

# SPECIAL EDITION Seeds of FAITH

A Publication  
of Our Saviour's  
Lutheran Church

Volume 17 | July 2020 | Issue 7

## The Lord is Our Shepherd—a Message from Pastor Bruce



### Financial Update

As we begin July, Our Saviour's is on a good foundation financially. It has not been an easy first six months to the year after in-person worship was shut down. The generosity of our members has helped get us through the start of this most unusual time in our church.

When Minnesota shut down, the Finance Team and Church Council wondered how we would be able to continue to pay our staff and bills if giving dropped off because of no in-person worship. I am very happy to report that our members have stepped up and been very consistent givers. We did apply for and receive a PPP (Payroll Protection Program) loan. Now that we've used at least 75% of that money for payroll and the remainder for qualifying expenses, the loan should be entirely forgiven by the federal government. Before we received this money, we did have to dip into our reserve fund. But since then we've been able to repay all of that money and build an additional cushion for the summer months when giving and attendance historically drops off.

(Continued on page 2)

*P*salms 23 is a powerful, personal psalm to remind you that you are never alone. Your divine Shepherd is guiding you through all things, even when you walk through the darkest valley (or the valley of the shadow of death).

While it's written in the first person singular – the Lord is *my* shepherd – I'd like us to hear it now in the first person plural:

*The Lord is our shepherd, we shall not want. He makes us lie down in green pastures; he leads us beside still waters; he restores our soul. He leads us in right paths for his name's sake. Even though we walk through the darkest valley, we fear no evil; for you are with us; your rod and your staff – they comfort us. You prepare a table before us in the presence of our enemies; you anoint our heads with oil; our cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our life, and we shall dwell in the house of the Lord our whole life long.*

**Our American culture tends to be highly individualistic with a lot of focus on "me".** That may be broadened a little to include "my family", as in my small, nuclear family. But like many cultures in the world today, in the Bible there is no "me" without "we"; there's no individual apart from the community. In the Old Testament, there is no individual identity that can be severed from one's larger family, tribe, or even nation. The New Testament is written by and for the community of the Church – the body of Christ. Most often when the word "you" appears in the Bible – Old or New Testament – it's not a singular "you", it's a plural "you".

**Because of our culture, I think it's easy for us as Americans to over-personalize faith to the point where faith is understood to be primarily about me and my personal relationship with God.** Then we run the danger of privatizing Christian faith. But there's actually

(Continued on page 2)

### Call Committee Update

The Call Committee continues to regularly meet online. We have just completed first-round online interviews with each candidate.

The committee developed first interview questions based on Our Saviour's Ministry Site Profile. Candidate profiles continue to be reviewed along with recorded worship services or written devotions during this time of social distancing. Committee meetings in early July will be used for prayerful consideration and reflection before determining a path forward. Our intent is to begin second interviews later this month with selected candidates.

(Continued on page 3)





(Financial Update from page 1)

Our mortgage is held by the ELCA Mission Investment Fund. They have been lenient with us and other churches during this time. We were able to pay interest only for the months of May and June. And now for July, August and September (when our giving is historically at its lowest), they have allowed us to defer payments.

With all of the events of the past months, we enter July in a good financial position. As we continue forward with all of the unknowns of when we will be able to attend church in-person again and how our economy and members will be affected financially by Covid, we are cautiously optimistic for the rest of the year. Our Finance Team, Council, and staff have worked hard to build the best reserve we can to weather this financial storm. We are very thankful for your generous giving by mail and electronically. We have been able to build our reserves back because of all of the tools afforded to us by the federal government PPP program, the flexibility of the mortgage holder, and most importantly by your generous gifts and prayers.

Finally, as we all know, most of our bills continue even without in-person worship. We aim to finish in a secure financial position with our reserve fund intact for the coming years. We will be able to achieve this with your continued financial support. Thank you for your generous giving!

Jason Moehring, Treasurer

Our Saviour's Finance Team

(The Lord Is Our Shepherd continued from page 1)

no such thing as private Christian faith. Without a doubt, our faith has a very real personal dimension. As Jim Wallis of Sojourners says, God is always personal, but never private. Genuine Christian faith always has both a personal and a social dimension. It's always about "me" and "we". But that's probably even the wrong order. In the Bible, as in some other cultures in the world today, the "we" usually comes before the "me". "I" come from community and live within and for community. "I" am not a separate entity that exists outside of human community.

We come from extended families which precede us; we come from ethnic groups which precede us; we come from the larger Church we are baptized into which precedes us; we come from a nation which precedes us. We don't live in isolation from these communities. Yes we have an individual identity and personal life. But in many ways, life is about how we live connected to these communities.

**Back to the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm. The Lord is our shepherd. We need this Shepherd to lead us now** in all our churches as we navigate the strange waters of this coronavirus. We need our divine Shepherd to guide us now at Our Saviour's in our call process for a new pastor. We need this Shepherd to lead us together in our families. And I believe we need our divine Shepherd to guide us as a nation.

**I know that as Christians we worship a God who created the whole world and is Lord of all the nations.** To worship a God who is only on America's side, no matter

what, is to worship a false god. I also know that as a nation we are a diverse people of many faiths and religions and of no faith or religion. But what we share in common is being human; being children of God (whether we believe in God or not); and being fellow citizens of this country. **To me, America shines with greatness when the "we" triumphs over the "me". To me, America shines with greatness when we seek to establish liberty and justice for all in our land...as we promise when we pledge allegiance to the flag.**

**So on this 4<sup>th</sup> of July, 2020, amidst this pandemic, amidst the social upheaval over racial injustice, amidst all of our country's challenges, I want to recite the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm on behalf of America.** In doing so, I don't seek to impose my faith on my neighbors of other faiths or no faith. But I invite you as people of faith to join with me in praying that God will guide our nation through these turbulent times.

**Hear Psalm 23 once more now and think of the divine Shepherd and our nation:**

*The Lord is our shepherd, we shall not want. He makes us lie down in green pastures; he leads us beside still waters; he restores our soul. He leads us in right paths for his name's sake. Even though we walk through the darkest valley, we fear no evil; for you are with us; your rod and your staff— they comfort us. You prepare a table before us in the presence of our enemies; you anoint our heads with oil; our cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our life, and we shall dwell in the house of the Lord our whole life long.*

– Pastor Bruce

## Life Events

### Welcome to the World

*Luella Marie Martin*, born June 16, 2020 to Kayla and Ben Martin.

Luella's proud great grandparents are Ben and Jill Bjornson.

## Congratulations 2020 Graduates

### 2020 High School Graduates

*Damion Schmitz* – Ed Visions Off Campus High School; will attend Anoka Ramsey Community College

*Benjamin Chock* – St. Francis High School with A.A. degree from Anoka Ramsey; will attend St. Cloud State University for a degree in business

*Jacob Oachs* – St Francis High School; will attend Bethel University in the engineering program

*Kali Ann Bjornson* – Devil’s Lake North Dakota High School; will attend the University of Texas at Dallas in the biomedical engineering program

*Kaylee Olson* – St. Francis High School; will attend the University of St. Thomas in the psychology program

*Parker Burman* – St Francis High School; will attend Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter

*Erin Johnson* – St. Francis; will attend North Dakota State University in the radiology program

*Zachary Day* – St. Francis High School; has achieved Eagle Scout

*William Day* – St. Francis High School; has achieved Eagle Scout

*Jared Schultz* – Centennial High School; will attend Northwestern College in pastoral ministry

*Zachary Hemmelgarn* – St. Francis High School; will attend Central Lakes College in the diesel mechanic program /heavy equipment program

### 2020 College Graduates

*Madison Leslie* – University of WI Stout with a B.A. in art education

*Laura Wyatt* – University of MN Twin Cities with a B.S. in agricultural education

*Holly Oachs* – Bethel University with a Masters in Counseling

*Emma Stockinger* – University of Minnesota Morris with a B.A. in biochemistry; will attend pharmacy school at the University of MN Duluth

*Sophia Kortemeier* – Gustavus Adolphus College with a B.S. in exercise physiology – hopes to pursue a nursing degree

## Omnipresent

*We may ignore, but we can nowhere evade, the presence of God. The world is crowded with him. He walks everywhere incognito. And the incognito is not always hard to penetrate. The real labor is trying to remember, to attend ... in fact to come awake. Still more, to remain awake.*

– C.S. Lewis

(Call Committee Update continued from page 1)



Effective communication and building personal connections is always challenging. Candidates and committee members have demonstrated patience with virtual meetings and shared additional time together to work through each question. We ask that the congregation continues to pray for our committee and the candidates during this time.

– Matt Wolff, on behalf of the Call Committee

## CONTACT information



### Staff Contact List

Let us know how we can help. While the staff will not be in the office on a regular basis, we will be working at home, checking emails, and checking voicemail remotely. Phone # 763-434-6117

#### Pastoral Staff

Pastor Bruce Arnevik, ext. 129  
barnevik@oursaviourslc.org

Deacon Glenndy Ose, ext. 113  
gose@oursaviourslc.org

Pastor Maria Pederson, ext. 112  
mpederson@oursaviourslc.org

#### Music Staff

Jennifer Thurman, Director of Music & Worship, ext. 119

jthurman@oursaviourslc.org

Julie Stitt, Director of Handbells  
juliestitt@comcast.net

Eeva Savolainen, Director of Celebration Choir  
erksavolainen@gmail.com

#### Program Staff

Kate Roettger, Director of Children & Family Ministry, ext. 116  
kroettger@oursaviourslc.org

Leisha Tays, Director of Confirmation & Youth Ministry  
ext. 131, ltays@oursaviourslc.org

#### Support Staff—Operations

##### Administration Team

Jan Green, Publications Secretary  
ext. 122, jgreen@oursaviourslc.org

Lori Vickstrom, Lead Housekeeper  
ext. 133, lvickstrom@oursaviourslc.org

Kim Fread, Bookkeeper, ext. 135  
kfread@oursaviourslc.org

#### Preschool Staff

Lissa Clair, Director of Preschool  
ext. 123, lleebens@oursaviourslc.org

# Our Saviour's Lutheran Church

19001 Jackson St. NE  
East Bethel, MN 55011

Phone: 763-434-6117

Website: [www.oursavioursslc.org](http://www.oursavioursslc.org)

*Interim Pastor Bruce Arnevik*

*Deacon Glennady Ose*

*Pastor Maria Pederson*

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
US POSTAGE PAID  
CEDAR, MN  
55011  
PERMIT NO. 4

## Special Event: '13th' Racial Injustice Documentary & Discussion

Sun., July 19, 5:30-8:30 p.m., for ages 17+

Join your OSLC family in the viewing and discussion of this documentary. '13th' (Rated TV-MA for language) is an in-depth look at the prison system in the United States and how it reveals the nation's history of racial inequality.

Join the group in watching the documentary via Netflix Party, followed by a discussion on Zoom.com. Find connection details at [oursavioursslc.org/special-event](http://oursavioursslc.org/special-event).

## FB Live Devotional Schedule Change

Since March, the pastoral and program staff have teamed up to offer a Facebook Live devotional at 9:00 a.m. every Monday through Saturday. Some people watch these live and some watch the recordings at a later time. Our FB Live devotions will continue, but the schedule will change due to the collective time constraints of staff. Beginning next Monday, July 6, FB Live devotions will be every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 9:00. Deacon Glennady and Leisha Tays will alternate Mondays; Pastor Maria and I will alternate Wednesdays; and Kate Roettger will continue every Friday. A devotional from one of the pastoral staff will appear every week in the Friday congregational email.

– Pastor Bruce

## Virtual Happenings in July

### Virtual Music Series at the Chapel

Wednesdays, July 8 and 22; Aug. 5 and 19, 6:30-6:45 p.m. on Facebook and YouTube. Coming in July and August: two featuring Organist Judy Blomgren and two featuring special guests, The Preacher's Daughters!

### All Church Netflix Party

Saturday, July 11, 5:00-7:00 p.m. View the movie *Despicable Me*. Find connection details at [oursavioursslc.org/all-church](http://oursavioursslc.org/all-church).

### Virtual Adult Education: *Let Your Life Speak* – by Parker Palmer

2nd and 4th Mondays, 7:00 p.m. on Zoom. Details at [oursavioursslc.org/bible-study-and-education](http://oursavioursslc.org/bible-study-and-education)

### Pub Theology

Monday June 15, 6:00 p.m., on Zoom. Contact Glennady Ose, [gose@oursavioursslc.org](mailto:gose@oursavioursslc.org), for details.

### Lego Group for All Ages

Fourth Sunday of the month, 11:30 - 12:30 p.m. Find connection details at [oursavioursslc.org/lego-group](http://oursavioursslc.org/lego-group).



### Lunch with Leisha

July 13, 16, 17, 20, and 27, 12:00-1:30 p.m., for grades 5 (completed) through college-age. Get details at [oursavioursslc.org/youth-fellowship](http://oursavioursslc.org/youth-fellowship)