



The

Parish Visitor

A Publication of Bethlehem Lutheran Church • Askov, Minnesota

July 2020						
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June 21, 2020

The assigned reading are Jeremiah 20:1-13, Psalm 91:1-10 (11-16), Romans 6:12-23, Matthew 10:5a, 21-22

Dear Friends at Bethlehem,

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

Today’s readings are rather dreary, except Psalm 91. Jeremiah prophesies that the people of God will be sent into exile from their homeland and spend years in captivity in Babylon – they would be aliens in a foreign land. That is why we are called to take care of foreigners, as well as widows and children, because our history includes times when the chosen people were foreigners, immigrants, aliens displaced from our homeland.

In Matthew, Jesus tells the disciples of the rejection they will receive from many because they teach in his name. Jesus’ words will bring havoc to families because some will cling to the traditions and rules they have learned about religion, while others will embrace the love and forgiveness that Jesus teaches as the way to be faithful to God.

How easy it is to forget that Jesus was understood to be a rebel by the church of his time. His followers were considered “radical” because they broke the old rules in favor of Jesus’ ways. Jesus did not honey-coat the truth that the Messiah would not only bring salvation, but also discord. I would rather that this change to the world would have come peacefully, but it didn’t and Jesus was honest with his disciples about what they were getting into.

In Romans, Paul is addressing a whole different set of people – Gentile Christians. Not those who were Jewish through their ancestry and had come to believe that Jesus was the Messiah, but those of different backgrounds who had come to believe in Jesus. In ever-widening circles the Church was growing. Paul wrote of the call to follow Jesus and be obedient to Christian practices, but not out of fear. Sin could be forgiven, but embracing the call to love our neighbors as ourselves was the way to a better life.

The melody of “On Eagle’s Wings” sings through my mind as I read Psalm 91; the verses of that hymn are based on this Psalm. The chorus is based on an image from Deuteronomy 32:11, “*As an eagle stirs up its nest, and hovers over its young; as it spreads its wings, takes them up, and bears them aloft on its pinions...*” *Although the eagles we know do not teach their young to fly by allowing them to rest on their backs, it is a powerful image of God carrying us through hard times as we grow stronger, just as God carried the Israelites through the wilderness by providing manna, water, and quail. Psalm 91 speaks of God as a shelter – a refuge, a fortress, a shield, covering us with his wings to protect us, sending angels to guard our ways. Of course, the threats to life still come – wars, diseases, accidents, wild animals. Yet through it all, God protects God’s people. God will never leave us alone. As Paul wrote in Romans, that does not give us license to do whatever we want. We are to be followers of this God in whom we trust – loving God with all our hearts, minds, souls, and strength and our neighbors as ourselves (the compact version of the Ten Commandments).*

The coronavirus is the current plague that threatens world health, and God is with us as we face the dangers to our communities. The government may not be holding daily news briefings anymore, taking the virus from the forefront of our minds, but it is far from done. We should still social distance and wear masks to protect our neighbors and ourselves. Our denomination (ELCA) reminds us that for now, we are not to gather for congregational worship, because it puts communities in danger of Covid-19 spread. I trust that God is working through all the scientists who are working to develop a vaccine. No matter their religion or what country they live in, God can use them for his purposes.

There are many other issues our country is facing right now. It can be overwhelming, but let us do what we can to be God’s instruments of healing and peace.

God bless you and keep you,

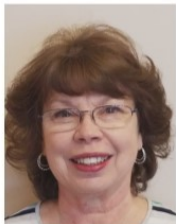


-Pastor Cindy Gray

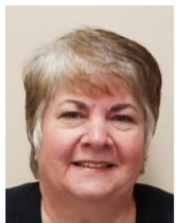
2020 Church Council Members



Bill Jansen



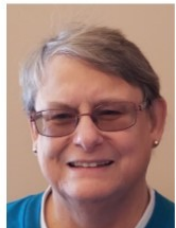
Marilyn Krogh



Cheryl Kohner



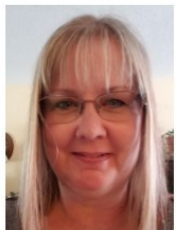
Chuck Moon



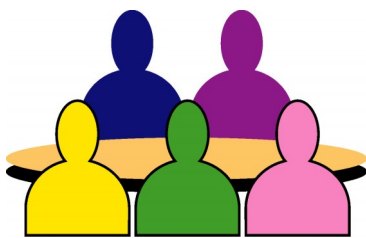
JoEllyn Foss



Andy May



Heidi Moon



COUNCIL MEETING

**June 10, 2020
Unapproved Minutes**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Bill Jansen, Andy May, Jo Foss, Heidi Moon, Chuck Moon, and Cheryl Kohner. Marilyn Krogh was unable to call in.

Check-in, devotion and opening prayer.

ACCEPT MAY MINUTES:

Motion to accept by Andy, 2nd by Jo, motion carried.

MAY 2020 TREASURER'S REPORT: Reviewed.

MINISTRY TEAMS:

- Property—Chuck reported carpet is being installed in the basement.
- Family Ministry—Jo reported they are meeting on Tuesday, June 16 regarding the ELCA youth gathering in Minneapolis in 2021.
- Music and Worship—Bill reported online worship services were posted on June 7th on YouTube. He has delegated portions of the services to others as well.
- Circle of Faith—Jo reported they had a meeting on June 6th to plan community meals. Also, Mary Johnson will be sending out "Thinking of You"

cards for those on the prayer list.

OLD BUSINESS:

- SMART team—Bill reported Linda Jensen is willing to be on the team. Chuck also agreed to be on. Discussed other possible members. The SMART team will look into aspects of when and how to reopen the church; supplies needed to re-open, such as touchless hand sanitizer stations for all entrances, masks, etc. Motion by Chuck to purchase supplies up to \$500, 2nd by Heidi, motion carried.
- Weekly mailing—Pastor Cindy Gray will continue writing devotions weekly until we no longer need her.
- Food Safety—Shawn has her certificate and will display it in the kitchen.
- Basement carpet/chairs/tables—Denny will meet with the Property committee and Circle of Faith to discuss tables and chairs.
- Chris's Food Stand—Jamie Fogt spoke with Kristi at Chris', she is still waiting to hear if they're able to open the stand this year.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Interim opportunity—Bill discussed the possibility of having Larry Anderson as a Bridge pastor. He will check with Larry, the Synod, and the call committee.

- Letter to local care facilities—Jo presented a sample letter to be sent to local care facilities, encouraging them to offer our members in residence the opportunity to view our live streaming services. Heidi will send the letters to the facilities with BLC members.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Shawn to display her Food Safety Certificate in the kitchen.
- Bill will ask Diane Peterson and Marilyn Krogh to be on the SMART team.
- Heidi will do devotions for our July meeting; purchase necessary sanitation supplies for re-opening process.

Motion to adjourn by Cheryl, 2nd by Heidi, motion carried. Adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

Next meeting Wednesday, July 8, 2020 at 6:00 pm.

*Respectfully submitted,
-Cheryl Kohner
Council secretary*



Free Community Meal

July 22, 2020
4:30 to 6:30 pm

All meals served to-go, pickup under the pavilion



- Austin Peterson—2nd
- Shari Jensen—7th
- Keith Klein—12th
- John Peterson—13th
- Adam Jensen—16th
- Gerry Knapp—16th
- Stephanie Dahl—19th
- Darren Fogt—19th
- Cookie Nielsen—19th
- Rob Sahlen—24th
- Bob Sahlen—25th



- John & Judy Peterson—
July 2nd
- Cookie Nielsen &
Herman Velsvaag— July 21st
- Bruce & Lynn Storrar—
July 29th
- Dwain & Missy Ecklund—
July 30th

IN OUR
Thoughts and Prayers

Please include the following people in your daily prayers:

- Millie Sorensen,
Jan Ecklund, Lois Sahlen,
Dorla Clark, Donna
Norgaard, Ann Olson,
Ardis Jensen, Jo Jessen,
Tony Ecklund, Shirley Lund,
Joyce Schaumburg,
Chase & Elizabeth Moon
(in the Philippines)
and their families.

If you would like to add someone to this weekly list, please email the church office at blcaskov@gmail.com

The Family Ministry Team has planned some intergenerational activities for the summer instead of our annual Vacation Bible



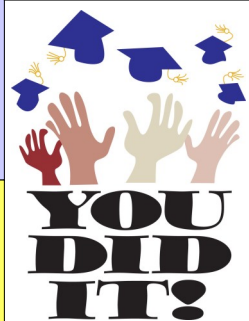
Camp due to Covid-19 concerns. The activities are outdoors, and we will be observing social distance, wearing face masks when necessary and sanitizing hands and objects, so come join the fun!

Yard Games—We will get together to play yard games on Wednesday, July 15, at 6:30 pm in the Village Park. If there is rain, we will play under the pavilion, and if there is storming, the activity will be canceled. We will have games like bocce ball, croquet, "yardtzee", ladder golf, corn hole, horseshoes, Frisbee, etc. Bring your own games and equipment as well, and we will have some, too. Bring your own lawn chairs and water bottles. We will provide some extra chairs, water and a treat. The public will be invited, and we encourage you to invite friends to join us. There will be games for all abilities, or you can just come and enjoy the company.

Mark your calendars for July 29 for a bike ride on the Munger Trail and August 12 for some uplifting sidewalk art and a campfire. Watch future letters for details.

Tentative plans are being made for next year's Synod Experience and ELCA Youth Gathering to be held in Minneapolis. Information will be sent to families to see who is interested in attending. Volunteers will also be needed at the event.

Talk to Shawn if you are interested in volunteering.



To send Payton a graduation card, mail it to
Payton Williams
23516 Skunk
Lake Road,
Sandstone, MN
55072



My future plans are to attend Wadena State Technical College for cosmetology. High school for me was a blast! I got involved in softball, cheerleading, volleyball, track, and prom committee. My favorite memory from school was my 7th grade family dreams project, and anyone who remembers that day knows why.

The one thing in school that I'm glad I did was got close to Ms. Joy Class. She pushed me to do good things in life, and I can never thank her enough for everything she did for me. —Payton

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

P.O. Box 188

Askov, Minnesota 55704

Address Service Requested

Parish Visitor July 2020

Check us out on the web:

www.blcaskov.com

Office Phone: 320-838-3191

Email: blcaskov@gmail.com



MISSION STATEMENT

*We are a family of Christian believers who:
GATHER together in fellowship,
GROW spiritually through God's word,
prayer, and sacraments,
GO into the community reaching out to welcome
and serve with compassion in Christ's name.*