

Pastoral Ponderings...

Welcome to the new normal.

We keep hearing that phrase as we move forward in a society, and a world, which has been unbelievably and overwhelmingly affected by the Covid-19 virus and the protests and upheavals following the death of George Floyd. We have been asked (or in some cases required) to wear masks and to keep 6 feet away from one another. We see both peaceful protestors and violent clashes on the news every evening. We see buildings and statues being vandalized, burned, destroyed, and removed. We hear of police departments being defunded. We see millionaire actors, and now professional sports teams as well, becoming more concerned about making political statements than they are about entertaining people and providing an escape from the stress of our everyday lives. We hear people condemning racism and the devastating effects it has had on so many in our country, and encouraging us to stand up and be heard. And at the same time we see "cancel culture" trying to silence everyone and everything *they* determine is not in agreement with what *they* say and believe. We see political parties 'politicizing' everything – and being more concerned about party lines and criticizing their competition on the opposite side of the aisle than they are about working together for the good of the people they are supposed to be serving. What is this world coming to? I don't like the new normal!!

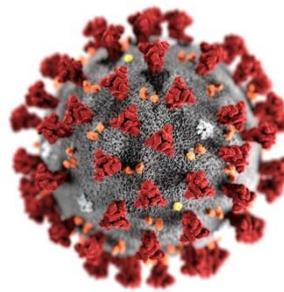
Well, I must admit – even though I think many of the changes I see (and many of the changes that are being called for) are crazy, I will also admit that some of the changes being called for are good, and may be long overdue. But change is never easy ... especially when it means changing what we think of as "normal." But remember, just because something is "normal", that in itself does not mean it is good. After all, "normal" is defined as "conforming to a standard; usual, typical, or expected." So, while a child who grows up in an abusive home (whether the abuse is physical, emotional, sexual, or a combination thereof) may think of these behaviors and feelings as "normal", because they are usual and expected ... they certainly aren't good.

A new "normal" will require changes. And a new "normal" may take some getting used to. But in the midst of all the changes we see taking place around us (both good and

bad) we can find comfort and security in the one thing which never changes – *"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever."* ~ Hebrews 13:8. And our concern is not to become more and more like the world, but to become more and more like Him.

Ever since humankind first sinned the world has been changed from a paradise into a place of deception, mistrust, lying, abuse, violence, murder, selfishness, competitiveness, one-upmanship, dominance, ... and the list goes on and on. But God, especially through His Son Jesus Christ, has always been calling us to repent, love, help, forgive, support, encourage, care, co-operate, share, think more highly of others than we do of ourselves, and to work for justice and peace in all the earth, ... just as he himself has done. In these times of great upheaval and change, hold on to Jesus ... and make His normal your normal.

Pastor Mark



Coronavirus Pandemic and its effects on our Congregation

FROM 3/15/20 TO 7/26/20
By Sadie Koser

Five days after Pastor Mark sent an email stating that the Wednesday Lenten dinners would be discontinued due to low attendance ... the Wednesday, March 18th worship service entitled "The Wounds Of Murder" was held with only 10 parishioners attending. Concerns about general health, now coupled with concerns about the corona virus, were already having an effect on our attendance – but we didn't realize at the time that the service on March 18th would be the last service to be held at Living Word Lutheran Church until Sunday, May 24th (when 25 people were present for our first on-site service in over 9 weeks!)

After that day, March 18th, all our lives took a drastic change. On Thursday, March 19th we were asked by

Governor Hogan to STAY HOME. Then came the mask situation - where wearing them was a choice. That changed on Saturday, April 18th at 7 a.m. when wearing a mask became mandatory, but we were still not able to gather together on the premises.



That was when Phyllis Alban put the cord of her sewing machine into the wall receptacle. Her goal was 100 handmade masks ... she made the goal by the 23rd! She mailed masks as far away as Florida and Texas. Phyllis also contacted Pastor Mark concerning giving the masks to our congregation members who would request them. She did not want a price put on her masks ... if you insisted on paying for your mask, she requested the donations be made to LWLC's roof fund! Upon completion she mailed the masks to Pastor Mark, and he delivered them to the members who had ordered them. At my request Phyllis mailed mine directly to me and I received it on April 22nd. It's a pretty lavender floral mask that I have worn ever since. At the rate the virus is rising at the present time we could be wearing them for the rest of 2020.

During all that 'stay home' period I was starting to get the feeling of a bear in hibernation! I'm sure the feeling was mutual. I thank those in the congregation who phoned concerning my well-being during this time.



I appreciated Peggy Young for keeping me informed of Pastor Mark's numerous emails ... though she does this good deed throughout the year. Thank you, my friend! Most of my shut-in time was probably spent the same as yours ... reading, sleeping, eating, SNACKING (all day & evening) and gaining weight!

Those who have email and internet access continued enjoying the weekly sermons of Pastor Mark. The first Sunday of our 'quarantine', March 22nd, he emailed the scripture lessons and the text of his sermon, along with suggestions for worshipping at home, so that our congregation members still felt connected to LW and to God. By Wednesday of that week he started video recording himself from his office at the church reading the scripture lessons and preaching the sermon for our midweek Lenten and Sunday morning worship services; and he sent the video files and bulletins to those who

have email. Caitlin Squires came to the church and recorded the worship services for Holy Week and Easter (all done in the sanctuary), edited them by adding opening screen shots and music, and showed Pastor Mark how to post them on a YouTube channel for LWLC and on our Facebook page. After Easter Pastor Mark returned to recording the services from his office using the webcam on his laptop computer; and he also began some editing himself - adding opening and closing screens, background music, scripture reading title overlays, and more. I have heard the services were most welcomed in the homes of our congregation that had email. (Now I realize how much was missed by not living in the real world of technology!!)

At the beginning of the coronavirus Pastor Mark placed 3 words on the outdoor bulletin board - **JUST KEEP PRAYING!** Those words had special meaning during this pandemic crisis, giving something for those travelling down Hill Top Drive to think about.

During the coronavirus pandemic it was decided to donate the \$250 monthly benevolence to persons who were affected by this catastrophe. In April our treasurer, Lori Squires, purchased ten \$25 gift cards, redeemable at Martin's and Chick-fil-A. Three cards were given to the Cumberland Health Care (to be given to laundry and house-keeping personnel), three cards were sent to UPMC Western Maryland Health System (for house-keeping personnel), two were donated to the Cumberland Police Department, one to the postmaster of the Oldtown & Barton offices (same person), and the final gift card was given to a clerk at Sav-A-Lot store. Ordinarily, I don't mention where council sends the monthly benevolence check, however, under the circumstances, you have helped meet the needs of a few persons in our area that are assisting others during the virus condition. Lori wrote a letter to each of the businesses telling them of the donation and including our worship hour (for when services would be resumed.)

The May benevolence was mailed to Samaritan's Purse (headed by Franklin Graham, son of the late Reverend Billy Graham) for the building of a hospital for coronavirus patients in New York and for tornado victims in Louisiana.



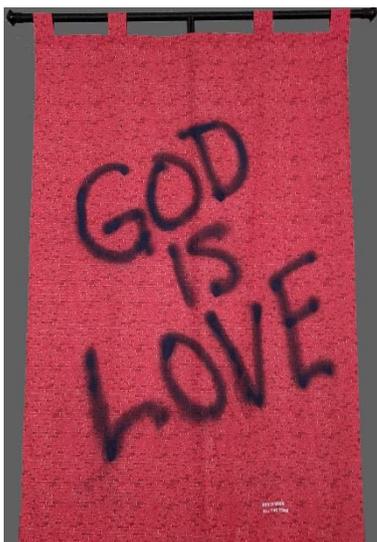
The June benevolence, five \$10 gift certificates to Sheetz's, was sent, also with a letter from Lori, to the

Allegany, Garrett and Mineral counties sheriff's offices and the same given to the Frostburg and Keyser City Police Departments.

The July benevolence of \$250 was sent to the Food Pantry, this being the first donation of cash or food since February.

When we were able to resume on-site worship services at the church building we enjoyed the signs of spring and summer as Kay Chaney did the centerpieces on the fellowship hall tables, downstairs window sills and the planter at the front entrance. Sondra Cave also redecorated the bathrooms for the season. Sondra and Kay's talents are greatly appreciated.

During the time of the protest marchers there was shown on television quite a lot of graffiti writing on the bases of



statues and buildings in the large cities. Andi Liller went to work and made a 'graffiti banner' for our altar. The material was a pattern of a red brick wall, onto which she spray-painted "GOD IS LOVE" in black lettering. It's sad ... the graffiti on TV, written by thoughtless marchers, viewed by millions ... while Andi's art was observed by only a few of us and was more meaningful.

As we gathered again for our worship hour only, with restrictions, Pastor Mark changed the outdoor bulletin board wording to "GATHERING AGAIN SUNDAY AT 10 A.M." Since that time Pastor Mark has continued to pre-record, and post on our YouTube channel and our Facebook page, the scripture readings and sermon so that those who are still staying home are able to worship "with us" on Sunday mornings. And, when she is able, Stacey McIntosh has been using her phone to tape the scripture readings and sermon live during our worship service. Then the files are transferred to Pastor's computer, where he edits them and then posts the file to our YouTube channel and Facebook page for those who prefer to watch



the recordings from our "live" worship service as well as for others who might "stumble across them" and decide to tune in to hear the word of God.

Congregational News

FROM 3/15/20 TO 7/26/20

By Sadie Koser

Our sympathy to the family of Harry Foreback who passed away March 31st following a brief stay at Sterling Care Frostburg Village, at the age of 93. A WW2 veteran, Harry retired from CSX where he was an engineer. For seven years after retirement Harry enjoyed being the engineer on #734 steam engine on the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad. His wife, Arlene, preceded him in death. Among the survivors are his two daughters, Vicki Larrick (husband Dave) and Elaine Reuschlein, his grandson, Clint Larrick (wife Michelle) and great grandson, Grant Harry Larrick. Many of us remember Harry as he attended our church at times with Vicki and he enjoyed our picnics when he attended them. Because of the restrictions due to the corona virus the family held a private service with a celebration of his life.

Sympathy is extended to the family of Richard McIntyre who passed away April 11th at UPMC Western Maryland Hospital, at the age of 81, after months of failing health. After serving in the Army during the Korean Conflict, he was hired at the Luke Paper Mill, retiring with 41 years of service from Mead Westvaco. Richard is survived by his wife, Sherry, two daughters, five grandchildren, one great grandchild, with a baby boy due in August and twins (boy & girl) that arrived in May. Richard is also survived by six siblings, including Bob McIntyre and wife, Becky. The family honored Richard with a private funeral service with interment in Potomac Memorial Gardens (Keyser). The family is also planning a memorial service which will be held at a later date.

Sincere sympathy to the family of Harry Dill who passed away May 11th at the age of 89 at the Augsburg Nursing Home (Baltimore) with deteriorating health problems for several months. He retired from the Sweetheart Cup Division of the Maryland Cup Company where he was a designer draftsman. Harry is survived by 2 sons, Keith and Pastor Mark. Grandchildren are Heather and Nathanael and 4 great grandchildren. His wife, Dorothy, passed away

in December 2016 and they were the parents of a deceased daughter, Lois Anne, who succumbed to Aplastic Anemia in 1972 at the age of 9. Because of the virus a private graveside service was held at the Dulaney Valley Memorial Gardens in Baltimore.

Sunday, May 24th church services were resumed with guidelines. Twenty-five attended, seated in family groups in every other pew. Masks were optional with social distancing set at 6 feet. All hymnals and pew rack materials were removed. The service, including hymns, has been printed in the bulletin each week, and members have been asked to take their bulletin home after service and not leave them in a pew. Communion is observed every Sunday with Pastor Mark wearing protective gloves and a mask while breaking and giving the bread. The wine and grape juice are pre-poured in the individual plastic cups. Bobby Huff is in charge of sanitizing the narthex and sanctuary after every service.

Our sympathy to the family of Lucille Ridgeley who passed away unexpectedly at the Lion's Center for Rehabilitation on May 26th at the age of 89. Lucille was preceded in death by her husband, Junior, and their son, Danny Ridgely. Among the survivors is her daughter, Donna Morris and husband, Johnny, 3 grandchildren, 3 great grandchildren and 5 great great grandchildren. Due to the coronavirus visitation and graveside services were private for the family. Burial was conducted at Queen's Point Cemetery (Keyser) on June 1st with arrangements by Smith Funeral Home, Keyser Chapel.

Sympathy from our congregation is extended to the family of Carol Roy who passed away on May 29th at Ruby Memorial Hospital (Morgantown) at the age of 74. Carol is survived by her husband, Thurl, two sons and a stepdaughter. She is also survived by two sisters-in-law, Wanda Lewis and Melva Friedland, who always affectionately considered her as their fourth sister. A celebration of her life was held on June 13th at Dryfork Assembly, Dryfork, West Virginia.

Although the church was closed on Mother's Day (May 10th) due to the virus the Liller couple (Scott & Andi) had prepared a celebration for the women (a few of us aren't mothers) of the church. On the first Sunday we had onsite worship services (May 24th) they gave the ladies a lovely lavender nail kit containing the necessities to repair a fingernail



catastrophe away from home! It's perfect for our handbag. Inscribed on the top is "Whispers of God's Love" with "You Are Mine. Isaiah 43:1" They remain on the table in the narthex and you may receive your gift when you return to church!

Sunday, June 21st was observed as Father's Day, with Scott & Andi remembering all men (some aren't dads) with a gift of a red pocket flashlight. It was inscribed with "God's Direction Is Always Best." Again, our appreciation to the Liller couple ... our dedicated church members. The flashlights are also on the table with the nail kits for your taking.



Sincere sympathy to the family of Richard 'Dick' Keller who passed away on Monday, July 16th at UPMC Western Maryland Health System, at the age of 79. The youngest of 5 children of John & Hilda Keller, Dick was preceded in death by his parents, a sister and 3 brothers. He is survived by his wife, Pat, son, Rich, and daughter, Andi Liller, 2 grandsons, and 1 great grandson. Dick's funeral was conducted at our church on Friday, July 10th at noon with Pastor Mark officiating. The burial was in Maryland State Veteran's Cemetery, Rocky Gap, with military honors by the Fort Cumberland Post 13 Honor Guard. Dick, and his sense of humor, will be sorely missed by all of us. He and Frank Perlozzi did the grass cutting and many maintenance jobs of the church for several years after the building was purchased. We could always depend on his volunteering to assist with the yard/bake/hotdog sales, the luncheons and the cleaning of the church building by the Helping Hands Group! Dick's last act of helping was the funeral luncheon for Bob Chaney in February. At that time he was taken to the hospital with shortness of breath. It wasn't a healthy life for him from then on ... PEACE AT LAST my friend (Kenny's too) of many years.

THOUGHT FOR THIS EDITION

YESTERDAY is history. . .

TOMORROW is a mystery. . .

TODAY is a gift of GOD. . .

which is why we call it the PRESENT!

(Bill Keane)

Our Younger Generation

FROM 3/15/20 TO 7/26/20
By Sadie Koser



The Allegany County Center for Career and Technical Education recently announced its honor roll for the second nine-week period. CAITIE ROSENBERGER, a member of the junior class, was on the A/ B honor roll. She is the granddaughter of Carl & Kathy. Congratulations, Caitie!

Mount Savage Middle School recently released its honor roll for the third nine-week grading period. Our congratulations to ANNABETH & CAROLYN HUGHES who made the straight A list. Carolyn is a member of the 6th grade, Annabeth is in the 8th grade, and they are the daughters of Kristi & Ray!

Frost Elementary School recently named the students who made the honor roll for the final marking period for 2019-2020. WILLIAM HUGHES, oldest son of Kristie & Ray, is a member of the 4th grade and made the list. Congratulations, William!

JORDAN CHANEY, daughter of Steve & Lisa, granddaughter of Kay, was recently selected as one of six from Allegany High School for the 2019 girl's soccer All Area first team ... Jordan is only a sophomore! This is her first season with the Campers and was highly praised by head coach Kyle Martz who said, "Jordan is blessed with scary speed, quickness and a motor that just will not quit. Put those three qualities with solid technical skills and she is a player that is worthy of a first team selection." In Living Word's Words last edition it mentioned Jordan being Allegany High School Student Athlete of the month for the school's basketball team and she also runs track. Jordan is quite an athlete ... and she also carries a 3.6 GPA. Our congratulations again in this newsletter to Jordan!



DYLAN JAMES, grandson of Mike & Phyllis Alban, graduated from Rice University in Houston, Texas on May 16th with a degree in kinesiology. He will be working for the next year with a physical therapist before returning to school to continue his studies in hopes of attaining his PhD in physical therapy.



GARRETT JAMES, another one of Mike & Phyllis' grandsons, graduated summa cum laude from Johnson high school in San Antonio, Texas, on June 1st. He will be attending Texas A&M Corpus Christi to pursue a degree in biology.

Thank You Notes

Dear Saints of God, Thank you so much for making my world a little more beautiful with your kindness ... it really meant a lot! Thank you for your love and kindness and hands of God that make these wonderful quilts. Thank you for your love of people, thank the kindness of your women.

In Jesus' Name, Love,
Calvary United Methodist Church, Billie J. Smith

Thank You ... Dear Friends, During a time like this we learn how much our family and friends really mean to us. Your expression of sympathy will always be remembered. Thanks so much for the beautiful floral arrangement. Pat & family

The Roof Repayment



A financial report on the roof replacement as of 7/19/20 is as follows: cash received \$8,715. with a balance of \$5,485. We thank everyone for their support in getting the money back to where it was temporarily taken from.



"I'm sorry, but I can't let you in. There's been a computer error."



AUGUST

- 1 Johnny Morris
- 2 Tanya Palmer
- 2 Pat Robb
- 4 David Snyder
- 10 Mary Aronhalt
- 12 Peggy Robb
- 15 Hannah Eriksson
- 16 Stacey McIntosh
- 22 Alan Arthur
- 24 Kari Shumaker
- 31 Scott Chaney

SEPTEMBER

- 1 Jessica Squires
- 6 Donna Morris
- 7 Pat Keller
- 12 Ray Hughes
- 20 Carolyn Hughes
- 22 Phyllis Alban
- 29 Paul Eriksson
- 30 Lisa Chaney

OCTOBER

- 8 Caitie Rosenberger
- 11 Morgan Chaney
- 12 Dot Snyder
- 21 Bobby Huff
- 23 Sharon Snyder
- 28 Lora Henson
- 28 Susan Dill
- 29 Lori Eriksson

AUGUST

- 1 Mark & Kim Jackson

SEPTEMBER

- 6 Mark & Susan Dill
- 9 Jim & Lori Squires
- 12 Terry & Peggy Robb
- 15 Bryan & Kim Boston
- 19 Mike & Phyllis Alban

OCTOBER

- 1 Don & Marsha Squires
- 9 Joe & Paula McIntosh
- 10 Clint & Michelle Larrick
- 11 Steve & Lisa Chaney
- 11 Lynn & Linda Zeller


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