



Our Savior's VOICE March 2021

A community transformed by Christ, to be Christ in the world.

Matthew 25 in a COVID World...

"Have you been vaccinated yet?" It's a question that ranks right up there with "how's the weather?" a common point of interest where we all share in the answer to the question; a common point of interest where we all share in being protected - individually and collectively - from the ravages of COVID-19.

In the casual conversations that I have had with many of you the answer to the question is: "Yes, I have been vaccinated!" And many more of you are about to get vaccinated, or get your second round of vaccination. Praise God! As needles go into arms this is a HUGE step in bringing us back to some sense of NORMAL that we all hope and pray for.

But as the world's pharmaceutical saviors ask us to roll up our sleeves for each of their rolled out vaccines, I'm struck by how the whole process can bring out the best, and the worst, in any given moment.

First, let's talk about the best. It is good that the most vulnerable among us are being vaccinated, and that there is plenty of advocacy on their behalf to make sure that the elderly are at the front of the line, and that convenient venues are open for travel, or better yet, smiling nurses have come to the facilities of those most vulnerable.

Related to this, the smiling nurses who give those shots, together with all of those who care for us when we are sick, and the essential workers who keep us safe and protected, they too need to be brought to the front of line.

But where supply and demand cannot keep pace with delivery and distribution, there is plenty of room to wallow in our worst, not giving flight to our better angels.

As I write these words to you, I, like millions of other Americans, am patiently putting my name on different waiting lists wondering when a 59 year-old white, male, in reasonably good shape, but does have underlying conditions of diabetes, and suffers occasionally from exercise induced asthma, might get vaccinated.

There is so much that is out of my control with respect to when I will get my "luck at the poke", might this then drive me to a deeper dependence on a God who holds the final victory in my life? Answer: of course!

At what point in the lottery of luck, importance, or providence I get vaccinated I do not know, but one thing I do know is that there is plenty *to work for, and to pray over*, so that ALL God's children can get vaccinated, and play their role in herd immunity, and get us ALL back to worship!

As a privileged white male, who is well insured, who has plenty of resources at his disposal, and who can sit on hold for multiple minutes on his cell phone waiting for the next available appointment to open up, I have a leg up on most of the world; and so do you.

Go on the *Google* and you will see article after article on how the inoculation efforts of our country (however well intended) reveal huge chasms between the rich and the poor, people of color, and other self-inflicted barriers where we do a pretty good job of building a bigger wall, rather than constructing a larger table.

What can we do about all that? Good question. I guess the first step is to give it voice. Part of my Lenten discipline is to revisit and reinterpret Matthew Chapter 25:

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat.

I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink.

I was a stranger and you invited me in.

I needed clothes and you clothed me.

I was sick and you looked after me,

I was in prison and you came to visit me.

[I needed a COVID-19 vaccination and you gave it to me!]

God bless, be well...
Pastor Kevin

***Virtual First Communion Instruction, via Zoom,
5th & 6th Grade Sundays, March: 14th, 21st, 28th from 4 to 6 p.m.***

When the grip of the COVID pandemic hit almost a year ago last March, we were in the midst of our First Communion Classes. Like many aspects of our ministry, we hit the proverbial pause button waiting for "*things to get better.*"

Candidly we've waited long enough! We are now in the season of Lent 2021, and as is a part of the rhythm and traditions of Our Savior's, we reaffirm the practice of scheduling First Communion Instruction for our Fifth Graders, leading up to inviting fifth graders to have their First Communion experience on the Maundy Thursday Service during Holy Week.

Due to the COVID - 19 shut down keeping last year's fifth graders from completing their First Communion Instruction, this year's class will be a COMBINATION of 5th and 6th Graders. Still abiding by social distancing protocols, the First Communion class will be taught via the church's Zoom Account. The Zoom classes will be held late Sunday afternoons from 4 to 6 p.m., on March 14th, March 21st, and March 28th. The textbook we will all use will be *Come to God's Table: Preparing for Holy Communion* (Augsburg Fortress, 1989).

All participants will be welcomed into the Zoom conversation via an email invitation. All fifth and sixth grade families participating in First Communion Instruction will receive the email invitation a week before March 14th, and the instruction book will be mailed to your residence as well. (If we do not have a current email address of your family please let us know at the church office.)

Questions? Contact the church office at (218) 263-7422.

Midweek Lenten Worship Services
Created for Community: A Midweek Lenten Series

The challenges to gathering our church community during this season of COVID have long been documented and they do not need to be repeated here. Yet nevertheless the invitation of the Lenten season reminds us that: "*together with the whole church we are created for communion with God, to love one another, and to live in harmony with creation.*"

Though many common Lenten practices rightly invite us to individual acts of repentance, prayer, fasting, sacrificial giving, and works of love, Lent is also a time for the deepening of *community*.

This year, as we gather for our Midweek Lenten Worship Services via live stream You Tube, we will do so under the theme of *In Community...* Perhaps now more than ever, as we are physically distanced from family and neighbors whom we love, we ponder all the more the significance of Christian community.

As in year's past, all services will begin at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday evenings. Also as in year's past, the long-standing, favorite liturgy of Marty Haugen's *Holden Evening Prayer* will be used. Different than year's past, **all services will be held and broadcast from Our Savior's** (*We are forced to do this due to the technical challenges of yoking how our two churches broadcast our worship services differently.*)

The weekly themes and scripture texts for *In Community...* are as follows:

Wednesday, February 24th *In Community... In the Midst of the Storm*

Mark 4:35-41

Wednesday, March 3rd *In Community... With All Who Suffer*

2 Corinthians 1:3-11

Wednesday, March 10th *In Community... With Our Neighbor* Mark 2:1-12

Wednesday, March 17th *In Community... With Those on the Margins*

Mark 5:1-20

Wednesday, March 24th *In Community... with Christ* Mark 10:32-45

2021 Missionary for a Day Calendar has received \$580 to date.

During February gifts were received:

In honor of Larry & Jan Baldwin Family Birthdays and Anniversaries

In memory of Todd Clark

In celebration of Suzanne Clark Family Birthdays

In honor of Sharon & Mitch Cook's grandchildren, Samantha, Piper,
and Grayson and in memory of Sharon's mom, Ione Wollin

In memory of Tom Rupp

In memory of Lorraine Sterns

In memory of Hellen Sulentic

Thank you for your generous support of our missionary, Dr. Friberg in Tanzania. Any time is a good time to sign up and contribute to the *Missionary for a Day Calendar*. A gift of \$10 in memory or honor of a special friend or loved one will support our missionary for one day. Dr. Friberg's work in Tanzania is very important, be a part of it!



Pastoral Acts:

Baptism: February 7 Della Louise Koschak

Funeral: February 13 Thomas E. Rupp

Happy Birthday

<i>March</i>	4	Ralph Hocking
	5	Rick Maki
	7	Shirley Angen
	16	Ann Mastell
	17	Ada Hobbs
	24	Joyce Carlson
	25	Audrey Hammar
	25	Os Schock
	30	Jim Haupt



Best wishes to Frank and Linda Kangas who will be celebrating their 57th Wedding Anniversary on March 21st. *Congratulations!!*

Musical Notes



We are several weeks from the anniversary of our Covid shutdown. Nothing to celebrate for certain! Have we learned anything from this trying experience? I suppose that just 'surviving' is something.

Certainly, we can say that we are learning ways to reach out beyond our physical church. That will stay with us into the future. We do meet the requirement of 'two or three' gathered in His name! We have no way of knowing how engaged our congregation is. Certainly, we do get a report of how many people may have tuned in, but that does not really tell us the level of engagement of our audience. For some individuals it could be a very casual experience. I am concerned that the informality of the virtual service will become too comfortable. How strong a response can we expect when we return to in person worship? These are issues that concern our leadership and rightly so. What will our choirs and our Sunday School look like? Our fellowship has been such a vital part of this congregation, so what will that look like? My faith tells me that God has a special plan for us and that we will witness that plan when we return. May I suggest that we all pray about our future and allow God's plan to be fulfilled. I give thanks that I am so blessed to be part of this congregation and will do everything that I can to make you feel welcomed back.

Roy

Confirmation News:

- 3rd grade** - Please pick your Bible from the office hallway. Lent will be a wonderful time for Bible reading.
- 4th grade** - Have you been enjoying Pastor Kevin's Children's Talks?
- 5th grade** - Your class will study Communion during Lent via ZOOM
Sunday, March 14th, March 21st and March 28th at 4 p.m.
Watch for details via text and email.
Please be sure the office has your family's email address
Celebration of Communion on Maundy Thursday, April 1st
- 6th grade** - Since you weren't able to study Holy Communion last year, you too will study Communion during Lent via ZOOM
Sunday, March 14th, March 21st and March 28th at 4 p.m.
Watch for details via text and email.
Please be sure the office has your family's email address
Celebration of Communion on Maundy Thursday, April 1st
- 7th-9th grade** - **Attend midweek Lenten services virtually**
Watch your email for invites to class with Pastor Kevin.
Participation: 10 sermon notes, 10 hrs. of service
- 10th grade** - Participation: 10 sermon notes, 10 hours of service, complete any incomplete work and continue to meet with your mentor

As in past years, members and friends of Our Savior's are being offered the opportunity to donate funds for Easter flowers in memory or in honor of a family member or friend. If you wish to donate, envelopes are available in the church office and the office vestibule. (Deadline for listing donors' names in the Easter bulletin is Monday, March 29th). Thank you for your continuing support and cheering up our homebound and nursing home residents. The cost is \$17.00.



BABY SHOWER 2021



When I talk to people about our congregation, I always mention what a generous group of people we are. Our yearly shower of baby gifts for our hospital is no exception. I write this in mid-February and already we are receiving lovely handmade and purchased gifts for the newest members of our community. Because many of us are still limiting our outings, we will be accepting gifts until March 15th. Sleepers, undershirts, outfits, mittens, hats, booties, sweaters, blankets and supplies are greatly appreciated and benefit those most in need. Smallest sizes are preferred. You may also donate disposable diapers (NB and size 1). Monetary donations should be sent to the office and will be used to purchase additional gifts.

Pam Rundell for OSLCW

May I introduce you to our Church Council 2021:



President: Scott Fawkes
Vice-President: Julie Jordan
Secretary: Melissa Schwarze
Treasurer: Keith Saralampi
Kathy Anderson
Rena Warwas
John Law
Al Lipke
Cassidy Kampsula

Welcome and God bless.

Council Meeting Highlights (February 9, 2021)

- The council met remotely via Zoom
- We welcomed new members John Law and Cassidy Kampsula; Council installation will be via Zoom at the Feb. 14 worship service.
- Officers were elected: President Scott Fawkes; VP Julie Jordan;
Secretary Melissa Schwarze
- Our Financial Secretary provided an orientation; the General Fund as of Jan. 31 = \$20,790.15.
- The virtual Annual Meeting was debriefed; many positive comments have been received. Kudos and thank-yous to our tech crew who made it possible: Chris Magnusson, Dustin Davidson, Paula Jackson, Melissa Schwarze, and John Law.
- We discussed returning to in-person worship. Based on the new virus variants in MN and the slow roll-out of vaccines, we determined to remain virtual-only. We will revisit next month.
- Lent begins Feb. 17th; packets of ashes are available in the office vestibule for the virtual Ash Wednesday service, along with Communion elements. First Communion classes will begin in March.
- Online, radio, and TV broadcasts of services are continuing to be provided.

Radio broadcast sponsorships are needed. If you would like to sponsor a broadcast in memory of a loved one or in celebration of an event, please call the office at 218-263-7422. Weekly broadcasts cost \$50 each.

News from the Mission Action Committee

The goal of a Mission Action group is to feed, clothe and provide quilts to people in the USA and the rest of the world. OSLC has been doing all three generously for many years. Locally our shipping costs are nil when need is accessed, however, when our Lutheran World Relief items need to go to other areas the cost of shipping can be quite expensive. In doing research I found if we were to mail items to the warehouse in So. St. Paul thru Shippo we would get big discounts from USPS, UPS and DHL. This may become necessary due to COVID unless someone going to the cities is willing to help out by taking items to the warehouse there. The cost for LWR to ship kits overseas is as follows: One quilt \$2.25, one school kit \$1.40, one personal care kit (includes cost of buying toothpaste in country of destination) \$2.65, one fabric kit \$1.30, and one layette \$1.00.

We discussed best use of the generous dollar amount in the food shelf account. It was decided we would revamp what is put into the food boxes and add more protein in the form of canned chicken and Spam. People would prefer instant white rice to brown. Pork and beans, sugar and cooking oil will also be added. Larger sizes of canned fruit will be added. It was noted that expiration dates on cake mixes, crackers and other baking mixes be carefully monitored due to the added fats in them going rancid. Please be aware of this if donating these items.

Mission Action Committee—Sue Schock



shutterstock_118550644

Would you like our congregation to pray for any issues, problems, or health concerns you have? We believe in the power of prayer and know that our petitions are heard and answered. Please call the church office at 218-263-7422 and we will pass your request on to the Prayer Chain.

Victory Scooter Available for Use

Motorized Scooter available for temporary use if there is a parishioner who needs to use one, the Church has a Victory. Both batteries are brand new, and was donated to the Church a few years ago. Contact the Church Office at 263-7422 if you need or know of someone in need of one. Unit must to be returned when done.



2021 White Elephant Sale

With very little change from the CDC, Governor Walz and Local Covid-19 rules toward group gatherings, we had to make the hard decision to Cancel the 2021 WES for the week leading up to April 24th. We are still tossing around what to do with our stored items. Small, non-arena, Mini storage area sales are still an option, but group gathering rules still prohibit that from taking place. **If anyone has an idea on how to accomplish some sort of sale, under these conditions please contact someone on the Committee, by way of the Church Office 263-7422.** We are booked into the Memorial Building Arena for the 2022 sale (4/18-4/23).

Property Committee

New Heating System: The System is working great. Still adjusting various area t-stats. Once we get the final invoice from Hart Electric we will have the final total expenses. Donations are still being accepted toward this project and also future capital projects.

Columbarium Area: Heater t-stat failed and was replaced with new.

Boy Scout Room: Painter Larry S. was at it again, finishing the painting of the door trim and the folding closet doors. Mike S. repainted and rehung the bulletin boards. Travis O. will be stripping and waxing the floor, then the room will be ready for whatever activities we wish to use it for.

Kitchen: Oak Shop and Rick Koschak continue to work on the refurbishment of the kitchen cabinet doors and fronts. Following that work, he will begin on replacement of three Formica counter tops. Thanks again to Rick and the Oak Shop.

Security System: The old Permar Security System is gone, and the new system through ESC Systems (Endresen) out of Proctor MN is up and running. Pastor Kevin and Travis should no longer receive nuisance calls in the middle of the night.

Sanctuary Roof Replacement: Following the annual meeting resolution support, we have given Range Cornice the go ahead to order materials and put us on their Spring schedule.

Please Note: We continue to follow covid-19, State and CDC guidelines. We are utilizing as few people as possible while working on projects. If we need more help, we shall contact people to help.

Mike Stavnes and Joe Arthurs Property Co-Chairs

Family Rejuve - March 5th, 6th, and 7th. Camp Hiawatha invites you and your family to spend a day, a night or the whole weekend playing in God's great northwoods. Contact us and let us know how you want to engage - make this a weekend that provides what your family seeks. Check out our website for additional information and to register. www.vlmcamps.org/familyrejuve
Cost: \$100/adult, \$75/youth (ages 4-17) for the full retreat (pro rating available for shorter stays)

Full retreat cost includes 5 meals (Fri-Sun), 2 nights lodging, snacks, and on-site activities outdoor activities. (Does not include equipment rental, ski passes or activity fees off-site).

Camp Fun Day -

Camp Hiawatha on February 28th

Camp Vermilion on March 13thDuluth on March 21 (location TBA)

Join us for a two-hour program filled with sledding, broomball, campfires devotion, snacks and more. This is a free-will donation event. You can come early, stay late or just come for the two-hour program. Check out the website for more information - www.vlmcamps.org/camp-fun-day

The "Giving Tree" Campership Fund

began when OSLC's "VLM Team" was established in 2013.

One of our goals quickly became paying the entire camp fee for any of our youth who went to Camp Vermilion, Camp Hiawatha, or on a VM Boundary Waters canoe trip.

We felt this would make it possible for many more of our youth to go to camp, and with your amazingly generous support, we have seen this happen each of the last six seasons! Now we want to do it again in 2021!

So again we invite and encourage you to participate in giving our kids the opportunity to go to Bible camp this summer.

Your donation – **whether it be a few dollars, or enough to cover a full camp experience** for one, or more (or many?) campers – will be deeply appreciated!

Please designate your gift to "Giving Tree" or "Camperships."

"Thank you!" in advance from all our campers, for your support, your encouragement, and your prayers!

Camp will happen this summer!!!!!!

To check the schedule and see when you can go to camp, and to register, go to: VLMcamps.org Click on "Summer Camp" then scroll down to "Summer Schedule".

In the registration process, when it asks about payment, if it says anything about transfer code, type OSLC501.