



Philadelphia
Lutheran
Ministries

Proclaiming Liberty in Christ in the City

NEWSLETTER | Christmas 2018

Jonah, Jesus, Jerusalem

by Rev Robert Kieselowsky
Executive Director

When you see the name Jonah, do you immediately think of a tree? Like most people, you probably imagine a great fish swallowing the prophet—but that whale does not get Jonah's attention the way a sapling does.

The reason Jonah ends up three days in the digestive juices of a great fish is fully revealed in chapter four of Jonah after God plants a tree, lets it grow shady leaves to comfort Jonah, and then takes it away. Jonah, upset that his shade has disappeared, whines and declares he wants to die. At God's rebuke, Jonah says that he had resisted God—running away only to be swallowed by a fish—because he knew the Lord would be a merciful, gracious and compassionate God. And Jonah did not like what that compassionate God would do.



Specifically, the compassion of God sends Jonah to call a violent people to repentance. In the ancient world, the people of Nineveh had developed a reputation of ISIS-like violence. While living in a sophisticated city, the people dominated the region with iron fists. Jonah does not embrace the change that might occur if the Ninevites turn to God and decides to work against the Lord's command. Even after every animal, person, and even the king himself dons sackcloth to repent, Jonah leaves the city and pouts.

God uses the tree to confront the prophet because Jonah has demonstrated more compassion for a plant than for the people of the city. God asks if He should not have compassion on thousands that "don't know their right from their left." Do any of us really know our right hand

from our left? Shall we not then have compassion on 1.5 million people of the city?

Jesus shows compassion for the masses in cities throughout His earthly ministry as well. He mourns over Jerusalem, "How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her



brood under her wings, and you were not willing!" (Luke 13:34) Later, He continues the lament by saying, "Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes" (Luke 19:42). Unlike the prophet Jonah, Christ desires that the people would repent and receive the mercy of God and so ascends the tree of the cross for their salvation.

As we celebrate our Lord's incarnation, we rejoice that He still has compassion on all those blind in their trespasses and sins, even in the heart of the city. He builds His church and remains faithful to His gospel presence in the city through our infant congregation. I rejoice that we will hold Christmas Day service for the second year in Center City. Christ has not forgotten His beloved saints and continues to show His mercy and lovingkindness to us.

I ask you to remember those living in darkness in Philadelphia with your prayer, care and gifts of support. We specifically need an additional \$8500 to cover a budget deficit for this year. Please consider how you might be able to contribute financially as 2018 draws to a close.

Thank you for your participation in our Father's merciful work of salvation here in Philadelphia.

Meet the Newest Board Member

Sarah Hill



The Board of Directors voted in its fall meeting to welcome Sarah Hill as its newest member.

Sarah has been a part of Logos Lutheran since moving to Philadelphia over two years ago. A lifelong member of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, Sarah has had the opportunity to live in many

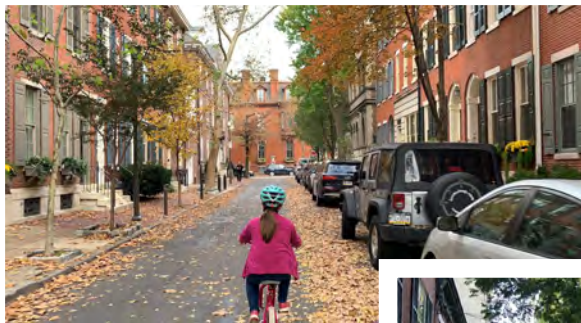
different places, including Venezuela, Texas and the Midwest, before moving to Pennsylvania as a young adult.

Sarah is an alumna of St. Paul Lutheran High School and studied fine art as an undergraduate. She continues to paint, to create calligraphy pieces and to sketch original works. She also works as an assistant to a defense lawyer in Center City.

We are grateful for Sarah's faithful support for the work of Christ in Philadelphia, especially for her willingness to serve unofficially as Logos Lutheran's social committee. Please pray for her as she serves on the Board of Directors for Philadelphia Lutheran Ministries.

Philadelphia in Fall

While many people picture skyscrapers and concrete when imagining Philadelphia, the city actually boasts many parks and bike paths that are beautiful during the fall months. Pastor Kieselowsky has especially enjoyed longer bike rides through the city with his older children.



Pastor Kieselowsky and his family (left)



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P.O. Box 15155 Philadelphia, PA 19130 www.phillyministries.org

For Ten Righteous

By Vicar Christian Einertson



In our midweek Bible study at Logos for the last few months, we've been going through the book of Genesis. A few weeks ago, we arrived at the story of Sodom and Gomorrah found in chapters 18 and 19. While we often look to this story and see in it a cautionary tale to our increasingly morally decadent culture—and rightfully so—we also find in the biblical narrative astounding demonstrations of God's great patience and mercy.

St. James writes in his epistle that the prayer of a righteous man avails much, and we see in this story two examples of the prayers of such righteous men: Abraham and Lot. Abraham pleads that the Lord would spare the city for the sake of ten righteous, and the Lord shows his patience and mercy in promising to forestall this judgment, justly deserved by the grave sin of the many, for the sake of the righteous few.

While God ultimately destroys the city because of the lack of even ten righteous, it is instructive also to look to the story of Lot. Because of Lot's humble prayer the entire city of Zoar, which had already been determined for destruction, was spared.

So great is the mercy and love of God for his righteous people!

At Philadelphia Lutheran Ministries Jesus is in the business of making such righteous people, not in the city of Sodom but in our own city. Through the proclamation of the gospel throughout our city, our Lord makes for himself righteous people by giving them the righteousness of his Son. At our Divine Services, at our midweek prayer services, and in their private prayers, the saints at Logos pray regularly for the city in which we

live. What a blessing for us that the Lord loves to hear prayers of such righteous people, and what a blessing to Philadelphia that our Lord continues to gather a people to himself who pray for her welfare.

We covet the prayers of all of God's righteous people that through PLM's work He would continue to do so.



Ella and EvaMarie Kieselowsky (above) place a protective cover over the paraments after Divine Service.



Fellowship

Young adults who attend Logos Lutheran (*far left*) meet at a restaurant for time of fellowship over great Italian food. The group has met at various events throughout the city this semester, including concerts, gallery events and local festivals.

All Saints' Sunday, Vicar Einertson (*left*) treated everyone to his famous peanut butter pie and Norwegian sweater at the meal following service.



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Thank you for your continued support!

Please Pray For . . .

- **Year-end financial support** to address a budget deficit of \$8500
- **Christmas Day service** at Logos Lutheran
- **University students** as they complete finals
- **Vicar Christian Einertson**
- **Pastor Kieselowsky and his family**