



Weekly News, May 6, 2020

Christ Lutheran and Trinity Lutheran churches Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

This special weekly newsletter is being sent to our congregations to provide worship/devotional resources, encourage everyone through this crisis, and keep our congregation connected.

General News

The weekly newsletters for **Christ Lutheran Church in Forest Hills** and **Trinity Lutheran Church in Monroeville** have now been combined into one. Pastor Breight of Christ Lutheran is serving as vacancy pastor for Trinity Lutheran. The newsletters are being produced at the church office at Christ, so this makes things a little more streamlined for office staff Barb and Theresa (and Pastor!).

Our **Mask Force** made about 140 masks last week. Most of the masks went to Concordia Lutheran Ministries, answering their earnest request for these items. Our next group of masks will be sent to New York City, where our sister churches are in great need of masks to distribute to low-income neighborhoods they serve. We can still use people to make masks. We have a simple pattern and materials for you to use. Please call Christ Lutheran's office at 412-271-7173 or send out an email to Jonathan Breight at jib0996@gmail.com to get involved and boost the number of masks we are able to

provide. If you need a mask, please let us know!

Rev. Dr. Jonathan and Deaconess Cheryl Naumann, formerly of Redeemer Lutheran in Oakmont, have sent a report on their mission work in the Dominican Republic. They relay they are in good health, sheltering at home in accord with government requirements, and are blessed with a wonderful team of missionaries who work together to take care of them and one another. Mission work carries on as possible, sometimes in creative ways that are new to us. Pastor Jonathan has also been providing video recordings of Sunday and other daily services in English for our missionary families. The Mercy Center ... an Institute of their seminary, included 15 educational workshops, with over 800 participants, held in eight countries. Cheryl, in her role as director of the VDMA Project, has been distributing three articles each week that focus on Spiritual, physical, and emotion assistance in times of great need, such as this pandemic. They also say, "We think of you often and pray that you are

finding reassurance and comfort in our Lord's embrace during these difficult days. Thank you for your prayers, your messages, and your financial support!" We also think of them often and pray God's blessings upon Jonathan and Cheryl!

Virus Outlook

We have begun making plans to return to our usual activities at church. We are monitoring Pennsylvania's guidelines and will use them to decide when to start phasing in weekly worship again. It looks like that will be soon. At a minimum, we will have to eliminate clusters of people in hallways and the narthex, spread out in the pews, and do communion in a safer way. We will keep you posted on when we will have services by means of this newsletter.

We are Family

Is your hair getting long? Are you doing your own nails? Unable to see a dentist or doctor? Stuck at your own place for weeks? It's easy to get unsettled in this mess of a virus. Anxiety, loneliness, and despair are likely companions through these times. Please make use of your daily devotionals, the worship resources sent with this newsletter and the videos on YouTube, if possible. If you need a mask, groceries, any other supplies, or need to talk, call or email Pastor at 412-926-7811 or pastor@christlutheranfh.org. Help is available for you.

Jesus says, " **Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.**" Matthew 24:35 Thank You Jesus that we can trust in You always!

Mask Humor Hate wear that mask? Us, too. Here are some ways people are coping.



<< Gram's always joking around

The Plague Doctor's favorite thirst quencher >>



<< Complete virus protection for day and knight

No virus is a match for The Force >>



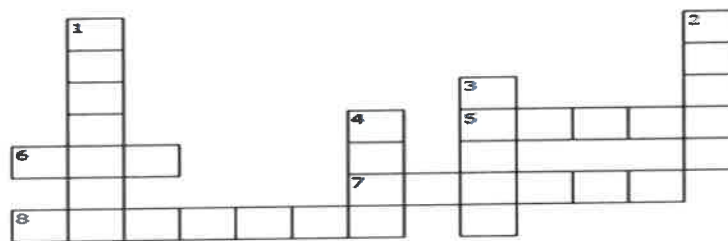
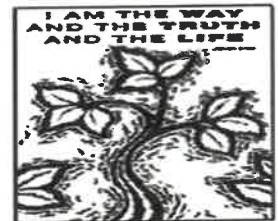
Thank You

A huge thank you to everyone who has made masks for Christ Lutheran's Mask Team. In total, we were able to collect 140+ masks so far. We donated these masks to Concordia Cabot and they are extremely grateful for our contribution. We will continue to collect finished masks every Monday and Tuesday during Church office hours (9am to noon). If you have any questions or concerns or are in need of material, please email Jonathan Bright @ jjb0996@gmail.com.



Finding the Way

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." John 14:6
This puzzle is based on John 14:1-14 (NIV)



ACROSS

5. Areas in a building that have their own walls, floor, ceiling, and door
6. The route or path to follow to get to a place
7. The male parent
8. To accept something as being true

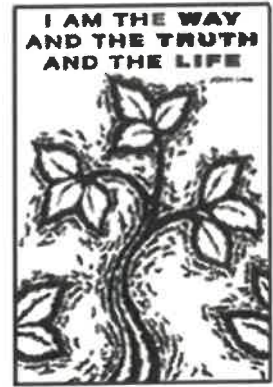
DOWN

1. To get ready for something that will happen in the future
2. A building in which people, usually one family, lives
3. The actual facts about something
4. The period between birth and death

TRUTH BELIEVE	WAY LIFE	HOUSE FATHER	ROOMS PREPARE
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T J Y C O M T W A Y Z C P V A
 A E E H I S I A U J S S R L F
 H L X B U D Y R N H Y T E Y R
 W R A R X H T Z A I I J P E T
 T U T Z P E R H F C M X A D N
 R F M E L A S R O H L W R Z P
 O V J X A R T H T M B E E B X
 U X R L C T O I O O A Q S L E
 B K L O E S A W I W W S V V V
 L C L I O F F A T H E R E O H
 E Q A D V M J O I F L I R T O
 D F D E L I S K R Z L C U N U
 S Y I K I K N O W E M R J X S
 L I N S F P I G B D T I S P E
 Y J I Q E M C E N O U G H J Z

ENOUGH	WAY	HEARTS	TROUBLED	TRUST
THOMAS	LIFE	MIRACLES	HOUSE	SEEN
SHOW	BELIEVE	KNOW	ROOMS	LIVING
FATHER	FAITH	PLACE	PREPARE	TRUTH

Sermon for the 5th Sunday of Easter May 10, 2020

Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

I remember a catchphrase from one of the cartoon shows from when I was a kid; “Have no fear, Underdog is here!” It might also go, “Have no fear, Superman [or insert name of favorite superhero] is here!” It’s a nice thought that all fear can be dismissed due to the presence of someone who can help. We also here it said in other, more down-to-earth ways: “Have no fear, the Fire Department is here;” or, “Don’t worry, the doctor is here;” or, “The police are here;” or especially, “Don’t worry, the plumber is here!” Ha Ha.

Today Jesus says, “Don’t worry, I am here.” This Easter, Jesus has already said he is the Good Shepherd and the Door for His sheep. Today Jesus adds to that and says He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. What else could we possibly need? Jesus is the Life. Everybody wants to live longer and healthier lives. He is the Truth. We are all tired of fake news, false reports, unsubstantiated claims made in gossip and on the internet. Jesus is the Way. That’s also good news as we muddle through countless political strategies aimed at a better society, search for the best philosophy of life, wonder about career paths, look for the best DIY method to redo the bathroom, and buy GPS boxes and phones to get us from here to there.

Since Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, He can say what He says here in John 14:1, ***“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me.”*** Jesus went through quite a bit of trouble in his life to save us! Far be it from us to turn back into wandering sheep following strange voices promising a better life, truer truths, and even better paths to follow than what Jesus provides. Remember Jesus’ words, ***“No one comes to the Father except through me.”*** John 14:6 Point taken!

It is no small thing when Jesus says, “I AM the way, the truth, and the life.” This is another Easter mystery for us to explore – the part where Jesus says, “I AM.” I AM the Good Shepherd. I AM the door. I AM the Way, the truth, and the life. It’s that “I AM” part that I’m talking about here. I AM is the name God uses in his covenantal relationship with the Old Testament people Israel. Remember when Moses encountered God in the burning bush? Moses asked God what his name was, and God said his name was I AM. In Hebrew, this is the name Yahweh, I AM

THAT I AM, or just I AM. Religious leaders knew this name well. When they were arguing with Jesus, insisting He was a foreigner with a demon, and questioning his authority over the likes of Abraham, Jesus answered, ***“Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.”*** So they picked up stones to throw at him. John 8:58-59 They clearly understood that Jesus, by using that name, claimed to be God, they wanted to kill him for blasphemy! They didn’t accept Jesus as *any* of the things He claimed to be.

Jesus is the Good Shepherd. He is the Door. He’s also the Way, the Truth, the Life, and more – he is *God in the flesh*. Jesus told his disciples, ***“Whoever has seen me has seen the Father”*** John 14:9. Everything we know about God – his omnipresence, power, justice, wisdom, love, etc. is found in Jesus. He’s the whole package.

When I go to the grocery store, I usually just have a few things on my list like coffee, coffee creamer, and chocolate. I get into the store and I see they have rearranged everything on the shelves – again. So, I “hunt” for the items on my list, ignoring everything else in the store, get them in the cart, checkout, and get on my way as fast as I possibly can. That’s one way to shop. Simple, efficient, minimalistic. I know other people have a different method of shopping. They get their cart, pick up the sales flyer, and *stroll through every isle in the store* to see what they might purchase. That style of shopping would drive me crazy! However, that’s exactly the method to use when receiving the blessings of God. We don’t want to go to God to just get what we need that day - not getting the virus, finding some chicken to buy, and help for a friend. We want to “shop” for every blessing God has to give us. The isles in God’s store are countless, and items on the shelves are innumerable. We will find everything we could possibly need, and many more things we didn’t even realize God has for us!

All this is why Jesus can say without reservation, ***“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me.”*** John 14:1 In Jesus we find every blessing of God, and He says He is on our side and working for our good. As the Way, Truth, and Life, He provides everything we need and more. Those words of Jesus lead you to that peace that passes all understanding, guarding your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus our Lord, Amen.