

# Wooden Cross Newsletter

July, 2023

WOODEN CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA

We are disciples of Jesus, connecting with God, growing in faith and friendship,  
who go to invite and serve that all will know and follow Jesus.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

### God's Word is not Comfortable Christianity

Dearest friends,

Ezekiel 33:6 says this: *But if the sentinel sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet, so that the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes any of them, they are taken away in their iniquity, but their blood I will require at the sentinel's hand.*

So by God's call and in keeping with God's mercy,  
**I blow...**

There is a virus that has infected much of Christianity in our day. It has to be with "who" will be listened to... who will arbitrate truth ultimately in our lives. Will it be Jesus... or will it be ourselves and the voice of our own perceptions. Before dismissing me too quickly... read on.

I recently was thinking about a passage that I'd expect you too have read previously. It comes from the gospel of Matthew, where we hear Jesus say, *"Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road is easy that leads to destruction, and there are many who take it. For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it."* (Matthew 7:13-14)

Let me ask you a couple questions to ponder and I'd encourage you not to answer them too quickly, even should the answers you come to prove discomfiting.

When you reflect upon the "gate" to God... is it "wide" or is it "narrow?" When you reflect upon the road people travel is it one that is "wide" or "narrow" and where ultimately does the "wide road" seem to lead... towards "destruction" or towards "life?" Think of some of the common messages of our culture...

A WORD  
FROM THE  
PASTOR

"I'm ok, you're ok..."

"You do you..."

"As long as no one gets hurt, what's the problem?"

"Who's to judge..."

"Live with no regrets..."

What trajectory do you perceive these pointing towards? I perceive these near universally pointing towards ways of life of maximum "permissibility" with few, if any real boundaries... what do you see? Should these messages become a frame for living? Are these messages that would direct you toward a life bounded within a will "greater" than yourself, or are they encouragements to live with no greater authority than your own desires? Are these expressions of a "wide" or "narrow" way to live?

Now let's take a look at some phenomena that have been marking Western Christianity (largely witnessed in Europe and America) for several decades.

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July Calendar

Insert





- Natasha Carlson .....President
- Blaine Wastell .....Vice President
- Peggy Reiber .....Secretary/Treasurer
- Sally Simpson..... Council Member
- Chantal Carlson ..... Council Member
- Dave Hutchinson ..... Council Member
- Jone Vrhel..... Council Member

**WEDNESDAY MORNING  
BIBLE STUDY**



God calls us to grow in faith. Members and friends are invited to grow in their relationships with God. A book of the Bible is selected to read and study together over several weeks to give it full exploration.

On **Wednesday mornings beginning at 10:00 AM** Pr. Eric will lead **Adult Bible Study** (in-person and online via Zoom). You are welcome to join us! Bring a willing heart. We will till the soil. God brings the growth.

**PASTORAL CARE**

If you or your family have any health concerns needing prayer, or a pastoral contact or visit, please call or email the church office. Thank you.



**2023 Stewardship**



*Let's accept our freedom to give generously, and our responsibility to be good stewards of all God's gifts.*

**2023 Local Giving Budget**

**Weekly Average Goal: \$4,649**

<b>MAY</b>	Week 1:	\$2,978	
	Week 2:	\$5,353	
	Week 3:	\$1,593	
	Week 4:	<u>\$1,756</u>	
		<b>\$11,680</b>	
	<b>Weekly Average:</b>		<b>\$2,920</b>
<b>JUN</b>	Week 1:	\$3,583	
	Week 2:	\$2,500	
	Week 3:	<u>\$3,360</u>	
		<b>\$9,443</b>	
	<b>Weekly Average:</b>		<b>\$3,148</b>

**Thank you!**



**WOODEN CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH**

17401 198th Avenue NE  
Woodinville, Washington 98077  
(corner of 198th and Woodinville/Duvall Road)

**Sunday Worship ..... 10:00 AM**

**Church ..... 425-788-3626**

Church Office Hours ..... MON-THU, 7:30 AM—3:00 PM

Church Email ..... [woodencrosslc@gmail.com](mailto:woodencrosslc@gmail.com)

Website ..... [www.WeAreWoodenCross.org](http://www.WeAreWoodenCross.org)

**Pastor Office Hours ..... T-Th: 9:30 AM—2:30 PM; Fri. by Appointment**

**Pastor Email ..... revericg@hotmail.com**

Pastor ..... Eric Griffith

Secretary / Bookkeeper ..... Kathy Corneloup

Organist / Interim Music Director ..... Seung Lee

Special Music ..... Ensemble Musicians

Altar Guild ..... Sally Simpson

**PASTOR'S MESSAGE***(continued from page 1)*

If a pastor/priest teaches or preaches a message that could be understood as pro-life, pro-marriage, pro-traditional sexuality/sexual expression would this get heard as matters “rightly” belonging to the realms of faith, or are these ideas nothing but “politics” and “right-wing” at that?

How many of us have friends or children that have departed churches or even faith itself because it's “too restrictive?” How many of those reading this even now, have contemplated departure for this reason at some point in their faith journey?

Do we grow anxious with messages from pastors / priests that hold Jesus up as “the” way to God to the exclusion of any other more broadly defined “way?”

Are we more comfortable with a teaching on “Radical Inclusion” than with one in which Jesus “Saves Sinners?” Which of these gets the name “gospel” in our modern conversations?

Would you tend to agree or disagree with a statement of: “I think most religious people largely are trying to get to the same place and worshiping the same God.”

If Scripture's word should contrast with something expressed in our culture as “just, right, or better,” which is more likely to be defended or upheld amongst Christian persons in your experience? (for good insight into the issue... Who are the caricatured or derided? Who are upheld as “enlightened” or “informed?”)

Friends, as I reflect upon these questions both cultural and related to faith, what I see is a fairly pervasive movement where Jesus' words (and by extension also God's Word) are being repudiated and rebuked with practices (our “living theology”) that prefer ideas that dismiss Jesus as either “wrong” or worse, a “liar.”

From pulpits, from church publications, from church websites across multiple denominational bodies the “way” to God is being declared in “broader and wider” terms to the point that many “post-Christians” wonder if being part of faith had any significant value with boundaries too restrictive, “detriments” to God's new ways of being with people today.

This “virus” infects us as it is simply another form of the age-old sin rooted in rejecting God as our authority, rule, and norm of life. The resultant infection manifests itself firstly as individuals and then subsequently as a church, that today “knows better” and proclaims God in ways inconsistent with Scripture itself. This false “gospel” results in running further down a wide, broad path towards not only our own destruction, but also contributes to the destruction of those God calls us to love and in whose service we have been called to become “laborers” in God's “harvest” (Matthew 9:37).

Our Baptism links us into Christ's narrow way of death to sin. It is a sign of a promise that God is ever working to bring us along that path to life. Our faith is to wholeheartedly trust that he is our friend and ally in living this “death to sin” that is our suffering throughout this life until the day God brings the promise to completion on our Last Day.

Every day is a struggle to live in the “narrow way” of life, yet we are not alone in the struggle, for God has promised us his Holy Spirit to be our help, teacher, and source of faith. We do not walk with God by falsely broadening the path that is of God's creation... We walk by returning to the foundation of our faith in Christ and rely upon him to be our guide, our way, our truth and our life.. Knowing that in Him we have been imparted forgiveness of our sin for His sake!

Is there a “wide” path to God, or is Jesus to be trusted at his word? Who will you listen to? Will it be a voice that whispers sweet seductions to blaspheme God's goodness and trust one's own thinking as one falls further from God, OR the voice of the Good Shepherd whose voice is calling you onto a narrow road of life?

There is no third option according to Scripture. The voice of Jesus ever calls you home... Have faith in him, for in faith in Jesus, God declares you righteous. Jesus is to be trusted. His are the words of eternal life... and perhaps it is time we stop inventing our own, for these will never be anything more than false hope. In Jesus alone you have life... His narrow road leads you home!

Peace

revEric

**NEW PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE!**

New and experienced musicians are invited and encouraged to be a part of the new Wooden Cross Percussion Ensemble. The music will be upbeat and lively!



We are having a **Percussion Jam Session** on **Thursday, August 10 at 7:00 PM** to have fun trying out different instruments and playing some music together. If you are interested in playing handbells, chimes, drums, etc. in this upcoming jam session, please contact **Jone Vrhel** at **425-205-1636**. Rehearsals following the jam session will be on **Thursdays** from **4:00-5:00 PM**, beginning August 17.

Come and join us, and enrich our music ministry during Sunday worship!

**SUMMER MUSIC**

Wooden Cross members and friends are inviting to share their talents as musicians, vocalists and performers during the worship services throughout the Summer months, beginning in mid-May.



If you play an instrument, sing or dance, please sign up on the narthex table. Both soloists and groups are welcomed and encouraged.

**WOODEN CROSS LIVESTREAM CHANNEL**

Wooden Cross church services are now available on a YouTube LiveStream Channel. You can now watch our Sunday morning worship services online, as well as see any of the previous broadcasted services. Visit us at our church website—**WeAreWoodenCross.org**, and click on the streaming link. Be sure to “subscribe” to receive ongoing notifications of



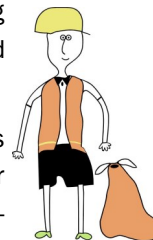
upcoming streams, as well as access to archived services that you missed or have chosen to watch later.

Through this technology we are able to expand our ministry anywhere in the world and let people learn more about us and our ministry as we Connect, Grow in faith, and Serve in our communities, following Jesus and helping others do the same!

**ADOPT-A-ROAD CLEAN-UP**

After a three-year hiatus, King County restarted their Adopt-a-Road Program at on June 2.

Wooden Cross members and friends have the opportunity to clean up our two-mile adopted stretch of Woodinville-Duvall Road on **Sunday, July 9**.



If you'd like to help with the clean-up, please sign up in the narthex, and complete an Individual Participant Release Form (required annually by King County). We will meet in the church parking lot at **1:00 PM**.

Keeping our adopted road clean is another way Wooden Cross demonstrates caring for the community and the environment. Thank you for participating!

**QUILTER'S GROUP**

The **Wooden Cross Quilter's Group** continue to make beautiful quilts for Lutheran World Relief. You are invited to join us (see calendar on the bulletin board for Sunday and Thursday dates and times). Bring a sewing machine, or just come and help cut and assemble fabric. Come and reconnect with friends, or make new ones!



Wooden Cross July News, 2023

2023



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
2 9:00 Community Prayer 10:00 Worship Service	3 Staff Vacation Day. Office Closed  7:00p AA	4 <b>Independence Day!</b> Holiday. Office Closed.   INDEPENDENCE Day	5 10:00a Adult Bible Study  2:00p Uke Group	6   Adopt-a-Road Gear Pickup	7	8
9 9:00 Community Prayer 10:00 Worship Service 11:30-3:00 Quilting & Brown Bag Lunch 1:00-3:00p Adopt-A-Road Cleanup	10   7:00p AA	11   7-9 p Boy Scouts	12 10:00a Adult Bible Study  2:00p Uke Group	13   11:00-3:00 Quilters	14   15   Facility Use: Scout Pioneering Camping Overnight July 7, 10:00 AM—July 8, 4:30 PM	
16 9:00 Community Prayer 10:00 Worship Service  AUG NEWS Article Due!	17   7:00p AA	18   7-9 p Boy Scouts	19 10:00a Adult Bible Study  2:00p Uke Group	20	21	22
23 9:00 Community Prayer 10:00 Worship Service 11:30-3:00 Quilting & Brown Bag Lunch	24 Staff Vacation Day. Office Closed  7:00p AA	25   7-9 p Boy Scouts	26 No Bible Study  2:00p Uke Group	27   11:00-3:00 Quilters	28	29
Pastor on Vacation July 24—August 14						
30 9:00 Community Prayer 10:00 Worship Service Guest Preacher	31 Staff Vacation Day. Office Closed  7:00p AA					
Pastor on Vacation July 24—August 14						