



St. John's Lutheran Church Serving the Lord for 115 years

April 2020



"Jesus Christ is God's Son and our Savior."

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus our Lord and Savior,

We have found ourselves in an incredibly strange time with all the panic that is occurring with the Corona Virus outbreak. We see the entire world closing. Leaders of state and federal governments are mandating that we quarantine and distance ourselves from everyone. Americans are going wild, buying up massive amounts of toilet paper and grocery items. Amid the fear, the hardest closing for many Christians I have spoken to is the sadness of not being able to gather for services.

I, too, like those I have spoken to, have a hard time with services canceled and not being able to gather in large groups, hear God's Holy Word, and receive the Lord's Supper. As Christians, we know in times of crisis, that we are to run to Christ. What we need to remember is that group size doesn't mean that we cannot still be Christ's Church in these scary times. Throughout world history, God's people have had to meet in creative ways in times of crisis.

During the reign of the Roman Empire, Christians had to be creative with communication and gathering together as Christ's Church because they could not meet in large groups out of fear of being killed for their faith. After all, it was illegal to be a Christian. Christian churches of the time, secretly used the symbol of a fish to communicate where they were meeting. Printed in the center of the symbol were five Greek letters that created the acronym (IXΘΥΣ). I, (Iota), the first letter of the abbreviation, stands for the Greek word (Ἰησοῦς) and means "Jesus". X, (Chi), is the letter of *Christos* (Χριστός) which is Greek for Christ. O, (Theta), is the third letter of the acronym of *Theou* (Θεοῦ) Greek for God. Y, (Upsilon), is the fourth letter of (Υιός), Greek for "Son," and finally, E, (Sigma) (ς), is the first letter of *sōtēr* (Σωτήρ), Greek for "Savior." When translated into English, it would say, "Jesus Christ is God's Son and our Savior." When early Christians saw this symbol, they knew they could find fellow Christians to share God's Word and share the Lord's Supper.

As modern-day Christians in the United States with thanksgiving be to God, it is still legal to be faithful practicing Christians, and we don't need to communicate secretly on how to hear God's Word or where we will fellowship together.

With services canceled until further notice, we will need to be creative and try new ways to share the Lord's Word and His Supper. Online content and worship materials like sermons, devotions, and other resources will be uploaded or mailed to those who would not know how to access them online.

For those who wish to receive The Lord's Supper, we will be setting up a one on one schedule where people can spend one on one time with me and receive the Lord's Supper. As a congregation, we will be working together with upping our phone and card ministries to keep in touch and hold each other in prayer.

Currently, we do not want to add to the panic in an already stressful situation. Still, we do want to love our neighbors as we are called to as Christians by taking measures to keep the most vulnerable of us into consideration.

As we wait through this time together as fellow Christians, remember that Christ told us that we would bear many burdens in this life and carry our cross. Let us repent as we should in this season of Lent and ask for God's mercy upon us and all the world. Let us pray that all who are far from Christ and outside the Church, that they would turn from the false idols of this world and cling to Jesus Christ for their hope in this life and eternity. Pray that the Holy Spirit would strengthen us and remind us of the victory we have over death because of Christ's death and resurrection. Pray for our President, Governors, and for all leaders of the world (whether you like them or not!). Pray for all medical personnel and for all who still have to work in harm's way.

Pray for those who will not be working! Pray for those who are scared and are unsure how they will pay their bills!

Finally, please support your Church! Times are always tough for many congregations and this is certainly the case for St. John's. If you can afford it, please continue to tithe to your Church so we can weather this storm as well. This can be done by individuals stopping by, mailing in your offering, or even setting up an automatic payment to the church through your bank.

Saint Paul writes in Romans 8:38-39: ³⁸ *For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers,* ³⁹ *nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Let us remember what early Christians clung to in their time of crisis, when they drew the Christian Fish symbol "Jesus Christ is God's Son and our Savior." Our Heavenly Father is in control and we have nothing to fear. Whether we live or we die of the Corona Virus or any other cause, you as baptized Children of our Heavenly Father have the joy and peace of Eternal life that awaits you!

If you have any questions or would like Pastoral care during this stressful time, you are welcome to call Pastor Ben Hollingsead at the Church 651-462-5115 or via cell phone at 651-323-3293.

Peace and hope be with you in Christ Jesus our Lord in Savior.

Pastor Ben Hollingsead

Recommended free solid Lutheran Christian online resources for home devotions.

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Stacy Website.

Devotions and videos will be posted here for people to find while we are unable to meet for services.

<https://stjohnslutheranchurch-stacymn.org/>

St. John's Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/stjohnslutheranchurchstacy/>

1517.org

1517 is a Lutheran publisher that produces great devotions, podcasts and videos that are available on their website and on YouTube. You will find solid Biblical Lutheran and Gospel filled materials!

<https://www.1517.org/sections/christholdfast>

Issues Etc.

They have free Lutheran online talk, programing and radio music for the thinking Christian. They provide daily Chapel services, conversations about theology, modern events and have a section where you can hear beautiful hymns. <https://issuesetc.org/>

Bible Gateway

A great free website where you can find Holy Scripture. They have every Bible translation available so you can read the Bible online in your favorite translation. <https://www.biblegateway.com/>

Book of Concord Online

The Book of Concord is a book that compiles the teachings of the Lutheran Church. This resource is great for finding online versions of Luther's Large and Small Catechisms. Along with the Catechisms are documents like the Augsburg Confessions that are the true and accurate confessions about the Christian faith.

<http://bookofconcord.org/>

Recommended YouTube pages:

Pastor Bryan Wolfmuller- Lutheran Pastor who does a great job of teaching the Christian Faith,
Wretched Radio a great non-Lutheran source that tackles a lot of what is going on in the world from a Reformed Christian Perspective.

Higher Things- Great source to hear great hymns and teaching Lutheran Doctrine

Koine- Great traditional hymns played in a Contemporary style

Fighting for the Faith with Pastor Chris Rosebrough compares things in popular Christianity to what Holy Scripture really says on a wide range of topics.

Luther House of Study- Short video resources on Lutheran doctrine.

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church – LCMC
Church Council Minutes

Date : 2/17/2020

Present : Linda Welch, Bethany Hardy, Patha Vue, Sue Lein, Derek Fitcher, Hal Satter, Roxann & Harvey Berg, Pastor Ben, Jim Johnson, Linda Dilts, Kim Schmidt

Absent: Vickey Nelson, Nicole Anderson, Paul Dahlstrom

Meeting called to order at 7:04 PM by Linda Welch.

Pastor Ben opened with prayer and devotion.

Minutes Approved

Hal Satter motioned to approve the minutes from 1/20/20, Derek Fitcher seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Financial Report

There was a problem with a way that the North Branch rent was rolled over and the way it is showing in our system. Rachel is researching how to fix this in the future. Mary Welty is willing

to help Rachel learn to navigate the system, Shepard's Staff since she was not trained on it.

Pastor's Report

Lent is coming up with services at 11 am and 7 pm. n May there will be three youth confirmed.

One funeral this past month for a man who was not a member, but Linda knew.

We are reaching the community with our open doors as Pastor Ben was able to help a woman and her children

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Financial Report February 2020

Budget Offerings (4 Sundays)	\$	14,071.76
Actual Offerings Received	\$	13,280.00
Offering Budget Shortage	\$	(791.76)
Office Expense	\$	51.00
Phone	\$	81.00
Offering envelopes	\$	419.00
Computer Operations	\$	125.00
Advertising/Evangelism	\$	28.00
Payroll service Fees	\$	(103.00)
Administrative Exp.	\$	601.00
Excel Electric	\$	540.00
Gas	\$	681.00
City Water & Trash	\$	290.00
Custodial Supplies-Misc	\$	90.00
Building Repair & Maint.	\$	133.00
Building Expenses	\$	1,671.00
Employee Salaries	\$	10,645.00
Visiting Pastors	\$	0.00
Work Comp. Ins.	\$	0.00
Total Salaries	\$	10,645.00
Christian Outreach	\$	66.00
Total Expenses	\$	12,983.00
End of Month Total <small>(offerings minus expenses)</small>	\$	297.00
Check Book Balance	\$	82,091.00
Liabilities	\$	0.00
Actual Cash Balance	\$	82,091.00
Dedicated Accts. Balance	\$	99,244.00
Church Acct. Balance	\$	(17,153.00)
Gen. Offering Bal.: Year to Date	\$	(7,999.00)

If you have any questions regarding this report,
please call Patha Vue Treasurer at (651) 313-3165
Thank you!

FOOD PANTRY

Let us all remember to donate food items into our Food Pantry. Local food shelves are always in need of non-perishable food items to help the less fortunate. Also, don't forget paper needs like baby formula, diapers, soap, toilet paper, etc... are always needed. Buy one item for yourselves, but also buy one for the Pantry. Christian Outreach Committee will see that the items are delivered to the local food shelf.

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New Business

- Offering envelopes

Many envelopes still not claimed as they belong to people who have left the church or are in nursing homes. There may be a way to mark people as inactive in our system so that we can send them church mailings, but not send envelopes.

Flowers

Forest Lake Floral charges us \$15 each week. Having it as a dedicated fund is causing some problems. Discussion about removing this from a dedicated fund and making this a regular expense line.

Snowplowing

Tanner was mailed a letting him know that we were terminating our contract with him. He is stating that the letter did not have a reason regarding the termination and he was not ever contacted about concerns prior to the termination letter. He was contacted by Linda Miller and Rachel regarding the concerns by phone.

Matt from Sunrise All Season Service has been contracted and has been doing a great job keeping up with our MN weather and keeping our parking lots safe.

MN Adult & Teen Challenge

Served only grape juice for communion and they were very appreciative of it. They were well received by our congregation and the group was very appreciative of us supporting them.

Annual Meeting minutes review

Community event July 18th Sue Lein motioned to schedule the annual Community Event for July 18th, Jim Johnson

seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Council and committee realignment, future council members

We will have multiple council positions that will be opening up this year due to the maximum number of years a council member can serve in a position being reached. It would be great to have new committee members coming to the council. Discussion about merging some committees as some committees are small. Also discussion about having one council member representing more than one committee.

Little Angel Preschool

- Requested to have decision-making rights to the old nursery which currently houses the director's office. Faith Weavers no longer uses it and LAP would like to make some cosmetic modifications to the room such as removing the coat hanger and painting it to freshen it up. The room is used for pull-out services for preschool as well.

- Hal Satter motioned to change the old nursery to the LAP Director's Office with the knowledge that the church may use the room for other activities as needed. LAP may modify the room to meet their needs. Sue Lein seconded the motion. Motion carried.

- Financial ○ In need of some ideas for a big event to bring in some money and members.

- Kim & Linda have some ideas. One was a Flea Market, run similar to the Craft & Vendor sale. City-wide garage sales in the area are on May 2nd.

Bethany Hardy motioned to adjourn at 8:45 pm, Sue Lein seconded, motion carried.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer

Respectfully submitted by,

Bethany Hardy, Council Secretary

St. John's Cancellations & Postponements

Due to the COVID-19 Coronavirus orders to not gather in groups larger than ten, we are forced to cancel Taste of St. John's, April 26th and the Flea Market, May 2nd.

Along with these events, the Semi Annual Meeting scheduled for May 3rd following the 9:30 AM service is postponed until we receive clearance to assemble in large groups. When we receive the clearance to assemble, we will work quickly to inform the congregation on the newly scheduled Semi Annual Meeting.

Missions Updates

Minnesota Food Share (Pack the Pews) food drive held in March was cut short by COVID-19. However, your donations of 374 pounds of non-perishable food items was delivered to the Family Pathways food pantry on March 19th. Thank you for your excellent support.

Options for Women baby bottle fundraiser scheduled to kick-off in April is being postponed until a later date (yet to be determined). Please save your coins and help support this wonderful local organization.

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Church Office: 651-462-5115
Pastor Ben Hollingshead
Cell: 651-323-3293

Return Service Requested

The Voice of St. John's
 St John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
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 Stacy, MN 55079

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