

From your Interim Coordinator – July 6, 2022

Last night (Tuesday) I was at the initial meeting of the Friendship Process, a joint effort between Christ the Good Shepherd and Holy Cross Lutheran Churches. A total of fourteen people attended, six from Holy Cross, four from Christ and four Synod/Pastoral representatives. The label “Friendship Process” is what the Synod uses to describe the building relationships and discernment that congregations engage in as they move toward making a mutual decision concerning their shared horizons.

This will be discussed further at our Congregational Meeting on Sunday, but the conversations did not just start last night. We might understand it as a further growth of our “Better Together” coalition that we have used over the past several years between the Salem Lutheran churches. We have done our youth groups together with these churches, and this is where Faithful Lutheran Youth (FLY) was born. We have held joint services, at each other’s Sanctuaries, during the Summers as well as Advent and Lent before Covid shut society down.

We have a history of collaboration, and now we find ourselves all in a transitional period without a permanent called pastor among us. For the record, Pastor Charles Mantey is retiring from Saint Mark on Sunday, Vicar Sena Norton is completing her year of Internship at Christ the Good Shepherd, has graduated from Luther Seminary, and is awaiting to be ordained at her first call. Our Interim, Pastor Curtis Zieske, is living in Gresham and trying to stay retired from a full-time career as pastor, lead, bridge or interim.

Many thoughts were shared last night as we determined what makes successful friendships, how they begin and how they are sustained. How does living a life in a common faith, sharing interests and experiences, being vulnerable yet supportive and inspiring contribute to the deep impact of a trusting, valued and creative relationship between our two churches?

Last Sunday we welcomed Vicar Sena Norton into Holy Cross to preside over a Service of the Word and Sacrament. Her thoughts on Christ’s message of the harvest being plentiful, yet the laborers few in numbers was on point and timely for the changes we, the ELCA, and churches in general are going through. Perhaps we have been looking at it from the wrong direction. If you were unable to attend last week, you may watch a recording of this service and other previous worship events on the Holy Cross YouTube channel at; <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCiHbmFBDWLG1W-jcI8jRhOO>

This coming **Sunday, July 10, 2022, at 10:00 AM**, Interim Pastor Curtis Zieske will be back presiding over a Service of the Word and Sacrament, and we will be holding a **Congregational Meeting** immediately following service. We will present, review, and ratify the Ministry Site Profile (MSP) and discuss what options we may have available moving forward as a congregation. Your

attendance, participation, and opinions matter, as we all come together to find a vision of where God is leading Holy Cross on our transitional journey.

Reflect on the thoughts previously brought forward by your church leadership;

‘Then King David went in, sat before the Lord, and said, “Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that you have brought me this far?”- 1 Chronicles 17:16’

The past is in your head. The future is in your hands.

Proposed group agreements of 1) Our congregation is changing 2) We own a beautiful but aging building that is costly to operate and maintain. 3) While we are currently solvent, we do not have the financial means to support a full-time pastor long term.

Returning to the prior ways of doing things, while nostalgic, is not a feasible way to continue into the post pandemic world.

“The church is basically inward oriented, focused on itself and its members and their savedness.” As the foundations of Christendom erodes, our congregations begin to fight to save what once was at the cost of opening space to what can emerge. – D Guder/S Norton

And some questions to ponder during your table talk on Sunday;

How do you feel about the Friendship Process/Better Together conversations between Holy Cross and Christ the Good Shepherd? What are your concerns and what do you want the teams to consider?

Where do you see Holy Cross in the near-term future? How will we connect to our neighborhood and community around us? Are we who we want to be?

What path is best for you at Holy Cross? Is that same path the best one for the legacy of Holy Cross as it continues its journey into the future?

May we all come together on Sunday, honor the work put in by your Transition Team, and make decisions that strengthen the presence of Christ in our lives!

In closing, here is a prayer that is fitting for this occasion;

‘Lord God, you’ve called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with courage, not knowing where we go, but trusting that your hand is leading us and your love is supporting us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.’

Always your servant in Christ, Bryan Struve, Interim Coordinator

Worship at Home - Holy Cross Lutheran Church
July 10, 2022 – Fifth Sunday of Pentecost

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who forgives all our sin,
whose steadfast love and mercy endures forever. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Merciful God,

**we confess that we have not followed your path
but have chosen our own way.**

**Instead of putting others before ourselves,
we long to take the best seats at the table.**

**When met by those in need,
we have too often passed by on the other side.**

Set us again on the path of life.

**Save us from ourselves
and free us to love our neighbors. Amen.**

Hear the good news!

God does not deal with us according to our sins
but delights in granting pardon and mercy.

In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.

You are free to love as God loves. **Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O Lord God, your mercy delights us, and the world longs for your loving
care. Hear the cries of everyone in need, and turn our hearts to love our
neighbors with the love of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

READINGS AND PSALM *God speaks to us in scripture reading and song.*

Deuteronomy 30:9-14

The LORD will take delight in your fruitfulness

Psalms 25:1-10

Show me your ways, O LORD, and teach me your paths. (Ps. 25:4)

Colossians 1:1-14

The gospel is growing, bearing fruit in the whole world

Luke 10:25-37

The parable of the merciful Samaritan

HYMN OF THE DAY ELW 712 “Lord, Whose Love In Humble Service”

APOSTLES CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord,

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died,
and was buried; he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,

the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

United in Christ and guided by the Spirit, we pray for the church, the creation, and all in need.

A brief silence.

Good and gracious God, you have placed your word of love in the heart of your church. Fill your church with compassion, that we bear the fruit of your healing mercy to a broken world. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

You created the earth with seeds sprouting up to new life. We pray for the flourishing of fruit trees and orchards, vines and bushes. Prosper the work of those who plant, tend, harvest, and gather. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Show us your ways and teach us your paths of justice and love. Raise up community and national leaders to challenge and dismantle societal structures that perpetuate ethnic, racial, and religious profiling and discrimination. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Come near to all in need. Orchestrate kindness in the face of cruelty, hope where there is despair, love in the face of neglect, healing in illness, and comfort where there is death, *especially the family of Jennie Reisch.*

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Turn this community toward neighbors in need. Bring aid and support to those who are poor, beaten down, abused, forgotten, silenced, or avoided (*local outreach ministries may be named*). God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We give thanks for the saints who revealed your love and mercy in this life. Inspired by their witness, strengthen us to live in hope. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God of every time and place, in Jesus' name and filled with your Holy Spirit, we entrust these spoken prayers and those in our hearts into your holy keeping. **Amen.**

OFFERING PRAYER

God of abundance:
you have set before us a plentiful harvest.
As we feast on your goodness,
strengthen us to labor in your field,
and equip us to bear fruit for the good of all,
in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

✠ GREAT THANKSGIVING

When our congregation gathered for the celebration of Holy Communion, we heard again the story of God's mighty acts and of the love shown us in the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

With thanksgiving we remembered that "in the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, he took the cup gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me."

The people of our congregation were given assurance of our Lord's presence through the gift of his Holy Spirit. Now we bring to you this same bread of life and this same cup of blessing, that you may be strengthened through your participation in the body of Christ.

Jesus said, "I am the bread of life, whoever comes to me shall never hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst."

At this time, you may remember the gift of holy communion with your own bread and cup.

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace. Amen

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever. **Amen.**

LAMB OF GOD

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
grant us peace, grant us peace, Lamb of God.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Life-giving God,
through this meal you have bandaged our wounds
and fed us with your mercy.
Now send us forth to live for others,
both friend and stranger,
that all may come to know your love.
This we pray in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

BLESSING

The God of peace, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you, comfort you, and show you the path of life
this day and always. **Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Love your neighbor.
Thanks be to God.