

First Lutheran Church
92 W. Walnut Street
Washington, PA 15301



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Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior

Pastoral Perspectives for February 2021

Grace and peace to you from God the Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit. Amen.

January certainly started off with a bang! From protests and politics to prayer 2021 seems to have dragged some of the sinful remnants of last year into this New Year! The media reported that the **“sacredness”** of the Capitol Building was violated after a protest in DC. Putting politics and rhetoric aside let us examine the meaning of the word **“sacred”** more closely.

Sacred

- A) being connected with God or dedicated to a religious purpose and so deserving veneration**
- B) religious rather than secular**
- C) of writing or text embodying the laws of doctrines of a religion.**

During other earlier *protests* in DC churches were damaged and set on fire such as the Metropolitan A.M.E., Mt Vernon Place UMC, Asbury UMS and the Luther Place Memorial Church; we did not see media outrage at the violation of these actual sacred places. After all, “People will do what people do!”, responded one politician.

I leave it to you and you can decide if the media was in error in applying the word sacred to the Capitol Building but not to these churches which were damaged.

Thankfully, the Capitol does allow prayer to open the congress and senate but the house speaker, who professes to be Roman Catholic, has banned gender defining language in the prayers offered by the clergy. How then does she recite the prayer given to us by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ that begins with, **“Our Father?”**

You may be wondering why I’m opening all these cans of worms regarding the protests, prayer and political realm of the New Year of 2021. Well, it came to a head from a *“prayer”* that took place on January 3rd that opened the 117th Session of Congress and also caused quite a stir!

Rev. Emanuel Cleaver, who is a United Methodist Pastor, former mayor and now government official, ended his prayer by adding the ***Hindu god Brahma and to the God known by many names, by many different faiths*** but also concluded with, ***“amen and a-woman.”***

Mr. Cleaver admitted he was trying to be *cute* but many traditional Christians openly criticized Cleaver on this ending of his prayer and rightly so! Cleaver then explained that, ***“he intended the word to be a light-hearted pun in recognition of the record number of women who will be representing American people in Congress during this term as well as the first female chaplain of the House of Representatives”***.

Should prayer ever be approached in this way? NO! So did Mr. Cleaver make an error in his prayer? Yes, for when one looks at the dictionary we find the actual meaning:

Prayer

a **solemn** request for help or expression of thanks addressed to God or an object of worship.

Nowhere in the Holy Bible do we find examples of light-hearted or cute prayers being offered to God! It's impossible for me to cover everything Luther wrote on prayer but he did cover everything from why we pray, how often we are to pray, how prayer is to be prayed in the name of Christ and even on the posture we are to have in prayer!

Did Mr. Cleaver misuse the word, “amen”? Yes! The word ***“amen”*** originates from Biblical Hebrew (not Latin as many posted erroneously) which translates as either ***“it is true”*** or ***“let it be so”***.

As a chaplain and as a pastor I have been called to publicly offer the invocation of prayer at public events over the years. At no time have I ever included false gods in my prayers nor have I ever offered a cute or light hearted prayer to God.

It's time for chaplains and clergy everywhere to take their sacred vow to serve God seriously and put a stop to the inappropriate attempts to be cute, humorous or politically correct in prayer this does nothing more than make a mockery of Christians everywhere when leading the prayer. Luther said, ***“We must be careful not to break the habit of true prayer and imagine other works to be necessary which, after all are nothing of the kind.”***

Amen to that! (and amen only!)

In Christ Jesus

Rev. Robert B. Grewe

Important dates for First Lutheran services

- February 14th** **Transfiguration Sunday with the burying of the Alleluia banner and the Lord's Supper at 11 am service.**
- February 17th** **Ash Wednesday service with the imposition of ashes and the Lord's Supper at 7 pm.**
- February 24th Midweek Lenten service at 7 pm
- March 3rd Midweek Lenten service at 7 pm
- March 10th Midweek Lenten service at 7 pm
- March 17th Midweek Lenten service at 7 pm
- March 24th Midweek Lenten service at 7 pm
- March 28th** **Palm/Passion Sunday with the Lord's Supper and the graduation of the confirmation students 11 am**
- March 31st Midweek Lenten service at 7 pm
- April 1st** **Maundy Thursday service with the Lord's Supper, stripping of the altar, foot washing (modified due to covid 19) 7 pm**
- April 2nd Good Friday service at 1 pm (modified to one service due to covid 19)
- April 3rd Easter Vigil service canceled (due to length of the service during covid 19)
- April 4th** **Easter Sunday service at 10 am with the Lord's Supper**

Please be advised that there will be a very special February 14th Coffee Hour where all members are invited to after the church service with more information to follow.

How to log on to watch the First Lutheran Church services online

It is best to use Google Chrome for watching the services online.

1) Type in First Lutheran Church Washington PA

This will bring you to the info on FLC where you have options of 1) call 2) Directions 3) Save 4) Website

2) Click on to the WEBSITE image/ word

This will take you to the First Lutheran Church website and you will see the sanctuary and the words COME WORSHIP

3) Above the image and the words you will see in white and in grey lettering on the left hand side FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH on the left hand side. On the Right hand side you will see three horizontal lines. Click on the three lines

4) This will bring to several options 1) Home, 2) Our Church, 3) Our Worship, 4) Newsletters, 5) Ministry, 6) Contact, 7) Church News

5) Click on the Church News

6) This will take you to the NEWS & EVENTS page. There you will see the date and the year with information for example January 24th, 2021 Third Sunday after Epiphany.....

7) Click on the blue letters READ MORE

Underneath you will see the Facebook website <https://www.facebook.com/First-Lutheran-Church-Washington-PA-10011923642143>

8) Click on the face book website This will bring you to an image of the outside of the front of First Lutheran Church.

9) Scroll down and underneath the picture you will see an image of the sanctuary with the symbol of a triangle (play button) in the middle of the picture.

10) Click on the play button and the service will start to play.

Dear First Lutheran Family,

I am happy to say that February is our last payment to Nicollela's for their work on our roof. If we continue to receive our monthly offering, we may be able to increase our monthly payments to repay our loan and get it paid off sooner rather than later. Please continue your generous support for First Lutheran Church so that we can pay our monthly expenses and get this loan paid.

Church Council is happy to have a new member, Scott Berry. We look forward to working with him.

Our Christmas Card tree/ donations have gone to Bethesda Youth Residence towards a new window. We were able to donate \$ 250.00.

Now that we have started the new year, do not forget to support our girls in Ethiopia. Supporting them means that we continue to care for others in this time of need. With your generous donations last year, we were able to send our support every month.

Church Council has moved forward with getting a new sound system for our sanctuary. We have made the first payment so that Hearcorp can order the equipment needed. As of this writing, they are scheduled to start work soon. Pastor Grewe is extremely happy, especially since our current sound system has been acting up for several Sundays.

Many of you watch our Sunday services online and we are happy that we are able to post them for you to watch. Please be patient. We have had some issues with the wifi and when that happens, we cannot do Live Stream. We still record the service, but it must be compressed and uploaded to our Facebook page later that day or on Monday. We get it posted for you as soon as possible when this happens.

Yours in Christ,

Jennifer Black, FLC Council President



WNALC

EACH DAY IS A GIFT FROM GOD

He has given us morning,
brightness, and sun,
Laughter to share,
and work to be done.

He has given us rainbows,
flowers, and song,
And the hands of our dear ones
To help us along.

He has given us prayer
with its wonderful power
To lighten our hearts
In a troublesome hour.

He has given us blessings
to brighten our way
and always—the gift
of another new day.

Feb. Lay Readers

- 7 Dennis Schmidt
- 14 Sonie Rea
- 21 Kimberly Grewe
- 28 Kris Briggs

Feb. Altar Flowers

- 7 Bob & Anneliese
- 14 Joe & Judy Sarver
- 21
- 28

Feb. Acolytes

- 7 Collin Berry and Cole Johnson
- 14 Maria Sobocinski and Heidi Walsh
- 17 Cole Johnson and Elijah Clark
- 21 Lillah Clark and Elijah Clark
- 28 Bryce Berry and Lyndsay Berry

Feb. Ushers

- 7 J. Hoffer; C. Krcil; R. Williams; N. & L. Williams
- 14 S. Ringer; D. Schmidt; Z. Mason; M. Verderber
- 21 T. Bernhart; E. Goga; R. Johnson; J. Ulanich
- 28 R. Phillips; J. Sakerka; D. Wheeler

Feb. Counters—Alternate, Rick Williams

- 7 H. Quedenfeld and Larry Sten
- 14 K. Luketich and Sonie Rea
- 21 C. Group and Vickie Group
- 28 S. Berry and Linda Coleman

Feb. Altar Team

Sonie Rea

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Robert Gosnell
- 4 Alissa Hixson
- 5 Patricia Platts
- 6 Dr. Angelica Houston
- 10 Brice Berry
- 15 Robert Fritz
- 17 Alan Sten
Debbie Hoffer
- 20 Billie Sue Serbak
Sharon Maust
- 21 Michelle Williams
- 24 Ann Christian
- 25 Sandra Rea
- 28 Donald McWreath IV