



St. Luke Lutheran Church
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St. Luke Lutheran Church

Connect, Grow and Serve.

Parish Times August 2020



The Pastor's Perspective...

Dear Friends,

I pray this finds you well and safe.

Last night while I was out for my evening walk, I was listening to a podcast about social inequality and the racism our nation continues to respond to, especially in light of recent events around George Floyd's death and police brutality. The interview was with Chloe Valdary, a black writer and educator, who has based her work around the research she has done using pop culture and social media. This has informed the ways she teaches emotional and social well-being, character building and interpersonal growth. Chloe has come up with three pillars which lays the foundations of our work as people:

We are all human beings

Use criticism to uplift and empower, never to tear down and destroy

Lead with love and compassion

Her final words on the podcast were about living into being the beloved community we are called to be, echoing Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s vision. I was inspired and thought about these are words that the larger church could lean into.

It reminded me of the following scripture from 1 Peter 4: 8-11:

Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

With a smile on my face and inspiration in my heart, I came around the corner in my neighborhood and noticed a mom coming out the side door of a Suburban van with a very tiny baby on her shoulder. As she bounced the newborn, I stopped walking because I have not seen a person that little for a long time and this one caught my eye. He was draped over his mother like a blanket and had the most beautiful head of dark, tiny curls. Physically distant, we started talking about motherhood and the exhaustion that comes in these early days. We spoke like long lost friends, whose native tongue is "Motherese", the common language of those who know that the first few months of a child's life is defined by barely a couple of hours of sleep, feeding constantly, changing diapers, watching them grow and trying to sneak in a shower to get the smell of spit up off of you.

She laughed and said, "This is easy. I have twin four-year-old girls. Now, they were hard. It was a rotation in which they were each laid on two bouncy seats and all I did was feed, burp, change diapers and put one down, only to pick up the other one and do the same thing. That was my life for a year. And this one? Well, he's here because this world needed some more love. That's what I think. Love is what we all need these days."

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August Birthdays

- 2 Emma McGrew, Phillis Amlee
- 3 Kimberly Tyl
- 5 Sandra Berger
- 14 Thor Burchill-Riley
- 20 Doug Klein, Cathy Erickson
- 21 Kay Reich, Max Elliott
- 22 Dean Stadem
- 24 Sol Holmly
- 27 Becca Ruiz



August Anniversaries

- 21 Kay Reich/Charles Kernkamp: '82
- 30 Mary Dybvig/Ralph Skoe: '09

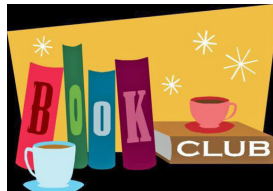


LOAVES AND FISHES Our heartfelt thanks to our July volunteers: Katy Eggert, Claudia Melbye, Joyce Bluel and Pr. Emily.



Farmers' Market

Our sixth annual Farmers Market is underway! It will run every Saturday, 8am to 1pm, through Oct. 3. Covid 19 precautionary measures are in place for your safety. Come and shop...visit with neighbors and peruse the lovely fresh fruits and vegetables from local farmers. Or better yet, come to volunteer, and get first choice of the produce. Interested? Contact Wendy at wlbjorklund@stcloudstate.edu.



Our next St. Mark/St. Luke Zoom Book Club meeting will be Wednesday, August 26 at 6:30 pm! All are welcome! We will be discussing "[A Good Time for the Truth: Race in Minnesota](#)": *"In this provocative book, sixteen of Minnesota's best writers provide a range of perspectives on what it is like to live as a person of color in Minnesota. They give readers a splendid gift: the gift of touching another human being's inner reality, behind masks and veils and politeness. They bring us generously into experiences that we must understand if we are to come together in real relationships."*

We plan to meet every six weeks, and we will take turns suggesting books to discuss. Hope you plan to join us!

Sue McNeill and David Nedrelow are collecting the photos for the 2020 self-produced directory celebrating the church family being united though apart physically. The deadline was July 31, but half the members have yet to submit a photo. It has been several years since we had a photo directory and this is a great year to produce our own. Easy process...no appointments, no dressing up, no sales pitch. Submit a recent photo or a selfie on the phone, indoors, outdoors, in the car...your choice. We just need to see your smiling face! Submit photos to suemc1493@gmail.com or davidned@mac.com.



(Pastor's Perspective continued from page 1.)

I smiled and nodded. I told her, "Yes, we all need some more love in this world, don't we? That and a heavy dose of compassion for one another." She smiled in agreement, and said, "Yes we love one another because it is all about the community, right?" As she turned back to put her little one in his car seat she said, "Nice to talk to you. Have a good night."

I walked away and thought about the power of an unexpected conversation on a warm, sunny summer evening. I thought about the assumptions I have made about people without knowing a thing about them. I thought about how important it is for us to connect, love and let compassion be the driver in the ways we speak to one another. I thought, God shows up and affirms human connection just when we need it.

Lastly, I thought about my own privilege as a white person, the history we are trying hard to un-do and sunk my feet into the words; above all, love each other deeply, because love covers a multitude of sin. Thank God for that.

Why? Because the mother of the beautiful baby I spoke with was black. Community in Christ was present as we stood there simply as two mothers, two human beings with love on our hearts.

As St. Mark and St. Luke communities proceed forward into the month ahead with all of the challenges that lie before us, I pray that we love each other deeply, assume the best about one another and use the time to be open to what God is doing in our midst. I believe blessings will abound.

May you know God's love and peace each day. You are all in my thoughts and prayers.

In Christ, Pastor Emily



I looked back at my first newsletter article in February (pre-pandemic) to see what I was anticipating for our church family this year and my role on council. My goal was to contact members we haven't seen for awhile and remind them we are still a church family whether we see each other every Sunday, or every month, or less during the summer when there is a cabin up north calling, or even a couple times a year for holidays, or rarely because of work or school schedules. I had to smile. Who could have guessed that in a few short weeks we'd see each other every week.....online, not in person? Glad to say the church family has stayed strong. There is a way you can help in keeping us in each other's thoughts and prayers. Our very special dual directory with St. Mark will let us connect with old friends and new friends. WE need to make this happen by providing a recent photo or a new cell phone photo to me or David NedreLOW **right now!** Thank you to all who have submitted a photo! However, there are still more than half of our church family who have not provided a photo for the directory. Since it is a self-produced directory, we are looking for casual photos of you and/your family. A selfie? Sure! The photo you used for your Christmas card? Absolutely! But please submit the photo as soon as you read this article and remind your friends or family to submit photos. The directory is whatever we want it to be. My vision is photos of all members, active or inactive. The printed portion will include some friends of our church family (as it does in our non-photo directories) to keep in touch with them. Please help us by reaching out to other members to help them find a photo or to take a photo to send in. Our deadline was July 31; however, we extended that to make sure we get as many photos as possible. Phone calls and emails are time-consuming for just two of us. David is re-locating for a job, but has volunteered to produce the photo section of the directory in August once he is settled. PLEASE help us create a church family directory for this special and "unusual" year!

In December, before the pandemic, Bishop Lull wrote "Tips For Saying Thank You as Good Stewards." It seems even more important as we begin our sixth month of isolation. Stewardship is not a committee. It is every member of our church who shares time, talents and financial support to keep our church family strong. In addition to daily prayers of thanks for what we have, she also suggests how powerful a short note of thanks to those you see offering time and talent to keep us close while apart. I strongly believe in the power of a card to say hi or thinking of you when it is unexpected. I try to send at least 5 cards a week to friends and family. Even more powerful could be a quick phone call to say hi. Just as we are the church, not our building...WE are the stewards of our church...each and every one of us. I am so grateful to all of you for sharing your strengths and time. Thank you!

Be safe and well.....wash your hands often....and please wear a mask! I wear one for you, please wear one for me.

Sue McNeill

ST. LUKE SAFE TEAM

Our Safe Team (Julie Ellingson, Sue Grzywinski, Jo Klein, Sue McNeill, Kay Reich, and Pr. Emily) continue to meet often to make sure we are ready with suggestions on how to re-open the church for services and keep everyone safe. We look for the most current information and suggestions for cleaning products, social distancing seating, plans for how we move about the church to keep safe, sanitizing products, and even contact tracing so we can contact everyone who attended a service if one of us becomes sick. We share information from the St. Paul Synod, the MN Dept. of Health, the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, MN Governor's daily updates, the World Health Organization and news articles. As for the most asked about concern, when will the church reopen, we are meeting with the St. Mark Safe Team this month to share all our information and discuss all options. If you have concerns, ideas, or want to be part of the team, please contact any member above. We are creating a shopping list (non-contact hand sanitizers, cleaning supplies, masks, etc.) and designing procedures for what needs to happen before, during, and after each service. The work we've been doing is not only for the first in-house service, but for each week. The Safe Team works with the Parish Board and the Council.



Musings from the Music Director

August is already here and normally I would be rallying my singers and ringers for a new music season, but as with so many things, this year is going to be different. There will be music though - creativity and technology are great tools for us this season and I look forward to working with singers in different ways to brighten our services. And a big thank you to everyone who sends in pictures for our offering every week, it is a blessing every week!

Be safe, be well, Rebecca Ruiz



Join us for VBS - Virtual Bible School!

This year we are bringing the fun to all! For six weeks leading up to Rally Day in September, we will be focusing on Random Acts of Kindness. Each week, we will meet, via Zoom, for a bible story and music, then families will be provided with something fun together. The congregations will be invited to participate as well with a fun Random Acts of Kindness Bingo! More information will be sent out the first week of August as we find new ways to learn, grow and serve physically distanced but spiritually connected!

We would like for the whole congregation to be involved in the scriptural theme for each week. The six-week sermon series will include everyone, so we can grow in our knowledge about these stories of kindness and discover new ways to share God's love. During VBS, we will be using the Jesus Storybook Bible to tell the core of the message. Of course, there are many stories of kindness throughout scripture, but here is what we will be focusing on each week:

August 9th: Story of Creation, Genesis 1-2

August 16th: Story of Noah, Genesis 6-9

August 23rd: Jesus is a Friend of Children, Luke 18

August 30: Story of Zacchaeus, Luke 19

September 6th: The Woman and her tears, John 12

September 13th: Feeding of the 5,000, Luke 9

(God's Work, Our Hands Day and Rally Sunday)

Saint Luke Appreciates Your Continued Offerings

Even though church services are currently suspended, you can still give to St. Luke to help support our mission to serve the people in our congregation and in our community. A new "Ways to Give" page on St. Luke's website explains how you can give in three ways—by mail, online, and using a mobile app.

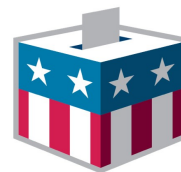
Giving online and through a smartphone or tablet is now possible because of St. Luke's new account through Vanco, a company that processes offerings electronically.

You can make electronic offerings using a credit or debit card or by withdrawal directly from a bank account (EFT transaction). EFT transactions are preferred because the fees are lower. For more information, go to our website (saintlukechurch.org) and click "Ways to Give" at the top of the page. Your gifts are appreciated



2020 US ELECTIONS

The Minnesota Primary Elections will take place August 11. St. Luke Church has been a polling location since 2004. We will once again open our doors for voters in August and November. This has been approved by the Council, with assurance from Ramsey County that safety precautions **such as masks and social distancing** will be enforced by the election staff, and our space will be sanitized by the election staff before they leave for the night. FYI.



Zoom Scripture Readers for August:

8/2	Sue McNeill
8/9	Bonnie Jellinek
8/16	Emily Elfritz
8/23	Myra Larson
8/30	Christine Olson

The Lord bless thee, and keep thee. ~Numbers 6:24