



The Messenger

Ascension Lutheran Church

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May 2020

MISSION

"As a progressive and open church, we boldly make Christ's vision known."

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Julie Bailey, Pastor
 Bob Aldrich, Education Coordinator
 Jennifer Salowitz, Musician
 Sara Gregor, Parish Nurse
 Cheryl Huebner, Secretary
 Dawn Dalton, Custodian
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WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sundays and Wednesdays
 on Facebook

Phone (989) 781-2170
 ascensionlc@sbcglobal.net

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A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR JULIE

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. ~Philippians 4:4-7



These words burn in my heart. Rejoice, don't worry, prayer, thanksgiving, peace! Alleluia! Christ is Risen!

I never expected this Easter season and beyond to be social distancing, spending most of my time at home in front of a computer or on the phone, and thinking about what things need to be done when we get to come back together. But this is what we are facing. And even if things are different, I trust there are some great things that are coming from it. Youth are telling me how much they enjoy spending time with their family at dinner time, watching movies, even doing things around the house. Some people who weren't able to attend Bible Study before are attending online, and we are still able to connect in different ways. This event in history has given me the opportunity to reprioritize the important things in life. I will tell you my prayer life is stronger than it has been in years! I pray through the directory, I pray through what news I watch, I pray for the church and the mission hoping that through this event God continues to bring people into a relationship with Him and eventually with a church community. Christ is Risen Indeed!

In the midst of all this, the leadership of Ascension and I have been working to continue to reach out to each other and our community, and to prepare for the time when we can come back together. Though we want to know when, we don't know. We can tell you we are watching the data and trust that we will know when that time is faithful. We have begun to prepare ourselves and the worship space for that time when we do come back. We don't know what all of this will entail, but it won't be as it was before.

All used spaces will need to be sanitized before it can be used again, so we are anticipating only one service will be live on Sunday. We will continue online worship for those who are not in attendance. We have details that need to be worked out, but know that worship and praise, along with your safety is at the utmost of our concern. Some things I think we can say will be true when we come back:

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- All worshippers will be required to wear a mask.
- Social distancing will be expected, in the worship space and all other areas of the church.
- Please respect the personal space of others in worship, and at all other times at the church.
- We will not physically be sharing the peace.
- We will be asking people to provide their own hand sanitizer, especially in this time of difficulty finding sanitizer to refill those in the pew.
- Hymnals, pens, and attendance cards are being removed from the pews to decrease the spread of the virus on these objects.
- The nursery is closed.
- All activities and rentals have been cancelled through June.
- We will not be hosting any funeral luncheons, potlucks, or coffee hours.

We continue to pray and discern options to sharing in Holy Communion and other aspects of worship. Online worship and Bible studies will continue.

I believe that in this event, Jesus will bring new life to our congregation and community. It will be different, things will need to change, but one thing does not change—and that is Jesus the Christ is Lord of all, and in Him we have a peace and trust that allows us to experience joy in the midst of suffering and distress.

Thank you to all who have been supporting the church with their financial offerings for the ongoing ministry of the church. We have been doing well so far.

Thank you to those who participated in the ELCA World Hunger appeal to raise money for our Weekend School Bag Program—we received a matching grant of \$500 from the ELCA. Thank to Karen DeLaRosa, Lynda Goward and their extended family with whom is quarantined together and come to fill bags so that they can be distributed. Thank you to others who have volunteered to help and we will take you up on that later—right now we want to do what we can to decrease the risk of any spread.

Thank you to Bob for his work on our virtual Sunday School—kids are loving it and I love the crafts.

Thanks to Jen for her musical additions and help in planning. Thanks to all who have read lessons and prayers, and for all who are sharing the videos with others. Thanks to all for your patience as we learn technology some of us didn't even know existed before now.

Thanks to Cheryl who is working on some database updates, holding down the office, and helping in ways she may never have planned.

Thanks to the council for their support and leadership during an event they could not have anticipated when they agreed to accept the call to serve on council.

There is always a risk when you thank someone that you will miss someone. But I do need to thank every one of you. This has been one of the most difficult times to serve as a pastor. So much of what I do is a ministry of being present, and social distancing has put a wrench in that. I miss visitations to hospitals and homes, those impromptu visits at the church, and chatting over coffee and donuts. I miss you all.

I pray we keep each other in prayer. I would encourage you if you have an old directory to pull it out and start praying. Pray for those who you sat near in worship. Pray! Continue to worship with us! Consider joining our Bible Study.

And rejoice in the Lord always.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Fellow Members in Christ,

I hope and pray that this Messenger finds you safe, in good health and strong faith.

I want to thank everyone for attending our online services, serving with prayers and music, and for your continued stewardship while we remain apart. The Council appreciates your efforts and praises Pastor Julie as we work through this difficult time. We believe she is working harder than ever serving the congregation and overcoming the challenges of “virtual pastoring”.



Online services, virtual Sunday School and Bible Study have garnered high praise and appear to be getting smoother with each passing week. Pastor Julie and Bob work hard to put these together in order to make them a positive and relevant part of our faith and commitment to His work.

Council has been meeting every two weeks to stay up to date with the “Shelter in Place” challenges. With a heavy heart, we have made the decision to suspend in-person worship services through the month of May in order to comply and stay safe. We will continue to monitor events and make decisions based on data, not desire, by following Saginaw County’s Health Department, CDC Faith-Based Guidelines, Township and Synod Guidelines.

When the church is able to re-open, we ask that you check with staff prior to coming into the church, and urge that you only come in for church business purposes.

As we continue this new era of worship, please remain faithful, grateful and reverent! I do not know what our future looks like, but I am SURE that we will continue to trust, praise, worship, and thank the Lord during these difficult times.

Until we talk again...stay home, stay safe, stay Ascension Strong!

Gus Hendrickson

OTHER



CHRIST IN OUR HOME

If you are interested in receiving a devotional booklet, please send an email to ascensionlc@sbcglobal.net (we only have a limited number of these available).

RAISE THE ROOF FUNDRAISER

We are progressing with our Raise the Roof Fundraiser. We have received three bids from contractors and have reviewed them in order to make a decision. If the necessary funds are accumulated to complete the project, we hope to have the work done yet this year. Thank you to all who have contributed and please keep the fundraiser going. We are approximately \$3,500.00 from our goal.



RISE UP SOCCER CAMP 2020—POSTPONED

Please watch for more information to come. If you have any immediate questions, please contact Dawn Earnesty or Bob Aldrich.

MEMBER NEWS

May Birthdays

1st	Lyric Haupt Josh Wardlow	17th	Craig Ford
2nd	Mikey Falkenberg Breanna Kocsis Maija Preston Lisa Stadler	18th	Katelyn Arndt
3rd	Rick Herren Lauren Huebner Kami Milbrandt	19th	Jennifer Salowitz Beau Turner
4th	Nicki Crump Marie Myers	21st	Elizabeth Kolb John Robishaw
7th	Brian Awad Emily Dreyfus	23rd	Mackenzie Morgan
8th	Dorothy Mayou	24th	John Richardson
11th	Lynn Staples	26th	Victor Mancini
13th	Kathy Fleming John Grolle Georgia Hickner	27th	Allison Faerber Marv Lentner
16th	Everette Schultz Cathy Watz	28th	Ashley Blehm Sharon Boyd
		29th	Tanya Blehm Heather Darabos Susan Kelley Hayes Mack Heidi McGrandy
		30th	Cheryl Huebner

Anniversaries this Month



1st	Scott and Tanya Blehm
2nd	Patrick and Bonnie Dalton
3rd	Michael and Lisa Randall
7th	Brent and Natalie Fleissner
11th	Terry and Jamie Waters
16th	Brian and Lisa Stadler
17th	Steve and Kathy McNally
25th	Bob and Debbie Beyerlein Josh and Malory Lopez
27th	Russ and Melissa Morgan
28th	Mark and Georgia Hickner

THANK YOU

Thank you to everyone for all of your kind words, thoughts and prayers for our family during this difficult time. Thank you, also, to everyone who donated food and worked the funeral luncheon. It is very much appreciated.

The family of Bill Gottlieb



HEALTH HIGHLIGHTS

Health Highlights by Kris Yackel-Friend

TIPS FOR DEALING WITH STRESS DURING THE PANDEMIC

Fear and anxiety about the disease, loss of income, and concerns for the safety of self and family members can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children. Signs of stress may include fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones, changes in sleep or eating patterns, difficulty sleeping or concentrating, worsening of chronic health problems or mental health conditions, and increased use of alcohol, tobacco or other drugs.



The following are some ways to cope with the stress of COVID-19 and its lifestyle changes. Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, Facebook and other social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting. Take care of your body! Start that exercise regime you were planning, stretch, try yoga, practice deep breathing, or go for a walk with your family/dog. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals. Exercise regularly and get plenty of sleep; yes exercise was purposely mentioned twice! Avoid alcohol and drugs. Try to do some other activities you enjoy, or those you don't, like yardwork or spring cleaning. Keep your body and mind busy. Call friends and family and focus on connecting with others. Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling. Stay connected: telephone, email, snail mail, text, video chat. Pray! Dust off the Bible and join our Tuesday morning Bible Study (contact Pastor for information).

Children and teens react, in part, on what they see from the adults around them. When parents and caregivers deal with the COVID-19 calmly and confidently, they can provide the best support for their children. Parents can be more reassuring to others around them, especially children, if they are better prepared and are aware of the facts from trusted sources. Not every child/teen reacts the same way; for example, some are happy not to have to go to school and for some this causes extreme stress. Signs of stress in your child may include: excessive crying or irritation in younger children, returning to behaviors they have outgrown (for example, toileting accidents or bedwetting), excessive worry or sadness, unhealthy eating or sleeping habits, irritability and "acting out" behaviors, difficulty with attention and concentration, avoidance of activities enjoyed in the past, and unexplained headaches or body pain.

Listed are several ways to connect with your child. If you have a teen or pre-teen, know they are listening even if they seem uninterested and are giving you the "stink eye". Can't get them to give you the time of day even though you are with them 24/7? Take them for a car ride to get out of the house or bribe them under the pretenses of a Slurpee or ice cream, and yes, you have to come through with the goods, but you now have a captive audience. This is a great way to have those "other" talks by the way. Talk with your child/teen about the COVID-19 outbreak...answer questions and share facts in a way that they can understand. Reassure your child/teen that they are safe. Let them know it is okay if they feel upset. Share with them how you deal with your own stress so that they can learn how to cope from you. Limit your their exposure to news coverage of the event, including social media. Children may misinterpret what they hear and can be frightened about something they do not understand. Try to keep up with regular routines. Since school is closed, create a schedule for learning activities, relaxing, and fun activities. Be a role model. They do as we do, not as we say.

If those suggestions aren't helping, here are some resources:

- Call your healthcare provider if stress gets in the way of your daily activities for several days in a row.
- People with preexisting mental health conditions should continue with their treatment and be aware of new or worsening symptoms.
- In need of immediate assistance:
 - Disaster Distress Helpline (SAMHSA): Call 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746
 - National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (Link) Call 1-800-273-8255 or Chat with Lifeline/Crisis Textline (Link) Text TALK to 741741
 - Veterans Crisis Line (VA) Call 1-800-273-8255 or text 838255

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HEALTH HIGHLIGHTS

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◦Biblical versus—consult the subject guide in your bible, or google it, there are plenty—but here are a few to get you started:

-Pslam 118:6 “The Lord is on my side; I will not fear.”

-Pslam 23:4 “Yea, though I walk thru the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and staff, they comfort me.”

-Joshua1:9 “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”

~ Isaiah 41:10 “So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”

Resources: www.cdc.gov , www.psychiatry.org, activechristianity.org, biblestudytools.com

Stress, Anxiety and Other Resources—Saginaw County

Saginaw County Community Mental Health Authority (SCCMHA)

All SCCMHA are closed to visitors with the exception of 500 Hancock.

◦Anyone looking for services is to call our Central Access & Intake Center at (989)797-3559 before coming in. Most screenings will be done over the phone.

◦SCCMHA is offering access to @myStrength to the community...myStrength is an evidence-based, self-help resource for emotional health and overall well-being. During this time, myStrength is also offering COVID-19 info. Create a free account at <https://app.mystrength.com/go/sccmha/saginaw>.

Great Lakes Bay Health Centers Child and Adolescent Therapy

*Great Lakes Bay therapy services are available and accepting new patients at the following locations:

-Davenport (989)907-2761

-Janes Street (989)755-0316

-Bay City South (989)922-5700

-Bayside (989)671-2000

*Currently, telehealth audio and video services are available.

Child and Family Services of Saginaw

Call (989)790-7500, email at intake@cfs-saginaw.org, or on Facebook.

◦Child & Family Services are continuing counseling services and mental health treatment for those in need. Services in their Counseling Center, Employee Wellness Center and Sexual Assault Center are available. *All therapy visits to telehealth appointments via phone or video counseling.*

List Psychological Services, PLC

Please contact them at (989)790-3130. Telehealth options available for anyone seeking services.

Personal Needs

Northeastern Michigan 2-1-1 By phone dial 2-1-1 or text your zip code to 898-211 (available 24/7, 365).

CAN Council Great Lakes Bay Region

Please contact them at (989)846-7500.

Distributing diapers to the community through “no-contact” distribution, appointments only, Thursdays. Call (989)752-7226 Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m.- 5:00 p.m. to arrange your appointment.

Humane Society of Saginaw County-Pet Good Assistance

Please contact them at (989)501-8672.

The program is for Saginaw County families with pets in need of assistance with pet food. Please fill out a food application by going to this link: <https://form.jotform.com/922777688893176>.

If you are in need of food, please contact the church for a list of several resources in the area.