

# Parkside Lutheran Church

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## From the Pastor

Greetings Church,

Have you ever been on a Zoom or conference call when everyone prays the Lord's Prayer together? Everyone starts at different times, the sound cuts in and out, and overall praying just seems harder. I have to close my eyes, my brow furrows, and I have to focus more than ever just to make it through the prayer. Lately, praying in general seems to be more challenging for me and not just on Zoom calls. Life is filled with distractions; COVID-19, economic challenges, tenuous political environment, concern for our actual environment, questions about school this fall, the future of our church, and did I mention COVID-19?

Has praying seemed harder for you lately? What are your distractions?

*"Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus.<sup>30</sup> But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!" Matthew 14:29-30*

Jesus walked on water towards the disciples and when Peter attempted the same he was overcome with fear. Anyone else feel like they are sinking? Anyone else afraid, exhausted, or just burned out? Maybe when the pandemic started you were attending Zoom coffee hours, or you were watching services on TV or YouTube but now... the motivation to invest time into spiritual practices is gone. Praying just seems harder. I want you to know that Peter sinking is not the key part of this story. We need to remember that Jesus grabs Peter's hand. Jesus actually walked towards the disciples before they even called out for help. Jesus did not need perfect prayers and Jesus does not require us to be perfect. We are instead offered his love and his presence even when we are tired, afraid, or distracted.

Knowing this I invite you to.... *(continues on next page)*

## Parkside Lutheran Church

Rediscovering the radical love of Jesus.

Gathering All.

Serving All.

Caring for All.

## Events:

Join us every Wednesday at 8pm for Digital Devotions or Parkside for Social Justice

Join us for Sunday Service at 10am on TV, YouTube or Facebook

Sun, Sept 13 & 20<sup>th</sup>  
God's Work Our Hands

Sat, Sept 19<sup>th</sup> 9am-1pm  
PARKSIDE SATURDAY  
at the Food Pantry

Tues, Sept 22<sup>nd</sup> – Burrito Project

**Indoor worship begins  
Sunday, October 4<sup>th</sup> !**

## Food Pantry Collection

Sept. - Canned Veggies

Oct. - Spaghetti Sauce

Nov. - Canned Soup/Chili

Dec. - Peanut Butter & Jelly

Paper items such as toilet tissue and paper towels are always needed.

Bring donations to the Food Pantry Saturdays 9am-1pm or contact office to arrange drop-off

***From the Pastor continued...***

- freely grieve the loss of the old normal and commit yourself to creating a better future for all.
- let go of guilt and shame for having a lapsed or sometimes absent faith/spiritual practice and instead find new ways to connect with the divine.
- give yourself permission to feel fear, joy, anger, frustration, and whatever other emotions are bubbling up inside you, all while acknowledging your emotions don't have to control your response nor prevent you from following Jesus.
- take a deep breath and love God, neighbor, and yourself.

In the coming months we will continue to explore new ways to be the church. We will continue to rediscover the radical love of Jesus. We will fall short, we will make mistakes, and it still might be hard to pray. Yet, through it all Jesus is always beside us. No matter how flawed our prayers, God will still be at work with and through us. I hope and pray you find new ways to connect with the Parkside Lutheran Community. More than anything I hope and pray you find your faith an asset in these challenging times. May you know the God in Christ is walking with you hand in hand.

God Bless,

*Pastor Jeremiah*

## **Council Report**

Greetings to all -

As we approach the end of the 'Summer of COVID', I hope you're all staying safe and healthy, and have found safe ways to connect with family and friends. While we can take comfort in the great strides New York State has made in controlling the virus, the impacts on our personal, professional, and academic lives can be difficult and even heartbreaking. Seeing the ministry of Parkside survive and even thrive during this time has really been a spiritual buoy for me.

The online/TV worship with St. Paul's and Zion is so popular and so widely supported that we plan to continue it at least through the end of 2020. Outdoor in-person worship began in July and we've been blessed with good weather almost every Sunday. Gathering in person has been wonderful ... I'm so happy to see (the top half of) many of your faces again!

A new committee formed this summer, Parkside for Social Justice, to discuss ways we can understand and confront injustice in our world and in ourselves. Church council continues to meet via Zoom, and we are currently finalizing a plan to safely resume worship in the sanctuary in the fall. On-going support for the Burrito Project, Meals on Wheels, North Buffalo Food Pantry, and our blessing box have allowed us to maintain these important outreach efforts. Volunteers continue to care for the building and grounds, and we just completed repair of 16 stained glass windows. An updated website was developed and is now 'live' to serve our membership and spread the news of our ministry to others. We are grateful for the support of members and new friends who mail their financial offerings to the church or give via Tithe.ly.

Thank you for being faithful, creative, and flexible! We are persevering and adapting and finding new ways to carry out Parkside's mission. We are still rediscovering the radical love of Jesus - gathering all, serving all, and caring for all.

Faithfully yours, Onda Simmons, Council President

Parkside Lutheran Church  
**COVID-19 Procedures for Return to Indoor Worship beginning Sunday, October 4<sup>th</sup>**

From the start, the Parkside Lutheran Church Worship Committee and Church Council want to make sure that no one feels pressured or shamed into attending in person worship. If you have health concerns, are elderly, or just don't feel safe, we encourage you to stay home and take advantage of our worship broadcast available online and on MeTV. *This plan is subject to change as science and circumstances develop.*

*“Where there is no guidance, a people falls,  
but in an abundance of counselors there is safety.”*

**Proverbs 11:14**

**Before you arrive for worship:**

-If you have a temperature, feel unwell, have been exposed to anyone with symptoms of COVID-19, or have recently traveled, we ask that you stay home.

-Know that masks will be required at all times inside the building. Anyone who removes their mask or lowers it below their nose will immediately be asked to return their mask to their face. Anyone who does not comply will be asked to leave.

-Worship will be shortened and last between 30 to 40 minutes. The restrooms will be available but we encourage you to use the bathroom before you arrive. At all times we ask folks to maintain six feet physical distance.

-Congregating in the narthex (Lobby) will not be permitted. If you wish to speak to someone, we ask that you meet with them outside of the building.

**What to expect when you arrive for worship:**

-The main doors will be marked enter and exit. When you enter there will be a sign in table. A volunteer will check you in. Per New York State contact tracing protocol, we need names and phone numbers for all who attend. At the sign in table you will find: hand sanitizer, offering basket, worship bulletins, wafers and wine for communion. (Gluten free and grape juice will also be available.)

-Once you enter the sanctuary you will notice that the aisles will be marked as one way. Everyone should enter via the main aisle and then exit by the side aisles. All of the pews will be marked with sections roped off so that everyone is seated physically distanced.

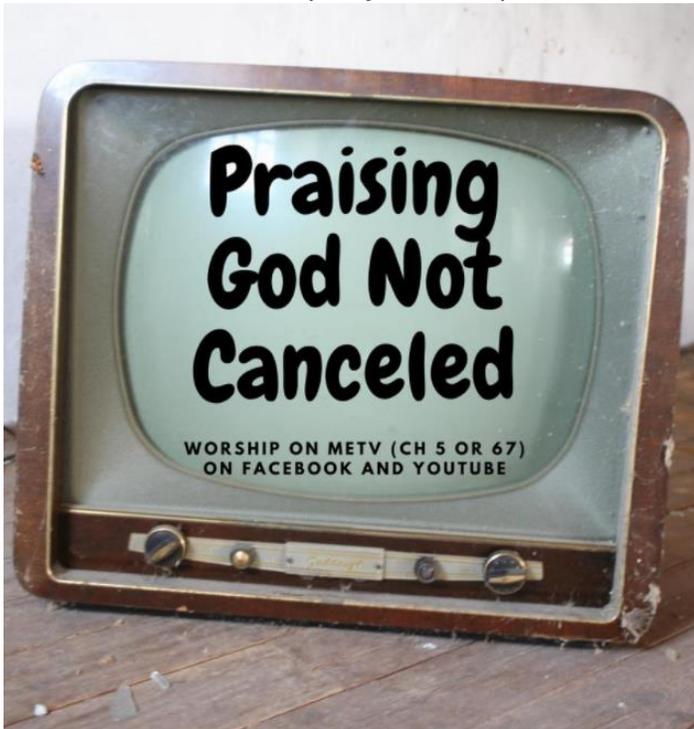
-At the conclusion of the service we will dismiss by aisle so as to avoid congestion in the narthex/lobby of the church.

-If you need to speak with Pastor Jeremiah he will stand outside after the service on days with good weather. On Sundays with poor weather he will stand in front of the sanctuary.

Does this seem strict or over the top? Great. We want to keep everyone safe and if that means we are mildly inconvenienced for the next year, until a vaccine is widely distributed, then that is what we owe to our neighbors.

Have ideas or see something we might have missed? Please contact me directly at [PrJeremiahPSmith@gmail.com](mailto:PrJeremiahPSmith@gmail.com) or by calling the church office.

Not able or ready to join us in person?



**Worship Sundays 10am on METV, Ch. 67 for DirecTV or Ch. 5 for Cable, Fios, Dish Or, watch on Facebook or YouTube**

Tune in Sundays at 10am for service with Parkside's Pastor Jeremiah and our partners from St. Paul's and Zion LC. We've worked with a small crew to film a brief worship service. Please watch and give us feedback for how to improve future services.

Watch on FB

<https://www.facebook.com/ParksideLutheranBuffalo/>

(You will be able to click on the video 3minutes before 10am and we will all be in a virtual waiting room together!)

Or watch on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/user/ParksideLutheran>



### **Does finding God seem like looking for a Needle in a Hay Stack?**

Join us Wednesdays at 8pm for Digital Devotions: A 30 minute Bible Study on Zoom, starting date TBA, Let's make it a little easier to see God at work in our own lives. *(Zoom info is on page 8)*

**Have you checked out our new website Parksidelutheran.org?**



**Please check it out and let us know what you think!**





**Parkside For Social Justice** – Our congregation has a group of folks committed to working for justice for all. At this time, they are especially focused on Racial Justice. Each month they will share a definition, a resource, and share a time for discussion (look in our weekly emails for details). All are encouraged to sign the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America’s Anti-Racism Pledge found here: <https://www.elca.org/racialjusticepledge>.

**Institutionalized racism:** The systematic distribution of resources, power, and opportunity in our society to the benefit of people who are white and exclusion of people of color.

Though institutions such as slavery, Native American displacement, internment camps, and segregation no longer exist, their effects still live on. We see this when we look at the differences in statistics for minorities.

- The COVID-19 death rate per 100,000 people by race is over 60% for people who are Black compared to under 30% for people who are White.
- The median net worth for White families is \$146,984 whereas for Black families it’s \$3,557. This divide has only worsened in the last 3 decades. In 1983 the average net worth of White families was \$110,160 whereas for Black families it was \$7,323.
- As of 2016 \$15.5% of White families have 0 or negative net worth compared to 37% of Black families.
- Despite Blacks and Latinos making up 44.1% of the U.S. population they make up less than 3% of fortune 500 CEO.
- Black youth represent 15% of all U.S. children, but made up 35% of juvenile arrests in 2016.
- Black college graduates face significantly more student loan debt (\$22,303) than White graduates (\$17,753) an associate’s degree

These are only a small sampling of the troubling statistics out there on racial disparity when it comes to economics, health, education, and criminal justice. As people of faith, we are called not to overlook injustice. Looking at these statistics it is clear that in the USA, we are not all on an equal playing field. Without significant policy changes to address institutional racism, these disparities will only continue to grow. This is evidenced by the widening gap between the net worth of White families vs. Black families. I encourage all of Parkside to familiarize themselves with these statistics and learn more about policy changes that can fight against these injustices.

Sources: <https://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/institutionalracism.pdf>  
<https://inequality.org/facts/racial-inequality/>  
<https://www.sentencingproject.org/publications/un-report-on-racial-disparities/>

**Resource:** So You Want to Talk About Race, By: Ijeoma Oluo

This book serves as great starting place to learn how to discuss sensitive topics surrounding race. Talking about these issues can be intimidating, as we are often afraid that we will say the wrong thing and offend someone. Unfortunately, our fear of messing up can stop us (or at least it can stop me) from speaking up even when it is the right thing to do. In the end, our silence is almost always worse than trying and accidentally saying the wrong thing. This book gives permission for mistakes, while providing tips and tricks to avoid them. It is a must read for anyone wanting to go a little deeper into these conversations, instead of letting the moment pass you by.

**Have a suggested resource or question about this initiative?**  
Contact Pastor Jeremiah or Alison Smith [alisonmsmith07@gmail.com](mailto:alisonmsmith07@gmail.com)



EVERY 4TH TUESDAY EVENING

# BUFFALO BURRITO PROJECT

EACH MONTH WE MAKE AND DISTRIBUTE  
100 BURRITOS TO HUNGRY FOLKS  
IN DOWNTOWN BUFFALO.  
THIS MAY BE THEIR ONLY MEAL ALL DAY.  
WILL YOU HELP?

**We need 6 volunteers each month**  
Sharing is caring!

PLEASE CONTACT PASTOR JEREMIAH  
IF YOU CAN HELP  
PRJEREMIAHPSMITH@GMAIL.COM



## God's Work, Our Hands – September 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>

We need *many* volunteers Sunday, September 20<sup>th</sup>, after service, to help pick up bags of food donations from our Parkside neighbors.

**We need your help! Many hands make light work.**

If you can help on September 20<sup>th</sup>, please contact Kris in the office: (716)836-1361 or email [parksidelutheran@gmail.com](mailto:parksidelutheran@gmail.com)

*All food donations go to North Buffalo Food Pantry  
at Parkside Lutheran Church*

**In addition to housing the North Buffalo Food Pantry, at Parkside Lutheran Church, we have a mini food pantry we call the “Blessing Box”. It can be found on the Depew side of the church.**

We welcome your contributions of nonperishable foods and toilet paper! You can put them right into the box or contact the office to arrange for drop off. We have folks stopping by daily to pick up a few items to tide them over during these difficult times. Thank you for helping to keep it well stocked!





## Did you know?

### Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday is Parkside Saturday at the North Buffalo Food Pantry.

We are always on the lookout for folks to help distribute food to families.

Please contact the office if you can help.

Shifts are 9-12 or 10-1pm.

We wear masks & socially distance.

## Have you ever wondered...what is a memorial gift?

Often times when you read a notice of death or an obituary you might see the phrase “in lieu of flowers donation may be made to...” Folks will then pick a cause near and dear to their hearts. We are blessed that many folks choose to honor their time at Parkside Lutheran by selecting us as the recipient. Friends and families then make a gift in honor of the deceased.

Here at Parkside we keep track of all the gifts and provide the names of those who donated to the deceased’s loved ones. However, we go one step further. We share the total amount of memorial gifts received and ask if there is a particular project or ministry they would like to support. Families often like having a tangible reminder, so gifts might go towards a new banner or equipment. Other ways to honor a loved one could be supplies for the food pantry or paid soloists for a special worship service. Pictured is the newly constructed Hazel Dodson memorial garden. Onda had heard that Parkside needed some new landscaping, so she and her sisters elected that memorial gifts received in honor of their mother would support this project. We give thanks for everyone’s generosity and we give thanks for all the saints whose legacy lives on in this community.

If you would like to make a memorial gift in honor of a loved one or if you would like to leave a legacy gift to Parkside Lutheran Church please contact the church office or Pastor Jeremiah.

*A memorial gift brought to life. Hazel Dodson Memorial Garden before and after:*



*From overgrown, damaged bushes to fresh greenery and flowers for pollinators*



### Excerpts from September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020 letter from ELCA Bishop John S. Macholz

I have a confession to make. I fear that I may be growing numb to the mounting number of deaths of our black and brown sisters and brothers in the streets of cities as well as the quiet of bedrooms; Daniel Prude being the latest. Daniel's death, which happened six months ago on the streets of Rochester, NY, and was only revealed yesterday, was ruled a homicide by asphyxiation at the hands of the police. I cannot grow numb. We cannot grow numb. Rather we must grow in numbers.

We must grow in the number

- ⊕ of people who speak out against the unending list of lives needlessly and tragically taken.
- ⊕ of individuals who speak up on behalf of those whose voices are being ignored
- ⊕ of churches whose ministry is involved in fighting this evil and recognized as such in our communities
- ⊕ of voices raised to say justice delayed is justice denied
- ⊕ of those who find ways to support our black and brown sisters and brothers
- ⊕ of those who, called to preach the Gospel and speak out against hatred and racism, do so with courage and conviction
- ⊕ of people who not only pray for an end to this but find a way to work toward that end
- ⊕ of communities of faith that commit to taking on the necessity of the hard conversations around systemic racism in all aspects of our lives

We have work to do people of God. We need to talk about this. We need to confront this head on. We need to say enough is enough. We need to dig deep and find the stamina and energy and patience to fight the fight that is taking place. It will be a battle, no, it is a battle. But it is a battle worth waging.

*For the complete letter, please see our latest e-newsletter or visit [upstatenynsynod.org](http://upstatenynsynod.org)*

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"For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." *Matthew 18:20*

## JOIN US ON ZOOM – ALL are welcome!

Use the Zoom link to join us at 8pm on Wednesday evenings for Digital Devotions or Parkside for Social Justice.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/7168361361?pwd=b3pxamRnN09UbGNuVXg2MUhOM1JtUT09>

Meeting ID: 716 836 1361

or, if connecting by phone, dial by your location

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York) Meeting ID: 716 836 1361

Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/ab2v1ql9Ui>

**Best Practices:** Zoom Works best on a computer with a camera. However, there is a zoom Application for Smart phones that works well. Please use head phones if you have them and Mute yourself when you're not speaking. This helps improve the sound for everyone.



## A note from Becky Amann

During this difficult time, many individuals and families have donated their time or money to help those less fortunate than us or to worthy causes. What if we challenged others to do the same?

I am proud and very blessed to work for a company, *Practicefirst*, that has recently made donations to organizations doing good work in our community.

For those of you that are working, would you consider challenging your employer to make donations? Perhaps your employer is willing to match your donation to a worthy cause!

Just imagine the difference we could make if we could persuade others to be generous too.

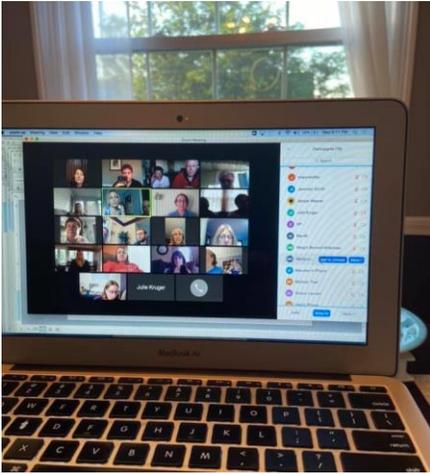
*(Left) Buffalo Burrito Project handed out over 100 burritos, granola, water, and socks. We were critically low on volunteers but Nathan, Chris, Adam, and Sharon (np) saved the day! Thanks to @stpaulseggertsville and @zionnoiz9535 for helping out 8/25. The need is greater than ever. We are church together!*

*(Center) Pastor Miranda & daughter help out with outdoor worship 8/16. (Right) Pastor in the (fire) house! 8/4.*



*(Left) Thank you to @stpaulseggertsville and the Amherst Tiger's den food pantry for passing on some donations. Our pantries work together so that when one has extra items, we pass it on to the other. On 8/1, that meant Parkside was the recipient of several boxes of fresh produce and several dozen loaves of bread from Panera. Teamwork helps strive for a world closer to God's dream. (Center) We said goodbye to many beautiful souls this year, including Pastor Emeritus, Rev. John Buerk. (Right) Filming 6/27 Service from Lake Chautauqua LC.*





**THANK YOU TO ALL WHO TOOK PART IN OUR SUNDAY "COFFEE HOURS" &/OR WEDNESDAY DEVOTIONS**

WE CAME - IN OUR NEED - AND FOUND COMFORT AND SUPPORT.  
WE CAME - IN OUR WEAKNESS -AND FOUND OUR STRENGTH, TOGETHER.  
WE CAME - IN OUR SEPARATENESS - AND FOUND COMMUNITY.  
SO AS WE CONTINUE OUR JOURNEY, MAY THE BLESSINGS OF GOD:  
FATHER, SON AND HOLY SPIRIT REST AND ABIDE WITH US ALL.

YOUR SIBLING IN CHRIST,  
JOAN BAUER

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Are you home-bound or would you appreciate a phone call or note from time to time from Parkside’s “Care Team”? Do you know of someone who should be added to the Care List and/or the Prayer List? If so, please contact Kris in the office (716)836-1361 or email [parksidelutheran@gmail.com](mailto:parksidelutheran@gmail.com)  
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We are so grateful to those who have helped sustain our mission through their continued financial offerings via Tithe.ly and by mail. If you want to check out Tithe.ly, now is a great time to give online.

***Unrestricted gifts are most appreciated at this time!***

Link: <https://tithe.ly/give?c=912288> or click on the link on our website [parksidelutheran.org](http://parksidelutheran.org)



**Church office**  
**(716)836-1361**  
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[parksidelutheran@gmail.com](mailto:parksidelutheran@gmail.com)  
**Pastor's email:**  
[prjeremiahpsmith@gmail.com](mailto:prjeremiahpsmith@gmail.com)  
**Mailing address:**  
Parkside Lutheran Church  
2 Wallace Ave, Buffalo, NY 14214

Please don't hesitate to reach out if you need anything at all. Leave a voice mail on the number below and Pastor will call you back.

Pastoral Emergency Number:  
716-939-1909

