

River of Life Lutheran Church

Chugiak, Alaska

"Ripples" Monthly Newsletter November 2021

Our Purpose Statement: We are a community of faith called to - glorify God - grow in faith and love, and - go into the world with the life-changing message of Jesus Christ.

From the Pastor's Desk...

“Do you see what this means—all these pioneers who blazed the way, all these veterans cheering us on? It means we’d better get on with it. Strip down, start running—and never quit! No extra spiritual fat, no parasitic sins. Keep your eyes on Jesus, who both began and finished this race we’re in. Study how he did it. Because he never lost sight of where he was headed—that exhilarating finish in and with God—he could put up with anything along the way: Cross, shame, whatever. And now he’s there, in the place of honor, right alongside God. When you find yourselves flagging in your faith, go over that story again, item by item, that long litany of hostility he plowed through. That will shoot adrenaline into your souls!” (Hebrew 12:1-3, The Message)

November is of course the month of Thanksgiving. The month to give thanks!! I have spent a lot of time considering what it means to give thanks to God. Of what it means to live with a thankful heart! A thankful heart that goes beyond a holiday and grows into an everyday gratitude!

On the one hand, truly living a life of gratitude is not an easy task. However, on the other hand, living a life of gratitude is not complicated either. After all, as the writer of Hebrews reminds us in the above Bible passage, Jesus “*put up with anything along the way: Cross, shame, whatever.*” And because He was willing to do this for us, we have a lot to be grateful for! It’s as simple as making a conscience choice every day to ask ourselves, “As I review this day, what am I grateful for?”

Part of the tradition in the church is to give thanks in November for those who have passed before us. We call it All Saints Sunday. It falls on Sunday, November 7th. November is chosen as the time to do this on purpose. November marks the end of harvest and the time when creation is entering into a time of dormancy and rest. The nights are getting longer, and the days gloomier. Of course, this happens earlier for us in Alaska! So, November is not only a time of Thanksgiving but also a time in which we are

reminded of the frailty of life, and the way our lives, like nature, go through seasons. The challenge is to “put up with anything along the way” – and still be grateful in every moment.

This year I am pondering the saints that have gone before us. People that have showed me what it means to live a faithful life as a child of God. I would encourage you to do the same. Consciously name people in your life that have made a difference to you in your faith journey. May November mark the beginning of a daily practice of giving thanks to God, who is gracious, merciful, and abounding in steadfast love!

Peace,
-Pastor Ottum

Sunday Worship Service

We worship at 11:00a.m.
in the downstairs fellowship hall of
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
18444 Old Glenn Hwy., Chugiak, AK

Drive around to the right side of the church and park in the lower parking lot. Enter through the kitchen door! You're welcome to bring your own seat cushion!

November Upcoming Events

You're welcome to join us each Sunday before worship for Adult Bible Study at 10:15. For the month of November we will be studying the book of Genesis.

- **Sunday, Nov. 7** – 11:00am – All Saints (Lighting of candles to honor those who have preceded us in the faith)
- **Tuesday, Nov. 9** – 6:30pm – Church Council Meeting
- **Saturday, Nov. 13** – 10:00am-4:00pm – Holiday Craft Bazaar
- **Wednesday, Nov. 24** – 7:00pm – Thanksgiving Eve Worship/ Pie Social
- **Sunday, Nov. 28** – 11:00am – First Sunday in Advent. We will set up and decorate the Christmas tree at noon after worship. Please join us!

** REMINDER: Annual Reports are due in December!

Thanks be to God - We have started construction!

The foundation was laid a few weeks ago, and the stem walls were poured on Friday, October 29th. The plan is to continue the construction throughout the winter. Drive by the site and take a look. If you take pictures, send them to the church office email: roladmin@mtaonline.net.

River of Life Holiday Craft Bazaar next Saturday!

*Saturday, November 13th, 10:00am-4:00pm
in the fellowship hall at
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
on the Old Glenn Hwy.*

Join a committee? Why not the newly formed Building Committee!

You don't need expertise in building or contracting, just a love for God and a desire to help with our rebuilding! Meeting dates for the Building Committee are yet to be determined, but the intent is to meet after worship on Sundays for brief updates. The Committee will evaluate what items need to be ordered as construction goes forward, so that they will be available in a timely manner for the completion of the project. For more information please check with Council President Gerry Cronquist, or Pastor Ottum.

Noisy Offering

This quarter's "Noisy Offering" goes to the *Chugiak Eagle River Food Pantry*.

The *Noisy Offering* is the fourth Sunday of each month. Each quarter we collect for a different local community need.

Prayer Concerns and Celebrations

Our Congregation

We pray for the health and vitality of ROL's Ministry & Mission.

Family and Friends

We pray for continued healing, encouragement, and strength for: **Liam** (Cindy's nephew); **Bob Reupke**; **Stewart Mee**; Joel & Padi's friend **Jack** (cancer); **Gloria** (Elaine's Friend); family of Finis Sheldon (whom passed away); And we ask for healing and recovery for those who are facing surgery, or have had recent surgeries: **Amelia** (Linda H's friend); **Dee**; **Joel**; **Bill** and **Terry**.

Prayer Partners

We pray for the health and vitality of the ministry of our other Knik Cluster congregations and their pastors (**Joy, Eagle River; Trinity, Palmer; Good Shepherd, Wasilla; Table of Grace, Bethel**), and our prayer partner for November – Trinity Lutheran Church in Palmer.

Compassion for Others in Our Community

Dear Father in heaven, Creator of what is good, beautiful, and full of joy, so that all may work in harmony with you - we thank you for all the good that comes to us. May we be your children, joined together to serve you. May our life bring joy to others, and may we do good without ceasing through your great, strong love, which moves us, strengthens us, and helps us every day, however hard life may be. May your name be praised throughout the world. May your kingdom come and your will be done on earth as in heaven. Amen.

Thank you, God, for the body of believers who are called to serve you, who are proclaiming the Good News to all who will hear. From those who minister across the country to the men, women, and youth here at home, send us out to be a light in the dark. Send us out to speak life, to extend grace and mercy, to feed the hungry, to befriend the lonely, and to find the lost. Open the doors of this church and fill it with the broken, the angry, the hurting. Let them find forgiveness and comfort here in the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Chugiak Eagle River Food Pantry

We accept food donations for the Chugiak Eagle River Food Pantry every Sunday. Please consider a donation of non-perishable food to benefit our local community. We will deliver our food offerings each month to the Food Pantry. Thank you!

November Birthdays

21 - Carol Baker

28 - Bob Norton

28 - MaryAnn Hartzog

30 - Krin Kemppainen

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