

To: The Members and Friends of Northminster

From: Bob Jordan, Lead Pastor



January 6, 2021

A Word from your pastor:

As I was preparing this week's update the news of a relatively small group of extremists rioting at our nation's Capital began to come across my social media accounts. On my TV I have now seen images of people breaking windows of the Capital building and committing acts of violence.

Within the pictures streaming into my living room there are protestors/rioters carrying signs invoking the name of Christ. This is not of God. Jesus does not serve the agenda of any political party of any nation. As Christians we are ambassadors of Christ's kingdom; we represent what is true and righteous in God's eyes. We serve and represent Jesus and his agenda.

As followers of Christ then, we stand for peace and peacemaking. We stand against injustice. Christ came announcing good news to the poor, liberty to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, and liberty to the oppressed. In no way did he teach that violence is the path to this liberty. His way was and is a way of peace and peacemaking, mercy and doing justice.

In our congregation we have members who support Mr. Trump and others who support Mr. Biden. Christians can and do come to different conclusions about particular political leaders and approaches to forming a just and fair society. But as Christians, no politician, no political agenda supplants the clear teaching of Christ.

Some might question why I haven't written on this topic earlier when people representing other political agendas were rioting. I've attempted to address our context in many of my sermons and other communications. I'm choosing now this format because a new, significant line has been breached, with people overtly invoking Jesus' name in support of their violent and destabilizing actions.

So as Christ followers, whether we call ourselves Republicans, Democrats or Independents, let's pray, let's speak up for those who have no voice, let's show mercy and compassion, let's stand against cruelty and racism and injustice, let's shine the light and love of Christ. These are the clear teachings of Jesus.

FIRST WORDS ...

What is your only comfort, in life and in death?

That I belong—body and soul, in life and in death—not to myself but to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ. At the cost of his own blood he has fully paid for all my sins and has completely freed me from the dominion of the devil. He protects me so well that without the will of my Father in heaven not a hair can fall from my head. Indeed, everything must fit his purpose for my salvation. Therefore, by his Holy Spirit, he also assures me of eternal life, and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for him.

Heidelberg Catechism Q/A 1

MARK THESE DATES ...

Jan 29-31 ECO's 2021 Virtual National Gathering

Our denomination's National Gathering this year will take place online, which means our whole congregation is invited to participate. For a list of speakers and times of presentations click [HERE](#). Registration is required and is free.

Feb 14 Annual Meeting of the Congregation

On Sunday, Feb 14 at 9:00am, we will meet as a congregation on Zoom to celebrate those who became Covenant Partners (members) in 2020, to remember those in our church family who died in the past 12 months, to elect a Covenant Partner to serve on our Nominating Team, and to ratify our 2021 budget.

Apr 4 Easter

We do not know, here at the beginning of the year, exactly what form our Easter celebration will take, but most assuredly we will celebrate! The tomb was empty; Jesus lives! Jesus saves! Jesus reigns!

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JOIN IN MINISTRY!

With multiple vaccines becoming available to more and more people it appears that sometime in 2021 social distancing will be relaxed and we'll enjoy engaging in more in-person activities and connections. Yet we don't have to wait to get involved. Ministry teams are already up and running throughout our congregation. We'll post opportunities for involvement in these Weekly Updates and in our Sunday Announcements. Feel free to let me know of any interests you have, and I'll be glad to get you connected.

BLESSINGS BAGS DISTRIBUTION

Lisa Lewis

A huge "Thank You" to everyone who donated supplies to create the Blessings Bags and to those who helped stuff them. Due to your generosity we were able to prepare 100 bags. Now that the weather has turned cold and snow has covered the area, it's time to put our Blessings Bags to work.

Due to the current COVID mitigations, we will be distributing the bulk of the bags thru area homeless shelters. However, we will also have some available if you would like to have a bag to carry in your car to give to someone you may encounter. If you'd like a bag, we will be distributing them on **Sunday, January 17th, 9-11 am**. Simply pull up to the front doors of NPC and someone will bring the bag out to you. Contactless delivery and a masked smile!

With many of us traveling similar routes in town, you might ask the recipient if he/she has previously received a bag. We want to bless as many people as possible.

With our goal to represent the love of Christ, let's be open and available not only to giving blessing bags but also to making connections with people. Consider exchanging first names and committing to praying for each other.

SPECIAL LEARNING CENTER REGISTRATION

There will be a special registration time for members of Northminster on January 29th. Information and registration paperwork is available through our [website](#). To speak to a staff member call 309.691.6322.

WHEN YOU OR OTHERS NEED HELP

If you or someone you know is suffering (e.g. tested Covid-positive, in need of resources, desires prayer, under quarantine, lonely, afraid, etc.), please contact [Pam Garner](#) (309.453.9928) or [Bob Jordan](#) (402.943.8218).