

# **CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH**

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**Mission Statement:** "As Christians living in God's grace we seek to demonstrate our faith in Christ by caring, listening, and responding to the needs of the whole person, serving each other and those beyond our Lutheran community."

## **JUNE/JULY NEWSLETTER 2020**



### **PASTOR'S MESSAGE**

During the pandemic all of us have been questioning what it means to be people of faith and how we continue to act as the Church. The following is an article by Dr. James Emory White that gives us and many others a perspective how the Church has been forced to change and what it might mean when we come back together.

#### **5 Ways the Pandemic Is Saving the Church**

COVID-19 is rightly seen as a plague on our world, leaving a wake of physical death and financial devastation in its path. Most would say it's been terribly distressing to the church, as most churches around the world are not able to gather for weekly worship or physically interact as a community of faith. What if the truth is that this pandemic might not just be serving the church, but *saving* the church? What if the path most churches were on, if not forced into a radical redirection, would have guaranteed their continued marginalization, irrelevance and decline? What if the pandemic has forced countless churches to change in ways that will actually allow them to grow in both size and influence?

Consider these five ways the pandemic might just be saving the church instead of killing it:

#### **1. Churches have been forced to move from a weekend-centric, crowd approach to a seven-day-a-week, incarnational approach.**

While every church should embrace, celebrate and promote corporate worship, too many churches made that celebration the end-all for the life of the church. We say that the church isn't bricks and mortar, but a community of faith that can be strategically served by bricks and mortar. Yet too many churches were never leaving the building. The goal of the church is to be the church in the community where it resides, attempting to reach and serve in the name of Jesus. The pandemic has broken us out of our gospel ghettos and holy huddles and into the neighborhoods and streets where we live.

#### **2. Churches have been forced online.**

You would think the vast majority of churches were already online. They're not. I don't mean they don't have a website—most do. I mean they don't have an online *presence*. Having an online campus, or even streaming a service on Facebook, had been pursued by a relatively small fraction of the

45,000 or so Christian churches in the technologically-advanced U.S., much less the wider world. Now, virtually overnight, the vast majority of churches *do* have an online presence. In other words, churches are finally going where the majority of the world "lives."

### **3. Churches have been forced to embrace social media.**

If most churches did not have an online presence before the pandemic, it goes without saying they were not embracing or using social media. In fact, a recent study found that only 15% of churches in the U.S. were using Twitter or Instagram. Yet, as churches are having to learn, social media is the communication network of the modern world. It's how people relate, get their news or are "touched." In essence, the pandemic has forced churches to learn to communicate the way the people they are trying to reach communicate.

### **4. Churches have been forced to innovate and change.**

Necessity, it has been said, is the mother of invention. It is also the mother of change. When you are forced to stop doing things the way you have always done them, but must find a way to soldier on, you are forced into new ways of thinking and new ways of acting. It has been quipped that the seven last words of a dying church have always been, "We've never done it that way before." In the nick of time, at least for many churches, they are now saying, "We must do things like never before." That takes a church from seven words before death, to seven words before life.

### **5. Churches have been brought back to mission.**

When all of your methods and practices have been stripped away, you are left with something raw and unfiltered. It's called your mission. Case in point? The Gideons. Imagine an organization that prints and distributes Bibles to hotels suddenly finding that the hotels are now saying, "No thanks." They quickly realized that Scripture distribution was never meant to be their main focus. The organization wanted to win people to Christ. Bibles in hotels were just a means to an end.

"Sometimes the methods get confused with the purpose," said Alan Anderson, president of The Gideons International in Canada. "We took a step back and asked ourselves, 'What are we trying to accomplish?'" Churches around the world are finding that much of what they had been doing to *fulfill* the mission had *become* the mission. Now, they are seeing the true mission in a new and liberating light.

If you had told me even three months ago that these five changes would soon take hold of the global church in a matter of days, if not hours, I would have assumed that it could only be the work and power of the Holy Spirit; that a true and historic spiritual awakening must be taking place.

I would never have assumed a pandemic.

But perhaps this is precisely what is happening through the pandemic. As the apostle Paul wrote, "*And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him*" ([Romans 8:28](#), NIV). As all good expositors know to

add, Paul is not saying that all things are good, just that God can work good through all things.

Perhaps the good that God is working through this pandemic, ... is the awakening of the church we've all been praying for.



## **A Birthday Wish by Bishop Michael J. Pryse of the Eastern Synod**

Wind, fire and a group of fearful friends. And then suddenly the Spirit descends and all is utterly, eternally, irrevocably changed. The once fearful disciples cringe no longer. Wishful thinking and timid whispers yield to a bold proclamation of passion and resurrection. Jesus' disciples are quite literally given a "second wind" and in that instant the Church of Jesus Christ is born. Pity the poor lector who's assigned for Pentecost Sunday! Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Mesopotamians, Phrygians, Pamphylans, Cappadocians etc. etc. What a strange combination of participants! But we shouldn't be surprised. The Christian community as described within the New Testament is characterized by some amazing combinations of people; Jews, Samaritans and Romans, rich and poor, slave and free, male and female. And for some, both then and today, this is a frightening prospect.

Some years ago I was at a continuing education event where Susan Briehl shared the story of a friend whose two daughters were preparing for the impending birth of a third child. The youngest of the two seemed to be adapting to the idea of an expanded family quite well, but the eldest seemed to be focussed on this coming birth in an excessive way. She was always asking questions. "Where will the new baby sleep? Where will the new baby sit when we eat supper? Where will the new baby go in the car?"

Finally the mother sat down with her daughter and asked her if anything was bothering her about this new baby. "Are you worried about something?" And it was then, that the real question came out. The little girl said, "Well, whenever we go out, you hold my hand and daddy holds Sonja's hand. So when the new baby comes, whose hand won't get held?"

There's a sense in which this describes our natural response to the kingdom's radical inclusiveness. Part of us feels that if God's embrace is defined too widely, if it were to really include those who are different from ourselves - both young and old, black and the white, men and women, gay and the straight, weak and strong, rich and the poor - we might somehow end up with nobody holding our hand.

In the Gospel accounts Jesus promises that he will never leave us orphaned. He will never let go of our hands! But those same accounts also call us to reach out and grasp the hands of others. Indeed, this is one of the primary themes of the Gospel narrative. Over and over again we encounter a kingdom wherein people who are in the darkness of separateness and aloneness and are called out of isolation and into the light of a new community.

Each Pentecost Sunday, as the party is ended and the candles are extinguished, we are sent forth to help fulfil God's birthday wish for the world! In part, that involves becoming a more visible sign of the kingdom's wonderful diversity. It means expanding the circle and grasping hands that have previously been spurned. It means going beyond the safety of our comfortable definitions of who is in and who is out, and to follow the light of God's presence to whomever and wherever that light might take us. May God grant us the faith and courage to make that journey.



Growing  
in

## **CHRIST. COUNCIL MINUTES – Christ Lutheran - May 12, 2020**

**Present:** Al, Brenda, Charmaine, Janice, Liz, Marlys, Milan, Robin, Sylvia,  
Pastor **Regrets:** Johanna

**Meditation** led by Pastor

**Correspondence:** Pastor received a letter from MPP Dave Smith regarding a Town Hall meeting for all spiritual leaders on Wednesday, May `13.

Facebook: 80% of active people have accessed services online.

**Pastor** - Making phone visits to people with whom he is not normally in contact 49 households (65 people)

Also holding weekly Bible study on Thursday morning and evening and Zoom coffee time on Tuesdays.

**Worship** - Online worship - At least 40 people from the congregation are tuning into worship through Facebook Live. In addition, Amelie Dahl from Germany and Meredith from North Carolina are tuning in. Pastor Sue, and my family, someone from Bahamas, many friends across the synod, and more have been tuning in. It has had an outreach far greater than I ever expected. Therefore, it is something that will continue after we return to regular worship. It not only proclaims the gospel to our members but to the world. The worship can be accessed live at 1030am on Sundays on Christ Lutheran Church Peterborough's facebook page. It can also be accessed all week long in the videos saved on the page. A link directly to the service can also be found on the church website at [www.christlutheranpeterborough.com](http://www.christlutheranpeterborough.com).

Holy Communion - Pastor said there was no best practices statement that has been distributed from the national church. Online communion was discussed. Pastor is researching this and at this time is not willing to offer online communion. Pastor mentioned that no clergy in the area have done this yet.

Return to church Taskforce - Pastor is establishing a task force to establish protocol for returning to church building when that is possible.

The Bishop had a meeting with area clergy. He reviewed what they were doing in the New Brunswick. He shared guidelines that have been introduced for the reopening of churches which included 15 people in attendance at a service. This could be a sign of what is to come in Ontario.

Parish Support - Robin is going to church every day and bring in offerings and mail.

Retaining wall – Brenda says it is falling apart. Robin says next year.

Lawn cutting – Robin will email.

### **Treasurer**

Cash on hand - \$83,852.22

Current to April 30 \$31,240

Income from all sources for year to April 30 \$42,555

Expenses \$46,123

Deficit \$3567

Discussion of governmental benefits. Brenda attended Zoom meeting with Keith Myra, Synod treasurer. Outstanding – Cameron House check for \$200 not yet cashed. Brenda will call. NSF charge for \$7 needs to be reimbursed. Robin will contact Jo.

**Outreach** - Money continues to be collected for Kawartha Food Share. Check will be sent for \$350.

**Messy Church** Sylvia is considering an online Messy church for September.

**Kid's Klub** - Nothing to report.

**Health & Wellness** - Church is clean – Robin. A virtual guest speaker suggested by Milan and Brenda. Social - No update

**Fundraising** - Yard sale will be in the fall – Robin

Wine fundraiser - For the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Sylvia with the help of other donations has made the wine and will bottle it. At a suggested possible price of \$20 a bottle there would be a \$1090 left over to support our congregation. More information on ordering will follow. As part of this fundraiser charcuterie boards will be prepared to be sold with the wine. The boards are made from various kinds of wood such as Bird's eye maple and cherry which Brenda purchased from a Bancroft woodcrafter.

**Mutual Ministry** - Review is waiting until COVID settles. Sylvia and Pastor had phone meeting. Charmaine asked for clarification of what mutual ministry is. Ministry is responsibility of pastor and council. Pastor says Sylvia is a bit of a sounding board. There are regular evaluations.

**Martin Luther House** Presently, all rooms are rented. July 1 one will become available. Jo has advertising in place for this room.

**Old Business** - No report

**New Business** – Return-to-Church committee

**Next meeting** June 9, Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.



**For those who can only stand and wait....**

We, in Canada, are "doers." Our value is measured by how much we accomplish, or how much we have done today. The doers are exalted in our culture. The ones who can only stand or wait are of little value. Or are they?

There are many people in this church, and in this city, and throughout the world who are part of the healing and renewal of life for others, but will never be known or mentioned on TV or online.

But don't we all need to feel that we are contributing to the common good also? Yes, but it doesn't have to be through doing this or that big thing.

I am reminded of Jesus' words about doing good deeds or righteous acts. He said: "Beware of practicing your piety before others to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. But when you give alms, (or do any good deeds for others) do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father, who sees in secret, will reward you."

There are many good deeds done by people who will never be known. You and I can always be part of that giving and loving whether others see it or not. We can do this while never leaving our apartment or even our room in a Long-Term Care home.

I remember visiting a woman in a home in Nova Scotia. She was often in bed when I came to visit and was spending more of her time sleeping. I would come and ask if she would like me to visit. She always said yes, and so we spoke, and I prayed with her. She was always genuinely interested in me, and when I left her I always felt good. There was a Light that emanated from her, and to this day I can still feel that benediction, that blessing that she gave me to me.

So, please, you beloved of the Lord, you who can't do great things that will get on TV in this Covid-19 time, know that God sees the alms and the good deeds that you have done in this time. The time you smiled and brightened a person's day; the time you called someone up and had a great talk with him or her; the time you prayed and then prayed again for someone or some situation.

You may never know the good you have done. But who cares? Your left hand doesn't ever have to know what your right has done. Just remember: your Father in heaven sees your good deed, and you will have God's reward.

Pastor Beth Wagschal  
May 23, 2020

### **Our Spring Fundraiser Is Moving Online!**

As you may be aware, Robin and Sylvia had planned to do a spring wine tasting fundraiser at the end of May, which due to current circumstances, had to be cancelled.

As a part of this fundraising event, we were going to have for sale by donation, bottles of commemorative wine celebrating our church's 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary which was on May 1st. Each bottle of quality wine will be custom labelled to celebrate this wonderful milestone and the label will include a sketch of the church, making it a great keepsake, or, just a bottle

of delicious wine to be enjoyed with friends or family at some point in the future. The good news is – we have decided to move our fundraiser online and we can now take orders for your bottles of 65th anniversary commemorative wine!

**How to order:** Email Robin (robins\_nest52@hotmail.com) or Sylvia ([sshea@hotmail.com](mailto:sshea@hotmail.com)) indicating if you would like red or white wine, or a combo gift pack of both a red and a white wine. We have 30 bottles of each available at this time but could arrange for more if sales are brisk. Orders are being accepted up until June 17<sup>th</sup>, with delivery anticipated before the end of June.

**Cost:** This wine is available by donation, so whatever you can afford will be greatly appreciated, however a minimum recommended donation of \$15-\$20 per bottle would really help to ensure the success of our fundraiser. (Please note we cannot give receipts for your wine donation.)

**Delivery:** If you live in Peterborough, Robin has kindly offered to deliver your wine and pick up payment. If you live outside of Peterborough, Robin will make arrangements for a pick-up at the church.

All proceeds from our fundraiser will be used to support community outreach, as well as our church, so we really appreciate your support! If we sell-out, we should be able to raise over \$1,000!

While we are truly disappointed we cannot get together right now to socialize, have fun, learn about wine and of course eat together, we thank you for supporting our fundraising initiative and when we can get together again, it will definitely be a wonderful party and celebration!


### **COVID and our Congregational Response**

These are certainly challenging times. But through all this calamity, Pastor Scott, Council and our volunteers continue to work to ensure that the mission of the church carries on.

You have noticed, and probably have participated in the weekly coffee times, twice-weekly bible studies and on-line church services. All of this is a big leap in technology for most of us, so if you have issues getting on-line to attend, please reach out to Robin or Pastor Scott and they can help explain the process. We realize that not everyone can participate in church activities this way, and we don't want to leave anyone behind. Pastor Scott and your church friends are always available for a phone call.

You also need to be thanked for your continued support of the church through your donations during these tough times. At the end of May we have donated about \$350 (every \$1 = \$6 = \$2100) and 50 pounds of food to the local food bank, and we are only \$4,500 behind our budgeted giving for the year. Thank you so much for your generosity!

The newsletter has several describing the impact of COVID-19 on worship. We are ever hopeful for an early return to church, but the reality is that we can't do that until it is safe, and that may be many months away. Until then visit our website at and do your best to embrace the new resources that are available to keep you connected with Christ and your Christ Lutheran family.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 <h1>June/July 2020</h1>						
	1	2 Virtual Coffee Time 2 pm on facebook	3	4 Virtual Bible Study 10-11:30 am 7-8:30 pm	5	6
June 7 Virtual Worship on facebook 10:30 am	8	9 Virtual Coffee Time 2 pm on facebook	10	11 Virtual Bible Study 10-11:30 am 7-8:30 pm	12	13
June 14 Virtual Worship on facebook 10:30 am	15	16 Virtual Coffee Time 2 pm on facebook	17	18 Virtual Bible Study 10-11:30 am 7-8:30 pm	19	20
June 21 Virtual Worship on facebook 10:30 am	22	23 <b>Last</b> Virtual Coffee Time 2 pm on facebook See you Sept.	24	25 <b>Last</b> Virtual Bible Study 10-11:30 am 7-8:30 pm See you Sept.	26	27
June 28 Virtual Worship on facebook 10:30 am	29	30	July 1	2	3	4
July 5 Virtual Worship on facebook 10:30 am	6	7	8	9	10	12
July 12 Virtual Worship on facebook 10:30 am	13	14	15	16	17	18
July 19 <u>Virtual Worship on facebook 10:30 am</u>	20	21	22	23	24	25
July 26 Virtual Worship on facebook 10:30 am	27	28	29	30	31	August 1