



'Till We Meet Again!

Week of September 5 and 6, 2020

REFLECTION FOR THURSDAY, AUGUST 27, 2020:

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight." Proverbs 3:5-6

When we are faced with disappointment today, it can sometimes be difficult for us to see the hope of tomorrow. It can be difficult to see through the cloud of disappointment and know which way is the best way forward. When we place our trust in God, God can bring us through to the other side of disappointment to something new and joyful.

In November of 2019 I was faced with the disappointment of being "Postponed" rather than "Endorsed" by the synod candidacy committee. In December, I met with a small panel of the committee and they recommended that I spend time with a congregation that was not my home congregation for further "Field Education" to help further the formation of my pastoral identity. This recommendation was approved by the full committee in February 2020. And then before we knew it COVID-19 shut everything down. Another disappointment that was initially difficult to see through. But I pushed forward, calling and emailing my contact at the synod for updates. In early June, I received the news that Pr. Jerry had agreed to be my "Field Ed" supervisor. After our initial Zoom meeting, I knew that God had indeed blessed me and made my path straight. A situation that had begun as a

disappointment, bloomed instead as a tremendous blessing. Working with Pastors Jerry and Suzanne has been a time of growth as well as great joy!



What disappointments are you dealing with today? We all experience times in our lives when, because of our disappointments, we don't understand why we are where we are. But

when we place our trust in God, giving all that we do to God, God can bring us to the other side of disappointment - sometimes in the most unexpected ways - to where joy is waiting.

Blessings,
Vicar Jamie

REFLECTION FOR TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2020

A GROUP COVENANT

Romans 12:9-21

9Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; 10love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. 11Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. 12Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. 13Contribute to the needs of the saints; ex-

tend hospitality to strangers.

14Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. 15Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. 16Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. 17Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. 18If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. 19Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." 20No, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." 21Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

You may recognize that this passage was our second reading this past Sunday. As I was studying this scripture I came across a comment by Rochelle Stackhouse, that this passage, "would function brilliantly as a group covenant for any gathering of people of faith." A group covenant!!! What a wonderful idea to consider as we are in the process of discovering what our community of faith would look like if our three congregations voted to officially come together. I have routinely done group covenants for confirmation classes, retreats, and youth gatherings. I never really thought about having a group covenant for a whole community of faith.

Stackhouse refers to a group covenant as a tapestry in which the warp, the ideals presented above, would be woven with the weft, which would be everyone's gifts and talents. The imagery is beautiful, that our combined community of faith would become a tapestry

for Bethlehem and beyond. We have the freedom to develop and weave our tapestry together, making it uniquely our own. Combining elements of who we were, who we are, and



who we endeavor to become.

If you were the artist, what would be the most important ideals to begin to weave into warp? Love would be first and foremost for me.

Loving one another as God first loved us. Then expanding that love to everyone we meet. Incorporating love into our every action, our every encounter, our every ministry. Even those who we do not like, even those who look and act different than us, truly extending love for all. Can you imagine how that might change our city? If love guided our actions, if we never thought we knew more than we did, if we outdo one another in love and service. Wow!!! So many possibilities to spread God's love.

I encourage each of us to think about what we would put in a group covenant as we come together as one community of faith. How do we want our tapestry to look? What colors would we weave together? What will our ministries look like? How will we weave in the best of each congregation and individual? Take a moment with me today and dream. I am praying that together we will weave a beautiful tapestry that glorifies God in all its diversity and richness.

In Peace,
Pastor Suzanne



IN PERSON OUTDOOR WORSHIP

Sunday, September 6 at 9:00 AM (weather permitting) at the Lutheran Center in Northeastern Pennsylvania, 2354 Grove Road, Allentown PA 18109-3044

Things to Bring: Chair (or you may stay in your car); Face mask; Sunscreen or umbrella for shade; Water or refreshments; Restrooms will be available to folks attending worship.

Directions: Exit Route 22 at the exit for the Lehigh Valley Airport, Route 987 north. Drive 1.5 miles to Grove Road on the right. Turn right on Grove Road. Drive approximately ¼ mile, and the Lutheran Center will be on the right. (If you are coming from Schoenersville Road, turn left on Grove Road. The center is located between Schoenersville Road and Airport Road.)

Call one of the below church offices with any questions:
 Light of Christ Lutheran Church 610-691-2321
 St. John's Windish 610-868-3282
 St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church 610-867-0519

LAY EUCHARISTIC VISITORS TRAINING SEPTEMBER 19 AND OCTOBER 3

LCS will host two virtual trainings for Lay Eucharistic Visitors in fall 2020. Choose Saturday September 19, or October 3, 2020. Fee for the training is \$25. Those participating will be mailed a guidebook prior to the training. Participants will be asked to read sections of the text prior to the training day (instructors for both sessions are ELCA pastors). Instructors will be using Zoom to deliver the training, which will last about two

hours. Participants will be asked to complete some follow up work and a final virtual check-in before the training certificate is issued. Training will include options for how to deliver the Eucharist in times of social distancing.

CHRISTMAS INGATHERING



For the 2020 Ingathering, the UPG has committed to “gathering” 180 tubes of toothpaste, 75 bottles of lotion and 75 women’s personal care items. Our collection will not begin until the 1st weekend of October. If you wish to purchase items in the meantime, please put them aside in your Pantry bag or other bag and bring your contributions to worship on October 4th (or any time after that). There will be more details about the Ingathering at a later time.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Thank you so very much for your most generous donations of school supplies! We received enough to generously share with the children at eight of our area schools! The children and teachers thank you so very much for your support! God bless you as He has blessed those in need with your donations.



HELP FEED OUR NEIGHBORS IN NEED



On Friday, September 11, we are sponsoring a meal at Trinity Soup Kitchen located at

Market Street with our Thrivent action money. Monday-Friday meals are given out to about 125 people. If you would like to help individual snacks (pudding, chips, etc.), apples or oranges, or gift cards to grocery stores, The Dollar Store or Walmart are all needed. You may bring to my porch (27 West Laurel Street) or I can pick up. Call 610-865-4047.

Gratefully, Tony and Karen Favinger

GOD'S WORK OUR HANDS



Please read these important updates on UPG Outreach from God's Work.Our Hands and Stewards, Angels in Ministry.

"Days" of Service - That's correct - this fall there will be several "Days" of Service instead of one specific day. When conditions are safe, we will schedule the Youth Car Wash (Josh Gulotta) and the Ft. Hill Cemetery Clean-up (Cindy Kemp). The same will be true of the intergenerational rock painting (Lois Ritchie). Dates to be announced later.

During the summer, Louise Fielding, Jean Finn, Elizabeth Elterich and Helga Rimonneau have sewn and filled twenty-five bags with school supplies for Lutheran World Relief (funded by a Thrivent Action Team).

Mat Ministry - This is an important ministry in progress at home right now and we need many volunteers. The GWOH and SAM Teams are transforming plastic grocery bags into sleeping mats for the homeless. This Mat Ministry requires many hands to produce one mat measuring 2½ by 6½ feet. Around 500-700 bags have to be prepared into "plarn" and then crocheted. We need empty bags, many more volunteers to make "plarn" (very simple after watching a video that can be found on YouTube) and, after tying the plastic strips together, roll them into a tight plarn ball, and volunteers who can crochet (a large Q or N hook is needed).

The back porch of LoC is being used as a drop off and pick up point for all supplies. You will find a blue bin for empty bags, a large black garbage bag sitting inside a box marked "plarn," and another large black plastic bag for the scraps that are left when you make plarn once the handles and seamed edges from the plastic bags are cut off. Please save all plastic scraps (including bags that have holes or are ripped) for Cindy Kemp who is helping our Moravian neighbors by collecting plastic. Our goal

is to make 50 sleeping mats. Thanks for your help.

Questions: Linda Maule (610-258-5006) or LoC church office (610-691-2321).



THANK YOU LETTERS

August 18, 2020
Hello Pastor & Staff,
Thanks for keeping me on your mailing list. I do appreciate all of the news and services you prepare so well. It's almost like being there at the church and friends I have known dating back to 1954.

Best wishes to all,
George Folk



THIS WEEK IN THE UPG SEPTEMBER 5—SEPTEMBER 13

Saturday September 5

4:45 PM Worship (Facebook)

Sunday September 6

9:00 AM Worship (Lutheran Center)

Monday September 7

Labor Day

No Coffee & Conversation (Zoom)

Tuesday September 8

9:00 AM Staff Meeting (Zoom)

Wednesday September 9

Thursday September 10

6:30 PM Bible Study (Zoom)

Friday September 11

Saturday September 12

4:45 PM Worship (Facebook from SJW)

Sunday September 13

9:00 AM Worship (Lutheran Center)