Dear friends in Christ,

As we live in this Easter season of the church’s liturgical year, I am drawn to the song of Mary’s Magnificat and the Canticle of the Turning (Hymn 723, verse 1) that she sings when she visits Elizabeth, rejoicing in the great transformation that God is working.

My soul cries out with a joyful shout
that the God of my heart is great,
And my spirit sings of the wondrous things
that you bring to the ones who wait.
You fixed your sight on your servant’s plight,
and my weakness you did not spurn,
So from east to west shall my name be blest.
Could the world be about to turn?

We are in the midst of a great global turning. Our lives have been transformed and we are experiencing unprecedented and bewildering events around us.

We are living in a storm of uncertainty as the coronavirus moves throughout the world. Vulnerability and dismay is noticeable as we create social distance between us to protect ourselves and one another; as we face furloughs, job losses, income and investment losses. We worry and mourn the loss of loved ones. We grieve in our separation from one another during this time of need. Hunger is on the rise and farmers are seeking new ways to get their food to markets. Confusion about what to do is deep.

As people of faith we look for God’s presence in the turmoil. We pray. We turn to God in worship and imagine the faces of the people with whom we normally sit. These days, we invite neighbors, family and friends to join us virtually in worship, remembering God’s promises and trusting in God’s faithfulness to restore life in this world.

We also carry on and prepare for the new life God will raise up from these times. We continue to support one another as a community of faith, nurturing in a variety of ways the deep relationships of compassion and friendship shared among us at Christ Church. We have meetings by Zoom, as staff and Council leaders, continuing the good work that God has begun among us. We are creative in our scheduling and our use of technology, adapting with resilience and patience as we continue to support and build our shared ministries. And, we give thanks that in the midst of uncertainty we continue to financially support our life and ministry as a congregation.

We are planning for a new boiler that will keep us warm when we gather together for worship through the winter season. We are planning for a new season of children’s ministry and expanded classroom numbers and sizes as more children are welcomed into the life of faith and God’s sustaining love. We serve and deliver meals to people who need that support. The Call Committee continues the search for a long-term Lead Pastor for congregational life. And a small, contained opening of the building will take place on May 4th when Riversong Montessori, a critical business, will re-open in a limited capacity, following state and city public health guidelines, to serve its families.

As we continue in life, faith and ministry during these times of social distancing, we live with eager longing and anticipation for the time when we will turn to one another celebrating new life and all that God is unfolding in the on-going work of creation.

Christ is Risen! Alleluia!
And God is still working! Alleluia!

May this Easter message be our hope and our joy as we navigate these times of change.

Pastor Eva Jensen
May
Birthdays
5/5 Levi Stugelmeyer
5/12 Patricia Solie
5/15 Eb Revsbeck
5/16 Naomi Bruesehoff
5/20 Carmen O’Halloran
5/21 Birgitte Christianson, Britt Dougall, Drew Benson
5/22 Lynn Tollefson
5/26 Stephanie Gustafson, Carlton Hunke, MariLu Peters
5/28 Robyn Nooney

Happy Birthday, everyone!

Congratulations, Morgan Boes & Brian Manor!
On March 14, Pastor Haaland presided at the wedding of Morgan Boes and Brian Manor.

Meals on Wheels during Covid-19
Just as many essential businesses in the country, and the world, have had to make adjustments due to the Covid-19 virus, so has South Minneapolis Meals on Wheels. Our primary focus has been on the delivery of meals to our clients who are the more vulnerable adults in our community. Setting up new delivery procedures took research and education by us on the SMMOW executive committee, as well as help and direction from Metro Meals on Wheels. Metro MOW provided us with 1,000 plastic delivery bags (similar to grocery plastic bags) and sanitizing spray for our hot food delivery boxes. Metro was also able to get sanitizing liquid from a distillery and provide small bottles which are in each cold food delivery bag. This enables drivers to sanitize between each delivery and place the hot food tray and cold food bag in the plastic bag, then either set it outside the door or hang it on the doorknob, step back, and confirm that each client receives the meal. We have asked all our drivers to wear masks and we provide disposable latex or nitrile gloves for them. This gives the client an added visual reassurance that we are doing all we can to deliver the meal in a safe manner. (See the photo below!)

As expected, we did lose a small number of clients who were just too fearful of someone coming to their door. But we have gained new clients who fear going out and appreciate a delivered hot meal. One such person is a gentleman I spoke with recently, a retired architect and Finn who has visited our church buildings on a tour! I am currently doing our “Welcome to MOW” visits by phone instead of in person so my call to him was a long conversation about the MOW program but mostly about the Finnish community, the Sarrinens, and Christ Church!

I want to thank our Christ Church drivers who are able to continue delivering. Understandably, some are unable to continue, due to health concerns. We welcome them back when the time is right.

As we are fed, so we feed.
Cathy Sieving
Lectionary Readings for May

May 3
Fourth Sunday in Easter
Acts 2:42-47
Psalm 23
1 Peter 2:19-25
John 10:1-10

May 10
Fifth Sunday in Easter
Acts 7:55-60
Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16
1 Peter 2:2-10
John 14:1-14

May 17
Sixth Sunday in Easter
Acts 17:22-31
Psalm 66:8-20
1 Peter 3:13-22
John 14:15-21

May 21
Ascension of Our Lord
Acts 1:1-11
Psalm 47 or Psalm 93
Ephesians 1:15-23

May 24
Seventh Sunday in Easter
Acts 1:6-14
Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35
1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11
John 17:1-11

May 31
Day of Pentecost
Acts 2:1-21
Psalm 104:24-34, 35b
1 Corinthians 12:3b-13
John 20:19-31

Kevin Olsen led our devotion by sharing a poem-prayer entitled “Maundy Thursday: All the World is Still” by Malcolm Guite. He gave thanks that, even with all that is going on, Jesus is still with us, even in our simplest meals.

We received an update that Chuck Merrell would continue working through the end of April, rather than retiring mid-month. The extra time allows to coordinate with the Property Committee to complete a few projects, including shutting down the boiler for the season and documenting maintenance priorities that are part of regular spring & early summer seasons. The fountain will likely be installed later in spring or, possibly, sometime after the Stay-at-Home order is ended. Until the boiler replacement project is decided, the full needs and qualifications of a new custodian position cannot be finalized. In the meantime, maintenance, groundskeeping, and cleaning will be done by volunteers and contractors, as needed. While the church is closed, demand for these services is relatively low. While many cleaning companies are closed right now, we have found a cleaner who has both residential and commercial cleaning experience that can support the custodial services we need. It is expected that they will begin in May.

We learned of the federal Small Business Association’s (SBA) Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), which is a forgivable loan opportunity to support small businesses (including churches) by paying up to 2.5 months of staff payroll and eligible utilities costs. While the first round of funding was expended very quickly, the Council approved applying for a second round. This is a very competitive process, but it is hoped that the church will be able to secure a forgivable loan. More information will be provided as it becomes available.

As reported last month, Property Committee has assessed the need to replace our 1961 boilers with a new high-efficiency boiler. The project would also include asbestos abatement on heating pipe insulation and replacement of hot air fans with high-efficiency air handling units that will significantly reduce our electricity costs and improve the overall heating system. After several site visits and at least three bids, Property Committee recommends the church move ahead with the project. The total estimated costs, including contingency, are $133,000. While this is a significant investment, the church is fortunate to have available resources to finance the costs. Council voted to support Property’s recommendation and agreed to call a congregation meeting in May to consider the final approval. We discussed the likelihood of needing to host a congregation meeting virtually, through an online format, due to the Stay-at-Home order and social distancing requirements. For those who may not have internet access, there would be a call-in option. Look for more information and details in a forthcoming letter. As in the past, written notice of a congregation meeting will be sent via U.S. mail to the last known address of voting members.

Our pastors provided updates on continuing worship and mission during these difficult times. We adjourned with the Lord’s Prayer.

Treasurer’s Update
I am heartened to provide this financial summary through the first quarter (Jan-Mar) 2020. Member giving started the year very strong, and while we’ve seen some softening of giving more recently, we remain ahead of our budget for the quarter in that category. Other income is a bit lower, but we also had lower than budgeted expenses so far this year. The result is that we are in a good financial position through March 31. Our longer-term financial position is also good. Given recent market volatility, investments of our Endowment and Congregation funds have declined in value a bit; however, these funds are, generally, invested moderately conservatively. The Endowment Committee and Council continue to monitor these investments, and representatives of each recently met with our Thrivent advisor team to ensure that these funds continue to provide support of Christ Church Lutheran into the future. Your continued support of the mission & ministry of Christ Church is vital and appreciated. ~Brad Hubert, Treasurer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Christ Church Lutheran Finances - thru Mar 2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For the quarter, Jan-Mar 2020:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACTUAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member Giving/Envelopes: 87,504.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Income: 102,220.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Expenses: $102,625.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Surplus (or Deficit): ($703.65)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Call Committee Update
On April 26 the congregation gathered online with Bishop Ann Svennungsen to consult about the next stage of our process to call a new Senior Pastor. This part of the call process reviews the congregation’s Ministry Site Profile (MSP). Due to the pandemic restrictions, the conversation took place with congregation members invited to connect through computer or phone, and 38 online participants. Bob Victorin-Vangerud, the call committee liaison with the Synod, opened the meeting with a welcome to Bishop Ann Svennungsen. In her opening remarks, she reiterated the importance of strong leadership from a pastor, and also the importance of the call process continuing during this time. She then asked for feedback on several areas, including the strengths of the congregation, the priorities for ministry tasks, and preferred characteristics of a new pastor.

Strengths and gifts of our congregational identity:
• Sense of care for each other and those in the external community
• Very talented members with a variety of gifts
• Welcoming of all ages and walks of life, with acceptance, openness, and a blend of generations
• Financially sound, actively seeking partnerships and grants
• Welcoming of new perspectives
• Worship which is rich, liturgical, and gospel-driven, enhanced by excellent music
• Spirit of the congregation, an X factor that gives life and energy to what we do and highlights resilience to work through obstacles
• Passion for the mission of the gospel, which flows out of our collective encounter with each other through worship (continued on next page...)

Top five MSP ministry tasks (discussion and confirming alignment):
• Building a sense of community, children’s ministry, recruit and equip leaders, preaching and worship, music worship and the arts
• Discussion:
  - Preaching has been critical to our growth, make sure we emphasize the need in the profile
  - Ensure that outreach is tied in to leadership, to avoid insularity
  - Adult education has long been a strength (both lay and pastoral leadership)

Top five MSP gifts of the new pastor:
• Helping people develop spiritual lives; caring and nurturing of children; being an effective and joyful preacher, communicator and administrator; sharing leadership in a team; promoting social justice
• Discussion:
  - Emphasis on children: we’ve seen great growth and excitement through emphasizing our children’s ministry. The children’s sermon is always a great part of worship for all
  - Working as part of a team is key given the size of our staff, as well as bringing out the talents of lay leaders
  - A strong ability to minister to people at all stages of life with a shepherd’s heart
  - Sharing the ministry with lay leaders
  - We’ve made strategic staffing choices (office administrator) to help the lead pastor focus on their call and not have time taken up by administrative tasks
  - Bishop suggested to strongly emphasize our need for a lead pastor who will help us evolve our worship while maintaining and respecting our traditional liturgical style, and who feels called to share a partnership to shape worship.

Next Steps: Nominations and applications can come from three sources:
• Candidate can self-nominate
• Congregants can submit nominations through the synod/committee
• Synod keeps a running list of good candidates from the roster

The Synod will screen candidates and refer those they feel to be a good match to the call committee. The process needs to be held in strict confidentiality to respect the pastors and their congregations.
(Continued on the next page)
This month’s Closeup features Sarah Brunsvold, Jeff Weispfenning, and Freddy Weispfenning who have been members of Christ Church Lutheran for six years.

When did you start attending Christ Church Lutheran and what brought you here?

We moved to the neighborhood and wanted to check out some churches nearby so we came here once and never went anywhere else because of the warm welcome we received. Freddy hadn’t been born yet and we didn’t see many children which gave us pause at first about becoming members, but we just thought it would all work out. It has worked out and both Jeff and I have become involved in Children’s Ministry.

Where do you live in the neighborhood?

We own a house about four blocks away from the church near Peace Coffee.

What about our church keeps you coming back?

The meaningful worship, friendships, children, and family events, and the intergenerational connections. It feels like a home for us and Freddy especially feels very comfortable here. He was born and baptized here in 2013, the year we joined.

How does Christ Church help you live and share your faith?

It keeps us grounded in a simple message of “Love one another as I have loved you” and gives us energy to keep trying to be positive forces in our neighborhood, city, and world.

What do you do when you’re not in church?

Sarah does conservation and restoration work on 20th century Russian paintings for the The Museum of Russian Art founder’s collection. Jeff is a graphic designer at SignArt and is an artist, creating oil paintings in his “Artecave” when he can. Freddy attends kindergarten at Hiawatha Community School.

What can you tell us about yourself that we may not have known?

Sarah is trying to be a hiker. Last summer she hiked Mount Katahdin, in northern Maine, via “The Knife’s Edge” route which was extremely challenging. Jeff is interested in his family history of Germans from Russia, so last summer he accompanied his 91-year-old dad to North Dakota to visit the family homestead. Freddy can solve a Rubik’s Cube!

Closeup is a Courier feature to help us get better acquainted with our fellow members. If you would like to share your story in “Closeup,” call Donna Lindberg at 651/552-8499.
Zoom Book Discussion: A Tale for the Time Being, by Ruth Ozeki

Saturday, May 30 from 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.

If you like the idea of a book discussion over Zoom (a video conferencing app), you are heartily invited to join this newest Christ Church activity! You have hopefully received an email about this—but if you are interested in ordering this book and joining the online conversation, please email Pastor Haaland (ehaaland@christchurchluth.org) so that he can be in touch with further details. All are welcome!

Here is a description of the book from the publisher:

A brilliant, unforgettable novel from bestselling author Ruth Ozeki—short-listed for the Booker Prize and the National Book Critics Circle Award

“A time being is someone who lives in time, and that means you, and me, and every one of us who is, or was, or ever will be.”

In Tokyo, sixteen-year-old Nao has decided there’s only one escape from her aching loneliness and her classmates’ bullying. But before she ends it all, Nao first plans to document the life of her great grandmother, a Buddhist nun who’s lived more than a century. A diary is Nao’s only solace—and will touch lives in ways she can scarcely imagine. Across the Pacific, we meet Ruth, a novelist living on a remote island who discovers a collection of artifacts washed ashore in a Hello Kitty lunchbox—possibly debris from the devastating 2011 tsunami. As the mystery of its contents unfolds, Ruth is pulled into the past, into Nao’s drama and her unknown fate, and forward into her own future.

Full of Ozeki’s signature humor and deeply engaged with the relationship between writer and reader, past and present, fact and fiction, quantum physics, history, and myth, A Tale for the Time Being is a brilliantly inventive, beguiling story of our shared humanity and the search for home.

Coping through Crafting

Knitters & Crocheters continue meeting, virtually!

This group has continued to gather, albeit online, the first Saturday of the month. Do you think they miss sharing those fabulous snacks? Yes!

Rug weaving, by Kevin Olsen

Mask making, by Britt Dougall and Rita Schoenike & Emma

Britt

Emma

Rita

Mpls.St.Paul Magazine feature!

The May “Best of the Twin Cities” edition of the Mpls.St.Paul magazine included a “Keeping the Faith” article, with Christ Church as one of ten remarkable neighborhood churches! The magazine will post it online within the next couple of weeks, and then we can take a closer look. Note the fun graphic rendition of our beloved building!
A Search for New life

I have to admit I was a little nervous to move from Lent and Holy Week into Easter this year. As we are in the midst of a pandemic, the season of Lent felt seemed to provide a fitting mood for what was happening in the world around us. I was worried that the joy and promise that comes with the Easter season would fall flat for me. Don’t get me wrong, it was hard and even a little sad to celebrate Easter apart from you all, but I have found myself feeling surprised in this new season; the empty tomb speaks even more deeply to me. The fear that the women at the tomb felt feels very much like the fear, uncertainty, and anxiety that many of us are facing today, and yet still the good news of Easter got out. The promise of new life and resurrection were carried on even in the middle of fear.

So, I wonder how you all are celebrating God’s gift of new life even in these days. Are you reading the Easter stories from the Spark Bible? Are you gathering around the Spark Sunday School At Home? I want to start something of a photo challenge. Get out in your yard or neighborhood and find some signs of new life—buds on trees, flowers popping out of the ground—take a picture, and send it to me (childrensministry@christchurchluth.org), and I will include as many as I can right here in next month’s Little Courier! May these small signs of new life that we find in the world remind us of God’s great love for each of us.

~Tyler Egge, Children’s Ministry Director
What are we up to during this time of sequestration? Here are a few snapshots...

Jody & Aaron are busy keeping up with twin daughters Mathilda & Greta

Mary is thankful for the greenery of spring

Hillary & Colin bought a home just a few blocks from church

Jeff & Laurel are pretending that there’s actually a baseball season

The Christ Church staff meets twice monthly via Zoom. They say hello!

Noah Niermann and his dad built this sauna in their backyard, and the girls love it. (Maybe hot saunas help stave off viruses!)

Max Wipperman just celebrated his 80th birthday! Happy birthday, Max, and cheers to your new decade!

The courtyard tree is popping its leaves

Pastor Jensen celebrated her birthday on April 17, and her boys Willie and Ollie were delighted to open presents with her. Happy birthday, Pastor!

Happy Mother’s Day!