

From our Pastor

St. John Lutheran Church Messenger

Week of June 21, 2020

"One body in Christ, Growing, Living and Sharing God's Love"



Even the hairs of your head are all counted. And if you are losing those hairs....God still knows! It is almost too remarkable to imagine a love that knows that deeply. And even more remarkable to know a love that **cares** enough to know you that deeply. And yet, that is what Jesus tells us as He describes God's care for us, his beloved children.

It is a fitting Scripture passage for a Father's Day weekend. Someone once said that "Mother's day lasts a weekend but Father's day only lasts as long as it takes to unwrap a tie!"

I hope that isn't true! If you are a dad, I hope you remember that God has placed you in an important role as a father. And, pray that you feel celebrated for your love, sacrifice, and care for your children [young and old!]. A blessed and happy Father's Day to each and every dad!

We picture God as our Heavenly Father and are blessed if that is a helpful image in our lives. We weep for those who don't see it as helpful, whose earthly fathers have somehow tarnished that image. We pray for strong families everywhere and for the support they need to be whole and healthy families.

One of my only pictures I have with me and my dad, is the picture of him holding me as I "danced" on his feet. I must be about 3 in the picture. My dad only lived 4 more years after that picture was taken. I'm not sure if I remember the day or just the memory of that picture. But, I do remember what it felt like to "dance" with the strong hand of my dad guiding me. It is a treasure. Dads have a lasting impact in the lives of their children.



I remember that I had to “let go” and let dad lead to be able to stay in step with him. Oh, but how hard it is for us to let go. Especially as adults. As children, we seem to be able to trust enough to let go. But, as adults...our grip grows ever more clinched and we forget to TRUST the One who holds us.

That forgetting and the importance of remembering who holds us will be the focus of our time together in worship this weekend.

Join me and the rest of the St. John faith community at 10 AM online on Sunday as we look at Psalm 16 and Matthew, chapter 10. We will worship online--outside, to once again, be reminded of the vastness of God’s creation and the mighty works of His hands.

In these beautiful days of summer, especially this year, when so much has been taken away from us...it is good to gather and remember all that God has given us! It is good to remember that in the midst of change and uncertainty...our God remains steadfast and certain.

Thanks be to God for the beauty of the earth and for all His many, many blessings! Including loving, caring, faith-filled fathers!

A Very Happy Father's Day to all the Dads!



Lord, hear our prayer...



Bruce,

prayers for healing

Shirley

prayers for healing

Email your prayer requests to: churchoffice@green-church.org

with the subject line: Prayer Request

We need plastic storage totes. If you have any extras---please consider dropping them by church.

Leave outside the Preschool door. Totes must have lids. Thanks!



Volunteers needed for Ruby's Pantry We especially need Jr.-Sr. high students to help us load cars. Email the church office if you can help. churchoffice@green-church.org



Ruby's PANTRY
RUBY'S POP-UP PANTRY IS COMING TO ZIMMERMAN, MN
TUESDAY, JUNE 23RD
3:30PM - 5PM
LOCATION UPDATE!
ZIMMERMAN CITY PARK
25850 MAIN STREET
ZIMMERMAN, MN
\$20 CASH DONATION PER SHARE
Guests Will Receive an Abundance of Grocery Items Including Meat, Frozen Foods, Dairy Products, Bread, Assorted Pantry Groceries & Snacks

This will be a **DRIVE-THRU** Pop-Up Pantry to limit any exposure between guests & volunteers. Guests will stay in their vehicles & shares will loaded directly into your vehicles.

Ruby's Pantry is for EVERYONE looking to extend their monthly grocery budget. There is no income or residency requirement.

THERE IS A \$20 PER SHARE DONATION. PLEASE HAVE YOUR \$20 CASH DONATION READY FOR THE VOLUNTEERS. No One will be Turned Away!

Questions? Email info@rubysheart.org or Call (651) 674-0009

Scripture Readings: 3rd Sunday after Pentecost
June 14, 2020

First Reading: Jeremiah 20:7-13
The prophet must speak despite opposition

Psalm: 69:7-10 (11-15) 16-18
Answer me, O LORD, for your love is kind. (Ps. 69:16)

Second Reading: Romans 6:1b-11
Buried and raised with Christ by Baptism

Gospel: Matthew 10:24-39
The cost of discipleship

[A Prayer of Thanksgiving for Our Present Help](#)

Written by Rev. Dr. Della O. McKinnon, Greenleaf Christian Church



“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth should change.” Psalms 46: 1-2a (NRSV)

Dear heavenly Father, we thank you for your grace and your mercy. We thank you for your loving kindness that you show towards your people. God, you are our refuge!

Lord, we thank you for being a very present help in times of trouble. You will never leave us nor with you ever forsake us. You are present, even in this pandemic; you are present, in our frustration; in death, you are present; in isolation you are present; and in our suffering, you are present. Even when we complain about being sheltered in place, you will not leave us, and when we fail to commune with you during this period of stay at home. God, you are our strength.

Thank you for being a present God—a very present help in a changing world. We will not fear because you have given us power, love, and a sound mind.

You are present, even in this pandemic; you are present, in our frustration; in death, you are present; in isolation you are present; and in our suffering, you are present.

Thank you for not forsaking us when we have not kept all your commandments and followed all your precepts. Forgive us for we have sinned against you. Though we do not deserve it, there is nothing that will separate us from your love. Thank you for not turning your back on us, even when we turn away from you. Your countenance has shined upon us, your goodness and mercy follow those who love you.

We are grateful for your being a very present help in our time of troubles. We glorify Your name. We bless Your Holy name. We give You thanks. In the mighty name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

[Prayer posted by the National Council of Churches, of which the ELCA is a member. Their website is: www.nationalcouncilofchurches.us]

The National Council of Churches participated in an ecumenical worship service of mourning for those who have died during the COVID-19 pandemic. If you would like to see it, go to the website listed above and you will find the recording on their front page.

Update on Worship Services

Update on Worship

St. John has a safety task force in place to work on the steps to move us back to in-person worship as soon as we can safely do so. We have several guidelines to follow and benchmarks to meet before we return to in-person worship safely.

The 6 Minnesota ELCA Bishops have urged congregations to practice radical love of the neighbor in being patient instead of surrendering to our own needs and the desire to resume normalcy.

The desire to be together for worship is strong and natural. God has made us to be in relationship with others. But, the care of neighbor mandates that we be extra cautious.

The Ecumenical Consultation on Worship during a Pandemic has given congregations some helpful information. They begin their report:

“As states “re-open,” churches face yet another challenge. how will we resume worship gatherings in person while the pandemic is still with us?

A care-filled response to that challenge is much more than unlocking the church doors and inviting all to come, sit, sing, and greet one another as had been our custom. We know the dangers posed and the risks taken if we were to do that. We care enough not to let that happen. It is not as simple as unlocking the doors and letting people back into the building.”

We have several questions to answer before we open back up to in-person worship. The SJLC Safety Task Force will use the guidance we learn through Scripture, our Christian tradition, the ELCA, the CDC and federal, state, and local public health entities.

We have several guidelines to follow and benchmarks to meet before we return to in-person worship safely.

Some of the questions we are working on—

- What are the best ways we can keep physical distancing and disinfection protocols?
- How can we enforce those protocols while also showing real hospitality that bridges all of our theological and social differences?
- How do we obtain the supplies we need for disinfection?
- How will we find the leaders for all we now need to do?
- How will we meet the increased need for financial and human resources as we incorporate physical distancing and ongoing, careful disinfection?

“During a pandemic, gathering for worship requires a delicate balance as we Christians weigh our need for being together as people of all ages, infant through older adult, alongside our commitments not to harm our neighbors through accidental spread of disease.”

[from the Ecumenical Consultation on Worship during a Pandemic Report, *“Resuming Care-filled Worship and Sacramental life during a Pandemic”*]

FAQ:

If the state says we can gather, why don't we?

The simplest answer to that is in our Christian mandate to radically love others. The state offers guidelines with acceptable risks. As a Christian community, we need to evaluate our threshold for “acceptable” risk within the context of our Christian practices.

If other churches are gathering, why aren't we?

Each worshiping community is unique. Each community also has differing resources available to them [financial, staff, volunteers]. The ELCA Bishops and our Insurance Company have both offered benchmarks to meet prior to resuming in-person worship. Many St. John members have expressed that they hope we wait a bit longer to gather, until we know things are safer.

Is there any idea as to *when* we might be able to gather in person?

The Bishop's of the ELCA have asked congregations to consider waiting to resume in person worship until we reach April 2020 levels of the number of cases of COVID-19 in our area.

Please refer to past St. John Weekly Messenger's for more information. The Messenger is emailed to every household weekly and is also on the website. www.green-church.org



Hey, St. John, let's reach out to each other.

Let us know in the office know if you know of someone who needs phone calls or letters, please. This weekly newsletter is being mailed to those we know about, but we do not want to miss anyone.

Thank you. Do your part in being church together! Call, Email, Text, or write a Card to 2 people a day during COVID-19 to keep us all connected. Use your new St. John Directory.



Yes! [Call? Yes!] Pastor's cell is 701-306-9687, that number is also on our recorded phone messages. The office email and voicemail are being checked daily. If you don't hear back from us, please be patient with us and also, call us back, we are juggling

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Resources for Faith Building @ Home



Christ in our Home, Are you missing your quarterly **Christ in our Home** devotional? We have the **new quarter** available! They are in a plastic storage bin, at the side door of the church (Preschool entrance). Please stop over and pick one up. They are free of charge to you. (SJLC covers the fee for the subscription.)

Kids at home? Faith Finders Fun! On our YouTube channel is filled with amazing ways to learn Bible stories and grow faith in the home. Be sure to subscribe.

"Backyard Mondays, Treasure Tuesdays, Creative Wednesdays, Magic Thursdays, Science Fridays" Click [FaithFindersFun Magic Thursday](#) for an example.

How to get your weekly offering to the church



Please consider signing up for scheduled giving.

Scheduled giving is done electronically, and you are in complete control of how much you give, how often you give, and you can easily change every week if you choose to.

1/ Give via mobile app [**GIVE+**]

2/ Give electronically either through the website or your own bank. Go to www.greenchurch.org and click the “donate” button at the top of the page. Sign up now for electronic giving, it is so easy! You may choose a one-time gift, weekly gift, or monthly gift. You can alter your frequency or amounts at any time—you are in control.

3/ Mail your weekly offering to 13045 Fremont Ave. Zimmerman, 55398

Thank you!

St. John Lutheran Church

Phone: 763-856-4561

Email: churchoffice@green-church.org

Website: www.green-church.org

Facebook: www.facebook./greenchurch1897

YouTube Channel: SJLC Youtube Channel Or

go to YouTube and search St. John Lutheran Church Zimmerman

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Deadline for weekly newsletter submissions is 12Noon on Wednesdays, please submit to churchoffice@green-church.org. Subject line: Newsletter

All links in this newsletter are active.