



## *HAPPENINGS at the PALMS*

### **NOTE FROM PASTOR**

I get it. I know people are anxious to “get back to church.” I miss not being at liturgy, too. I too, want to be in the same space with the people with whom I feel the deep connection of a Christ-Faith Community. But we are called on a deeper level, NOT to “go to church,” but to BE church, in the places outside of the sanctuary – especially now. This church, the Body of Christ, is already present in the holy people of God in our homes, our families, in our relationships, and those “out there” (who are reachable through phone calls, letters and through the gift of social media), who we can be attentive to, and to honor with the same reverence.

Crisis moments call for strong, decisive action—people want to know that someone is in charge and things are being managed. But once the initial crisis calms, a period of disorientation sets in as we find our way to a new normal. The resolute leadership style that worked well during the initial crisis won’t work well in this ongoing unsettled space.

We are in a liminal season, stuck between an ending and a new beginning. The pathway forward is not knowable. The way we “did church” even two months ago is done. We have literally been thrown out of our buildings by a pandemic. We can reassure people (and ourselves) by pretending the disruption is temporary saying, “we will resume all normal activity soon.” That reassurance is not helpful or truthful.

No one knows what normal looks like after sheltering in place. Likely, we will resume many familiar things, but congregational life will not be the same. We are disoriented and confused. There is grief and loss.

This season requires a different leadership stance. Our actions must originate from a new center—a less busy and more yielding, soulful place. The following five practices can help us lead more effectively as we discover the next, new normal with our congregation.

### **Surrender**

To surrender is to yield. We accept this moment as “just the place we need to be” to learn what is most important now. To surrender does not mean giving up or giving in. It does

not mean we languish or grow lazy—quite the opposite. It means we lean into the disorientation and trust the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Striving, rather than surrender, was the mood of the first season of this crisis. Striving is the act of working harder and longer to prove mastery, merit and worth. We hoped that our industriousness could protect people from the difficult, adaptive work ahead. Through our own hard work and determination, we figured out how to put church online. We worked to demonstrate our care for people when we could not be physically present with them. We learned new ways to connect those in need. We've done good industrious work.

But now we find ourselves beyond the limits of our own resourcefulness and knowing. This next season requires adaptive learning—for leaders and followers alike. Learning begins with surrender. I acknowledge that I don't have answers. I yield my spirit to God's leading and invite our congregation to do the same. We attend to all that arises in response to our surrender.

### **Use the Disorientation**

All innovation begins with disorientation. People must let the old status quo fail before we can embrace innovation. We should acknowledge that the status quo failed us some time ago. We've been falsely clinging to the old normal because there was too much pain in letting go.

The pandemic has thrown us into deep disorientation. Now, we have no choice but to let go of the old normal. We occupy space on both sides of a threshold. One foot is rooted in something trying to end, another is planted in a thing not yet defined, something waiting to begin. We cling to structures, identities and relationships formed by our old experiences, although we know that those processes and practices will not serve us adequately moving forward.

It would be a mistake to shore up the old structures and practices as things get "back to normal." We need to take advantage of this moment to let old things die, to experiment, to take risks and learn.

### **Invite Meaning-Making**

Humans cannot live without meaning. The greater our sense of uncertainty, the more desperately we grasp for a handhold, a shred of something that reminds us of who we are and where we have been. People need help interpreting the present moment given their shared past.

Part of this work is theological in nature. People grapple with the deep questions of our faith. Where is God when people are suffering? Why are we here? Is God punishing the world? Listen. Sharpen your theological edge and shape the conversations happening around you.

Beyond that, locate this moment in the history of your specific context. When have we endured a moment reminiscent of this one? What higher values did we bring to that moment? How might those same values guide us now?

### **Define One Good Next Step**

People need to know that they are pursuing something that matters now: worthy work, a shared common cause, or a sense of rootedness to something enduring. This is especially important when we can't plan our next steps in one, three, and five-year increments. Who even knows what tomorrow will bring in this environment?

Systematic planning won't serve us well in liminality, but we don't have to wander aimlessly. We need to remember our passions and connect those passions to our gifts and resources. Develop a shared sense of what we are trying to learn together. Then, claim one good next step in the general direction of our shared aspirations.

### **Attend to the Yearning**

Rational decision making assumes that human knowledge is enough to address the challenges we face. Rational decisions can't guide us through the deep disorientation we face now. Instead, we need to pay attention to yearning.

Yearning is the language of the human soul. When we listen to others at soul level, we sense a collective longing that will guide us to the other side of chaos. Letting go of what once was, we let ourselves be led by God who is drawing us forward and into our future.

Discernment is the tool we use to attend the yearning. It's a wisdom way of knowing. We drop beneath rational decision making, directly into the knowing planted in our souls. Make space in our congregation for this expression of collective yearning. What is God calling us to do or become next?

### **The New Normal**

Our new normal is already with us and it is also just beyond our reach. This is an exciting time to be the church if we are willing to stay in the disorientation for the time it takes to discover our next chapter.

## From your Church Council President:

As you know, the Call Committee has recommended a candidate to be our pastor. The council is now hard at work. We are developing a process to follow in order to feel that we have the knowledge to make the right decision for our congregation. The Synod has given us instructions, but COVID 19 has made it difficult to follow some of them.

We will gather information in different ways to get to know the candidate and form our own opinions about whether or not this is the right person. All information about this person must remain confidential until the council votes to extend a call. If we do, then you will find out about this person and have a chance to form your own opinion. The final say will be a vote by the congregation. Since we are unable to get everyone together for a meeting, we are working on an alternate solution.

This has never been done before with our current restrictions so we are making history. You all and your opinions are important to us and we want to make sure that you are all involved in this decision. We are in close communication with the Synod to be sure we follow all of their rules throughout this entire process.

Please pray about the decision, the candidate and the council so that we hear the Holy Spirit and know the correct decision. Thank you for your support.

Blessings to you all.  
Arlene

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Dear brothers and sisters of LCOP,

The Finance Committee would like to extend their sincere gratitude to all for the offerings that have been made during the last two months when we have not been able to physically meet for service. We always knew that you were a generous, loving congregation in Christ but this difficult time has furthered our belief in your commitment to the LCOP mission. We hope everyone is well and safe! We look forward to seeing everyone again and worshipping together!

LCOP Finance Committee



## LCOP Kids



Children's Sunday School is not meeting due to the COVID-19 social distancing.



### Barlow Little Palms Preschool

Our preschool accepts children from 2 - 5 years old.

VPK is free from 8:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.

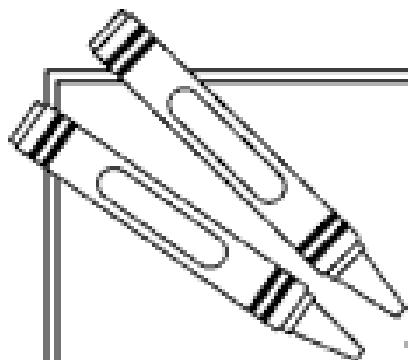
Contact us at 727-784-9700 or Email: [barloweducation@yahoo.com](mailto:barloweducation@yahoo.com)

**Call for a tour!**

Hello LCOP family! We are happy to inform you that this year's vacation bible school will be presented virtually! A series of videos will be released on YouTube from July 6 to 10. These videos will include crafts, games, music, skits, and much more! Please contact [LCOPVBS2020@gmail.com](mailto:LCOPVBS2020@gmail.com) for more information on the program. We hope to hear from you soon! -Mallory and Nana



We wish to extend sincere CONGRATULATIONS to our only graduating senior this year. MALLORY CLARK is graduating from Palm Harbor University High School where she has spent a good part of her time in true enjoyment in musical theatre and voice. We, at LCOP have been blessed to have Mallory as a vital voice in our choir where she will be sorely missed. She will be attending ADELPHI UNIVERSITY in New York, majoring in voice performance with a minor in Opera. We will all miss her and wish her the very best as she ventures into the next exciting chapter of her life. Our thoughts, best wishes and prayers go with you, Mallory!



# Just for KIDS

## FATHERS IN THE BIBLE

God plans for our fathers to play important parts in our lives. Fill in the puzzle squares with names of important fathers from the Bible. Use the clues and verse references below to help.

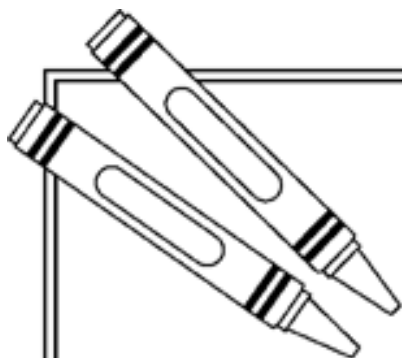


### DOWN

1. King Solomon's father, who ruled over Israel for 40 years (2 Samuel 5:4)
4. He was asked to sacrifice his son Isaac. (Genesis 22:1-2)
6. He had 12 sons. (Genesis 35:22)
7. Samuel's father (1 Samuel 1:19-20)
9. His son was Obed. (Ruth 4:21)
10. David was the youngest of his 8 sons. (Ruth 4:17)

### ACROSS

2. His 3 sons helped him build an ark. (Genesis 6:10)
3. His youngest son, Jacob, tricked him into giving away the birthright of his older son Esau. (Genesis 27:30)
5. The Father of our Lord (Ephesians 1:3)
7. His sons were not like Samuel. They were wicked. (1 Samuel 2:12)
8. David's best friend and father of Mephibosheth (2 Samuel 9:6)
11. Father of Cain, Abel and Seth (Genesis 4:25)
12. He was married to Mary, mother of Jesus. (Matthew 1:20-21)
13. Father of Jonathan, he was chosen by the people as the first king of Israel. (2 Samuel 9:6)



# Just for KIDS

## Fathers and Sons of the Bible

Proverbs 13:1 says,  
"A wise son heeds his father's instruction."

In the puzzle below, find and circle the names of these fathers and their sons from the Old Testament. Names may be forward, backward, diagonal, → ← ↓ ↑ ↘ ↗ up or down. Circle them.

ADAM  
CAIN  
ABEL  
SETH  
NOAH  
HAM  
SHEM

JAPHETH  
ELKANAH  
SAMUEL  
AARON  
NADAB  
HUR  
CALEB  
ABRAHAM

ISHMAEL  
ISAAC  
ESAU  
JACOB  
REUBEN  
DAN  
ASHER

JUDAH  
LEVI  
GAD  
NAPHTALI  
SIMEON  
ISSACHAR  
ZEBULUN  
BENJAMIN

JOSEPH  
MANASSEH  
EPHRAIM  
SAUL  
JONATHAN  
DAVID  
SOLOMON

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

Wednesday



*Bible Study*

### Virtual Bible Study

Our Wednesday evening bible Class on the book of Acts is continuing. Each week our members receive a study sheet in their email. The sheet is something that can be used by an individual, as a couple or as a family. Anyone in the church who is interested is welcome to participate. Just let me know and I will put you on the list. Gary Mehl. [Preachervonfange@gmail.com](mailto:Preachervonfange@gmail.com).



### PRAYER PARTNERS

To be called upon to join in thought and prayer for those we love and care for as well as so many others unknown to us, is a true blessing to all.

Blessings all,  
Joan Holmes

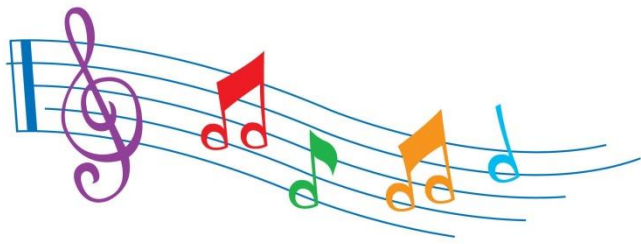
**Your items for the Month of July NEWSLETTER are due by Friday, June 26<sup>th</sup>**

Please email your articles / announcements to the church email address:  
[LCOPoffice@gmail.com](mailto:LCOPoffice@gmail.com)

**Our Webpages for our Church and Preschool:**

See the latest information at: [www.lutheranchurchofthepalms.org](http://www.lutheranchurchofthepalms.org)  
and  
[www.palmharborpreschool.com](http://www.palmharborpreschool.com)





## WORSHIP & MUSIC

Pentecost is May 31st. This bold, challenging Day of the Spirit, comes 50 days after Easter. It's a day we celebrate well at LCOP by wearing red (the color of the blood of martyrs and fire), by decorating with red balloons and flowers and by singing hymns that reflect the Pentecost theme. We then gather for gifts of food reflecting our various personal histories. (Oh, the joy of Violet's Guyanese potato balls, Swedish meatballs and German sauerbraten!)

However, the day is so much more. I recall a prayer regularly said before the reading of the lessons on any Sunday. The pastor would pray that we, the hearers, would "read, mark and inwardly digest" the words of God. (As a kid I often thought that I would rather "digest" many other things than a bunch of words because I was ready to get out of there and get some lunch!") The gift of the Spirit in the mighty wind and tongues of fire changed the faithful followers of Christ, both male and female, who waited in that upper room. They "marked and digested" what was happening. The disciples were Jews, accustomed to being "with their own kind." But as the mighty wind blew the prejudices and fears out of their minds, the tongues of fire revealed why this was happening to them and why they had to wait 50 days for these explanatory gifts.

On that 50th day, Jews from many nations gathered in Jerusalem because it was their festival that came 50 days after Passover and was the time of the wheat harvest. For several years, we at LCOP would hear Yvonne, our "token Norwegian", read the lesson and expertly pronounce the names of all those people gathered..."Parthians, Phrygians, Pamphylans, etc." It was a worldwide gathering of people who heard the disciples speak in THEIR languages. Like people today, reluctant to believe anything miraculous, the crowd excused the phenomena as a sign of drunkenness. But Peter, the coward at our Lord's arrest who was absent from his crucifixion, suddenly had courage. "Gosh, people" he says. "We aren't drunk. It's only 9am!" What we have experienced is the power of the Spirit promised by the prophet Joel. Young, old, men, women, slaves, free, all races and nations... ALL are called to spread resurrection justice and joy. Then, he did something even more powerful. He was not afraid. He became blatantly honest. YOU people. YOU were responsible for death of Christ. He really laid it on the crowd and amazingly, they

listened... they “marked and digested” his accusatory words. Their hearts were changed. They followed Peter’s instruction to repent of their blindness, and they were baptized. Perhaps this is the first example of the church’s calling to preach a gospel that “afflicts the comfortable and comforts the afflicted?”

Anyway, IF we were able to gather on Pentecost, Linda would be selecting hymns that remind us of the inclusivity of a Spirit-filled church. They would remind us that the family of God is universal. “Hail Thee Festival Day” was written by Fortunatus in the 500s! In the 1500s Luther wrote the first verse of the German hymn, Come Holy Ghost, God and Lord. Gracious Spirit, Heed Our Pleadings has roots in the language of 20th century

Swahili. O Living Breath of God has a Swedish melody and Veni Sancte Spiritus was written in the French Taizé community of the 1980s.

Sadly, we won’t be able to physically worship together for some time. We miss our brothers and sisters, hugs from good friends, even elbow bumps during the exchange of peace! We yearn for the forgiving balm of the sacrament. The choir is trying desperately to figure out how to sing through masks and remain 6’ apart. But perhaps we can use this time to share the love of the spirit with those who are struggling, stressed and in need of understanding. Whether it be at Walmart or Costco, whether that person in need is old or young, brown or white, gay or straight, we are the church of Pentecost. We have the power to “read, mark and inwardly digest” the message of Pentecost. Wear red on the 31st. Remind yourself that you have the power of the spirit. And pray. Pray for our world, our nation, and our church as we look forward to reaping the rewards of our dedicated call committee and the candidate we will call to lead us forward.





## STEWARDSHIP

**The Stewardship Committee meeting will be rescheduled after the COVID-19 social distancing order is rescinded. All are invited to attend when we gather again.**

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**The Evangelism Committee meeting will be rescheduled after the COVID-19 social distancing order is rescinded. All are invited to attend when we gather again.**

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## Sewing Group News

Still waiting patiently for day we can meet  
We know that the quilts and fabric will still be there for us to greet.

Until that day when we can again play,  
there still are **MASKS** for us to give away.

If you still do not have one,  
please think of others before you go on the run.

If everyone would wear a beauty,  
we would all do our civic duty!!!



Several of the women who have sewing machines at home are making cloth masks. **So if you need a mask, please call the church office 727-784-4119, leave a message and we will make sure you get a mask.**





## Social Ministry

Last month we concentrated our food thoughts on FEAST, the food pantry across the street from Lutheran Church of the Palms. Thank you for your wonderful outpouring of food. FEAST is very grateful for your support.

This month we would like to share with you another food drive. We received word from Rez House, our sister congregation in Dade City; that their food bank was in dire need of supplies. While Rez House consists mostly of migrant farm workers they also reach out to help many people in their surrounding community. So at the last minute we collected a van full of food and some funds which were delivered to them.

With very short notice, LCOP's generosity is once again visible. Thank you seems too simplistic for those of you who helped. Your generosity truly shows the love of Christ in you all.







### *Women's Breakfast!*

Yes!, we are planning our next Women's Breakfast to be held on August 15, provided our current shelter-at-home order has been lifted and we can once again enjoy fellowship and good food with one another. Stay tuned for more details as the date gets closer.

Remember those Psalm 23 bracelets that were given at a recent breakfast? What a wonderful "tool" as we pray during these days and weeks of anxiety and fear. May you be safe and well.

EVEN THOUGH I WALK  
THROUGH THE VALLEY  
OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH,  
I WILL FEAR NO EVIL,  
FOR YOU ARE WITH ME.

PSALM 23:4, NAB

June 2020						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 Worship Online	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 Worship Online	15	16	17	18	19	20
21 <i>Father's Day</i> Worship Online		23	24	25	26  July 2020 Newsletter items are due today!	27
28 Worship Online	29	30	<p><b>We keep each other and our world in prayer as we deal with the COVID-19 pandemic.</b></p>			



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.



**Lutheran Church of the Palms**  
2250 Nebraska Avenue  
Palm Harbor, FL 34683  
727-784-4119

**Worship Services: Online Only for now.**  
[www.lutheranchurchofthepalms.org](http://www.lutheranchurchofthepalms.org)  
Email: LCOPoffice@gmail.com