

the sower

... christ + charity + community ...



Well, I just found out. No Thanksgiving Day Parade, this year! There'll, still, be football! Three games, in fact! But the parade? Called on account of covid! No going over the river or through the woods, either. Too risky for grandma. Even with all the hand washing and mask wearing and keep your distancing. But that's the least of it ...

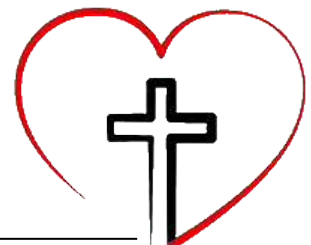
People in the streets. Battlegrounds drawn. Shouting. Carrying signs. An election's coming up. An election with its aftermath and god only knows what that will bring. A pandemic that feels like it's been here, forever, and isn't going away, anytime soon. Seventy thousand new cases a day. Quarter of a million people dead and counting. A healthcare system coming apart at the seams.

Now, it's Thanksgiving. We sit at the dinner table, feeling more like the turkey than pilgrims. Bowing our heads. Closing our eyes. Thanking god ... Thanking god for what? Thanking god for absolutely nothing! Not for the time lost. Not for love kept at arm's length. Not for dreams delayed or lives deferred. This time, we, just, sit, heads bowed, eyes closed, in silence ... having nothing to say ...

But in that silence, we'll hear the sniffing. And we'll watch as tears stain the tablecloth. We'll turn and we'll see god. Beside us. Between us. Elbows on the table. Head in hands. Weeping for the world. And then, it will be our chance ... To put our arm around god's shoulders ... to turn god's face toward us ... and reach out, to gently wipe the tears from god's eyes ...

blessed thanksgiving, my friends ...

Bob





worship ... in a time of pandemic!
reformationSunday @ the pavilion, hoganPark,

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NOVEMBER 01st, each year, is All Saints Day, a 'lesser' festival when the church celebrates the lives of all the baptized – both living and dead! On the other hand, All Souls Day – what we might call a "lesser-lesser" festival – is the day-after, Monday, November 02nd. It's kinda like the church's version of El Dia de los Muertos, The Day of the Dead, when we remember, specifically, the "saints" who have died. Well, I thought it would be a good time for us to host a "virtual" candlelight vigil, remembering the quarter-of-a-million-plus who have died from COVID-19, since the start of the pandemic. It's called [For Those Who Have Died](#) and has a Facebook page all its own. The vigil began at 7:00pm and lasted about twenty-minutes. Like the other things we've done, the past few months, it, too, was livestreamed on Facebook. and was saved as a video on [For Those Who Have Died](#). We shared it on our page, as well ... [Midland Lutheran Church](#). Take a look, when you get the chance! And a special thanks to Father Rick Lopez (and Iglesia Episcopal San Miguel Arcangel,

Odessa) and to Pastor Cheryl Homsher (and Grace Presbyterian Church, Midland) for making this event happen!



... rest eternal and light perpetual ...

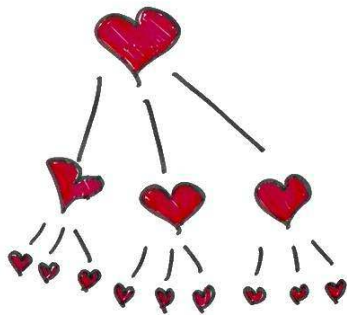


EIGHT MONTHS AGO, we began livestreaming “Morning Blessing” from Luther’s *Small Catechism*! Since then, each and every Tuesday and Thursday, we’ve done the same! Cloudy or clear! Rain and shine! Blessing! Creed! Lord’s Prayer! Luther’s Morning Prayer! Hymn! Of course, the Blessing all by itself is worth the doing. But the real reason we started was, simply, to be reminded – in the early days of the pandemic – that life goes on! The sun always rises ... no matter what! Kinda like grace! This month, sunrise on Tuesday, the 03rd, is at 7:07. Thanksgiving Morning, the 26th, it rises at 7:27. And as long as we’re wearing face masks and washing our hands and keeping our distance, we’ll be looking East! Each and every Tuesday and Thursday morning to come! Join us in real time ... or if you miss it then, take a look at the video on [our Facebook page](#) when you can! After all, it’s always sunrise somewhere!



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THE WEDNESDAY pmSTUDY is finishing up a look at *Love in Daily Life*! For the



past few weeks, we’ve focused on the mission and ministry of god’s gospel people ... Who we are! Why we are! However, the second Wednesday of this month – November 11th – will be the last session of this topic. Fortunately, like everything else we’ve livestreamed, it’s all saved and can be watched at your leisure. Just go to www.Facebook.com/MidlandLutheranChurch, find the video section, make your choice, and enjoy! And if you have any questions along the way, message pastorBob on Facebook or give him a call or drop him a text @ **432.349-7407**.

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SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 08th, pastorBob and Mark Russell, synodically-authorized worship leader at Christ’s Lutheran Church, Odessa, will lead worship! Together! On Facebook! Live from Stonehenge! Not that one ... The other one at UTPB! Mark will do the service. Bob the sermon. 10:30! Sunday morning! November 08th! Here on Facebook! Join us then ... in real time! Or join us, later, as you watch the video! And spoiler alert ... This is the kind of thing we have in mind when we’re talking about being “regional” in our vision! We’re not in this thing, just for us!



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THIS MONTH'S MEETING of the congregation **COUNCIL** is Sunday, November 15th, immediately following worship! As in the past, we'll do it on ZOOM. The main piece of business is the annual Meeting, the last weekend of January. Meeting place? Agenda? Ministry proposal? Budget? Any questions or suggestions? Talk with one of the council Members or with pastor Bob! Names and numbers are below ...



+ the **CONGREGATION COUNCIL** +

samantha schivelbein (210.315-1505)

ken spencer (432.853-6683)

janice taylor (432.661-5920)

fred behnken (432.212-1496), *treasurer*

jonathan yee (432.352-9387), *secretary*

bob barndt (432.349-7407), *pastor*

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THE THIRD SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH – in November, that's the 15th – is the day the sermon has been rooted in the journey we've been on since selling the building. The goal is to help us understand where we've been, where we are, and – god willing and the creek don't rise – where we're headed! Most months, the topic's been pretty impulsive. Nothing scripted or choreographed. Whatever happens to pique interest, at the moment. Pretty random, really. But for the next few months, we'll be considering a half dozen words as we flesh out our vision for the future ... grist, if you will, for the mill ...

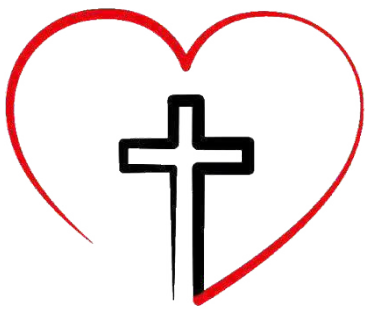


**+ LUTHERAN + REGIONAL + ACCESSIBLE +
DIVERSE + UNEXPECTED + SUSTAINABLE +**

Hopefully, by the annual Meeting, they'll inform our discussion and our dreaming! A bookmark's been included in the newsletter with these words to prod our imagination! Put it in a conspicuous place – on a nightstand, a coffee table, bathroom mirror, refrigerator door, even a book – where it can stimulate your thoughts . And again, any questions or suggestions ... message, call, or text pastor Bob or anyone on the council!

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**CHRIST
CHARITY
COMMUNITY**



**LUTHERAN
REGIONAL
ACCESSIBLE
DIVERSE
UNEXPECTED
SUSTAINABLE**

WE'VE INCLUDED ... a copy of the table blessings from Luther's *Small Catechism*, in this month's newsletter. It's on the inside back cover! And it's, probably, more praying at dinnertime, than you're used to. So, feel free to use all of it ... part of it ... or none of it ... during your festivities! But maybe while you're getting dinner ready ... or after the everything's been cleared away ... while you're waiting for the next kickoff ... take a few moments, simply, to read them through. Not so much as a prayer. More as a devotion. Remembering the love god gives ... not just to god's people ... but to all creation! Animal! Vegetable! Mineral! Faith isn't – foremost and first – giving thanks. it's saying, "Grace!"



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IF YOU HAVEN'T HEARD ... Clifford Miller and his family – then-wife Paula, son Walter, and daughter Ginger – were members here at Midland Lutheran back in the early-Seventies to the mid-Eighties. Paula died a little over three years ago. A month or two ago, Charles Wolle let us know that Clifford died, as well. On July 30, 2020. To read Clifford's obituary, [click here](#). To read Paula's obituary, [click here](#). Life eternal grant them both, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them!

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A BIG "¡MUCHAS GRACIAS!" ... to everyone who helped host the families with [Family Promise of Midland](#), this time around! Three adults! Five kids! One infant! And that does it – for us – for 2020! We haven't gotten the final schedule, yet, for 2021. But we'll be sure to let you know as soon as we do! If you'd like to know more about Family Promise, click on the link above to go to their website. Or [click here](#) to go to their Facebook page! And again, thanks for everything!



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AND FINALLY, ABOUT CHRISTMAS ... I think I shared with you the council's decision from last month, to continue livestreaming alone through the end of the year. We have no plans to return to "in person" anything until 2021. This is for a couple reasons. First, of course, is the pandemic. But second is our moving into the future as a congregation. We've spent the last couple years worshiping – when we could do so safely – in the fellowship hall. And we've spent it listening for that "still small voice" telling us where to head toward! In January, we'll talk



more about that! But for now ... we need to figure out what to do for Advent and Christmas!

Sundays will continue to be done as we've been doing them for the last thirty-some weeks! 10:30! Sunday mornings! FacebookLive! And, for those not online, we'll keep sending out the sermons via snailMail.

As for the midweeks ... there are three ... December 02nd, 09th, and 16th. And I've been thinking about taking our cue from the shepherds ... living in the fields! Keeping watch by night! We'll still livestream everything! But we'll do it from out there somewhere! By a fire! We do it just like shepherds! Sing songs! Tell stories! Look up at the stars! At the end – or rather, in the beginning – be surprised by the angels! I think it would be a pretty good way of “heading” into Christmas.



Then, night before the night before – on Christmas eveEve – we can do the same! In the night! Around a fire! There's more thinking to do! Pick a place! Where anyone can join in – if they want ... if they're able ... Where they can “socially distance” ...

And, as far as the topic goes ... Well, I'll gladly entertain any and all suggestions! Just message me on [Facebook](#)! Or call or text @ **432.349-7407**! Or email – bbarndt@juno.com! It's kinda exciting ... This has to be the first time in any of our lives that we – as a people of god – don't have to do things the way we've always done them! The first time that we CAN'T to things that way! It's going back to the beginning and starting over from square one!!! So, let's! Have! Some! Fun! Next year, it can be same old same old! How's that prayer go ...

O God, you have called your servants
to ventures of which we cannot see the ending,
by paths as yet untrodden,
through perils unknown.
Give us faith to go out with good courage,
not knowing where we go,
but only that your hand is leading us
and your love supporting us ...

table blessings

from the smallCatechism

The children and the members of the household are to come devoutly to the table, fold their hands, and recite:

The eyes of all wait upon you, O Lord, and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living creature.

Then they are to recite the Lord's Prayer and the following prayer:

Lord God, heavenly Father, bless us and these your gifts, which we receive from your bountiful goodness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Similarly, after eating they should in the same manner fold their hands and recite devoutly:

Give thanks to the Lord, for the Lord is good, for God's mercy endures forever. God provides food for the cattle and for the young ravens when they cry. God is not impressed by the might of a horse, and has no pleasure in the speed of a runner, but finds pleasure in those who fear the Lord, in those who await God's steadfast love.

Then recite the Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

and the following prayer:

We give thanks to you, Lord God our Father, through Jesus Christ our Lord for all your benefits, you who live and reign forever. Amen.



the PROPERs for november

ALL SAINTS DAY, november 01

the **PRAYER** of the **DAY**: Almighty God, you have knit your people together in one communion in the mystical body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Grant us grace to follow your blessed saints in lives of faith and commitment, and to know the inexpressible joys you have prepared for those who love you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

the **READINGS**: Revelation 7:9-17 + Psalm 34:1-10, 22 + 1st John 3:1-3 + Matthew 5:1-12

the TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY of PENTECOST, november 08

the **PRAYER** of the **DAY**: O God of justice and love, you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, and awaken us to the needs of others, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

the **READINGS**: Amos 5:18-24 + Psalm 70 + 1st Thessalonians 4:13-18 + Matthew 25:1-13

the TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY of PENTECOST, november 15

the **PRAYER** of the **DAY**: Righteous God, our merciful master, you own the earth and all its peoples, and you give us all that we have. Inspire us to serve you with justice and wisdom, and prepare us for the joy of the day of your coming, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

the **READINGS**: Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18 + Psalm 90:1-8 [9-11] 12 + 1st Thessalonians 5:1-11
+ Matthew 25:14-30

CHRIST THE KING, november 22

the **PRAYER** of the **DAY**: O God of power and might, your Son shows us the way of service, and in him we inherit the riches of your grace. Give us the wisdom to know what is right and the strength to serve the world you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.


























the **READINGS**: Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24 + Psalm 95:1-7a + Ephesians 1:15-23
+ Matthew 25:31-46

the FIRST SUNDAY of ADVENT, november 29

the **PRAYER** of the **DAY**: Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

the **READINGS**: Isaiah 64:1-9 + Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 + 1st Corinthians 1:3-9 + Mark 13:24-37

noviembre 2020

domingo	lunes	martes	miércoles	jueves	viernes	sábado
 1  10:30am – worship	2	 3  7:07am – amBlessing	 4 7:00pm – pmStudy	 5  7:08am – amBlessing	6	7
 8 10:30am – worship	9	 10  7:13am – amBlessing	 11 7:00pm – pmStudy	 12  7:14am – amBlessing	13	14
 15 10:30am – worship  12:00pm – council	16	 17  7:19am – amBlessing	18	 19  7:21am – amBlessing	20	21
 22 10:30am – worship	23 <i>misd holiday</i>	 24  7:25am – amBlessing	25	 thanksgiving day	27	28
29  10:30am – worship	30					

Verbum Domini Manet in Aeternum
the word of the lord endures forever



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

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midland lutheran church

2705 west michigan avenue * midland, texas 79701-5840

bob barndt, pastor

office: 432.694-1373 * home: 432.689-9274 * cell: 432.349-7407

webpage: www.MidlandLutheranChurch.org

facebook: www.facebook.com/GospelCrossWords/

www.facebook.com/MidlandLutheranChurch/

email: bbarndt@juno.com

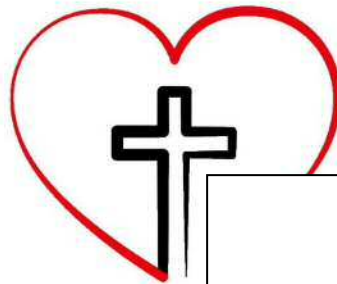
sunday morning schedule: **learning hour @ 9:15 *worship @ 10:30**

office hours: monday-thursday, 9am-noon & by appointment

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midland lutheran church

2705 w michigan av + midland, tx 79701-5840



november 2020