

MAY 2020

The Lord of...

LIFE LINE

Special Edition Newsletter of Lord of Life Lutheran Church



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What's normal?

by Pastor Paul

Have you wondered that? People are in a rush to return to "normal" but I'm not sure normal is what we think it will be. I think it will look like something new, don't you? That can be scary, especially if we fear change, but perhaps we can think about what scripture tell us to help ease our fears.

"And the one who was seated on the throne said, 'See, I am making all things new.'" - Rev. 21:5

I wonder what the "new" will look like. How will our life together change or be the same? Will we be able to let our guard down when we leave the house? (*cont'd page 2*)

It would be easy to get wrapped up in the what ifs and the maybes, or to be overcome by the fear of the unknown, so what if we take a moment to reset? If we believe that God is making all things new, if we believe in the resurrection of Jesus and the Easter hope we share, can we not also trust that somehow, some way, everything will be alright? Not normal as in, the way things used to be. But okay.

I believe that God is at work in our world already. Confirmation youth are doing things like making cards to send to shut ins and looking out for their neighbors. Hungry people are finding food in our little food pantry. And in spite of everything else that's going on, God's people are still gathering for worship and Bible study and to plan what's next.

Our hope is what drives us forward, our hope founded in Christ's love for us, in the grace of God for us, drives us to respond with what we have and who we are. That may look different. That may require something new of us, or for us to let go of what is comfortable. But I truly believe that God is at work, even in the midst of a pandemic, to make all things new. I look forward to discovering what that means for us in the months to come. Remember, God loves you, God is for you, and we are in this together.

Worship Online

Worship online is our current reality and we give thanks to God for our partnership with our area ELCA Congregations for the partnership we have forged to provide Sunday services.

Sunday Mornings at 9:00 a.m.

Link via our website | Phone in at 1 (312) 626-6799, then enter the meeting code: 887 508 411#

A NEW WAY TO MEET WITH COUNCIL ONLINE



From Council President Jon Dienst

Greetings Lord of Life Lutheran Church!

I want to update the congregation on an action that your Church leadership recently did to protect the congregation. As many of you may be aware there have been a number of stimulus packages released by the US Federal government in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. One of those packages called the CARES act provides assistance to small businesses and non-profits. The program was announced on Thursday March 26th to provide assistance to protect paychecks. This is known as the Paycheck Protection Program. The program provides a forgivable loan (essentially a grant) as long as employment is maintained for all employees.

The executive team for Lord of Life quickly made some inquiries with our bank and submitted an application. The church council approved the application. Lord of Life has received approximately \$25,000 as part of this program. I want to personally thank the council for quickly responding to this.

Applying for the forgivable loan was encouraged by the ELCA at both synod and national church levels.

We all know this is a stressful time for everyone, especially with finances. I hope this update helps relieve some stress. Please continue to give to Lord of Life as much as you can. Our mission continues and expenses continue. Council members have adjusted costs where we can in light of the situation.

*Thank you to mask makers who've provided masks for
the church and the pantry.*

Special thanks to Cartee & Toops families.

Feeding the Hungry

Kathleen and Tim Toops, Rita and Jon Dienst, and Dave King put on their masks and carried the food to St Luke's United Methodist Church downtown to serve a meal to neighborhood families. This is a long-standing tradition we are happy to rekindle at Lord of Life. Thanks, also, to The Weeks family for cooking. We will serve again this Fall, watch for a sign up later this summer.



Little Food Pantry (Neat story!)

Our little food pantry has been getting quite a workout of late. We are grateful to Susan Hansen for monitoring and refilling the pantry each morning. Last week, Susan was approached by a neighbor next to the church. The neighbor told Susan that she had noticed what we were doing and wanted to help. She gave Susan a check for \$50 to buy food for the pantry! Praise God!

An update from our treasurer

Here is the giving report for March. We will have an update on our financials once April giving and expenses have been reported. This update will be made available online.

March YTD	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2020 Budget	2020 Total Budget
Member General Giving	65,472	67,761	65,001	260,000
Hunger	507	338	375	1,500
Lent/Advent	620	643	1,000	1,300
Other Giving/Income	78	325	501	2,400
Total Income	66,677	69,067	66,877	265,200
Benevolence	5,077	5,202	4,926	21,000
Evangelism	402	0	940	3,750
Stewardship	515	429	312	1,250
Music & Worship	6,105	5,981	5,502	22,013
Faith Formation	1,300	125	2,325	16,700
Ministry/Pastoral	27,824	32,322	31,565	115,761
Church Home	15,784	10,421	9,999	46,800
Administration	10,515	9,479	8,559	34,230
Total Expenses	67,522	63,959	64,128	261,504
Net Gain (loss)	-845	5,108	2,749	3,696
Mortgage - (\$6,252/month)	18,756	18,756	18,756	75,024

Soap and Water

As I listened to the news the other day, I heard that one of the governors had issued a directive that no utility company in the state would be allowed to shut off water service to any of their customers, even if their bill had not been paid. This was in recognition of the fundamental need for water with the onset of COVID-19.

Water, clean water, is something we often take for granted, but with the coronavirus pandemic moving rapidly through the world, the life-saving significance of soap and water has become apparent. Not to diminish the crisis that we are presently facing here in the United States, but for many of our global neighbors without access to clean water, their entire lives have been a crisis.

On Sunday, March 22, we not only celebrated World Water Day, but it also marked the completion of our “Well Wishes” fundraising campaign. As of Sunday, March 15, we had raised a total of **\$5254.23**. Now, as you probably recall, life as we knew it went through many changes during the week of March 15 through the 22nd – we were all urged to socially distance ourselves and to try to stay at home, many businesses closed, people began working at home, schools were closed and the stock market took a major dive.

Even under these dire circumstances, our church office informed me that more donations had been sent to the church during that week. Even in the face of darkness, we find a light. Kindness and generosity continue to prevail.

Our initial wish was to purchase one well through ELCA Good Gifts, with the possibility of maybe two. Our wish has not only come true, but has multiplied more than two fold. Through the work and generosity of many, enough money has been raised to purchase two wells with additional seed money toward a third.

Next time you grab that bar of soap and turn on the water to wash your hands, know that our gift of clean water is going to not only change lives, but also save lives. Thank you for supporting this outreach project.

Sandy Heer and Mission and Outreach Committee

Resources for Faith in Your Home

Pastor Paul has curated resources for nurturing the gift of faith in your home. We have arranged to post our Taking Faith Home resource on our website under the **Faith at Home** card on the front page.

We are always updating links! Under the heading of **Kids and Faith** you will find a large number of resources for children and families. There are resources like coloring pages that are tied to the Bible readings for the week, and there are even resources for home schooling and education. If you have ideas or links to share, contact Pastor Paul.



Pastor Paul hosts a weekly Bible study online each Monday evening at 7p.m. You can join at anytime and the resources for the class are on our website under the Online Bible Study card on the front page.

You may phone in at 1 (312) 626-6799 and enter meeting code: 723 123 111

Keep Checking In

We are so grateful for you! We continue to hear stories of the connections you are making with each other by phone, text, and email. As we continue in this "lock down" phase of the pandemic, let's continue to reach out to each other and check in. If there is a need, share it with the church office and we will do what we can to meet it. We have folks willing to run errands, too.

How will we know we can worship in person again?

We have been working with area congregations and the Northeastern Iowa Synod leadership and the Synod Disaster Response Network to ask this very question. Though we all want to be together, in person, we also recognize that one of the greatest witnesses to our faith right now may be staying apart. Caring for others by distancing seems counter-intuitive, but it truly is the way that we can love our neighbor when faced with the spread of the virus.

Councils and pastors will continue to evaluate, based on the recommendations of health officials and the prescribed criteria for gathering in person, to determine the safest way and time for us to resume worship together, in person. We will evaluate, next, at the end of May. In the meantime, we are blessed with the ability to gather for worship online and by telephone each week. We look forward to seeing each of you in worship.

Our sympathies to...

Barb Croghan on the death of her cousin Janice.

In our prayers...

Betty and Dan Westemeier have both been diagnosed with the coronavirus. Dan remains hospitalized as of this newsletter publication and Betty is at home. Elenor McGrath is struggling and family are not permitted to visit at Bethany. We pray for all who are in need and entrust our prayers to God.

Volunteer Opportunity

At this point, if you are interested in volunteering for the Beyond The Game events 8/12 - 8/15, please follow the link below and fill out the volunteer form on their website to subscribe to the email list. You will then receive updates on scheduling and details on the number of volunteers we will be needing and the shifts/times available throughout the four-day festival in the upcoming months.

Lord of Life member, Roman Weinberg, Director of Operations,
Go The Distance Baseball, LLC

https://dyersville-events.volunteerlocal.com/volunteer/?id=46538&start_over



Welcome Dayna!

Dayna Lapidus joins our Lord of Life family as our new administrative assistant. Dayna started on Wednesday, April 22nd and is training with Grace. Dayna will work Monday thru Friday 9:00am-3:00pm.

In the Mail...

Though we primarily share resources and updates electronically, if you are unable to access the Internet, please contact the office to arrange to have items mailed.



Lord of Life
Lutheran Church

2899 Hales Mill Road
Asbury, Iowa 52002
563.582.7371
office@lordoflifedbq.org
www.lordoflifedbq.com