



November 3, 2020

This week we will together decide about leaders in our country, including the highest elected office in our land. In baptism, we are set apart to “work for justice and peace.” Each of us has a role to play in peacemaking. Whether it be something as significant as following your conscience to cast a vote, or taking a deep breath and pausing before you hit “send” or “share” - we are called through baptism to be peacemakers.

If you have not made a plan to vote, I would encourage you to do so. If you are tempted to believe that your voice “doesn’t matter anyway”, re-think that with me for just a moment. Our faith exists in a democracy that functions best when we all participate. Just like church, citizenship is not a spectator sport. The word “liturgy” can be translated from the Greek to mean, “The work of the people.” Together we are one people, working for a better society. There is a call and response to this week and your response is an essential part.

Together we are called to discern a path forward that will give expression to the values we each hold dear. We will not all vote the same, but I trust we all hope for the same outcome: a steady and peaceful election where the voice of the majority is honored - even if that voice is different from our own preferences.

Which leads me to this: let's not think of this week in terms of "winning" or "losing." That is not helpful, nor does it help in the face of the reality that some of us will be fearful or hurting while some of us will feel more steady or peaceful after outcomes are shared. When the stakes are as high as they are now, we are all invested. If your candidate is elected, don't let hubris shape your life. If your candidate is not elected, don't let anger or despair shape your life. Give some thought to how signs or apparel with candidates name contribute to building up or breaking down unity in your life and in your neighborhood.

However the election turns out - whether we know Tuesday night, Wednesday morning, two weeks, or two months from now - stop and breathe. Does the outcome of the presidential election have anything to teach you - regardless of who is elected? Does God desire for this world, peace? Can God continue to call us forward no matter what? Is "care for the least of these" on your mind?

I woke up this morning with a passage on my mind from Colossians 3:12-17: "Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."

Put on these things: compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another. Our president is not God - just a servant of God. Our elected leaders are not God - just servants of God. We are not God either - just servants of God. Discern how you will respond to this week's news with prayer. Let your response be grounded in love. Act. Write. Fact check. Vote. But more than anything - Pray. Serve. Reflect Jesus in all you say and do. You are citizens of a higher kingdom, too.

Pr. Jenn

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## Immediate Needs During Covid Times

Because Saint Andrew is still up and running, there are some immediate needs that need to be met during this time. If you are able to fulfill some of these needs, please fill out [this form](#) and let us know how you can help. The Saint Andrew community has continued to show its strength during this time and SALC could not be more grateful for how God is working through the congregation at this time.

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## A Message from the Bishop

All Saints Day, November 1, is a beloved day in the Church Year calendar. On All Saints we celebrate the communion we share with people of faith both living and dead. Who are those saints? Well, they are you and me and many others. “See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are (1 John 3:1).”

This year we celebrate All Saints in the midst of a pandemic with record numbers of new cases being set weekly. Public health officials are telling us that even harder days lie ahead, that the numbers of people infected with Covid are likely to get much higher in the weeks and months to come.

I urge congregations to continue to hold worship online and to resist the temptation to return to in-person gatherings for worship and congregational activities. I know people long to be together in person to pray and commune, to support and care for one another. Meeting virtually certainly has its limits. But the risk is too great. Our God gives us the freedom in Jesus Christ to use our heads and take those steps that lower the risks of spreading the virus.

Dr. Michael Osterholm, University of Minnesota epidemiologist and Director of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Public Policy, says the virus is like a wildfire that will keep spreading. It may die down periodically. But until a vaccine is found the virus will continue to infect others unless people take steps to mitigate the spread. With the numbers rising to unacceptable levels in Wisconsin, we need to keep maintaining physical distance, wear masks, and wash hands.

Dear synod, we can do this. With the help of God we can get through these coming weeks and do our part to love and care for our neighbors. We are not alone. God is with us. God blesses us with God's own presence and gives us the gift of one another. We can encourage and care for one another in the midst of these difficult days.

All Saints is a reminder of the life we share and the life God gives. All Saints is a kind of Easter in November, a celebration of God's life and light at the very time when the leaves are falling, the air getting colder and the daylight hours growing shorter. God's gift is one of life over death, hope over despair, and love over bitterness and hatred.

There has been a lot of loss in this pandemic. Lives have been disrupted and hardships endured. We have all experienced the loss and been impacted in some way...in our churches and schools, homes and families, businesses and communities.

In the midst of this loss God comes with the comfort and assurance of God's love for us in Jesus Christ. All Saints gives us hope, encouragement and strength for the coming days. Revelation chapter 7 lifts up a beautiful vision and proclaims: "Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne and to the Lamb." The vision points to people in newly washed robes who have survived horrific times. They are seated before the throne and praising the Lamb when the writer says: "They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat; for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

Hang in there, dear people of God. We can do this—faithfully, lovingly, responsibly, with God's help, comfort and assurance.

Bishop Mansholt

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## **Worship Watch Parties**

We are starting something new! We know that worship feels different these days, especially watching at home alone. To help foster a sense of community, Faith Formation is hosting small group Worship Watch Parties on Sundays. Members are invited to watch a recording of the live stream worship in the Fellowship Hall. There are 10 seats available for both the 11:00 am and 1:00 pm viewing. You can sign up here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0A4BA9AF29A1FE3-worship1>

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## **Sunday Worship Now on Public Access TV**

Sunday morning worship is now being shared on the Wausau Public Access Channel (Charter/Spectrum 980) four times each week. Please note that the Sunday airing is the recorded worship from the prior Sunday. Days and times to watch worship are:

Tuesdays at 2:00 pm  
Thursdays at 10:30 am  
Fridays at 6:00 pm  
Sundays at 7:00 am

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**Plan to Gather Weekly**  
**Update: 11/3/2020**

For now, Saint Andrew remains in Phase One of the Plan to Gather. As soon as there is a consistent downward trend, we will move forward to Phase Two.

# SALC COVID-19 UPDATE

As of 10/28/2020

Date	Burden #	Trajectory	Burden Status
10/7	701.2	Increasing	Very High
10/14	1003.4	Increasing	Very High
10/21	1189.7	Increasing	Very High
10/28	1357.4	Increasing	Very High

**Current SALC Status: Phase One**

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