



# The Grapevine



God's Purpose at ASLC is to welcome and accept everyone, improving their lives by embodying Christ's love.

Volume 21, Issue 11

Mission: To be a family of faith, empowered by God, to proclaim Jesus Christ.

November 2018



*Pr. Joshua W. Gyson*

*and the Prez says . . .*

By: Paul Oldenburg

"How Thankful I am for All Saints Lutheran Church"

ELCA presiding bishop offers four emphases in understanding church:

1. "We are Church,
2. we are Lutheran,
3. we are Church together,
4. and we are Church for the sake of the world."

First off...and most simply, we are Church. We are the embodiment of Jesus Christ on Earth, empowered by the Holy Spirit to do God's work with our hands.

Second...we are Lutheran. We are distinctively Lutheran in our interpretation of Holy Scripture, we know first-hand the importance of setting ourselves aside for the in-breaking of the Kingdom of God...it isn't going to happen the way we plan, the Holy Spirit has a much bigger plan that we could ever dream up!

Third...we are Church together. Salvation is not individualistic. The Church, the Body of Christ, is what resurrects. We live together, we die together, and we resurrect together. We are who we were created to be by living in community, particularly Christ's community. (I think our individualistic society often needs to be reminded that we are in this together!)

Fourth...we are Church for the sake of the world. We have complete faith that Jesus Christ has saved us from the powers of sin and death, and freed us to be his witness of the Kingdom Come in this world. We have the most important job in the history of the world, bearing witness to the light of Christ in the darkness.

As the Church, not individuals (no matter how much we might want that), we have been saved and formed into the living embodiment of Jesus Christ on Earth. God has brought us together as the Church, with a unique witness that this world is actually becoming the Kingdom of God on Earth (It's not all going to hell in a handbasket! That is a demonic message. ). As we wait for the return of Christ, the Parousia, Jesus Christ calls us to be his witnesses of these truths, and to live in a community that demonstrates the ways of the Kingdom of God working on Earth. We get to live in the Kingdom today!

As a member of All Saints, I thank you for your dedication in serving and loving our neighbors. I thank you for always remembering the ways that Jesus Christ has given you new life and Christian Freedom. I thank you for making this community a safe and welcome place for all people. We have done this together, and I just want to take this moment to point out really how special of a place that God has made All Saints. We are in this together, and because of Jesus Christ we will always remain together, in this life and the next!

Fall is here. I know, I know, sometimes it is hard to tell seasons in Florida, but we are finally having hints of cooler evenings as we approach Halloween. And surely cooler days will eventually follow.

Thanksgiving will be here before you know it! I really enjoy Thanksgiving with all the delicious food, family, and friends. But most of all, I like to give thanks to God for all God has blessed me with, family, good friends, and a church home that is welcoming to all who enter.

There are many who have nothing or no one, and this makes the holidays especially difficult. Make an effort to seek out these people and offer them your friendship and hospitality. And, please keep all those who are alone, frightened, and hungry in your prayers this season.

Peace,

*Paul*

From the Pastor continued on Page 2

**From the Pastor continued from Page 1**

Thank you All Saints for being the Church, sharing our unique Lutheran witness, for doing it together, and for having a purpose grounded in following Christ's example. Thank you, All Saints. For this I am most thankful! For us, for the Church doing God's work together, this brings me the most joy!

*Pr. Josh*

**Pondering Along the Path**

By Melanie Werner

I saw a news article the other week about several employees pooling money to buy lottery tickets for the drawing worth over one billion dollars. They had managed to collect \$22,000 to buy tickets; \$22,000 on a long shot chance to win \$1 billion! I'm not denouncing or applauding this phenomenon because truth be told, we bought a \$2 ticket as well, but the mania over this lottery made me ponder what it could be like if giving to God was met with such enthusiasm. Think of all that could be accomplished. Think of all the people who could be helped. Think of the idea that God's children could evoke such a marvelous giving response from people. After all, God's promises are priceless, and not subject to the fortunes of luck. The good news is, you don't have to give to receive God's jackpot, but if you love God, wouldn't you want to?

**Meals on Wheels**



MOW is a private non-profit community organization that provides hot nutritious meals on weekdays to the elderly and homebound. Volunteers are needed to deliver a route in their own vehicle which takes about an hour. Drop off is between 10 am and 1 pm depending on location. If you would like to help, please visit [www.MOWTampa.org](http://www.MOWTampa.org) and click the green Volunteer button or call (813) 238-8410 to get started!

**YES! of America**

Did you realize that our celebration of Christ's birth is just around the corner? YES! is already working to provide gifts for those who would be without a smile during the holidays. We just got our Secret Workshop up and running, stocked with needs for hygiene, individually wrapped paper products, cleaning products, as well as child/teen gifts.

You might be asking yourself how you can help. Volunteers are needed at our workshop office. Workshop items are needed and can be placed in our barrel. YES! can do the shopping for you, if you would like to make a monetary donation. And finally, pray with us to help give a hand up, not a hand out to so many in need.

Our families come recommended to us as a last resort and we personally pick items they are desiring under \$10 plus other things that are donated to fill a 13 gal. bag for each member of the family.

Thanks for all you have done and continue to do for YES!; it is greatly appreciated!

**Brown Bags**

On November 11th and December 9th, we will be packing some extra bags for the families at A Brighter Community Preschool. These bags are in addition to our regular brown bags, and include some much needed food staples for the entire family.

If you would like to donate items for these bags, please use the following link to our [online registry](#). Your donation will be sent directly to us. If you would like to help with the packing of the bags, please save the dates listed above.

*"These are all of our children. We will all profit or pay for whatever they become." - James Baldwin*

**Christian Social Services**

C.S.S. is having an open house on November 10th from 10 am until 4 pm. This is a wonderful opportunity to check out this ministry first hand. The thrift store will be having some special sales, plus there will be refreshments and special drawings. C.S.S. is located at 5514 Land O'Lakes Blvd.

C.S.S. Angels should be arriving mid-November, and gifts must be returned to the church by Sunday, December 16th.

*"I tell you the truth, whatever you did for the least of these, you did it for Me" (Matt. 25:40)*

**Free Little Pantry**

The free little pantry provides an option outside of traditional pantries which run on limited hours and provide only food. Along with non-perishable food, this pantry also contains personal hygiene products and baby supplies such as diapers and wipes. Please place donations in the barrel in Malivuk Hall.

**Mission Team Meeting**

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, November 14th at 7 pm.

**Newsletter Deadline**

The deadline for the December Grapevine is Monday, November 19th.

**Faith Formation**

There is something for everyone from infant to adult. Nursery age to Pre-K will be in the nursery where they will hear a Bible study and have coloring time. Kindergarten through 5th grade will be in Classroom 1, learning to connect what they hear in worship with their everyday lives. Those in grade 6 to 8 will participate in Confirmation upstairs in the youth room. High School student will meet in the sanctuary and hear how the Bible stories connect with real life stories in the here and now. Adults will review the day's lessons in Malivuk Hall.

**Deacon Continuing Education Class  
January 14th at 6:30 pm**

As part of the Deacon Continuing Education Classes, Pastor Josh will be doing a class on Ethics. Many people want there to be a single right answer to ethical questions, because they genuinely want to do the 'right' things. But often, there isn't one right answer—there are several right answers, or just some least worse answers—and we must choose between them.

This class will give us an overview of Ethics, leading up to Christian Ethics, complete with case studies. If you are interested in this class, please let Pr. Josh know.

**Wednesday Supper and Study  
(except Second Wednesdays)**

Wednesday evenings begin with a potluck meal at 6:30 pm. followed by the study at 7 pm. Our study will look at the stories and roles of women in the Bible who witnessed in some fierce and fearless ways. Each class is independent so you don't have to worry if you can't make every week, you can just come check one out! The study is followed by Communion. Please join us for this most interesting Bible study!

**Music Notes**



Adult choir practices are held every Thursday at 7:30 pm. The next youth music practices are November 18th and December 9th after Faith Formation with pizza for lunch. There will be practice for the Christmas Program on Saturday, December 15th at 9 am. The Christmas Program will be December 16th during worship. If you have any questions about practices, or are interested in doing special music, please see Marcia Greensfelder.

**Congregational Meeting  
November 4th after Worship**

We will meet after worship to vote on the 2019 Spending Plan and new Mission Team members. After the meeting we will be having cake in the narthex in celebration of our 33 years of ministry together as All Saints. For those attending Sunday School, you can take a piece with you to enjoy during class.

**Worship Time is 9:47 am**

**Acolyte:** November 4: Aishlyn McCarty. November 11: Jackson Kamp. November 18: Keller Gyson. November 25: Kahlie McCarty.

**Altar Guild:** Set-up: November 4 & 11: Ben & Kaye High. November 18 & 25: Melanie Werner. Clean-Up: November 4 & 11: Brenda Schwarzkopf & Maureen Sherman. November 18 & 25: Tina Breede & Erin Brown

**Assisting Minister:** November 4 & 11: Duncan Engel. November 18 & 25: Rob Sabatini.

**Lectors:** 11/4: Erin Brown. 11/11: Judy Callan. 11/18: Anna Breede. 11/25: David Sticklin.

**Crucifer:** November 4 & 11: Mackenzie Gyson. November 18 & 25: Trudy Heselton

**Ushers:** November 4 & 11: The Moore Family. November 18 & 25: Adam Blair, Gary Blair, Larry Bryant, and Stuart Krell.

**Projector:** 11/4: David Sticklin. 11/11: Sarah Walkowiak. 11/18: Mackenzie Gyson. 11/25: Paul Lunseth.

**Tellers:** John Stewart and David Sticklin.

**Greeters:** November 4 & 11: Paul Lunseth. November 18 & 25: Bob Sticklin.

**Communion Bread:** Julie Noya.

**Communion Wine:** Julie Noya.

~ ~ ENABLERS ~ ~

**Second Sunday Meal  
November 11th after Worship**

Please join us for a meal of Baked Mostaccioli, salad, and bread as we raise funds for the Wounded Warrior Project, a non-profit charitable organization that helps veterans and active duty service members. There will be a speaker who will share their experiences with this organization and their various types of assistance they provide. See you then!

**B.L.A.S.T. Youth Worship  
November 11th after the Meal**

Bible Learning and Sharing Time is for elementary age kids to experience worship in a truly youth oriented way. Once the youth are done eating the Second Sunday meal, they will join Pastor Josh in the sanctuary for worship.

**Thanksgiving Eve Worship  
November 21st at 6:30 pm**



Thanksgiving is a wonderful time to reflect on our many blessings. We hope you will join us as we worship together and give thanks to God. There will be no Supper and Study on this day.

**Chrismon Tree Decorating  
December 1st at 9 am**

What better way to get into the spirit of the season than to come help decorate the church for Advent. It is also a good time to hear about why the tree is a Chrismon tree, not a Christmas tree. And, why the decorations are all white and gold, instead of the many colors found on a lot of trees.

**Thank You!**

The Metavivor 5K was a huge success! Members of All Saints participated in the physical walk and many others did the virtual walk online, all in an effort to raise funds for research of Metastatic Breast Cancer. 100% of funds raised go to research, and gives the hope of a new drug or a new treatment that can at least make this a manageable disease.

**The Season of Advent**

We are all familiar with advent calendars, where you open the door and get a treat. Well, this year we are going to try something new, a reverse advent calendar. You start with an empty basket and then every day from **December 2nd to Christmas Eve** you add something to the basket, then bring it with you to worship. You can put a tag on the basket for CSS, Free Little Pantry, or YES! What a great way to help a cause as you remember and count down to Christmas. Any questions see Cindy Kamp or call the church office.

**Out of the Darkness Walk  
December 8th at 10 am**

When you walk in an Out of the Darkness Walk, you join the effort to raise awareness and funds that allow the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) to invest in new research, create educational programs, advocate for public policy, and support survivors of suicide loss. A group from All Saints will be participating in the walk taking place at Al Lopez Park on Himes Avenue.

**Labyrinth Work Dates  
December 29th and January 5th from 9 am until noon**

The Second Sunday meal was a huge success, raising all the funds needed to start our project! In December, we will begin to stake off the area in preparation for two scheduled work dates, December 29th and January 5th. Work will begin at 9 am and will wrap up with lunch served at noon. We hope you will be able to come out and help!

**Book Club**



For our next Book Club is on January 4, 2019 at 6:30 pm at the home of Marcia Greensfelder. We will read The Mystery of Julia Episcopa by John I Rigoli and Diane Cummings. It's Book 1 of The Vatican Chronicles and has two intertwined stories set 2000 years ago AND in modern day. Please bring something to share and your favorite beverage. Entrée to be announced in December.

**Winter Fest—Florida Style!**

All Saints will be holding a Winter Fest on February 23rd for the whole community. There will be tables available for crafts, flea market items, and a bake sale. There will also be food, fun, and games for the children. It will take many hands to make this a fun, successful day. If you have ideas, or are able and willing to help, please see David Sticklin, Duncan Engel, or Melanie Werner. Watch the bulletins, newsletters and Facebook for more information to come.

**We welcome all who are seeking God's love and grace.**

We welcome all because God welcomes all, regardless of race or culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, or relationship status. We welcome all without regard to addictions, physical or mental health, imprisonment, socio-economic circumstances, differently-abled or anything that too often divides us.

**Our unity is in Christ.**

## **The Eucharist and the Stranger—Let God’s People Go**

Courtney documents her year in Mexico with the ELCA’s YAGM Program

On October 19, 2018, a group of approximately 3,000 Central American migrants arrived at the Mexico-Guatemalan border in a large caravan with the intent of crossing the border into Mexico and heading north to the United States. (Read more about this story here). Many broke through the border fencing and were met with the Mexican authorities in riot gear and forced to turn back while others jumped in a river in an attempt to flee capture. While a great number of them have been stopped, I know that there’s a good chance that in a matter of time, some of them may be arriving at the shelter where I work.

Every day, they arrive at my shelter. Not necessarily from this specific caravan, but from Central America. Typically, these migrants come from Honduras and El Salvador, but others hail from Guatemala and Nicaragua. I’ve mentioned before how during the registration process I am told about how they had to escape their home due to violence from gangs or an economic situation so bleak that they could not feed their families. I am often reminded that I will most likely never have to understand this kind of desperation because of where I was born and the color of my skin.

As I watched a video online of the migrants breaking through the border, I felt a sense of relief for them. They were one step closer to safety. To freedom. But then I could see the comments coming through on the video about how these people were no good criminals and unwelcome in the US. There were comments praising Trump for threatening to close the US-Mexico border and to send military troops there to protect it. And that’s when I thought, “But what about the Israelites who fled Egypt?”

In the book of Exodus, the Israelites were living under extreme oppression in Egypt. Moses tried to free his people from the Pharaoh. God commands him to tell the Pharaoh that God says “Let my people go” (Exodus 9:1). And when that fails, God tells him to lead his people to Canaan, the Promised Land. This story is a familiar one; many of us have heard about how God sent 10 plagues to Egypt and gave Moses the power to part the Red Sea. We have heard about the Israelites living in the wilderness and fearing that they’d die from no food or water, and how God heard their cries and sent them manna. And when I heard about these migrants at the border, fleeing in large numbers, I thought of the Israelites. I thought about how often we praise this story, a story of migration and survival, and yet foster so much hostility towards those fleeing their countries now. Are they not also God’s chosen people?

For the entirety of history, we see these battles rage on against bondage and oppression. The Israelites escaped slavery in Egypt, Jesus fled from Herod, our Black brothers and sisters fought slavery in the US, then they had to fight for their civil rights and against systematic racism and prejudice (a fight which continues on today). And every day, migrants come to borders, fighting against their own bonds of oppression. These people—the Israelites, Jesus, Black people, migrants—these are God’s people.

God stands on the side of the oppressed. We get this message throughout the Bible in a variety of forms, through the story of the Exodus, Jesus’s time spent with the poor and unclean, the popularly quoted “the last shall be first” verse from Matthew 20:16. We get it when God asks Moses to tell the Pharaoh that God says, “Let my people go.” So if God stands with the oppressed, then who stands against them? As humans and as Christians, there seems to be an attempt to take on the role of judge and jury and even God. Our government, those who are on the “right side” of the border, those with privilege, decide who gets grace and who is worthy of freedom from bondage, but this isn’t a God-given right. A current rhetoric that has taken hold of the US is one of fear and anger towards “illegal aliens,” yet how often do we ask about their stories? How often do we meet them at the border with the bread of life? God gave God’s son for the whole world. God led Israelites out of Egypt and into the land of milk and honey. We, as humans, don’t have the authority to play God. All we can do is live out our baptismal promises to the best of our abilities.

Matthew 22: 34-40 tells us to love the Lord our God with all our hearts and souls and minds. This is the greatest commandment. But the second greatest commandment is to love our neighbors as ourselves. I find myself asking, “How do you love someone the way that God wants you to love if you’ve let a wall keep you separate?” I am embarrassed to admit that I didn’t know about the struggles of migrants in the intimate way that I am experiencing this year. I had an idea that there was a struggle and that injustice was occurring, but I didn’t understand just how much that injustice was in direct conflict with my faith or the extent to which my elected officials played a role in exasperating the divide. A physical wall separates our countries, but a metaphorical wall is the one that kept me from understanding the oppressed, that kept me from confronting the hypocrisy of my faith. How am I to love my neighbor and yet forget about or ignore the realities of their existence?

God stands with the oppressed and asks us to do the same, which sometimes is in conflict with our sociopolitical views of the world. So, what do we do? How do we wrestle with the fact that over 3,000 people are trying to escape their modern version of slavery in Egypt? How do I live in Mexico for a year as a Christian missionary and American citizen, while the President threatens to send military troops against God’s people? There is no clear-cut answer for me or for any of us because the Bible isn’t an instruction manual. But we cannot stop having these conversations. We cannot stop reminding each other of the borderless and limitless extent of God’s love and grace. We cannot stop standing with the oppressed. We must let God’s people go.

## How to Walk a Prayer Labyrinth

At the Second Sunday meal, we provided finger labyrinths for you to begin practicing at home until we get our new labyrinth completed. The kids also created their own labyrinths out of homemade play-dough. So, it seemed like in preparation, it might be the right time to talk about how to walk a prayer labyrinth.

- ✚ There is no right or wrong way to walk a prayer labyrinth. The only rules are to respect the prayer walk and others who are there. Simply begin, focusing on a quiet mind and open heart, that allows God to accompany you.
- ✚ The following are some simple instructions and suggestions and that will assist you in maximizing the experience.
- ✚ Please enter and remain in silence throughout the walk.
- ✚ When you reach the center, you may want to pause and experience God's presence and/or offer a prayer.
- ✚ Each person can establish the timing for walking the prayer path. It is not a race. There is no too fast or too slow.

An often used process for the walk includes:

The Journey In: as you open your mind to spend this time in the presence of God.

The Center: where you can pause, pray or simply "be in the moment."

The Journey Out: that allows you to reflect and gradually return to your daily world.

**We are excited to begin this project in late December and hope you will come help. Details are inside the newsletter.**



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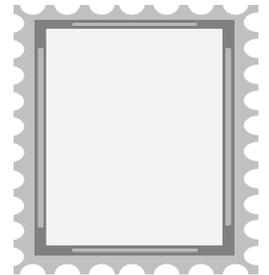
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### Mission Team

<b>Pastor:</b>	Joshua Gyson
<b>President:</b>	Paul Oldenburg
<b>V President:</b>	Cindy Kamp
<b>Secretary:</b>	Nicole Aiello
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Anne Sylvester
Emma Brown	Larry Bryant
Larry Hickman	Heidi Lacko
Rob Sabatini	Anthony Williams

### Donation Options

- ♥ Sunday Offering Plate
- ♥ On-Line Banking
- ♥ Use the "Give" option on our website



\*\*Meets 2nd Wednesday of the month!\*\*