

Writing this article is tough. What do I say that you haven't heard

in the last 5 months? Normally for an August newsletter I would have pictures of Day Camp and VBS. Unfortunately, we aren't celebrating those programs. However, we can celebrate what those programs mean to our community and our young people. Each of those weeks we spend learning that our faith can be fun. Our young people spend a week doing crafts, games, bible studies, and spend quality time with their church friends. Those things look totally different now, but what doesn't change is that our faith is and can be fun.

Did you know that fun is biblical? In Ecclesiastes it literally says there is a time for laughter and dance. VBS and Day camp are FULL of laughter. Faithful fun doesn't just happen at church (although church is a great place for fun and faith), that same fun can be had at home with your family. In these times it

## Faithful Families tip

### Sock Puppet Show

Each member of your family will go find a sock without a friend and transform it into a sock puppet creation. Once your characters have come to life then you are encouraged to pick out a bible story and retell it using your sock puppets.

is taking more creativity than normal, it is taking more patience, and it is worth it. Now more than ever it is apparent to us that faith starts at home. So, with the coming months looking different and no definite finish line for the pandemic, we have the unprecedented opportunity to create faithful *fun* family time!

Past newsletters have faithful family's tips, past emails from me has plenty of fun activities you can do with your kids, and when in doubt Pinterest is a solid go to. If you have not checked out Holy C's Pinterest, now is as good a time as any. Pull up Pinterest and search for "Holy Comforter Youth and Family Ministry". There are things pinned for all ages, faithful family activities, and fun activities, and fun faithful activities. Give it a peak.

*Beka Forst, Youth and Family Ministries*

Holy Comforter Lutheran Church

# Coming Soon...

# SUMMERAMA

## August 3rd-7th

Reconstructed VBS is coming to a mailbox near you!



Lutheran Church of the  
**Holy Comforter** **COMMENT**  
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Greg Cline, Organist /Choirmaster  
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Teresa Keller, Parish Nurse



Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. <sup>20</sup>And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full.

Matthew 14:19b-20

## Worship Opportunities for August

Drive-In Worship takes place each Sunday at 10:30 am.  
Virtual worship is posted each Sunday morning on our website and on Facebook and YouTube.

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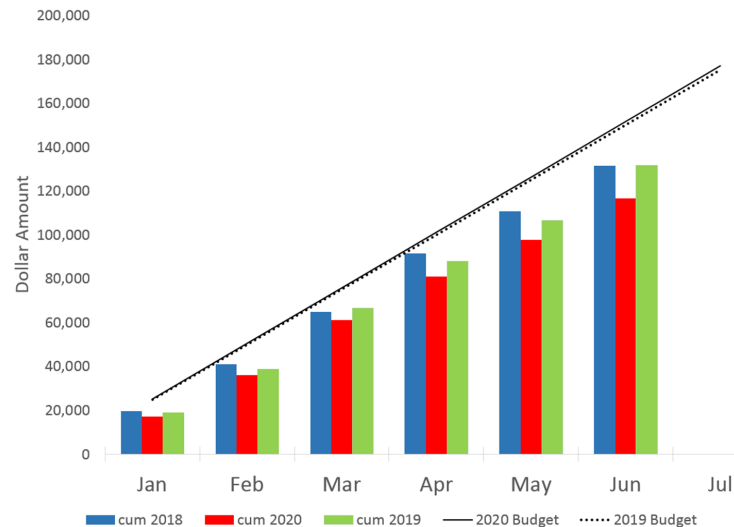
**Church Office Hours**  
Monday-Thursday  
8:30 am—3:00 pm

# Holy Comforter Treasurer Report

Holy Comforter's operating deficit (expenses in excess of offering income) during June was \$1,599.19. The year-to-date deficit, through June 30, was \$10,293.52. Year-to-date spending, curtailed because of the pandemic, is \$24,874.48 below the amount planned in the 2020 budget. Total giving to support Holy Comforter's routine expenses during June was \$18,694.00. The budget estimate of the amount needed each month is \$25,281.08. The adjacent chart compares this year's offering income, by month, with that of the two previous years. This and last year's budget tracks are also presented in the graph.

Warren Heller, Treasurer

Offerings to Current Account, 2018 & 2019 vs. 2020



## Evangelism/Outreach

So much looks different these days as we continue to adapt to life in a pandemic. As we adapt, there are likely gaps where people do not have the basic things they need. That may be food, shelter, money for bills, and we are continuing to support BCO and SOCKS for meeting these needs. But there will be others, and we are asking folks to watch for the gaps, and helps think if there are ways we can help fill them. One place we are having conversations is around schools, and whether there may be ways we can help schools and families now that school will look a lot different than before. Contact Krystyna Sarrazin or Pastor Micah if you see places we can help fill gaps.

## Regathering for Worship Update:

As with every other person and organization these days, we continue to wrestle with the constantly changing and adjusting landscape of society with Covid-19. The Synod Council recommends waiting until numbers get to the original Phase 3 targets, so we are watching many places to try and determine when to gather in the sanctuary for worship. In the meantime, we will continue to offer online worship as well as our Drive-In worship on Sundays at 10:30 am. Know that council and staff is eager to worship with you all in the sanctuary again, but want to do it well and in a way that cares for our members and our community.



I'm going to talk about health and worship. Sometimes when I get involved with someone, I find I don't really know him/her well because he/she hasn't been attending worship regularly. I believe regular worship to be one of the foundational pieces of who we are as Christians and that a regular relationship is especially what God wants from us.

Take this example...you know that 50% of all marriages end in divorce; it's an often-published statistic. But did you know that 50% of all marriages in which both partners belong to the same congregation end in divorce and 50% of all marriages in which both partners occasionally attend worship end in divorce? But...here's more...in those marriages in which the partners are together in worship at least three out of 4 weeks a month, only 2% end in divorce. The study that I took those statistics from suggested that the reason for the 2% was that consistency and values that lead a couple to worship together also lead them to be more intentional in working on their marriage.

Faithful, regular, weekly worship doesn't just strengthen your relationship with God; it can strengthen your personal relationships and fortify your health. What is good for your emotional and spiritual health can be good for your physical health. Worship teaches you to let go and let God. It relieves stress. It puts songs in your heart that you carry into the week (thanks to Greg and the rest of the musicians of Holy C!) Regular worship can also focus you on those areas of your life that you know, and God knows, are not healthy. Often people who do not worship regularly will say they have good reasons, but what they really know deep down inside is that they are sealing off certain areas of their life from God, thinking that by staying away from worship, they don't have to do something about it.

We need to nurture our spiritual self in order to nurture our physical and emotional self. Research has identified a positive relationship between spiritual experiences and physical and mental health. Spirituality and religiosity have been cited as protecting individuals against anxiety, alienation and loneliness of old age, instilling hope, bringing comfort and support from others and bringing resolution to our fears.

Improving your spiritual, emotional and physical health may be a challenge, especially now, due to the outside forces of Covid and the changes to our world that it has brought. Healing, curing, repair and behavior management are the major efforts needed in restoring health in all areas. Regular worship attendance is the first step – establishing a regular relationship with God and joining in the fellowship of others at the same time. Ok...we have two choices currently for "worship" and "fellowship" – virtual services and drive-in services. Granted, that doesn't give us solid fellowship...not like being face-to-face and giving hugs...but it is a step back toward normalcy. You also have a Health Ministry of folks – your Parish Nurse and her team – who are calling you regularly to connect you to Holy C and to each other by giving you an opportunity to ask about others and chat. There is PEP exercise, zoom luncheons, zoom Bible studies, kids' get-togethers...most are virtual but at least it is fellowship and connection. Are you participating in any of that which is offered to you? Identify the things in your life that give you a sense of inner peace, comfort, strength, love and connection. Set aside time every day to do the things that help you spiritually. Mind, body and spirit are all connected. Do something good for all three by participating in what Holy C has to offer to you and by seeking other things that you know nurture your spirit. And worship! Stay healthy – stay safe!

*Teresa Keller, Parish Nurse*

# MUSIC NOTES

Folks... particularly choir members have been asking me what worship will look like when we gather collectively again in the future. Here's the truth... I don't know. As of the time of writing this on July 27, I'm not certain of anyone who knows for sure. I have been reading about the creative ways that churches around the globe have sought to safely gather in this unprecedented time. Here is a story about a small church in Berlin, Germany reopening after being closed for several months.

It was an odd feeling when the pastor asked members to make reservations for families to have a spot in a pew. That certainly never happened before. The German government is developing plans on restarting worship, regulating the use of face masks, physical contact, and restrictions on congregational singing. Questions about singing, more than anything else, has caused consternation among evangelicals in Germany. Perhaps this is no surprise. It was Martin Luther, after all, who said that, "next to the word of God, music deserves the highest praise."

"Many Germans found the new restrictions depressing, and some even question whether it is worth starting worship with such constraints in place. The Catholic German Bishops' Conference recommended 'quiet singing.'"

I'm not sure exactly how to interpret that.

Many opinions abound on this subject. It's important that we respect each other in thought, word, and deed as we work toward a future worship reunion together; however way that might look, making sure the church remains responsible in how that is done. I know few who prefer isolation.

Rather than focusing on what we can't do, let's dialog about what we can do. We can keep on praying. We can stay peaceful. We can encourage each other. We can stay connected to each other and to the word of God. We can keep trusting and stay full of faith. We can stay generous and continue to hold on to the promises of Jesus Christ.

*\*Points are taken from articles that were googled regarding the subject of congregational singing\**

Blessings!

Greg

## Weekly Schedule-

Throughout this time of social isolation we have worked to create some new patterns for worship, faith formation, and community. Currently each week we have:

- **Sundays:**
  - Sunday morning- Virtual Worship posted during the morning to watch at your leisure
  - 10:30 am-Drive-In Worship in the parking lot
  - 4:00 pm- Kid's Club Zoom gathering
  - 5:00 pm- HCY Zoom gathering
- **Mondays:**
  - 6:30 pm- PEP Exercise Class over Zoom
- **Tuesdays:**
  - Noon-Zoom lunch together. A time to check in and be in fellowship with one another
- **Wednesdays:**
  - 6:45 pm- Zoom Bible Study

Beka periodically sends out faith formation resources for families during this time, and Teresa sends out a weekly Parish Nurse article.

## Reminder!

If you are planning to join in on any of the weekly Zoom meetings, the Zoom invites will be sent out through email, 30 minutes in advance of meetings!

**We hope you will join us!**

**We recognize and celebrate these birthdays in the month of August.**

**We are thankful for the life and Spirit of those we celebrate.**

<b>August 2</b>	<b>Alyssa Buchanan</b>
	<b>Becke Featherstone</b>
<b>August 3</b>	<b>Joy Robinson</b>
<b>August 4</b>	<b>Kathy Graves</b>
	<b>Mark Yount</b>
<b>August 6</b>	<b>Eric Carpenter</b>
	<b>Justin Koehler</b>
<b>August 11</b>	<b>Cindy Buchanan</b>
	<b>Jill Leitner</b>
	<b>Ginger MacDonald</b>
<b>August 17</b>	<b>Theodore Bruchon</b>
	<b>Mark Dabrowski</b>
<b>August 18</b>	<b>Katie Baker</b>
	<b>Alex Bocchino</b>
	<b>Henry Bocchino</b>
	<b>Grayson Kelly</b>
	<b>Dixie Spivey</b>
<b>August 21</b>	<b>Andrew Robinson</b>
<b>August 25</b>	<b>Gage Gatlin</b>
<b>August 29</b>	<b>Matthew Bruchon</b>
<b>August 30</b>	<b>Becca Gatlin</b>





Grace and peace,

I had a few surprises waiting for me when I got back from vacation at the end of July. Our neighbor brought over the mail he'd collected for us and I was a bit confused by the abundance of cards not only for me, but for my whole family. I tried to think of a holiday I'd forgotten. As we opened them up that evening we were overwhelmed by the outpouring of love and thoughtfulness from many members of the church at the 6<sup>th</sup> anniversary of my ordination and installation at Holy Comforter. Then on Monday night I was brought outside for an unexpected and incredible parade of cars with signs, silly string, balloons, and best of all, smiling faces I love, to celebrate the day. The recognition of the occasion felt great, and I cannot begin to express my appreciation for it. I feel like I need to do that to all of your houses for putting up with me for 6 years!

But even more than the recognition it was wonderful to read cards from, and see faces of, many of you wonderful folks who I miss dearly and who I have grown to love deeply over these 6 years. My time here has not looked like I would have thought it had if you'd asked me to map it out at the beginning, and the last 4 months or so have only been a more vivid reminder of how that has been true all along. We've walked through not only a pandemic in this time, but also times of both peace and turmoil as a community, times looking back at the past and leaning into hope for the future, personal struggles that have been supported by an entire community, had triumphs of faith and mourned the brokenness of the world that has affected us.

One thing that I "knew" but have learned more intimately in our time together, particularly now, is the extent to which our faith does not exist within a bubble separate from the world that we can keep safe and control. The world around us has a dramatic effect on our lives of faith. We proclaim that God is constant, but our world is not, so the way God is at work in the world changes, as does the way our faith intersects with the world around us. We've continued to worship in this time, but because of Covid it has looked dramatically different. We've continued to pray, to fellowship, to study scripture, to support one another and our community around us, but all of the ways those happen have had to shift dramatically. We are very much still the Church, the Body of Christ, bound together by the Spirit, but what that looks like has shifted, at least for a time.

This shift does not mean we engage our faith any less, however. Rather we must look to our faith even more in times of transition or tribulation, because our faith is what assures us that God is already in the place we are headed, and will us help us discern who God is calling us to be in this time, and how we are called to proclaim our constant God through word and deed. I have all the hope and confidence one could have that there will be a solution to Covid so that we can gather back together in the way that feels right to us, but our world will continue to change and evolve, to throw us new curveballs, and we will continue to lean our faith in Christ that no matter what happens, God is God, and is at work to reconcile and heal God's good Creation.

I give thanks for these 6 years in which I've been called to ministry with you all, for the journey of faith we have walked together in this time, and for the reassurance our faith gives us in God's constant presence, love, and grace in an ever-changing world.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Micah

## Tuesday Fellowship

Spend your lunch time with friends and fellowship at noon.

Zoom Links will be sent out 30 minutes prior to meeting.



## Wednesday Night Bible Study

Join Beka and Pastor Micah on Zoom at 6:45 pm!  
Zoom Invites will be sent via email 30 minutes prior.

