

This past summer has been challenging, tough, full of grief, and full of creativity. The pandemic has done nothing if not challenge my creativity. I worked to provide faith-forming experiences that can happen at the dinner table, in the living room, and in the backyard. While none are the ideal, it has offered a beautiful opportunity to build faithful family time. That won't stop when school starts, when faith formation hours begin, and when we get back in church because the truth is that faith starts at home. We will continue to carry this theme with us from here on. Our faith formation hours will happen at home, with a bible, computer, and God at the center. We hope you will join us for what we think is the best way to grow our faith together.

On September 13th we will kick off our faith formation year with a Rally Day blessing. Bring your bibles, your devotions, your "Sunday School" materials and we will bless those supplies and materials. This year we are intentionally taking time to dwell in the Word during our Faith For-

Faithful Families Tip

Worship Bags

Create a worship bag that lives in your car or home worship space. Think about things that could help you and your children engage with worship. Maybe it's different items, maybe is a guided worksheet, maybe it's an activity.

mation time, and we want to bless the supplies and tools we use to do that. That evening our classes begin! Starting at 4 pm on the 13th we will have our Pre-K and Elementary age lesson via Zoom. Then at 5 pm we will have our HCY age group gather for quality time with each other gathered around scripture. Throughout the week our adult classes will be sprinkled in with our bible study on Wednesdays, and a video series class taught by Pastor Micah. An email went out with a survey on the best time for this last class to meet. Be sure to vote if you are interested in participating. While this doesn't look the same as it normally does, we know that God doesn't change, and we will continue to draw closer to our unchanging and ever-present God. I have been praying that these new ways of engaging our faith will be life giving for you and your family. I pray to see you in Zoomland!

Beka Forst, Youth and Family Ministries

Kids Worship Bulletins Coming Soon!

Coming September 13th Children's worship bulletins! We are thrilled to be experimenting with new ways to engage little bodies in cars, during worship! Our worship bulletins walk in tandem with our Faith Formation materials, Whirl. Each week we will have *Reader* and *Pre-Reader* options for our young members. Be sure to ask for them if your car is interested.



Lutheran Church of the

Holy Comforter COMMENT

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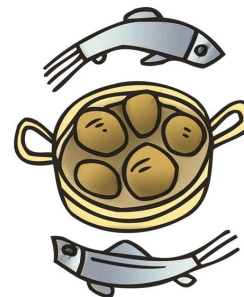
Micah Kearney, Pastor

email: mkearney@holyc.org

Greg Cline, Organist /Choirmaster

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

Teresa Keller, Parish Nurse



"Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law."

-Romans 13:10

Worship Opportunities for September

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.

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Church Office Hours

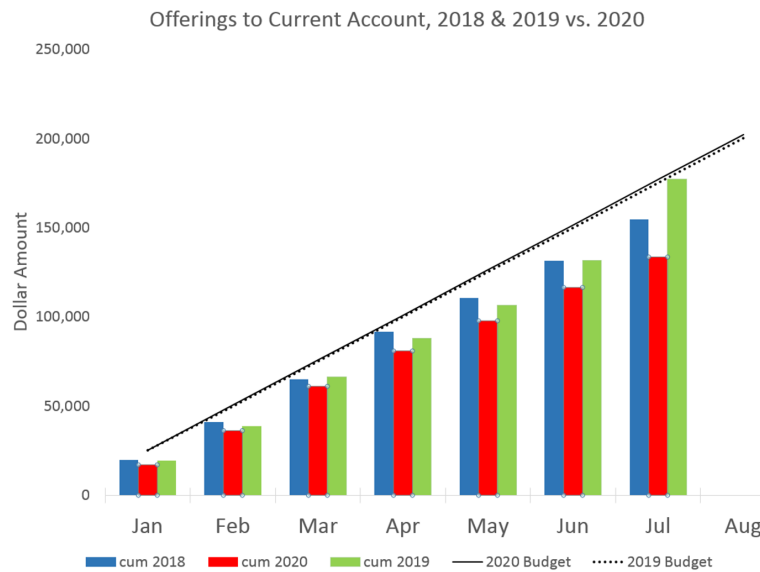
Monday-Thursday

8:30 am—3:00 pm

Holy Comforter Treasurer Report

Holy Comforter's operating deficit (expenses in excess of offering income) during July was \$5,446.51. The year-to-date deficit, through July 31, was \$15,260.72. Year-to-date spending, curtailed because of the pandemic, is \$28,138.36 below the amount planned in the 2020 budget. Total giving to support Holy Comforter's routine expenses during July was \$17,050.00. 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



Financial Stewardship

Abundant thanks are due for the continued faithfulness of so many members of Holy Comforter throughout this time of Pandemic in supporting the finances of the church. While we are losing money each month, we are in a much better financial situation than many other churches due to the faithfulness of members in their giving and handling of funds before this time, and the continued efforts through this time. We have had continued giving in support of our current expenses, as well as in our benevolence that supports people and ministries in need beyond our congregation.

Regathering for Worship Update:

Our council continues to look at our worship plans on a month to month basis, taking into account our Synod's recommendation to wait until Phase 3 to worship indoors, as well as looking at our local numbers. We all want to be back in the sanctuary, but want to be responsible as we weigh the timing. In the meantime we invite everyone to worship with us either through our virtual option, or in our Drive-In Worship on Sunday mornings, in which we've begun offering communion.



From your Parish Nurse:

September is upon us and school has started. I've heard a lot about the glitches going on with the options of both virtual and/or the combined option of in-person and remote. Facebook is alive with disgruntled comments. NOW is the time for all of us to pray for the administration, teachers and staff who are working diligently through this to give our children the best education they can get during this trying time. And patience...we can pray for their patience and for ours...we are all in this together!

One of the things we've all consistently said as we've struggled under the burden of this pandemic is that we miss people...we miss the connectedness of our Holy C family and of other friends and of relatives. Let's face it...we all need other people. We have a fundamental need to feel connected however, to varying degrees we are disconnected at the moment. But even in the best of times, though we love the connection, relationships can be hard. Sometimes we may not feel we have the time or the energy. I actually said that to a friend once...that I felt I wasn't a good friend because I often don't have the TIME to be a good friend!

But I came across this the other day and am going to share it with you...it's a wonderful set of "rules" for how to get along in our relationships:

The Ten Commandments of How to Get Along with People (Author Unknown)

1. Keep skid chains on your tongue. Say less than you think. Cultivate a soothing voice. How you say it often means more than what you say.

2. Make promises sparingly and keep them faithfully, no matter what the cost.

3. Never lose an opportunity to say a kind word to or about someone.

4. Be interested in others, their pursuits, their homes, and their families. Let everyone you meet, however humble, feel you regard him/her as important.

5. Be cheerful. Keep the corners of your mouth turned up. Hide your worries and disappointments under a smile.

6. Keep an open mind on all debatable questions. Discuss, but don't argue. It is a mark of a superior mind to disagree and remain friendly.

7. Let your virtues speak for themselves and refuse to speak about the shortcomings of others. Discourage gossip by changing the subject.

8. Have respect for the feelings of others. Wit and humor at the expense of a friend is never worth it.

9. Pay no attention to destructive remarks and personal attacks on you. Live so that no one will believe them. Remember, a common cause of backbiting is dissatisfaction with oneself.

10. Don't be concerned about your "just due." Do a good turn for the sake of being helpful.

Let's work on our relationship skills and be ready, truly ready for those wonderful in-person reconnections we will make when this is all over. But, until then, practice the dos and don'ts of a good relationship as we connect from afar! And remember...at least for now...it's an elbow bump, not a hug!

Teresa Keller, Parish Nurse

MUSIC NOTES

September 2020 Musical Notes...

As the unprecedented summer slowly exits, we await the wonderful cooler temps of fall, which come as a particular blessing for those participating in “exterior” worship this year.

I wanted to share some positive developments that are unfolding. First, our handbell choir is gathering together again beginning on September 13. We will social distance, wear masks, gloves, surgery gowns if necessary. We will be coming together (rehearsing) for the purpose of recording musical offerings to share with the community, and world, as we have been doing on line for a number of months now. Thanks to all of our adult ringers who have agreed to continue this ministry in a new and creative way.

Second, our church choir is embarking on a task to get together virtually beginning in October and eventually record anthem selections that can be used during the upcoming Christmas season. We are currently investigating the ways in order to make that happen.

Here is an unexpected outcome to this story. On a personal note, I became more than bummed out by the pandemic. Being a choir director with no choir is less than uplifting. I convinced myself that half the choir would not be back; that, having tasted “freedom” from the labor of rehearsals, my days were numbered.

We then began the personal contacts and an amazing thing occurred. Not only did virtually 100% reply in the affirmative, but we gained voices from folks who have not sung in our choir, as well as from choir members who have been on sabbatical for a time. My personal lack of faith brought me back to the reality of the human spirit, and the power of Christ in every aspect of our lives. We should never lose sight in the fact that God’s timing is not only best, but perfect.

So, technically at the moment we have more members on the church choir roll than we did prior to the pandemic. Hallelujah! To this team of music ministers I speak from my heart, and if I may for a grateful congregation. Thank you for your willingness to continue to persevere; giving unselfishly of your gifts and talents for the sake of the Kingdom. We long for the day when can all sing together again...With One Voice

Blessings!

Greg Cline

Evangelism/Outreach

Thank you for your support for the community through donations for SOCKS/BCO and in a quick response in buying school supplies for Page Primary students. We are continuing to have conversations in the community to figure out how best to support those struggling in these difficult times and will let you know as more opportunities to reach out as the Body of Christ for the world arise.

Weekly Schedule-

In mid-September we will see some additions to the schedule as we offer faith-formations opportunities akin to Sunday School.

- **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
- **Wednesdays:**
 - 6:45 pm– Zoom Bible Study (ends Sept 2)
 - 7:00 pm-Gospel of Mark class with Bishop Smith (begins September 9)

*There will be one more adult faith formation class. We are working to find the optimal time for it to meet.

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.

September 2	Preston Baker
September 3	Bryn Bailey Jarín Schmaltz
September 6	Alex Buell
September 7	Elizabeth Bruchon
September 10	Sherry Nelson
September 11	Hannah Carnes Madison Carr Maria Carr
September 14	Emily Koehler
September 16	Rick Whitener
September 17	Bill Hollar Tony Leitner
September 18	Winston Baker
September 20	Lyn Miller Beverly Reynolds
September 21	Horace Bean Heather Povinelli
September 22	Dean Burwell
September 23	Mary Page Anne Reese Rebecca Yount
September 25	Harold Singleton
September 26	Warren Heller Henrik Sarrazin Jeremy Scharpenberg
September 28	James Milton Beth Passer
September 29	Barbara Beale Claire Mitchell Luka Piscatelli



Grace and peace,

It became apparent in the National Conventions of the two main political parties that faith will be a part of the debates and discussions that take place between now and Election Day in November. Both candidates claim to be people of Christian faith, both claim to be led by their faith, and both have people of strong faith convictions supporting them. Which means faith and religion will be wrapped up in the political debates over the next few months. Which means faith and religion will be weaponized over the next few months, and something that we believe calls us to love one another and is healing for Creation will be used as a tool to drive us apart. Seeing that coming, I want to lift up a few points as we potentially wrestle with this.

The first point is that these politicians and political debates do not define your faith or your religion. While they will want you to pick a side as they claim theirs is the faithful party, another option is to reject the premise. Our faith should absolutely influence the way we vote, with our vote doing more than helping ourselves but also advocating for the vulnerable in society, but we should not let political parties with obvious motives dictate how our faith should move us to vote. Question their assumptions about your faith and what they think it means about you. If something doesn't feel right to you, talk to me or a person of faith you look up to and we can wonder about these things together.

If you're interested in what the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) says about a number of the hot button issues that will be brought up at some point throughout the election cycle you can look at ELCA.org for the Social Statements. They cover a variety of issues like Care for Creation, Criminal Justice, Abortion, Health Care, Death Penalty, and more. Some of them are a number of years old and in need of some updating, but they will show some faithful and scripturally founded ways to think through these issues from a Lutheran perspective.

One thing that I have appreciated about the ELCA as I have grown up in it and become a pastor in it is that there is room for wrestling. While I've spoken with people kicked out of other churches for questioning and wrestling with issues, the ELCA has often been a place where this has been encouraged. Within our own congregation we have a breadth of perspectives and stances which only widens as we move to the ELCA on a state and national level. I appreciate this because it allows me to struggle while knowing that I have a place where I am welcome, where I will not be cast out for questioning and doubting and ultimately growing in my faith. I also appreciate this because I think it is a wonderful witness to the world that even when we disagree on a wide range of topics, we believe the love of Christ

which binds us together is bigger than all of those things. That is an important witness in the world these days.

And remember that your faith is from God, a gift of the Spirit. May it be a gift that is used not to tear down, but to share the love and grace of God and bring healing to the world.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Micah



God's work.
Our hands.

Sunday, September 13 is "God's work. Our Hands. Sunday," when we join with other ELCA churches in service for the sake of our neighbors. This year we are lifting up opportunities to care for your neighbors where you are, with projects at home or with our family. Even as we continue to wrestle with this pandemic we are still the church, and our call as the Body of the Christ for the sake of the world remains! Look for more information on Facebook and through emails.

Discipleship Academy

Where Learning Becomes
Faithfully Personal.

New Confirmation Program!

We are excited to offer a new confirmation program this year! Inspired by meetings Beka had with leaders throughout the synod, Beka and Pastor Micah are working to offer a curriculum that looks much different than before. Students will need to acquire 16 total credits in order to be confirmed, with 8 credits coming from required classes and 8 coming from optional classes. The hope is this will give students a good foundation of our faith tradition while also allowing them to experiment with unique ways they may want to live out their faith as they become an adult in the church. The credits will come from a mixture of podcasts, classes on specific subjects (currently offered online but will be in-person when possible), retreats, camp, worship volunteering, music offerings, community engagement, and more. Beka has developed a website to support the program, and they will have a new topic to engage each month.