



UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH OF PROCTOR

July 2021



Thoughts from Pastor Liz

Greetings in the joy of our Lord!

On the 4th of July, we celebrate our nation's independence. As I consider what this holiday means, especially in light of our Christian faith, songs from the musical *Hamilton* come to mind. *Hamilton* by Lin-manuel Miranda tells the story of our founding fathers as they fight for independence from the British crown and seek their own rise in power and prestige.

When King George hears that America has won their independence he sings a rather snarky song including the words, "What comes next? You've been freed. Do you know how hard it is to lead? You're on your own- Awesome, wow! Do you have a clue what happens now?"

The war was difficult, but the struggle to create a new nation may be just as hard, albeit in a different way. Americans who were once mostly united against the common enemy (Britain) now squabble over differences in vision about how the new government should run. There is still distrust, intrigue, and frustration, even though the shared dream of freedom has been achieved.

In Galatians 5:13-15, we read, "For you were called to freedom, siblings; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' If, however, you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another."

Even in the Christian community, freedom can be the breeding grounds for division. In Christ, we are freed from the law, sin, and death. Jesus has fulfilled the law so it is no longer necessary to prove our rightness with God. Jesus has washed from us the stain of sin. Jesus has broken the power of death to claim us. We are thereby freed from living in judgement and fear. This is a wonderful thing! But this gift can be twisted for selfish reasons. It can become, "I'm good- I don't have to care about you."

As Lutherans, we talk about "freedom from" and "freedom for." Jesus frees us *from* death, sin, and fear, and frees us *for* our neighbors. Everything we do is not about ourselves and gratifying ourselves, enjoying all the things we're allowed to do. It's about how we serve our neighbors, sometimes even how we give up our freedoms and rights for our neighbor's sake.

When American discourse becomes about celebrating freedom as that which gives me the opportunity to do whatever I want and to do what is best for me, our Christian faith reminds us that we are called to look after the whole people of God- the whole creation. Our Christian freedom leads us into greater acts of service and greater love for our neighbors. Sometimes it means doing things or avoiding things for the sake of others, like when we might not set off loud firecrackers when we know a neighbor is a veteran for whom the noise might be triggering.

As you celebrate our national holiday this year, consider also how you might celebrate our Christian freedom through loving service to others. Talk with your family or friends about how your faith expands your idea of freedom. We live out our freedom in community. Even *Hamilton* alludes to this in a song describing the battle of Yorktown with a line, "we'll never be free until we end slavery." Granting freedom to one group of people while denying it to another means freedom has not been achieved. The apostle Paul continually reminds the early Christian church that the benefits of

faith are given to the community as a *whole*. We are the body of Christ, called to tend to every member, sacrificing for the most vulnerable. We do this because we have experienced the incredible love of Christ that has been given to us!

God is with you! Pastor Liz

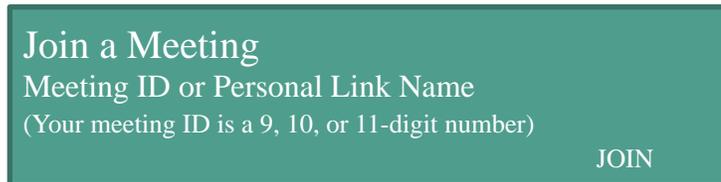
Pastor Liz's drop-in hours: Mondays 9-11; Wednesdays 2:45-4:45 (No drop-in hours the weeks of July 4 and July 11. If you have a need for spiritual care, please call Deacon Jennifer Simonson at (218) 576-7058.)

Email: pastorliz@proctorlutheran.org

Cell (Sun-Thurs workday, or emergencies): 218-461-0933

How to Join a Zoom Meeting

Using your computer/Smart Phone and Web Browser:



Join a Meeting
Meeting ID or Personal Link Name
(Your meeting ID is a 9, 10, or 11-digit number)
JOIN

1. Open a web browser on your computer and type in the following address: <https://join.zoom.us>; Meeting ID: 218-624-4255; Password (same as ID): 218-624-4255.

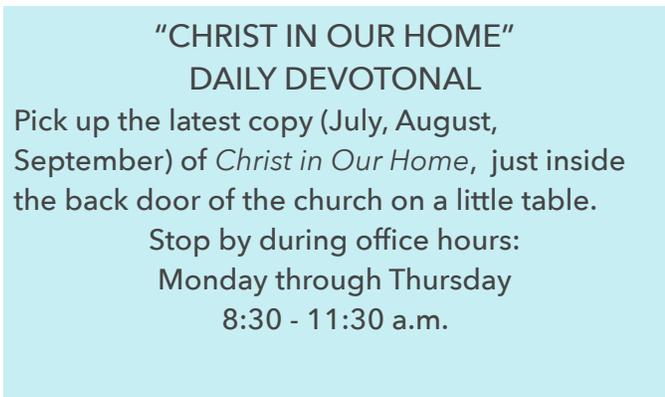
2. If you have never used zoom, you will be prompted to run a small plugin. You may have to say OK.
3. Click Open Zoom Meeting or Open zoom.us to launch the meeting.
4. Depending on your browser, you may have to “open the link.” Don’t be concerned if you do not get this prompt.
5. You will then be prompted to connect your audio. Test your audio settings, then click “Join with Computer Audio” button: NOTE: You can also join a test meeting to familiarize yourself with Zoom: <https://zoom.us/test>

Using your landline or cellphone to call in (audio only):

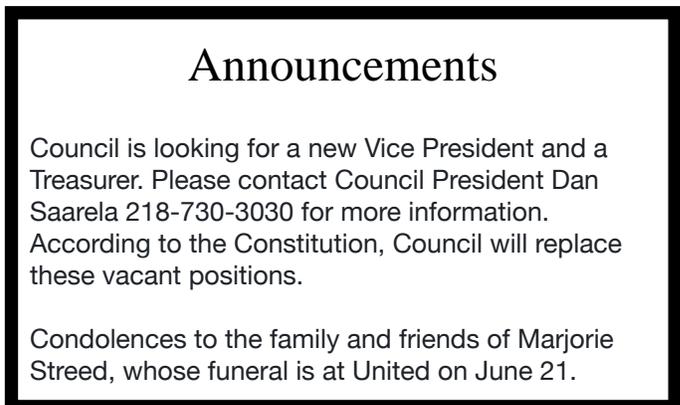


Join Audio X
Join with Computer Audio
(Test speaker and microphone)

1. Call 1-312-626-6799 (long distance charges may apply)
2. Enter Meeting ID number: 218-624-4255 and Password (same as ID): 218-624-4255



**“CHRIST IN OUR HOME”
DAILY DEVOTIONAL**
Pick up the latest copy (July, August, September) 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.



Announcements
Council is looking for a new Vice President and a Treasurer. Please contact Council President Dan Saarela 218-730-3030 for more information. According to the Constitution, Council will replace these vacant positions.
Condolences to the family and friends of Marjorie Streed, whose funeral is at United on June 21.

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP

Join us!



Plan to spend a few extra minutes after church on July 11th to grab a cup of coffee/tea and have a short visit with your fellow parishioners outside the church doors after our regular church service that morning. We have not visited with each other in so long; spend a few extra minutes catching up on what's going on in our lives. We hope to see you there!



Church Picnic

The annual church outdoor worship and picnic is scheduled for Sunday August 8 at Sampo Beach on Little Grand Lake in Saginaw. Bring a lawn chair and swim suits. No lifeguards.



Property

The community garden is available for those who want to play in the dirt and grow stuff! Check with Larry Sommers at 952-232-7919 for more information.



Worship

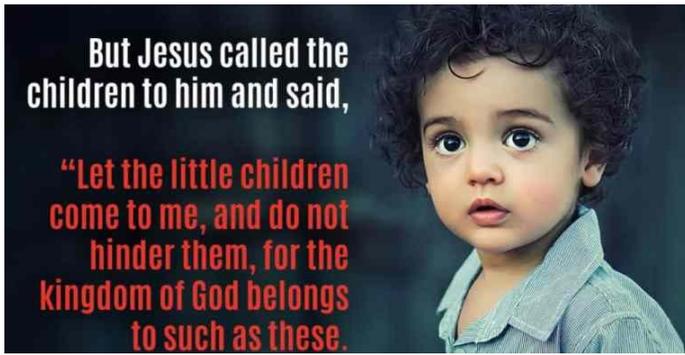
Worship in the sanctuary at 11 a.m.

What you need to know:

- Everyone (over age 2) is required to wear a mask covering nose and mouth at all times inside the building.
- Group conversations should be held outdoors.
- When you arrive, please go directly to an open pew, picking up communion elements and a bulletin as you enter. We want to avoid bunching together at the entrance.
- Sit with those in your household or pod/bubble. Some pews will be marked "closed" to facilitate physical distancing. Windows will be open for airflow, so dress accordingly.
- At the close of worship, remain seated and take turns departing to allow for distancing. You will be able to place your offerings in the plate as you depart.

Worship and Music Team is seeking volunteers of a variety of ages, backgrounds, and interests to serve. Interested? Speak to Alice Sommer or Pastor Liz.

Claudia Gannucci needs to know which counters are willing to continue counting the Sunday offering. If you were previously a counter, please let her know ASAP if you are willing to continue counting as the church reopens. She would like to get a list of names and a schedule set. Contact Claudia at cgannucci@aol.co or text/call her at 218-590-6804. Please respond either "Yes I would love to" or "Sorry, not at this time." She's also looking for new counters. Two are needed each week. If you are willing to count once every 5-6 weeks, please contact her and she will show you what needs to be done and how to do it. Thanks to all who have previously given their time to the church by counting. Very much appreciated.



Christian Education

How about teaching Sunday School this Fall?

Before you answer “NO” right away ... I’m not asking you (yet) for a commitment — just maybe some thought. As we begin our summer months, we are already looking forward to what we want to accomplish this fall. It has been over a year since we have held any Sunday School classes, and we believe this is an important time in the lives of our children. I have fond memories of my own Sunday school experience: memorizing Bible verses, singing camp songs, and learning Bible stories. But it can’t happen without teachers. We have yet to decide how we want to structure our Sunday time. We have done every other Sunday as well as every Sunday. There are many possibilities. I recently read an article about so many discouraged Sunday school teachers. The kids are rowdy, the resources are limited, or their church keeps losing families. All these problems can weigh down the best teachers and even lead to burnout in ministry. Our Sunday school class is important. It matters to the kids, it helps parents fulfill their mission, and most importantly, it matters to God — because Jesus loves kids.

Sunday School can make a difference

1. **It supports godly parenting.** The church was never meant to be the exclusive faith teacher of children. Instead, God’s plan was for the two institutions (church and family) to form a partnership.
2. **It helps nudge some parents into more faithful attendance.** Usually, parents become more involved in the church when their kids become more involved in the children’s ministry.
3. **It brings unchurched families in contact with the Gospel.** In our culture, reaching children is one of the most effective ways to make contact with unchurched families.

So as we all go through the summer months, keep the possibility of being a Sunday school teacher in the back of your mind. Let the seed grow! The Education Committee will be meeting in late August if you want to be part of the discussion. Look here for more information, or feel free to contact me with any questions or ideas at RodendorfMN@q.com or 591-8587. Gordy Westendorf, Education Chair.



July Birthdays

2nd	Olivia Grace Scherber
4th	Emerson Stahl
6th	Lindsey Scherber; Jade Kmecik
8th	Thomas Olson
9th	Esther Miller & Edith Anderson (twins born 1932)
14th	Chris Pasek & Kris Thoreson
15th	Marge Lind
17th	Jacob Lockwood; Linda Southerton
18th	Bill Berglund
19th	Neoma Stahl
22nd	Allison Johnson
26th	Debra Gregorich
27th	Haley Johnson
31st	Maisy Rohweder

Apologies to Ida Bensen, whose birthday was June 25, and missed in the June newsletter. We hope your day was blessed!



IN OUR PRAYERS

Military folks serving our country;
 Marge Thoreson; Amber Spillman;
 Alice Sommer’s sister, Margaret;
 Sue Schwarz’s mother, Clarice;
 Gladys Haugen; Jan Bakke; Emerson Stahl
 Durrell Richard; Betty Merling;
 Mary Towers; Amanda Saarela; Jim Gannucci
 Kaitlynn Jackson, daughter of Kathy Benson

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

Summer Worship & Study Series:

I've Been Meaning to Ask... A Series for Curiosity, Courage, and Connection

The guiding principles of this series:

... where are you from?

Everyone is beloved, shaped from the dust of the earth and the breath of God. Everyone has a story to tell. Our stories are messy and beautiful, painful and hopeful—being written and rewritten over time. We commit to disrupting our assumptions and staying curious.

... where does it hurt?

Everyone carries hurt and has the capacity to acknowledge the pain of others. God draws close to us in every moment of suffering. We commit to vulnerability and compassion.

... what do you need?

Everyone has needs, but each of us needs different things at different times. God calls us to care for one another—in seasons of joy, transition, and hardship. We commit to listening and being present.

... where do we go from here?

Courageous conversations have the power to change and transform us. God bridges connections in unexpected ways. We commit to continuing the conversation.

Engage:

Worship:

- Sunday worship June 13- August 8th will delve into each theme for two weeks, focusing on the same Biblical passages you'll be studying at home and in small groups.

Home Devotions: Study Journals will be available for pickup at worship or can be delivered to you by request.

Group Study:

- Two opportunities for group study: an afternoon and evening group offered alternating weeks. There is a lot of material to work with, so you may want to attend both sessions. Afternoon session (1:15pm at United) will include reflecting on video vignettes from guest speakers. Evening session (5:30pm at Our Savior's) will include an exercise called "Visio Divina"- allowing an image to be a form through which we experience God's Spirit. Both will use the Study Journal. Please indicate your interest to the church office.
- Based on the weather and desires of the group, classes will either be held outside with masks optional or indoors with masks required.
 - Dates:
 - What do you need? July 7 5:30pm; July 14 1:15pm
 - Where do we go from here? July 21 5:30pm; July 28 1:15pm



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

PRACTICING THE PRESENCE OF GOD, PART ONE: "PRAY WITHOUT CEASING." 1 THESSALONIANS 5:17.

What does it mean to pray all the time? A great devotional classic called *The Practice of the Presence of God* can be read in less than an hour. A monk named Brother Lawrence wrote it in the 17th century. The point of his little book, which is "to pray without ceasing" simply means adopting a praying life, rather than a life of prayer. There's a difference. The latter implies a life devoted only to prayer, like someone in a religious order. A praying life, on the other hand, is one in which you include God in your daily routine. You talk to God as you go about the business of the day: doing the dishes, traveling to school or work, walking out to the mailbox to pick up your mail.

I saw the power of this lifestyle in my child Wyatt. Part of our Christmas tradition was to decorate our home with nativity sets. As long as I can remember, Each November, Wyatt picked out a set to display in their bedroom. Late one November I entered my child's room as they finished placing the nativity set on their dresser. Wyatt's dresser was usually covered with a jewelry box, brushes, paper, pens, books. But that day, everything disappeared. The only objects on the dresser were the pieces of the nativity set. Wyatt was learning to live a praying life— clearing the clutter from their life so they could listen to God's voice. It may seem like a little thing, but it's a big step toward "praying without ceasing."

Practicing the Presence of God, Part 2, next month. Until then, God's peace be with you. Cheryl Fleckenstein

Please have newsletter submissions to me no later than the 20th of the month. Questions or suggestions? Call (608-495-3147) or email (fleckensteincheryl@yahoo.com)





Council News

Council Meeting Minutes: May 16, 2021

Meeting was called to order by President Dan Saarela at 12:05 p.m.

Present: Dan Saarela, Paul Hauschild, Kris Thoreson, Gordy Westendorf (via telephone), Alice Halvorson-Rohweder, Janice Anderson, Larry Sommer, Alice Sommer, Pastor Liz Davis.

Devotions: Pastor Liz led devotions.

Approval of Minutes: Meeting minutes were approved with the fixing of a typo of Pastor Judy's name. A motion was made by Alice H. and second by Janice, meeting minutes of April 11, 2021 meeting were approved as read.

Treasurer's Report/Finance Committee: Audrey sent the reports, but Tammy was not present at the meeting to discuss. We were unable to have much discussion without Tammy present. Dan will follow up with Tammy.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Liz would like us to let her know if we hear of people that are sick or in the hospital so she can reach out, visit, etc. She also has a few other items listed under new business.

President's Report: Dan thanked Kris for her hard work.

Committee Reports:

Worship & Music: Alice would like to propose that there needs to be a team of people that assists with worship and music as it is a large task for one

person to get done on their own. Possibly having separate sub-committees for altar guild, worship, music, etc. Everyone agrees it is a good idea to have smaller committees/teams of people to help with some of the functions, taking some of the burden from Alice.

Christian Education: Confirmation has 1 week left. There will be plans to have kids confirmed in the fall.

Fellowship: N/A

Evangelism and Service to Others: N/A

Property: There was a leaky sink in the closet by Mary's office that had to be fixed. The lawn mowing company that previously mowed the lawn is no longer doing it. We will need to find a new lawn mowing service. Meanwhile Property will take care of it. Cheryl Erickson will plant flowers by the church sign. The community garden plots are available at \$15 per plot. A notice will be put in the newsletter of availability.

Staff Reports: Mary's surgery was postponed. It will now be on May 25.

Unfinished Business: The last time the SMART Team met there were only two people that were on the zoom call. Do we still want to continue with the SMART Team? Does Council want to take over making the decisions? No final decision was made on the SMART Team. It was decided that the first indoor service will be on Memorial weekend Sunday May 30. We will need to adhere to strict masking and social distancing guidelines. No live singing but Dennis will play music.

New Business: We will start having council person of the week. Their duties will be to be at church early to unlock and lock the doors, turn on and off lights, etc.

The ULCP book club would like permission to meeting the conference room on June 12. It will be their last meeting until Sept. There will be less than 10 people. Alice made a motion to allow them to meet. Larry seconded. The motion was approved. Pastor Liz would do a summer worship series "I've been meaning to ask". It was developed to get people back in conversation with each other. She would have 2 study groups. One at Our Saviors and one here at ULCP. It would be 4-9 weeks. The study materials for worship would cost about \$100 for each church. Gordy made a motion to approve the study group, Janice seconded. The motion was approved. Pastor Liz would like to do a special service of Lament and Hope (service of loss) on June 6. It would include recognizing the struggles of last year, people would light candles and also would have communion. Janice made a motion to hold the service. Larry second. The motion passed.

Announcements: Next Council Meeting Sunday June 13.

Adjournment: meeting was adjourned at 1:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Kris Thoreson, Secretary

JULY 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
4 11 am worship in sanctuary	5	6 7 pm Proctor AA mtg.	7 5:30 pm Bible study @ Our Saviors	8	9	10
11 11 am worship in sanctuary; noon coffee fellowship	12 7:30 pm Finance mtg.	13 7 pm Proctor AA mtg.	14 1:15 pm Bible study @ United	15	16	17
18 11 am worship in sanctuary; noon Council mtg.	19	20 7 pm Proctor AA mtg.	21 5:30 pm Bible study @ Our Saviors	22	23	24
25 11 am worship in sanctuary	26 7:30 pm Finance mtg.	27 7 pm Proctor AA mtg.	28 1:15 pm Bible study @ United	29	30	31

The Church's Zoom Account 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>

Zoom Small Group Meetings: Please call Mary at the church office, 218-624-4255, Monday-Thursday mornings, to schedule a Zoom meeting for your group. She needs to place you on the calendar to make sure no one else has scheduled that time. Please don't assume you can meet if you haven't checked with her!

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 has resumed in the sanctuary at 11 a.m.! Please wear masks covering both nose and mouth in the church building, and maintain 6 feet physical distancing. 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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