



Christ Lutheran Forest Hills, PA

Weekly News (April 1, 2020)

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

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Psalm 46:1

Virus Outlook

With government agencies extending time periods for social distancing and some church officials ordering public worship on hold through Easter, we may not have services for a while yet. Our church leaders will evaluate the situation each week and make the best determination for how to proceed. We'll keep you updated by means of this weekly newsletter and on our website.

Request from the Finance Committee

We trust that you will continue good stewardship and set aside your regular weekly offerings during this unprecedented period of no church services. Since the length of the shutdown is not definite, and the church continues to incur costs for missions, staff, and operations (utilities, maintenance, insurance, etc.), the Finance Committee encourages you to

mail your offerings (checks not cash) to the church office at 400 Barclay Avenue, Pittsburgh, 15221, Attention: Financial Secretary. Please include one of your offering envelopes or note your envelope number in the memo section of your check. If mailing a check is not practical for you, you may bring your contributions when you are again able to worship at Christ Lutheran.

Worship Helps

Videos of weekly worship will continue to be available on our YouTube channel – Christ Lutheran Forest Hills PA. For those without a computer or smart phone, it would be great if somehow you could get one of your children or a neighbor or friend to help you out so that you could see these videos. We also hope to have special services for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday available on YouTube next week. We will continue to send out the **weekly bulletin** with readings, psalms, and

prayers. We are working on a plan to get the April-June **Portals of Prayer** out to those who want it as well. Let us know if you need a copy.

General News



Bob Stimmler and Jonathan Bright are working to bring you the **worship videos** each week. This is a huge undertaking and has proven to be very challenging. Thank you to Bob and Jonathan for

your persistence!



No gatherings or day care are happening in our building right now. This provides the perfect opportunity for our **video surveillance system** to be

installed. Workers from CORE Business Connectivity Solutions out of Greensburg are busy making this project happen.

Keep the Faith!

Many of you are stuck inside as this virus spreads. If you are experiencing any anxiety, loneliness, etc. or need groceries, medicine or supplies please call the church office at 412-271-7173. Your information will be kept discreet. Pastor and a team of church members are standing by to lend help in any way they can.

Soup for the Soul

L.O.C.K.D.O.W.N. is a time to:
L-isten to God's Voice and reflect. Let go and Let God.
O-bey His word and His teachings.
C-all on Jesus' name and be Calm.
K-know what is the purpose of all of this.
D-well in His presence. Do not panic.
O-ffer a prayer for everyone's safety.
W-ait and be patient. This too, shall pass.
N-urture our personal relationship with Him.

To Your Health

Stanford University Notes on Coronavirus:

The new Coronavirus may not show sign of infection for many days. How can you know if you are infected? By the time you have fever and/or cough and go to the hospital, the lung is usually 50% fibrosis.

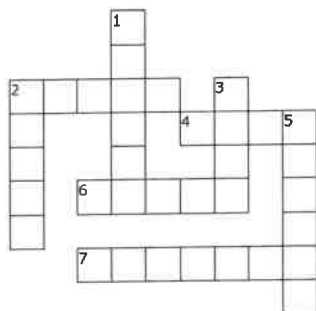
Taiwan experts provide a simple self-check that we can do every morning: **Take a deep breath and hold it for more than 10 seconds.** If you do this successfully without coughing, without discomfort, stiffness or tightness, there is no fibrosis in the lungs; it basically indicates no infection. In critical times, please self-check every morning in an environment with clean air.

The Lighter Side

Four different varieties of sweet peppers have been started for the church garden. One variety matures in 68 days, is a fancy, flavorful, very sweet bell pepper often featured in gourmet produce markets. The name of this delicious pepper is ... Corona! 😊



Corona Peppers



ACROSS

- 2. A loose outer garment without sleeves worn instead of a coat
- 4. A pathway for vehicles, persons, and animals
- 6. To speak with a very loud voice
- 7. A community which is smaller than a town, usually in the countryside

DOWN

- 1. The part of a tree that grows out from the main trunk and has leaves
- 2. A large group of people who have gathered together
- 3. A young male horse (or donkey)
- 5. An animal like a small horse with long ears

BRANCH	COLT	ROAD	CLOAK
SHOUT	VILLAGE	DONKEY	CROWD

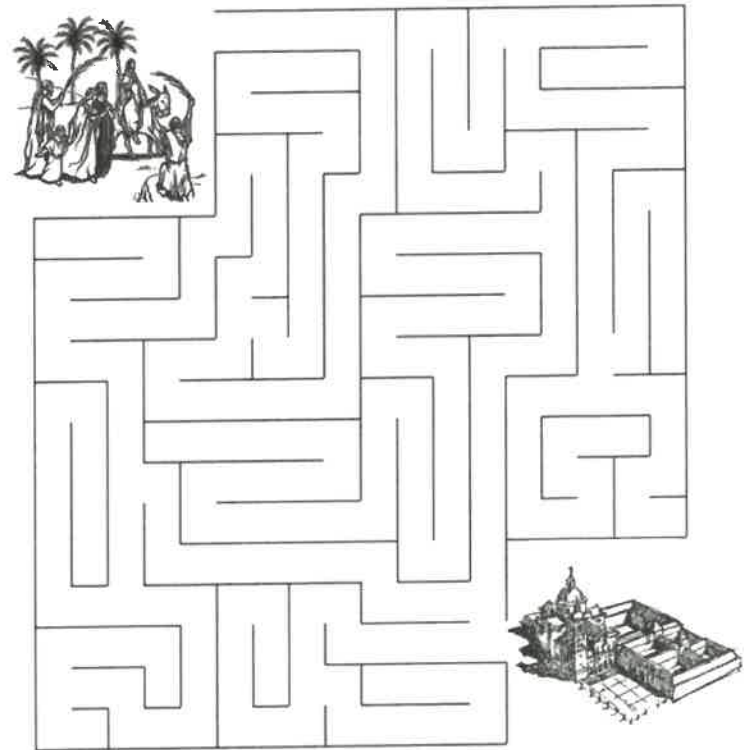


C L O A K S N J T E M K I N G
 E E Y S Y E J E R U S A L E M
 P X K H K N H B K D K F K D J
 H D D O M P X L B I E F P Q L
 M O P W O E L E S S P H J A Y
 O S S R N I X S L C H X O R U
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 N U O L N P E E E P A C H D F
 T X U L J N Y D X L J P B I V
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 Z D C Y D G V I L L A G E K P
 E M D B R A N C H E S L U I U

RIDING	SPOKEN	JESUS	PROPHET	MOUNT
BRANCHES	BLESSED	JERUSALEM	HOSANNA	KING
CLOAKS	LORD	FULFILL	DONKEY	FOAL
VILLAGE	DISCIPLES	OLIVES	GENTLE	COLT

Follow Jesus through the streets of Jerusalem.

The Triumphal Entry





Palm Sunday
April 5, 2020
Weekly Worship Resources

Psalm 118

19 Open to me the gates of righteousness,
that I may enter through them
and give thanks to the Lord.
20 This is the gate of the Lord;
the righteous shall enter through it.
21 I thank You that You have answered me and
have become my salvation.
22 The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone.
23 This is the Lord's doing;
it is marvelous in our eyes.
24 This is the day that the Lord has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.
25 Save us, we pray, O Lord!
O Lord, we pray, give us success!
26 Blessed is He who comes in the name of the
Lord!
We bless you from the house of the Lord.
27 The Lord is God,
and He has made His light to shine upon us.
Bind the festal sacrifice with cords,
up to the horns of the altar!
28 You are my God, and I will give thanks to
You;
You are my God; I will extol You.
29 Oh give thanks to the Lord, for He is good;
for his steadfast love endures forever!

for His steadfast love endures forever!

Zechariah 9:9-12

9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!
Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!
Behold, your king is coming to you;
righteous and having salvation is he,
humble and mounted on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
10 I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim
and the war horse from Jerusalem;
and the battle bow shall be cut off,
and he shall speak peace to the nations;
his rule shall be from sea to sea,
and from the River to the ends of the earth.
11 As for you also, because of the blood of my
covenant with you,
I will set your prisoners free from the
waterless pit.
12 Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of
hope;
today I declare that I will restore to you
double.

Philippians 2:5-11

5 Have this mind among yourselves, which is
yours in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in
the form of God, did not count equality with God
a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, by
taking the form of a servant, being born in the
likeness of men. 8 And being found in human
form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient
to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9
Therefore God has highly exalted him and
bestowed on him the name that is above every
name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee
should bow, in heaven and on earth and under
the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus
Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

John 12:12-19

12 The next day the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. 13 So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, crying out, "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!" 14 And Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written,

15 "Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt!"

16 His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about Him and had been done to Him. 17 The crowd that had been with Him when He called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to bear witness. 18 The reason why the crowd went to meet Him was that they heard He had done this sign. 19 So the Pharisees said to one another, "You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him."

Prayer during Lent

Heavenly Father, Your only begotten Son overcame Satan, sin, and death by His patience and suffering. Help us, we pray, to treasure in our hearts all that our Lord has borne for us that we would be inspired to patiently persevere in true faith unto life everlasting, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Apostles Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; He descended into hell; on the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Christian Church, the communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Collect Prayer

Almighty and everlasting God, You sent Your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, to take upon Himself our flesh and to suffer death upon the cross. Mercifully grant that we may follow the example of His great humility and patience and be made partakers of His resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

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.

Sermon Palm Sunday 2020

Grace and peace to you through God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to bear witness. John 12:17

This is a wonderful account of how the message about Jesus spread. Many people saw Jesus bring Lazarus forth from four days dead in the tomb. It certainly was a spectacular, never-before seen, life-changing event not just for Lazarus but for all those who witnessed this miracle. Sometimes I think it would be good if we could have a few miracles like this today. Maybe there would be more energy behind our own witness and outreach! We have to work with what we have, and what we do have is this eyewitness testimony from the apostle John. We'll take him at his word and receive this account as true. May it also change our lives today so many years after its original occurrence.

The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign. John 12:18

It's also encouraging to hear that people received the word of those who witnessed Jesus' miracle. If only a few people saw what Jesus did and told others, the others would may well have been like, "Yeah, sure, someone was raised from the dead – NOT!" But because of the number of witnesses of Lazarus' resurrection, the truth held sway for many. They believed the report that Lazarus had been raised and concluded that this Jesus fellow was something else again and it would be a good idea to put him in charge.

The next day the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. John 12:12

The perfect opportunity to welcome Jesus in a big way did not take long to present itself. Jesus was already in the area, and only a few days passed between Jesus performing this miracle and his re-entry into the holy city.

And Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, John 12:14

For us, of course, this seems like an unusual way to make a grand entrance. However, when Jesus got up on the donkey and rode it into Jerusalem, he was signaling that he came in peace. That is the importance of this gesture on Jesus' part. Imagine – the King of kings and Lord of lords peacefully riding into Jerusalem on a donkey. One might think it would have been more fitting to burst through the city gates on a strong war horse accompanied by a swarm of cavalry amid a horde of foot soldiers. Jesus did not come to display his power, but the saving grace of God. His goal was not to assert his authority, but to bring peace between a God of justice and people who were trapped in sin and disobedience against him.

So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!" John 12:13

Palm branches were a familiar element in Israel's religious tradition. They symbolized power and victory – especially the power and victory of the Messiah who would come and be their deliverer from oppression. Here they rightly cry out, "Hosanna," or "Lord save us." Jesus had indeed come to save his people. Jesus had even come to be their king. But none of this was going to happen in the way the people were expecting.

*"Fear not, daughter of Zion;
behold, your king is coming,
sitting on a donkey's colt!" John 12:15*

Here John connects Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem with the words of the prophet Zechariah. The prophet foretold this memorable day in the church's history centuries before it actually took place. This was all part of God's plan to save us. How does the prophecy begin? "Fear not..." Jesus has come riding on a donkey along his road to coronation with the purpose of dispelling all our fears. Right now, we may be feeling a lot of fear because of this virus. Our lives have changed. Will we stay well? Will my child finish the school year? Will people get their jobs back? Will the economy recover? What permanent damage is this going to cause our country and the world? Zechariah says, "Fear not." All those things we fear may indeed come to pass. We pray they won't. But they might. With Jesus as our savior and king, none of these things will be able to tear us away from his eternal presence and saving power. We remain his forever.

His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and had been done to him. John 12:16

All of this can be hard to take in. There is much in the Bible we do not yet understand. Along the way you may have been enlightened in important ways. There is so much more! As we read what the bible says in the light of Jesus' resurrection and glorification, we, too, can understand more of what God is saying to us and grow and mature in our spiritual lives. We certainly do not understand everything yet. As we read, hear, and learn God's Word, it dwells more richly in us. With the power of the Word in our hearts, that fear Jesus came to dispel is replaced with his perfect love. That love of Christ leads us more and more into his peace and strength.

So the Pharisees said to one another, "You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the world has gone after him." John 12:19

Were that the Pharisees were right in their estimation! How wonderful if the whole world had indeed gone after Jesus Christ. Things were being overstated here, but no doubt in the eyes of the Pharisees this is exactly how it seemed. When we make things out to be more than they really are – when we over-exaggerate the problems in our lives, we will often make costly mistakes. So it was with the Pharisees. Since they viewed Jesus as a huge problem, their solution was also equally grand. Jesus had been elevated to the status of a Rock Star. The solution? Kill Jesus.

These events of Palm Sunday propel us into Holy Week. Holy Week is a bit different than Lent. In Lent, we join Jesus during his 40 days in the wilderness and fight temptation with the ashes of repentance, fasting, prayer and almsgiving. In Holy Week, we huddle up with Jesus' disciples and follow him closely into his final battle against Satan on through to his victory. God bless you as we travel together over the next 7 days and on to Easter.

The peace of God that passes all understanding guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.