

Shepherd of the Mountains

December 2020

Advent
Hope · Love · Joy · Peace



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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www.shepherdofthemountainsjh.org



Bah h-alleluia

Dear Shepherd of the Mountains,

Of course, as we enter Advent in the year of our Lord 2020, we begin "Year B" - the lectionary year we focus on the gospel that doesn't have the Christmas story. Don't worry - we'll borrow from Luke and John, but still, it's so *2020* that Mark begins with John the Baptist crying out in the wilderness; the cross far more proximate than is comfortable for the Hallmark movie mood I like to escape into.

Contact Information

Pastor Inger Hanson

Email:

pastor.inger@
sotmlc.org
(preferred for
non-critical
communication)

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(307) 733-4382

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(307) 248-0438

Office Hours

by appointment
Tuesdays,
Wednesdays
or Thursdays

Call or Message
during

Online Office Hours

Wednesday
8-10 am

Days Off

Mondays &
Saturdays

Bah humbug.

And yet.

Where I can't help but notice that my Hallmark world doesn't have to wear masks, where I am marking the death of a father of the bride from Covid-19, there's an honesty, an authenticity, to this cross-shaped Advent that soothes and stirs my heart.

What if Christmas, and Christmas with the cross, has more to offer than a simple escape?

We strongly associate the birth of Christ with the promise of the incarnation - Emanuel, God-with-us. Yet, as scholar Douglas John Hall reminded me in his book *The Cross in Our Context: Jesus and the Suffering World*, it is the cross of Christ that delivers that promise at its most unalloyed and all-embracing. Humans are not only born - we live, we die. Pandemics ravage our communities and systems. But the cross affirms more powerfully still that God is with us, to and through the end. Mark doesn't spend time on 8 lb 6 oz newborn infant Jesus, and instead focuses on how Christ participates with us in and through all of life. Divine love doesn't just touch us in a rose-colored moment, but reaches and stays and suffers with us in the reality of our being; not just in birth, but in life and death.

And so Alleluia rings through the bah humbugs and any false cheer, striking a true, sustaining note. The loving and liberating presence of the divine is with us, working to transform this aching world.

Bah-halleluia. God IS with us, even and especially now.

Advent blessings,
Pastor Inger

ISAIAH 40:10A, 11

¹⁰ See, the Lord God comes ... ¹¹ He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

Bah-halleluia!



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.

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, meets via ZOOM. 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 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, weather permitting. You can check in electronically (through Facebook, email, text or message).



Advent Evening Prayer On Wednesday evenings at 6pm, we will pause and gather (for now by zoom) for “cruciform prayer” - see page 4 for more details. Look for an email with the zoom link on Wednesday afternoon! A recording will be made available after.

THURSDAY



Communion Celebrations at the church on Thursdays 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.

EVENTS IN DECEMBER

DECEMBER
1

Holy Horizons meets via zoom to discuss chapter 1 of 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.

DECEMBER
9



Stars and Promises Christmas Concert feat. Peter Mayer, lead guitarist for Jimmy Buffet, to benefit ELCA World Hunger! Premieres on facebook at 6 pm Mountain Time (see details on page 5)

DECEMBER
13



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

DECEMBER
15

Holy Horizons meets via zoom to discuss chapter 2 of 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.

DECEMBER
24



Outdoor Christmas Eve Worship at 4:00 pm (see details on page 4);
Tiny Desk Worship will be available at noon.

DECEMBER
25

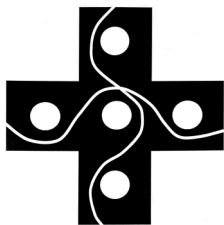


Tiny Desk Christmas Day Worship will be available at 10:00 am.

DECEMBER
27



Tiny Desk Worship will feature a sermon from **Rev. Kara Skatrud Baylor** (do you recognize that middle name? She’s part of Elaine Skatrud and the McCreedys’ extended family!) as the synod continues the Color Amazed Preaching Project (see details on page 6). **Watch the facebook premiere at 9 am**; then join us for a **ZOOM Fellowship at 10 am!**



cruciform

“Cruciform” means “cross-shaped,” and as we pray, we know that God is shaping us to become more like Christ.

We start with God at our center, move outward to God’s world, back to ourselves, and then to the needs of friends and enemies.

If you would like to create your own worship space, set out five candles in the shape of a cross. Otherwise, feel free to focus on the candles on your screen.

A recording will be made available after.

This Advent, we will pause midweek and gather for “cruciform prayer.” Look for an email with the zoom link each Wednesday!

Outdoor Christmas Eve Worship

December 24, 4 p.m.



On Christmas Eve, a special Tiny Desk Worship will be available at noon. We will also be offering a short and sweet outdoor service at 4 pm. Dress warmly, wear your mask, and gather with us for scripture, a sermon, prayers and a few acapella carols.

You're Invited!

**Stars and Promises Christmas Concert feat.
Peter Mayer, lead guitarist for Jimmy Buffett**

Dec. 9, 2020 | 7 p.m. Central time
Benefiting ELCA World Hunger

Facebook Premiere
(Accessible without a Facebook account)



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

In the first-ever event of its kind, ELCA World Hunger presents an online Christmas benefit concert featuring Peter Mayer, a longtime Lutheran and the lead guitarist for Jimmy Buffett.

Although we are in the midst of a difficult winter due to COVID-19, we know that, through God's abundance, you have shown incredible generosity by supporting the necessary work of the church. This concert is a gift to you this Advent season. It is a way for us to say thank you and provide a place for you to gather online with the church community as we prepare for the birth of our Savior.

The concert is free and will premiere on the ELCA Facebook page, with a live chat so you can engage with the audience, ELCA staff and Peter Mayer himself. Donations to ELCA World Hunger are encouraged and will support our church's work to respond to hunger and poverty in more than 60 countries around the world.

color amazed preaching project



The Northwest Intermountain Synod is thrilled to welcome Lutheran leaders of color to our digital pulpit. This is a chance to hear siblings we may not have listened to as often, and our hope is that this project helps us begin to better live into the fullness of being the body of Christ.

**On these special Sundays, Tiny Desk Worship will premiere on facebook at 9 am;
join ZOOM Fellowship at 10 am for discussion and to catch up!**

**Shepherd of the Mountains has a particular connection
to our December special guest.
Do you recognize this middle name?
Rev. Kara Skatrud Baylor
is part of Elaine Skatrud and the McCreedys' extended family!**

1st Sunday of Christmas, December 27, 2020

Rev. Kara Skatrud Baylor

Rev. Kara Baylor (she/her) serves as the campus pastor for Carthage College, a small college founded by Lutheran pioneers in 1847 in Kenosha, Wisconsin, bringing to her position more than 20 years of experience in youth ministry from her work with congregations in Wisconsin, Minnesota and North Dakota. Her new blog, #pissedoffpastor, is the exact opposite of who Rev. Kara Baylor has been in her first twenty years of ministry. While she still recognizes times where being a calm and peaceful presence is a good thing, she is also seeing the need for fire – to comfort and warm the lives of those who are afflicted, to inspire movement and change for those who are comfortable, to light the way for the transformations we need as individual Christians and as church together.



Psalm 8

¹ O Lord our Lord,
 how majestic is your name
 in all the earth! —
² you whose glory is chanted
 above the heavens
 out of the mouths of infants and children;
 you have set up a fortress
 against your enemies
 to silence the foe and avenger.
³ When I consider your heavens,
 the work of your fingers,
 the moon and the stars
 you have set in their courses,
⁴ what are mere mortals
 that you should be mindful of them,
 human beings
 that you should care for them?
⁵ Yet you have made them
 little less than divine;
 with glory and honor you crown them.
⁶ You have made them rule
 over the works of your hands;
 you have put all things under their feet:
 all flocks and cattle,
 even the wild beasts of the field,
⁷ the birds of the air, the fish of the sea,
 and whatever passes along
 the paths of the sea.
⁸ O Lord our Lord,
 how majestic is your name
 in all the earth!

A Passage

In the season of Advent, we wait on a God who breaks into a world chained by brutality and fear. We know that the world around us is crumbling, aching, and yet some of us have eyes to see what might be, and give that possibility a name. Some of us have hands that can usher God’s world into this one, bringing light and hope. Love is birthed in a darkened world; she takes a first wrenching breath, and cries. This, we call incarnation.”

— Rev. Emily M.D. Scott in *For All Who Hunger: Searching for Communion in a Shattered World*. Convergent, 2020, page 52.



A Prayer

Emmanuel, God promised and God with us: Give us peace as we need peace; give us courage to live in times without peace. Awaken us to the hope of your reign, but restrain us from vain hopes in the dominions around us. Free us to claim our own welling-up joy, and sustain us when joy seems far. Lead us to service in your world; strengthen our feeble attempts to serve. Spirit of holiness and good tidings, we come through Advent again, and again we ponder the meaning of incarnation. Form and receive our words and deeds of praise and prayer, for we magnify your name and rejoice in your salvation in the Christmas moment, on the cross, and in the journey of our years and lives.

— modified from a Christmas Eve prayer by Maren C. Tirabassi in *Touch Holiness: Resources for Worship*, Pilgrim Press, 1990, page 27.

Stewardship Corner



Simply Giving allows members the ability to set up a direct deposit from your bank. It helps the church manage our finances and makes it easy for you to give on a regular basis. It requires a simple form that can be changed at anytime. If you have any questions or are interested in completing a form, please ask Church Administrator Nancy Parisee.

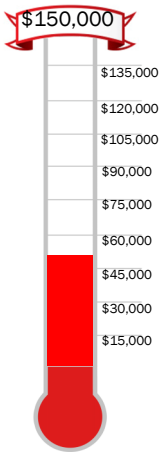
Last Call for Pledges!

Your help is needed to reach our goal of \$150,000

Pledge update for 2021! To date we have received
18 pledges that total \$49,200



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



\$150,000
 Our goal

THANK YOU!

We still have a way to go to get to our goal of **\$150,000**.
We can't make this goal happen without you!! Don't forget to mail in your pledge card so, we can plan a budget for the new year.

Thank you!

A Thanksgiving for a special birthday!
 Vivian Moulder celebrated her 29th birthday this past Sunday, November 29th. She celebrated the evening with her children Chris & Jolene Moulder and John & Nancy Parisee. To celebrate Vivian's birthday they all enjoyed a meal from Bubba's BBQ and a delicious birthday cake afterwards.



NOVEMBER 2020		
1st Simply Giving		\$ 1,675.00
Week of 2nd	NA	\$ 1,138.39
Week of 9th	NA	\$ 1,988.00
15th Simply Giving		\$ 530.00
Week of 16th	NA	\$ 2,172.00
Week of 23rd	NA	\$ 5,875.00
Week of 30th	N/A	\$ 725.00
Total	NA	\$ 14,103.39

Note: Weekly budget needs: \$2,375.00

Please feel free to cut out the pledge card below and mail it back to the church with your pledge.

Shepherd of the Mountains Lutheran Church

2021 Pledge Campaign

In gratitude for all of God's Blessings in our lives we respond by helping our church family by giving.

Our/my total annual pledge for 2021 is

\$ _____

This estimate of giving may be revised by calling the church.

Please mail this pledge card to SOMLC
 PO Box 3257
 Jackson, WY 83001



Name: _____
 Address: _____

 Phone: _____
 Email: _____

Thank you for your commitment to Shepherd of the Mountains Lutheran Church!