

Shepherd of the Mountains

Easter in the time of COVID-19

May 2020



Tiny Desk Worship

No in-person worship at SMLC
as we take COVID-19 precautions with our community.
Email us to receive weekly worship resources at home and
instructions for our "Tiny Desk Worship" series!

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Strengthened by Measureless Love

Contact Information

Pastor Inger Hanson

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*(preferred for non-critical
communication)*

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Office Hours

by appointment
Tuesdays,
Wednesdays
or Thursdays

Call or Message
during

Open Heart

Online Office Hours

**Wednesday
8—10 am**

Days Off

Mondays &
Saturdays

¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ^[a] ¹⁵ from whom every family^[b] in heaven and on earth takes its name. ¹⁶ I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, ¹⁷ and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. ¹⁸ I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹ and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. ²⁰ Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, ²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.
- Ephesians 3:14-21 (NRSV)

Dear Shepherd of the Mountains,

As various trips get cancelled, some of my traveling groups commiserate with humor, and “train” for the future. Have you seen the video where a quarantined traveler uses her treadmill to simulate a moving walkway at an airport? My reading groups, on the other hand, remind me of the adventures awaiting at the turn of a page. And then Rev. Phil Misner, our Assistant to the Bishop, reminded me of this passage from Ephesians. I like to think of Paul praying for us in these times.

Strengthened in inner beings. I’m so aware of my inner self right now, when so many outer expressions are limited. I’m so aware of how dependent that inner self often is on the outer world. But even when we can’t go the gym, or on our favorite hike, those activities we Jacksonites so often gain physical and mental and even spiritual strength from, Paul’s words remind me that God grace isn’t limited to the means we might normally recognize or go to, that we are being strengthened in our inner beings with power through the Spirit, even now.

But Paul’s words also remind me of our study groups. God’s grace expands our world, calling us to think about *the breadth and length and height and depth of the love of Christ*. It’s so much bigger than our homes. We aren’t trapped in our houses or our inner beings. The love of Christ takes us beyond them. Even as we delve deeper into our books, I pray that our comprehension of that love surpasses the knowledge and escape we get from them (even the Bible: remember that we don’t worship the words on the page but the God they point to!), so that we may be filled with all the fullness of God.

And so I bow on my knees before Abba, the parent of every family.
May you know the Spirit strengthening your inner being.
May you glimpse (because comprehend seems so ambitious!)
the expansiveness of the love of Christ in this time of great limitation.
And I lift up my asks and my imaginings.
My imaginings of your asks and your imaginings.
Of healing. Of testing.
Of shelter and food and employment needs met.
Of better policies and practices and a safer, kinder world.
Of being able to hug a parent, a child or grandchild now at a distance.
Of a church renewed and stronger than ever.
Dear God, Abba, do more
than we ask and imagine.



† Pastor Inger

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

SUNDAY



On Sunday mornings, check for an email from Pastor Inger with an At-Home Worship Service, including the readings for the day, a sermon, songs for reflection, and prayers. A “Tiny Desk Worship” will also be available on the church’s Facebook page.

Even as we miss the familiarity of the in-person liturgy, we are exploring what online formats offer. Please watch your email and participate in photo and video challenges when you can! Have you always wanted to read or lead the prayers, but suffer from stage fright? Now is your chance! Volunteer as a “Worshipping in Spirit” assistant or reader, and you can make an audio recording of the reading and send it to Pastor Inger. You might also explore the ELCA in different parts of the country by tuning into another congregation’s livestream.



Holy Horizons, our women’s contemporary theology group, meets via ZOOM from **6:30-8 pm**. We will be finishing Nadia Bolz-Weber’s new book, *Shameless* on May 3rd and anticipate beginning Rev. Emmy Kegler’s *One Coin Found: How God’s Love Stretches to the Margins* on May 10th. If you would like to join us, please email Pastor Inger (pastor.inger@sotmlc.org)

TUESDAY



Bible & Breakfast, our weekly coed group that looks at the lectionary readings for the upcoming Sunday, meets via ZOOM. Taking advantage of connecting even when we are in different states, we have adjusted our start time slightly. We meet **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 Scott Daily (scott@hoback.org).

WEDNESDAY



Open Heart Online Office Hours from 8:00am to 10:00am. In lieu of “Open Office Hours” at Picnic, Pastor Inger is setting aside this time to be present online, taking prayer requests and lighting candles for parishioners and the wider community. Prayer requests may be public or messaged to her privately.



In the late afternoon, check facebook or email for **Tiny Desk Easter Catechism** — a 10 minute devotional connecting the previous Sunday’s gospel lesson with Luther’s Small Catechism.

EVENTS IN MAY

MAY 2

Annual Church Clean Up from **10 am–2 pm**. Due to Covid-19 precautions, Dale asks that volunteers work alone or with household members. We will forego the group lunch this year.



MAY 17



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

MAY 17



Holy Horizons will meet via ZOOM from **6:30-8 pm** (social time begins at 6 pm). We will begin our discussion of a new book, Emmy Kegler’s *One Coin Found*.

MAY 29



Pentecost Photo Challenge! Help us celebrate the birthday of the church by sending in a photo of yourself with a party hat or balloons, OR with fire. Look for further instructions by email as it gets closer.

LOOKING AHEAD

TBA



The measures we need to take as a community to help “flatten the curve” of COVID-19 sometimes change and don’t have a clear timeline. Even as town and county measures loosen, the church has to weigh the risks of singing and communion practices. Watch for weekly emails to have a better sense of when in-person worship or other activities might resume.



Bishop Kristen Kuempel announced that the Northwest Intermountain Synod will be offering an evening adult faith formation class on the Small Catechism. We are still watching the synod Facebook page—they say details will be released soon!

In the meantime, get your hands on a copy of the Small Catechism. Any version will do! There are even online and app versions available. You could also check out Pastor Inger's midweek **Tiny Desk Easter Catechism** episodes.

The subtitle "How God's Love Stretches to the Margins," resonates when pondering the expansiveness of Christ's love depicted in Ephesians. Kegler also makes connections to Luther's *Freedom of a Christian*, which quite a few of you read earlier this year in Adult Education!

"Kegler shows us that even when we feel like lost and dusty coins—rusted from others' indifference, misspent and misused—God picks up a broom and sweeps every corner of creation to find us."
- amazon

"In *One Coin Found*, Emmy Kegler tells us a story about struggling with mental illness, wrestling with faith, and rejecting human rejection in favor of God's infuriating grace. Her questions, her vulnerability, and her skill as a storyteller invite us into a place where we can be honest about who we are and be loved for it. *One Coin Found* provides that space for everyone, but especially for those of us who identify as LGBTQIA. This book is a balm for weary souls."



- Austen Hartke, author of *Transforming: The Bible and the Lives of Transgender Christians*

"In the years I have known Emmy Kegler, I have found her to be everything you will discover in these pages: wise, nurturing, pastoral, anointed, strong, honest, and deeply loving. She has given us such a gift with this book. I found myself weeping, not in sorrow, but in gratitude and awe as she wrote of God and Scripture and story and the ones who are lost. Reading *One Coin Found* was like hearing the gospel for the first time all over again and remembering just why this story is so glorious. For those who are the lost coin, the prodigal son, or the lost sheep, Kegler is the pastor you deserved all along, and just wait, you're about to learn what it really means to be fully found."

- Sarah Bessey, author of *Jesus Feminist* and *Out of Sorts: Making Peace with an Evolving Faith*



**Need a book to read?
Whether you are looking for
a Bible reading plan or a devotional,
a novel or a history or theology book,
or you'd like to be surprised,
Pastor Inger's library is open!
Email if you'd like to have a loaner
book mailed to you.**



The bishop has made provisions for communion under special circumstances. If you would like to know more, contact Pastor Inger.



A MINISTRY OF SMITH'S CARDS

The church is experiencing increased requests for assistance. One way we help is through grocery cards! We have channeled a significant portion of our Old Bill's funds into these cards. Thank you to **Sherry Kinsella** for picking up a fresh supply for the church office, and personalizing them with a supportive message for recipients.

THE CHURCH & THE CARES ACT

Even as we seek to serve and support our neighbors, these are difficult times for churches. **Jolene Moulder**, one of our treasurers, moved quickly to educate the council and enroll in the new Payroll Protection Program through the CARES Act. This loan is forgiven if the money is used for payroll and utilities for eight weeks, effectively becoming a grant that gives us surer footing. Thank you Jolene!



LOVE FROM THE WIDER CHURCH: TWO GRANTS FOR MUSIC



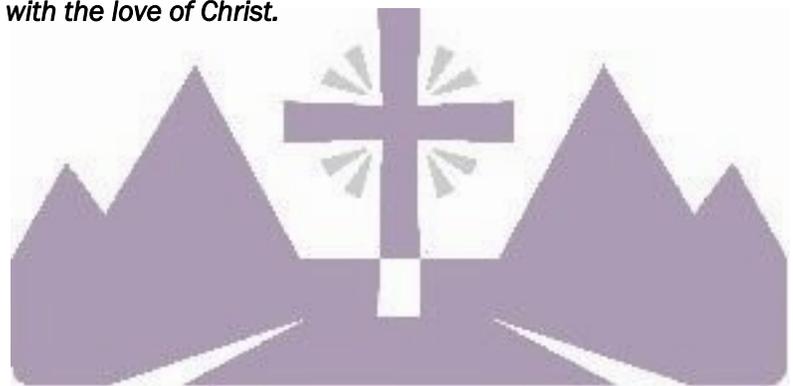
One of our bigger siblings in Spokane Valley, Advent Lutheran Church, has an Endowment Fund that they use to provide financial support for community outreach throughout our region. This year, our music ministry received one of their grants of **\$623**. We are so grateful!



SHARE Fund Grant—\$6,000

“SHARE” stands for Synodical Help and Response Endowment. The Synod uses it to help congregations during times of change or development. Creating the part-time Director of Music position and sponsoring a benefits package was a big reach for our small congregation. We were awarded this grant to make it easier to alleviate some of the increased costs without sacrificing our other ministries.

Now more than ever, as we worship together online, I am aware of how music can both strengthen us inwardly and also fill those around us with the love of Christ.



Seasonal parishioner **Cathy Barr** was instrumental in helping Pastor Inger write and edit these grant applications. Here she is last summer in Wyoming, “catch and release” fishing. Thank you to Cathy for her work behind the scenes helping us land these grants!



So many voices have contributed to our Tiny Desk Worship services! It has been exciting to have both veteran and new assisting ministers and readers participate (and even members who have moved away, like **Greg Fontaine** and **Holly Luense!**)

tiny desk worship

Each Wednesday from 8–10 am, Pastor Inger lights candles for various prayer requests during **Open Heart Online Office Hours**.



Pastor Inger and **Ron Fabry** record music for Sunday worship services each week.



Thank you to so many of you for making our Holy Week services special by participating in the congregational photo challenges. Here are some favorites of **Rose Jeske, Lorrie Lee Wells, Kinley Hull, Ethan, Jolene** and **Chris Moulder**, and **Matt McCreedy**. Look for the Pentecost challenge at the end of the month!



Servant Hearts



Steve Nelson was recognized by the Wyoming Coaches Association as the Boy's Assistant Basketball Coach of the Year! In awe of his time and dedication to student-athletes.



Jolene Moulder organized another successful blood drive with Vitalant, following additional social distancing measures to our normal procedures. With college campuses closed, many major drives have been cancelled and blood banks are in need. Vitalant was able to collect **80 units**, with **25 first time donors!**

We continue to pray for our extended family on the front lines of the pandemic, especially those in hot spots.



Jason Liebrecht, MD and Associate Professor of Emergency Medicine at Emory University School of Medicine is caring for patients in the ER at Grady Hospital in Atlanta, Georgia, a Level 1 Trauma Center and County Hospital.

Abbie Moulder, PA continues to battle COVID as a Physician's Assistant at Citrus Pulmonary Associates and Citrus Memorial Hospital in Crystal River, Florida. Cases are declining.

Andrew Krause, MD is resident ER physician at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, Michigan. He reports that the number of cases is declining, and that he and his team feel better prepared if a second wave should hit.



Psalm 23 & Me

Sometimes a psalm becomes a passage becomes a prayer.

Samantha Beach wrote this for Austin New Church (UMC) as a cue card-style reflection piece (look for it on facebook and youtube!) and gave permission for the script to be used here.

We hear Psalm 23 on the 4th Sunday after Easter (May 2nd), or "Good Shepherd" Sunday.

The Lord is my shepherd;

I lack -

toilet paper.
answers.
work.
child care.
Patience.
hope.
I lack less than many
but more than I'm used to
- lots.

I lack nothing.

ok I feel like you're not -
I feel socially distant from my shepherd.

He makes me lie down

I'm fine on my feet

He makes me lie down

You can't catch me

He makes me lie down

BUT THIS ARTICLE AND THAT
LINK TO THAT THING I HEARD FROM THAT
GRAPH AND THAT PODCAST AND WHAT
THEY SAID AND PRESIDENT

He makes me lie down

I feel dizzy

He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside still waters.

He restores my soul.

Even if...
even if my soul is
spinning?

He leads me in right paths

for his name's sake.

Right paths like safe paths ?

Even though I walk through the valley of

Nvm

Even though I walk through the valley of

unplanning
undoing
goals on hold
dreams delayed
lost memories
lost landmarks
no work
overwork

even though

the illness

even though

the stuckness

even though

the magnitude
the terror
the heartbreak

the valley of the shadow of death

EXACTLY.

I will fear

no evil

for you are with me.

Your rod and your staff, they comfort me

my robe and my sweats
my routine and my sched
my robots and snacks
they comfort me
your rod & your staff?
IDK
new metaphor

You prepare a table before me

in the presence of my

doubt
fear
grief

my enemies

You anoint my head with

Purell

oil.

these are old words.

My cup overflows.

...
sometimes you feel so far away.

Surely goodness and love

will pursue me

all the days of my life

seems unlikely
that goodness and love will pursue me all
the days of my life
I mean, fingers crossed

Surely

goodness and love will pursue
me all the days of my life ?

and

and I will dwell in my house forever?!

and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

goodness & love....
even though ?

Even though

Even so ?
Even now ?
Even here ?
Even there ?
Even then ?
Even if ?
Even when ?

There it is -
the spinning.

He makes me lie down.

Ok.

Catch me?

Please catch me.

April 2020		
1st Simply Giving		\$ 1,675.00
Week of 5th	NA	\$ 0
Week of 12th	NA	\$ 2891.00
15th Simply Giving		\$ 1,330.00
Week of 19th	NA	\$ 575.00
Week of 29th	NA	\$ 1275.00
Total	NA	\$ 7746.00
Note: Weekly budget needs: \$2,375.00		

Stewardship Corner



breeze
Online Giving
is simple and easy

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

We now are offering through our Breeze program online giving to everyone in our parish.

You may sign up to give one time, weekly, monthly, or yearly at no additional cost to the church.

Shepherd of the Mountains now offers two additional ways to give Online Giving - Simply click the link below and you are on your way to helping to support your church.

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

Or you can simply text your offering to our special text number 307-207-3866

Breeze does charge the church 2.9% for credit cards and 1% for Arch payments; please consider putting those amounts into your donations.

Mailing your check to the church is just another way to give.

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



Giving While You Shop at Smith's

Help your parish while you buy your groceries (and TP!)

Please consider enrolling in Smith's Grocery's Inspiring Donations Program.

Link your Smith's card to Shepherd of the Mountains Lutheran Church. The church will receive a check for .5% of your purchases!

It's easy:

1. Sign in to your account and choose "My Account" in the top right corner.
2. This brings up a list on the left. Choose "Inspiring Donations."
3. Look for our organization number—YJ339
4. Finish the process.



AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon with the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the church! Please switch over to AmazonSmile and pick Shepherd of the Mountains (make sure it says Jackson, WY) as the charitable organization you support.

You can always mail your donations directly to the church
Please submit your generous gifts to

Shepherd of the Mountains
PO Box 3257
Jackson, WY 83001



Church Office Hours
Tuesdays & Thursdays
8:30 am - 3 :30 pm