

Church Newsletter
July 2020

The Parish
Messenger

Mission Statement

We are a Christian community rooted in
God's love growing in Christ through
reaching out and serving.



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PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

by Pastor Diane House

This month I would like to share with all of you what I ponder everyday about when and how we can return to worshipping in person in our buildings. The following information has been shared with both church councils and has guided our decision making regarding this very important topic. We have deliberated with the safety and health of all of you topmost on our minds and in our hearts, following Jesus' commandment to love your neighbor as yourself. We have been keeping up with guidelines from the Center for Disease Control and the Wisconsin Council of Churches based on the Badger Bounce Back Plan. Since the gating criteria is still at red for our state we currently at phase 1 where gathering of up to 10 people can take place following health safety protocols. Bible studies of only 10 people have been meeting outdoors and plans are in the works for an outdoor, inter-generational Bible School that practices safe physical distancing so that all ages have an opportunity to meet together with as little risk as possible. We will meet in family groups that have quarantined together, spaced at least 10 feet apart and outdoors, etc.

So here is some of the information that has gone into our decision making:

From the Wisconsin Council of Churches document "Returning to Church: Possible, Prudent, and Pastoral in Q & A format:

Q: My church has already moved to Phase1, but the gating criteria aren't green yet!

A: Phase One allows for gathering of up to 10 people. Stay at Phase 1 until everything is green/improving, and wait another three weeks before deciding whether or not to advance to the next phase.

Q: We'd like to start with outdoor worship Is that safer?

A: Outdoor worship represents a trade-off. You gain from better airflow and mor ability to spread it. You do lose the assistance of sanctuary furniture to help you manage people and proximity. Make sure you have a plan for maintaining 6+ foot physical distancing, wearing cloth face coverings, and who will help ensure it is followed. A shorter time together is better than longer, and please refrain from singing for safety's sake.

Q: Is drive-in worship an option?

A: Drive-in worship does help with physical distancing. The best recommendations of our advisers are that we maintain one empty spot between cars and avoid visiting between cars. If you can't keep an empty spot between cars, make sure that everyone is masked or that car windows are closed, so there is at least a 6-foot distance between people. (As seasons pass and it gets progressively warmer, closed windows could present a safety concern unless you meet very early in the day.) A shorter time together is better than longer, and please refrain from singing.

Q: Our church is in a rural area without many cases of COVID-19. Do we really need to be this cautious?

A: You have the built-in benefit of the ability to physically distance, fresh air, and plenty of room to spread out, which is a gift! However, there are additional challenges of more limited access to medical facilities, and the exponential growth means the situation can quickly transform from looking like it is low-level and manageable to extreme in numbers. The low number of cases you have is in part a result of your success in being proactive. Please keep up the good work!

From “Returning to Face-to-Face Worship, A checklist to help simplify the return to in person worship” put out by our Synod Office:

What to expect in the worship service: It will not be the same and may feel strains. There will be no singing, no choir, no sharing of the peace, no communion or bread only for communion. High risk individuals and those who don't feel well will be encouraged to stay home and worship online.

Building safety: Map out the traffic flow patterns in the building to keep folks 6 feet apart, masking tape on the floor works. Prepare the sanctuary by removing hymns books and other items from the pews. Clean the building before and after worship—especially high touch areas like door handles. Open windows and doors before/after worship so fresh air circulates and reduces aerosols. (Volunteers will be needed)

Personal safety: Provide face masks for all worshipers. Provide hand sanitizer stations throughout the building. Train ushers to seat one family groups per pew with a pew or row between or place bulletins on the pews/chairs indicating where folks are to sit. Train ushers or volunteers to guide people out of the building via a clearly marked path to avoid crowding in the center aisle or in the narthex. Prepare altar committee to serve communion with just a wafer and no wine during this time. Communion assistants wear masked and gloves. It is still recommended to use a Service of the Word and omit communion until Phase 3. Do not pass offering plates. Plan no touch ways to share the peace. Plan to project words for worship to avoid using paper bulletins. If paper is used, ask that the bulletins be recycled at home. (Volunteers will be needed)

Thanks to the dedication and creativity of Gretchen Frenndt, we have an excellent online worship service available! The councils decided that going through all the work necessary to be back in the building would not result in a worship service that would compare to what we are offering online. Also, the councils and I will continue to communicate with you in a variety of ways primarily through phone calls and mail. We would encourage all members to be in communication that way. I will continue the weekly emailed devotion and the online “Pastor on the Porch” for devotions for you to do on your own or with others in your home. Right now, this seems to be the best way to “be church” together.

As I said, I ponder this daily (well, continually really). So if you have thoughts, concerns, questions or just want to vent your frustrations, I am ready and willing to listen! The best way to contact me is either at my home phone (715-822-3553) or by email at: house.dianerev@gmail.com

This pandemic can bring out the best in us and that has been my experience so far as I work with the church councils on this issue. I thank each of the leaders involved from the bottom of my heart for the way they faithfully wrestle with all the information and recommendations and then prayerfully listen to the Holy Spirit's guidance. I hope and pray that we can gather together soon but until then, we remain committed to offering the best worship, devotion, and study opportunities we can given the safety protocols. Thanks be to God and to our Savior Jesus Christ for all the ways that God's love is made real to us in this time!

Blessings and Peace,
Pastor Diane



Important Reminders

When cutting grass around the flower garden please shoot grass away from the garden. It takes 3-4 rounds shooting away & very little grass will be blown into the garden.

Trinity Announcement

Don't forget there are two separate ways to give to Trinity. We are still in need of \$1,000 in donations for the air conditioning. Also, this month's gift of mission is Luther Park.

On Earth as it is in Heaven

Join us for "On Earth As In Heaven" an inter-generational exploration of the Lord's Prayer! For the five Wednesday's of July both Trinity and Georgetown churches will meet to explore this important prayer that Jesus gave us through games, crafts, stories, and more! We begin on Wednesday, July 1st at Trinity Lutheran Church. We will be practicing good health and safety protocols to protect each other from the COVID-19 virus so please plan to bring a blanket to sit on outdoors with the ones you have been sheltering with. Dinner will be provided by either a local restaurant that follows all safety protocols to deliver take-out or by masked and gloved individuals who have put a boxed dinner together in Georgetown's commercial kitchen under supervision. We ask that you bring your own bottle of water or other beverage for the evening.

The schedule for "On Earth as it is in Heaven" will be:

July 1 we will start promptly at 5:30 pm and plan to end at 7:30pm Trinity

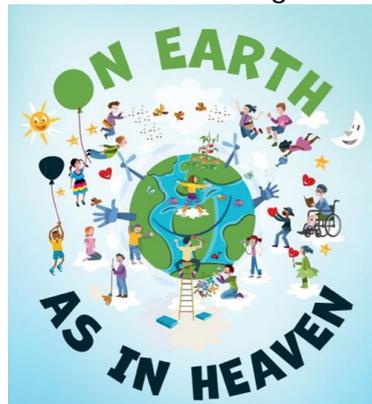
July 8 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm Georgetown

July 15 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm Trinity

July 22 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm Georgetown

July 29 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm at Trinity

Please register for each week you plan to attend on either Trinity's or Georgetown's facebook pages. There is a weekly invite to the "On Earth As In Heaven" under Events. This will help us plan. Please join us and invite a friend or neighbor of any age to come along!



Trinity Church Council Minutes

Trinity Church Council Minutes

June 16, 2020

Members present: Steven Anderson, Kathy Grenquist (Treasurer), Pastor Diane House, Debbie Wickstrom, Christine Anderson, JoAnn Sellent, Robin Denver and John Gall.

Opening devotions

Meeting called to order by Steve Anderson.

Secretary's Report: Secretary's report from May was read. Motion to accept the secretary report from as written was made by Robin Denver and seconded by JoAnn Sellent. Minutes accepted by council.

Treasurer's Report:

We are thankful for the continued generosity of our congregation members. We have been using the Paycheck Protection (PPP) loan to pay pastor's salary and any shortcomings in utility bills.

Summary for the month of May shows the following:

Income	\$2,480
Total expenses.....	<u>-\$5,092</u>
May balance.....	-\$2,612
Income from PPP Loan.....	<u>+\$8,715</u>
Adjusted May balance.....	+\$6,103

Palt: After all bills have been paid, the final numbers from the Palt Dinner are in! We made \$2504 total. \$2500 of this has been used toward the air conditioning. We need a new, large water container for next year since the spout doesn't close all the way and drips water. We have not spent all the money given in memory of Phyllis Erickson, so the amount remaining (around \$200) will continue to be used next year.

Noisy Offering: Kathy will deposit the coins into the Sunday School account and the kids will decide where to donate this amount.

On-Line Giving: There have only been a few donations. Council feels two people should be involved in the on-line recording. The money is deposited directly into Trinity's account in the category indicated by the donor. A receipt is sent directly to the donor from tithly (an ELCA managed program). The president has the ability to securely log-in to the account and provides information to the treasurer.

Motion to accept the treasurer's report was made by Christine Anderson and seconded by Robin Denver. Report accepted by the council.

Pastor's Report:

- Pastor Diane continues to check in with members who do not have access to digital worship.
- Confirmation connections are through e-mail.
- Pastor Diane encouraged council and all members to continue to reach out to one another with physical cards, phone calls, social media connections, etc.

Old Business:

- **Air Conditioning:** The air conditioning was hooked up and tested on June 16th at the council meeting! Again, we are amazed by the generosity of the congregation! Here is where we are so far:
 - \$5000 memorial for Fred Buccholz designated for air conditioning
 - \$5000 from Elsie Marklund's estate (At the annual meeting, the congregation directed the council to spend the remaining memorial for items on the wish list)
 - \$2500 raised by Palt Dinner
 - \$1200 has been donated from congregation members. We don't know the actual total bill as we haven't received the bill from the electrician yet. **We estimate only \$1000 is still needed.**
- **Egress Window:** All the parts for the parsonage's egress window have arrived--except the window. Chad Anderson will get this on his schedule as soon as the window comes in.
- **Paycheck Protection Loan:** Trinity applied for and received money to enable us to pay the pastor's salary and utilities. This money must be spent in the next 8 weeks and the treasurer will keep documentation so that we can apply to have the loan changed to a grant when that options becomes available. If we cannot transfer to a grant, the loan is for 1% interest over 2 years.
- **Mission of the quarter** (April- June) Continues to be Luther Park Bible Camp's capital campaign.
- **Wi-Fi** Century Link provided some information. Possible cost is between \$80-\$120 per month depending upon speed and bundling. Christine will follow up for more details.

New Business:

Vacation Bible School: Much discussion was held about having a weekly gathering that would be similar to Vacation Bible School. This event would be intergenerational with anyone welcome to come. Congregation members have been invited to attend Wednesday nights in July for an outdoor experience which will include individual meals packed from a local restaurant, story, craft, games and music. The invitation includes information about staying with the group you are "sheltering with", maintaining 6 foot distance and staying home if you are sick. Family or groups that sheltered together are asked to bring a blanket and will be directed to place them 10 feet away from other groups. Food, craft supplies, pictures for the stories, etc. will be distributed in a box for each group.

The council discussed if it was wise to allow people to gather in a larger group, even if it is outside. A few points made were:

- Distance will be hard to maintain with children
- The virus spreads through droplets in the air
- One of the riskiest behaviors (inside or outside) is group singing.
- Risk is measured by time spent in close contact and the type of interaction (yelling, talking, singing, sneezing, coughing, etc.)
- Being outside lowers the risk, but it does not remove it.
- Congregation members expressed longing to gather
- Numbers of cases continue to rise in our area.
- Percentage of the population testing positive is low.

- WI department of health does not recommend gathering inside, Synod does not recommend returning to worship in person indoors without a serious plan, CDC recommends a risk analysis of your area when making plans.
- Many of our congregation members are at high risk due to age and underlying health concerns.
- Things are going to get worse in the fall when weather forces us all back inside, now may be our only window for cautiously gathering.
- It is council's responsibility to help keep our congregation members safe, which may result in positions that are not what people want.

Parameters for outdoor gatherings were discussed:

1. Keep family/sheltered groups spread out by 10 feet. Designate someone to monitor this set up.
2. Communicate that if you are sick, please stay home
3. If it is raining, that night will be cancelled
4. Shorten the time from 5:30-8pm
5. Have hand washing/sanitizing stations
6. Adapt games so children are not required to be in close proximity (Simon Says, etc).
7. Be sure that the restaurant preparing the food is practicing excellent hygiene as they cook and pack. Ask when ordering.

Steve Anderson made a motion that we hold this weekly gathering (VBS in the age of Covid). The motion was seconded by Robin Denver. After a lengthy discussion, a vote was taken. The motion was approved with strong opposition expressed.

Worship and COVID-19: Continuing the discussion about gathering together from above a motion was made by Steve Anderson and seconded by Christine Anderson to continue worshipping together on Facebook Live and revisit again in July. Conversation about what other churches in the area are doing and what is recommended by the Synod as well as the list above were discussed. The council passed this motion to continue with Facebook Live worship services unanimously.

The following weekly routine will remain in place:

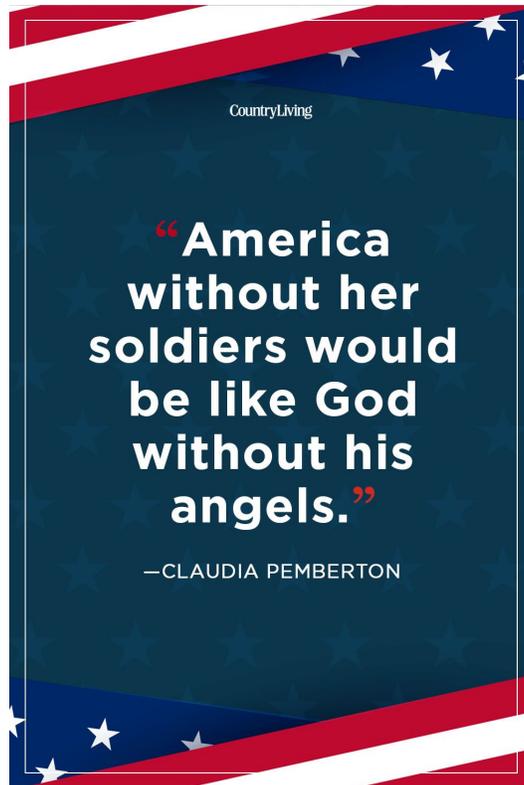
- Sunday morning worship is shared via Facebook Live on Georgetown's Facebook page at 10:30am. Christine reposts directly to Trinity's Facebook page.
- Gretchen Frenndt e-mails the link to the Youtube video of worship sometime after the service is over.
- A mid-week devotion and ideas for worship at home are being sent out via e-mail.
- "Pastor on the Porch" is recorded on Wednesday and is posted on Georgetown's and Trinity's Facebook pages.
- Bulletins and inserts are available in the church entries for anyone who wants to pick them up.

Benevolence:

A motion was made by Christine Anderson to send \$1500 of our pledged benevolence to the Synod. The motion was seconded by Robin Denver. Motion carried.

Motion to adjourn made by Robin Denver and seconded by JoAnn Sellent. Meeting adjourned. Closed in prayer.

Next Trinity council meeting will be at Trinity on Tuesday, July 21, 2020 at 6:30pm. Minutes submitted by Christine Anderson



Georgetown Lutheran Council Meeting Minutes

Georgetown Lutheran Church Council Meeting
June 18, 2020

Present: Stephanie Fansler, Sherry Doornick,
Tom Levi, Gretchen Frendt, Judy Gammel, Dennis
Weise, Tim Frendt, Keith Ward, Pastor Diane, Roberta
Hansen, Treasurer

Absent: Stacy Bergmann



The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm.

Pastor led prayer and devotions.

Secretary Report: Sherry read the minutes of the May 26, 2020 Council meeting. A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes as read. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: The budget is looking positive with the addition of the Paycheck Protection Loan of \$8,500 and the sale of a lawn mower at \$400, which was moved to the General Fund. In addition, offerings have increased on a weekly basis and there were 5 Sundays in May. Current Operating Funds at the end of May were \$6,609.46.

Discussion took place about extending the PP Loan beyond the 8 week deadline, which will be July 3, 2020. There is a possibility of extending the Loan out to 24 weeks, which would be October 24, 2020. There is also the possibility of submitting an application for Loan forgiveness. There was discussion of additional funds being available from the Bold Generosity fund and submitting an application for the Synod Endowment Fund, which is due on July 1.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Treasurer's report. Motion carried.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Diane had a Sunday off on June 14th and Wayne Kendrick filled in and did a great job, even though he hadn't done a service on video in over 50 years.

Pastor had a request to use the church for 2 training sessions in August for 2020 Census workers in the Balsam Lake area. The request will be denied.

Vacation Bible School is being planned for the 5 Wednesdays in July from 5:30 to 8:00 pm, beginning July 1 at Trinity and alternating between Trinity and Georgetown. We plan to provide a box supper for families as they arrive and are checking with local providers. Trinity wants to make sure that all activities take place outside and, if the weather doesn't cooperate, it will be cancelled. There is another meeting of the planning group on June 24 at 7:00 pm at Georgetown. A request was made to be careful when mowing the grass around the flower bed.

Deacon, Elder and Trustee Reports: The broken window that was reported last month is cracked and water is sitting between the panes, but not contacting the wood. The windows were originally purchased from the lumber yard in Milltown. Keith will contact the lumber yard to discuss repair of the window.

The Laker did not correct our church information in their recent publication as requested by Pastor Diane. Gretchen will contact the editor to make the corrections.

As discussed last meeting, the front doors of the Church are in need of refinishing, but have been determined to be fiberglass, not wood. Because of that fact, Sherry contacted someone who has

agreed to refinish them for \$180.00. Moved by Dennis and seconded by Keith, the motion carried to have the doors refinished.

Old Business: One of our stained glass windows has a crack. We need to find the records of who made the stained glass windows and how it can be repaired. Keith will do some investigating. The Serving Our Neighbor initiative has created 20 packets intended for the homeless. They have been donated to the Community Resource Agency in Milltown.

A large quantity of material donated to the church has been given to Halos Of The St. Croix Valley. They are a non-profit organization in New Richmond that provides ongoing support to families grieving the loss of a child. Charlotte arranged for and delivered the donation.

New Business: Pastor Diane identified for the Council some of the guidelines and requirements that would be necessary if we were to re-open our Church for Sunday services. We would need to follow these guidelines until such time as a Coronavirus vaccine was available. After much discussion, the Council decided at this time not to open the Church for Sunday service. Pastor Diane was asked to share information about the checklists of expectations and guidelines required for holding services in our facility.

Last Sunday's service on Facebook registered 206 viewers. Pastor Diane and the Council expressed their thanks to Gretchen for her work getting our Georgetown Church service on Facebook and You Tube.

The budget was discussed and whether we need to put out a plea for more funds, but it was determined that there was no immediate need at this time.

The idea of an on-line garage sale was discussed because there are a lot of large items currently being stored in Jeanne Johnson's shed/garage. Pictures could be taken of items for sale and then shared online for potential buyers. Further discussion is necessary to figure out the details.

Open Discussion: We were asked to keep Shirley Schilling, Vicki Dorner and Mary Marquardt in our prayers.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm. The next Council meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 16 at 6:30 pm.



Georgetown Financial Report

Itemized Categories - May 2020
5/1/2020 through 5/31/2020 (Cash Basis)

6/13/2020

Date	Account	Num	Description	Memo	Tag	Clr	Amount
INCOME							13,770.00
	Miscellaneous Income						400.00
	lawn Mower						400.00
	Offering						4,870.00
	PPP Loan						8,500.00
EXPENSES							-4,410.05
	Church						-577.69
	Electric						-218.23
	Maintenance & Repair						0.00
	Propane						-247.29
	Telephone						-112.17
	Miscellaneous Expense						-7.59
	Bold Generosity Technology Grant						-7.59
	Office Expenses						-7.64
	Worship & Office Supply						-7.64
	Parsonage						-248.51
	Electric						-165.78
	Telephone						-82.73
	Pastor						-3,487.37
	Disability Benefit						-42.69
	Health Insurance						-811.50
	Home Equity						-119.00
	Life Insurance						-19.92
	Retirement						-304.49
	Salary						-1,991.76
	Social Security Tax						-198.01
	Secretary						-81.25
	salary						-81.25
OVERALL TOTAL							9,359.95