

February 2021

Redeeming Words

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February Calendar

Feb 6	Confirmation Class	1:00 pm	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86129833203
Feb 7	Worship	9:30/10:00 am	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83596791034
Feb 9	Congregational Council	7:00 pm	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81151056223
Feb 14	Worship	9:30/10:00 am	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83596791034
Feb 17	Ash Wednesday	7:00/7:30 pm	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83472824564
Feb 20	Annual Meeting	10:00 am	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83596791034
Feb 20	Confirmation Class	1:00 pm	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86129833203
Feb 21	Worship	9:30/10:00 am	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83596791034
Feb 24	Lent	7:00/7:30 pm	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83472824564
Feb 28	Worship	9:30/10:00 am	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83596791034

Ash Wednesday

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday; this year on February 17. The forty-day season (excluding Sundays) leads us to Good Friday and Easter. The season encourages simplicity, prayer, introspection, dieting and charitable giving.

There are several challenges in planning for worship for the evening. Rev. Dorothy and Pastor Jim are considering an alternate for the imposition of ashes. What is a sign of repentance and sorrow in 2021? And although communion is usually a part of the service, this year's gathering will be a Service of the Word.



Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of CTR will be held on Saturday February 20, beginning at 10:00. Many participants will join us by video-conferencing (Zoom), but those who are not able to do so may join us on the telephone. Look for instructions after this method is tested.

As in previous years a Bulletin of Reports will be prepared. Those with e-mail addresses will receive an electronic copy, while **others who request a paper version will have one mailed or delivered** before the meeting. Contact Pastor Jim at the church office (see number above).

The method of voting for routine matters (minutes, reports, etc. and special items (budget, capital projects, council members etc.) has not yet been determined. But all members will have voice and vote in making decisions.

Perhaps the most important discussion will have to do with the investment strategy regarding the two major gifts we received in 2019/2020, and with several capital projects. The congregation has already voted to proceed with paving the parking lot, lighting, and bathroom and kitchen renovations as funds allow. The Worship and Music Committee also proposes a new Audio-Visual system.



Mid-Week Lent

Plans are still developing...

But it's very likely we will meet on-line with the Rev. Dorothy Samuel and members of St. Barnabas Anglican Church. After a simple service of worship (hopefully Marty Haugen's Holden Evening Prayer) on Wednesday evenings at 7:30, we'll have a study using a resource called *Revive*. It was developed by an Anglican priest in the US. See the Zoom link above. Invite your friends.

Congregational Council

Council met twice, on Zoom, in January.

The session on January 5 focussed on the first detailed view of the draft budget for 2021, and a proposal from the Worship and Music Committee regarding a video camera and microphone suite that will allow us to broadcast (live-stream) to members and friends of the congregation when COVID has subsided.

On January 26 members had another look at several financial reports and the 2021 budget. Plans for an Annual Meeting on Zoom and phones were developed further. The search for at least one new member continues.



Lights! Camera! Action!

Since last April we have broadcast Sunday worship via Zoom. It has allowed two-way communication in the COVID-era. We have also used this platform for Council and committee meetings, Confirmation classes and Bible studies. But it has its limits, including sound and picture quality, and camera movement.

The Worship and Music Committee believes that as we begin to return to live worship in 2021 some members, for a variety of reasons, may prefer to worship from home. For this reason a plan is being developed to install a better quality video camera, microphones, and mixing equipment (computer, etc.) in the coming year. Further details and projected costs will be presented at the Annual Meeting.

Painting

Winter during COVID is a great time for members and friends of the congregation to lend a hand, one household at a time, to repaint the hallways and nave of the church building. Contact Pastor Jim if you'd like to help. Supplies and equipment will be provided.



Do Dogs Go to Heaven?

As many of you know, our dog Lou was "put to sleep" a week ago, due to an enlarged heart. He was the first canine pet I knew; a frequent guest at Bible studies and Zoom worship.

Some years ago (before having a dog) I received an e-mail directing me to a series of church signs that indicated a difference of opinion about dogs going to heaven or not. It all took place in the Texas town of Cumberland. Look it up for yourself.

<http://www.thedogpress.com/Funny/All-Dogs-To-Heaven.asp>

At the time it was funny.

Now it's a real question, for Natalie and I.

And probably for many of you with beloved pets.

To tell the truth I don't think God has spoken to me about this question. I haven't heard a disembodied voice in the sky, or even a quieter voice inside. There is no passage from Scripture or bit of theological insight that answers the question definitively, as a matter of divine revelation. Sure, I could offer my opinion, but that's all it would be.

Which is my way of saying that some of us Christians (esp. pastors) speak on God's behalf much more often than we should. We have ideas and feelings and beliefs, and speak about them as if they are from God. (See Deuteronomy 18:15-20.)

And then, more than that, we argue with others as if we are perfectly right, and that others are perfectly wrong. Like the signs about dogs going to heaven, or not. Or worse, much worse.

So I imagine God being like a parent, trying to settle disputes among his/her children. You remember the ones I'm talking about, as a variety of gifts are given at Christmas or birthdays, as bickering breaks out in the back seat of the car, and even as wills are read.

In this case God *has* revealed to me that we're all loved, equally, and just wants us to get along.

Intricate and rigid doctrine, on one side of a debate or another, is no substitute for love. If only we could swallow our pride, and admit that we don't know everything that God knows. And that in the end it is God's business, more than yours or mine, whether dogs enter the pearly gates.

So let's all be content that God is in charge of such matters, and that that makes it okay. In fact, better than okay.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Jim

Outreach

In 2021 the Outreach Committee will, every two months, designate an organisation for your special donations. For January and February, the designated organisation is the Roxboro Food Bank West Island Assistance Fund). Please mark your offering envelope or electronic gifts "Food Bank" so that we can help provide filling and nutritious meals for our neighbours. Thanks!



From the WIAF website:

Since 1966, the West Island of Montreal Assistance Fund has been responding to the needs of single people and families in our region who regularly face social and financial difficulties. On your behalf, it provides food aid and, when the situation requires it, distributes free clothing, furniture and household items. Weeks of summer camps are also paid to the children of these families in the summer and during the school break in winter. Since 2005, the West Island Aid Fund has also been coordinating the regional "Christmas Baskets" program for the West Island territory.

Caring for Others

If a proposed investment plan is adopted at the Annual meeting \$40,000 of income from our fund will be directed to others:

\$14,000 for **Eastern Synod Benevolence**,

\$12,000 to **Other Lutheran Ministries** (CLWR, seminary, Camp Lutherlyn, etc. as determined by the Stewardship Committee), and

\$14,000 to **Local Outreach** programs (Chez Doris, food banks, Dans la Rue, etc. as determined by the Outreach Committee).

All in addition to your offeringd! This will be our way of thanking God and serving Jesus by caring for others.

World Justice Day 2021

Several years ago the members of the United Nations voted to make February 20 *World Justice Day*. Here's an excerpt from their website:

Social justice is an underlying principle for peaceful and prosperous coexistence within and among nations. We uphold the principles of social justice when we promote gender equality, or the rights of indigenous peoples and migrants. We advance social justice when we remove barriers that people face because of gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture or disability.

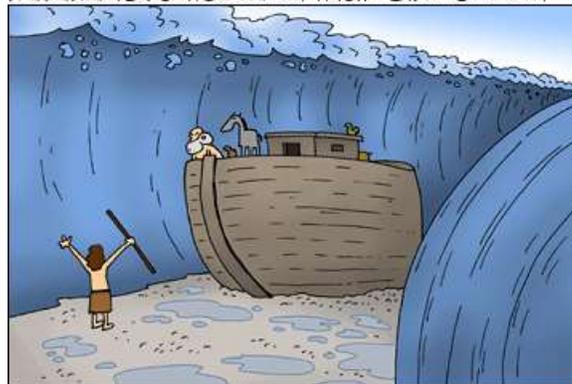
COVID has made it harder for UN members to meet, and for local events to be planned. I have not yet been able to locate the 2021 theme and resources. But pause, if you can on the 20th, and pray that all of the world's people be treated fairly and kindly. This is probably what Jesus meant when he declared the dawn of God's kingdom/reign on earth.

Zoom

We continue to use Zoom to worship, meet and learn together. For those who have not yet used this platform:

1. Go to Zoom.us (using a search engine like Google) and download a free version of this program onto your device (laptop, tablet, smart phone). Or get it from the App Store.
2. Look for invitations or links from the church office. The invitations are sent as e-mails. Links usually appear underlined and in blue in e-mails, *Viral Times* or *Redeeming Words*.
3. Click (or double-click) on the blue link at the appropriate time. You'll enter Waiting Room.
4. Practice muting and unmuting your microphone, and turning your video camera off and on.

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02-07-2014

MOSES AND NOAH HAVING AN ARGUMENT

February Birthdays

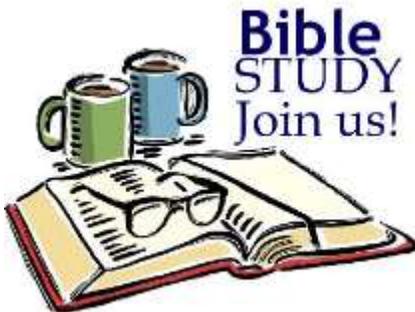
Nicolas Ferriera	February 1
Karen Rockwell	February 1
Jessica Joseph	February 4
Chris Bertchsmann	February 9
Arthur Fagundes	February 17
Veronica Ticknor	February 17
David Saabas	February 17
David Puusa	February 18
Benjamin Jacques	February 18
Alexis Jacques	February 20
Emilie Laurin	February 24
Kai Grandsire	February 26
Natasha Kunanec	February 26
Wilfried Jonasch	February 28
Edna Gunpat	February 29

Confirmation Class

The teen Confirmation Class has been meeting on Zoom since last spring. In February we're moving from the Old (Hebrew) to New (Greek) Testament.

At 1:00 pm on February 6 we'll be introduced to the Gospels, beginning with Mark.

And on February 20 we'll move on to Matthew and Luke.



Montreal Lutheran Council Winter Bible Studies

The Montreal Lutheran Council and Montreal Ministry Area have planned a four-part Bible study series on Zoom this winter. Here is an invitation to the third and fourth sessions:

February 3

Jesus and his Jewishness (in Worship)
Pastor Eric Dyck, from St. John's

February 10

Hope and Healing in the Age of COVID
Leader TBA

We will begin gathering on Zoom at 6:30 and begin the one-hour classes at 7:00. (See page 1 for link.)

Deaths

Gisela Kraatz Guénolé died on Christmas Eve and was buried by Pastor Jim at the Côte-des-Neiges Cemetery in Montreal on January 6.

Eleanor Sohlman died at the Henri Bradet Residence in NDG on January 13. Funerals plans have not yet been made.

Call for Prayers

In addition to prayers request each Sunday morning there are two special requests for prayer:

Fritz Haarer Sr., the father of Fritz & Veronica

Pat Pachal, the wife of Cliff

Lessons

Epiphany

February 7

Isaiah 40:21-31, Psalm 147:1-11, 20c,
1 Corinthians 9:16-23, Mark 1:29-39

Transfiguration

February 14

2 Kings 2:1-12, Psalm 50:1-6,
2 Corinthians 4:3-6, Mark 9:2-9

Ash Wednesday

February 17

Isaiah 58:1-12, Psalm 51 :1-17,
2 Corinthians 5:20b-6 :10, Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Lent 1

February 21

Genesis 9:8-17, Psalm 25:1-10,
1 Peter 3:18-22, Mark 1:9-15

Lent 2

February 28

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16, Psalm 22:23-31,
Romans 4:13-25, Mark 8:31-38

Drop In

At the time of writing the Legault government allowed ten people to gather in houses of worship. And because such a small group, without being able to sing the hymns, generates little in the way of "spiritual energy" we've decided not to open our doors on Sunday mornings quite yet.

But our building is open to visitors, one person or household at a time. Perhaps to say hello to Pastor Jim, pick up some papers, or simply to sit quietly in the nave (main worship space). Just call ahead. Sign in. Wash your hands. Put on a mask. And chill (or unchill this winter?).