



I can't believe we have gone through another academic year and celebrated so many graduations! Speaking from my personal experience, I can't thank you all enough for the love and support.

The last three years of seminary have been a mix of fast- and slow-moving time, it was full of papers, lectures, sermons, classes, and church work. I was lucky enough to be loved through one of the most challenging and rewarding seasons of my life. Your accompaniment and encouragement while I learned what it meant to offer pastoral care and love, while learning to preach, and through a year of covid ministry hasn't gone unnoticed or fallen on deaf ears. Now that graduation has come and gone, I'm looking forward to the ministry we can do together in the future!

This year we also celebrated 4 graduates of our congregation. Catherine Carr is headed to University of South Carolina.

John Zander is headed to Gaston College. Mollie Caldwell graduated from NC State. Ashton Nault graduated from University of North Carolina in Wilmington. What amazing young people we have. They are bright, kind, brave, and going to do big things! The world is a better place with them in it. Happy Graduation Class of 2021!!!! We are so proud of you!

Beka Forst, Director of Youth & Family Ministries
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Faithful Families Tip

Bubble Prayer

Using a bubble wand blow bubbles. With one bubble say one thing you pray for or praise God for, and the next bubble say *hear our prayer*. Go back and forth between bubbles. Blow the bubbles towards the sky and imagine that they are floating up to God. The giggles and excitement of blowing bubbles will model fun in praying and praising God.



Lutheran Church of the
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Beka Forst, Director of Youth & Family Ministries
Teresa Keller, Parish Nurse
Dona Martell, Office Manager



2 Corinthians 6: 1-2

¹ God's co-workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. ² For he says, "In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you."

I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation.

Volume 42 /No. 6

Worship Opportunities for June

- Worship is offered each Sunday at 10:30 am.
- Outside Worship will be offered Sunday, June 6th and 20th at 8:30 am.
- If attending in person for either service, please register ahead of time through your email or with the church office.
- Each 10:30 am service is livestreamed on the website and transmitted to the parking lot over the radio and communion is served to those present.

Church Office Hours
Monday—Friday
8:30 am-2:00 pm

MUSIC

Notes

June Music Notes



Our church choir gathered together recently and recorded 10 songs which will be posted on our web site, you tube, and face book pages. We will also be utilizing these songs within our services of worship during the summer months. It was a welcome experience to come together in our worship space and record, (even greatly distanced throughout the nave, and masked.) This is not such a small task to overcome. In all of recorded history I am not aware of another time when church choirs were asked to not sing at all, or to only sing masked and distanced. Our ensemble, like most small choirs, has always clustered shoulder to shoulder in our gallery. This gives at least a fighting chance to hear the overall "blend" of each singer and not feel like one is singing alone. Nothing stifles congregational singing more than that individual feeling. Our wonderful sanctuary acoustically has enabled us over the years to overcome at least a bit of singing apprehension. We will continue to worship our Lord in many and varied ways that are available to us. We are grateful for the options we have. The choir membership at Holy Comforter has become a high point in the lives of many of our musical singers. Many times, on a dreary Sunday afternoon, we would arrive for rehearsal just, "beat to our socks," only to leave

on an absolute high. Studies have shown that singing is good for us, all of us, not just choir members. There's a raft of evidence for how it improves our sense of well-being, releases a flood of beneficial hormones, lowers blood pressure and boosts immune response. The choir brings fellowship, a reassuring ritual, the challenge of doing something novel. But all those things are nothing more than wonderful side effects and are not what totally draws our choir together...it is also the joy of giving through the gifts that we have been given.

So thank you "choir" for being my extended family over these many years. It is an honor to serve along by your side.

Greg Cline, Organist/Choirmaster



Covid Protocols beginning June 6th

Council met on May 25th and made some adjustments in our covid protocols. You may read Pastor Micah's letter to the congregation or watch his video for more information. It can be found in email or on the church's YouTube page. (See cliff notes of the video below)

- We will continue to mask while indoors. Masks will not be required outdoors unless in scenarios that do not allow distancing.
- We will raise the worship registration number to 65, still allowing distancing.
- We will sing! Continuing to follow the protocols of masks and distance allows us to sing in worship, an important part of Lutheran tradition and faith.
- We will continue to offer weekly parking lot and streaming options for worship, as well as outdoor worship on the first and third Sundays of each month.

Treasurer's Report for April 2021

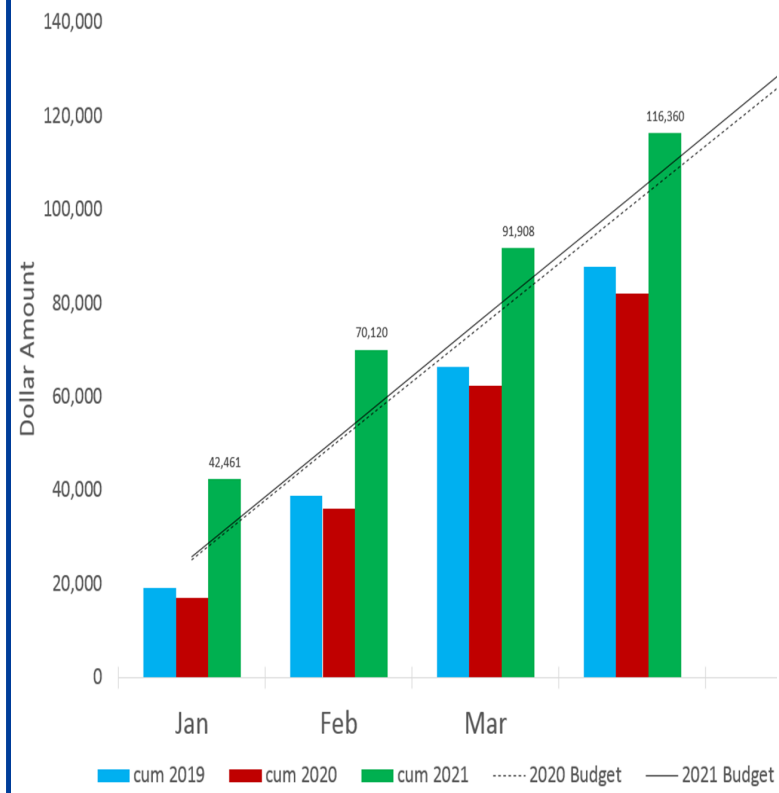
Holy Comforter's operating deficit (expenses in excess of offering income) during April was \$1,497.63. Total giving to support Holy Comforter's routine expenses for the month was \$21,452.00. The budget estimate of the amount needed each month in 2021 is \$25,767.00.

Year-to-date spending, through April 30, was \$9,522.71 below the amount planned in the 2021 budget. 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

Holy Comforter Treasurer Report

Offerings to Current Account, 2019 & 2020 vs. 2021





From Your Parish Nurse

Hello and Happy June !

Have you ever experienced chronic pain? Ever felt totally alone? Have you felt overwhelmed? Have you felt that God was not present? We've all been there. No one's life is free of disappointments or losses. We meet it in the death of a loved one, the loss of a job, the loss of a relationship, or the loss of a dream.

Suffering can be physical, emotional, or spiritual. Whenever we or someone we know is in any kind of pain or profound distress, we need to try to find reasons and meaning in the situation. It is normal to have a wide range of "roller coaster" emotions, including anger. You need someone with whom to "vent" and share these feelings. Also, remember that you may need to "lament" and be honest with God about all your feelings.

So, what do we do when we are suffering? Step number one is to **accept the fact that you are suffering**. Then God's work can begin.

Here are suggestions to do or remember in the darkest moments of your suffering:

1) Be honest. You can't pretend you're fine if you're not. Cry out to God about it. If it's sadness, confusion, doubt, anger – or all of that – take it to Him. He can handle it.

2) Get outside yourself and love others. Don't turn inward and fall into self-pity. Go outward and spend time with loved ones. They distract you from wallowing, and they help you see that life isn't just about the difficulties you're facing. There is laughter, love, and enjoyment to be found, even in little things.

3) Be intentionally thankful. Set aside ten minutes every day to write out what you were thankful for that day, even if it was really small. This really does shift your perspective. Sometimes it feels fake, but that's okay. Naming your blessings and being grateful for them isn't ignoring reality, it's accepting the greater reality that, while things may be hard, there is just as much blessing as there is struggle.

4) Get your creativity on. Do something productive and creative. Make something with your hands. Do things you've been wanting to do for a long time for yourself, and actually do them. Take your pain and make something beautiful out of it.

5) Just keep going. Sometimes people tell us "things will get better" when we are suffering. That doesn't necessarily just come into play immediately, though. But God always brings good out of anything and everything, especially the disappointments and sufferings that life throws our way.

6) Be still. It's tempting, but don't try to understand your pain or figure out what or why it is happening. If you feel like you're in a dark room with no windows or doors, don't bounce off the walls fighting it. Just feel it and ride out the storm. Be still, go into prayer and allow God to comfort you.

7) Ask, where is God in all this? God's gift to us when we are suffering – especially when we cry out – is not always an answer; it's the gift of Himself, His presence. Even when you don't feel Him there, He is. He weeps with you. God never promised us a pain-free life. But He promised us He'd be there in the midst of it.

So, if you are suffering, take that suffering to God. He is there for you!



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

- **Sundays:**
 - 10:30 am-Worship in Sanctuary
 - *Service livestreamed on website and transmitted by radio to parking lot.
- **Mondays:**
 - June PEP Exercise Classes are postponed
- **Tuesdays:**
 - Noon-Zoom lunch together. A time to check in and be in fellowship with one another.
 - 7:00 pm- Nar-Anon
- **Wednesdays:**
 - Adult Faith Formation video posted in afternoon
- **Saturdays:**
 - 9:00 am-Yoga for Holy C (Sign up to participate)

Events to Note:

- **Sunday, June 6th - Congregational Meeting before both worship services and on Zoom.**
- Sunday, June 6th – Worship Outside – 8:30 am
- Sunday, June 20th – Worship Outside – 8:30 am



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

We are thankful for the Life and Spirit of those we celebrate. May the blessings of God flow in the life of each of you.

June 2	Lucas Serrano
June 3	Ginny Shoemaker
June 6	Katie Piscatelli
June 9	Kaylin Leitner
June 10	Greg Garrison
June 11	Tonya Zander
June 12	Martha Hogge
June 16	Cooper Burwell
June 18	Dawn Fleming
June 18	Shaelie Scharpenberg
June 19	John Koehler
June 23	Eric Scholler
June 25	Wil Carpenter
June 27	Reid Passer
June 29	Gabriel Kearney
June 30	Leah Koehler

If we have unintentionally left any member's name off the birthday list, or if there are any errors, please call the church office.

Thank you, Dona Martell



FROM THE PASTOR

When I was in seminary my dad gave me a book that he said was top 5 in books that had affected his ministry, one called *Brother to a Dragonfly* by Rev. Will Campbell, a Baptist minister and civil rights leader. It is largely autobiographical, telling the story of his relationship with his beloved but troubled brother alongside the story of his work in civil rights. In one challenging but powerful piece of the book, Rev. Campbell tells about a huge shift in his work, deciding if he is going to affect change in the racism within folks, he needs to first show them he cares about them. He befriends members of the KKK, among others, not lying to them about his position, but out of a desire to come alongside them where they were with a hope to truly get to know them and care for them in order to bring about change.

That's an oversimplification of a very difficult relationship he worked to form, but it is a perspective that I appreciate and think would be helpful in the divided culture in which we currently live, whether the dividing line is along racial perspectives or something else. We have become well-practiced at judging people for their perspectives, at putting them in a box, making assumptions about the entirety of who they are, and then having strong emotions towards them based off of the small slice of their person that we have experienced and the large chunk we've assumed. There are terrible behaviors and perspectives that need to be called out and brought to light, but it is with a growing rarity that we use the gift of empathy to look through the behaviors to the motivating factors. We see the greed, racism, or anger that perpetrates atrocities, but we do not take time to see the fear, grief, or sense of loss that have gone unaddressed which motivate them.

While there may be times when a fierce defense of victims is needed to protect them, I still believe lasting change happens when we work to meet the needs of, and show love to, the perpetrators as well, when we address their fear, grief, or loss that is motivating the behavior. Deep, lasting, peace happens not when one group feels shamed or forced into a change of behavior, but when all people feel safe, cared for, heard, valued, and loved. To do this takes an empathy that does not excuse sinful or victimizing behaviors, but looks through them to empathize and see the whole person and realizing that that is a person who God loves, and we are called to love as well. Doing this hard work of empathizing means we are working for healing of the victim, of the situation, and of the perpetrator, and not just punishment as a resolution.

So, as we live in this divided culture, let us empathize and work to love our neighbors and our ene-

mies, so that we ultimately work for healing and reconciliation in the world. This isn't the only work we have to do, but in a polarized culture, I believe it is essential kingdom work.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Micah

Congregational Meeting Sunday, June 6th

"The Congregation Council has unanimously voted to recommend Beka Forst for a call as a rostered Deacon at Holy Comforter. Beka has completed her Masters from Wartburg Theological Seminary and is now eligible to be called as a Deacon in the ELCA. A call is different from hiring someone, and in order for Beka to be called to Holy Comforter, the congregation as a whole must vote to do so. To that end, on Sunday, June 6, we will hold a congregational meeting at both worship services (8:30 and 10:30 am) as well as over Zoom, to vote on extending Beka a call, as well as her compensation package. We encourage every member to be present for the meeting, either at worship or over Zoom, so that we will have a quorum to hold an official vote. See the email announcement for more details about the call and process."



PEP—People Exercising for a Purpose

PEP classes have been postponed for the month of June. Classes will resume when Teresa Keller, Parish Nurse returns from vacation.