

Shepherd of the Mountains

February 2021



Tiny Desk Worship

No regular in-person indoor worship at SMLC
as we take COVID-19 precautions.

Email us to receive weekly worship resources at home
and instructions for our “Tiny Desk Worship” series!

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sotmlcjackson@gmail.com
www.shepherdofthemountainsjh.org



Living with Lent

Dear Shepherd of the Mountains,

The pandemic came to Jackson just about a year ago, a few weeks into Lent. While we observed the subsequent liturgical seasons, in some ways that journey that was supposed to be 40 days seemed to linger. So here we are, entering what in some ways we never seemed to have left.

What does Ash Wednesday (this year falling on February 17th) mean in such a time? I have struggled with whether we really need “to remember that we are dust, and to dust we shall return” when John Hopkins reported 3,872 new deaths in the U.S. a few days ago (1/28/21). In the past, I’ve usually thought of this day as opening a door – one we can peek through or step through. And I’m aware of the times I’ve stood at the threshold, in my busyness or distraction unwilling or only partially able to engage those Lenten practices of prayer, fasting, and giving. I wonder if there are times I’ve effectively shut that door, eager to move on to Easter.

Perhaps this year, when remembering we are dust feels far less optional, far less momentary, the better analogy of Ash Wednesday and the invitation of Lent is pulling up a chair. Now that the shock of the pandemic has worn off, this Lent gives us time to be present to the existential questions the pandemic raises, the questions Lent has always tried to ask us. This Lent gives us time to sit with our pain and vulnerability, to process how this stark knowledge of our fragility and vulnerability has changed us. More than ever before, we are collectively conscious of being dust, of our eventual return to dust. We can try to look away from our dust-i-ness, but there is a paradoxical strength to be drawn from this exercise in honesty.

Rather than a fleeting remembering, this Lent invites us to a re-remembering, and reconstituting of how we are and act in the world. Prayers, rather than being merely read or recited, are welling up from within and around us. We are already fasting from the ways we were used to gathering. Perhaps we are finding new ways to give of ourselves.

Such re-remembering isn’t all somber. And in this weird Lent that perhaps paused but never seemed to really end, we don’t have to wait until February 17th. Jolene Moulder and Mary Lou Klene have organized a sharing a meal via zoom on Valentine’s Day. After Ash Wednesday, our midweek services will offer contemplative spaces to ponder questions together.

Dear church, as we live with Lent, let its wisdom be in the room even if it’s not the focus. Let us make peace with our frailty and vulnerability, knowing that God re-members us, forming amazing things from dust and calling them good.

In Christ,
Pastor Inger

Contact Information
Pastor Inger Hanson

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non-critical
communication)*

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Office Hours

by appointment
Tuesdays,
Wednesdays
or Thursdays

Call or Message
during

Online Office Hours

**Wednesday
8–10 am**

Days Off

Mondays &
Saturdays

EVERY WEEK *staying connected even as we physically stay apart*

SUNDAY



On Sunday mornings, check for emails from Pastor Inger with the announcements, bulletin, and links for **"Tiny Desk Worship"** (YouTube and Facebook).

Sign up to assist or read via our "Sign Up Genius" volunteer system (email Tanya Shedd (thobbs6@hotmail.com) for more details). The many voices of Christ's body make each service special.



Hole Food Rescue - On Sunday mornings, volunteers pick up bread and baked goods from Persephone & Picnic to be distributed to those in need. Would you like to help? Talk to Robyn Lunsford (rlunsford@jorgeng.com)

TUESDAY



Bible & Breakfast, our weekly coed group that looks at the lectionary readings for the upcoming Sunday, is currently meeting via ZOOM **from 8 - 9 am (Jackson time)**. Grab a cup of coffee and your most Virginian-worthy breakfast, and join us! If you would like to attend, please email Pastor Inger at pastor.inger@gmail.com.

WEDNESDAY



Online "Office" Hours On Wednesday mornings, Pastor Inger will be more intentionally online and lifting up prayer requests. Give a phone call or check in through Facebook messenger, email, or text.

THURSDAY



Communion Celebrations at the church from 12 - 2 pm. Pastor Inger is available for short, masked, socially distanced communions in the sanctuary. Attendees are still expected to be their own altar guild (bring your own bread and wine or juice). Note this is not a full worship service but a 10-15 minute celebration of communion. If folks arrive at similar times and are comfortable, multiple households can space themselves apart in the sanctuary, or wait in the Narthex until the group that has arrived first is finished.

EVENTS IN FEBRUARY

FEBRUARY
2



Holy Horizons meets via zoom to discuss Marcus Borg's *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time*. Join us for fellowship at 6:00 pm and discussion from 6:30 to 7:00 pm.



FEBRUARY
7



Souper Bowl of Caring Fellowship at 10 am on Zoom.



FEBRUARY
7



Church Council will meet at **11 am**. If you have something you would like to be on the agenda, please email a council member.

FEBRUARY
8-15



Pastor Inger will have Continuing Education this week. There will be no office hours or communion celebrations this week.

FEB
10 & 11



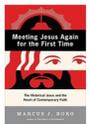
Blood Drive Volunteer with Jolene to welcome and check in donors, or sign up to give blood at www.vitalant.org, or call 1-877-827-4376

FEBRUARY
14



Pastor Ben Nardi will lead worship. Pastor Inger in a continuing education week.

FEBRUARY
16



Holy Horizons meets via zoom to discuss Marcus Borg's *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time*. Join us for fellowship at 6:00 pm and discussion from 6:30 to 7:00 pm.



FEBRUARY
17



Ash Wednesday - Ashes to go

FEBRUARY

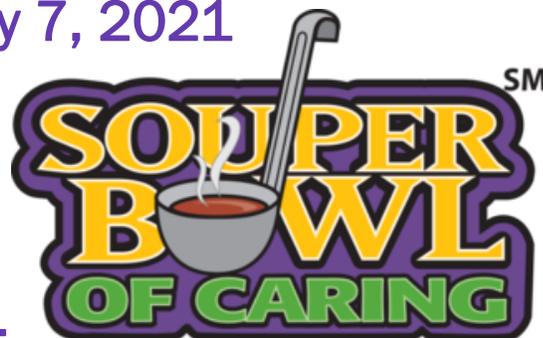


Tiny Desk Worship will feature a sermon from **Rev. Nicolette Penaranda** as the synod continues the Color Amazed Preaching Project (see details on page 5). **Watch the facebook premiere at 9 am**; then join us for a **ZOOM Fellowship at 10 am!**

5th Sunday after Epiphany, February 7, 2021

Robyn Lunsford and Tanya Shedd are working with our youth to bring us this year's Souper Bowl of Caring.

Join the zoom fellowship on Sunday, February 7th at 10 am (link in weekly email and will be included with worship announcements).



SMLC Valentine's Dinner, Saturday, February 13, 2021

Please join a congregational Fellowship Event via ZOOM
on **Saturday, February 13th, from 6:00 – 7:00pm**
which will also support **HOLE FOOD RESCUE**.

Click on this link: <https://secure.everyaction.com/0bEVJYN41UWb6WSOBSfcJQ2> to learn about and sign up for *Après Ski Dinner for Deux*, which will provide a lovely take out Valentine's Dinner and an occasion for us to catch up with our church family! Dinner for two is \$100 - \$50 of which is a tax-deductible donation that goes to Hole Food Rescue, a non-profit we partner with every Sunday to help address food insecurity and waste in our community.

Note that the deadline for making reservations is this Sunday, February 7th. Delivery is also available.

They are only packaging dinners for 2, so pair up with another member or enjoy having a second yummy meal to eat another day. **Whether you order a meal to go or cook at home, please consider joining the ZOOM Fellowship time.** The ZOOM invitation will go out with the weekly church email; you can also email Jolene at jolene@dubbe-moulder.com to RSVP for the ZOOM.

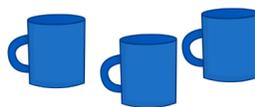
We can't wait to SEE YOU!



Settling into Lent

Ash Wednesday, February 17, 2021

Instead of a formal service, on Ash Wednesday you are invited to settle into Lent by stopping by the church anytime throughout the day (10—7 pm). In the sanctuary, there will be stations to reflect on scripture, repentance, and the traditional Lenten practices of fasting, prayer, and giving. You are welcome to rotate through on or more of the stations. When you are ready, return to the narthex to pick out a special gift (one per person) for “living with Lent,” and receive your ashes from Pastor Inger as you leave. Please wear masks, and practice physical distancing if members from other households are also in the sanctuary.



color amazed preaching project

In the words of a recent guest to the Northwest Intermountain Synod’s digital pulpit, Rev. Kara Skatrud Baylor, “the Color Amazed Preaching Project is about creating relationships virtually with leaders of color in the church body that we are all apart of. It is about learning more about the church as a whole, hearing how others interpret scripture, and what work God is putting in our hands...”

1st Sunday of Lent, February 21, 2021



Rev. Nicolette Penaranda

Rev. Nicolette Penaranda (she/her) serves as the pastor of First Lutheran Church of the Trinity (Chicago). She brings to her role a wealth of knowledge and experience: in addition to her Masters of Divinity from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, she has a Masters in Business Administration! Before coming to Chicago, Nicolette served as a Horizon International Intern at Iglesia San Lucas in Grand Bourg, Argentina. Outside of parish ministry, Nicolette is a community organizer and a political candidate for city council in her community. She is the creator and facilitator of MONadvocacy, an adaptation of “Monopoly” designed to explore the intersection of race, class, and policy. This tool has been utilized by bishops, clergy, lay folk, adults and youth, and folks of various social backgrounds and featured at major ELCA events.

Join ZOOM Fellowship at 10 am for discussion and to catch up!



What joy is it to know our loved ones are a little safer! Pastor Inger thinks 12 or more parishioners have already received at least one of their vaccinations. Here, Vivian Moulder shows off her card and her Norwegian "Uff-Da" mask, chosen especially for the occasion.



An unexpected sorrow this January was learning that Legacy Lodge, where three members and several friends of the congregation were residents, was closing. Elaine Skatrud is settling into St. John's Living Center and Karen Priebe is heading to her home back east for now. A.J. Walter wrote us a note:

Dear Friends in Christ,

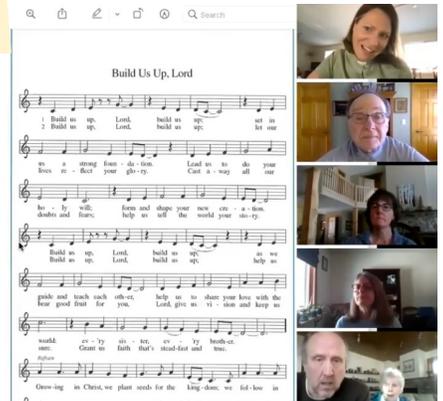
Pastor and you, the church as a whole, have given my soul a lift when I really needed it. I came to Shepherd of the Mountains over a year ago and found a peace I've never experienced before. I'm headed back to Iowa, although I'd much rather stay. Perhaps God has something in mind - who knows. Thank you for your love and prayers. It has been a comfort.

In His name,
A.J. Walter



A snap shot of SMLC's 2021 Annual Meeting with the opening litany on screen share.

- L. O God of all power and love ...
- C... we give thanks for your unfalling presence.
- L. O God of all power and love, we give thanks ...
- C... for the hope you provide in times of uncertainty and loss.
- L. O God of all power and love ...
- C... we ask you to send your Holy Spirit to enkindle in us your holy fire.
- L. O God of all power and love, we ask you ...
- C... to revive us to live as Christ's body in the world.
- L. O God of all power and love, we ask to be ...



An unprecedented Annual Meeting!

Our first ZOOM Annual Meeting was a success! Thank you to all who attended for your patience and pioneering. We had 22 members participate (2 more than our in-person meeting last year). We passed the 2021 budget; accepted reports; confirmed our 2021 council (no changes due to Terry DiMattio and Carolyn Daily's willingness to serve an additional year), elected a nominating committee (Nikki Thompson, Rose and Dale Jeske, and Steffan Freeman), and elected synod assembly delegates (Scott Daily and Nikki Thompson, with Keaghan Shedd as an alternate).

Responding to Christian Nationalism...

As I wrote in my annual report, Christians have work to do in finding the church's voice and role in racial justice and dismantling Christian nationalism and white supremacy. Rev. Elizabeth Eaton, the presiding bishop of ELCA, noted that patriotism isn't that same as Christian nationalism: "God knows I love my country, but my allegiance is to Christ." She urged Lutherans to revisit our Catechisms and to think about how the tenets of Christian nationalism violate the 1st commandment. It is helpful to hold that critique as you read about the marks of Christian nationalism on the next page. For me, it makes me re-think about how comfortable I have been (or at the very least complacent) with some of the familiar claims, and how I might respond differently in the future. —Pastor Inger

WHAT IS CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM?



Christian nationalism is a cultural framework that idealizes and advocates a fusion of Christianity with American civic life. Christian nationalism contends that America has been and should always be distinctively “Christian” from top to bottom – in its self-identity, interpretations of its own history, sacred symbols, cherished values, and public policies – and it aims to keep it that way.

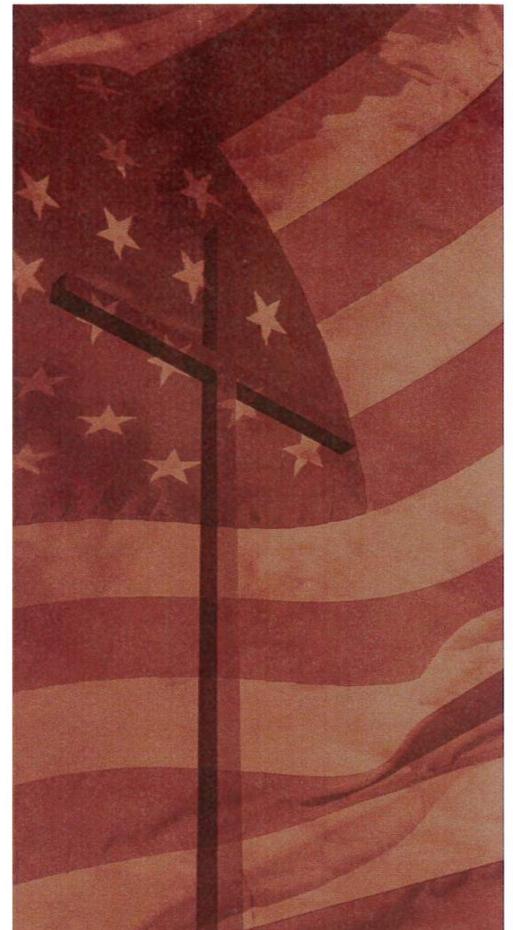
But the “Christian” in Christian nationalism is more about identity than religion. It carries with it assumptions about nativism, white supremacy, authoritarianism, patriarchy, and militarism.

How does Christian nationalism show up in politics and policy?

According to multiple academic studies using large, nationally representative surveys, Americans who embrace Christian nationalism are more likely to:

- Approve of authoritarian tactics like demanding people show respect for national symbols and traditions
- Fear and distrust religious minorities, including Muslims, Atheists, and Jewish people
- Condone police violence toward Black Americans and distrust accounts of racial inequality in the criminal justice system
- Believe racial inequality is due to the personal shortcomings of minority groups
- Report being “very uncomfortable” with both interracial marriage and transracial adoption
- Hold anti-immigrant views
- Fear refugees
- Oppose scientists and science education in schools
- Believe that men are better suited for all leadership roles while women are better suited to care for children and the home

Information from *Taking America Back for God: Christian Nationalism in the United States*, by Andrew Whitehead and Samuel Perry (Oxford University Press, 2020).



How do researchers identify Christian nationalism?

Americans who embrace Christian nationalism strongly agree with statements like:

“The federal government should declare the United States a Christian nation.”

“The success of the United States is part of God’s plan.”

“The federal government should advocate Christian values.”

Learn more: ChristiansAgainstChristianNationalism.org

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Have you ever thought about giving your offering online but don't know how?

You may sign up to give one time, weekly, monthly, or yearly .

You can give by text (307-207-3866), by credit or debit, or by online checking. Go to this link and you're on your way!

<https://sotmlcjackson.breezechms.com/give/online>

Thank you to those of you who have already donated; your gifts to the church are a blessing!



Lynn and Foster Friess gifted Shepherd of the Mountains with an incredible donation of \$100,000 (for the 2020 year-end). Their letter noted that our members, Ed and Carole Liezeit, selected the church to be the recipient of these funds. We are so thankful for their advocacy! The council is in prayerful discernment on how we will steward this amazing gift, and is receiving input and guidance from a financial planner Carole arranged and the ELCA regional gift planner. For now, our hearts are full of gratitude and dreams!



You may also mail in your donations to

Shepherd of the Mountains

P.O. Box 3257

Jackson, WY 83001

Thank you!

Your financial support is important to us!



Church Office Hours

Tuesdays & Thursdays

8:30 am - 3 :30 pm

JANUARY 2021

1st Simply Giving		\$ 1,530.00
Week of 4th	NA	\$ 10,675.00
Week of 11th	NA	\$ 2,715.00
15th Simply Giving		\$ 530.00
Week of 18th	NA	\$ 75.00
Week of 25th	NA	\$ 1060.64
Total	NA	\$ 16,585.64

Note: Weekly budget needs: \$2,375.00

Blood Drive Dates for 2021

Your help is always needed in our blood drives.

To give blood please go to

<https://www.bloodhero.com>

February 10 & 11

April 14 & 15

June 16 & 17

August 18 & 19

October 20 & 21

December 15 & 16 (at Presbyterian Church)



Your donation matters!