



August 2020
#713

The Chimes

First Evangelical
Lutheran Church
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From Pastor Bill

As most of you know, we have returned to in-person worship, but not inside the building; we have been gathering outside. While there are challenges to outdoor worship (sometimes the sun is a little bright and the wind a little too strong for us leaders), the experience has been good. You all have been great in terms of wearing masks. Congratulations for being willing to sacrifice in a small way for the sake of the common good.

What we know about the virus is that it spreads best indoors, in unventilated venues where many people are gathered. Truthfully, you are most likely to receive the virus from family members or friends who are with you in tight spaces, who hug you or who breathe on you for more than 15 minutes. Parties, gatherings at bars, and yes, church experiences can be opportunities for a quick spread of the virus.

Since we are outside and we insist on mask wearing and social distancing, and since we are not engaging in congregational singing, we have made the worship gathering a relatively safe experience. There are no guarantees, of course, and so we respect those of you who choose to stay away from the gathering. But you should know that we are doing our best to keep you safe. You can feel confident about the relative safety of our gathering.

We will continue to worship outside until we cannot do so. And then, we will have to decide what the next course of action will be. If we move inside, we will be particularly sensitive to the size of our gathering bodies. The ability to provide for social distancing will be essential for any decision regarding the return to the building. Our asking you to register your attendance via Eventbrite.com is our attempt to keep the size of our groups to manageable levels and to provide for a way of doing contact tracing.

The experience with the pandemic has gotten me thinking about the role of the church, the Bible, and the prophets of the Bible during times of such wearisome loss, grief, and fear.

Last week I preached from the second portion of Isaiah, a Biblical book in which the prophetic imagination goes wild, asking us to look beyond the situation on the ground to discover hope for us and for all of creation.

Prophets of hope like Second Isaiah are needed in times like these. Trusting that the loss and the grief we know right now, although very real, is not the only or ultimate word for us is so necessary. We need to know that something larger than death is at work among us. Frankly, this is the power of the resurrection of Jesus. It drives us forward. It begs us to experience the beauty in the midst of the storm. And I find it helpful right now to look for the small signs of that beauty.

(Continued on page 3)



From Intern Paula

I love the month of August. It's the month where we begin to see the fruits of our labor in the gardens we tend. It's the month where the market is typically bustling with activity and stalls of colorful produce, flowers and delicious goodies are displayed to appease the eye and satisfy the palate. It's the month where the "dog days of summer" often bring a feeling of melancholy as the summer wanes and autumn is on the horizon. This August, however, is different for a myriad of obvious reasons. A global pandemic has created less activity at the market and my garden and grass got a late start as quarantine took its toll on supply, demand and services. Our nation is in a state of constant upheaval and I can't even hug those who are grieving. The whole *flow* of summer this year is in a state of disarray and I am feeling a bit disorientated.

This state of disorientation brings to mind the type of literature found in the book of Psalms. Walter Brueggemann has characterized the Psalms around three general themes: poems of orientation, poems of disorientation and poems of new orientation. By grouping the Psalms this way, Brueggeman is suggesting that the flow of human life characteristically is found in one of these settings. However, they are not isolated or independent of each other. Realistically, we do not stay in one *season* for the duration of our lives. The physical elements of creation don't and neither do we! Thank goodness for that because as much as I love the winter, I would not want to be knee deep in snow for the duration of time!

The *movement* we experience from seasons of well-being, where gratitude for an abundance of blessings overflow - to seasons where hurt, alienation, suffering and death often challenge our faith and lure us to lament - to seasons where joy breaks through the despair is the nature of creation itself. You know, the more I think about the rhythm of the songs which distinguish the Psalms from other literature in the Bible, the more I think the Psalmists have taken a play from *my* playbook! The playbook where I offer praise for the joy of sunrises, sunsets and the beauty that hovers over the glistening waters of Lake Michigan. The playbook where I searched my heart when I lost

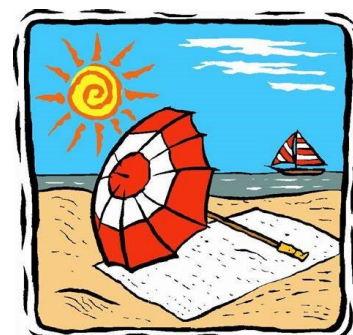
my fiance in a plane crash and I cried out in anguish, "Why? Why now, Lord? Where do I go from here?" Or experience the tightness in my chest that comes when a child has no one to affirm them and feed them. And then, there's the playbook that surprises me with grace and goodness and grandchildren. The playbook...which brings light where darkness has taken a foothold and where a new song emerges...a song of *new orientation*.

Perhaps Brueggemann was on to something when he characterized the Psalms in this way. And just as the movement was crucial for our Jewish ancestors, so rings true for us. We are not stationary beings nor are our circumstances. As Christians, the ebb and flow we experience throughout life *is* our narrative. It *is* our story. It *is* part of the *big* story of God, of the interconnectedness of creation.

Yes, the flow of this summer *is* in a bit of disarray and as we ask, "How long, God? How long until a vaccine is created for this deadly virus? How long will people suffer injustice due to the color of their skin, geographical location or gender? How long before we can experience the healing touch of a hug? How long...oh Lord? How long?" But today, just for today, I am trusting in the God who delivered the Israelites from slavery and led them into the promised land. I am trusting in the God who orders the seasons and brings new life out of dried bones. I am trusting in the God who is the Alpha and Omega and everything in between. Today, I am grateful for the writers of the Psalms as their raw emotion and honest examination bring hope to me as I wait for a new season to emerge and while I experience the movement.

Be at peace, and serve the Lord. Thanks be to God.
Paula

PS.
We often talk about these themes in our weekly Bible study on Thursdays - which by the way, always has a square available in the zoom room for you to join in the discussion!





Confirmation News

Our confirmation students will be confirmed on August 1 at the 5:30 pm outdoor worship service. You will be able to view the ceremony and worship service on Facebook or YouTube during the regularly scheduled time on Sunday, August 2 at 10:30 am.

Please keep these young people, their families and their mentors in your prayers as they continue their faith journey during this time of uncertainty *and new beginnings*.

Confirmation Students

Michaela Beidler
Natalee Lindell
Tyler Rop
Logan Montgomery
Chase Zizak
Spencer Zizak

Mentors

Beth Milligan
Shar Bourdon
Ron Peel
Karl Ziemelis
Phil Sielski
Mary Will

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Interestingly enough, the Bible not only contains the messages of the prophets of hope, but it also includes the prophets of doom and gloom like Jeremiah. Jeremiah takes on the feel-good prophets who say, “peace, peace, peace,” when there is no peace. Prophets like Jeremiah confront the land with the truth.

We have to be honest enough to say that we didn’t face the truth with which the scientists (the prophets of our time) confronted us. Hiding under all kinds of conspiracy theories and even claiming that the virus was a hoax served to keep us from dealing with the truth. Running from the truth meant that we weren’t prepared to deal with the virus. We thought it was going to go away, and it certainly hasn’t. The consequence of not facing the truth has been grave.

Let’s face it. Not facing the truth is always grave. Those who deal with addictions and family members who deal with the addicted ones will tell you this better than anyone. We need the prophets of hope and the prophets of truth. We need the whole Bible.

These are tough days. It does no one any good to deny that. But we are in this together, and together we can discover the hope that will take us courageously into the future.

Weekend	Scripture Readings
08/01 & 08/02	Isa 55:1-5, Ps 145:-9, 14-21 Rom 9:1-5, Matt 14:13-21
08/08 & 08/09	1 Kings 19:9-18, Ps 85:8-13 Rom 10:5-15, Matt 14:22-33
08/15 & 08/16	Isa 56:1, 6-8, Ps 67 Rom 11:1-2a, 29-32, Matt 15:21-28
08/22 & 08/23	Isa 51:1-6, Ps 138 Rom 12:1-8, Matt 16:13-20
08/29 & 08/30	Jer 15:15-21, Ps 26:1-8 Rom 12:9-21, Matt 16:21-28



Paula has attended a meeting with our Synod leaders as the ELCA discerns how to engage our children within the framework of the guidelines of the CDC and state mandates. The safety and well-being of our children will drive the decisions and promote new opportunities to learn and grow as children of God.

Introducing the new First Lutheran Church Website

Believe it or not, not everything about the COVID-19 pandemic has been terrible. The swiftly-changing environment forced us to make some updates to the ways we connect and communicate with our community and it's proving to be a good thing!

When the quarantine began in March, we had to immediately formulate a plan for keeping our church community connected. We quickly learned that having effective communication tools was critical to this connection.

We established live online worship in the first week of quarantine using just a smartphone. In the months that followed, we have honed our production skills and upgraded our equipment to provide a quality online worship experience that reaches people, even across the country! Based on your feedback, online worship will remain a permanent part of our worship offerings, even after we can fully return to in-person worship.

And now we have a new website, too! Visit our new website at www.firstlutheranmuskegon.org.

Note that ".org" is a new part of the website URL or address. We made this change because .org signifies a nonprofit organization and this is used by most churches. During this transition time, you will be automatically be redirected from www.firstlutheranmuskegon.com to www.firstlutheranmuskegon.org.

Church email addresses have also changed to end in ".org." Here's an example: bill@firstlutheranmuskegon.org. You can also send emails to staff using the staff directory feature on our new website: <https://www.firstlutheranmuskegon.org/who-we-are/church-staff/>.

Here are some additional features on the new website we hope you'll find helpful:

Worship

In the Worship section of the new website, you'll find a description of our worship "style," a catalog of our weekly worship bulletins for adults and children, a worship archive with links to our online worship experiences dating back to March, a collection of Pastor Bill's sermons, and an explanation and links to the Lectionary, or weekly Scripture readings.

Prayer

In the new Prayer area, we're offering an online Prayer Request form. Simply complete the form, click the "submit" button and your request is on its way to us! Also, look for the Prayer Ventures collection. Prayer Ventures are brief, daily petitions that are offered as guides to prayer for the global, social, and outreach ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, as well as for the needs and circumstances of our neighbors, communities, and world.

Engage

In the News and Events area called "Engage," you'll find news on our latest events, activities, and programs. There's a comprehensive [church calendar](#) that you can check by day, month, or year. We've also provided a place to sign-up for our weekly events emails and Prayer Line. And finally, we've archived this year's Chimes newsletter for your reference.

If you have questions or suggestions for the new website, please contact [Beth Milligan](#), Digital Communications Coordinator.





All email addresses now end in .org.

Pastor Bill
bill@firstlutheranmuskegon.org

Intern Paula
paula@firstlutheranmuskegon.org

Lorey Montgomery
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Shar Bourdon
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Amy Badley
amy@firstlutheranmuskegon.org

Ed Wosinski
ewosinski@firstlutheranmuskegon.org

Beth Milligan
beth@firstlutheranmuskegon.org

Karl Ziemelis
karl@firstlutheranmuskegon.org

Official Acts



Births

Josie Noelle Betty Thomas
Parents: Jeff and Amber Thomas

Deaths

Greg Liskey
Date of Birth: 06-19-1953
Date of Death: 06/22/2020

Bernard (Bernie) Harrell
Date of Birth: 05/14/1934
Date of Death: 06/20/2020

Richard (Dick) Ferry
Date of Birth: 11/14/1929
Date of Death: 06/14/2020

Barbara Mae Rowell
Date of Birth: 09/03/1947
Date of Death: 06/15/2020

Violet Ann Peterson
Date of Birth: 05/23/1932
Date of Death: 04/21/2020



Fire Pit And Fellowship!

Noah's Ark is ready to set sail! Thanks to all the volunteers that have pitched in to pull weeds, rake, mow, stack wood, sweep, powerwash, stain and pull more weeds! You may reserve "The Pit" for small groups of ten by calling the office. As with all small groups meeting at the church, Phase II guidelines will need to be followed.

We hope you enjoy the new space!

Thank You!!

Thanks to Theresa Buchan who assembled the July Chimes.



I would like to thank everyone who came out for the parade to wish me well and tell me goodbye. It meant a lot to me. I will miss all of my friends at First.

Peggy Jobe

August Birthdays!

- | | | | | | |
|----|--|----|---|----|---|
| 1 | Jason Bleich
Naomi Strait
Michael Strait | 13 | Betty Huey | 25 | Shirley DeVries
Logan Montgomery |
| 2 | Janet Glick
Betty Crenno | 14 | Tyler Lindell | 26 | Pat Cox |
| 3 | Susan Aker | 15 | Jennifer Giles
Kaitlin Rich
Robert Wei
Matthew Badley
Alaina Hartzell | 27 | George Bramer |
| 4 | Beverly Bringedahl
Carroll Loughrige
Emily Traub | 16 | Courtney Gust
Ashley Harper
Alicia Schaefer | 28 | Kristina Gallo |
| 5 | Linda Clark
Denise Studeman | 17 | Breanna Schultz
Ethan Lucht
Michael Bevans | 29 | Carter Pruitt
Haley Pruitt |
| 7 | David Anderson
Brady Wheeler | 18 | David Harrell | 30 | Dennis Young |
| 8 | Jeff Lindell | 19 | Sadie Brown
William Gallo
Haile Will | 31 | Sabina Freeman
Kelley Peel
Tom Veihl
Laura Veihl
Eric Nienhouse |
| 9 | Michele Rogers | 20 | Amy Howard | | |
| 10 | Elizabeth Bachelder | 22 | Kelly Smith
Jarett Wall | | |
| 11 | Alta Breunsbach
Cynthia Archer-Mitchell
Cindi Mitchell | 24 | Felicia Swirczek
Jennifer Bevans
L. A. Berge | | |
| 12 | Dani Zizak
Lori White
Kaitlyn Fiser
Noah Ziemelis | | | | |



Chimes Articles

Articles and information for the Chimes should be submitted via email to Rhonda Smith at rhondak33@comcast.net or placed in her mail box next to the church offices no later than the **15th of the month**.



Weekly Offerings For June

Weekend of 6/6 & 6/7

General Fund: \$9,960.45
 Mortgage Fund: \$934.81
 Dollar-A-Day: \$251.00

Weekend of 6/13 & 6/14

General Fund: \$7,429.27
 Mortgage Fund: \$620.00
 Dollar-A-Day: \$377.05

Weekend of 6/20 & 6/21

General Fund: \$5,523.72
 Mortgage Fund: \$435.00

Weekend of 6/27 & 6/28

General Fund: \$18,150.50
 Mortgage Fund: \$7,139.51

Total General Fund Offering received:	\$41,063.94
Total General Fund Offering needed:	<u>33,354.92</u>
	\$7,709.02

Total Mortgage Offering received:	\$9,129.32
Total Mortgage Offering needed:	<u>7,192.00</u>
	\$1,937.32

Keepers

Flo Bates

667 Lake Forest Ln Apt P1
 Muskegon, MI 49441
 767-2494

Elaine Brevick

Seminole Shores
 850 Seminole Rd
 Norton Shores, MI 49441

Linda Cates

1585 Wolf Lake Rd.
 Muskegon, MI 49442
 788-1806

Aileen Horton

18647 N. Fruitport Rd.
 Spring Lake, MI 49456

Pat Mullinnex

2284 Riverwood Drive
 Twin Lake, MI 49457

Jean Sodini

Robbinswood Northcrest Campus
 2650 Ruddiman Ave.
 N. Muskegon, MI 49445

Wally Tallent

Hillcrest Nursing & Rehab
 Community
 695 Mitzi Dr.
 Muskegon, MI 49445
 744-1641

FRIENDS OF FIRST WHO ARE HOMEBOUND

Dorothy Wood

Hillcrest Nursing & Rehab
 Community
 695 Mitzi Dr.
 Muskegon, MI 49445



(NOTE: Events via Zoom and Facebook Live are indicated)

Weekly Events

Other Events

Sunday	9:30 a.m.	Worship
	10:30 a.m.	Worship (via Facebook)
	7:00 p.m.	AA Meeting
	9:00 p.m.	Compline (via Facebook)
Monday	7:00 p.m.	AA Meeting
	12:00 p.m.	Quilters' Group
	9:00 p.m.	Compline (via Facebook)
Tuesday	9:00 a.m.	Seniors Helping Our Parish
	11:00 a.m.	"Big Thinkers" Study (via Zoom)
	9:00 p.m.	Compline (via Facebook)
Wednesday	4:00 a.m.	Journey Through Grief
	9:00 p.m.	Compline (via Facebook)
Thursday	12:00 p.m.	Bible Study (via Zoom)
	7:00 p.m.	Over-Eaters Anonymous
	9:00 p.m.	Compline (via Facebook)
Friday	10:00 a.m.	Paula's Reading Segment (via Facebook)
	7:00 p.m.	AA Meeting
Saturday	5:30 p.m.	Worship Service

1 & 2	Dollar-a-Day Weekend
10	Lion's Club Food Truck
11	1st on 2nd Quilt Bee
12	Stephen Ministry
19	Memorial Service
26	Stephen Ministry