



Country Chronicles
December 2020
Cannon River and
Cross of Christ Lutheran
Parish, ELCA



Ministry Notes

Next month I'll have been in ministry for fifteen years. I have a lot of memories of being with families as their loved ones passed away. Memories of visiting people in the hospital or nursing homes. Memories of bible studies, worship services, fellowship...

If there's anything I've learned in fifteen years-- it's to show up! Being present with people is the most important thing there is... You don't need to have all the answers; you just need to be there.

When I was doing my Chaplaincy training, my supervisor had us read a research paper examining the length of stays of hospital patients who had suffered a heart attack. Specifically comparing patients who received regular visits from a Chaplain, and patients who received regular visits from a therapy dog.

Guess which group had the shorter hospital stays? Yup, it was the patients that received visits from the dogs! My supervisor said, "You need to learn to be like a dog-- don't judge, don't talk, just look at the patients with big eyes and wag your tail." Of course, we all thought that it was pretty funny, but there was also a lot of truth to it.

Presence communicates love and care. Presence communicates connection and solidarity. Presence communicates compassion. Our physical presence is often the very heart beat that gives each other hope.

This is why family gatherings on Holidays are so important. It's how we express our love for one another. And it's also why this social distancing has been so hard! We want so desperately to hug one another and be in each other's space! But, we can't. I get it, I want nothing else in the whole world than to hug my kids.

I think we're all a little "presence" deprived.

The good news of Christmas is that God came to be present with us! Jesus was born into this world to show us how much He loves us!

I wonder, do you suppose that during this pandemic, we might experience the meaning of that in a deeper way than before? Do you suppose we might actually be able to feel the heartbeat of God in our own chest?

Imagine with me... Close your eyes and take some deep breaths... Feel your lungs expand and contract. Focus on your heart beat. Can you feel it? That pulse you feel is the rhythm of God... That pulse you feel is God telling you that you are His special creation. That pulse you feel is God wrapping His arms around you in love and forgiveness. A real, live, physical presence...

God is present all around you. God loves you. And God will be with us through this Christmas season and far beyond. And thanks be to God...

Merry Christmas, everyone. And may God bless us all, in unique and surprising ways.

Todd

Contact Information for Todd Portinga:
Church Phone: 651-388-3464 ***Cell Phone:*** 651-983-1795
Email: pastor@cccchurch.com

Cannon River News

Attendance

November 1 st	21
November 8 th	21
November 15 th	14
November 22 nd	12
November 29 th	No in person worship service

Financial Report

	Income	Expenses	Net
Jan	\$2,588	\$3,076	(\$488)
Feb	\$2,465	\$3,544	(\$1,079)
March	\$1,670	\$4,451	(\$2,781)
April	\$1,630	\$2,967	(\$1,337)
May	\$2,830	\$3,029	(\$199)
June	\$4,508	\$4,095	\$412
July	\$2,568	\$3,127	(\$559)
August	\$5,143	\$3,427	\$1,715
September	\$1,923	\$4,579	(\$2,656)
October	\$5,070	\$3,262	\$1,807

Year to Date	\$30,395	\$35,562	(\$5,167)
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Ruth's Boys

Christmas is just around the corner! For the past many years, we as a congregation, have made the holidays brighter for "Ruth's Boys". The tree with gift ideas will be at church by November 29th. Please have your gifts back at church for delivery on **December 20th**. If you are not comfortable with in-church worshipping and aren't able to stop to pick up a tag, a gift certificate to Walmart would always be a helpful gift for them. They have been doing curbside pickup at Walmart during Covid. Mark and Dan want us to know how much they greatly appreciate our help each year.

Sharon Niebur

Cross of Christ News

*We are called by the Spirit to be a lasting presence in our community,
faithfully sharing the Word of God through worship, fellowship and
service to our neighbors.*

Faithful through Generations

Assistants for December 2020

Greeters

December 6 th	Doris Gruber
December 13 th	Jim Gustafson
December 20 th	Dennis & Jackie Martin
December 27 th	Bob & Shirley Watsi

Readers

December 6th	Dean Dinndorf
December 13th	Sandy Luhman
December 20th	Kailyn Peterson
December 27th	Cathy Nemcek

Council Person

Joan Slingsby

Kitchen

Doris Gruber

Ushers for December

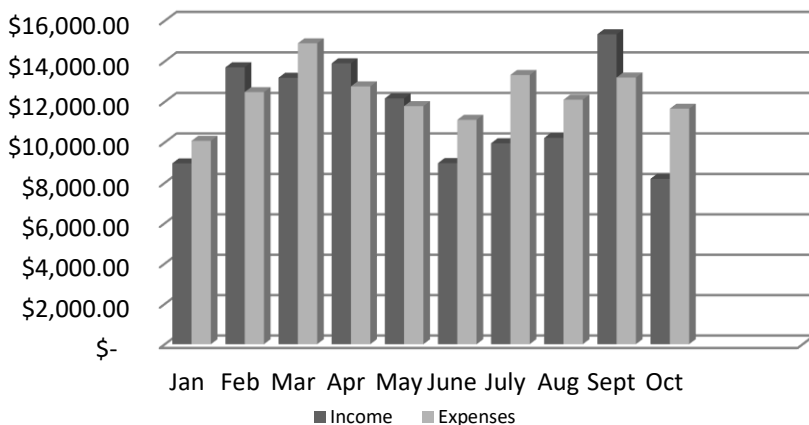
Paul Hansen, Jeff Busse, Jim Chester

Cross of Christ Financial Report

	Income	Expenses
Jan	\$8,954	\$10,066
Feb	\$13,695	\$12,471
Mar	\$13,181	\$14,880
April	\$13,896	\$12,753
May	\$12,162	\$11,782
June	\$8,968	\$11,104
July	\$9,949	\$13,317
August	\$10,212	\$12,100
September	\$15,328	\$13,193
October	\$8,192	\$11,653

Year to Date \$114,538 \$123,319

2020 Income/Expenses



Financial News:

Thank you for your continued financial support during this time!
 We know that many of you have added stress, expenses and maybe a

decrease or loss of income right now, which makes your gifts even more meaningful.

Harvest Festival donations will go to the operating fund this year.

The **Mission Committee** sent \$100 to Feed My Starving Children, \$200 to Lutheran Disaster Response for wildfire relief, a tablet to our sponsor child, Gabby, for \$231.53, \$120 to Hastings Family Service for their Thanksgiving meal, and spent \$83.12 sending birthday cards to members.

The **PPP loan forgiveness application process** has begun, and we are working on collecting the required information.

2021 Offering envelopes and Harvest Festival envelopes are available in Dahlen Hall.

The fraudulent charge to our credit card has been refunded and a new card has been received.

Please consider designating your Thrivent Choice Dollars to Cross of Christ. You can designate Choice dollars earned so far in 2020 at any time. Contact your advisor or go to www.thrivent.com for more information.

The **Kwik Trip cards** are still available through Julie Schriefels at 388-2326. A portion of your purchase price comes directly to Cross of Christ. It is a very easy way to support your church!

The **Simply Giving Program** allows you to have your church offering automatically deducted from your checking or savings account, biweekly or monthly. Please contact Rebecca Peterson for help with setting up scheduled donations through Simply Giving.

If you make any purchase on **Amazon.com**, you can designate .5% of your order to come to Cross of Christ by using **smile.amazon.com** instead and designating us as the recipient.

The next Finance meeting is scheduled for **Wed, Dec 2**, time and place TBD. Detailed reports of income and expenditures are always available upon request.

Rebecca Peterson, Treasurer
crossofchristtreasurer@gmail.com
651-301-2652

Kwik Trip Cards



They Make Great Christmas Gifts/Stocking Stuffers

Help support our Building Maintenance Fund by buying Kwik Trip cards. The cards can be used to purchase anything at Kwik Trip from gas, groceries and car washes to anything else they sell. Available in **\$10, \$20, \$25, \$50 and \$100**. You pay the amount of the card being purchased; the church makes 5% of the sales and another 10% for non-fuel purchases made with the cards. ***Purchase \$10 gas only cards for the Hope Coalition mission project.*** The **next order** will be put in on **Tuesday, December 8th** and will be available at the church by, December 12th. **If you would like to order cards and are not on the regular order list please email hjschreif@live.com or 507-990-7024. We can discuss how you would like to receive and pay for your cards.** Thank you to those who have ordered Kwik Trip Cards.

Adopt-A-Family Christmas Project



Cross of Christ will be participating in the Adopt-a-family Christmas project again this year. A list of gifts was emailed out for this project. Any questions or if you want to participate, please contact Lynette Hanson at 651-380-7814 or by email at

lynronfarmer@yahoo.com

Missions

Missions at Work:

In contacting Hope Coalition this year, we learned that the greatest need they have for their homeless folks is Aldi and gas cards. We feel it's important to listen to the need that is out there, so we are **continuing a donation of Aldi and Gas cards (gas only please)**. If you are able, please purchase these cards in the amount of **\$10 or \$15**. Once purchased, you can drop them off at the Dahlen Hall entrance; there will be a collection box there. Or if you prefer, please mail them to church:

Cross of Christ Lutheran Church
24036 Cty. 7 Blvd.
Welch, MN 55089
Attn: Mission Committee

We have had an amazing response! 30 gas cards and 10 Aldi cards!!

Thank you! This donation will help homeless folks in need of food and transportation. We will continue this collection through the winter months.

Thank you for your continued Mission support!

The Mission Committee

Family Fare Receipts!



We are getting close to collecting \$150,000 in receipts. Once we have this amount, we will receive a check for \$1,000 for Feed My Starving Children. We currently have **\$137,668** in receipts, so please keep them coming. There is a bucket to put the receipts in right inside Dahlen Hall.

Youth and Learning News

The Learning and Youth Committee discussed how we will determine when to restart Sunday School. This will be determined based on when church services begin in a regular manner, without limited seating.

In the meantime, families will be able access the lessons through Sparkhouse digital. Each family has been given a username (your email address) and password to access the lessons and videos. An email was sent to each family regarding this. If you didn't get and email from me or have any question please feel free to contact me.

Confirmation Classes: Wednesday nights 7:00.

Activities & Reminders: No activities scheduled at this time.

Learning and Youth Meeting: Thursday, November 12th 6:30 pm Dahlen Hall.

CHRISTMAS VIDEO: *We will be producing a Children's Christmas video to go along with the Christmas service. We are in the planning process and will be contacting families soon to determine how you would like to record your part(s). Please contact Julie if you have ideas and/or would like to help with the program.*

Mission Projects:

Apply Clear Sound. keep it, PAY \$299 per aid. FREE S

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HELP WANTED

Sunday School Teachers;
1-3 Grade to teach a short lesson after the opening introduction.
Could be a co-taught position
Sundays determined by co-teachers.
4-6 Grade to teach or co-teach same as above.
7-8 Grade co-teacher, Dean will mentor.
Contact: Julie Schreifels
507-990-7024 hjschreif@live.com



Weekly offering will be used towards the assistance of Gabby, a child in Tanzania. She still needs to be supported so



If you stop by the church
put some coins in the
globe for Gabby

Peace,

Julie Schreifels

Sunday School Superintendent hjschreif@live.com h. 651-388-2326
c. 507-990-7024



The next **WELCA meeting** will be **Tuesday, December 1st 7:00 pm.** The agenda will include: Blood Drive, Pie Sale debriefing, Kitchen Committee, Days for Girls, other.

Taste of Welch THANK YOU! To all who participate in the Taste of Welch.

Red Cross Blood Drive: **Our next drive will Thursday, January 7th from 12-6 pm and Friday, January 8th from 8:30 am to 2:30 pm.** Come and donate blood-Save lives. You can register now at <https://www.redcrossblood.org/> The Cross of Christ site has had 30 drives totaling 767 units of blood donated. We could use a couple more volunteers to help with the drives at the drives or providing homemade, individual wrapped snacks for the donors or the meal for the Red Cross workers. Contact Julie if you are available.

Pie Sale: Thank you to all who purchased pies and especially to those who baked them! We sold 58 pies profiting \$580. A Thrivent grant was used to purchase some of the su😊ies. The rest of the pie ingredients were donated by the bakers.

Days for Girls Kits: We have established our own Days for Girls team. Contact Joan Slingsby or Julie Schreifels for more details or go to the web site www.DaysforGirls.org .

Women's Retreat: We will NOT have a Women's Retreat in 2021. The deposit will carry over to the weekend of Jan. 21-23, 2022.



The Eleventh Triennial Gathering of the Women of the ELCA will be held in Phoenix, AZ will now be held August 5-8 2021. Those of us who were registered for the July 2020 date have automatically been registered for the August 2021 gathering and we all plan to attend.

Future Events:

Red Cross Blood Drive: Thursday, November 5 12-6 pm and
Friday, Nov. 6 8:30 am – 2:30pm

Pie Sale Pick-up: Monday, November 23 5-8 pm

11th Triennial Gathering: August 5-8, 2021 Phoenix,
Arizona

Officers: President: Julie Schreifels Vice- President: Tracy Harth

Secretary: Joan Slingsby Treasurer: Jean Kehren

Kitchen Committee: Doris Gruber, Joan Slingsby, Jean Kehren, Janet Daley, Cathy Nemcek.

Julie Schreifels phone: 651-388-2326 cell: 507-990-7024 email

hjschreif@live.com

TASTE OF WELCH RAFFLE WINNERS

QUILT.....Jim Gustafson

FRAMED PRINT....Mike Botz

FLASHY STASH SALSA-RW..Katie Morem

RANCHO LOCO GIFT CARDS-RW-\$20 gift cards. Judy

Meyer,Doris Gruber,Laurie Prifrel

FAIR TRADE BOOKS-RW..Todd Portinga

GET TAN-RW GIFT CERT.....Florence Keppers

VINTAGE VINYL RECORDS-RW-\$20 GIFT CARDS..Audrey

Plots, Ann Kulla

SARGENTS NURSERY-RW-\$20GIFT CARDS-Marilyn Nelson,

Sandy Bjornson

BAYSIDE TAP&STEAKHOUSE-\$20 GIFT CARD..Ann Kulla

GOD FATHER PIZZA-RW-\$5 GIFT CERTS..Duane

Leurquin,Johanna Portinga

FANTASTIC SAMS HAIR SALON-RW..GIFT CARD&

PRODUCTS..Janet Daley

KINGS BAR&GRILL-MIESVILLE-3 GIFTS CERTS \$20-Jim

Gustafson & Peter Schreifels--\$10 gift card- Joan Christensen

SPEEDWAY -MIESVILLE\$25 GIFT CARD..Hans Schreifels

Cross of Christ Council Minutes Draft

Faithful through Generations
November 10, 2020

Present: President Ron Hanson, Vice-President Joan Slingsby, Robin Nelson-Williams, Oscar Daley, Dana Dinndorf, Duke Bjorklund, Jon Peterson, Kelley Mittelsteadt, Jim Gustafson, Deacon Todd Portinga and Parish Secretary Deanna Gehloff

Absent: Dana Dinndorf

The meeting was called to order by President Ron Hanson and the mission statement was read.

Deacon Todd led devotions and prayer.

The agenda was approved. The October meeting minutes were approved as written.

Unfinished Business

***Deacons Report**

Todd talked about the fall Theological Conference he just finished up with a touched base on a few highlights of it. Confirmation class is going well on Wednesday nights and all the students are doing a great job with Covid practices. Todd mentioned the recent passing of Grace Nelson. Todd made quite a few visits with the warmer weather this past week. Todd is starting to make plans for a Christmas worship video, any ideas or thoughts can be passed along to him.

***Covid Plan, Virus Talk, Church Re-opening**

A brief discussion was held on the Phase 2 plan. Todd talked about a letter to be sent to the members.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Phase 2 plan as written with pending changes to the occupancy limits. -Motion Passed

Further discussion included notifications and training. Council will be making another round of survey calls to members.

New Business

*December Council Person-Joan Slingsby

*Annual Meeting

A brief discussion was held on how to conduct the annual meeting during Covid, more in-depth discussion will be held at the December meeting.

Committee Reports

*Finance

A motion was made and seconded to have any Harvest Festival offerings be designated to the operating fund. -Motion Passed.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the financial secretary's reports as written. -Motion Passed.

*Property Management

Joan met with Ramsbacher Flooring on the carpet in the sanctuary issue, nothing was done at this time, Joan will meet with them again next summer. Joan put all the hymnals aside and marked off the pews for seating.

*Missions

Missions met in September. Donation made to Hastings Family Service. Purchased a tablet for Gabby. Hope Coalition gift card donation collection.

*Stewardship

A Harvest Festival/Stewardship letter will be put together; Jim and Todd will complete and get ready to send out.

Cross of Christ will not participate in ordering poinsettia plants this year.

The meeting was adjourned, and the Lord's Prayer was said.

The next Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 8th at 6:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Deanna Gehloff
Parish Secretary
