

# The Luther Memorial News July 2020

*We are a  
Reconciling in Christ Congregation.*



*A community committed to making  
Christ's disciples, dedicated to worship,  
study, and prayer while serving all in need.*

**Rev. Monica L. Weber, Pastor**

**Rachel Peterson, Campus Lay Minister**

**Juanita Smoot, Director of Music Ministry**

**Michael Spencer, Custodian**

**Marcia Barrow, Office Manager**

**Church Contact Information:**

**Phone: 951-1000**

**Email: [luther@lmlc.org](mailto:luther@lmlc.org)**

**Web: <http://www.lmlc.org>**



Yay, it's Summer! I give thanks to God every day for bringing me to this part of the world, where summers are relatively mild, the humidity is low, and where I can sit on my porch in the evenings and reflect, without sweltering. Summer is truly a season that tangibly demonstrates of God's bounty: the earth brings forth ripe berries, juicy red tomatoes, delicious cucumbers, beautiful flowers, buzzing bees and singing birds. During this pandemic, I've spent a lot of time outside in silent meditation or to read, and rediscovering the priceless gifts of Creation that ground me in God's constant presence and love. The Gospel of John 1:3 says, "All things came into being through God, and without God not one thing came into being." God creates, but chooses us as partners to be responsible stewards of the earth, to plant, water, fertilize and harvest, then share what God brings into being with others. Whether we tend gardens, or simply enjoy the fruits of those who do, we inhabit God's good and generous gift of Creation. I encourage you to take time this summer to give thanks for God's glorious Creation; for sunshine and rain; for ecosystems that hum like clockwork; and for the unexpected gifts of reduced pollution and healing that the earth received during the pandemic lockdowns. As we face continued uncertainty about the future, it is comforting to remember that Jesus reminds us to always trust God, who knows every hair on our heads, and who always provides what we need. Thanks be to God for Summer, and for our countless blessings. Peace to all here.

*Pastor Monica*



## Congregational Council Corner

### Council Members:

#### 2020

Kathy Parrott  
Leah Wechtaluk McFarren  
Fred Rencsok, President  
Lois Voss, V. President

### Committee Liaison:

Stewardship  
Social Ministry  
Christian Ed.  
Congregational Care

### Committee Chair:

Bennet Cassell  
Elaine Belay  
Fred Rencsok  
Carol Reynolds

#### 2021

Carol Reynolds  
Mara Knott  
Tim Larson  
John Hess, Secretary

Fellowship  
Finance & Mission Endowment  
Worship & Music  
Property

Marti Larson  
Terry Hagman  
Pastor Monica  
Danny Knott

#### 2022

Jay Crone  
Andy Hansbrough  
Seth Knight  
Ed Vigen

Personnel  
Mutual Ministry  
Youth, Young Adults, & LCM  
Creation Care

Kevin Carlson  
Andy Hansbrough  
Seth Knight  
Rebekah Paulson

### Actions:

Authorized the COVID-19 Task Force to develop a plan for contacting all members in order to help persons be informed and to receive questions about our ministry, particularly during this time of physical distancing and virtual worship.

Approved a scope of work for renovating the fellowship hall and signed contracts with Gabriel Brame, NRV Renovators, LLC, as the general contractor and project manager; and with Hookups Plus for installation of audiovisual equipment. Kathy Parrott serves as the project coordinator for the church.

The new website, developed by Cassell, Inc., became available in mid-June, improves the presentation of and access to information about our ministry for members, visitors, and persons seeking an accepting Christian community.

Requested that inquiries from real estate developers about development of the church property be reviewed by the executive committee of Council and reported to council. At this time there are no plans to change how the congregation uses the property.

### Communications:

Accepted the letter to the congregation from the COVID-19 Task Force that explains their charter and proposed work.

Accepted the letter prepared by the Committees on Finance and Stewardship, and the Capital Campaign to review the current financial status of the congregation and the needs to meet expenditures during the second half of the year.

Provided letters of appreciation to Rachel Peterson, resigning as lay campus minister and to Marcia Barrow for resolving matters with ATMOS Energy who supplies our natural gas.



**Pastor Monica** has been appointed by the **Virginia Synod Council** to serve as the **Synod Council Representative** for the **New River & Highlands** conference partnership, effective July 1, 2020. The Virginia Synod Council meets four times per year and presently conducts its meetings by Zoom. Please hold Pastor Monica, the Virginia Synod Council members and the Synod staff in your prayers, as they continue to address the challenges of gathering as the Body of Christ during the pandemic.

### **New 'Dial a Sermon' at LMLC**

We are excited to share a new way for you to listen to a weekly Gospel reading and sermon, right from the convenience of your home or mobile phone.

#### **Here is how to access the weekly Gospel & Sermon:**

- 1) Dial the Luther Memorial Main office: 951-1000 (**after 5pm on weekdays**; any time on weekends).
- 2) When prompted, press the # key.
- 3) You will hear a recording of the Gospel and Sermon from the most recent Sunday worship service.

Each week you'll hear a different message from one of the four Blacksburg ELCA Congregations, as we continue to worship together during the COVID19 pandemic.

You can always visit our website, [www.lmlc.org](http://www.lmlc.org) to watch the whole worship service, but if that's not an option for you, we hope you'll enjoy hearing God's Word and a message by phone, as we continue to social distance for everyone's health and safety.

If you have any questions, please call the Luther Memorial office for assistance. May God keep you safe and bless you until we meet again when it is safe to do so.

### **Wednesday Evening Check-in Zoom Calls & Evening Prayer**

Perhaps now more than ever, it's important to gather as the Body of Christ. One way to safely do this is to continue our Wednesday evening check-in calls using the digital technology of Zoom. Join us every Wednesday at 7pm for this informal meeting as we check on one another to share how we're coping with social distancing and other challenges. We will close our Zoom check-ins with Evening Prayer. Pastor Monica sends out an email every Tuesday with the link to this check-in call. If you need help using Zoom, or learning how to access the call by your telephone, please contact Pastor Monica at (540) 951-1003.

### **Women's Bible Study Group**

We will complete our study of Mary Magdalene, the 'apostle to the apostles' on July 9, take a week off, then begin a new study on Thursday, July 23. An email will be sent to the congregation with info on the next book for this study; the class meets by Zoom on Thursdays at 7pm, and we enjoy prayer, great discussion and fellowship. Please join us!

### **Check Out the Our New Luther Memorial Website**

The online address is the same, [www.lmlc.org](http://www.lmlc.org), but we have a brand new look, courtesy of Cassel International our media consultant who has been working since February to build our new site. Many hours were dedicated to updating our congregation's information, reflect our commitment to social outreach and display meaningful visuals that illustrate our service to Christ and the world. Please be patient as this new site is a work in progress: new content will be added over the next several weeks. Many of the links on this site are also being integrated into LMLC's social media presence, including FaceBook and Instagram, to raise our visibility and increase our appearance on internet search engines. Thanks to Carol Reynolds, who diligently proof-read the new site prior to it going live. If you see something in error on our new site, please contact Pastor Monica.

## Blacksburg ELCA Lutheran Fellowship Virtual VBS for All Ages!



July 5-26<sup>th</sup>

### **“Let’s Build our Faith Toolbox Together!”**

A weekly virtual format with hands-on activities. Materials are accessible at your own pace.

#### **Tools in our Toolbox:**

1. Discipleship: Past & Present
2. Music: Make a Joyful Noise!
3. Prayer: Talking with God
4. Love: We are the CHURCH

**VBS packets can be picked up at St. Michael weekly**, and details will be emailed to every participant. Also there will be a **Drive-In movie and car parade** to close out Virtual VBS, so stay tuned!

#### **Register online:**

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdiwZmkzMzfFQ7pQox47Uqkyq7N\\_jFablBkw2kl8CMHfZQ0JA/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdiwZmkzMzfFQ7pQox47Uqkyq7N_jFablBkw2kl8CMHfZQ0JA/viewform)

For help with registration or more info, email Margaret Christle: [mrosschristle@gmail.com](mailto:mrosschristle@gmail.com) or Maggie Maloney, [magiesatch@gmail.com](mailto:magiesatch@gmail.com)

#### **NITA’S NOTES: July 2020**

During this time of Covid-19 there have been many changes to the world of church music and worship.

I know that each of you reading this is completely aware of that!! Here at LMLC our choir continues to be community in various ways via Zoom, phone calls, email and prayer. Each week I send out an email (or two LOL!) complete with musings and music. Members respond by sending their own music, thoughts or stories to share. That was the case last week when Tim Larson found this beautiful sync track performance of “How Can I Keep From Singing” which has become a message of hope and heart for singers across our country. Please take the time to read about this great hymn of faith and listen to these voices and instrumentalists from NYC. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VLPP3XmYxXg>

We can be thankful for the sound engineer who actually made this appear like an effortless performance!

#### **HYMN HIGHLIGHT:**

**“How Can I Keep From Singing”** (“My Life Flows On in Endless Song” #763) is a Sunday School hymn that dates from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Its musical form is like that of camp meeting songs: catchy melody, simple harmony and rhythm and a refrain. Once adults started singing these children’s songs, the gospel hymn was born. Robert Lowry (1826-99) was first credited with both the text and tune, although the hymn has been attributed to several other 19<sup>th</sup> century poets in various hymnals. Lowry was a pastor who succeeded William Bradbury as editor of Sunday School songbooks for the New York firm of Biglow and Main. He was known as a tune writer for the texts of prominent hymn writers of the day. He also wrote his own texts and tunes. **ENDLESS SONG**, the tune for this hymn, was published in “Bright Jewels for the Sunday School in 1869. His hymns, along with those of other gospel song writers, were used and promoted by the Young Men’s Christian Association which was founded in London in 1844.

The first known publication of the hymn text was in August of 1868, titled “Always Rejoicing” and was attributed to a Pauline T. and included this verse:

*I lift my eyes; the cloud grows thin; I see the blue above it;  
And day by day this pathway smooths, Since first I learned to love it.*

Also, if you follow along in a hymnal, you will notice that the words have been modified for a more universal inclusion. For example: “Christ” was changed to “love” which is actually a great choice!!

Doris Plenn learned the original hymn from her grandmother and then wrote additional verses in the 1950’s when her friends were being imprisoned during the McCarthy era.

*When tyrants tremble, sick with fear, And hear their death-knell ringing,  
When friends rejoice both far and near, How can I keep from singing?  
In prison cell and dungeon vile, Our thoughts to them go winging;  
When friends by shame are undefiled, How can I keep from singing?*

She passed her version on to Pete Seeger, a family friend, and it was then embraced by other folk revivalists. His version also leaves out much of the Christian wording.

And so, this great hymn of faith which found its way into the protest song genre, continues to evolve today into a Covid-19 hymn of unity. I trust that it will bring blessing, joy and hope to each of us as we listen and sing along!!

**Former Luther Memorial pastor Bill King** has recently published a collection of meditations entitled ***Bread for the Journey: Preaching to Myself***. Originally written as online meditations for members of the congregation, the reflections in Bread for the Journey draw on art, pastoral encounters, books, podcasts, and significant cultural events. Pastor King places them in conversation with the Bible and the Christian tradition, inviting readers to see how experiences, both mundane and earthshaking, may be filled with spiritual insight. Organized around the seasons of the church year, ***Bread for the Journey*** invites readers to reflect on their own times of waiting and darkness, hope and light, death and rebirth, struggle and growth. Written in a conversational, often whimsical style, it is intended for those who are seeking a devotional resource which connects Scripture to life’s gifts and challenges. A copy may be ordered from Amazon or by emailing Pastor King: [luthercm@gmail.com](mailto:luthercm@gmail.com)



# *HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THOSE BORN IN JULY*



<i>July 02</i>	<i>Robin Reynolds</i>
<i>July 04</i>	<i>Sandy Sheppard</i>
<i>July 08</i>	<i>Michele Kennedy</i>
<i>July 12</i>	<i>Sandy Hagman</i>
<i>July 15</i>	<i>Meg Peterson</i>
<i>July 19</i>	<i>Sam Crone</i>
	<i>Betty Segar</i>
<i>July 22</i>	<i>Ann Stevens</i>
<i>July 23</i>	<i>Jacob Schillen</i>
<i>July 25</i>	<i>Cooper Neeble</i>
	<i>Roger Sheppard</i>
<i>July 30</i>	<i>Korin Freeman</i>
	<i>Kayla Hansbrough</i>
<i>July 31</i>	<i>Georgia Roeder</i>

## *Happy Anniversary*



*Bennet and Teresa Cassell; July 3<sup>rd</sup>*

*Paul and Gladys Smeal; July 17<sup>th</sup>*

Luther Memorial Lutheran Church

600 Prices Fork Road

Blacksburg, VA 24060



**STEWARDSHIP NUGGET FOR JULY 2020**

“Caretaking is the utmost spiritual and physical responsibility of our time, and perhaps that stewardship is finally our place in the web of life, our work, the solution to the mystery we are.” *Linda Hogan*