

We are almost 8 months into this thing. I still find myself saying “back to normal” or “like we used to be”. I try to correct myself and say things like “when we can do it again” or “in the future”. I try to remind myself that we are still moving forward, and it will change and again. My prayer is for good change. Mostly I know we won’t stay like this forever. Although while lots of things are changing there are a few things in my days and weeks that aren’t much different. I still work, I still go to school, still walk my dogs, and still meet with my communities- even over zoom.

One of my communities is youth and family ministers. They are good people who know the struggle of this work in a pandemic. I go to the synodical meetings with other youth and family ministers twice a month, we often talk about how we are doing and what we are doing. Lately those

meetings have gotten trickier and trickier. There are so many conversations around faith formation opportunities, worship, and youth groups that sometimes it can feel like we are missing something, or we aren’t doing enough. I have caught myself saying “I can’t wait till we can do stuff again”, and if I don’t catch myself Pastor Micah reminds me that we are. We are doing stuff; we are offering opportunities for you and your family to get involved and engage with your faith and faith community. This pandemic makes it hard to see that the “normal” we live in right now isn’t on hold, and there are life giving things out there. So, waiting to get involved till “things go back to normal” isn’t realistic, because we are always moving forward. So, we are 8 months in and it’s not too late to join in on one of our many opportunities to see our faith community, to engage with your faith, and feel loved by your people.

Beka Forst

Faithful Families Tip

Remembering that Jesus is the Bread of Life, and that God offers us daily bread, Let’s Eat...bread!

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- 1/8 tsp salt
- 1/3 cup of water
- Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
- Mix flour, oil, and salt together in a bowl.
- Add water and mix dough I soft.
- Using your hands, form dough into six balls and press into disks onto the baking sheet
- Bake at 425 F for 8-10 minutes or until bread is cooked.



Lutheran Church of the

Holy Comforter COMMENT

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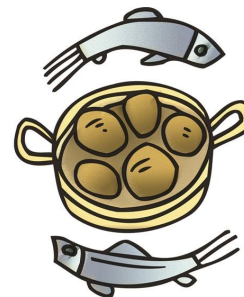
Micah Kearney, Pastor

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Greg Cline, Organist /Choirmaster

Beka Forst, Director of Youth & Family Ministries/Deacon Intern

Teresa Keller, Parish Nurse



**“The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone”
-Matthew 21:42b**

Worship Opportunities for October

Drive-In Worship with Communion takes place each Sunday at 10:30 am.

Virtual worship is posted each Sunday morning on our website and on Facebook and YouTube.

Prayer Gathering Tuesday evenings and Thursday mornings.

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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 August was \$1,893.60. The year-to-date deficit, through August 31, was \$17,154.32. Year-to-date spending, curtailed because of the pandemic, was \$32,551.85 below the amount planned in the 2020 budget. Total giving to support Holy Comforter's routine expenses during August was \$18,974.00. 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



From Your Parish Nurse...

While the Health Ministry has had a hard time trying to figure out how we can provide for you in healthy ways as we've navigated this pandemic, there are TWO ways in which we've been able to provide a difference:

- 1) We created the Caring Tree Callers – volunteers who checked in on you, initially weekly, then bi-weekly, in order to be sure you were not lonely, that you had all the supplies and food you needed, that you had masks to provide you with protection, and to provide you with volunteers to bring those supplies or bring those masks, when you were in need.
- 2) We brought the PEP exercise class to you via Zoom. For those who have participated, it's been a fun way to connect, and it provides benefit to our bodies as part of the bargain. And the wonderful thing about it is that we've been able to include folks who live farther away – even one in Washington and one in Arizona! Thank goodness for the wonders of technology!

NOW, I want to talk a little more about the flu...not Covid, but the regular, seasonal flu...

KEY FACTS ABOUT THE FLU

Influenza (commonly called "the flu") is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. These viruses can result in illness ranging from mild to severe with life-threatening complications. An estimated 10% to 20% of U.S. residents get the flu each year (per the Centers for Disease Control): An average of 114,000 persons are hospitalized for flu-related complications and 36,000 Americans die each year from complications of the flu. Now combine that with the numbers we know about Covid – do we really want to increase the already staggering numbers we see nearly daily in the news by not getting our flu vaccines and raising the risk?

SYMPTOMS OF FLU

Symptoms of flu include fever (usually high), head-ache, extreme tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, and muscle aches. Gastrointestinal symptoms, such as nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea, are much more common among children than adults. Now realize that those are the SAME set of symptoms, along with a few more, that signal Covid. Scary, huh?

SPREAD OF FLU

The main way flu viruses are spread is from person to person in respiratory droplets of coughs and sneezes. This can happen when droplets from a cough or sneeze of an infected person are propelled (generally up to 6 feet) through the air and deposited on the mouth or nose of people nearby – ugh! Another way that viruses can spread – although much less frequent – is by a person touching respiratory droplets on another person or an object and then touching their own mouth or nose before washing their hands. Scientific studies show that adults can shed virus from 1 day before developing symptoms to up to 7 days after getting sick. Young children can shed virus for longer than 7 days. Now by "virus" this is speaking of the flu but we now also know that it applies to ANY virus and we've already found out that contagion from Covid can be as many as 2-14 days PRIOR to developing symptoms. Again, if we get the flu and then also get Covid, we are going to be highly contagious to others twice over and for many days.

PREVENTING FLU

The single best way to prevent the flu is to get vaccinated each fall. Ways that we can help prevent the spread of this virus include: Avoiding close contact with others who have it, staying home when we are sick and covering our mouths and noses when we

cough or sneeze, washing our hands, and keeping our hands away from our eyes, nose or mouths. AND wearing our masks and social distancing!

AT SPECIAL RISK FOR COMPLICATIONS FROM FLU

People aged 65 years and older, people of any age with chronic medical conditions, pregnant women, children between 6-23 months of age, residents of nursing homes and other chronic-care facilities, and children 6 months – 18 years of age who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy are at increased risk from complications of flu. These complications can include bacterial pneumonia, dehydration, worsening of chronic medical conditions, sinus problems and ear infections. Again, some of the indication of high-risk sound familiar, don't they...like the list of folks at high risk from Covid?

My point is this – GO GET YOUR FLU VACCINE. We will be at double the risk of illness and possible death if we get both the flu AND Covid, but we at least have a vaccine for the flu and it is effective in preventing the illness in 40%-60% of the overall population. That is 40%-60% of us who will be at much less risk of death should we get Covid. GET YOUR FLU VACCINE if you haven't already done so. It may save your life!

Teresa Keller, Parish Nurse

MUSIC NOTES

October 2020 Musical Notes...

Our adult handbell ensemble resumed rehearsals again in September. We meet in the sanctuary balcony with ringers spread all the way across a 29 foot- span. Hopefully, during the month of October, we will be able to record some seasonal selections to be shared on some of our future On-line services of worship. Every member agreed to participate in this endeavor...so special thanks to: Chuck and Raini Kimball, Ann Miller, Elizabeth Bruchon, Julia Gunter, Diann Halverson, Janet Achor, and Kris Yavalak.

On Sunday, October 4 at 3:30 and weather permitting our church choir members will gather in the parking lot for a glorious reunion and to record musical selections to be utilized at a future date. We met in September with individual sections. Each member has their own musical score and has been practicing at home with a rehearsal CD. We will be distanced and masked for the recording session. Thanks to all of our choir members for participating in this ministry. They are truly a blessed group of individuals. Details of that event will appear in next month's edition.

Special words of thanks to all those who participated in summer (drive-in) services of worship; All those Lutheran drivers and passengers; Pastor Micah, for his leadership; Beka, communion assistants, Nathan and Amanda Kelly for saving

the music director's life, as well as all the instrumental equipment, with shelter from their tent...Also to Tim Baker who gives unselfish hours each week behind the scenes editing and posting word and musical portions for both drive-in and on-line services of worship. 2020 is certainly a year we will never forget!

Blessings!

Greg Cline

Notable Music Dates for October

- October 4, 3:30 pm— Church Choir recording session (in parking lot)
- October 11, 18, 25 @ 5 pm-Adult Handbells

Weekly Schedule-

This is the regular Schedule. When exceptions happen they will be posted on the website calendar and in weekly emails.

- **Sundays:**
 - Sunday morning- Virtual Worship posted during the morning to watch at your leisure
 - 10:30 am-Drive-In Worship with Holy Communion in the parking lot
 - 4:00 pm— Kid's Club Zoom Faith Formation (begins Sept 13)
 - 5:00 pm— HCY Zoom Faith Formation (Begins Sept 13)
- **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
 - 7:00 pm-Evening Prayer Gathering (weather permitting)
- **Wednesdays:**
 - 7:00 pm-Adult Faith Formation-Gospel of Mark class with Bishop Smith
- **Thursdays:**
 - 7:45 am-Morning Prayer Gathering (weather permitting)
 - 7:00 pm-Adult Faith Formation-class on Gratitude with Pastor Micah

*-On October 25, HCY will meet in person

We recognize and celebrate these birthdays in the month of October.

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

October 1	Ellen Flemming
	Andres Mendez
October 2	Garrett Buell
October 3	Lauren Shoemaker
October 4	Mark Reese
October 5	Larry Siglar
October 7	Catherine Carr
October 8	John Lee
October 10	Tim Kelly
October 11	Evan Howard
	Pat Roberson
October 14	Jean Ferguson
	Linda Grimsley
	Stephanie Hinricks
	Jeff Howard
October 15	Pat Speck
October 18	David Koehler
October 21	George Keller
October 22	Taylor Gross
October 23	Eva Kline
	Noah Rogers
	Carson Potter
October 24	Sarah Boyd
	Renee Carpenter
October 26	Carole Jolley
October 27	Kay Holden
October 28	Sarah Reese
	Andrew Bryant
October 30	Shawn DeNicholas
	Micah Kearney
October 31	Cody Koehler
	Gary Rogers
	Kurt Scholler



Grace and peace,

Most of us are tired of politics, and as someone who does not like conflict, I join those people in the feeling of exhaustion surrounding our current political climate. Politics seem more divisive now than any time I can remember, and it has become harder to name shared values as we watch politicians and citizens alike sacrifice much to defend their party and help their party keep or gain power. It is anxiety inducing, and on plenty of occasions I've advised people to step away from the news for a while because they have become overwhelmed. As tired as we may be, however, we cannot turn our backs on the process completely.

It isn't always easy to figure out how to faithfully be a Christian involved in politics. The first amendment establishing separation of church and state often makes us think our faith cannot inform our politics. What it actually does is say the government cannot influence our faith. Therefore, there are a number of ways that our faith can inform our politics. When faced with the question, Jesus gave a characteristically deep but vague "Render to Caesar what is Caesar's, but render to God what is God's." People have interpreted that in a variety of ways over the years, and while I tend to hear it as "everything is God's," it also seems to keep us in a place of tension where we exist both as citizens of the kingdom and citizens of this world. Martin Luther wrote about a "two hands" or "two kingdoms" theory, in which he states that with the right hand God governs by grace and gospel, extending mercy as a gift. With the left hand God carries out stewardship in the world by means of law and government. Luther claimed that one of the ways that God is active in the world in caring for Creation, including people, is through government, which means we cannot ignore government but should be engaged in the civic process.

There are many ways that we can do this. Some folks might feel called to public office themselves. Some folks feel called to service through the military or as first responders. Others might feel called to advocacy on behalf of specific issues or peoples. But the main way that we can all participate in this process is voting. I will not tell you who to vote for, but in an ELCA social message that recently was released it offered one main guiding question in assessing government's effectiveness: "Is the neighbor being served?" The message (found at elca.org/socialmessages) gives 14 guidelines to think through that question, but that one question gets at the root of something I have often thought about voting as a Christian. A vote is powerful, and as a Christian any power or privilege I have should not be used to serve myself, but to serve my neighbor.

As we approach the election in November we will get overwhelmed with people asking for our votes. I encourage you, as you wade through the propaganda, to consider how candidates will serve our neighbors, particularly those Christ most frequently calls our attention and hearts to: the vulnerable, the outcast, the poor, and the oppressed. If we believe that God works through government, then

through voting we who are citizens of both kingdoms have a part to play in shaping government to be about that work. So, over this next month and beyond, there may be plenty of times when you need to step away from the news cycle and political conversations for your own self care, and that's ok. Good even. But we should also be informed about the issues on the table and not only how they affect us, but how they affect our most vulnerable neighbors. So please, vote, so that your neighbor can be served.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Micah



Trunk or Treat

On October 30 (time yet to be determined) we will have Trunk or Treat at the church! It remains to be seen what this event will look like in the time of Covid, but at the very least we will have a Drive-In Style movie in the parking lot and get to show off our costumes. Chances are there will be some candy involved too.

Updated Prayer List

We are again circulating a prayer list each week and have started it anew. If you'd like someone included on the prayer list, please let the office know so we can include them. If you're able, a description of the prayer concern is helpful as folks pray.