

The Luther Memorial News September 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

Vicar Alyssa Kaplan, Lay Campus Minister

Juanita Smoot, Director of Music Ministry

Michael Spencer, Custodian

Marcia Barrow, Office Manager

Church Contact Information:

Phone: 951-1000

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After his excommunication and trial in Worms in April 1521, Martin Luther hid at Wartburg Castle to escape bounty hunters dispatched by Pope Leo X. In exile, Luther wrote to his Reformation colleague Philip Melancthon, encouraging him to continue their work. "Sin boldly," Luther advised Melancthon, because as Christians, our hope lies in the unconditional grace of Christ Jesus that triumphs over human sin and death. Luther drew his advice from the apostle Paul, who writes in 2 Cor. 3:12 to "act with great boldness" as baptized, forgiven children of God, led by the Holy Spirit.

The Virginia ELCA Synod also includes 2 Cor. 3:12's call to "act with great boldness" in its mission statement. Our Synod's tag line, adopted in 2019, is "Faithful + Bold + Serving." As Christians, everything we do should be performed as God's faithful people, acting with great boldness to serve the world, in the example of our Risen Lord Jesus Christ.

I give thanks for you who "act with great boldness" during this pandemic. Though we can't yet worship in person, you faithfully "show up" for weekly Zoom Vespers, book studies, and committee meetings. You view our recorded worship services and attend Drive-In worship, "acting boldly" to partner with the Blacksburg ELCA Fellowship congregations and forge new relationships. You've acted boldly through your financial support of this congregation's ministries. And you've served tirelessly: thank you to the Magdalene Ministry team for reaching out to homebound and elderly members; thank you for donating food, clothing, diapers, sewn quilts and masks, and blood. Thank you to our church staff, Council and our COVID19 Task Force for their service. Thanks to those who mow and tend our grounds and property. And thanks be to Jesus the Christ, whose confidence in God's love and forgiveness moved him to boldly give himself on the cross, so that all people may be forgiven and embraced by God. —Peace to all here,

Pastor Monica



Congregational Council Corner

Council Members:

2020

Fred Rencsok, President rencsok@verizon.net
Kathy Parrott homes@vt.edu
Leah Wechtaluk McFarren lwechtal@vt.edu
Lois Voss, V. President loisvoss@aol.com

2021

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Tim Larson tilarson@vt.edu
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2022

Jay Crone jaycrone@vt.edu
Andy Hansbrough andy.hansbrough@kollmorgen.com
Seth Knight sethoro@gmail.com
Ed Vigen ed.vigen48@gmail.com

With recommendations from the Committee on Finance, Council reviewed reductions to the 2020 spending plan. Committees are asked to monitor expenditures carefully and prioritize needs for future spending.

Adopted the recommendations from the COVID-19 Task Force with a decision to evaluate restricted use of the buildings after the October 4 meeting of Council.

The subcommittee for presenting revisions to the *Constitution and Bylaws of LMLC*, proceeds with the understanding that specific changes to the bylaws will be considered in 2021.

Carol Reynolds is relocating and resigned her position from Council. Council elected Carolyn Howard to serve the remaining months of this year.

Council voted to hire a part-time AV Technician, Daniel Taylor, and will share the expense with Saint Michael's.

Finance Message:

July by the numbers:

General Treasury income: \$24,797

General Treasury expenses: \$30,529

Net General Treasury: - \$5,732

After the boost in receipts from pledges that we received in June, the receipts from pledges went back down in July to where we were before that. Our available cash to spend went down this month another \$2,768 to \$19,790. Thus, we are still losing money every month and our margin for paying salaries and expenses is getting thinner. At this rate we may not be able to pay all of our planned benevolences to the local community by the end of the year. Other than paying our monthly benevolence to the Virginia Synod on time, most of the rest of the benevolences have not yet been paid. This remaining benevolence amount is about \$20,500 that has gone unpaid. Note that our available cash to spend is less than that amount and we do not want that balance to fall below \$10,000. We very much appreciate every effort that the Congregation is making to support us in these trying times not only for the Church but for yourselves.

Luther Memorial Campus Remains Closed

At the recommendation of LMLC's COVID Task Force, the Congregation Council voted to remain closed until the October 4th Council meeting. At that meeting, Council will consider the COVID impact in our region, plus the status of Fellowship Hall renovations, to determine a potential date for offering limited capacity in-person worship, meetings and fellowship. Please direct your comments or concerns to a council member by October 3rd.

The Church office is open: please call 951-1000 before you visit. To make an in-person or remote appointment with Pastor Monica, please contact her at 951-1003. You may also schedule small group or committee meetings at our covered picnic shelter: please contact Marcia for shelter availability.

Welcome Christ Lutheran, Radford!

The Blacksburg ELCA Fellowship (LMLC, St Michael, Shiloh & New Mt Zion) extends a warm welcome to our newest Fellowship member, Christ Lutheran Church in Radford. Vicar Alyssa Kaplan serves the Christ congregation part-time, and the Fellowship will record worship at Christ on the third Sunday of every month. We give thanks to God for this Fellowship, as we praise the Triune God and serve our communities together.

Don't forget to attend the Fellowship's monthly Drive-In Worship with Holy Communion on the last Sunday of the month, 10am at St Michael Lutheran Church, 2308 Merrimac Rd in Blacksburg.

Calling LMLC Soul Sister Wannabes!

After our women's book study about Mary Magdalene concluded, some of you expressed a desire to continue with these weekly discussions – with a twist! As a result, LMLC will retain the Thursday Zoom hour between 7:00 and 8:00 PM for LMLC women to remain in touch virtually. Pastor Monica and Patty Marickovich will co-facilitate *LMLC Soul Sisters*, possibly posing an “easy breezy” question to get the discussion started at the top of the hour.

No time to prepare? This time is for you. *LMLC Soul Sisters* will connect with one another, celebrate each other, and engage over weekly chats without homework or reading assignments. Feel free to join our conversation on any - or all - Thursday evenings between **September 17th and November 19th**. This will lead us up to the time just before Advent.

If you would like to participate, please contact either Pastor Monica (pastormonica@lmlc.org) or Patty Marickovich (pmarickovich@gmail.com). The Zoom link and password will be sent to Soul Sisters just prior to each session.

Autumn 2020 is bound to be a cool time in a virtual world.

Blacksburg ELCA Fellowship's Blessing of the Pets Sunday, Oct 4th

Join us to remember St Francis of Assisi with the Blessing of the Pets. The Fellowship pastors will bless our pets, who remind us of God's unconditional love. Gather at **3pm** in **Luther Memorial's lower church parking lot** near the picnic shelter. Please observe safe physical distancing and wear a mask. All pets are welcome but must be leashed/controlled at all times.

With our Roman Catholic and Episcopal brothers and sisters, Lutherans observe October 4th as the feast day for St Francis of Assisi, known for his love of Creation and all God's creatures. Born into great wealth in Italy, Francis took a vow of poverty and worked to renew the church, care for Creation and relieve human suffering. In 2011, a Lutheran order of Franciscan brothers and sisters was founded. Their goals are: to accompany the poor; to bring about spiritual renewal; to care for Creation and to build ecumenical bridges. You can learn more about this order here: <https://www.lutheranfranciscans.org>. We look forward to seeing you and your pet on **October 4th!**



Lutheran Campus Ministries At Virginia Tech

Welcome to The Well Students!

To our Returning Well students and our new Well friends,
Greetings to you in Christ Jesus.

I want to assure all of you that I, Vicar Alyssa, Council Rep Seth Knight, the Luther Memorial Council & our Covid task force are committed to making our ministry to The Well vibrant and life-giving, despite the many uncertainties and changes we face due to the pandemic. We hold you in prayer, trusting in the plans that God holds for us as we walk together in this faith journey that is Campus Ministry. Never forget that we are universally and eternally connected by our baptism into Christ Jesus. My door is always open to you, for a listening ear or just to chat, as you navigate life as a Virginia Tech student during the craziness of a global pandemic. You can reach me at (540) 951-1003, or email me at pastormonica@lmlc.org.

Blessings to you in this semester, and peace be with you!

Pastor Monica

Grace and Peace to you in the name of Jesus.

My name is Alyssa Kaplan and I am delighted to be joining you in ministry in Blacksburg this fall as The Well's Campus Ministry Coordinator.

This past Friday I was approved for ordination to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament in this church. The persistent presence of the Holy Spirit has guided me throughout my life and journey of discipleship. And, I can say to you without a shadow of a doubt, that I came to understand my call to pastoral ministry because of the transformational impact of young adult communities, like campus ministry, in this church. I came to fully live into my baptismal identity and vocation because communities faith, like Luther Memorial, deeply invested in my spiritual well-being as a college student.

Like Luther Memorial, at my campus ministry in undergrad every student had a key. The campus center was a place where we could bring all of ourselves: our stresses, our passions, our joys, our doubts, our faith, and our ever-evolving identities, knowing that we would be met with grace upon grace. Campus ministry re-introduced me to Jesus and the Good News of God's love and justice come to earth. It helped me understand our baptismal vow to strive for peace in justice in all the earth and how to live an engaged and public faith.

In the past two weeks, I've had the privilege to meet one-on-one (virtually and at a safe social distance) with each member of The Well's leadership team. In each of these meetings I've asked them, 'what do you love about The Well?' Time and time again, I've heard them lift up the same things that so restored my soul throughout my college experience. They described radical welcome, where a diversity of identities and life-experiences are celebrated as the gift of God that they are. They described the campus center as an oasis of grace, just steps off campus but wholly removed from the stress and the hustle. They described gathering around Word and Meal, encountering Jesus in new ways that relate to their lives as young people. They described the joy of sitting in the front rows on Sunday morning, and the richness of the inter-generational congregational relationships they've had the chance to build.

I'm so grateful to get to be a small part of this congregation's faithful commitment to accompany these wonderful young adults throughout their time at Virginia Tech. I pray you know the profound impact of your ministry. May God's peace be with you,

Alyssa Kaplan

Nita's Notes – September 2020

During our worship service on Sept. 13, 2020 we will join together in our virtual community gathering to recognize and celebrate our annual emphasis of "God's work. Our hands." Sunday. As posted on the ELCA website: *"This day is an opportunity to celebrate who we are as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America – one church, freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor."*

In 2019 a hymn titled "God's Work, Our Hands" written by Wayne Wold was selected as the winning entry in the ELCA's "God's work. Our hands." Sunday hymn contest. It expresses how the people of the church live in service for the life of the world. More than 120 entries of original compositions were submitted. Although Dr. Wold wrote both a text and hymn tune for his entry, his text is often sung to the well known tune, EARTH AND ALL STARS (#731 ELW). This is the tune we will use on SEPT 13th. I believe you will enjoy the following YouTube video of the inclusion of this hymn during a pre-Covid worship service.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WkUINcJ3KXA&feature=youtu.be>

God's Work, Our Hands

God's work, our hands: working together,
building a future, repairing the world,
raising up homes, planting new gardens,
feeding the hungry and shelt'ring the cold.

Bless, God, our hands as we work in your name,
sharing the good news of your Gospel.

God's work, our feet: trav'ling together,
following Jesus to places unknown,
walking as friends, marching for freedom,
running the race with God's future the goal.

Bless, God, our feet as we follow your way,
sharing the good news of your Gospel.

God's work, our voice: singing together,
praising, proclaiming to all who will hear,
praying for peace, shouting for justice,
claiming God's love for the lost and the least.

Bless, God, our voice as we speak in your name,
sharing the good news of your Gospel.

God is at work in and around us:
seedlings are sprouting and bread's on the rise!
Washed and set free, humbled and honored,
gifted by grace, we respond in God's love.

Bless, God, our lives as we answer your call,
sharing the good news of your Gospel.

Unfortunately, it is still not advisable for our choir to gather and record our hymns to lead us in worship. We had hoped for the possibility of safe distance singing/recording outside, but that just isn't realistic at this time. Know that we grieve this loss of making music together in community and leading our congregation in corporate singing. However, we are thankful that we can continue to include solo music and find other ways to develop our great musical traditions.

Born on April 16, 1954, Dr. Wold is a professor and chair of the music department at Hood College in Frederick, Md., where he serves as concert manager and college organist. He is also the director of music ministry at First Lutheran Church in Ellicott City, Md. He is an active writer of 3 books and many published articles, a composer with over 400 titles and a performer of both organ and harpsichord. He was a member of the editorial committee of our Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW) service book/hymnal. Only one of his hymns appears in this hymnal, "Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah" #240 for which he arranged the Yiddish folk tune, TIF IN VELDELE.

To learn more about Dr. Wold as a Christian, Lutheran and musician please read this article from Oct. of 2019.

<https://www.livinglutheran.org/2019/10/im-a-lutheran-wayne-l-wold/>

Joyfully Yours,
NITA



Live Zoom Webinar with ELCA pastor Rev. Lenny Duncan Saturday, Sept 12, 7pm. Mark your calendars to attend LMLC's 2020 Visiting Theologian Webinar with Rev. Lenny Duncan, who asks, "***What Now? Discussing the Sin of Racism and Dismantling Systemic Racism.***" Duncan is the author of "Dear Church: A Love Letter from a Black Preacher to the Whitest Denomination in the US." To register or for more info, click this link: <https://www.vasynod.org/event/what-now-discussing-the-sin-of-racism-and-dismantling-systemic-racism/>. The registration form includes space for you to submit a question to Rev. Duncan during the Q&A that will follow.

On Sunday, Sept 13, Rev. Duncan will serve as our Guest Preacher for weekly worship. You can view the worship service as usual by visiting www.lmlc.org and scrolling down to "Watch Worship" on the Home page.

This Webinar is made possible by a grant from Luther Memorial's Visiting Theologian endowment fund.

Thanks to the Virginia Synod for assisting with technology to make this event available to our Synod congregations, and to the Synod's Tapestry group, which will host a moderated conversation on Rev. Duncan's presentation and sermon on Sunday, Sept. 13, 7pm by Zoom. You can register for that conversation at the link above. Tapestry addresses issues of multiculturalism, diversity and inclusion in our Synod and the world.

Boy Scouts of America Update

Luther Memorial holds the charter for Boy Scout Troop 704, and we've been proud supporters of this troop for over 40 years. Recently, the Boy Scouts of America organization filed for bankruptcy as a result of several lawsuits involving sexual abuse cases. Luther Memorial has been advised of the need to inform any persons who may have been involved with this troop, or any other Boy Scout troop, that there is a deadline of November 16, 2020 to file a claim of sexual abuse with the national organization. Please note that Troop 704 and our regional Scouting organization remains solvent: it is the national BSA organization that has filed for bankruptcy. Troop 704 leaders want to reassure Luther Memorial members that our troop is committed to protecting all minors and ensuring safe, appropriate conduct with Scouts as they interact with troop leadership and sponsors. If you or someone you know would like to file a sexual abuse claim with the national Boy Scouts of America, visit www.officialBSAclaims.com, or call 1-866-907-2721 by November 16. All claims and information will be kept confidential.

Luther Memorial's Troop 704 continues to meet in small groups on Monday evenings, 6:30-8pm in our covered picnic shelter. Please hold our scouts and their leaders and families in your prayers as they rise to meet the challenges of completing badge and Eagle Scout requirements during the pandemic.

Caregivers

Unitarian Universalist Congregation hosts a monthly support group for caregivers to share their experiences and challenges. The group meets on the 2nd Tuesdays of each month at 7-8:30 PM. Join us via Zoom. Questions or concerns - contact Rev. Pam Philips: revpam.uuc@gmail.com

Parent Bereavement

We are a community-wide support group for bereaved parents and grandparents who have lost an adult or adolescent child. We come together once a month on 2nd Mondays from 6-7 PM to help one another on our journeys. Join the group via Zoom. For more info and the Zoom link, contact Katherine: kallen@vt.edu

Mental Illness Peer Support

If you've been missing the NAMI NRV peer support group, or had difficulty getting there, we offer a temporary alternative. If you are someone who has experienced mental illness and would appreciate the support of peers, join our online meetings on the 3rd Mondays of each month. Contact Kimberley: khomer@vt.edu for the Zoom link or for more info.

Transgender Support

NRV Trans* Support is a peer-led organization whose mission is to offer support, resources, and social activities to all transgender and gender non-conforming individuals in the New River Valley in a safe, anonymous and affirming environment. To learn more about NRV Trans* Support, visit their website: www.transsupport.com

The Adult Group meets on the 2nd & 4th Thursdays of each month via Zoom from 6:30-8 PM and welcomes all adults who identify under the trans umbrella or are questioning their gender. Contact nrvtrans@gmail.com for the Zoom link.

Follow Luther Memorial on *Instagram*



@luthermemorialblacksburg



Do you have your voting plan? The Covid Task Force encourages everyone to vote in the safest way possible. Begin by using the website vote.elections.virginia.gov. It's the place to register or check on your registration status. Last day to register is **October 13**. Then you can continue on this website to apply to vote absentee by mail, a process that takes only a few minutes. You may also request the absentee ballot by phone at 540-382-5741.

When the ballot comes in the mail, you will have choices about what to do next: send it back by mail, put it in a drop box, take it to an early voting location, or bring it with you on election day. It's good to have the ballot ahead of time so you can review the candidates and two statewide ballot measures.

Montgomery County residents can utilize two early voting locations in Christiansburg: a large room on the first floor of the County Government Center or at the mall in the "Wonder Universe: A Children's Museum." Those locations will be available from Friday, September 18, to Saturday, October 31. Hours are 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday, plus the same hours on two Saturdays, October 24 and 31.



600 Prices Fork Road

Have you been driving by this address during these summer months? If you do, you see a well-groomed property that is inviting and hospitable. Although the property is used in a very limited way, you may be in one of the groups or know friends who share time together outside in the picnic shelter. Perhaps you know one of the families with a child enrolled in the preschool program, Little Hokie Hangout, that is again operating under strict COVID-19 guidelines. The mowing and trimming of lawns are essential to our witnesses as good stewards of our property. Some months the grass grows slowly and in others it seems never to stop. We all appreciate the following persons who organize the schedule and mow the lawns to keep Luther Memorial Lutheran Church a witness to God's Work/Our Hands. We offer a hearty thanks. When you have an opportunity to visit with anyone on this "team", thank them personally:

Barry Johnson, Dennis Catley, Glenn and Nelda Buss, Andy Hansbrough, Kevin Carlson, Tim Larson, Danny Knott, Mike Neeble Family, Matt Zeiger Family, Kevin Widner, Fred and Dianne Rencsok, and John Anstrom.



**Drive Thru Food Drive for
Blacksburg Interfaith Food Pantry**

Saturday, September 29th from 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

Luther Memorial Lutheran Church
600 Prices Fork Road
Blacksburg, VA

Luther Memorial's Change for Change project for September is a food drive for the Food Pantry. The Food Pantry continues to have problems with the food supply chain. They currently have some very empty shelves and could use almost everything. While money is always appreciated, what we really need is food.

The following is a list of **urgent needs**:

- Diced tomatoes
- Spaghetti sauce
- Hamburger helper
- Chicken helper
- Tuna helper
- Instant Potatoes
- Pancake mix/syrup
- Brownie mix
- Mac & Cheese
- Ketchup
- Mayonnaise
- Ground coffee

Read the latest Food Pantry Newsletter: <https://www.facebook.com/BburgInterfaithFoodPantry>; click on their August 23rd post.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THOSE BORN IN SEPTEMBER

September 05	<i>Danny Knott</i>
September 10	<i>Carolyn Howard Tammy Neeble Rebekah Paulson</i>
September 11	<i>Jenny Akers</i>
September 18	<i>Mary Korslund</i>
September 23	<i>Andy Hansbrough</i>
September 27	<i>Mary Hansbrough</i>



Happy Anniversary



George and Linda Libey; September 1st

Luther Memorial Lutheran Church

600 Prices Fork Road

Blacksburg, VA 24060



STEWARDSHIP NUGGET FOR SEPTEMBER 2020

“We are surrounded by God’s benefits. The best use of these benefits is an unceasing expression of gratitude.” **John Calvin**