GROW

At Fish Lake Lutheran Church

43353 Cedarcrest Trail
Harris, MN 55032
Phone: 651-674-4252
Fax: 651-237-1190
Online: www.fishlakelutheran.org
Office Hours
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday
and Friday 11:00 am to 3:00 pm

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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Address Label

Fish Lake Lutheran Leadership & Staff

Interim Pastor: John Keller
Office Administrator: Denise Steinberg
Parish Deaconess: Sister LaDonna Olson
Pianist: Cindy Blesener
Custodians: Robin Graham & Tom Anderson

Church Council Members

Steve Mettling, President
Barb Sauer, Vice President
Kathy Lodin, Treasurer
Kelli Klein, Secretary
Candy McColley
Justin Ricke
Gaylen Yates
Clay Wilking

MAY

All Activities suspended until further Notice

Choir Rehearsal each Sunday 9:00 am
Worship Service each Sunday 10:00 am

5th Social Ministry Meeting 6:00 pm
6th **Wednesday Evening Classes Resume**
WELCA Meeting/Sewing 10:00 am
Staff meeting 11:00 am
7th Fish Lake Council Meeting 6:30 pm
16th Block of the Month 8:30 am
African Dinner 6:00 pm
19th Prep.for confirmation celebration meal 5 pm
24th TIM Team Orientation 5:00 pm
25th Memorial Day Service in Cemetery 11:00 am
Ham Dinner 11:30 am
26th Prime Time 11:00 am

Wednesdays Evening Activities
(Beginning May 6th)
5:45 - 6:15 Supper
6:00 - 7:30 Confirmation
6:15 - 7:15 - Faith Weavers

together we make a difference

Vine & Branches

A Monthly Newsletter of Fish Lake Lutheran Church

May 2020

Prayer in the Season of COVID-19

As a child and youth, I felt a strong calling to prayer. Though I was often bored when my pastor would give long pastoral prayers on Sunday morning, I sensed that God was listening and acting. Sometimes my concept bordered on magic: "if I just say the right words or willed enough faith, God would answer my request." I don't have any memories of a specific request being answered, yet I continued to pray

In 1968 my pastor, a retired Marine Corp chaplain, organized a 24-hour prayer vigil at church for the war in Viet Nam, praying for the men and women in uniform and for peace among the nations. I was fourteen and went with my mother late one night to pray for God's intervention. The church was empty quiet, soft candle light bathed the sanctuary as we kneeled together at the altar and prayed. Pastor Crawford had left some written prayers and Bible verses to use, but mostly it was deep silence as we prayed for God to end the war. I remember being a bit bored, but also a deepening connection to God. After our half-hour slot of earnest prayer, my mom and I went home. The war continued for four more years.

In college, my concept of prayer began to mature and change. I was three thousand miles from home and in an academic setting that was often hostile to overt Christian faith. Prayer was less about changing God to do my will but rather asking God to change me, to give me strength, patience, wisdom. My freshman year I found a few other Christian believers and we met several nights a week in an empty classroom to pray. Again it was dark, empty space, this time without candle light. We read scripture passages and prayed short, simple prayers from our hearts. I was sometimes bored and restless, yet the practice gave me strength.

Through my adult life, I have embraced certain prayer practices for a season. I have a large collection of journals in which I poured my heart out to God. I have had various prayer partners and prayer groups that last for a season and then dissolve for various reasons. I have kept lists of prayer requests and tried to pray them daily or at least weekly. At times I have felt deep connect to God but I have also had extended seasons of restless boredom and struggle. I continue to pray, especially for wisdom and strength. I continue to pray for the needs of others, especially healing and guidance.

In this season of COVID-19, I continue to pray. I pray for all the sick, the health care workers, government leaders and essential personnel that they might have strength, wisdom and courage to continue their jobs. I pray for the scientist who are researching the coronavirus, treatments and vaccine. I don't believe my prayers will magically make COVID-19 go away, but rather provide patience and perseverance for our shared journey.

In recent years I have been practicing Centering Prayer, a silent form of Christian meditation, based on Jesus teaching from Matthew 6:6, "Whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you." My prayer intention is to simply be with God, allowing God's Spirit to work in God's secret way. Whenever my thoughts wander (which they always do) I simply come back to my chosen sacred word and breath the word over and over. I practice Centering Prayer in small groups with others, at first in person but now virtually. I am sometimes bored, but I am also experiencing lasting connection with God as the practice deepens and rewires my brain.

During this season of social distancing, I invite you to take time to reflect on your relationship with God and how your prayer life may have grown or changed over the years. What is God teaching you now in this time? Has your understanding or practice of prayer changed?

I long for the day when my family, my friends, and my congregation will gather together in person .For now, I practice prayer trusting that God is teaching each of us and the world a new lesson about faith, hope and love. Prayer continues to call me into the fullness of life.

Just a note on how the pandemic has impacted the Social Ministry Committee.
We have not met in person, of course but have made some decisions by email.

1. Since the weather has warmed significantly we will save the hats and mittens from the Warmometer collection until November 2020 and again begin collecting and donating to the area Family Pathways Food Shelf. Thank you so much for all the warm clothes you have donated for those in need.

2. The collection of Birthday Party Supplies will also be saved until a later date with the exception of cake mix and and frosting which will be donated to the Food Shelf. An inquiry will be made to see if Family Pathways would accept the other Birthday Party supplies as well.

3. Please see Cindy's update on the Africa Dinner and the Africa Quilt Drawing.

4. As you know the children of FLL sponsor Samwelli through Compassion International. This organization has provided some information that applies to the general situation in Tanzania.

"**Tanzania:** All schools, colleges and universities in Tanzania are closed and public gatherings are currently banned through April 15. Accordingly, group meetings and activities at all Compassion child development centers are canceled through April 15. Staff of Compassion Tanzania and frontline church partners have received instruction on virus prevention measures. Partner churches will continue to provide medical attention and child protection to beneficiaries and families as needed." Because the Compassion International center he goes to is closed he does not receive letters from us or can he send letters to us. We pray that Samwelli and his family are well and safe.

Let us Pray for…

Those in our midst fighting cancer: Mary, Beth, Barb, Jim, and Jordan.

Our service men and women including: Sami, Tim and Joe

Injured and ill: Ronnie, Carol, Jean, Ruby, Dan and Ray

Partner congregation – Wasa Congregation in Tanzania

Those preparing for or recovering from surgery

Those who are grieving

Fish Lake Family,

We know the church is going through a hard time as everyone else. We love Fish Lake and want to support them.

God Bless and Stay Safe and Healthy,

Love, Andrea & Grand Patton

COUNCIL MINUTES

April, 2020

NO MINUTES FOR THE MONTH OF APRIL DUE TO ONLIINE MEETINGS DUE TO PANDEMIC

THE VIRUS THAT STOLE EASTER
Think Grinch

Twas late in '19 when the virus began,
Bringing chaos and fear to all people, each land.

People were sick, hospitals full,
Doctors overwhelmed, no one in school.

As winter gave way to the promise of spring,
The virus raged on, touching peasant and king.

People hid in their homes from the enemy unseen.
They YouTubed and Zoomed, social-distanced, and cleaned.

April approached and churches were closed.
"There won't be an Easter," the world supposed.

"There won't be church services, and egg hunts are out.
No reason for new dresses when we can't go about."

Holy Week started, as bleak as the rest.
The world was focused on masks and on tests.

"Easter can't happen this year," they proclaimed.
"Online and at home, it just won't be the same."

Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, the days came and went.
The virus pressed on; it just would not relent.

The world woke Sunday and nothing had changed.
The virus still menaced, the people, estranged.

"Pooh pooh to the saints," the world was grumbling.
"They're finding out now that no Easter is coming.

"They're just waking up! I know just what they'll do!
Their mouths will hang open a minute or two,
And then all the saints will all cry boo-hoo.

"That noise," said the world, "would be something to hear."
So it paused and the world put a hand to its ear.

And it did hear a sound coming through all the skies.
It started down low, then it started to rise.

But the sound wasn't depressed.
Why, this sound was triumphant!
It couldn't be so!
But it grew with abundance!

The world stared around, popping its eyes. Then it shook!
What it saw was a shocking surprise!

Each saint in each nation, the tall and the small,
Was celebrating Jesus in spite of it all!

It hadn't stopped Easter from coming! It came!
Somehow or other, it came just the same!

And the world with its life quite stuck in quarantine
Stood puzzling and puzzling.
"Just how can it be?"

"It came without bonnets, it came without bunnies,
It came without egg hunts, cantatas, or money."

Then the world thought of something it hadn't before.
"Maybe Easter," it thought, "doesn't come from a store.
Maybe Easter, perhaps, means a little bit more."

And what happened then?
Well....the story's not done.
What will YOU do?
Will you share with that one
Or two or more people needing hope in this night?
Will you share of the source of your life in this fight?

The churches are empty - but so is the tomb,
And Jesus is Victor over death, doom, and gloom.

So this year at Easter, let this be our prayer,
As the virus still rages all around, everywhere.

May the world see hope when it looks at God's people.
May the world see the Church is not a building or steeple.
May the world find Faith in Jesus' death and resurrection,
May the world find Joy in a time of dejection.
May 2020 be known as the year of survival,
But not only that -
Let it start a revival.

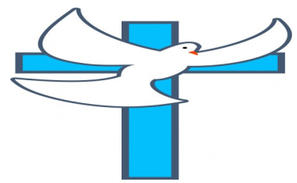
Submitted by Kathy Lodin

With Warm Thoughts and Prayers at Easter!

Happy Easter to the Congregation

Evy Yates

Donation to the Cemetery fund and Vacation Bible School in Memory of Lois Colliander from her friends from Prime Time!!



Sent by Barb Sauer, from a friend of hers.

Living in uncertainty (and let's face it, at times in fear) gives us the opportunity to learn how to live in the present with joy. The bible said not to worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow has enough worry of its own. God promises His very presence in all circumstances. He is with us!

Dance on!

Friends

Life
isn't about waiting
for the storm to pass
tt's about leaning to
Dance in the rain

Women of the ELCA

NO MINUTES FROM WELCA, DUE TO NO MEETINGS IN APRIL DURING PANDEMIC

Helping homeless families with shelter and a path forward

Volunteer Drivers—to transport families, by agency van, to and from the Day Center and night shelters (churches in the area). Drive times 7:00—8:00 am or 4:30-5:30 pm daily. It takes about an hour per volunteer shift.

Volunteer Committee Member— plan and help put on seasonal events for New Pathways.
Volunteer meetings are on the 2nd Tuesday of the month from 6:00-7:00 pm, planning and pending spring events.

New Pathways

Volunteer Board Members– Board members serve a 2 year term by application. They help develop strategic plans for the non-profit organization, serve on working a working committee and over see financial growth.

To Volunteer please contact Mary Westlund at 763-691-0121 ext. 7
Or email director@newpathwaysmn.com

FAMILY PATHWAYS

We're doing what we can.

The Coronavirus pandemic has caused much devastation to our daily lives-physically, emotionally, financially. As we experience social distancing, school and business closures and event cancellations, Family Pathways has been hit hard.

Thrift Stores, our most consistent source of 65% of operating revenue, have been temporarily closed.

In light of these challenges Family Pathways remains focused, resolved, and hopeful.

Here are some of the steps we have taken to weather this storm:

- Food Shelves are distributing pre-packed groceries curbside and working with food partners to expand food delivery
- Created a doorstep delivery program to bring groceries to housebound seniors
- The domestic abuse emergency shelter remains open with advocacy services and caregiver consulting provided remotely
- Homemaking, youth, supervised visitation, and men's education programs suspended
- Decrease the size of staff structure by 75%
- Barn Bash annual fund raiser cancelled (stay tuned for more information on a reimagined virtual event)

How Can I help! **Make a financial donation.**

*Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Advocacy 24-Hour Crisis Hotline (800) 338 –7233

amborella house
renewing hope · restoring lives

April, 2020

An Exciting Day!

On March 31st, we received the keys to the home that will begin serving women who have survived sex trafficking! We are grateful for all who have partnered with us, continue to partner with us and new partners joining us.

We will be working on the home over the summer and are excited to be another step closer to working with the women. We all desire to see women healed and restored and given a brighter future! Thank you for caring about the women and caring for them with your support!

TARGET REGISTRY

We have prepared a registry at Target in Forest Lake, MN to provide items for the house. I

it's an easy way to participate in setting up the kitchen and bathrooms!
You can order online, list Terri Hopman as the alternate pick up person, and order. Choose to have it delivered to the Forest Lake store, and Terri will pick up the items as well. If you go to the store, the registry is listed under Terri Hopman.

To request a tax receipt, please send a message to contact@renewhopemn.org and a receipt will be emailed to you once the items are picked

African Dinner and Quilt Raffle Update

First of all, we hope all of you are well and finding ways to cope and stay healthy and connected with one another during this crazy time. God is with us and we will get through this! Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we have decided to cancel the dinner that was scheduled for May 16th. With so many unknowns as to when we can gather again with one another, we are not rescheduling the dinner for this year. Next year is a whole new year so we will put it back on the calendar for next spring.

As you know, this year we were planning to raffle a quilt that I made from fabrics purchased in Tanzania. (check the link below to see a picture of the quilt) Our plan was to sell tickets during coffee hour at church and have the drawing at the dinner. Obviously, we are not able to do that, so we have moved to Plan B. I have tickets with me at home and would love to give you all a chance to win this colorful quilt. Tickets are 1 for $5.00 or 3 for $10.00. If you would like to purchase tickets please contact me either by text at 763.843.5311 or email me at cindy.blesener@gmail.com. I will need your name, phone number, and how many tickets you would like to purchase. I will then send you my address and you can send me a check for the amount of tickets you wish to purchase. Please make your check to Fish Lake Lutheran Church. Once I receive your check, I will fill out your tickets with your name and phone number, and send your ticket stubs back to you. We will then have the drawing on August 9th, hopefully during coffee hour at church. All the funds raised from ticket sales will be used for scholarships to secondary school for students in our sister congregation in Wasa, Tanzania.

God Bless you all!

A message from Sr. LaDonna

I have a small quilted wall hanging made with pastel colored fabrics. The embroidery on it says, "Spring has sprung, the grass is riz. I wonder where the bunnies is." Spring has definitely sprung – there's no holding it back. Sunshine, budding trees and greening grass all point to a change in the seasons.

The season of Easter which began on April 12th turns our hearts and minds to the hope that we have in Christ Jesus. Our spirits are lifted as we think about the resurrection and the new life that comes after heartache and sorrow. Martin Luther encouraged Christians to daily remind themselves of their baptism as a way of connecting to the gracious act of God on our lives. No matter what our circumstance we can be sure of God's love and presence with us.

Life for all of us has taken a strange turn. We are trying to figure out how to navigate the changes and stay sane. In the midst of those changes we can be confident of the baptismal promise that when we were baptized, we were marked with the cross of Christ forever. Paul writes in the book of Romans, "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore, we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

Newness of life. It sounds so Spring-like. It sounds uplifting and hopeful. I encourage you to take moments throughout the day to notice the change in nature and to remind yourselves of the newness of life. Even as we struggle with daily uncertainties we can find hope and courage in the triumph of Easter.

Christ is Risen, Alleluia!

Shelly & Gang,

We thank you all so very much for all your help, cooperation, consideration and all the extras we asked of you. It was a job well done!

Our family is so very grateful for your help at the last minute for Dad's luncheon.

Thank You!

Paul Reese's Family, Marilyn Ferrie

I discovered this post in Facebook. It touched my heart and I hope it touches yours.

I don't know if you agree, but something invisible came and put everything in its place.
Suddenly the gasoline went down, pollution went down, people started to have more time - so much time that they do not know what to do with it - parents are spending time with their kids as a family, work is no longer a priority, or traveling or social life either.
Suddenly we silently see within ourselves and understand the value of the words "solidarity", "love", "strength", "empathy" and "faith".
In an instant we realized that we are all in the same boat; rich and poor. That the supermarket shelves are empty and the hospitals are full.
New cars and old cars also stand in the garages, simply because nobody can get out.
Empty streets, less pollution, clean air, the land also breathes.
The human returns to his origins, realizing that with or without money, the important thing is to survive.
Today, health is the main thing, even in spite of wanting to have or possessing.
It took 6 days for the universe to establish the social equality that was said to be impossible.
Fear invaded everyone.
At least this happened to realize the vulnerability of the human being.
Nature is forcing us to clean up the mess made by ourselves.
Our overthrown gods:
-Money
-Sports
-Fame
-Politics
What the coronavirus is teaching us:
-Our best protection: GOD
-Our best refuge: HOME
- Our best company: FAMILY
- Our real time: TODAY
- Nature's call: STOP US
- Its message: WAIT, RESPECT
We are not gods, we are not kings, we do not have the power of controlling everything.
We are part of a whole, fragile, brittle and vulnerable something.
Part of a whole something that we wanted to dominate & today is telling us:
Stop, breathe, respect.
Go back to the basics, to the essentials, that the peace of your soul guide you towards what you are: a CREATION.

Much love peace n happiness always, Kelli Klein

Year of Renewal **Date:** 4/2/2020 (impromptu meeting after council)

Present: Pastor John, Barb and Candy

Purpose: Discuss how the renewal team and the current situation could support our members. This is a difficult time for many.

Agenda: Renewal Perspectives and Moving with the Change

Tree Call List
- Face to Face is the best way to communicate
- Phone Calls is the second best way to communicate
- Email and Text are nice. Email can be spread to more people.

Follow Up To Call List
- Provide updates to Denise if it applies to membership
- Provide update to Pastor if it needs support or prayer or resources
- Could Renewal Team Members participate in this in addition to council and volunteers.

Team's Next Meeting: 4/14/2020 Time: _____

Pastor will check with folks and get back to us on the time.

2020 FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP AT FISH LAKE LUTHERAN				
Date	**Actual Offering**	**Budgeted Offering**	**Percent**	**Above/Below Budget**
March 22	2,750.00	3,317.31	83%	(567.31)
March 29	7,426.00	3,317.31	224%	4108.69
April 5	2,976.00	3,317.31	90%	(341.31)
April 12	3,476.00	3,317.32	105%	158.68
2020 YEAR TO DATE	48,770.78	49,759.65	98%	(988.87)

ALL who contributed to these funds in 2020:

- **Cemetery Fund—$910.00** was given in support of maintaining our Cemetery grounds.
- **Building Fund—$727.00** was given in support of maintaining our building and grounds.

Sunday Morning Schedule—
Suspended until further Notice

10:00 a.m. Worship

Refreshments and Fellowship

Offering Counters

3 Amy Johnson & Cindy Blesener
10 Joel & Katie Santjer & Nancy Hoffman
17 Laurie Knutson & Shelly Lustig
24 Mary Street & Arnie Ricke
31 Council Members

Ushers - Sundays

3
10
17
24
31

Coffee Hosts

3 Cookie Jar
10 Skibas and K. Nelson
17
24 WELCA: Barb Sauer
31 Africa Mission Group

May 2020 - ALL ACTIVITIES SUSPENDED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
3 **Worship Online**	4	5 6:00 Social Ministry Meeting	6 10:00 WELCA 11:00 Staff Meeting 5:45- 6:15 Supper 6:00-7:30 Confirmation 6:15-7:15 Faith Weavers	7 6:30 pm Fish Lake Church Council Meeting	8	9
10 **Worship Online**	11	12	13 5:45- 6:15 Supper 6:00-7:30 Confirmation 6:15-7:15 Faith Weavers		15	16 8:30 am Block of the Month 6:00 pm Africa Dinner
17	18	19 5:00 Prep for Confirmation celebration meal	20 Staff Meeting 5:45- 6:15 Supper 6:00-7:30 Confirmation 6:15-7:15 Faith Weavers	21	22	23
24 **Choir Rehearsal 9:00 am** **Worship 10:00 am** TIM Team Orientation 5:00	25 11:00 Memorial Day Service in Cemetery 11:30 Ham Dinner	26 11:00 Prime Time	27 5:45- 6:15 Supper 6:00-7:30 Confirmation 6:15-7:15 Faith Weavers	28	29	30
31 **Choir Rehearsal 9:00 am** **Worship 10:00 am**	1 (June)	2 6:00 Social Ministry Meeting	3 10:00 WELCA Staff Meeting 11:00 am 5:45- 6:15 Supper 6:00-7:30 Confirmation 6:15-7:15 Faith Weavers	4 6:30 pm Fish Lake Council Meeting	5	6