

New Covenant Lutheran Church

E-Weekly Newsletter

October 23, 2020



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This Sunday
Matthew 22: 34-40

Series: Staying Healthy During ~~A~~ **Pandemic**
An Election!

Sermon: "Freedom of a Christian"

NO In-person Worship This Sunday
Online Worship Sunday at 10:00 am

In-person worship has paused for now due to the rising number of positive COVID cases. Please check our website at www.newcovenantaz.church/regathering for details.

ONLINE WORSHIP INSTRUCTIONS:

New Covenant Lutheran Church will continue to hold online worship services.

We use Facebook Live for our online worship services. You do not have to have a Facebook account to watch the service.

FACEBOOK: go to New Covenant Lutheran Church's Facebook page at 10 am Sunday to see the video live. Our Facebook page is at www.facebook.com/NewCovenantAZ



PASTOR'S CORNER

Hello Church,

The older children in Sunday School and the confirmation youth have been studying the story of Jacob and Esau. Jacob was the second born of twins and became known as "the heel-grabber." Eventually, after twenty years of estrangement from his family, Jacob makes the decision to return home. One night he wrestles at Peniel with an angel or perhaps it was actually God. Jacob refuses to let go until his opponent will bless him. Jacob is injured, blessed and renamed Israel for he has wrestled with God and survived.

Sometimes I feel like we are wrestling with God, like Jacob (Israel) did. We are in the 8th or 9th month of a pandemic and many experts are telling us that we have one to two years to go. We have been wrestling with fear, anger, doubt and just plain frustration. What is the hope in this wrestling match? That it will end soon? Is there more hope than that?

Perhaps we should continue to wrestle with our feelings and thoughts about this disease and try to listen to God in regard to what we are learning – not so much about the disease, but about ourselves. I know some of you have been injured personally by this disease. You have lost someone you loved and there is an emptiness. That's one of the daunting things about this disease. Even if we do not experience the disease personally or from a loved one, we are still injured by it. Some have lost jobs and others have lost businesses. Some marriages have strengthened, but many are suffering, and some are even failing. And if any of these consequences don't impact you, they will impact a family member, a friend or business associate.

Jacob ended up with a bum hip and a blessing. In the midst of the impacts of this virus, I pray that God will bless you and keep you during this time. So that when we walk around wounded, we can also walk around with God's blessing!

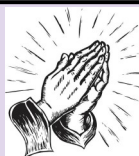
So, with that, I have an announcement that I've wrestled with, as have many others, and you may wrestle with it, too: **The Board of Ministry has made the decision to pause our in-person worship.** The state of AZ numbers for cases is on the increase. In addition, our "temple church" services have been very sparsely attended. We've had less than 20 in attendance – and that includes our staff. The Board has surmised from these factors that most of the congregation is not yet comfortable with attending in-person worship. The Board will continue to monitor the data and when they feel it is safe to re-gather, we will resume. In the meantime, please join us online – our "scattered church" is still alive and well!

This Sunday you will still be able to live stream with us on Facebook Live. As we celebrate **Reformation Sunday (remember to wear your red – whether it's pajamas or clothes)** we will take a look at Martin Luther's view of Christian Freedom. **Our scripture text is Matthew 22:34-40 and the theme is "Freedom of a Christian."** The Pharisee asked Jesus "which is the most important commandment in the law of Moses?" On Reformation Sunday, I want to ask what did Luther say was the most important teaching from the life of Jesus? Join us at 10:00 am and find out! I hope to see you (virtually) this Sunday!

Pastor Steve



Several people have reported getting an email from Pastor Steve or one of the church staff asking for gift cards, money or assistance. Please be aware that we have not and will not send such emails. Pastor Steve's email is Pastor.Steve@newcovenantaz.org Please contact the office at 480-860-0169 if you are concerned about communication that you receive claiming to be from one of us. We appreciate reports of spam so that we can make everyone aware.



Thank you for your prayers and love. I am so glad to be home from the hospital. Each day is better than the one before! Love you all, Mary Cole

Offerings can be mailed to:

New Covenant Lutheran Church
15152 N. Frank Lloyd Wright Blvd.
Scottsdale, AZ 85260

Online go to: www.newcovenantaz.church

Click on Donate Now

Hosts Needed!!

As we reconvene for in-person worship, hosts are needed to greet, explain procedures and direct everyone to their seats. Training will be provided! Be a hero and contact the office today to express interest and ensure you'll have a seat at the worship service. If you are healthy, we need you!



Hospitality

Join us at 11 am on Sundays for time together on Zoom and be a part of face-to-face conversations with one another! Zoom with meeting id: 841 5937 9421 (No passcode)



Soul Sisters Fall Calendar

Yoga

October 3
October 17
November 7
November 21
December 5
December 19

Hiking

October 10
October 24
November 14
December 12

Yoga will be held in the church courtyard at 8:45 a.m.

For Hiking, we will meet at church at 7 a.m. to carpool or caravan to the trail head.

Sunday School for 3rd - 5th graders continues Sunday at 11:15 am

The zoom link is at the top of this E-Weekly email.

Jacob and Esau

If God's blessings were only for people who deserved them, who among us would receive them? God's blessings come through God's grace and are rarely given because someone is worthy. Jacob was born holding onto his twin brother's heel. When Jacob was older, he acted like a heel, a slang word that describes someone who is dishonest. But Jacob's story shows that God makes promises to everyone, even people we wouldn't expect. "God, thank you for blessing us, even though we don't deserve it."



October Mission Project



Raise \$2,000 to provide a pallet of food

Donate online, mail your check to the church office, or put in Donation box at church on Sunday.

(Sunday's Call to Worship Hymn)

A Mighty Fortress is Our God

A mighty fortress is our God
A sword and shield victorious
He breaks the cruel oppressor's rod
And wins salvation glorious
The old satanic foe
Has sworn to work us woe!
With craft and dreadful might
He arms himself to fight
On earth he has no equal

Though hordes of devils fill the land
All threatening to devour us
We tremble not unmoved we stand
They cannot overpower us
Let this world's tyrant rage
In battle we'll engage!
His might is doomed to fail
God's judgment must prevail!
One little word subdues him

God's Word forever shall abide
O thanks to foes who fear it
For God himself fights by our side
With weapons of the Spirit
Were they to take our house
Goods, honor, child or spouse
Though life be wrenched away
They cannot win the day
The kingdom's ours forever!

