



# Christ Lutheran Forest Hills, PA

## Weekly News

*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.*

### Virus Outlook

Confirmed cases of Covid-19 continue to grow. We have been advised to wear masks when leaving home. It looks like it will still be a while until things get back to normal at Christ Lutheran. We'll keep you updated by means of this weekly newsletter.

### Worship Helps

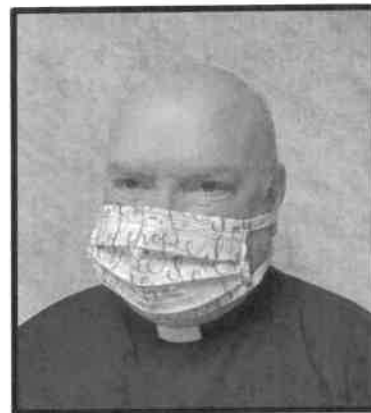
**Portals of Prayer** is now available free on Concordia Publishing House's website; [cph.org](http://cph.org). Many copies were distributed last week. If you still need a copy, please call the church office at 412-271-7173.

We have received positive feedback from including the bulletin with this newsletter. The readings for Sunday as well as the Creed and prayers are there for your use and edification.

**Worship Videos** continue to be posted to the internet. This week will include videos for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. You can find the videos on our website ([christlutheranfh.org](http://christlutheranfh.org)); Our YouTube channel (Christ Lutheran Forest Hills PA); and Facebook ([christlutheranfh](http://christlutheranfh)). We also recommend Sunday services from **Worship Anew** at

[worshipanew.org](http://worshipanew.org) as well as other livestreams and videos from our sister churches. See the Eastern District website ([lcmseed.org](http://lcmseed.org)) for a good list. God bless your Easter Celebrations!

### General News



Linda Kern, a member at Christ Lutheran and professional tailor, made masks for Pastor Breight. The print on the fabric says faith, hope, and love. Thank you Linda for your excellent work!

**Zoom Zoom!** – We have done a few meetings using the Zoom program where everyone is at their own home but can see and hear everyone else in the meeting. It is time to expand our use of this program to the Wednesday morning Bible Study, Christ Lutheran's (Re)Start new

member class, and our Confirmation class. If you are interested in being part of the Wednesday Class or (Re)Start, please call the church office.

**The Pennsylvania primary elections** have been rescheduled to Tuesday, June 2. Please keep that in mind when planning church activities on that date since we are a voting station. It will be great if we CAN plan activities for that date. Let's hope so. Mail-in ballots are also being made available to all who request one. You'll have to visit [votespa.com](http://votespa.com) to request a mail-in ballot.

The **Real ID** deadline has been changed from October 2020 to October 2021.

Apple has an app for corona virus screening. It's called **Apple COVID-19**

### **We are Family**

Many are stuck inside as this virus spreads, and many are also experiencing anxiety, loneliness, etc. Others need groceries, medicine or supplies. If any of these describe you, please call the church office at 412-271-7173 or Pastor Breight at 412-926-7811. Pastor and a team of church members are standing by to lend help in any way they can.

### **Soup for the Soul**

The best way to manage anxiety is by focusing on all the positive things we have around us right now. It's pretty easy to get rich quick - just count all the blessings in your life!

"While the world around us is filled with fear and uncertainty, this is our opportunity to shine like lights in the darkness. We can be a community of people with calm hearts like the sea, a community that has listened to His voice

and announces His great power and infinite love to the world." – Pastor in Italy

***I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.*** John 16:33

### **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.

### **To Your Health**

Here's some advice by Japanese doctors treating COVID-19 cases: Everyone should ensure your mouth & throat are moist, never dry. Take a few sips of water every 15 minutes at least. Why? Even if the virus gets into your mouth, drinking water or other liquids will wash them down through your throat and into the stomach. Once there, your stomach acid will kill all the virus. If you don't drink enough water regularly, the virus can enter your windpipe and then the lungs. That's very dangerous.

Also:

1. If you have a runny nose and sputum, you have a common cold.
2. Coronavirus pneumonia is a dry cough with no runny nose.
3. This new virus is not heat-resistant and will be killed by a temperature of just 26/27 degrees C. (About 77 degrees F.) It hates the Sun.
4. If someone sneezes with it, it goes about 10 feet before it drops to the ground and is no longer airborne.
5. If it drops on a metal surface it will live for at least 12 hours - so if you come into contact with any metal surface, wash your hands as soon as you can with a bacterial soap.
6. On fabric it can survive for 6-12 hours. normal laundry detergent will kill it.
7. Drinking warm water is effective for all viruses. Try not to drink liquids with ice.
8. Wash your hands frequently as the virus can only live on your hands for 5-10 minutes, but - a lot can happen during that time - you can rub your eyes, pick your nose unwittingly and so on.
9. You should also gargle as a prevention. A simple solution of salt in warm water will suffice.
10. Can't emphasize enough - drink plenty of water!

#### THE SYMPTOMS:

1. It will first infect the throat, so you'll have a sore throat lasting 3/4 days
2. The virus then blends into a nasal fluid that enters the trachea and then the lungs, causing pneumonia. This takes about 5/6 days further.
3. With the pneumonia comes high fever and difficulty in breathing.
4. The nasal congestion is not like the normal kind. You feel like you're drowning. It's imperative you then seek immediate attention.

#### Lighter Side

A Quote recently heard: "If someone hates a few days of self-isolation, retirement is really going to be a bummer."



#### **Pretty in Pink (or Purple)**

- 1 can pineapple
- 1 can Eagle brand (sweetened) milk
- 8 oz. Cool Whip
- 1 can cherry pie filling

Mix all ingredients except Cool Whip in 9x13 baking pan. Fold in Cool Whip. Taste it and STOP before you eat it all! Put mixture in freezer for two hours. Remove from freezer and let thaw a bit and then enjoy. It has a spring-like look to it and colors will vary depending on pie filling. – from Barb Mitchell

***April showers bring May flowers!***

**"He is not here; he has risen, just as he said.  
Come and see the place where he lay."**

**Matthew 28:6 (NIV)**

## **WORD SEARCH**

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

TOMB  
SHOOK  
EARTHQUAKE

ANGEL  
WEEK  
ROLLED

RISEN  
FIRST  
JESUS

RISEN  
DAWN  
AFRAID

STONE  
HEAVEN  
DAY

## Sermon Good Friday 2020

Grace, Mercy, and Peace be unto you from God our Father and Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

One word I hear being used a lot these days is UNPRECEDENTED. People say, "We are living in an unprecedented time." Signs posted everywhere read, "Our store hours have been shortened due to this unprecedented crisis" and, "Please practice social distancing." News reports declare this to be an "Unprecedented Pandemic." It's said to be an unprecedented virus, outbreak, crisis, plague, pandemic, shutdown, and lockdown.

Is this really an unprecedented time that we are living in? Have there never before been viruses and plagues that have swept across the globe? Of course there have been. We know the devastation of the bubonic plague that swept across Europe at least several times. There were other diseases that broke out across large populations. As recently as 1918 the Spanish flu became a global pandemic and 40-50 million perished. This time is perhaps unprecedented for US. However, it is certainly not unprecedented in the history of the world. Or for other people living in earlier times and places.

Another one of those unprecedented times in the past was what we call Good Friday – the day Jesus Christ was crucified. The thing that made Good Friday so unprecedented was that almost no one there understood what was happening right in front of their eyes. The words of Jesus could be applied to everyone there as he proclaimed "...they do not know what they are doing."

Judas betrayed his teacher, rabbi and master for 30 pieces of silver. When he realized what he had done, Judas found a tree overhanging a cliff and he hung himself. Jesus came to bring peace, but in Gethsemane, Peter took out his sword and cut off the ear of Malchus, a servant of the high priest. Later, when he was identified as one of Jesus' followers, three times Peter denied that he even knew Jesus. When he realized what he had done, he wept bitterly. The other disciples deserted Jesus and fled when the officials came to arrest him. They were so afraid of getting into trouble, one even wiggled out of his clothes when a guard grabbed him and ran off naked. At the foot of the cross were the three Mary's: Jesus mother, her sister, and Mary Magdalene, another serious follower of Christ. Filled with horror, they did not understand why the Lord was being crucified either. Nothing there made any sense to them.

The Jewish leadership finagled and connived to get Jesus arrested, tried, and then crucified. Yet they did not realize they were trying to kill their own Lord.

He had walked with them through the Red Sea, in the wilderness, and brought them to the promised land. Now he had come to bring them life. Pilate, of course, had no idea what he was doing either. Passing the sentence of death on his own creator. Washing his hands as he tried to remove his own guilt. The crowd cried out, "Let his blood be on us and our children." They had no idea the weight of what they asked.

In all of this, there was ONE who did know what was happening. There was one who did understand. Jesus understood. Jesus knew exactly what was happening. He knew all the prophecies that had been spoken about him. He was there to fulfill every last one of them and become the savior of the world. He entered into the events of Good Friday with both eyes wide open. Jesus knew exactly what he was doing. Earlier in his ministry Jesus had said, ***"And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself."*** John 12:32 On this day, Good Friday, Jesus was lifted up on Calvary. Now Jesus draws us to him and his cross. Jesus' cross has become the gravitational center of our lives even as we live in this unprecedented time.

How many times we go about our lives as Jesus' disciples, yet we have no idea of what we are doing. We follow our own way, not his. Sometimes we have no idea of the gravity of what we say. Other times we think we are doing good, but we are really producing evil. In Jesus' eyes, we might well look like a hopeless lot. But Jesus said of those there at the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." Jesus asked for their forgiveness. Jesus also brings his forgiveness to US from his cross where he paid the ransom price for all our sin and guilt - what we know we have done, but also our wrongs we do not realize we have.

These days of a global pandemic are unprecedented in our lives. The crucifixion of Jesus, an innocent man and Lord of creation, was an unprecedented act. But there have been other plagues, epidemics and pandemics. There have been other times when lots of people made very bad decisions thinking they were doing something beneficial. Good Friday, however, leads us into something that truly was a never-seen-before, never-heard-of-before, unimaginable, unprecedented event. Join me next time for more!

Until then, the peace of God guard your hearts and minds as you believe and trust in him. Amen.

## Sermon for Easter Sunday, April 12, 2020

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

Christ is risen! Christ is risen, indeed! Hallelujah! Easter is the day to use that historical and meaningful expression. Unfortunately, not many of us are together to share this Easter responsory. This year, we must settle for giving thanks and praise to God at home with maybe just a few family members.

Last Thursday at 8 pm we had the **Illumination Ovation**. Pittsburghers were asked to light up their homes and porches, go outside, and clap, ring bells, and just make noise to show support for first responders, hospital employees, mail carriers, grocery store clerks, delivery drivers and other essential workers who are risking their own well-being to help others. That was a fine effort to thank all those people. Today on Easter Sunday, we applaud and praise the Lord Jesus Christ for putting himself in harm's way to be the sacrifice that atones for our sin and brings us eternal life.

This virus continues to spread. Cases are increasing. The death toll rises. By now, it's very possible you know someone who has contracted Covid-19, or at least you know of a friend of a friend who has been infected. It's a scary time with all the hand washing and sanitizing, social distancing, living in isolation, mask wearing, and hoarding. Did anyone ever imagine we would have an Easter like this? I think not. It is, as people are saying, unprecedented, at least for us.

I don't think Jesus' disciples expected to celebrate a Passover with Jesus like they did either, which resulted in the first Easter. First there was the meal in the upper room. Then Jesus was arrested in Gethsemane, falsely accused, brought before Pilate, beaten, flogged, forsaken, and finally crucified. That's NOT what the disciples were expecting. What a celebration that turned out to be! Over the past months, over a million people have been infected with the coronavirus. Obviously, this was not by their choice. However, Jesus - our savior and friend - willingly took upon himself the unhealthiness and disease of the sin of all people. Jesus suffered the full torment of hell and he died as a sinner because of it. What a friend we have in Jesus! When he burst forth from the tomb, he declared his victory over the power sin and death held over us. Jesus now reigns in its place. Victory over death is his. In him, victory over death is ours, too!

The current pandemic is far from over. Stay-at-home orders in our area last at least until the end of April. But what happens after that? Experts say social distancing could last for months. Others say once Africa and South America get hit hard the whole spiral could start again. Still others say Covid-19 will always be with us and we will have

to continually guard against it with vaccines and other precautions and treatments for the rest of our lives.

The Lord of creation sends many reminders that this world is broken, and in his time, it will be destroyed. Hurricanes, tornadoes, droughts, earthquakes, tsunamis, meteors, and wars all signal God's impending judgement on the earth. Plagues, epidemics and pandemics also warn of the same end – that on the last day this earth will be destroyed, we will all meet our Maker and we will all give an account of the deeds we have done in this life. Everyone will be guilty of trespassing against the righteous Lord and merit nothing but condemnation. But those who are covered with the blood of Jesus Christ, the Passover Lamb, will be saved. We are covered with his blood when we admit and confess our sins to God and ask his forgiveness for the sake of Jesus and his cross. We are also – and especially - covered with his blood when we receive it in Holy Communion. We pray God speed that day among us soon!

This current crisis continues on and will eventually be replaced by another and another and yet another in a continuing chain of catastrophes until the end of time. But when Jesus completed his mission on the cross he cried out, "It is finished!" All the troubles of this world are unending. However, the problem of sin and death and guilt that are at work within us has been finally solved once and for all in Jesus Christ. We can live in confidence and hope that our biggest problems have already been dealt with in him!

In these modern times, medical research has brought forth many treatments that have been proven successful against cancer, diabetes, heart disease, arthritis, and the like. We fully expect that, in time, a treatment and vaccine will be developed against Covid-19 as well. But these treatments are like plugging one hole in the boat just to spring another leak that will sink us. No matter how many ailments and diseases we find solutions for, we will all still die. That is the final and ultimate cure we need. If only we could live forever! And that is exactly what we have in Jesus Christ. Jesus said, ***"I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die."*** (John 11:25-26) On Good Friday, Jesus paid the price of our sin and removed our guilt. On Easter, in the most unprecedented moment in all of history, he rose from death and gives his new life to us. Let that message strengthen you and keep you strong during these difficult times. Be sure to share this good news with others who need the encouragement it gives. Together, we live each day in the power of Easter, proclaiming "Christ is risen! Christ is risen, indeed! Hallelujah!" Amen.