

THE LAMP

A Monthly Publication of American Lutheran Church

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



LAMP NEWSLETTER

2020 EDITION ISSUE 488



LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

Dear friends in Christ,

There is a lot going on right now. There's so much going on right now. We are in the midst of a global pandemic of a new coronavirus, and the efforts to fight this pandemic have changed everyone's life.

The pandemic and its economic effects have hit Black Americans especially hard. Now, throughout the country, people are protesting the deaths of Black Americans like George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, who died at the hands of police officers. We hear news of peaceful protests but also news of riots and looting. We are called to come to terms with our country's systemic racism, which is a very difficult and painful thing to do.

I find myself wanting to have something really insightful and helpful to say, but I can't find the words. I'm overwhelmed. I'm not getting enough sleep, because our underweight baby was released from the hospital with orders to be fed through her NG tube every 3 hours, round the clock, until the end of June. Last week, after very heavy rains, water came into the basement of the parsonage, so we are also dealing with a flooded basement. There's just a lot going on for my family and for our world.

So I don't have the mental energy to think of something brilliant to say. But I wanted to teach you about Spoon Theory.

Christine Miserandino is a woman who suffers from Lupus, and she came up with Spoon Theory as a way of describing to her friend what it is like to suffer from a chronic illness. She handed her friend a bunch of spoons, and said that they represent finite amounts of energy. Every task, often every detail of a task, takes a spoon, meaning a certain amount of energy. So a person with chronic illness needs to plan their day based on how much energy they will have. If they get to the end of the day and only have a little bit of energy, like, they might have enough energy to cook dinner but not to clean up afterwards, they would say that they only have one spoon left.

This is a helpful thing to think about not only for those who suffer from chronic illness, but also for those who have gone through or are going through trauma experiences. And this pandemic is causing us all to go through a collective trauma experience, although the trauma is more acute for some than for others.

Have you tried to read a book during this pandemic, but not been able to focus or concentrate on all the sentences? Have you gone through an entire day feeling like you just didn't have the energy to get anything done? It's because you don't have enough spoons that day. But that's okay.

This is why I love being a Lutheran. Lutheran theology teaches us that God's saving presence is not dependent on anything that we do; it is based on God's love for us. This means that even on the days that I'm feeling overwhelmed and I don't have the spoons to write something brilliant about what's going on, or to clean the house, or to understand a book I want to read, it's okay.

God is still present with me. God still loves me. And God loves you, too.

Christ's peace,
Pastor Kristen

**American Lutheran Church
April Council Meeting
April 13, 2020**

President Maureen Even called the meeting to order electronically on Zoom at 6:35 p.m. Present on Zoom were Maureen Even, Pastor Kristen Rod, Mike Waring, Loren Corkery, Kaye Jones, Sara Borland, Christa Leach, and Sheila Collins. Absent was Dan Kopplin.

Maureen Even led devotions from Psalm 121 and Pastor Kristen shared a prayer.

Secretary's Report - Sara Borland made a motion to accept the minutes from the regular council meeting of March 9, 2020 and the minutes from the special council meetings of March 14, 2020 and April 6, 2020. Second by Kaye Jones. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report - The checking account balance at the end of March was \$4805.34. The amount of \$1180.00 was transferred from the memorial fund to the current fund. The memorial committee will designate the interest on the memorial fund to go to the current fund at their next meeting. Mike Waring made a correction on his reporting of the total for synod benevolence in the budget vs. actual report from \$2221.00 to \$2241.00. Christa Leach made a motion to accept the treasurer's report with the correction mentioned above. Second by Sara Borland. Motion carried.

Committee Reports:

Memorial - No report.

Be Our Guest - No report.

Abundant Life - No report.

Hospitality - No report.

Parish Ed - Vacation Bible School scheduled for July is on hold for now due to the pandemic. Sunday School classes are also on hold, pending further directions from the Governor of Iowa.

Property - Updates to the Property Committee Report from March 2, 2020 are:

1. Sunday School side men's toilet tank parts have been replaced.
2. Fireside/narthex door latch has been repaired.
3. Balcony clock has been replaced.
4. A new spring-cleaning date is to be determined.
5. The old vacuum could be taken to the city clean-up day this summer.
6. Ray will sand the frame for the South East door.
7. Ray did some spring yard clean-up and trimming in late March.

Scholarship - No report.

Technology - No report. Good job Pastor Kristen and thank-you to Charlie Rod for all his expertise and assistance.

Worship and Music - Several hymns for future use, have been recorded by Jessica Saunders and Shirley Bergman, made possible by Charlie Rod.

Youth - No report.

Pastor's Report - This past month has been one of drastic change for our world, while the COVID-19 pandemic really took hold and we began formal social distancing measures and in-person gatherings are canceled until further notice.

We have moved our worship services to online platforms - YouTube videos available through our congregation's website and Facebook page. These videos are made under a privacy setting. They can only be viewed through a link and not directly on YouTube. (I am extremely grateful to Charlie for his knowledge and expertise regarding audio and video recording and editing!) These have been well received, and some of the folks who have not been able to attend worship have enjoyed being able to watch our online services. Jessica mails an order of worship, plus a copy of my sermon, to the people in our congregation who do not have internet access so that they can participate as well.

We had collaborative online services with FPC and UMC for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday-- it was nice to be able to collaborate with Pastor John and Pastor Alex. All the churches in the Jesup ministerial are trying to be aware of what the needs are in our community and what our churches might be able to do to meet those needs.

I continue to serve on the board for the Independence Food Pantry. They are continuing to operate but have reduced their volunteer staff, but instead of their usual shopping-style, they have to just provide prepackaged boxes of food to people. They request that any donations in the near future be monetary donations rather than food.

Now that Lent is over, it's time to resume the Wednesday evening Confirmation classes. I intend to teach Confirmation via Zoom, and we will keep the same schedule as before, with a few weeks of classes before the summer break.

The first week of May, we will try having the Thursday morning Women's Bible Study via Zoom. I may try to initiate more church activities via Zoom in the future, depending on how long we have to not gather in groups.

I am available for pastoral care by phone and hope to call our shut-ins once a month since I cannot visit them in person. If you know of someone who could use a pastoral phone call, please let me know.

New Business:

We have at least 5 members in the May 17, 2020 graduating class. If we cannot have in-person worship by then, Pastor Kristen would like to do an on-line slide show with their pictures and career goals. Maureen volunteered to send congratulation cards with gift certificates.

Old Business:

Pastor Kristen has completed a draft of the welcome letter to inactive members and shared this with the council. When completed it will be sent on church letterhead so the email address will be included and signed by Pastor Kristen only. There are 217 inactive members from 92 households. Mike Waring will help Maureen Even go through the list prior to send out to remove the names of any known deceased, moved, or transferred members.

Determining a “strategic budget plan” has been hampered by the current COVID -19 pandemic. Our efforts so far include:

1. Consecration Sunday
2. Budget watch
3. Application for forgivable CARES ACT Paycheck Protection Program loan of \$11,148.00.
4. Welcome letter to inactive members.
5. 2021 possibility of Pastor’s family on husband’s health insurance.
6. Possibility of having a budget committee open to the congregation for new insights.

Correspondence - none.

Deacon assignments (if in-person worship):

May 3 - Maureen Even

May 10- Mike Waring

Mike Waring made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:43 p.m. Second by Sara Borland. (This motion and all motions made electronically will be ratified when we are able to meet again in person). Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheila Collins,

Secretary



Ringing of the Bell: Every night since the pandemic caused us to have to physically distance ourselves, members of our congregation have been ringing the bell at 8 pm as a remembrance to pray; pray for our leaders, pray for our essential workers, pray for each other. It's also a reminder that even though we are not physically together, we are still the church. Thanks to those families that have rung the bell (some not pictured). If you'd like to participate, please reach out to Shirley Bergman to get on the schedule. Or simply pray with us at 8 pm whether you can hear the bell or not.



		4/30/2020	3/31/2020	2/29/2020	1/31/2020
CHECKING ACCOUNT					
Beginning balance 4/01/2020		\$3,995.34	\$4,128.83	\$6,799.57	\$8,247.85
Receipts					
Deposits		\$12,716.00	\$9,723.80	\$8,204.84	\$9,318.00
Transfer from Improvement		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$187.04
Transfer from Memorial		\$0.00	\$1,180.00	\$316.14	\$0.00
Transfer from Community Meal Fund		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Transfer from Youth Ministry		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Transfer from Benevolence		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$74.25	\$0.00
Transfer from Line of Credit-Current Fund		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Transfer from Line of Credit-Improvement Fund		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
	Sub Total	\$16,711.34	\$15,032.63	\$15,394.80	\$17,752.89
Expenditures					
Checks		\$4,552.52	\$6,358.15	\$5,877.61	\$6,241.41
EFT payments		\$3,997.12	\$3,984.14	\$3,983.36	\$3,981.91
Transfer out for Simply Giving		\$550.00	\$440.00	\$450.00	\$525.00
Transfer to Memorial Fund		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Transfer to Improvement Fund		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Transfer to Benevolence		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Sabbatical Set Aside		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$600.00	\$0.00
Pay to Line of Credit-Current Fund		\$100.00	\$255.00	\$355.00	\$205.00
Pay to Line of Credit-Improvement Fund		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Transfer to 3937 for correction		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
	Sub Total	\$9,199.64	\$11,037.29	\$11,265.97	\$10,953.32
Ending Balance 4/30/2020		\$7,511.70	\$3,995.34	\$4,128.83	\$6,799.57
ACCOUNT BALANCES					
Improvement Fund (3911)		\$13,371.78	\$12,926.78	\$12,528.68	\$12,088.68
Memorial Fund (3929)		\$6,163.16	\$6,163.16	\$7,341.37	\$7,657.51
Designated to Other Programs	\$5,904.63				
Undesignated Funds	\$258.53				
Community Meal Fund (3937)		\$854.60	\$854.60	\$854.39	\$819.39
Youth Ministry (5441)		\$4,694.59	\$4,694.59	\$4,694.59	\$4,694.59
Sabbatical Set Aside (3945)		\$3,005.87	\$3,005.87	\$3,005.19	\$2,405.19
Checking Account		\$7,511.70	\$3,995.34	\$4,128.83	\$6,799.57
Total		\$35,601.70	\$31,640.34	\$32,553.05	\$34,464.93
Banklwa Line of Credit - Current Fund		(\$9,565.00)	(\$9,665.00)	(\$9,920.00)	#####
Banklwa Line of Credit - Improvement Fund		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total		\$26,036.70	\$21,975.34	\$22,633.05	\$24,189.93

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Prayer Chain: With all of the changes and anxiety that Corona Virus has brought with it, many of us feel helpless, worried and alone. We at American Lutheran are starting a Prayer Chain. A few of us have joined together to pray for each other and would love to have you as part of the chain. Currently we are contacting each other either by email or a phone call, which ever you prefer. American is a worshipping family and many things happen in each part of this family that can be prayed about. Currently we are joining in prayer when someone, or a member of their family, asks for specific prayer. When we are able to join in small groups Tuesday mornings will be a time to bring prayer concerns while the Prayer Shall group meets. While we are all welcome and encouraged to pray for each other at any time we are not trying to make anyone uncomfortable by adding them to the prayer list without their knowledge. Some examples would be surgery, medical tests, death of a family member, the joy of a new birth, CoVid 19, safely opening the church and schools and on and on. There are also many blessings that we can share and give thanks to God for these blessings.

If you would like to be part of this prayer chain, please contact Kaye Jones either by phone 319-334-3783 home phone, 319-327-6118 cell phone or email tomjones@indytel.com. There is so much power and comfort in prayer and we can join together as a way of caring for and loving those we love.

Budget Committee: The Church Council has been working on producing a strategy plan for our financial needs. When funds are available we have been trying to pay on the loan whenever possible. Some of our church members have also designated funds specifically for that purpose as well. We have discussed possibly having fundraisers, bazaars etc. when we would be able to open our doors again to the community.

In April we sent letters of encouragement to our inactive family members. We are still planning to have a Consecration Sunday in October to help us plan next year's budget. We are still looking at the possibility of Pastor Kristen transferring her insurance coverage to her husband's insurance.

In April we also applied for the CARES ACT Paycheck Protection Program loan. Our loan was approved on May 5th in the amount of \$16,984.00. The loan may be forgiven according to the CARES ACT if we follow their guidelines. We have eight weeks from May 5th to use these funds, which would be until June 30th. The council has decided that the funds that aren't used by June 30th will automatically be returned to the bank. The amount of the loan covers the average of all employee salaries, health insurance and a portion of Pastor's retirement for 2 ½ months. We will be diligent in our financial record keeping to make sure the guidelines are being followed according to their procedures.

We would also like to create a Budget Committee of 5 to 6 church members. They would assist the church council in strategic planning for our budget. We would meet two, maybe three, times after Consecration Sunday to plan the next year's budget and make recommendations to the council. If there is anyone interested in being on the committee or just have some ideas you would like the council to consider, please let us know by contacting anyone who is currently on council, Pastor Kristen, Mike Waring, Loren Corkery, Sheila Collins, Sara Borland, Kaye Jones, Christa Leach, Dan Kopplin or Maureen Even.

Reopening Response Plan Created

Dear members of ALC, after the Governor began reopening plans for the state of Iowa, the Council designated a group of seven members & staff to meet via Zoom and develop a reopening plan for the church facilities and in person worship. The committee was guided by Pastor Mark Anderson, the Synod Staff representative on the Synod Disaster Response Team, who presented viewpoints and guidelines from which to work and guide our plans.

The committee has presented the Council with a proposed four phase reopening plan based on data and guidance from the state and local health officials, **keeping at the forefront the safety and well-being of our members for each decision and phase.**

This document will be discussed and voted on during our next Council meeting on June 8. Once approved, it will be posted immediately to our church website and mailed to those who do not have ability to access it online. We look forward to the day that we can again meet safely together, but until then, please remember that WE are the church, not the building.

Reopening committee:

Mike Waring

Maureen Even

Pastor Kristen

Shirley Bergman

Jessica Saunders

Kristi Clayton

Sara Borland

Pastoral Care: Pastor Kristen is available for pastoral care by phone at 563-212-1366.

Call to Prayer: We are ringing our church bell at 8pm as a call to prayer during this time of social distancing. If you are interested in ringing the bell, please contact Shirley Bergman at bergmansa@hotmail.com.

Even in these difficult times, we remember that all that we have is a gift from God. I encourage you to practice both gratitude and generosity with these gifts. If you are able, remember American Lutheran Church in your generous giving. Offering can be mailed to the church or given through the website. Thank you!!

An update about Jesup Community-Wide VBS-- we have decided that this year instead of doing a traditional VBS, we will be hosting an online/virtual VBS called Compassion Camp!! Details are still being figured out, but this VBS will have openings, songs, Bible stories, and activities, just like regular VBS, only they'll all be online! We'll have a closed Facebook group for those who would like to participate, where all the videos and materials can be found. And our timeline will look different-- rather than having one jam-packed week, we will offer one lesson a week for several weeks in July. We hope that this will give families more flexibility with when and how they participate. Watch our Facebook page for more upcoming details!

Jesup Ministerial Summer Food Program: We will be working with the other churches to provide boxes of food for families in need this summer. Most of our food will be purchased from the Northeast Iowa Food Bank this summer, so if you would like to donate toward that effort, you may give through ALC; please mark "Summer Food Program" on your donation. We will be organizing the boxes at the St. A's school gym on the afternoons of June 10, June 24, July 8, July 22, and August 5, and then bringing the boxes out to peoples' cars those evenings. Please let me know if you would like to volunteer with the organizing crew.

Be Our Guest: It is with a heavy heart that the Be Our Guest Committee has decided it is time for our twice-monthly meals to be discontinued. We have enjoyed all the fellowship that these meals have provided us and other members of our community. We give thanks to all who have helped with the food preparation, serving and cleanup in the past several years.

God's Blessing from the
Be Our Guest Committee

From Syd Brinkman, Vice-President of the Northeastern Iowa Synod: Your Northeastern Iowa Synod council has met several times over the course of the last months looking to the future, listening to the synod and medical expert leadership, and have made many tough decisions. Saturday, May 30th, the council approved a motion to postpone the 2020 Synod Assembly to the 2021 Synod Assembly; approved a motion to hold the Bishops Election at the Synod Assembly 2021; and to initiate the consultation process with Presiding Bishop Eaton to provide an interim Bishop for the Northeastern Iowa Synod.

Also, in the description of the re-opening stuff, after Pr. Mark Anderson's name, please add "the Synod Staff representative on the Synod Disaster Response Team"

EVENTS via ZOOM or ONLINE

Sunday, June 7: worship online via the YouTube link, or the church's website or Facebook page

Sunday, June 14: worship online via the YouTube link, or the church's website or Facebook page

Sunday, June 21: worship online via the YouTube link, or the church's website or Facebook page

Sunday, June 28: worship online via the YouTube link, or the church's website or Facebook page

Sunday, July 5: worship online via the YouTube link, or the church's website or Facebook page

Sunday, July 12: worship online via the YouTube link, or the church's website or Facebook page

Sunday, July 19: worship online via the YouTube link, or the church's website or Facebook page

Sunday, July 26: worship online via the YouTube link, or the church's website or Facebook page

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thank You:

"Thank you for the money to Kwik Sar. I really appreciate the though." ---From Heath Wyant

"Congregation members, Thank you for the gift card to Kwik Star! It will be put towards gas to get to campus! I will be attending Hawkeye starting this summer!" – Thank you Lainy Bahe

Homebound members:

Mary Jo Sullivan is at Grand View in Oelwein
Marilyn Shultz is at Winding Creek Meadows in Jesup

Military members:

Jordan Leach is in the Air Force and is currently stationed in Sioux City, IA.

If you know of anyone else serving in the armed forces, please contact the church office (secretary@americanlutheranjesup.org) or (827-6626). We'd like to remember them in our prayers.

Technology Help: If you are experiencing technical/technology difficulties during these unprecedented times - such as viewing or hearing our online worship, would like help attending a church meeting with Zoom, or setting up online giving, please reach out to Sara Borland (319-230-8223) and she'll do her best to help!

Women's Bible Study: We will be continuing the Women's Bible Study over the summer this year, using the Bible studies from the Gather magazine. Bible Study will take place on Thursday, June 4, at 9:30am, via the platform Zoom. People can join on their computer at the following link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89315380580?pwd=OVppYU9ZMVN1b0VhZnRhaXVFNjY1Zz09>

Meeting ID: 893 1538 0580

Password: 030596

You may also join by calling +1 312 626 6799 at the appropriate time.

Celebrations

June Birthdays

Justin Leach	6/4
Cindy Gosse	6/5
Mary Adams	6/6
Loren Corkery	6/6
David Ruckdaschel	6/9
Leonard Ohl	6/10
Sheila Collins	6/11
Alan Wright	6/11
Robert Bergman	6/13
John Bergman	6/16
Barb Mostek	6/20

June Baptisms

Lydia Emme	6/2
Josie Loyd	6/17
Christa Leach	6/18
Sharon McAtee	6/18
Hannah Mihm	6/18
Jenifer Wyant	6/22
Ronald Bushkofsky	6/24
Riley Mihm	6/24
Monette Colton	6/28
Alyssa Hoey	6/30
Kristin Hoey	6/30

June Wedding Anniversaries

John & Heather Bergman	6/12/2004	16
Travis & Christa Leach	6/14/1997	23
Derek & Sarah Maeder	6/14/2003	17
Alan & Joyce Wright	6/17/1956	64
Anthony & Melissa Bahe	6/19/1999	21
Loren Corkery & Jessica Saunders	6/24/2017	3
Scott & Marcia Riggs	6/26/2010	10
Kenny & Teri Schares	6/30/1984	36

July Birthdays

Susan Bowers	7/3
Crystal Lysne	7/6
Gene Waring	7/14
Jenna Tolle	7/16
Monica Hill	7/23
Wayne Schneider	7/26
Austin Ohl	7/27
Dar Thompson	7/28
Doris LeBahn	7/29
Beth Stanek	7/29

July Baptisms

John Bergman	7/3
Robert Bergman	7/4
Laurie Even	7/7
Alan Wright	7/7
Sheila Collins	7/11
Wade Putnam	7/11
Katey Niichel	7/13
Mary Adams	7/18
Justin Leach	7/27
Jim Gosse	7/31

July Wedding Anniversaries

Bill & Laurie Even	7/17/1982	38
Brian & Monica Hill	7/23/1994	26
Tom & Sue Hoey	7/25/1992	28



#separate together