



ST. PAUL LUTHERAN

MINISTRIES

CHURCH • SCHOOL • CHILDCARE

302 N. Morrison St. Appleton, WI 54911

June 2020

## Church, Don't Let Coronavirus Divide You

For church leaders and elder boards everywhere, the last few months have presented a near-constant array of complex challenges related to shepherding a church during the COVID-19 pandemic. The latest complex challenge is perhaps the trickiest yet: how to prudently resume in-person gatherings.

As if the logistical details weren't challenging enough—how to maintain social distance and limit crowd size, whether or not to require masks, to sing or not to sing, what to do with children, and so on—the whole conversation is fraught with potential for division. If a congregation—and within it, a leadership team—is at all a microcosm of our larger society, it will likely contain a broad assortment of strongly held convictions. Some will be eager to meet in person and impatient to wait much longer to get back to normal. Others will insist it's unwise to meet at all until there's a vaccine. Plenty will fall somewhere in between.

In such a precarious and polarizing environment, how can churches move forward in beautiful unity (Ps. 133) rather than ugly division? It won't be easy. But by God's grace and the power of the Holy Spirit working to unify us in ways our flesh resists, the opportunity is there for us to be a countercultural model for the rest of the world.

### Countercultural Sacrifice

At a time when self-idolatry is being exposed in ugly ways, the church has an opportunity to model love that places the interests of others above the self. For example, someone might find it personally difficult—even maddening—to have to wear a mask during church and stay six feet away from everyone at all times. You might think these precautions are a needless overreaction. But here's the thing: even if it turns out you're right, can you not sacrifice your ideal for a season, out of love for others who believe the precautions are necessary? Even if you personally think it is silly, or even cowardly, for someone

to stay home even after the church is open again on Sundays, can you not heed Paul's wisdom in Romans 14: *"Let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother"*? Or 1 Corinthians 8:9: *"Be careful, however, that your freedom does not become a stumbling block to the weak."*

Likewise, those who think the lockdowns should continue should not pass judgment on those who question the wisdom of the government's ongoing restrictions. Churches should strive to honor people on both sides of the spectrum. Yes, it will be costly for churches to keep offering online services for those who don't feel comfortable attending physical gatherings. Yes, it will be a sacrifice for church members who are sick of masks, social distancing, and Zoom to continue to use these for the sake of others. But little is more Christian than a posture of sacrifice (Rom. 12:1). We should embrace it with gladness.

### Countercultural Humility

Have you noticed how remarkably confident so many of us are in our views right now? Unfounded certainty—on the part of laypeople, leaders, modelers, and "experts" alike—is a contagion at least as viral as COVID-19 itself. We could all use a bit more humility, and the church should lead the way.

As much as ever before, Christians should follow the advice of James to be *"quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger"* (1:19). Listening well may slow down the process of deliberation and planning, but it is worth it. Whatever opinions church leaders themselves have on the matter of reopening, they should take time to humbly hear the voices of others—perhaps convening forums of various stakeholders within the church, as well as other church and government leaders in their area. Church members should likewise model Christlike humility (e.g., Phil. 2:3) in

how they react to the plans outlined by leaders, even if they don't agree with every aspect of it. No one of us should assume we've arrived at the definitive answer on how to do this well. Let's model humility by acknowledging that everything is not obvious, and we are all just trying to do the best we can in this "build the plane in midair" moment.

### **Countercultural Patience**

Patience is one of the rarest virtues in today's insta-everything world. And yet patience has rarely been more needed, as many of us are antsy to break free of "stay home" isolation and get back to normalcy as soon as possible. To be sure, it is good and right to be eager to gather again as churches. We should take Hebrews 10:25 seriously when it says we ought not neglect meeting together. We should feel the ache of what is lost when we only meet virtually, and every Christian should long for the day when "church on Zoom" gives way to "church in a room." That day will come. But we should be careful to not rush it. We should be careful to not go faster than governments allow, or faster than those in our community can understand. We should be patient with a timeline that might be slower than we'd prefer; patient with a reopening process that will doubtless be clunky; patient with leaders feeling the pressure of this complex situation; and patient with one another as we figure out the new normal. Those who are not comfortable with physical gatherings should be patient with those who are, and vice versa. As hard as it will be to practice patience, remember that in the scheme of eternity this season—whether it's months long or years—will be but a blip.

### **Countercultural Nuance**

We live in an un-nuanced age. The economic model of the media (built on clicks and views) works against nuance. Advertisers know nuance doesn't sell. Politicians know it too. We shouldn't be surprised by how rare it is for someone to hold humble, complicated, "both/and" views in today's hyper-partisan, media-catechized world. But if churches are going to emerge from this crisis with unity and fellowship intact, we must embrace the countercultural path of nuance. It's the path that avoids ALL CAPS hysteria of every extreme sort, recognizing that truth is rarely as simple and shrill as Twitter would have us think. It's the path that prizes both courage and prudence, and avoids both Pollyannaish and doomsday responses. It means we can be skeptical of some aspects of the lockdown without resorting to outrageous conspiracy theories, and we can honor governing authorities (Rom. 13) while engaging them in civil pushback when necessary. Countercultural nuance avoids thinking the worst of people and concedes that the other side of a

debate is sometimes right, just as we are sometimes wrong. Nuance often results when humility and patience combine.

There are some things Christians should not be nuanced about, of course, and one of those is our rugged commitment to the gospel of Jesus Christ and all that Scripture commands. What Paul urges the Ephesian church, therefore, should be equally urgent for us today: *"Walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"* (Eph. 4:1–3).

*Article by Brett McCracken,  
Senior Editor at The Gospel Coalition*

## In this Issue:

Worship Schedule	3
Official Acts	3
Financials	3
School News	3-4
LWMS	4
Outside Church Flowers	4
Fall Festival – October 11 <sup>th</sup>	4
ECC Update	4
St. Paul Wish List	5
FVL News	5

## Worship Schedule

**Sunday services: 8:00 a.m., 9:15 a.m., & 10:30 a.m.**

**Monday evenings: 6:00 p.m.**

**Currently, in-person worship is limited to 50 people per service. Reserve a place by contacting the office. Our 8am Sunday services are on facebook live and can also be heard on WNAM 1280 AM.**

6/4	Graduation Service – this is a virtual service only, and will be on facebook live at 6 p.m.
6/7	First Sunday after Pentecost—The Holy Trinity - The Holy Ministry proclaims the Triune God
6/14	Second Sunday after Pentecost - The Holy Ministry stands on the rock solid truth of God's Word
6/21	Third Sunday after Pentecost - The Holy Ministry is called out by God's mercy
6/28	Fourth Sunday after Pentecost - The Holy Ministry is given by God out of compassion

## Official Acts

### Transfer In:

Tom & Kelly Clark  
Madeline Clark  
Greyson Clark

### Forever with the Lord:

Marylin Fredericks departed this life on April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at the age of 84 years, 10 months, and 29 days.  
Doris Rehfeldt departed this life on April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at the age of 91 years and four months.  
Donna Rusch departed this life on April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at the age of 78 years, 4 months, and 11 days.  
John Boettcher departed this life on May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at the age of 90 years, 9 months, and 25 days.

## Financials through April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020

	Apr.	July – Apr.
<b>Income</b>	<b>\$ 114,652</b>	<b>\$ 1,666,604</b>
<b>Expense</b>	<b>\$ 149,433</b>	<b>\$ 1,692,332</b>
<b>Behind / Ahead</b>	<b>\$ -34,781</b>	<b>\$ -25,728</b>
<b>PPP Loan Transfer</b>	<b>+65,870</b>	<b>+65,870</b>
	<b>+31,089</b>	<b>+40,142</b>

**All bills are paid, all obligations are met.**

**\*Yearly income includes a transfer of \$24,920 from MLF to GE Fund for deficit months.**

**\*\*PPP Loan Transfer includes payroll expenses and utilities.**

Report Date 5/20/2020

UPDATE ECC MORTGAGE-INVESTORS BANK			
Original Note Date	4/10/2015	Next Maturity Date	10/20/2021
5 year locked interest (4.40%)			
Regular Payment for May 2020	\$9,170	P-\$8,474.80	I-\$695.20
Extra Payment on Principal For May 2020	-----	P-\$1,775.00	

Starting Mortgage Value	11/20/2015	\$ 2,000,000.00
Amount paid off of Principal as of	5/20/2020	\$ 1,819,801.00
Mortgage value as of	5/20/2020	\$ 180,199.00

ECC Debt Retirement Effort directly to debt	<b>\$ 1,575,977.16</b>
Money applied from normal monthly payment to debt	\$ 243,823.84
Total Payments on Principal	5/20/2020 \$ 1,819,801.00

Total interest saved over 20 years at 4.4% by ECC Debt Retirement Program

ECC Debt Ret.	Int %	Interest Saved
<b>\$ 1,575,977.16</b>	4.4%	<b>\$ 1,386,859.90</b>

To make an offering for ECC Debt retirement use any envelope in your packet or a normal envelope. Your envelope number must be on the envelope so your contribution can be recorded. **TO HAVE IT APPLY DIRECTLY TO THE OUTSTANDING BALANCE OF THE LOAN, WRITE "ECC DEBT RETIREMENT" ON THE ENVELOPE. To God be the Glory.**

## School News

### Mission Statement:

Using God's Word as our guide, St. Paul Lutheran School will raise up future generations of Christians in our community by assisting parents in the Christian teaching of their children and by striving for excellence in all areas of instruction.

**Graduation Service:** Our closing and graduation service is scheduled for Thursday, June 4<sup>th</sup> at 6pm. This service will be done virtually on facebook live. There will be no in-person worship at this service. All are invited to join us online to thank God for a successful school year.

**Confirmation Service:** Our confirmation service has been temporarily postponed. This is largely due to the 50 person limit we are adhering to for our services at St. Paul to ensure safety and social distancing. More information will be relayed when a new date has been set.

**International Program:** St. Paul School has been recently notified of our acceptance into the International Program. This program allows for students living abroad to come to St. Paul for their education. What a blessing to be able to share the gospel with these children! Although we do not have any applicants as of yet, we are looking for housing for any potential students. There is a \$6,500 yearly stipend

for those that house international students. If this might be of interest to you, please contact Mr. Kelley directly for more information ([jkelly@stpaulappletonwi.com](mailto:jkelly@stpaulappletonwi.com) or 733-9061).

## LWMS

Remember our Befriend a Missionary (BAM) summer birthdays and anniversaries by emailing or sending a card:

- **June 9** – Home Missionary, Pastor Scott Wolfram birthday [pastorwolfram@gmail.com](mailto:pastorwolfram@gmail.com) The Word Lutheran Church, 2501 Plover Springs Dr, Plover, WI 54467
- **July 19** – Stephanie Wolfram, see contact information above
- **August 10** – Pastor Scott & Stephanie Wolfram wedding anniversary
- **June 16** – Home Missionary, Rev. Benjamin & Julie Birner wedding anniversary [benbirner@gmail.com](mailto:benbirner@gmail.com), 4276 Gemini Path, Liverpool, NY 13090
- **July 27** - World Missionary John C. Hartmann with WELS Friends of Africa in Zambia - [hartmannjohn5@gmail.com](mailto:hartmannjohn5@gmail.com), PO Box 310195, 15301 Chelston, Lusaka, Zambia, Africa
- **August 19** - Home Missionary Staff Minister Jerry & Jeannie Worden wedding anniversary [smjworden@divine-word.com](mailto:smjworden@divine-word.com), The Word - Steven's Point Campus Ministry, 2501 Plover Springs Dr, Plover, WI 54467

A message from Staff Minister Eileen Zanto – Christ Lutheran Church in Denver, Colorado:

What a humbling experience it has been to walk with Jesus all my life and serve him in a variety of ways! In the fall of 2000 when I accepted the call to be the coordinator of Denver Urban Outreach, I was advised to get my first cell phone and laptop computer. This technology was such a contrast to the dirt floor in the bathroom of the rented building we began using!

As Jesus continued to walk with the called mission leaders, volunteers from WELS churches came to teach a variety of adult and children's Bible studies and English as a Second Language classes. Advances in technology were a huge blessing to be able to quickly contact these many volunteers.

Now almost 20 years later, technology has advanced so much, but Jesus is still the same. Today text messages to people of all ages save us a lot of time from making phone calls. However, in most instances our visits to homes are more personal than any kind of technology. Pastor Paul Biedenbender and I, as a staff minister, are given countless opportunities to point English and Spanish speakers to their Savior. No amount of modern technology will take the place of the opportunities to

assure people face-to-face of their salvation. The children from the very early years of the mission are the new leaders, pointing people to the same Jesus who is walking with them.

As I near the end of my public ministry, I thank God for this challenging but joyful outreach ministry in urban Denver. My prayer is that each one of my family and my church family will be in heaven, where together we'll continue walking with Jesus.

*Staff Minister Eileen Zanto –  
Christ Lutheran Church in Denver, Colorado*

## Outside Church Flowers

Anyone who would like to help keep our exterior flowers watered, please contact Linda Zimmerman at 920-788-6061 or Julie Bork at 920-734-5794. "Many hands make light work".

## Fall Festival - October 11

Women's Ministry is looking ahead to fall 2020. We cannot know today what it will be like health wise, but we hope things will be somewhat back to normal in our lives. Mark your calendars for Sunday, October 11 for good food and (hopefully) fellowship. Our delicious roast beef dinner may be served in the school gym or there could be a possibility of a take-out menu. Right now, we are thankful to be returning to regular church services.

## ECC Update

The ECC reopened for business on May 26th! While we served a smaller group of families, we look forward to the rest of the families returning gradually in the coming weeks as employment resumes for the parents. For the safety of everyone, we enhanced our cleaning procedures, implemented daily health screenings for all children and staff, and increased our safety protocols. We made these adjustments in keeping with the CDC and Wisconsin Department of Children and Families guidelines for child care centers. Our teachers made every effort to keep connected to our families throughout the closure. It was not the same as being with the children in person. Our staff were very excited to get back to work. Thank you for your prayers and support these past 2 months. Please continue to keep us in your prayers for our health and safety as we gradually welcome back our families over the coming weeks.

## St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church and School Project Wish List

- |    |                    |           |
|----|--------------------|-----------|
| 1. | ECC Loan           | \$180,000 |
| 2. | LED Lights for Gym | \$8,000   |
| 3. | Push Bars for Door | \$4000    |
| 4. | Security cameras   | \$5000    |
| 5. | Classroom doors    | \$29,000  |

Any donations (large or small) given toward these items is greatly appreciated. Some of these items/projects have been purchased/completed and we are looking for members to help in covering any part of the costs involved.

For a closer look at these items as well as giving options, including 'Easy Tithe', please follow this link: [Wish List Giving](#). As always, THANK YOU for your support.

### FVL NEWS

**FVL Tuition Assistance** applications for families struggling with COVID-related needs are being accepted until June 15. Go to the FVL Tuition Assistance page online or contact President Jeff Loberger at [jloberger@fvlhs.org](mailto:jloberger@fvlhs.org).

**A handful of host families are still needed** for FVL's International program. Applications have been received and acceptance depends on housing being available. Contact Monica Uhlenbrauck with questions at [muhlenbrauck@fvlhs.org](mailto:muhlenbrauck@fvlhs.org). A stipend of \$6500 is available to offset expenses.

**FVL's Annual Golf Outing** is being planned for Friday, July 10 at High Cliff Golf Course in Sherwood. Golfers can register online at [www.fvlhs.org/golf](http://www.fvlhs.org/golf). Event details are online. Shotgun start at 8:30 with event wrapping up by 3 PM.