

Mission Connection

MISSION CONNECTION

SEPTEMBER 2020

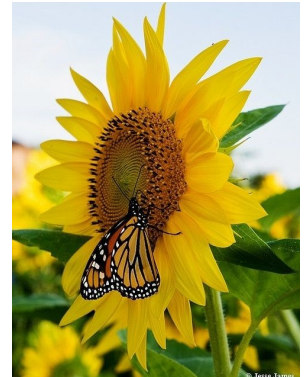
**Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.”
Matthew 16:24**



Pastor's Message

Our small catechism's explanation of the Fourth Commandment - *Honor your father and your mother* – declares that we are to fear and love God so that we do not despise or anger our parents *and others in authority*, but respect, obey, love, and serve them.

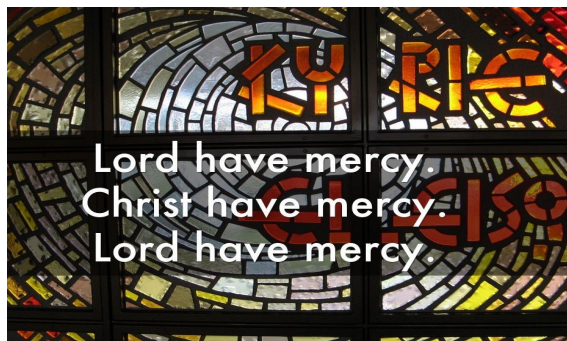
Sadly, rather than respect the protocols pleaded for by the preponderance of science and medical authorities, it seems too many of us prefer to hide behind the areas of confusion and misinformation stemming from the many still unknown characteristics of this novel virus and reject even the most basic common sense health advice we all grew up with: Cover your mouth!



We love to talk about “sacrificing” for Jesus, and “taking up our cross” to follow him. Yet when he comes to us through those whom he has gifted and charged with our health and well-being and asks that we be willing to be a little inconvenienced, to give up a modicum of comfort, we childishly stamp our feet and complain about our freedoms and rights being curtailed!

Through the course of the pandemic, the church is being handed one of the greatest opportunities in our lifetime to show our care and compassion – our love – for our neighbor. Are we squandering it?

Lord have mercy,
Christ, have mercy,
Lord, have mercy.



Cloud of Witnesses

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. Among them are those giants of the faith upon whose shoulders we stand, and they, too, comprise this “great cloud” that surrounds us. Here is a list of “Cloud Members” who are remembered during the month of September:

- September 2: Nikolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig, bishop, renewer of the church, died 1872
- September 9: Peter Claver, priest, missionary to Columbia, died 1654
- September 13: John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople, died 407
- September 11: Dean Helmrichs, Mission in Christ Partner in mission, died 2018
- September 16: Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, martyr, died ~258
- September 17: Hildegard, Abbess of Bingen, died 1179
- September 18: Dag Hammarskjold, renewer of society, died 1961
- September 21: Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist
- September 29: Michael and All Angels
- September 30: Jerome, translator, teacher, died 420

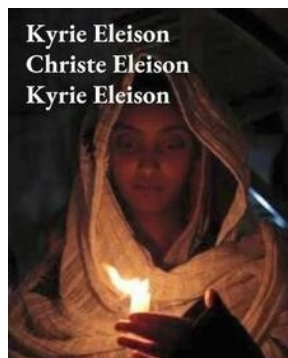


Over the Coffee



A little perspective: we wring our hands in dismay over the 176,000 deaths due to Covid in 2020, yet we seem to shrug off the average of over 800,000 infants murdered by abortion every year...every...year...since 1975. That count now stands at over 43 million.

Lord have mercy,
Christ, have mercy,
Lord, have mercy.





Stanza of the Month

Stanza of the Month: *Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil* (WOV #713)

*Lord, let my heart be good soil,
open to the seed of your Word.*

*Lord, let my heart be good soil,
where love can grow and peace is understood.*

When my heart is hard, break the stone away.

When my heart is cold, warm it with the day.

When my heart is lost, lead me on your way.

Lord, let my heart,

Lord, let my heart,

Lord, let my heart be good soil.

I chose this short hymn for several reasons; first, it was a favorite of Michelle Schlee of blessed memory, and was used as one of the communion distribution hymns at her funeral on August 18th.

Second, it does not fall victim to the malady that often plagues many contemporary worship and praise songs (even in the *With One Voice*!) – that of focusing too much on what the worshipper is doing rather than on what God is doing! Too often, hymns of this nature are couched in terms of what you or I are doing to warm our own hearts, stir up our own passions, and generally be responsible for our own self-improvement. In contrast, this hymn is the worshipper's prayer for God in his mercy to do those things for us which we cannot do for ourselves recalling the words of the Explanation of the 3rd Article of the *Creed*: by our own power and understanding, we cannot believe in our Lord Jesus Christ or come to him!

Written in the form of a prayer, it is a beautiful meditation based on the parable of the sower from Matthew 13:23 – “*As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.*”. It also incorporates images found in Ezekiel 36:26 – “*And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh,*” while reminding us also of our liturgical response based on Psalm 51: *Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God.* All in all, a delightful melody coupled with a theologically sound petition to our heavenly Father! Does it get any better?



Community Meal/Food Pantry

The food pantry at St Mary's last week served 17 households. There have been many monetary donations so I am not putting out a list of needs. Items that can be ordered in cases I have been ordering through Strawberry Foods. Others items that do not need as big a quantity are gotten in the surrounding area. Meat is purchased at Strawberry Foods or Edgewood Locker. I received a call from Edgewood Locker last week. Someone has donated a hog and the processing to the pantry. I will be picking up the meat this week. The pantry is making deliveries to the elderly or home bound persons in Strawberry. The next date for the food pantry is September 16. If someone is in need of food assistance before then please call me at 563-920-2753.



The community meal served 79 last week. We are still doing only carry outs and deliveries are in Strawberry. The past two months the number served has been 74 and 70. The next date for the meal is September 16. The menu has not been finalized but will be posted later.

If you have questions or suggestions please contact me

Thank you,
Delaine Gruman

September Worship Leaders***

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

September 6	September 13	September 20	September 27
Lector: Terri Gould	Lector: Sue Mercer	Lector: Annie Puffett	Lector: Connie Puffett
Cleaning: Chris Schlee	Cleaning: Chris Schlee	Cleaning: Chris Schlee	Cleaning: Chris Schlee



Council Meeting Minutes

August Council Notes

Mission in Christ Church Council Agenda
Tuesday, August 25, 2020
At Mission in Christ Church

Opening Prayer lead by Connie Puffett.

Call to Order: 6:01 pm

Present: Pr. Burkhalter, Connie Puffett, Michelle Borrett, Deron Hakert, Dave Gould, Jerry Hawkins. Deb Ommen, Betty Burkhalter

Absent: None

Opening Devotions: Deb Ommen shared a poem titled The Dash. The dash refers to engraving on a head stone – date born dash date of death. It's the period of time between when we are born when you pass away. How do you spend your dash?

July Minutes: June meeting minutes were emailed to the council. No reading of the minutes took place at this meeting. There were no corrections or questions. Jerry Hawkins made the motion to approve the minutes as written. Michelle Borrett 2nd: Approved

Treasurers Report: Michelle Borrett provided a written treasurer's report. Beginning balance was \$11,685.77. Offerings totaled \$5,700.00 - \$750 was designated for the building fund. Expenses for July totaled \$6,439.30. Ending balance for the checking account was \$8701.54. Several large distributions from the checking account were made this month – 2nd quarter benevolence, contribution to the Iowa Mission District and the NALC. Dave Gould made the motion to approve the Treasurers Report, Deron Hakert 2nd. Approved.



Pastor's Report: Pastor Burkhalter provided a written report of Joys & Concerns (loss of Michelle Schlee, recent Iowa storms, continued participation online of prayer offices and Sunday service). A discussion was held regarding the storm recovery. We discussed having a special offering collection for this. Pr. Gary will check with the Marshall Hahn (Mission District Dean) and Pr. Ron Voss to see what the needs are. Coming up in September: Iowa Mission District 'convocation' will be held via email this year. Delegates from each congregation will be asked to review/approve the budget for the next fiscal year as well as vote for Dean of the Iowa Mission District, a Clergy council member and a Lay council member. Adult education will resume in September – no Sunday classes – Wednesday only. Wednesday class will be offered in person as well as via ZOOM. Class will start at 6:30 followed by Compline at 7:30. We will resume our study of the Large Catechism.

Worship/Music: No report Pr Gary indicated that the team is working on hymn selection for September/October. We will return to LBW after Labor Day.



Council Meeting Minutes

August Council Notes Continued

Education Report: No written report. Connie Puffett reminded the council that this fall she will provide education to the youth in her home. Adult education: will resume in September – no Sunday classes – Wednesday only. Wednesday class will be offered in person as well as via ZOOM. Class will start at 6:30 followed by Compline at 7:30. We will resume our study of the Large Catechism.

Word/Sacrament Ministry for Part -Time Pastor: Pastor Gary asked that this be tabled for now. We can look at this again in a year or so. This topic seems to be causing a lot of concern within the congregation.

Church's Future – Where are we headed? How are we going to get there? How to make visions a reality? During previous meetings we began discussions about thinking about the future of Mission In Christ - where are we headed? Pr Burkhalter and Connie Puffett asked everyone to bring their thoughts to the next meeting regarding a 2 year and 6-year vision and how to get there. Ideas shared by Connie and Pr Gary were:

- Consider an after school program

- Reach out to needs in the community

- Invite children - Pr Gary stated invitations will only work if we (Mission In Christ congregation) model discipleship ourselves

- Increase the congregation's knowledge of scripture, the confessions, etc.

- Form a call committee in a couple of years to begin discussion options once

- Pr. Gary retires. IE: sharing a pastor, Mission In Christ an internship site, part-time word & sacrament ministry

- Feed My Children

- Expand Carols & Cookies

5- & 6-year plans: Make Mission In Christ known as a place to go to for a relationship with Jesus, expand the use of the facilities, share a pastor Sanctuary Blinds: Connie researched the cost of blinds. Prices ranges from \$30 to \$300 per window. The council was surveyed, and most were not interested in having blinds – they like the windows as is. Betty Burkhalter made the motion to discontinue the discussion about putting up blinds/window coverings. Jerry Hawkins 2nd. Approved.

Sound System: The council discussed the issues with the current system. Pr Gary will reach out to Carns in Elkader and Cory Wulfskuhle in Manchester to get their input on our existing system vs a replacement.

Bonfire/Sing Along Gathering: Tabled until next meeting.



Council Meeting Minutes

August Council Minutes, Continued

New Business:

COVID 19 Positive Cases Procedure: Going forward if there are any positive cases in our congregation, we will return to online only for 2 weeks.

Annual Meeting Possible Date Change: After discussion, Deron made the motion to move the annual meeting to January 10, 2021. Michelle Borrett 2nd. Approved

Possible New Banners: Are more banners needed? Pr. Gary reported we now have banners for all major festivals. No additional banners will be made at this time unless there is a need for a special one, i.e. wedding, baptism, confirmation, etc.

Number of Council Members: Tabled until next meeting

Disaster Relief (NALC and Mission in Christ): Refer to the note included in the Pastor's Report

The Return: National and Global Day of Prayer: September 26, 2020. Pr. Gary will check with the Strawberry Point Ministerium as well as the Iowa Mission District to see what plans, if any, are being made for this event.

Other Business:

Jerry Hawkins purchased two loads of black dirt for ground cover as the result of the tree removal. He paid \$400 for the dirt. He asked if he could receive reimbursement for this even though he hadn't received prior approval from the council. Deron made the motion to reimburse Jerry. Deb 2^{ne}. Approved.

Seeding of the black dirt will be delayed until the end of September or later.

Jerry has also been in conversation with Larry Meyer regarding putting in tile on the west side of the property. The estimate was \$250 for the tile and \$450 to install. The council asked Jerry to have further discussions with Larry Meyer on this and we can discuss again at the next meeting.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, September 15 @ 6:00 PM at Mission in Christ

Devotions: Connie

Adjournment: Deron made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Michelle Borrett 2nd. Approved. Meeting adjourned at 7:44 with the Lord Prayer

Respectfully submitted,
Betty Burkhalter
Church Council Secretary



Iowa Derecho Relief

Here are some of the ways congregations and individuals in our mission districts can support our brothers and sisters who have been so seriously impacted by the recent derecho:

* NALC Disaster Response – they have brought in a trailer with supplies and will be continuing to assist in the recovery. Donations may be given to help in this work by sending gifts payable to:

*North American Lutheran Church
2299 Palmer Drive, Suite 220
New Brighton, MN 55112-2202*

Please write “Disaster Response Fund – Iowa Derecho Relief” in the memo. Also, NALC Disaster Response is working on coordinating 2 Saturday work-days in September for any volunteers who wish to come and help. I will pass along the details on this as I receive them from Mary.

* Gift Cards – a good way to provide help to people who have lost so much from the storm is to provide gifts cards to those in need. The NALC and Pastor Ede have been working with a group called Iowa Giving Network to distribute these cards to those in need. Pr. Hahn is planning to go to Cedar Rapids on September 5 to volunteer and am willing to bring Gift Cards with him to distribute to those in need. Walmart, Fareway, Target, etc. are all good usable cards to give to people. If you wish to donate any cards, send them by September 4 to:

Marshall Hahn
329 W. Hill St.
St. Olaf 52072

Any that are sent after that date will be distributed as well.

* Volunteer – There are other volunteer opportunities that are in the works but not finalized at this time. I will send out information on any others as I become aware of them.

* Stuff the Truck – Don’t forget - the NALC will have a truck at Mission in Christ Lutheran in Strawberry Point on September 18 – 20 to collect items. Details are in the August newsletter. This will be a long-term recovery process and anything that can be given will be most appreciated.

* Prayers – Please keep all the people who have been affected by this tragedy in your prayers. Especially with the extent of the damage and the sheer volume of the debris, the safety of those who are cleaning up and repairing power lines, buildings and property continues as a prime concern.



2020 Iowa Mission Convocation

The Iowa Mission District Council met via Zoom for a special meeting to discuss the 2020 Convocation scheduled for September 19. At this meeting, the council decided it was not advisable to hold an in-person Convocation this year due to the Covid 19 pandemic. Instead, we will conduct the necessary business via email. The council decided that there were 2 items that we needed to do – Election of Council Members, and Approving the Budget. The process for taking care of these items will be as follows:

ELECTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS: Nominations for Council Members may be sent to Secretary Craig Lease by August 15 for any of the following positions: Dean, Clergy Council Member, Lay Council Member.

Be sure to secure the person's willingness to serve and have them complete the biographical form available in the newsletter and mail to Secretary, Craig Lease.

The names of the nominees with their biographical information will be included in the September newsletter. Pastors of each congregation will inform their delegates to email their votes to Secretary Craig Lease no later than September 14.

APPROVING THE BUDGET: The Iowa Mission District Treasurer will send out a copy of the 2019 – 2020 Treasurer's Report and the 2020 – 2021 Proposed Budget in the September newsletter. Approval of the Proposed Budget will also be done via email. Pastors of each congregation will inform their delegates to email their votes to Secretary Craig Lease (pdlease@gmail.com) no later than September 14. Because of the logistics involved, there would be no provision for submitting amendments to the budget. It will simply be submitted for approval.

It is unfortunate that we will be unable to meet together as the Iowa Mission District, but, as with so many other events this summer, it seemed to the council to be the best option available to us. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact any of the Iowa Mission District Council members, or our dean - Pastor Marshall Hahn.



Mission in Christ Lutheran Church

A ministry of the NALC

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Strawberry Point, IA 52076

Office Phone: 563-933-6525
Emergencies: 815-394-9309

Email:

secretary@missioninchristluth.onmicrosoft.com

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.

Mission Driven

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.*

