A NOTE FROM PASTOR JEFF

Oh, to return to January 1st, 2020. Do you remember when the biggest news was impeachment? I was with some teenagers recently. I asked them, “Use one word to describe the first 6 months of 2020.”

Loss.
Confusion.
Disappointment.
Destruction.

Destruction. There seems to be a dismantling of everything we thought was secure. Assumptions about health, education, economics, and racism have all been challenged. Everything has been blown up in the span of four months. Now we are all trying to make sense of the rubble, wondering if we can put things back together the way the were. Or, do we start from scratch?

Destruction is devastating. Consider the Kubler-Ross “five stages of grief.” How many of these have you experienced since March?

**Denial** (avoidance, confusion, shock, fear)
**Anger** (frustration, irritation, anxiety)
**Depression** (overwhelmed, helpless)
**Bargaining** (“Can things just be normal again?”)
**Acceptance** (exploring options, new plans, moving on)

Destruction has a place in God’s arsenal. The Prophets recount this over and over, “to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant” (Jer. 1:10). This is the Lord’s way, “to kill and make alive.” Sometimes there must be an end to be a beginning.

So it goes in our lives. God builds upon our ruins. It is the pattern of repentance and forgiveness.

So it goes in the history of God’s people. “The church is a series of deaths and resurrections.” We are always dying, and yet God is always creating life from the remnant ashes.

So it goes in all the agricultural metaphors in Scripture. The soil must be tilled for new seed to be planted. Jesus said, “Unless a grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit” (John 12:24). Jesus’ own life set the paradigm of destruction and restoration.

2020 is a year of destruction . . . and restoration.

So what destruction is there in your life? Look at it a little closer. Where is God sprouting a green leaf of something new in the middle of it?
July Worship Schedule

Christ Memorial

Traditional, organ -led worship
Saturday @ 5pm
Sunday @ 8am, 9am

Casual contemporary, praise-team led worship
Sunday @ 10:30am

Reliant

NO worship July 5th
All other Sundays @ 10:30am

Worship Changes Coming in July

With updated local guidelines, look for worship changes at Christ Memorial and Reliant in July. Attendees will no longer need to pre-register to attend worship services. A short sermon and some singing will be added to the services. Communion will be offered on the 2nd and 4th services of the month (July 12 and 26). Connections classes and in-person Bible Studies are still on hold.

The general flow and guidelines around worship (the use of masks, sanitation between services, communion protocol, no congregating) will remain the same. Thank you to those who have attended and followed these guidelines, helping us make a smooth re-entry to worship. With the ever-changing nature of the pandemic and local guidelines, we will reevaluate and make adjustments for August. Please refer to the sidebar on the left for specific worship times for July. Worship information can also always be found on our website, cmstl.org.

Pastor Paul Dickerson to be Ordained July 19th

Pastor Paul Dickerson’s Ordination and Installation will be at Christ Memorial on July 19th at 4:00pm. This service will mark the commencement of Paul’s service in the pastoral ministry. We welcome Paul, Pam, Jack and Sarah to our congregation.

Stay tuned for details on this service as there may be adjustments to crowd sizes by July 19th. The service will also be livestreamed to ensure everyone has the chance to watch.

If you would like to send Paul and Pam a note, card, or gift, please mail to our church office, addressed to him.

Clarion

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The Clarion is usually published six times a year for members, family, and friends of Christ Memorial Lutheran Church.

All copy (in Microsoft Word) is due the second Tuesday of the month prior to the next issue. Please attach to an email.

Email to:
clarion@cmstl.org

Next deadline: July 14th (for August/September issue)
Community Assistance Fund: An Overwhelming Response

Since March, our church has collected resources to meet the needs of those devastated by the pandemic. **After collecting over $50,000, we announced a $20,000 match on May 24. From May 24-June 7, we exceeded the match with a total of $24,960!**

All told, our people have given over $100,000 during a difficult time. See a breakdown of the impact below. Our gifts have blessed members, neighbors, and mission partners. Supplies for refugees and new Americans. Groceries for the unemployed. Insulin for an elderly client of our REHAB program. A medical bill for someone deep in debt. Tuition assistance for a single mom.

Our Community Assistance Fund collection will now conclude for the time being. If future needs arise, we will communicate with our congregation. We celebrate the mighty work of God through his people.

Thanks for playing your part in the movement!

- Christian Friends of New Americans $5,000
- LINC Bay Area $2,500
- Rev. Alexey Shepelev, WORDrus Mission $5,000
- Bridge City Community, Chattanooga, TN $2,500
- Bethlehem Lutheran Church – Groceries $5,000
- BLC kids outreach – Baden, Hyde Park, N. County $15,000
- Feed My People $2,500
- Messiah Lutheran Church Neighborhood Needs $1,000
- Immediate Response (bills, groceries, medical) $25,000
- Crave Coffeehouse and SLU Medical Outreach $10,000
- Christ Memorial Health Center $10,000
- Green Park Tuition Assistance $20,000
- Water Well in Liberia, Rev. Edward Collie $5,000

Life Team Update

Thank you very much for all of your donations to the Baby Shower. Deliveries were made to the Pregnancy Help Center and to Nurses for Newborns. These included over 1100 diapers, thousands of wipes, clothes, formula, bottles, and a circle walker. The walker was delivered immediately to a mother looking for that exact item. Despite the church being ‘closed’, our members came through with so much help for these two organizations. Your generous support is greatly appreciated.

Our visits to the Lemay Community Center have been put on hold for the time being. We look forward to being able to visit and sing with our friends over there again. We praise God that no one there has been infected with COVID-19.

While we hope to hold our annual Fall Monarch event, planning is currently on pause. In the meantime, you can continue to donate jewelry to this worthy cause by bringing it to church. Thanks for your past support of this very important ministry.

To find out more, please contact Mike Albers (malbers2323@gmail.com).
»Love Thy Neighbor Update:

When we got word back in March that the coronavirus was not just some far away issue, but a very real threat that was going to affect our day-to-day lives, Pastor Jeff gathered the ministry staff together. When I came into the office, he said to me, "Your job description just changed overnight." We didn't even know the half of it: I did not expect to spend the last five months of my vicarage carrying out pastoral visits over the phone. I did not anticipate preaching to a camera. There were no seminary classes titled "Crisis Relief", "Masks: they're a huge deal now", "Vicarage Behind Closed Doors", "How to organize a food-delivery service", or "How to acquire large quantities of toilet paper when there is a shortage". So, we made it up as we went along. We searched for needs, gathered resources, and the congregation rose to the occasion! I have counted on the hard work of our staff, the sacrifice of our volunteers, and the generosity of our members! You have encouraged me. You have humbled me. You have reminded me that it is not my ministry, it's His.

You have made all of the following possible:

**Community Assistance Fund**—Thanks to the generosity shown to the community assistance fund, we have been able to provide assistance to several families in the form of groceries, grocery cards, utility assistance, rent assistance, and medical expense assistance (more details on page 2). At least 16 of the families assisted had no previous connection to Reliant or Christ Memorial.

**Saint Trinity Staff and Volunteers**—10 volunteers from Christ Memorial and Reliant have been going down to Saint Trinity to assist with distributing meals to community members.

**CFNA**—7 volunteers from Christ Memorial and Reliant have been going to the CFNA Peace Center to assist with preparing and distributing meals to new Americans.
**Member Callers**— 31 Volunteers, the Shepherds, Class/Bible Study leaders, and Community Group leaders have worked to make personal contact with all of our members. These calls have ranged from simple check-ins to extensive prayer and care for members. These calls have provided needed comfort to our people and directed our staff and volunteers to the needs of our communities.

**Mask Sewers:** Several experienced sewers have worked tirelessly to make cloth masks. We have been able to donate masks to the St. Louis County Department of Public Health, the staff at Crave, and staff members at Bethlehem Lutheran. All told, more than 500 masks were made and donated!

**Hodiamont Volunteers**— The Davidson family (Cheryl, Alan, Carter, and Luke) went up to the apartments in Hodiamont to donate hygiene kits, assembled by the Bugala family, to several families.

**GSLAU Food Drive**— In May, we partnered with the Greater St. Louis Association of Umpires to collect food for the Orphan Grain Train. OGT staff and volunteers assembled the two and a half van-fulls of food into 440 meals which were distributed to area food banks.

**Sanitary Item Donations**— Collections of sanitary items have gone out, by the van-full, to Bethlehem Lutheran where the staff has distributed them to families in need.

**Bethlehem Grocery Delivery**— Crave has used its bulk distributor to order groceries for 15 families a week! These groceries are then organized by Crave staff and delivered by Reliant and Christ Memorial volunteers to families of Bethlehem Lutheran.

To God be the Glory!

- Vicar Micah Drengler
The VBS videos on YouTube have songs, crafts, Bible lessons, & more!

»Virtual Vacation Bible School: Rocky Railway

Virtual Vacation Bible School is slowly coming to a close! Our virtual VBS: Rocky Railway will be finishing up in the second week of July! Since we were not able to meet in person this year, the Children’s Ministry team sent out videos each week for five weeks that included lots of things you would see in a normal VBS! We had our openings and closings with music, dancing, and skits led by Dianne Mueller, along with Bible Adventures led by Naomi Moon with help from Micah Drengler, Tim Wilkinson, and families from Christ Memorial and Reliant. Each week, there were also videos of crafts led by Lisa Waltenberger and Loco-Motion Games led by Makayla Adams! We also had lots of help from Larry Jost working with Dianne Mueller to create all of the videos. There were lots of moving parts for VBS to go virtual, but with everyone’s help, we were able to stay on track!

If you would still like to view any of the videos, you can find them all at vbs.cmstl.org. They will be available for 30 days after the initial post date. You can share them with a friend who might live down the street, or someone you know across the country! With our virtual videos, we can share God’s word with everyone!

There are still some craft bags available and Music Download Cards if you would like to own the VBS songs and play them whenever you would like. Please contact Naomi Moon (naomi.moon@cmstl.org) if you would like either of these.

We would also like to invite you to a sing-along! Since all of us cannot meet in the church building, we are inviting you to the front parking lot of Christ Memorial to sing some songs together! Please join us on July 11th from 8:30-9:30 am. Bring a friend and let’s dance!
»Christ Memorial Productions — Wish List Cabaret

CMP is pleased to announce plans for a Wish List Cabaret to be presented in September of 2020 as a free live event. Ticketing for this event will begin in early August of 2020. Guidelines and restrictions recommended because of COVID-19 will be followed, and adjustments based on guidelines in place in September will be adhered to. Plans are being made for a seating plan that allows for social distancing.

Auditions will be by video and audition submissions are due before July 14, 2020. We hope to receive auditions from a wide variety of people of all ages and look forward to presenting an evening of excellent live entertainment. A freewill offering will be accepted to help defray costs of the production.

See CMPShows.org for complete details and the audition submission form.

»2020 Green Park Golf Scramble

At present, Green Park Lutheran School is moving forward with plans for its annual golf scramble. We’re hopeful we can all be together on the golf course in September!

The event will be held on Sunday, September 13th at Acorns Golf Course. This year’s giveaway is a golfer polo; registration by 8/24 ensures you’ll get your requested size!

Event sponsorships welcome!

Looking to join for dinner only? We’d love to have you!

More information on registration & sponsorship opportunities can be found on the Green Park website at greenparklutheranschool.org/2020golf.

We hope to see you in September!

-Laura Reis, Development
INSIDE:
THE CLARION NEWSLETTER

RACE, JUSTICE, & THE GOSPEL
Check out the Loved Sent YouTube page for Pastor Jeff & Pastor Bobby’s conversation with Pastor Schmidtke & Pastor Bolling, of our partner church Bethlehem Lutheran, on Race, Justice, & the Gospel. (find the video directly by clicking here)