

St. Luke Lutheran Church

Volume 2020 Issue 11 November

Pastor's Corner

As I was reviewing the playbook for navigating this time of Covid-19...

You of course know I'm just kidding. There is certainly no playbook that I'm aware of and we are all learning as we go about how we should best proceed during these very different times. But wouldn't it be nice if there were? We'd all know what to do and how best to proceed. But, as a church, what then are we to do? In contemplating this question I've found myself in long moments in prayer - talking to God and seeking his direction. The guidance I keep receiving is to consider the power found in faithful discipleship.

We are all disciples of Christ; made so through his death and resurrection. We are disciples of Christ together and as a community of faith we are charged to look out for one another, serve one another, and to be vessels of the Holy Spirit into the work of ministry throughout God's creation. This is such an important calling and it is firmly rooted in our baptism.

As disciples into the world of God's creation, we bring our calling into all in which we encounter. From work and pleasure to joys and challenges, our discipleship (the action of being a disciple) flavors all our actions and deeds. This most certainly includes how we handle our Covid-19 world today. It is in this realm that we've found ourselves discerning how we go about ministry, as a church, in this new moment in history.

Every action we are taking (or pausing or not undertaking) as a church seeks to fulfill our mutual calling in discipleship, including in the areas of worship, ministry activities and outreach. We are charged to look out for each other's well-being and health, and as such we've had to carefully tailor our worship opportunities to both put our best foot forward in worship and also to make wise and prudent adjustments. From worshipping outdoors to offering worship virtually, these changes have permitted us to all have a means to gather for worship while still yet focused on safety and care for one another and our wider community. The change that will eventually be coming is that we will take a step, due to the weather, toward worshipping very carefully indoors. Again, we will do so with the utmost care for one another as a sign of our calling to discipleship. (As a note, please see the guide in this newsletter that speaks to the plan for upcoming indoor worship).

Our discipleship focus has also brought us to limit some of the work we have been accustomed to doing in ministry and to emphasize the ministries we can best do safely. A primary focus of our church's ministry right now is on helping to feed and serve those most in need in our community. In two complementary ways, we've increased our focus outward with the Christian Crisis Center and in our work through Loaves and Fishes to feed the hungry of our county. There are many in need and, within good practice, our church is working to help serve this need.

Our attention to our work in discipleship will continue to flavor how we proceed in all aspects of ministry in our church. At times this will lead us to appear measured and intentional, and at times even bold and nimble. Through it all, we will walk this path together focused on God's call and within it our love for God as we serve and care for one another.

**In Christ,
Pastor Andrew**

November Birthdays

November 1st Lewis Herman

November 5th Carlee Stafford

November 5th Kenna Sipe

November 10th Leona Herman

November 11th Carol Mays

November 14th Sheila Pennell

November 17th Jason Head

November 17th Rick Reid

November 18th Robin Reid

November 20th Tammy West

November 22nd Dana Stafford

November 24th Kenny Mecimore

November 24th Maria Friday

November 28th Wes White

November 29th Fely Sipe

November 30th Michael Rogers

November 30th Joyce Mclean

Vicar Shepherd's Shares

Psalm 46:10 He says, "Be still, and know that I am God;"

Have you ever experienced life in such ways where you wish you could just catch a break, take a breath, to take a step back, or wished everything would just slow down? If we were honest with ourselves, we have all been there, right? We all have these lists (these if only lists) "if only things were a little less hectic, I could get (___) done." "I could finally get caught up on (___)."

SO? How are those lists coming? Have you been able to catch up? Have you been able to get everything done like you thought you could, and would now that the world has slowed down during Covid? Maybe not.....(maybe you have, and Good on you! But I hope you have been able to see a few things with new eyes, like me. To see that our busy rush isn't what completes us. That our productivity and what we produce? Is not what defines us or our worth. Maybe you have had a little perspective change, an adjustment, a taste of "you don't know what you have until it's gone?" I know I have. This has been a difficult time for all of us, don't get me wrong, it has! But, can we see the blessings where others don't? Can we recognize the Grace in the midst of the storm? Can we not still connect, though it seems everything is changing, as we realize "normal" was always just a construct and that everyone has their own "norms."

"BE STILL, AND KNOW!"

As a child, my mother would use this daily, sometimes hourly, with me. As a child with ADHD and two parents who refused to medicate me, they had to get creative. This was my mother's go-to phrase for me. I was HIGHLY energetic, unlike my siblings, so you can imagine how I experienced this phrase across a range of emotions. Sometimes it was just to get me to be still and quiet for a moment. But it was used so much in my life it became a guiding mantra, if you will, calling me to slow down to be more mindful. To take a breath and recenter on what is truly important—knowing that God is in control and always with me. It helps me reassess my priorities and realign them. I am in no way perfect at this practice, and sometimes I can still hear my mother's voice in my head with some of her more extreme emotions calling me to SLOW DOWN. I always find myself smiling and thanking God for the memory and gentle and not so gentle nudge to be still and know!

"Be still, and know that I am God;"

Might this become a new spiritual practice for you? I invite you to try this in this time—a Pandemic Blessing, perhaps. A moment to center our breath, our time, our lives, and even our priorities. to remember that God is God. And God is always there with and for us, no matter the state of the world around us may seem. We give thanks, for we can; Be still and know that God is God and abides closer than the air we breathe.

Dear St. Luke,

As Vicar Oscar continues in his internship at St. Luke, how is his progress being noted? Surely he is working closely with Pastor Andrew, but is there any evaluation undertaking on behalf of the congregation? While these are certainly unusual times, and I would imagine especially so for beginning a seminary internship, it is great to see Oscar's progress and to appreciate his dedication in his service.

Thank you,
Hugh O. Versite

Dear Hugh,

Thank you for your note and curiosity. As the internship supervisor, Pastor Andrew performs an important evaluative role (along with a mentoring and teaching role) in Vicar Oscar's internship experience. That said, the congregation indeed also plays a critical role in Oscar's work. A special internship committee has been put into place. This committee comprises a cross section of our congregation and is charged to meet with Vicar Oscar on a monthly basis. The committee members are Arland Mays, Jennifer Mull, Abbie Bowman, Melissa Hager, Walter Jones and Glenn Mays.

This committee is tasked with providing regular evaluation, support and guidance. They will also submit to the seminary and the NC Synod two reports, through the year ahead, about Vicar Oscar's progress and their insights and observations. The congregation is invited to be in conversation with these internship committee members as we all work alongside Vicar Oscar and to provide any insights and guidance you'd like to have shared.

Thank you again Hugh and it's great to share this news with the congregation!

In Christ,
St. Luke



We are people of God, redeemed by Christ, and called into fellowship by the Holy Spirit. Knowing our Lord's definition of disciples as those who take up their crosses daily to follow him and responding to His command to go and make disciples of all nations. We, the members of St. Luke Lutheran Church of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, celebrate life in Christ and claim a servant style of ministry to our congregation, community and world.

ST LUKE LUTHERAN CHURCH
FUNDS BALANCES
FOR THE MONTH ENDED JULY 31, 2020

FUNDS IN CHECKING ACCOUNT		BALANCE	RECEIPTS	DISBURSEMENTS	ADJUST	BALANCE
		6/30/20				7/31/20
101	CURRENT/ BENEVOLENCE	130,188.84	16,851.44	20,338.05	0.00	126,702.23
105	WORLD HUNGER	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	SPECIAL OFFERINGS	19,963.22	565.00	0.00	0.00	20,528.22
TOTALS		150,152.06	17,416.44	20,338.05	0.00	147,230.45
SPECIAL OFFERINGS ACCOUNT						
10710	PELI FUND	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
10715	MEMORIAL GARDENS	5,141.30	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,141.30
10746	CHRISTIAN CRISIS CENTER	40.00	40.00	0.00	0.00	80.00
10752	COMMUNITY NEEDS/HELPING HANDS	786.15	0.00	0.00	0.00	786.15
10796	BENEFIT BREAKFAST (MADISON ST.CLAIR)	956.15	0.00	0.00	0.00	956.15
10797	BENEFIT BREAKFAST (KASSNER)	1,867.70	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,867.70
10799	BENEFIT BREAKFAST (JORDAN LAFONE)	303.30	0.00	0.00	0.00	303.30
11116	CEMETERY TRUST FUND	0.00	50.00	0.00	0.00	50.00
11201	WOMEN WITH A MISSION	1,425.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,425.00
11212	MEMBER HELPING MEMBERS	775.88	0.00	0.00	0.00	775.88
11213	PLAYGROUND UPDATE	1,544.92	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,544.92
11215	MUSIC PROGRAM	200.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	200.00
11412	LOAVES & FISHES/SOUP KITCHEN	0.00	25.00	0.00	0.00	25.00
11514	MEMORIAL DARRELL ROBINETTE	2,517.58	100.00	0.00	0.00	2,617.58
11526	20'S & 30'S SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS	200.86	0.00	0.00	0.00	200.86
11545	MEMORIAL JOAN FOX	560.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	560.00
11546	MEMORIAL SHIRLEY SIPE	575.00	200.00	0.00	0.00	775.00
11547	MEMORIAL IRENE HERMAN	0.00	150.00	0.00	0.00	150.00
11600	PARSONAGE SECURITY DEPOSIT	850.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	850.00
11627	SOUND SYSTEM	2,219.38	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,219.38
TOTAL SPEC OFFERING ACCOUNTS		19,963.22	565.00	0.00	0.00	20,528.22

ST LUKE LUTHERAN CHURCH
FUNDS BALANCES
FOR THE MONTH ENDED AUGUST 31, 2020

FUNDS IN CHECKING ACCOUNT		BALANCE	RECEIPTS	DISBURSEMENTS	ADJUST	BALANCE
		7/31/20				8/31/20
101	CURRENT/ BENEVOLENCE	126,702.23	24,738.28	15,597.40	0.00	135,843.11
105	WORLD HUNGER	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	SPECIAL OFFERINGS	20,528.22	3,675.00	50.00	0.00	24,153.22
TOTALS		147,230.45	28,413.28	15,647.40	0.00	159,996.33
SPECIAL OFFERINGS ACCOUNT						
10710	PELI FUND	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
10715	MEMORIAL GARDENS	5,141.30	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,141.30
10746	CHRISTIAN CRISIS CENTER	80.00	25.00	0.00	0.00	105.00
10752	COMMUNITY NEEDS/HELPING HANDS	786.15	0.00	0.00	0.00	786.15
10796	BENEFIT BREAKFAST (MADISON ST.CLAIR)	956.15	0.00	0.00	0.00	956.15
10797	BENEFIT BREAKFAST (KASSNER)	1,867.70	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,867.70
10799	BENEFIT BREAKFAST (JORDAN LAFONE)	303.30	0.00	0.00	0.00	303.30
11116	CEMETERY TRUST FUND	50.00	2,400.00	0.00	0.00	2,450.00
11201	WOMEN WITH A MISSION	1,425.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,425.00
11212	MEMBER HELPING MEMBERS	775.88	0.00	0.00	0.00	775.88
11213	PLAYGROUND UPDATE	1,544.92	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,544.92
11215	MUSIC PROGRAM	200.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	200.00
11412	LOAVES & FISHES/SOUP KITCHEN	25.00	25.00	50.00	0.00	0.00
11514	MEMORIAL DARRELL ROBINETTE	2,617.58	100.00	0.00	0.00	2,717.58
11526	20'S & 30'S SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS	200.86	0.00	0.00	0.00	200.86
11545	MEMORIAL JOAN FOX	560.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	560.00
11546	MEMORIAL SHIRLEY SIPE	775.00	200.00	0.00	0.00	975.00
11547	MEMORIAL IRENE HERMAN	150.00	425.00	0.00	0.00	575.00
11548	MEMORIAL NORINE SIPE	0.00	500.00	0.00	0.00	500.00
11600	PARSONAGE SECURITY DEPOSIT	850.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	850.00
11627	SOUND SYSTEM	2,219.38	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,219.38
TOTAL SPEC OFFERING ACCOUNTS		20,528.22	3,675.00	50.00	0.00	24,153.22

ST LUKE LUTHERAN CHURCH
FUNDS BALANCES
FOR THE MONTH ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2020

FUNDS IN CHECKING ACCOUNT		BALANCE				BALANCE 9/30/20
		8/31/20	RECEIPTS	DISBURSEMENTS	ADJUST	
101	CURRENT/ BENEVOLENCE	135,843.11	21,028.47	21,455.92	0.00	135,415.66
105	WORLD HUNGER	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	SPECIAL OFFERINGS	24,153.22	1,547.00	0.00	0.00	25,700.22
TOTALS		159,996.33	22,575.47	21,455.92	0.00	161,115.88
SPECIAL OFFERINGS ACCOUNT						
10710	PELI FUND	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
10715	MEMORIAL GARDENS	5,141.30	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,141.30
10746	CHRISTIAN CRISIS CENTER	105.00	232.00	0.00	0.00	337.00
10752	COMMUNITY NEEDS/HELPING HANDS	786.15	0.00	0.00	0.00	786.15
10796	BENEFIT BREAKFAST (MADISON ST.CLAIR)	956.15	0.00	0.00	0.00	956.15
10797	BENEFIT BREAKFAST (KASSNER)	1,867.70	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,867.70
10799	BENEFIT BREAKFAST (JORDAN LAFONE)	303.30	0.00	0.00	0.00	303.30
11116	CEMETERY TRUST FUND	2,450.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,450.00
11201	WOMEN WITH A MISSION	1,425.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,425.00
11212	MEMBER HELPING MEMBERS	775.88	0.00	0.00	0.00	775.88
11213	PLAYGROUND UPDATE	1,544.92	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,544.92
11215	MUSIC PROGRAM	200.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	200.00
11412	LOAVES & FISHES/SOUP KITCHEN	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
11514	MEMORIAL DARRELL ROBINETTE	2,717.58	100.00	0.00	0.00	2,817.58
11526	20'S & 30'S SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS	200.86	0.00	0.00	0.00	200.86
11545	MEMORIAL JOAN FOX	560.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	560.00
11546	MEMORIAL SHIRLEY SIPE	975.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	975.00
11547	MEMORIAL IRENE HERMAN	575.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	575.00
11548	MEMORIAL NORINE SIPE	500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	500.00
11549	MEMORIAL MARIE SIPE	0.00	1,080.00	0.00	0.00	1,080.00
11550	MEMORIAL ERIC WEST	0.00	135.00	0.00	0.00	135.00
11600	PARSONAGE SECURITY DEPOSIT	850.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	850.00
11627	SOUND SYSTEM	2,219.38	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,219.38
TOTAL SPEC OFFERING ACCOUNTS		24,153.22	1,547.00	0.00	0.00	25,700.22

November 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 <i>All Saints Day</i> Morning Worship Daylight Savings Time	2	3 Election Day	4	5	6	7
8 <i>Twenty Third Sunday of Pentecost</i> Morning Worship	9	10	11 Veterans Day	12	13	14
15 <i>Twenty Fourth Sunday of Pentecost</i> Morning Worship	16	17	18	19	20	21
22 <i>Christ the King</i> Morning Worship	23 <i>Newsletter Week:</i> <i>Articles Due by Noon</i>	24	25	26 Happy Thanksgiving! 	27	28
29 <i>First Sunday of Advent</i> Morning Worship	30					

Please remember that Sunday Morning Worship times are subject to change.
You will be notified by the St. Luke Phone Tree on Saturday for the time of worship that next morning.



Planning for Indoor Worship at St. Luke Lutheran

As we continue to make measured adjustments as a church during this time of Covid-19, we will eventually be considering opening worship indoors at St. Luke. **Outdoor worship is by far our safest method of gathering for worship and we will strive to meet outdoors until such time as we are unable.** This said, as the weather becomes less conducive for outdoor worship, great thought has been put into how we might gather most safely for worship indoors when that time comes. While it cannot 100% be guaranteed that Covid-19 cannot be transmitted while in worship (indoors or outdoors - or for that matter in any other reality of life), this plan has been developed to minimize risks and builds on the latest health and safety guidance of our time. The steps shared below are designed to maintain the safety and well being of all involved in worship and to create the safest possible environment to worship indoors together.

Our location for indoor worship at St. Luke will be in the church gymnasium.

The church gym is by far our largest indoor space and our most versatile. The tall ceilings and wide expanse permits us to best maximize proper social distancing. Seating will be carefully arranged in advance, accurately spaced, and will utilize the entirety of the gym space. When you arrive, and if needed for your immediate household, please add from the extra available stacks of chairs at the side of the church rather than rearranging any seating. It will be fine to leave unused any seating not needed in your area.

The service will continue to be a shorter and simpler version of our typical worship service, with changes being made based on proper Covid-19 adjustments. Our worship focus will be in the biblical word, preaching and prayer. We will continue, in accordance with proper Covid policy, to reduce the amount of responsive language (liturgy) that is shared and we will continue to suspend all singing. Singing greatly increases the volume of air we breathe in and out and the prevailing guidance is for churches to refrain from singing at this time. Our plan going forward during Covid is to continue to offer communion, through individual wafer and cup, on the 1st Sunday of each month.

Caring for One Another: We continue to be committed to our caring for one another as a top priority. This will first mean that we cannot shake hands or share in hugs or gather closer than 6 feet apart with anyone not in our immediate household. To minimize and manage risk as we move to indoor worship, masks will be required to be worn over the nose and mouth by all people and at all times while indoors (the only exception will be when the pastor, vicar or other worship leader is speaking). Seating will be pre-arranged throughout the gym space so that a minimum of 6 feet of spacing is maintained between all participants not living in the same household. This is critical, as doing so within our confined indoor space will greatly minimize the spread of airborne aerosol and insure a lower risk Covid environment for worship.

Faithful action by all: There is no doubt that the adjustments set forth for indoor worship will continue the necessary theme of change for our church while we traverse this time of Covid. While change itself is not always easy, these adjustments are set forth to create the safest atmosphere for us to gather in worship together and to earnestly care for one another. Our adherence to these adjustments will speak to our devotion to one another and our active and faithful concern for the health and well-being of each person in our church family.

When we do begin to worship indoors, the worship time will be at 10:00am on Sundays. As additional cleaning measures are being implemented during this time of Covid, particularly after the conclusion of worship, this worship timing will best enable this important and intentional care.

Additional Important Notes:

Worship online and through our sermon phone line service will continue. While there will continue to be a slight delay as to when worship will be posted online and on the phone line on Sundays, these worship offerings will continue. The sermon phone line number is (828) 392-7246. The sermon online link can be found on the church's website at www.stluketaylorville.org (via the "Worship Online" link) and on the church's Facebook group page.

Second (and this is still so unusual but important to say), in-person worship at church may not be for everyone right now. While we so relish the opportunity to be together at church, and it's been so difficult to have been apart for so long, there are some who may not feel comfortable participating in in-person worship at this time and in our current environment. I would like to encourage you, if you have reason for reservation, to be comfortable in not participating in in-person worship at church until the time you believe you can comfortably do so. This includes those with health concerns, pre-existing health complications and those who just don't feel ready or safe to gather among an assembled group. I want everyone to know that caring for your health and safety is our great priority and please make the proper decision for you - with the full blessing and understanding of all across our church community. If you should decide to refrain from in-person worship at this time, please continue regularly participating with the church in worship virtually every Sunday.

Third: If there should be a positive case of Covid among our church by someone in recent attendance, in-person indoor worship will be postponed for a period of at least two weeks. This is in keeping with Synod, State and CDC guidelines for Covid practice and care.

Finally: If there should be a rapid uptick of Covid-19 cases in our community, we may cancel in-person worship on the affected Sunday(s) as a precautionary safety measure. Should this occur, we will move as a congregation toward virtual worship (online and over the phone) on those Sundays.

A Final Word:

As is the common call of our time, please do refrain from attending worship in-person on any Sunday if you should feel sick, have been exposed to Covid in the last 14 days or are awaiting results from a Covid test. Thank you for taking time to familiarize yourself with this plan and for your dedication toward caring for the health and well-being of everyone in our church in this important time. Please feel welcome to reach out to Pastor Andrew if you should have any questions about this plan and what a joy it will be to be able to continue to worship together at church indoors!