by MIF)
- o Net ($2352)

Keep in mind that after a large giving month in December, past trends show that giving tends to be less than expected in January.

Waiting

I have heard murmurings among the members of Christ the Good Shepherd. Perhaps you have heard them, too. “When will we have a new pastor?” “Why is it taking so long?” “It shouldn’t take this long; something must be wrong.”

Nothing is wrong. The Transition Team continues to work diligently to prepare our description of ourselves and our mission needs. You will have opportunities to interact with their work soon, before it goes to the Oregon Synod office for matching with pastoral candidates. This is expected in March or April.

In the meantime, we have this period of waiting. Waiting is a tool of God. He uses it to cultivate our faith. In the call process it is preparation on both sides of the call. God through the Holy Spirit is preparing us for mission and to receive a new pastor. At the same time, He is preparing the new pastor to receive us with all our gifts and foibles. As much as we want speed in this call process, God’s timing is not our timing.

Psalm 27:13-14 tells us that we will experience the goodness of the Lord by waiting for Him. The Bible is full of accounts of waiting – Abraham and Sarah for a son; Joseph to be reconciled to his family; Joshua and Caleb to enter the Promised Land; Mary and Joseph for Jesus; and the faithful for Jesus’ return. In every case the result of waiting for God is fulfilled promise. As members in this family of believers, should we expect something different?

As people of faith, we are called to wait. Not as the world waits, in limbo, sitting on our hands, doing nothing. We wait actively, moving forward in our ministries, caring for each other and our greater community, expressing our spiritual gifts because God is our trustworthy leader. We practice inviting, encouraging, comforting and celebrating, so when we are blessed with a new pastor, it is a “joining in” rather than “taking over for”. Waiting is not easy. When you feel anxious in the waiting, pray. Ask to be shown the source of your worry or unbelief. Speak that worry to God and a fellow believer to share the burden. God who is faithful and trustworthy will bring us through to a place of blessing. Let’s embrace the wait for how it will shape us for love.

As a sibling in Christ,

Heidi Dupuis

Marion County Sheriff:
503-588-5032
Salem City Police:
(503) 588-6050

You are invited to keep these numbers handy in case of non-emergency needs at the church or in your life outside of church. A good place to store it is your contact info in your cell phone or wherever you keep important phone numbers.

Bible Study
9:30 am
Christ House
Study guides are available.
All are welcome!
I am always grateful for spring to arrive. The birds return and the grass starts growing, and travel becomes much more pleasant. On that subject, I’m excited to share that I will be out of the office for a couple of days in March. My father has retired to the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Washington DC, and I will be visiting him the 2nd weekend of March for his 85th birthday. Please keep me in your prayers for safe travels and I’ll look forward to sharing the photos.

In the office, the time between Transfiguration and Easter begins to feel a little like a marathon. Publishing the various pieces and parts that make worship seamless and meeting the multiple deadlines is always a challenge and often feels like I am juggling for two straight months. Since it’s a time of reflection and gratitude, I feel it’s important to point out that I am fortunate to have a group of individuals who help me out. I want to express my gratitude out loud because much of their hard work happens behind the scenes.

If you see a typo or an error, it’s probably because I didn’t ask Twila Anderson to proofread it for me. She does an excellent job of making sure our publications look great and are accurate. Peat Kramyer spent a great deal of personal time clearing the parking lot of moss and grooming up the roses and other plants, and both Peat and Mike Kohn made the yard behind Christ House nicer removing a few dead trees. (Take a look at the results below.)

Gwen Carr does so much more than any of us realize, all while she makes herself available to answer my questions, make constructive suggestions, and run-down solutions for me. She and Virginia Mohr have spent a lot of time managing our budgetary needs and mastering the Treasurer’s position, which makes a huge difference to almost everything to do with the church.

Our Budget Committee members, mostly Executive Council, put in real time and effort getting our ducks in a row by making critical and creative decisions. Pastor Shelley has put in some very long days helping reorganize and prepare for another pastor, and help us to connect with our Lutheran community around us. Her liturgy expertise keeps me straight and our bulletins accurate. Heidi Dupuis works behind the scenes to do things for us that I don’t even know about, but I am grateful she is in there doing it and providing me the information she always seems to have. Joan Mathias helps me manage attendance, find resources, answers people’s random questions, and helps to keep the newsletter fresh and relevant.

Some Tuesday Crew guys (you know who you are) spent most of a day replacing a light in our sign to make sure that it is functioning and shining. A few have partnered with me in bringing reliable, fast internet to the church building. Special thanks to Charley Johnson, Dean Hatzenbihler, and Aaron Palmquist for accomplishing that wonderful task.

I’m sure there are very many more people that I have not managed to include in this list. A church is not about the building; it’s about the people, and all of you are what makes Christ the Good Shepherd special. I appreciate each and every one of you, without whom I would not be here doing what I love doing. I could take up the whole newsletter just giving you all my thanks, so, “THANKS!”

I pray for blessings for you all. ～～Rose

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outreach meeting
March 7 - 10 AM
In Christ You Matter
Matter Church
Charlottesville, VA

MATTER
Outreach Meeting
March 7 - 10 AM
In Christ You Matter
Matter Church
Charlottesville, VA
Servant Hearts Needed!

- Worship Assistant (assisting Pastor on traditional Sunday mornings, singing the liturgy, reading prayers, assisting with communion distribution).
- Lector/Scripture Reader (reading the First and Second Scripture Lessons and leading the Responsive Readings)
- Communion Assistants (assisting with communion distribution)
- Greeters (arriving 15-20 minutes early on Sunday morning with a smile and an outreached hand to warmly greet members and visitors)
- Providing assistance with the overhead projector screen for worship (operating the laptop during Sunday worship service)

Volunteer Sign Up List on the Narthex library counter this Sunday or contact Twila: 503-871-5253 or twila.anderson@me.com.

“Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.” - James

Who is My Neighbor?
Jenny Gutierrez Outreach Coordinator at Four Corners
March 22 – After Service

Lenten Wednesdays
March 4th, 11th, 18th, 25th
April 1st
Midweek Lent
Collaborative Worship
@St. Mark
12:05 PM @ with soup lunch following
Holden Evening Prayers @CGSLC
5:45 PM Potluck Soup Supper
6:30 PM Prayer Service

Our Little Library book supply is dwindling!
Please help us with more books!
We need more English language Bibles, as well as books for children, teens, & young adults.

Prayer shawls are tangible reminders of God’s love for you.
Wrapping up in a prayer shawl is like getting a hug from God.
THURSDAY February 27, 2020
At 1:00 PM in the Gathering Room
Shawls available in the narthex or the office.
Please consider directing your Thrivent Choice Dollars to Christ the Good Shepherd. You still have until March 31, 2020 to direct your 2019 Choice Dollars. The process is very easy and there are two ways to direct your dollars. First, you can call Thrivent at 800-847-4836 and say Thrivent Choice when prompted. Someone will come on the line to assist. The second way, visit Thrivent.com/Thrivent Choice and follow the prompts. Either way is easy and these Choice Dollars can make a difference.

A message from Rev. Dr. Phil Brandt, of the Lutheran Institute of Theology and Culture

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I am writing these words on February 3. Yesterday was quite a day. For anyone interested in obscure little facts it was the first time you could write the date as a palindrome in just under 909 years. Yesterday, we could have written the date as 02 02 2020. That reads the same way forward and backward. The last time that happened was 11 01 1011. Of course, yesterday was also Groundhog Day.

I understand that Punxsutawney Phil has predicted an early end to this winter. I am not sure how much I want to rely on the predictions of a large rodent, but it might be the best we have.

For the many who were called to worship it was also the Feast of the Purification of Mary and the Presentation of our Lord. This might be the longest name for a minor festival in the calendar. It notes that Jesus, born under the Law, came to redeem those who stand condemned by that Law.

This was not the only celebration vying for our attention on Feb. 2. In another calendar it was the Presentation of the Lombardi Trophy, better known as Superbowl Sunday. Having spent a good portion of my youth in one of the small towns in the orbit of Kansas City, I was pleased with the outcome.

As I worshiped and preached on Sunday, I was struck by the similarity of the first and the 21st century. The only people who noticed Jesus in the Temple long ago were a pair a of elderly folks. The rest of the world was fixated on a Messiah whom they thought would come with power and glory. They were not looking for a Messiah who showed up in the arms of a humbly poor Galilean couple. The Gospels are filled with stories about the people who failed to recognize Jesus.

Isn’t it the same today? I don’t know about your parish, but we were not selling spaces in the pews for the $2,500 average price of a Superbowl stadium seat in Miami. I wonder if you got to see the commercials for that price. Look around most parishes and it looks like a Simeon and Anna crowd. The world, other than a few old folks, can still seem deaf and blind.

There is hope in that. God heard and accepted the praise of those two old people. He also called others to proclaim that kingdom. Don’t be discouraged if the heads are grey in your parish. Jesus has a history of listening to the tremulous praise of aged people. But there is also a challenge for us as a Church. As Augustine noted long ago, the people streaming into the arenas and colosseums of ancient Rome were looking for good things but looking in the wrong place. They sought community and joy. The emotional rush of a show would not last. The real drama, the real experience, was to be found in the mysterious and gracious movement of God to earth in Sacrament and Word.

How will we help them seek that today? There are so many competing visions for where one can find the good life. Technology, consumerism, environmentalism, and many more promise that if people only commit to this or that they can have true peace and happiness. But these are all empty promises. The thrill soon passes. Even the fans of Kansas City will have to come to that realization. Being Superbowl champs doesn’t solve life’s real problems. Take hope in this: God loves the people of our communities and would that his people be the living invitations to the Kingdom he has called us to be. How will that happen in this time and place? He likely has ideas and plans which we can only begin to see.
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<th>Service Date &amp; Time</th>
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*If you are unable to fulfill your duties for a particular Sunday, you are solely responsible to find a replacement as soon as possible and then notify the office by phone or e-mail so that the information can be accurately printed for the Sunday bulletin.

Spring Worship Schedule:
- **FIRST Sunday of each month at 10:00 AM**
  - Contemporary Worship w/ Communion, First 5 and Potluck
- **OTHER Sundays 10:00 AM Alternating Contemporary AND Traditional Worship both w/ Communion**
### Scouting Events:

**Sunday March 1st** - First Summer Camp Payment due - Approx $65

**Monday June 1st** - Summer camp full payment due.

**Saturday June 27th - July 3rd** (Summer Camp Baldwin)  
[https://scoutcampsnw.org/camps/camp-baldwin/](https://scoutcampsnw.org/camps/camp-baldwin/)