



King of Kings Lutheran Church

Centered in Christ we love all, welcome all, and pursue justice and peace

Koklutheran.org | 5501 SE Thiessen Road, Milwaukie, OR 97267 | 503-659-0990

March 2020

Pastor's Message



I have been with so many people as they die. I've been with people who die peacefully – happily – of old age, surrounded by loving family at the bedside, telling funny family stories, saying goodbye with tears and laughter and giving thanks for a life well lived.

I've kept vigil with those who were not yet ready to die, waiting for family members to arrive, or struggling with unfinished emotional or spiritual business. For the family who couldn't bear it, I stood with their 22-year-old son – brain dead as a result of an overdose – as life support was withdrawn.

I've held a cold, blue baby, trying to at least keep him warm until his mother came out of surgery.

Have I made you all uncomfortable yet? These deaths, in many instances, certainly made me uncomfortable.

Perhaps it is inappropriate for a pastor to talk so plainly about death and dying¹. Aren't we supposed to preach about happy things? If we preach the truth, won't people be so uncomfortable that they will stop coming to church?

If sermons, reflecting on the word of God, focus only on the pretty, the positive, the upbeat aspects of life, we do a disservice to our people. My job is to tell you the truth. The one big, uncomfortable truth we cannot avoid is that sooner or later, no matter how we try to stop or delay it, we are all going to die.

There's that well used saying: There are two things in life we cannot avoid – taxes and death. That really should be amended to this: there are two things in life we cannot avoid – messing up our lives and death. We are mortal. We are imperfect. These are the certainties of life for human beings.

Some of us gathered in the sanctuary on Ash Wednesday. We were marked with ashes and we heard the words "Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return". We repented of our known errors; we confessed our sins.

Now, we face Lent with the intention of turning ourselves around, to set a new course. In this season, we will hear stories of Jesus from the book of John. In these stories – and our own stories – we will seek to learn a new way of being the Children of God.

We are mortal, we are imperfect – but we are not hopeless. We are not doomed. We are claimed by a reality so much larger than ourselves. When God lays claim to us, then nothing – not even our own painful mistakes or the end of our own lives, will ever be enough to destroy us.

¹ Heavily influenced by Rev. Emily C Heath, *Christian Century*, January 31, 2018. Page 19.

We are invited into a journey of new life. This season offers us a closeness with God that has nothing to do with giving up something, or even taking on something. The closeness with God that this season offers comes from this: the willingness to be marked as belonging to Jesus, and finding our hope in his story.

Pastor Sharon L. Hughes



Upcoming Worship Schedule

- March 4:** Soup Supper & Worship beginning at 6:00 pm
- March 8:** 2nd Sunday in Lent
- March 11:** Soup Supper & Worship beginning at 6:00 pm
- March 15:** 3rd Sunday in Lent
- March 18:** Soup Supper & Worship beginning at 6:00 pm
- March 22:** 4th Sunday of Lent
- March 25:** Soup Supper & Worship beginning at 6:00 pm
- March 29:** 5th Sunday in Lent



March 8 Daylight Savings Begins!

Remember to set your clocks ahead or you'll wonder why you're the only one at church.



Spirits & Theology

Time: Tuesday, March 10 @ 6 pm

Place: Flying Pie Pizza, 16691 SE McLoughlin Blvd.

Topic: "Faith in Action"

Come when you can. Bring friends. All are welcome.

Fellowship abounds and ideas about spiritual matters are exchanged in an informal and public setting. We certainly don't have all the answers, but we sure have plenty of opinions!



News

One of the tasks of the Transition Team, is to develop a Vision Statement. This is what we came up with:

"Our vision is for a leader who will listen to us, helping us continue to move forward with the dreams God has for our future. We are a vital and viable congregation. With God's help we are eager to sustain and/or build on the following:

1. We are primarily interested in issues of social justice.
2. We will continue our food pantry ministry.
3. We will continue to build on and strengthen our current relationships.
4. We will continue to look for ways to help others.

The members of KOK are willing to be leaders and helpers, as is appropriate for the task at hand. There are 9 active committees at KOK. Of those committees, there are approximately 52 individuals involved in the different committees."

Ministry Site Profile

On Wednesday, March 4, 2020, your transition team completed their assignment – the Ministry Site Profile (MSP) is written and ready to be presented to the Congregation Council at their next meeting (March 18).

We all owe great thanks to the Transition Team that has worked faithfully for the last 6 months to gather information and formulate it into this document. Be sure to thank Lisa Hiller (chairperson), Gordon Merseth, Vicki Rutger, Dan Peterson, Kerin Lommen and Don Trotter. They have been faithful servants.

Once the Council approves the MSP, the congregation will receive copies. We will have a meeting on a Sunday after worship in which people may ask questions if there are any.

Then, the MSP goes off to the Oregon Synod. Pr. Melissa Reed is our contact person and she is anticipating the arrival of the King of Kings MSP.

Once the MSP is accepted by the OR Synod, we begin the next step – creating a call committee. I am planning to invite one member of the Transition Team and one member of the Council to serve on the Call Committee. I am inviting all members of the congregation to spend the next 3 weeks in discernment and prayer. On Sunday, March 29, we will take time in worship for each of you to submit your list of 4 names that you recommend to serve on the Call Committee.

The Mutual Ministry Team will consider the names that you all submit. Using that list, I will invite 4 people to join the Call Committee, making a team of 6.

In the meantime, Pr. Melissa Reed will be discerning and praying about which candidates to recommend to our Call Committee. She believes that 2 to 4 names will be submitted to the Call Committee.

The work of the Call Committee is highly confidential. We will not know who or how many are being interviewed. We will not know whether there are men or women selected. We will not know how long the interview process will be, along with the background checks and conversations with references.

When the Call Committee is able to make a unanimous recommendation to the Council, you will be invited into the process again.

Pastor Hughes



Stewardship Action Core (SAC)

The **Stewardship Action Core (SAC)** is a committee of church members who are called to educate ourselves in the careful and responsible management of all things entrusted to our care and to share that vision with the congregation.

Thank the Lord

The Lord is good to me. And so, I thank the Lord for giving me the things I need! Or do I? Thank him? My Lord. I know most of my time is filled up with me. I do say the words in church. Do I say thanks to my Lord at other times? And just because I say, "thank you Lord", do I mean it? Do I pay attention to my words, or am I thinking of me?

Most of my body works right now. I have the knowledge to recognize some of my needs. God knows all my needs, and my wants. I don't always tell God or thank him for what has been provided. So how is my gratitude for all? I believe it is not as big, large, or great enough. I could or should do better, for my God is worthy of all my thanks.

And so, I thank my Lord for giving me the things I need. **"Thank you."**

1Thessalonians 3:9: "How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy we have in the presence of our God because of you?" (NIV)

Sylvia Hornyach

Social Justice Update

During the February Social Justice meeting we decided to take a meal to the Veterans Village later in the month— in fact several members helped prepare a meal that Ellen, Gene and Mary took to the Village on February 23rd.

We also decided to hold a QPR* training (*Question Persuade Refer) after Easter. We will be providing information and statistics about suicide prior to that training.

The MACG Clackamas Housing Team continues working to find locations for the SOS program although the process will be different — no longer going through Planning and Zoning as we did. Another part of the team is working on a program to help groups learn how to talk about how the housing shortage is affecting all of us.

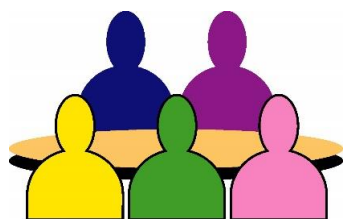
Our next meeting will be Tuesday, March 10th at 2:30 pm — all are welcome.

Do you have Pick-up or Van? — periodic help needed



Since last fall when we lost our connection with the Gleaners who had been picking up the food that remained after each pantry — we have been sharing those foods with the Vets Village on 115th and Jennifer in Clackamas. The Z's use their pickup to aid a Do Good Multnomah employee who helps transport the boxes of food (approximately 10 -16).

On **March 12th** the Z's are not available for this transport. Anyone with a good back, (though we do have a dolly to take boxes from the church to the vehicles), a good heart, and time on Friday, March 13th for about an hour — time flexible— is asked to contact the Z's for additional details. Your help will be appreciated and it will be a chance to see the Vets Village if you haven't been there.



Council Highlights

Minutes February 18, 2020

Those present: Pastor Hughes, Tom Rutger, Bonnie Cowden, Mike Foley, Greg Peterson, Kathy Pearsall, Patty Hess (phoning in from Mexico), guests: Tom Hiller and Susan Carder.

The meeting was brought to order at 6:57 p.m. by Pastor Hughes. Devotions: Bonnie Cowden read from an article by Mark Scandrett, entitled *Practicing the Way of Jesus*. Good reminder to look for ways to help others.

Relational Question: When or where have you experienced an act of justice that you applauded? Many of us found this a difficult question in just defining an ‘act of justice.’ Pr. Hughes gave the example of Republican Senator, Mitt Romney voting his conscience rather than his political party in the Trump impeachment hearings. The question begs that we look for justice in daily life.

Election of Officers: M/S/A by unanimous ballot to elect Tom Rutger, President, Kathy Pearsall, Vice President, and Greg Peterson, Secretary.

President Rutger moved to accept minutes of the January 21, 2020 as written. M/S/A.

Tom Hiller presented information on the proposed Constitution updates. Informing council that most of the updates are wordage tidying up; changing tense of verbs, replacing ‘the’ with ‘this,’ nothing problematic. Pending final council review it was M/S/A to accept the constitution amendments to bring us up to date, incorporating both the 2016 and 2019 Amendments to the Model Constitution for Congregations as approved by the Churchwide Assembly. The revised constitutions going out via e-mail by February 29 along with the notice for the Special Meeting to be called for March 29.

Property Committee: Of the three bids presented by Forensic Building Consultants the committee would choose the \$210,335.00 bid from JR Johnson if we proceed with exterior repairs.

Quad Squad: Two recommendations: M/S/A 1. that King of Kings postpone exterior building repairs until a new pastor is called. This will allow the new pastor a contributing role in the future vision of the congregation. 2. that council call a meeting on March 1, to update the congregation regarding building repairs.

Worship Committee: Ash Wednesday, February 26. Lenten worship for both Sundays and Wednesday evenings has been prepared. Five people had agreed to give Temple Talks regarding the roll KOK has played in their spiritual development. We have received a letter from Bishop Laurie Larson-Caesar authorizing Josh Stromberg Wojcik to preside at Holy Communion on February 23, 2020.

New Business:

Pr. Hughes is beginning the process to update our membership records for our annual statistical reporting and to start with a clean slate of active members for the new pastor. M/S/A that as we determine those who are inactive, a letter will be sent asking the member if they would like to continue their membership or be removed.

The meeting closed at 9:15 with the Lord's Prayer

The next meeting will be March 17th.



COUNCIL LIAISONS 2020

Christian Ed:	Greg Peterson
Finance:	Tom Rutger
Mutual Ministry:	Patty Hess
Pantry:	Kathy Pearsall
Property:	Mike Foley
Radical Hospitality:	Patty Hess
SAC:	Kathy Pearsall
Social Justice:	Mike Foley
Worship:	Bonnie Cowden

Bible Study



READ THROUGH THE BIBLE

Whether you're reading along at home or want to join us **Wednesdays at 9:45 am** here is the reading plan for **March** is to continue Proverbs, we are about half way through.

Proverbs brings together a vast, infinitely varied collection of wisdom literature from many sources and ages. Wisdom literature consists mainly of advice to the individual. The book of Proverbs was part of this body of wisdom literature and was likely compiled after the exile and used to instruct Jewish youth. Come join us to find out what happens next!



Bottledrop

Return your bottles and cans and donate the proceeds to KOK.



How it works: Pick up a special green bag in the office, take it home, and put your refundable bottles and cans in the bag. Once your bag is full, return it to the office and we will return it for you. That is

Gary Noble or Harry & Sharon Konsa will. Bottledrop only accepts 2 bags at a time, so give a heads up if you need to bring more.

Thanks to Gary & Harry & Sharon!



Let's Celebrate!

God's Blessing to you as you celebrate...

March Birthdays



- 03 Sandy Peterson
- 06 Mary Zellharie
- 14 Sharon Konsa
- 17 Jeanie DuPere
- 18 Harry Konsa
- 22 Grace Lopez



March Baptisms

- 15 Cathy Griswold
- 16 Gary Noble
- 22 Bobby Cunningham
- 22 Sue Trotter
- 25 Patty Hess



MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

19 Bonnie Warren & Gary Sinnen
22 Mike & Susan Brooks



Prayers & Thanksgivings...

Rory Fitzgerald	<i>and all houseless people</i>
Susan Carder	<i>Recovering from recent heart episode</i>
Selma Eckert	<i>Multiple heart attacks; resting peacefully at home</i>
LaVern Mortensen	<i>Recovering from broken elbow</i>
Pr. Michelle Manicke	<i>Recovering from broken ankle</i>
Pastor at Bethlehem LC in Montana	<i>Diagnosed with stage 3 cancer</i>
Karen Corbett	<i>Continuing recovery from back issues</i>
Micki Cline	<i>For positive, ongoing breast cancer treatment</i>
Amelia Huggins	<i>One-year old baby daughter of Eric and Alisha with rare form of leukemia; beginning chemo round 2</i>
Mike Brooks	<i>Continuing mesothelioma treatment</i>
Carolyn Potter	<i>Multiple health concerns, for successful dialysis treatment</i>
JR Potter	<i>Life threatening autoimmune disorder</i>
Jane Greenwood	<i>surgery to find unknown source of cancer</i>

