

Weekly Newsletter from Fr. Ryan & St. Luke's:

September 16, 2020

1) From the diocese:

“Please join us in lifting up Fr. Sam Vongsanit and the congregation of St. Martin's, Fresno in prayer. Last night their church burnt down. The cause of the fire is not immediately known but the police are investigating.

Almighty God, by your Word you laid the foundations of the earth, set the bounds of the sea, and still the wind and waves. Surround the people of St. Martin's with your grace and peace, and preserve them as they recover from this fire. By your Spirit, lift up those who have fallen, strengthen those who work to rebuild, and fill them with the hope of your new creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”

2) Please continue praying for all those effected by the wildfires, including for the safety of those fighting the fires, those whose lives and homes are at risk, and those effected by the air quality. Pray especially for Linda Herlitz's daughter and her family, who had to evacuate, and for the bishop's son Sebastian, who is fighting the fires.

3) As of today's forecast (for both temperature and air quality) we are looking forward to our first outdoor service on Sunday! Please check your email or the church's website or facebook page as we near Sunday for updates in case there of rain, extreme heat, or a change in the air quality due to fires.

The plan is to hold service at our normal time (10am) in the courtyard between the office building, church, and fellowship hall. Folding chairs will be provided, but you are also welcome to bring your own chair or cushion. Masks are required for entering and leaving, but those with difficulty breathing through a mask may remove them while they are seated. Each seat must be at least six feet from others, except those you live with.

Please be ready to be flexible, as this will be a work in progress! I will also be working to keep the service under an hour. Communion will be provided, with the host (bread) only. You will need to wear a mask while I give you the host, and please carry the host back to your seat. You can remove your mask and consume the host as soon as you are safely seated.

4) For those who cannot attend the outdoor service, the online service will still be released on Sunday morning, and “drive up communion” will still be provided from 11:30-12:30. While the online service is “officially” at 10am, a couple of parishioners have requested that they be able to view it earlier on Sunday morning, so I am not arranging for it to post by 8am. If you need it earlier than that, please let me know. You can also watch the service any time after that.

5) Sharon Graham is continuing to recover from the West Nile virus. She is not currently taking visitors but appreciates your prayers and notes. We have the happy announcement of the birth of her grandson. Kash Thomas Weger was born to Francesca on Tuesday, September 15.

6) If you have any announcements about major life events, I would love to share them in this weekly newsletter. Please send them by Tuesday afternoon, and I will include them in my Wednesday email.

7) Ben & Jill Elms offer heartfelt thanksgivings to St. Luke's. As I shared previously, they recently adopted their daughter Hanna. However, while they were waiting a long time for a girl to adopt, they were required to pay \$20,000.00 on short notice for all of the legal and administrative fees associated with the adoption. They are in the process of fundraising to meet this need. St. Luke's members have donated \$1000.00 to that need through the church, so far. Juliet and I had the honor of giving them the check yesterday.

8) Sermon Notes: I have attached a document for those of you who would like to engage with the sermons more. Especially for those of you who will continue to watch online, this can be a helpful way to get more out of the preaching, both for understanding and for your own personal application. This "notes" document is also part of larger document I've created for a "Sermon Feedback Team." The document I am sharing with this email is for everyone, and you can use it however you like. For the feedback team, there are additional questions to offer me feedback. For example, the notes for everyone ask you to give a short summary of the message in 1-3 sentences (this helps you think through the message and remember it). The feedback team will then answer questions, "how clearly was that message communicated?"

The feedback team will have rotating membership. If you would like to serve on it in the future, please let me know!

9) Finally, a reminder about our new prayer list and email. Requests can be sent to: praystlukes@gmail.com. I will be the only person who reads the requests initially, and I will keep them confidential if you ask me to. However, if you do not ask for something else, I will send the prayer request to all church members who ask to be on the prayer list. If you give me permission, I can also share your prayer requests in this weekly newsletter.

We only started this last week, and so far we have 4 people who have committed to praying. I would like to add many more.

Please remember that our Sisters in Prayer is a special ministry of prayer. You can be a member of the Sisters and also on the prayer list (I strongly encourage that).

Blessing,

Fr. Ryan