

St. Stephen the Martyr Lutheran Church ELCA

THE MARTYR MONTHLY - SUMMER EDITION

*Be Still
and know
that
I Am
God*
Psalm 46:10

JUNE & JULY 2020

**All In-Person Services and Activities
are**

Cancelled Until Further Notice
(Please see pages 8-9 for more information)

6101 South 51st Street, Greendale WI 53129; 414-421-3543 www.ssmelca.org

Welcoming all, Worshiping God, Serving others

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS...

Dear Friends in Christ,

On May 31 we celebrate the day of Pentecost. Pentecost is often referred to as the birthday of the church. It is the grand finale of Easter. Easter comes to full bloom as the Holy Spirit is poured out on the waiting disciples. The good news of resurrection is for all the people of the earth.

During this time, we pause to remember the Holy Spirit that gives us our life, breath, and being, both individually and as a church. In Acts 2:17, Peter's Pentecost sermon, God declares, "I will pour out my Spirit on every kind of people." That power has been poured out on us. The power of the Spirit is the power of life!

What a wonderful gift it is to be alive; to work and rest, play and pray, eat and drink, reflect and dream, and to be in a living relationship with a loving God and a faith community. During this pandemic, it is difficult as we are separated by distance from each other, but the Spirit continues to unite and connect us to each other. We are the body of Christ together.

During this time, we will be continuing online worship. We have a dedicated task force that is looking into when we might gather again for in person worship and we are thinking of what safety precautions will need to be in place. Keeping people safe and not causing any unnecessary health risks is top priority.

Unfortunately, we have had to postpone several in person church activities including VBS and the Quilting Bee. In mid-June we will be beginning a congregational book study, exploring the book *Holy Envy: Finding God in the Faith of Others* by Barbara Brown Taylor. We will have both evening and afternoon online gatherings; Isabelle Barry and I will help to facilitate discussions. More details to come, but you can now look into getting a copy of the book.

Thursday night check in and discussions continue on Zoom at 7pm. If you need more information about connecting to church activities, or need pastoral care, please reach out to me through my cell phone, or email, at pastorbrianhooper@gmail.com.

As we enter the warm months of summer, I remind you, as I remind myself, to be a faithful steward of all that God has blessed you with; your time, talents, and treasure. Don't let a day go by without giving thanks to God for all you have; and remember the grace and love given for us in Jesus Christ.

Peace,

Pastor Brian



STEWARDSHIP - Walk with Jesus

It has been an interesting few months. While normally I wake up in the morning with some sense of where I'm going and what I have to do, these days they all blend into one. I find I have trouble tracking which day it is. I find myself wanting to sleep in later because I simply have very little on the docket. For me retirement has been busy and the change has been striking. Though I kid about waking up to ask, which Saturday is this, in truth some days I'm so busy I can't remember how I found time to work. I know since the Supreme Court shut down the extension of the governors Safer at Home order, there have been pockets of complete insanity where within hours bars were full of people, shoulder to shoulder without masks. This is a picture of people so anxious "to get back to normal" that they are willing to risk their lives to act as though nothing is wrong.

It should not be so among us. So how are we going to live our lives at this time? I've heard, this is my life, my risks, my rights? This libertarian attitude refuses to acknowledge the very Christian attitude that God asks two things of us. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your being and all your strength; and love your neighbor as yourself. Our stewardship has two faces. First, that all that we have and all that we are is a gift from God. We move beyond constitution and rights because it is from God that we have derived all things including the breath in our lungs. The second face of our stewardship is "the other". We owe something to those around us. Jesus said "love your neighbor as yourself. We owe it to our neighbor to stay 6 feet away and to wear our mask. It may mean doing what we can to protect the weak and the vulnerable around us. Though my primary reaction has been that I plan to remain isolated because I am one of those vulnerable ones with COPD; I also know that part of my concern needs to be the safety of those around me. Corona has given us another chance to see that we may have a real impact upon one another, unfortunately if we don't take steps to guard, that impact maybe a threat to life.

I've had another eye opener, electronic giving! Bonnie and I have discovered the benefit of Give+. I can control what and when I give. I was able to designate my weekly offering, special Lenten offerings, and now donations to the organ fund. I love it and it helps me continue to remember that God's many gifts deserve a return of thanksgiving. Technology has allowed us to remain in contact and a community in which to worship, fellowship, and Bible Study. These are true gifts from God. The entirety of stewardship asks us simply, how are we using the gifts that God have given us? Corona may have changed that, but it has not caused it to stop.

In Christ Jesus,
Rev. Dr. Kipp W. Zimmermann

MUSIC NOTES FROM TABITHA MOLDENHAUER MUSIC DIRECTOR



Pipe Organ Update

While church has been closed, construction has been ongoing for the new pipe organ installation. The 1968 Wicks organ was blessed and decommissioned last week in a short recorded prayer service that is available to view on the SSM YouTube channel. It has been packed for travel to its new home in a private residence in Missouri. The new Casavant winchesters, wind lines, and cables have been run, all the pipes in the organ have been cleaned and are in the process of being re-voiced to fit our acoustical space. The work has been slowed due to pandemic closures of suppliers in other states, but things are beginning to open up and the work is progressing. Dick Kroll has been documenting the construction in photos, which are posted in the church Facebook page. Thank you for your support of this project!

SSM DRIVE-THRU EVENT

We are hosting a drive-thru event at SSM that will include:

- distribution of Holy Communion kits
- a food drive (non-perishable food items or monetary donations)
- distribution of children's packets (fun, faith-based gizmos)
- distribution of cloth face masks for anyone who needs one

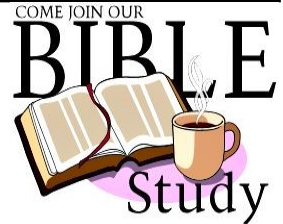
Please be sure to sign up for a time slot on June 11 or June 13 using this online signup: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F45ADA72DA13-communion> (see link in SSM-Announcements email) or by calling Denise Sanders at 414-423-0608 to participate.

During your sign up time, drive to church and pull up under the canopy. We will meet you and give you your communion kit and other items and will collect any donations you are dropping off. You will not need to get out of your car. If you prefer, we can remove and/or place items in your trunk to reduce contact. Placing your name in the passenger side window may make the exchange more efficient.

Note regarding distribution of Holy Communion: These individual, pre-filled cups with wafers will be consecrated by Pastor Brian prior to distribution and a note will be included with a prayer and words for home distribution. [Note: gluten-free wafers were not available; all the cups are non-alcoholic.]

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Both the Men's and Women's Bible Studies are continuing as scheduled. Both groups are meeting via Zoom. No word yet on what we will be doing by the time you receive this newsletter. If we are still Zooming it and you want to join in on either please contact Kipp Zimmermann at kippzee@gmail.com or by phone at 917-805-5998 to be added to the list for the men's group or contact Bonnie Zimmermann at bonniezimmermann426@gmail.com or by phone at 917-805-5994 to be added to the list for the women's group.



Pastor has been holding Zoom! Congregational get-togethers on Thursday evenings at 7pm as well. Again, at this point we are in a wait-to-see mode regarding this.

Watch for kids lessons and videos as well.

Most future activities are up in the air for now. Decisions will be made on what to do and how to do it as seems appropriate. Hang in there, we will get through this with the help of God and each other.

Bonnie Zimmermann for Christian Education

HUMAN CONCERNS

THANKS TO ALL FOR THEIR CONTINUED WEEKLY OFFERINGS DURING THIS PANDEMIC.

Due to our continued offerings, we have been able to fulfill our Easter special offering commitments.

Last month we were able to give over \$500 to Santa Fe and Bay View Community Center food pantries.

The Council also approved \$250 to Tippecanoe Divine Intervention Hungry Hearts Program. This provides weekend meals for the homeless.

The Council also approved \$250 for The Greater Milwaukee Synod lunchbox program to feed families.

Thanks to all from our congregation who generously give to help the needy in our community in Christ's name.

Nancy Mineau



WOMEN'S MINISTRIES/WELCA



6th Annual Quilting Bee Postponement

Due to the COVID19 pandemic, the Quilting Bee scheduled for June 15, 2020, will be postponed to a future date, to be announced.

The quilt closet remains available with lots of fabric for cutting and stitching. If anyone would like access to the fabric, please give me a call, 414-943-2766 and I'll help you with that access. Keep calm and quilt on. Betty Kroll

SWO Fall Convention Update:

Due to a directive voted on by the Churchwide Board, it has been recommended that all SWO fall conventions be postponed or cancelled. Your SWO Board has read the directive and voted to cancel our October 10th Annual Convention. We regret having to cancel the convention but for the safety of all that is what has to be done for this year. We will, of course, keep you posted via the Gleanings.

Loose Ends Luncheon:

The "lunch ladies" have discussed whether or not to continue holding our luncheon on the second Wednesday of each month following Women's Bible Study. Because of the Covid-19 virus we felt it would be best to cancel all lunches until after January. We want everyone to stay safe. Watch your newsletter for updated information later this year.

YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT TO SSM

FINANCIAL GIVING

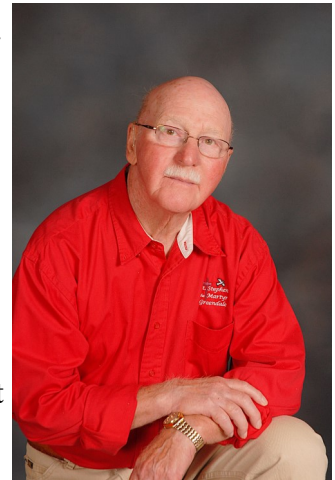
Your continued financial support is needed in this time of uncertainty to support the mission and ministry of St. Stephen the Martyr Lutheran Church. Please continue to share your regular and special offerings, as you are able. You can do this through the following methods:

- Mail (6101 S 51st St, Greendale, WI 53129)
- Online using Give+ (go to the following website: <https://giveplushelp.vancopayments.com/> and click on "How To")
- Set up a Simply Giving account (contact Jane Miller at jusjmillier@aol.com to learn more)

A SALUTE TO BOB BROWNELL

After 26 years of dedicated service to St. Stephen the Martyr Lutheran Church as chief custodian of our building and grounds, Bob has announced that he will retire as of mid-May. Our congregation will be losing a loyal servant of the church who has spent countless hours making sure our building was clean and maintained, and kept in good repair so that people coming for worship, baptisms, weddings, funerals or concerts found everything in good order.

Bob enjoyed coming to work at the church. He said to me several times that his job at SSM “meant the world to him”, that doing things around our building is what kept him going, even as he advanced to his 90th birthday.



Bob didn't only clean and maintain things around our building, but he was a purchasing agent, going to Sam's Club or Menards for supplies or tools and equipment. Also if the problem was beyond his capability, he would contact contractors for roof repair, AC and furnace breakdowns, often waiting hours until the situation was resolved, well beyond his normal work day.

As I became friends with Bob, I learned that he had two specialties. One was doing the floors. Even in his last year of employment, he scrubbed, applied wax, and polished floors on both levels of the building and did they ever shine when he was done! His second specialty was cutting the church grass. It always amazed me that he had the endurance to work in the hot sun and ride over uneven ground for hours.

Bob did not spend all his time working and ignore folks who came into the building. He always was willing to chat in a friendly manner, injecting humor in his clever Irish way, making me laugh, inquiring about my health, about the family or whether I needed him to usher at the Saturday or other special service.

Over the years, Bob has been a good friend to me, but more importantly, he has been a friend to SSM, serving faithfully as custodian, usher, working funerals with his wife, Jean and as a volunteer at the Unity meal. Thank you Bob, you will be missed. You are a “Good and Faithful Servant”.

Bob Rasmussen

REOPENING THE CHURCH TASK FORCE

A task force has been formed to plan for the reopening of the church building for in-person worship and other activities. The group is tasked with reviewing guidance and recommendations related to returning to in-person contact, which includes, but is not limited to, that of the Greater Milwaukee Synod, the CDC, local and national public health organizations, and local, state, and federal government.

In the words of Bishop Paul Erickson, the group believes “We need to take our time.” Given all the complexities of this issue and considering the many high risk populations SSM serves (especially older adults and persons with underlying health/medical conditions), our intention is to use a cautious approach to reopening the church building. Our primary goal is to keep our members safe.

Just a few of the considerations that the task force is discussing include small group worship, outdoor worship, in-person group activities. We are also reviewing protocols and recommendations that would go along with any in-person connections, such as cleaning procedures, physical distancing, masks, no contact, and building entry.

As we work through the issues of being physically together, SSM will continue to host online worship. Even as we begin to host in-person gatherings, we are planning to host virtual worship for the foreseeable future. If you need assistance connecting to our online presence, please give Pastor Brian a phone call.

If you have questions or comments, please reach out to any of the task force members. The group has representatives from the church council and staff, including Pastor Brian Hooper, Tabitha Moldenhauer (music director), Jim Hennessey (building maintenance), Jason Covert (president), Jeff Dose (property committee chair), and Denise Sanders (music and worship committee chair).

REOPENING THE CHURCH SURVEY

An online survey is being sent to all members through the SSM Announcements email (<https://forms.gle/KwfSjMsqAfiVKFmk7>). If you do not have access to that email or have any difficulty responding to the survey online, please call the office at 414-421-3543 (leave a message on voice mail or with Mimi) and share your responses to the questions below.

In the coming months, any in-person worship services at SSM will not be the same as we are used to (making reservations for worship, fewer people, increased spacing, no or less singing, no handshakes, changes to communion and offering procedures, no fellowship time, etc.). Additionally, the church will ask you to abide by safety restrictions and protocols (6 feet distancing, no gathering before/after, wearing masks, signing in for possible contact tracing purposes, etc.). SSM will continue to offer an online worship option for the foreseeable future. Given these factors and your own personal feelings, please share your thoughts about attending in-person worship at this time.

- 1) To assist the task force in planning for a return to in-person worship, would you attend a service in the building on a Sunday in June? Yes or No
- 2) We may need to limit the number of congregants at any given service. Are you willing to attend in-person periodically rather than regularly to allow for this?
Yes or No
- 3) What factors will affect your decision to return to in-person worship?

NEWS & NOTES

REMINDER TO THRIVENT MEMBERS:

You may direct your Thrivent Choice Dollars throughout the year, as they are earned. This can be done on the internet at Thrivent.com/thriventchoice or by calling 1-800-847-4836 between 7AM and 6PM.

Especially at this time, SSM as well as all other charitable causes need funds. Check on your Choice Dollars and have them forwarded to do good now.

Bob Rasmussen - Coordinator

CONGRATULATIONS 2020 GRADUATES

Annie Nelson is graduating from Greenfield HS and attending the University of Michigan Pursuing a major in Biochemistry on the pre-med track.

Julia Mayer is graduating from Greenfield HS and will be going to Carroll University and majoring in elementary education.

Kelsey Nehring is graduating from Greenfield HS and will be attending Iowa State University for a double major in Genetics and Plan Sciences, with minor in science.

Owen Sanders is graduating from Greenfield HS and will be attending MATC for computer technology.

Rachel Ziegert will be attending Carthage College and majoring in accounting.

Jacob Malinowski graduated from Yale University with a B.A. in Political Science after writing his thesis on American Elections and is campaigning for Wisconsin State Assembly here in the 82nd district.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL CANCELLED



We have decided to cancel the 2020 Vacation Bible School, originally scheduled for July 13-16. We are continuing to explore ways in which to connect with children over the summer, whether in-person or online.

Look for Rocky Railways to come to SSM in Summer 2021!

COUNCIL MEETING 5/12/2020

Highlights of May 12, 2020 Council Meeting

President Jason Covert called the meeting to order at 6:36 P.M.

Council members present were: J. Covert, B. Daleness, J. Dose, B. Fritschel, J. Konop, A. Matusiak, J. Miller, N. Mineau, J. Muroi, D. Sanders, and L. Sweet. Pastor Brian was also in attendance.

PASTOR'S TIME:

Pastor is trying to connect to parishioners who are home alone. He is thinking of having a call chain to check up on certain people on a weekly basis.

CURRENT ACTION ITEMS

Some changes have been made to our website. J. Konop will continue to update it.

Bob Brownell is retiring from his custodial duties. His last day will be May 15. We will acknowledge his service in various ways. Jim Hennessy will take over some of his duties. May need some assistance with lawn mowing.

We have received the funds for both the organ loan and the PPP loan.

Council approved sending \$500.00 to food pantries during this time of special need.

A task force has been formed to make decisions on how and when the church will begin reopening. They are taking the time to do it right. Services will still be available online even after the church does reopen.

Both High School and College seniors will be honored in the newsletter and at services.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:50.

Respectfully submitted,
Bonnie Daleness
Council Secretary