

Dear Emmaus Family,

November 13, 2021

Jesus said to the disciples, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit." (John 20:21-22)

This passage comes from a poignant moment Jesus shared with his disciples. It took place after Jesus had risen from the dead. The disciples were scared. They felt lost without Jesus. But then, as the disciples hid behind closed and locked doors, Jesus came and appeared in their very midst.

What's more, he brought gifts. Jesus gave them the gifts of peace and the Holy Spirit. These gifts are meant to help them. This is not the peace that the world can give. This peace isn't simply the absence of fighting. There is something more that Jesus is giving his disciples. The Holy Spirit is not some invisible and unknowable essence in the universe that mostly seems to leave us alone. Again, there is something more that Jesus gives his friends.

The peace that Jesus gives is a peace that is filled with faith, and rest, and certainty, and power. It is a peace that doesn't come and go quickly, as though it has something to do with whatever mood we are in. Jesus recognized the disciples' need for comfort, something to give them the courage to face the world and all the challenges that comes with it.

We can also share the peace of Christ with each other. We can give the peace that is filled with faith, and rest, and certainty, and power. We used to share the peace of Christ every week – at every worship service. But the pandemic stopped us from sharing the peace with each other. We long for meaningful contact in the presence of others in Christian fellowship. For nearly two years we have been denied that meaningful contact.

The Coronavirus positivity rate in Volusia County was 3.3% this morning. Because the rate has held at this level for a few weeks, we feel (Worship and Music Team) that we can relax our precautions a bit more. We will continue to watch the numbers each week. The opening up of more international travel

may cause COVID-19 numbers to change, and also with the holidays approaching we may see a spike. Hopefully not!

This weekend – tonight and tomorrow morning – we will be sharing the peace of Christ again. In the past, this has been a warm greeting that included a handshake or even a hug. We may not all be comfortable with that greeting right now. Also, not everyone will have the same comfort level as those worshiping around us.

There are ways to share the peace without the concern of sharing anything more. Try a fist-bump or an elbow-bump. How about a ‘peace sign’?

Worship changes coming up:

- ~ We are going to Share the Peace this week (perhaps non-contact)
- ~ We will be passing out our pew Bibles again
- ~ The tape has been removed from the pews
- ~ Masks are encouraged, but not required

We will still not be passing the Offering plate. Thank you for placing your gifts in the plate on your way in or out of our services, or for mailing your offering to the church.

In two weeks, on the First Week of Advent, we will be coming forward to receive both the Body and the Blood of Christ. A hand sanitizing station will be set up in the aisle and worship leaders will sanitize prior to serving Holy Communion.

Memorial service for Don Prether – Don passed away on October 18 and a service was held for him in Clayton, IN. We will have a service for Don on Saturday, November 20, at 2:15 p.m. The service will be held outside and physical distancing will be observed.

Ellie Vaughan – A service of inurnment will be held for Ellie at Oakdale Cemetery on Sunday, November 21, at 2:00 p.m.

This week at Emmaus:
Sat., Nov. 13 –

5 p.m. – Sanctuary worship
6:30 p.m. – Portico worship (outside)

Sun., Nov. 14 –

Gift cards for Thanksgiving project – last day to turn them in

10 a.m. – Sanctuary worship

11 a.m. – Adult Study in the Fellowship Hall or via Zoom conferencing

Mon., Nov. 15 –

Noon – AA meeting

7 p.m. – Cub Scouts

Tue., Nov. 16 –

10 a.m. to noon – Food Pantry distribution

Noon – AA meeting

6:30 p.m. – Congregation Council meeting (via Zoom)

Wed., Nov. 17 –

Noon – AA meeting

5:30 p.m. – Jubilate Ringers rehearsal

7:10 p.m. – Emmaus Choir rehearsal

Thur., Nov. 18 –

Noon – AA meeting

7:15 p.m. – Girl Scouts

Fri., Nov. 19 –

Noon – AA meeting

6:30 p.m. – Boy Scouts

Food Pantry – We are still in need of money donations for our Food Pantry. The need for food items is great in our community. Your donations make it possible for many families to have food for their tables. Thank you so very much.

Commitment cards – Don't forget to fill out your commitment card for 2022. Be prayerful as you consider your support of the ministries of Emmaus Lutheran for the coming year. Commitment cards will also be available at the church. Thank you for all the many ways you support your church.

My closing words to you are: *“The peace of the Lord be with you always.”*

Grace upon grace,
~Pastor Mark