



TO WITNESS AND GROW

Living our mission in all that we do.

Free to discover life.

Loving as Christ loves.

Open to going deep.

With God creating.



This Time is Different

With Covid-19 numbers on the rise again, you may be thinking, “Oh boy, here we go again!” But this time is different.

There are still many strong differing opinions about how to best mitigate the risks of Covid, but we have learned a lot about those risks and hopefully can continue to respond with common sense safety measures which are respectful of differing risks and risk tolerances.

Please know that in this article, I am not trying to tell you what to believe about what your risk tolerance should be. The medical and public health community are rightly focused on providing us the best scientific understanding of effects of Covid-19 and how we can reduce those health risks the most. But they are not necessarily able to see the unintended consequences of isolation, restrictions on our individual freedom or social implications of masking. We all are born with different priorities ingrained in our survival instincts for security, connection, and independence. Some people instinctually value security the most. Others value connection or independence the most. These are competing values in which it is impossible to satisfy all of them equally when facing a public health concern. We also have differing levels of risk tolerance in trying to satisfy these instincts. We also have differing levels of risk due to our general health and age. These are all variables which influence how we understand or approach Covid-19 mitigation strategies. The important thing is to remember that it is not helpful to be angry at someone for having different instinctual priorities, levels of anxiety or risk tolerances. These are not something that we choose, but only something that we can become aware and try to manage thoughtfully.

Peter Bregman and Howard Jacobson, two executive coaches and authors, wrote an article this month in which they wrote, “We all want people to be well, to be free from harm, to be free from coercion. We all want the economy to flourish—even though we may have different visions of what that entails. We all want to be respected. From this place, you can begin to explore your differences with curiosity and compassion. ‘It sounds like you and I want people to be both healthy and free from coercion. And this virus is sort of pitting those values against each other.’” The key they say is to stop trying to convince each other that the other is stupid, but to create an environment in which we feel safe enough together to have a real conversation and then we may change our minds on our own.

We are learning more every day about the risks of Covid-19 and its variants, about the effectiveness of the vaccines and whether or not masks may be a recommended additional precaution at times. We are learning that we need to be flexible as there are many factors which mean the risks aren’t just going away, but try not to be overly fearful. We may not find the perfect balance in our masking policy, but I am grateful that we in our church are having mutually caring and healthy conversations along the way. Our policy is being updated on a weekly basis depending on levels of transmission and community spread.

Sunday School Starts Soon!

On September 12th, our youngest members begin a new year of learning about how our faith in Jesus helps us be good neighbors.

Confirmation Picnic @ Beach

Park Sept 1st at 6 p.m. starts our year of learning about the best questions of faith.

FROM CHRIS'S FRONT PORCH

How's your walk with God going these days? I hesitate to ask this question, since, if you're like me, I get a little wary of the question, and I'm not sure how to answer it so I would tend to just say 'fine' and hope they leave it at that. But what if I were to say to you, I really want to know without judgment or agenda. Simply because I care—and hopefully as a church we care about each other.

This world is throwing some real challenges at us these days. If it isn't the rapid spread of the Delta variant of Covid, it's the weather with many suffering from unprecedented droughts and resulting forest fires, while others are experiencing life threatening floods. And then there's our political issues national and international—even if we have strong opinions, we are still often left feeling helpless and afraid.

So, I come back to my question. How's your walk with God? When tragedy hits us, when fears overwhelm, when worry is always lurking in the back of our minds, even agnostics will say please pray. But what is that really? And, please don't read this as flippant, but, how is that working for you? Truly, does your walk with God keep your faith strong? Does your walk let you always chose hope over fear, patience to seek out His truths and hear is still quiet voice in the midst of the storms of life?

It's a challenge for even the most faith filled. Especially when we struggle to come together at church for fear of our health. We were never meant to walk alone. The Christian walk is not a solo one. We can and should have time alone with God but we also need others to walk with us. The Fellowship of Believers is not just for Pentecost but for all of us today. Most of us have found we often exercise better together, do chores better with others, together have more impact with service projects—we usually find that we work harder and longer when we're working, listening and sharing side by side with others. And that's the same for our Christian walk with God.

As we look into fall and stay with our one 9 a.m. Sunday service for the time being, not knowing what lies ahead, we need to continue to think creatively how we can support each other in our walk with God. The CDC is warning us against getting into large crowds for any length of time, but what if our gatherings were purposely smaller? Jesus promised, "where two or three gather in my name there I am with them". (Matt. 18:20). Smaller isn't always bad. It gives us more time to listen to each other, to get to know each other better, and to develop supportive friendships. So next month I'll be making sharing some proposals but I would also love to hear from you. What would help your walk with God be better?

More to come...with blessings,
Pastor Chris



HAPPY SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS TO:

2 nd	Jim Jahn	11 th	Oaklee Metcalf	21 st	Janet Damme
2 nd	Anne Meurer	14 th	Chris Evers	22 nd	Kristi Kropp
8 th	Lauren Bussian	15 th	Jane Hager	22 nd	Dan Wagner
9 th	Susan Anderson	16 th	Dan Steffenhagen	24 th	Heidi Iverson
9 th	Jill Leimer	18 th	Jode Fancher	25 th	Teagen Lillie
9 th	Seth Tentis	19 th	Zachariah Gillespie	27 th	Zachary Laffrenzen
9 th	Aspen Metcalf	19 th	Sage Grover	28 th	Jay Walgrave
10 th	Liesl Knox	20 th	Lynn Johnson		
11 th	Analise Lien	20 th	Mike Peterson		

OFFERING COUNTERS FOR SEPTEMBER-DECEMBER 2021

Sept. 5	Rollie Kallstrom & Cindy Fuerstneau
Sept. 12	Cindy Fuerstneau & Kay Hickey
Sept. 19	Kay Hickey & Dar Jones
Sept. 26	Dar Jones & Lynn Johnson
Oct. 3	Lynn Johnson & Toni Burns
Oct. 10	Toni Burns & Cindy Fuerstneau
Oct. 17	Cindy Fuerstneau & Jim Nordstrom
Oct. 24	Jim Nordstrom & Dar Jones
Oct. 31	Dar Jones & Rollie Kallstrom
Nov. 7	Rollie Kallstrom & Neil Hedquist
Nov. 14	Neil Hedquist & Lynn Johnson
Nov. 21	Lynn Johnson & Annette Hedquist
Nov. 28	Annette Hedquist & Toni Burns
Dec. 5	Toni Burns & Cindy Fuerstneau
Dec. 12	Cindy Fuerstneau & Neil Hedquist
Dec. 19	Neil Hedquist & Kay Hickey
Dec. 26	Kay Hickey & Rollie Kallstrom

WELCA NEWS!

Minutes from the August 3, 2021 meeting

14 members attended.

Devotions were read by Linda Brehmer on “What If”. Even if “What If” happens, God will help me.

Marlene and Carolyn were at the meeting and said our WELCA’s Annual Cookie Walk is in the planning stage (of course that is subject to change at anytime based on Covid guidelines.)

New this year we are adding a craft/vendor sale and it will be called “CCC in Christ” for Cookies, Crafts and Candy. If interested in a craft table, please contact Marlene Mayhew 507-202-9874 or Carolyn Hinkle 651-565-4036 to secure your booth. All spaces that are 10 x 10 are for a \$25 fee. All smaller spaces \$20. To Wabasha and surrounding areas—please contact your friends! We need your crafts and talent!

We are hoping to get some men to help us with tables.

More of our WELCA members signed up to help and be on the “CCC in Christ” committee. We also talked about needing new signs.

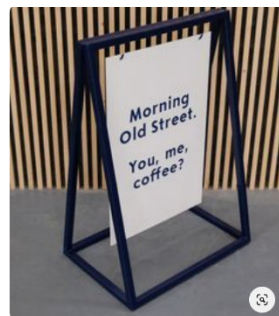
Mark your calendars for Saturday, December 4th from 9am to 3pm for our “CCC in Christ” event!

Next meeting will be held the first Tuesday of the month, September 7th at 10am.

Respectfully submitted by Kay, Marlene and Jane

WE NEED NEW OUTDOOR SIGNS!

We are looking for someone to build one or two lightweight movable signs to use for the bagged lunch and Christmas Walk fundraisers. We have two signs, but they are extremely heavy and cumbersome to move. Pictures of suggested designs are below. We want to be able to change the dates and information. Do you have any ideas? Please call the church office if you can help us out. Money for the supplies will be provided. Thank you!



September

*Bev Hanks
Dar Hovda
Carol Allen
Chris Garness

October

*Val Zabel
Mary Mundy
Kay Hickey
Toni Burns

November

*Dorothy Kallstrom
Jean Jahn
Heidi Iverson
Sandy Buchan

December

*Bev Rice
Dar Jones
Dar Hovda
Julie Anderson
Val Zabel

THE NEXT WELCA MEETING IS TUESDAY, SEPT. 7TH AT 10AM!

All women are welcomed and encouraged to join us for fellowship, fun and food! Discussion will continue about the December "CCC for Christ" fundraiser.

WORSHIP HOURS THIS SCHOOL YEAR

The Worship & Music Committee met and the church council joined in on the difficult discussion of whether to return to two services or not. Considering the Covid level of transmission Wabasha County is in (high) and the concerns of the Delta variant being here and our attendance numbers, it was decided together that we would continue with one worship service at 9am with Sunday School beginning at 10am.

A worship video will still be available for those who are out of town or are not comfortable attending in-person yet on Utube, facebook, our website or through an email.

Thank you to Bob Mann, Jim Nordstrom and Naomi Knox for rotating the responsibility of videoing the service with our camera and another HUGE thanks to Naomi for editing the video every Sunday morning so it can be sent electronically right to us and the TV stations and facebook, etc. No more making a DVD!

SUNDAY SCHOOL BEGINS SEPTEMBER 12TH

The Sunday School hour will begin at 10am. We look forward to seeing everyone back! If you are new, please call the church office to sign your child up, otherwise if you were here last year, we have you! Come ready to learn and have lots of fun! There will be a blessing of the backpacks on September 12th so don't forget to bring yours!

NEW CHURCH OFFICE HOURS STARTING SEPTEMBER 7TH

Office hours will return to Tuesdays-Thursdays, 9-noon.

THE SEPTEMBER SHEPHERD IS:

Dar Jones 565-4345

Please call her with any congregational joys or concerns.

WORSHIP SAFETY TEAM UPDATE

We are committed to respond quickly to changing circumstances so that we can worship safely together with reasonable precautions as needed. We will review the changing numbers of transmission of Covid cases every week and follow CDC recommendations based on those transmission rates from

Low (blue)

Moderate (yellow)

Substantial (orange)

High (red)

While we will not ask for proof, remember unvaccinated people are always asked to wear masks when in public spaces for all levels.

During Low and Moderate transmission rates, masks are still welcome for all who choose to wear them. Pews will be spaced as normal.

During Substantial transmission rates, we will provide more visual reminders that masks are required for all unvaccinated people, and recommended for vaccinated people too. Pews will be spaced further apart and overflow doors opened. Pastors and assistants will wear masks when distributing communion.

During High transmission rates, masks are required by all regardless of vaccination status and worn by leaders at all times except when leading worship behind the pulpit or altar.

If you'd like to keep up to date on our county's status, here is the CDC Covid Data tracker web site:
<http://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view>

Your worship safety team,
Pr. Dave, Pr. Chris, Joni, Deb, Roger and Julie

As of printing time (August 25th), Wabasha County is in the HIGH (red) transmission rate. Please wear a mask to church. Thank you.

CURRENT BUDGET UPDATE

as of August 22, 2021

Budget needed: \$127,058

Current: \$103,793.25

Behind: (23,264.75)

Capital Improvement and Maintenance:

Goal: \$20,000

Current: \$11,020

Present: Pastor Dave, Joni Lommen, Dave Laffrenzen, Dorothy Kallstrom, Randy Johnson, Howard Gorder, Dennis Bussian, Pr. Fossum, Roger Fossum

Absent: Deb Smith, Chad Meuer, Jean Jahn

Pastor led a session on the Enneagram-Wisdom for Councils followed by a prayer offering.

Call to Order: Laffrenzen

Secretary's Report: Lommen

The August council minutes were approved as written. **MSP:** Gorder, Bussian

Treasurer's Report:

The August report was approved as presented. We are under by \$5130 year-to-date. The capital improvement fund is over by \$7903. **MSP:** Johnson, Laffrenzen

Pastor's Report: Knox

Pastor presided over a graveside service for Tony Purvis's parents. He will be doing another for Doug Henke in Byron, MN in the near future.

He will be on vacation starting 8/22 and Pr. Chris will be leading the 8/29 service.

Education: Laffrenzen

VBS, held August 10-11, was a great success and lots of fun. Twenty-five kids and 21 volunteers participated and feedback has been very positive. Pastor congratulated Dave on the great job. Planning is underway for Sunday school this fall and a curriculum on "Being a Good Neighbor" has been selected.

Confirmands will be dividing into groups of 5-6 again this year and will kick-off with a picnic dinner at Beach Park.

Memorial/Special Gifts/Endowment Fund: Knox

Tharan Leopold from the Synod office spoke to the committee and was very helpful in explaining the advantages in investing our endowment funds in Fund A. Their approach decreases market instability by paying out on a 5 year average versus 1 year. The mission fund will have \$37,000 when it matures. The minimum amount of money needed to invest in Fund A is \$25,000. The remaining amount would stay in the mission investment fund to help with other mission activities of the church.

Pastor Dave made a motion to move forward with getting the paper work in order to invest in Fund A when the mission investment fund matures in February. Dennis Bussian seconded and the motion passed.

Property: Bussian

The entire roof was damaged by hail and will need to be replaced. A claim has been filed for \$57,000 and they are in the process of evaluating who will do the work. There is no deductible because we have been claim free for 5 years.

The large cross on the outside of the building will be removed and refreshed. The sign out front is also in need of refreshing. The committee is looking for a member to help with this task.

The committee is evaluating various contractors to perform general maintenance on the HVAC equipment.

They decided to wait on the power-washing of the building until next year.

Stewardship: Fossum

The committee will be meeting soon to begin the budgeting work.

Worship and Music: Pr. Chris

The committee discussed the feasibility of going to 2 services starting 9/12 with a re-evaluation being done in mid-October. Average attendance is about 45. Start time for the services and Sunday school was debated.

Council members questioned if we may be moving too fast given the high transmission for COVID level the county is currently in and the concerns around the Delta variant. Also, would going to 2 services for a month and then having to switch back to one service cause confusion?

Pastor Dave made a motion that we keep worship at 9:00am with Sunday school starting at 10:00am. Roger Fossum seconded and the motion passed.

Masks will now be required by all attendees because of the high transmission level.

They will be optional during coffee fellowship.

WELCA: Kallstrom

Planning is underway for the CCC (Cookies, Candy and Crafts) in Christ event to be held the first Saturday in December. The crafts committee met to determine the size and layout of the craft booths.

Old Business:

Constitution revisions

We are in the process of bringing our Constitution in line with the Synod model constitution and part of that is addressing discrepancies between current practice and what is in our constitution regarding committee responsibilities. The Stewardship committee currently does an insurance coverage evaluation every 3-5 years. Discussions have raised 2 issues. Should the evaluation be done more frequently and is the Stewardship the right committee to do this?

Dorothy explained the process that is done with our current carrier, Brotherhood Mutual.

There aren't that many companies offering this service and they have been good to work with.

A suggestion was made that the Stewardship committee could recruit a subcommittee including members who have insurance experience to assist with this process. Dorothy will take this back.

New Business:

Worship Service Under the Bridge

Pastor proposed and the Council agreed to delay this service until next year given the current COVID situation.

Adjourn: Laffrenzen

MSP: Bussian, Johnson

Closed with the Lord's prayer. **Next meeting:** September 16, 2021