Mission Connection

Mission Connection

JULY 2020

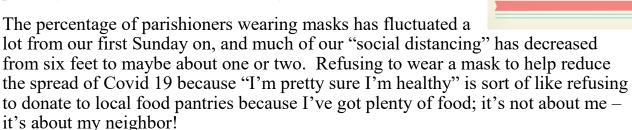
"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Romans 6:23



Pastor's Message

We've now been enjoying physically gathering for mass for four weeks and, thanks be to God, no member of Mission in Christ has tested positive for Covid-19 to date – as far as we know. As we move into the summer months, let's not get overconfident and drop our guard regarding the virus. If our state returns to a condition of increasing positive cases, deaths, and/or hospitalizations disproportionate to increased testing, we may need to reevaluate our decision to gather for worship and possibly return to online services only.



Let us remember that the inconvenience of wearing a mask is for the benefit of our neighbor. Remember what we confess each Sunday: "We have not loved You with our whole heart...we have not loved our neighbor as ourselves." It is an act of Christian charity that we wear a mask so that our neighbor might be safe. It is annoying to wear a mask, but our



Lord calls us to look beyond ourselves for the sake of the neighbor. The small act of kindness for Jesus' sake as well as for our neighbor is something we can bear as Christ bore the cross for us.

Page 2 Mission Connection



Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith. (Hebrews 12:1-2)

We believe that even those saints who have died are still alive in Christ Jesus. They are those giants of the faith upon whose shoulders we stand, and they, too, comprise this "great cloud". Here is a list of "cloud members" who are remembered during the month of July:

- July 1: Catherine Winkworth, died 1878; John Neale, died 1866; hymn translators
- July 3: Thomas, Apostle
- July 6: Jan Hus, martyr, died 1415
- July 9: Marvin Hamlett, Mission in Christ partner, died 2016
- July 11: Benedict of Nursia, Abbot of Monte Cassino, died ~540
- July 12: Nathan Soderblom, Bishop of Uppsala, died 1931
- July 17: Bartolome d Las Casas, missionary to the Indies, died 1566
- July 22: Mary Magdalene, Apostle
- July 23: Birgitta of Sweden, renewer of the church, died 1373
- July 25: James, Apostle
- July 28: Johann Sebastian Bach, died 1750; Heinrich Schutz, died 1672, George Fredrick Handel, died 1759; musicians
- July 29: Mary, Martha, and Lazarus of Bethany; Olaf, King of Norway, martyr, died 1030



Over the Coffee







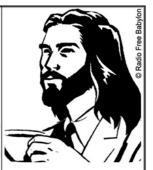
It's so sad, Jesus, that after all these years, we haven't really made a lot of progress on race relations in this country.



It's better than it was, Ann, but you're right. Long way to go.



There has to be a solution, Jesus.



The only place I've ever truly seen race erased, Ann, is...

...well, you're lookin' at him.



Page 3 Mission Connection



Stanza of the Month

Word of God, Come Down on Earth - #716 WOV

(For the next several months, we'll be using the With One Voice hymnal for our setting of the Mass and for our hymns of worship and praise so I'll be selecting our hymn for this column from that resource as well.)

The first stanza of this hymn contains a delightfully surprising number of teachings from the Holy Scriptures, the Creeds, and our Lutheran Confessions. I'll take it line-by-line and unpack each one!

Word of God, come down on earth,

²living rain from heaven descending;

³Touch our hearts and bring to birth

faith and hope and love unending.

⁴Word almighty, we revere you;

⁵Word made flesh we long to hear you.

In the first phrase we hear echoes of the introduction to John's gospel along with a declaration from the 2nd Article of the Nicene Creed: "...and the Word was with God, and the Word was God"..."For us and for our salvation, he came down".

The second phrase incorporates a metaphor used in the royal Psalm 72 for the king of Judah who foreshadows Christ Jesus: "May he be like rain that fall on the mown grass, like showers that water the earth!"

Phrase three reflects the orthodox understanding that faith is conceived and brought to life by the Word of Christ. Romans 10:17 declares, "So faith comes from hearing and hearing through the Word of Christ." Our confessions express the same idea in the 5th Article of the Augsburg Confession: "The Holy Spirit creates faith where and when he pleases in those who hear the gospel."

The fourth phrase is the same call we encounter in the 3rd Commandment that "we should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred, and gladly hear and learn it."

The final phrase in this stanza returns us to John's gospel: "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." In addition, I'm reminded of the Simon Peter's response to Jesus when asked if he wanted to leave from following Jesus: "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."



Page 4 Mission Connection



Ask Pr. Gary!



Q Pr. Gary, Should Mission in Christ go on record as supporting *Black Lives Matter?*

A That's a difficult question and while a newsletter column may not be the best venue in which to deal with it, I'll do my best, fully realizing that the attempt may be harshly criticized.

As a *concept*, every Christian should be proactively supportive of the idea that the lives of marginalized and oppressed people matter! They matter to Christ Jesus and we are called to care about, and for, the things He cares about and for. Although as Christians our track record for putting our money, hands, and feet where our mouth is has been at times abominable, it has been a theme of the church since the earliest centuries. Both Old and New Testaments are filled with God's call to his people to advocate for "the lowly, the poor, widows, and orphans", euphemisms for any and all people who marginalized or oppressed.

The greatest commandment, according to Jesus, is "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." (Luke 10:27). Our failure – and, yes, at times refusal – to do so, as we confess at the beginning of every mass, is exemplified nowhere more clearly than the systematic and systemic oppression of peoples of color. And it has to stop.

For me, the difficulty arises in the face of the phrase having been coopted as an official slogan of an organized movement. It is apparently not enough to affirm or even insist that black lives do, indeed, matter as much as any other. Now, use of the phrase is presumed to imply, if not demand, that one affirm all for which the movement and organization – blacklivesmatter.com – stands. Sadly, it seems that attempts to qualify that use or explain reluctance in embracing it is immediately deemed "racist".

Consequently, I will continue to affirm that, like any other life, the lives of the downtrodden, the lowly, the oppressed, the poor, the marginalized, the despised, and the rejected matter. That's good news. But even better is that the lives of sinners matter to Christ Jesus – "The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost." (1 Timothy 1:12)

July Worship Leaders***

*** If serving in this capacity is not something you are comfortable with, please let the church know.



Page 5 Mission Connection

Council Meeting Minutes

June Council Notes

Mission in Christ Church Council Agenda Tuesday, June 16, 2020

Mission In Christ Council Meeting June 16, 2020 Call to order: 6:01

Present: Pastor Burkhalter, Connie Puffett, Michelle Schlee, Michelle Borrett, Deron Hakert, Betty Burkhalter, Dave Gould (via Zoom), Jerry Hawkins, Deb Ommen

Opening Devotions: Connie Puffett shared a devotion on Hope. She read from a book she received several years ago from a Sunday School student.

Reading of Minutes: May meeting minutes were emailed to the council. No reading of the minutes took place at this meeting. No one had any questions or corrections. Connie Puffett made the motion to approve the minutes as written. Michelle Borrett seconded. Approved.

Treasurer's Report: Michelle Borrett provided a written treasurers report. May offerings totaled \$10,461.40. \$650.00 went to the building fund and the balance, \$9,801.40 went to the general fund. Expenses for May were \$6,649.13. Motion to approve the treasurers report was made by Pr. Burkhalter, Jerry Hawkins seconded. Approved.

Pastor's Report: Pr. Burkhalter distributed a written report. Kathy H is now doing the reporting license reporting. Joan has been recording the With One Voice music. The liturgy was used this past Sunday. It went well. There is a 2-5 second delay before the music starts. Distribution of the Sacrament went better the second week. About 50% of the attendee at worship are wearing masks. June giving appears to be low. Pr. Burkhalter will be taking vacation July 1-6. The council agreed that he should discuss with the Music/Worship Team regarding doing a lay service or securing a supply pastor for that Sunday. He will report back to the Council their recommendation via email so the Council can review and vote via email.

Worship/Music Report: No report. Once Joan gets further on with the recording from With One Voice, Pr. Burkhalter will contact Annie Puffett and Donna Moeller to see if they would be interested in assisting with recording a voice over for worship. Currently Pr. Burkhalter is receiving the recordings from Joan the Thursday before worship – short timing for someone to come in to assist. So, he will continue doing the recordings for now.

Education Report: No report because no Sunday School is being held at this time. Pr. Burkhalter encourages everyone to go online and work thru the puzzles.

Old Business:

• Online Services and In-House Services Update: Pr. Burkhalter provided reports which reflects attendance. Matins (held Monday, Wednesday, Friday @ 9:00 AM) – average attendance is 24.2. Compline (held daily @ 8:00 PM) – average attendance is 26.9. Devine/Sunday – 57 online only, 67.5 live/online combined. The online services will continue as the pandemic continues. Many more people are being reached with the online option.



Page 6 Mission Connection

Council Meeting Minutes

June Council Notes Continued

• External microphone: Jerry/Deron – They agreed to research using an external mic for Pastors iPhone. Jerry investigated an alternative to using Pastor's iPhone for the live broadcast is to purchase a camera with the mic built into our sound system for \$7,000. Pr. Burkhalter has made some adjustments to the recording (location/volume) using his iPhone. It appears the echo was only present when the camera had been moved to the west side of the sanctuary. No additional concerns/complaints have been received since moving back to the center isle. A motion was made by Jerry to table this topic for the future. Deb seconded. Approved.

Concerns were raised about being able to hear the Lector when reading the scriptures/prayers. Readers need to test the mic before service and move it accordingly so it will pick up their voice.

We ran out of bulletins this past Sunday. Pr. Burkhalter will have Kathy increase the number printed to 30.

- Disaster Relief Warehouse: Pr. Burkhalter received information from Mary Bates regarding the specifications for a building. Questions were risen regarding building a 30 x 30 building (including concrete and electricity) for \$15,000 \$20,000. Pr. Burkhalter will check on who pays the utility bill for heating/cooling as well as property tax implications. Michelle Schlee will have Chris Schlee look at the specs for his opinion on construction costs.
- Sanctuary Blinds: Tabled until next month as Deb didn't get a chance to investigate this due to her workload.
- Word/Sacrament Ministry for Part-Time Pastor: When Pr. Burkhalter accepted the call, the agreement was that he would provide full-time services and Mission in Christ would work towards a full-time compensation package. Pr. Burkhalter shared with the Council information he received from Pr. Wendell in the Bishop's office a year ago regarding a compensation package. The information provided a High Range and a Low Range. The information was based on a congregation the size of Mission in Christ. Pr. Burkhalter's current compensation package is below the Low Range.
 - Why are we looking at this? When Pr. Burkhalter retires (aprox 5 years), Mission In Christ will need to offer a compensation package to their new pastor. The Council needs to begin discussing what type of package they will be able to offer Full Time/ Three Quarter-time, Half-Time. Would a half-time provide 2 services per month? Would a three quarter-time provide 3 services per month? Would it be just shortened hours?
 - Pr. Burkhalter announced that he is considering moving to three quarter time starting in September. He suggested 3 services per month. The fourth (and fifth two times per month) could be lay led or supply. There was a suggestion that he cut out Matins and Compline and still provide weekly services. Due to attendance of these services this is not something Pr. Burkhalter is considering currently.

The Council was asked to think about this and bring suggestions to the next meeting.

• *Church's Future*: The Council was asked to think about the future of Mission In Christ. Where are we headed/going? Pr. Burkhalter asked everyone to bring their thoughts to the next meeting regarding a 2year and 6-year vision and how to get there.



Page 6 Mission Connection

Council Meeting Minutes

New Business:

• *Tree removal*: There are seven evergreens on the west side of the property. Some are on Seedorff's property some are on Mission In Christ's. There are at least 2 that are dead. There was a discussion about taking them down. Jerry expressed concern about taking the trees down at this time for sentimental reasons of Verle Pugh. A motion was made to have Jerry speak with Seedorff about Mission In Christ taking the trees down and for Jerry to get a quote for stump removal buy Betty Burkhalter. Seconded by Connie Puffett. Approved.

- *Pugh property*: Pr. Burkhalter receive a text message from Trisha Pugh. Trisha was checking to see if Mission In Christ had any interest in the property. The Council agreed based on the Annual Meeting, the congregation was not interested in making a purchase of that property. Pr. Burkhalter will send a reply text advising Mission In Christ is not interested in the property.
- High Bush Cranberries: Jerry suggested the Council consider planting High Bush Cranberries on the east side of the church. Deb Ommen has them on the north side of their property. Grow to about 12' high and provide a great screen to the adjacent property. This was tabled to for the next meeting.

Other Business: None

Next Meeting: Tuesday, July 21, 2020 @ 6:00 pm

Devotions for next meeting: Deb Ommen

Coffee / Treats for next meeting: None at this time due to the pandemic

Adjournment: Michelle Borrett made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Michelle Schlee seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:28 pm with the Lord's Prayer

Respectfully submitted, Betty Burkhalter Church Council Secretary





Page 8

Council Meeting Minutes

Mission Connection

NALC Disaster Response

Listed below, you will find a copy of the items needed for the NALC Disaster Response. A truck will be at the Iowa Mission District Convocation scheduled for September 19 at St John Lutheran Church Vilmar. That same truck will stop at Mission In Christ to pick up additional donations.

If you have donations, feel free to take them to the Convocation or bring them to the church.

I will be making some school bags. At this point I don't know how many I will get made and what supplies I will need to fill them. Keep an eye on the bulletin board at the church for updates on this.

Betty Burkhalter Coordinator Iowa Mission District NALC Disaster Response

Stuff the TRUCK!



July, 2020

NALC Disaster Response can send a Truck to your next scheduled event/meeting to pick up donations from Mission Districts.

Please bring your collected items to the designated church for pick up on September 19, 2020 from 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

St. John Lutheran Church Vilmar 16073 Keystone Ave, Green, Iowa 50636

Suggested Donations:

Bibles
Quilts & Blankets
Flood Buckets
School Kits
Healthcare Kits

Baby Care Kits Gift Cards Building Supplies See Needs List for Items in Kits

OR DELIVER TO: NALC Disaster Warehouse 810 Main St. Caldwell, Ohio 43724

Floods and Tornadoes:

NALC Disaster Response is collecting flood buckets, health kits, school kits, layettes, Bibles, and Lowes/Home Depot Gift Cards for the flooded areas in Michigan

If your congregation has any flood buckets and kits available, please contact Mary Bates at 740-509-1132 or by email at <u>disasterresponse@thenalc.org</u> to "Stuff the Truck" at the Iowa Mission District Convocation.

We will continue to support impacted congregations throughout the spring. Thank you for your prayers and support!

Mary Bates, Director NALC Disaster Response 810 Main St. Caldwell, Ohio 43724



Mission in Christ Lutheran Church A ministry of the NALC

312 East Mission St. Strawberry Point, IA 52076

Office Phone: 563-933-6525

Emergencies: 815-394-9309

NALC Core Values

Christ-Centered

We confess the apostolic faith in Jesus Christ according to the Holy Scriptures. We affirm the authority of the Scriptures as the authoritative source and norm, "according to which all doctrines should and must be judged" (Formula of Concord). We accept the ecumenical creeds and the Lutheran Confessions as true witnesses to the Word of God.

Email:

Mission Driven

secretary@missioninchristluth.onmicrosoft.com

We believe that the mission of the Church is to preach the Gospel and to make disciples for Christ. We believe that making disciples—in our congregations, in our communities and nations, and around the world—must be a priority of the Church in the present age.

Traditionally-Grounded



We affirm the ecumenical creeds and the faithful witness of the Church across time and space. We endorse the form and practices of the universal Church that are consistent with Scripture, particularly the office of the ministry and the tradition of worship under Word and Sacrament. We seek dialogue and fellowship with other Lutheran churches and with faithful Christians of other confessions.

Congregationally-Focused

We strive to be a church body that is organized to facilitate the ministries of local congregations in a posture of servanthood and a spirit of partnership, through the provision of resources, connections and information.

We're on Facebook!

Join us for Worship
9 AM Sundays and
online through our
Facebook page or
Mission in Christ Website.

