



UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH OF PROCTOR

January 2022

Thoughts from Pastor Liz



Blessed New Year, People of God!

I wish you much joy as we join those around the world in marking the passage of time with celebration and hope. As we enter the new year, our minds are often turned towards new intentions and hopes for what will occur.

Along with writing this reflection, my tasks to complete this newsletter include providing dates for the calendar of the classes and events in the month ahead. This year, I'm struggling to do this. My plan and hope is that I will be able to participate in a clergy study immersion in the Holy Land. We'll be walking through the Biblical sites and meeting with Lutheran pastors and the bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land. That will take a bit of time, displacing some other events I would otherwise have on the calendar. The thing is, I'm not so sure it will happen. It's already been postponed a couple times due to COVID, and now I just learned that the USA is on the "no-entry" list for Israel, until things are better. How long will that be? Nothing is certain yet, either way. So how do I plan? Is it a waste to hope on things that might not be? Do we look at the year ahead and simply feel ambivalent because we can't know what might happen?

I tend to be one of those people who is hesitant with anticipatory joy. I'm often not willing to risk disappointment, so I don't look forward to things. They might not happen, or happen the way I want, and so if I'm not excited for them, I also don't have to be disappointed. This is not a good way to live. I'm working on it.

Our faith gives us tools to live in the uncertainty of our days. The first is the blunt truth that we are not in charge. It's not within our power to control everything and make things happen just the way we want. In the book of Job, God reminds Job of his limitations by questioning, "where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?... Have you commanded the morning since your days began...? Have you comprehended the expanse of the earth?" (Job 38). The scope of our human power is limited. We're fooling ourselves if we think too much is in our control. That's why Jesus advises, "can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?" (Luke 12:25). When we think we have more power than we actually have, we get stuck in trying to change things that are out of our control. All we gain by that is frustration, worry, and anger.

We can choose to work on ourselves. Our reactions and attitudes are within our control to affect. When we have a difficult time with that, we can find support from therapists and doctors. We are called to "rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances" (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18a). When we focus on praising God for what we have received from God, our attitudes shift. When we become concerned with the needs of others through prayer, our inward gaze turns outward. We work for the good of others and find joy in that.

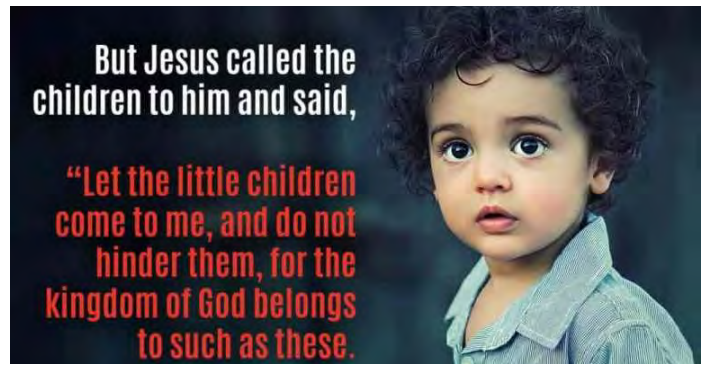
Finally, we are given eternal hope through Jesus Christ. We're not always going to be happy. There may be horrible tragedies in our lives. Grief may overwhelm us. Again, we are freed from having to rely only on ourselves. We may not be able to muster up any hope, but Jesus holds hope for us. Jesus has created a good future that will eventually come to us and to all creation. While everything in the short-term is uncertain, the long-term is taken care of. We can be certain that God will make all things well.

I don't know what the new year holds. It might be another year of writing plans in pencil. I know that I can look forward to celebrating God's love for us and the whole creation as the one certainty in an uncertain world. No matter what, church, we have work to do. We will spend this year rejoicing, praying, giving thanks, and serving our neighbors. That's work good enough to look forward to.

God is with you! Pastor Liz

**Pastor Liz's drop-in hours: Mondays 9-11;
Wednesdays 2:45-4:45
Email: pastorliz@proctorlutheran.org
Cell (Sun-Thurs workday, or emergencies):
218-461-093**

Youth Cookie Bake



Christian Education

Sunday School 1st, 3rd, and 5th Sundays at 10 am.

Bible Study, Confirmation, and Youth Group dates are still flexible during January. Watch for weekly updates via email and at worship. Jan 26: Bible Study at 2:15 and Confirmation at 4pm.

Voyageurs Lutheran Ministry

Your camps are preparing for summer camp!. United is offering scholarships/financial assistance to campers from our church this coming summer, so please contact us as soon as possible if you have children attending.

VLM staff are also available for a Camp Sunday or Wednesday visit. They are willing to be with us in-person or can also put together a video greeting for us to share. Please contact Gretchen@VLMcamps.org if you would like to schedule a visit to help promote summer camp.

Summer Camp registration is now open! Early, Early Bird discounts are available until February 15.

The VLM Annual Meeting is happening on Saturday, February 5, 2022 at Gloria Dei Lutheran in Duluth.

VLM is now accepting applications for Summer Staff! Please encourage the young adults at United to consider a summer of ministry at Camp Hiawatha and Camp Vermilion.

Gordy Westendorf, Education Chair



Worship

Thank you!

Thanks to Hoffbauer Tree Farm for the tree and all who decorated inside and outside.

Christmas Decorating and Lights Display





Mission Planning

People of United, God has work for us to do! We need everyone to engage as we work to reclaim our identity as a congregation, get to know our neighbors, and plan how we will carry out God's work in partnership with others in our area, to serve the needs of our neighborhood.

This January, we will begin a process that will lead us towards developing a mission plan. We will begin with deep listening: to each other in this congregation and to our wider neighborhood. The whole congregation will be involved in sharing their story and bringing forward their ideas. We also need a group of people who will be involved in a Bible study about mission and a group who will conduct community interviews and work with the data we collect. If you're interested in being a part of both or either of those groups, please contact Pastor Liz. The future vitality of this congregation is important enough to work for it!

Mission Planning Introduction

- Bible Study/ Team Training (Jan 23 or 26)
- Reputation Pulse Snapshot Conversations: Late January
- Mission Moment in Worship: Introduction Jan 23

Who Are We?

- Bible Study (Feb 6 or 9)
- Member to Member Conversations: February
- Mission Moment in Worship: Identity Feb 20

Who is Our Neighbor?

- Bible Study (March 6 or 9)
- Member to Neighbor Conversations: March
- Mission Moment in Worship: Connection March 20 (June 5) - extended outdoor event

Why Are We Here?

- Process Learning from Conversations (April 3 or April 6)
- Bible Study (April 24 or 27)
- Mission Moment in Worship: Share-Back (May 15)
- Mission Moment in Worship: Dream-Forward (June 5) - extended outdoor event

Which Partnerships and Plans Fulfill God's Purpose for Us Now?

- Council and Team develop clear mission plan with action items and teams to carry out stated actions
- Mission Moment in Worship: Mission Plan Celebration and Connection, giving opportunity for every member to commit their time and gifts to support an aspect of the mission plan
- Mission Moment in Worship: Mission Plan Implementation Update



Book Club

The book club meets on the 2nd Saturday of the month at 9:30 a.m. in the conference room. Books are chosen from the Duluth Library's "Book In A Bag" collection. Topics vary from historical, biography, mystery, etc. Members comment that some of these are books they wouldn't have selected to read except for the book club, but they do enjoy. Membership is limited to 10 (that's how many books are in the bag) but we could share and add more members. No pressure, just interesting conversation. Join us!!

Karen Nolin



Evangelism/Outreach

For the second year, United has been the recipient of many (40+) warm knitted caps and scarves from Inez Syrett of Moose Lake MN. Inez gives her knitting projects to Kris Brenna Lyons and Kris brings them to Proctor for distribution. They will be delivered to shelters in Duluth and Proctor. Thank you very much Inez for sharing your many hours of knitting.

LET'S KEEP EVERYONE WARM THIS WINTER

During January we will be collecting warm clothing for The Duluth Harbor Rescue Mission. Veronica, Harbor Mission Director, will be with us at Sunday church service on January 16th. We hope you can be there to hear the wonderful work the mission does to help the homeless and those living in poverty. They really need warm hats, scarves, gloves or mittens, socks, blankets and boots. Watch the sales for good deals. Also any clean, gently used jackets would be welcome. All donations can be dropped in the containers in the entryway of the church at Sunday service. By caring for those in need we are loving our neighbors as Jesus taught. This project is sponsored by the Evangelism/Outreach Committee at United Lutheran.

Linda Southerton, Evangelism/Outreach Chair



In Our Prayers

Military folks serving our country;
 Andy Livingston; Wayne Halverson;
 Alice Sommer's sister, Margaret;
 Bill Bergland; Jan Bakke; Durrell Richard;
 Betty Merling; Joan McCall; Alice Sommer;
 Family of Ardis "Ardy" Erickson-Sjodin

All prayer requests can be called to Alice Halvorson-Rohweder at 218-464-0201 or submitted online: proctorlutheran.org/prayer



January Birthdays

1st	Jan Bakke
2nd	Brooke Strom
3rd	Kasey & Cody Olson
5th	Mary Lou Sharp
7th	Matt Rohweder
10th	Reese Rohweder
12th	Steve Grabko
13th	Jim Kmecik
14th	Bonnie Maeckelbergh
18th	Linda Anderson
20th	Jan Lockwood
23rd	Karson Strom
24th	Lisa Lockwood
25th	Barb Omundson
26th	Joanne Schwert

"CHRIST IN OUR HOME"
DAILY DEVOTONAL

Pick up the latest copy (January, February, March) of *Christ in Our Home*, just inside the back door of the church on a little table.

Stop by during office hours:
Monday through Thursday
8:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Editor's Correction:

Apologies for the error in last month's newsletter, recording Skyelar Jackson's birthday. Skyelar was born on May 25, 2021 (her baptism was on November 7, 2021.)

COVID SAFETY

Masks and distancing are required at all times in the building. We need to have airflow, so some windows will be open. Please dress warmly. COVID rates are very high right now. We love our neighbors by doing what we can to slow the spread. Please consider getting vaccinated and boosted if you are eligible and at the discretion of your healthcare provider. Keep all healthcare

January 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
						New Year's Day
2 10 am SS 11 am worship	3 7 pm Boy Scouts	4 5 pm Girl Scouts 7 pm Proctor AA	5	6 10 am Quilting	7	8 9:30 am Book Club in conference room
9 11 am worship: noon Council mtg. in conference room	10 7 pm Boy Scouts	11 5 pm Girl Scouts 7 pm Proctor AA	12	13 10 am Quilting	14	15
16 10 am SS 11 am worship	17 7 pm Boy Scouts	18 5 pm Girl Scouts 7 pm Proctor AA	19	20 10 am Quilting	21	22
23 11 am worship	24	25 5 pm Girl Scouts 7 pm Proctor AA	26 2:15 Bible Study 4 pm confirmation	27 10 am Quilting	28	29
30 10 am SS 11 am worship	31 7 pm Boy Scouts	1	2	3	4	5

The Church's Zoom Meeting ID and password are both the church phone number: 218-624-4255. The direct link to Zoom is <https://zoom.us/j/218-6244255>. Please call Mary at the church office, Monday-Thursday mornings, to schedule a Zoom meeting for your group.

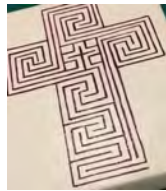
We welcome EVERYONE!

United Lutheran Church of Proctor
701 Third Avenue
Proctor, MN 55810

Northeastern Minnesota Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work: Our hands.

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WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

Worship in the sanctuary at 11 a.m.
Current COVID protocols: masks and 6 feet physical distancing required. No eating/drinking inside the building. See Worship Committee article for more details.

Within this newsletter are various events hosted by United during the month. You are invited to all. We look forward to seeing you.

**UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH OF
PROCTOR**

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facebook.com/proctorlutheran