
WINDSWEEP

This Extraordinary Ordinary Time

The liturgical season between Pentecost and Advent is known as Ordinary Time. It is by far the longest season of the church year: 25 weeks, in fact, give or take a week or two depending on the given year.

As I look at the calendar, by definition, we are in Ordinary Time.

But nothing about 2020's iteration of this season feels like Ordinary Time. It is inarguably the most *extraordinary* of all Ordinary Times. Virtually nothing about life and church and worship feels ordinary right now and has not felt ordinary since before Lent.



Perhaps the only thing about Ordinary Time that rings true this time around is the sheer length of the season. Now at the beginning of August, we're only about a third of the way through Ordinary Time. As we continue to face the unknowns of life and community and church and school surrounding the ongoing pandemic, a long slog of a season sounds about right.

Yet perhaps there's another key aspect of Ordinary Time that rings true for us this year:

Amidst the dark cloud of this pandemic, there have been a few strands of silver linings. Among them is the gift of slowing down and savoring the ordinary things of life: time with family, neighborhood walks, quiet time at home, reading.

The pandemic has also revealed the many ordinary things we all once took for granted: time with extended family, travel, dinner parties, haircuts, handshakes, and of course regular gatherings of worship and fellowship.

In other words, the pandemic has revealed the extraordinary in the ordinary.

Per usual, Jesus was ahead of me in this revelation. Throughout this season in worship we're hearing from the Gospel of Matthew, in which Jesus tells all sorts of stories about ordinary things: seeds, yeast, merchants, fishnets, wheat, and weeds. He references these things because of the ways they reveal God's kingdom and the nature of discipleship.

It shouldn't be surprising, I suppose. In our Lutheran tradition we confess that God's grace comes to us through the ordinary elements of water, bread, and wine. These are the simple items God uses for the Sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion. They are simple and ordinary and profoundly holy.

And so, dear partners in ministry, even in the middle of this seemingly endless slog of midyear 2020, may you experience God in the ordinary. And may you hear God's call to share God's love in ordinary ways, as extraordinary gifts to our neighbors.

God's peace to you,
Pastor Christy Hallenbeck Ask

Financials through June 30, 2020

Checking Account

General Fund	\$71,066.06
Building Fund	\$34,948.44
Donor Restricted	\$10,174.43
Sunday school	\$1,151.03
Reserve Fund	\$4,360.10
Petty Cash	\$200

Savings Accounts

Building	\$69,579.71
Donor Restricted	\$750,434.37
Total Cash Balance	\$941,914.14

Year-to-date Income for Ministry	\$312,204.92
Year-to-date Expenses for Ministry	\$310,317.95
Net Income/Deficit for Ministry	\$2,067.10

	June 2018	June 2019	June 2020
Attendance	991	1001	N/A
General Offering	\$41,210.57	\$45,687.86	\$45,472.29
Building Offering	\$15,409.33	\$37,193.76	\$41,881.08

Capital Campaign Totals

Pledged	\$2,478,485
Received as of May 31, 2020	\$1,328,882.32

Spirit of Joy Leadership Team Agenda

July 16, 2020 @ 6:30 pm via Zoom

I. Unfinished Business

A. Building Expansion

1. **Pay application #4 July 2020:** Jodi Hanson moved and Carole Chell seconded to approve the payment of \$463,582.50 as noted on the Application and Certificate for Payment from Journey Group Companies (Invoice #201101-04). Motion carried.
2. **Updated Timeline:** See comments under IIIK-Building Expansion.

B. Mission Investment Fund-Payment and Performance Bond

1. **MIF Request:** The MIF has requested a Payment and Performance Bond for our project in order to protect the congregation in case the contractor or subcontractors should not do the work they've been contracted to do. MIF allows for congregations to request a waiver of the policy for loans/projects under \$5 million. Discussion followed.
2. **Spirit of Joy Request for a Waiver:** Jodi Hanson moved and Brad Tams seconded to move forward with a waiver contingent upon a conversation with Jason Appel.

C. Office Manager Search Update:

The position has been posted and there has been interest from several SoJ partners. Interviews are planned for the first week in August.

D. Reopening Church Building Update:

The COVID-19 Task Force met and recommended a 14-21 days of decline in cases before opening for in person worship. They will meet again in a few weeks. Also see comments under IIIG-Worship.

II. New Business

- ### A. July Benevolence:
- Carole Chell moved and Lori Tripp seconded to make benevolence payment of \$5000 to the Center for New Americans for technology upgrades. (This is not to support a refugee family, since that is not a need at this time.) Motion carried.

VI. Meeting Review and Lord's Prayer:

The meeting was adjourned following the Lord's Prayer.

Next Leadership Team Meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, August 20 at 6:30 pm.**

Building Expansion Update

Special thank you to Dale Schempp for the photos.



Food To You Collection

August 3-16 Spirit of Joy will be collecting toilet paper and hygiene items, like shampoos, bars of soap, deodorant and toothpaste full size, for the Food to You Mobile Food Pantry. You can drop off donations any day 9am-5pm at Spirit of Joy.

Weekly Outdoor Worship Begins

Sunday, August 16

Spirit of Joy will begin offering **weekly outdoor worship** starting Sunday, August 16 at *two times and in two locations!* The reconstruction of Spirit of Joy's parking area (and the addition of 20 new spaces) is scheduled to be completed by Friday, August 14 and will be useable that following weekend. We invite you and your neighbors to join us for:

8:30 am Morning Prayer in the Garden

This *30-minute worship service* will happen in the labyrinth area of our prayer gardens on the north side of our building. We ask that worshipers BYOC (bring your own chairs) and practice physical distancing between yourselves and other worshipers. This Service of the Word will be a time to gather outdoors for prayer, reading of lessons from Scripture and a campfire (without the fire) song or two.

10:00 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion on the Blacktop



We invite you to come in your cars again for parking lot worship, and, if desired, sit in lawn chairs close enough to your car radios to pick up the FM broadcast. The worship experience will include liturgy, live music, Word and message, and distribution of Holy Communion. We will continue to take care as we gather; greeters and other worship leaders will wear masks, and we ask that worshipers practice physical distancing in their parking places.

We will continue to record our Sunday worship service and make it available on our YouTube channel for any persons who prefer to participate in worship at home. We are happy to welcome you in whatever place you feel safe and comfortable at this time.

In this uncertain time our plans are also subject to change depending on the course of the COVID-19 pandemic in our region. If it rains on a Sunday morning, we will cancel outdoor worship and ask that worshipers join us via our recording of worship. We will send out notice of any cancellations via Constant Contact and post the info on our Facebook page and website.

Faith Formation

Blessing of Backpacks and Students - Sunday, August 23

It's time for school! This year may look different and certainly is more complicated than typical years. It seems especially important now to bless our students (and their backpacks) as they head back to school.

On **Sunday, August 23, at 10am outdoor worship** we will offer a congregational prayer of **blessing for all students AND all adults who work in education as teachers, social workers, nurses, administrators, and other support staff.** In addition, we will give a special keychain for each student's* backpack to remind them of God's presence no matter where they are. What will the backpack keychain be this year? Come and see!

Kids, you are welcome to bring your backpacks! We'll make it a safe, distanced blessing and gift-giving. See you August 23!



Ruth - Summer Once-a-Month Bible Study

Session #3 will be held Thursday, **August 13** at **7 pm** via Zoom, or Friday, **August 14** at **9 am** in the Spirit of Joy prayer garden. We will explore the 3rd chapter of Ruth for August's session. A Zoom invitation will be sent the morning of August 13. Contact Deacon Katherine with questions: family@spiritofjoy.net



Fall Faith Milestones Update

We are working on the best way to make our milestones happen in a safe way for our children and their parents. Particularly we're exploring dates to offer the First Communion instruction that was postponed last March. We will keep you posted! Another milestone to be scheduled and perhaps offered in multiple formats (ZOOM and/or small family groups) will be 3rd Grade Bible Instruction. We'll also be in contact regarding our 3 year olds and their Spark Story Bibles. Stay tuned!

From Deacon Katherine's Desk

Time spent in God's creation, even a few moments in one's own backyard or nearby park, can offer a respite from the trials of the day. This is certainly true for me. I am reminded of God's faithfulness in the rhythms of the day and night, in the predictable and playful activities of the birds and squirrels, in the way the sunshine plays in the leaves of my trees.

The author of Psalm 136 finds similar solace and comfort observing the natural world – and credits the mighty acts of creation to the steadfast and eternal love of God.

I invite you to read this with me and find comfort in God's presence:

“¹O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
²O give thanks to the God of gods,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
³O give thanks to the LORD of lords,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
⁴who alone does great wonders,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
⁵who by understanding made the heavens,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
⁶who spread out the earth on the waters,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
⁷who made the great lights,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
⁸the sun to rule over the day,
for his steadfast love endures forever;



August Book Conversation of Dear Church-Wednesday, August 26

Our summer reading and discussion of books dealing with racial injustice in our country and in the Church continues with a discussion of *Dear Church: A Love Letter from a Black Preacher to the Whitest Denomination in the U.S.* on Wednesday, August 26 at 6:30 pm via Zoom. Author Lenny Duncan is a pastor in our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America who, to his surprise, met a gracious God in an ELCA church and then began a kind of lover's quarrel with the denomination that introduced him to Christ. To sign up for the discussion via Zoom, contact Pastor Jeff at jeffeisele@spiritofjoy.net.