



Thoughts and Reflections from the Pastor

Isaiah 12:2

"Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid, for the Lord God is my strength and my might; he has become my salvation."

My wife, Katie, and I have been having a lot of conversations about how we are going to engage with people moving forward. It has been frustrating and disappointing, because we know we need to, continue to keep our distance from folks, even though we want to be with people desperately. I know this is one of the hardest consequences of the pandemic for everyone, but I am just tired of it.

Perhaps like us, you have noticed that your ability to stay vigilant about the virus has diminished somewhat over time. Not being able to just get together with whomever we would like when we would like is frustrating. Do not even get me

started on not being able to worship as a community on Sunday. While I am grateful for our ability to do online services and for the help I have from our faithful volunteers, I miss having a sanctuary full of loving people to share worship with. Liturgy is meant to be the "work of the people", not the work of a few people.

So I pray and am reminded that God's love is steadfast. I engage scripture and am encouraged by passages like the Isaiah one I began this article with. God is my salvation, and I will not be afraid. I remember that truth and can begin to find strength again. Strength to continue to be vigilant, to continue to serve in whatever ways we are able, to continue to show love and support, from afar.

I pray that you all are able to continue to be safe and cautious. Everywhere we see that cases of COVID are on the rise, not just nationally, but locally too. We seem to be hitting another wave of infections, so we can't let

down our guards. Please continue to wear your masks, practice social distancing, and wash your hands. These are simple but effective ways we can take care of ourselves and are also a way for us to show love to our neighbors. Whenever we wear our masks, we are signaling to those around us that we want them to be well, that we care about them.

"Be strong, and let your heart take courage, all you who wait for the Lord." — *Psalms 31:24* God will surely see us through our current struggles, so I pray that God makes your days easy and your burdens light. God be with you all and may the light of Christ shine in your hearts and lighten our world.

In Christ,

Pastor Travis Larsen

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Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever.
1 Chronicles 16:34

Council minutes October 12, 2020 6:07pm

Present: Pastor Travis, Doug DeBok Janet Wood, Linda Gustin, Kevin Hale, Mark Stansbury, Carol Doherty, Gayla Eckis and Linda Mattes.

Absent: Dena Summerfield.

Meeting called to order by President Carol Doherty and Pr. Travis opened with prayer.

Consent Agenda

Pastor's Report: *The best of last month:* we have things up and running in our Covid world. Sunday School, Confirmation, Bible Study and Adult Education are happening. I began the Bishop's Convocation today, which is a good opportunity to discuss best practices and brainstorm some ideas for Advent and Christmas. I am still working with the flood recovery efforts, though that work has gotten into the slow phase. We are looking at cases one at a time and seeing how we can help.

Upcoming events and activities: I plan to confirm our 3 Confirmands Sunday the 25th during our live streamed Reformation Sunday service. We are testing the waters as we go, but my hope is to continue with classes and various learning opportunities. November 6-7 is Synod Assembly, all online. The Carlsons are ready to go. Holiday planning is happening, though we are still working out what we can pull off and what we need to just let go of.

Requested actions: I am seeing if it would be possible

to put together a Christmas Concert outside on the green. Right now, I am just seeing if we have musicians willing to work outside in December. (It was suggested to look into using the Vert.) I will be taking November 9-13th off. Heading to the coast for a bit.

Visits: these are still largely on hold, though I have been making regular phone calls with some folks who are struggling.

PDF: There have been spotty requests for aid since this all began, but I have helped with some hotel rooms and aid with bills and gas cards. Balance: \$1,941.77.

It was moved by Linda Gustin, seconded by Gayla Eckis to accept the Consent Agenda and minutes of September 14, 2020 Council meeting, the motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: by Janet Wood. September offering was \$14,319; budgeted monthly amount is \$18,128.00. Income was \$3,809 less than the budgeted amount. The monthly expenses were more than income by \$890.27. Month end bank balance was \$11,776.13. Month end bank balance was \$11,776.13 but all of that money plus \$2,000 in savings is earmarked for the sanctuary remodel. The slowdown in giving and low amount of unrestricted cash led to a lot of discussion about how to handle this. It was decided to be proactive instead of reactive and to update the congregation in our

next newsletter and include an offer to sign up for Vanco automatic giving in both the print and emailed newsletters. We need to continue to communicate our situation and touch base with each other. Mark Stansbury is still working on Payroll Credit Relief and hopes to have it by the end of the year. It was moved by Linda Gustin, seconded by Kevin Hale to accept the Treasurer's Report, motion carried.

Old Business:

Update on Sanctuary remodel by Kevin Hale. Kevin reported that the painting of the sanctuary will be completed around November 10 and the pews are out of the sanctuary already. It was suggested to paint the heaters in the sanctuary. The carpet has been ordered and they will begin installing them after November 10th. If we take the carpet out ourselves it will save some cost and it was decided to do this. The Altar Guild has offered to help with money for the Sanctuary Fund. Thank you notes have been sent to those who have donated to the Sanctuary Fund.

New Business:

Bottle fund: There is approximately \$1190.90 in this fund; half goes to Youth and half to the Sanctuary Fund. Pr. Travis asked permission to request a check from the bottle fund and split it between the two places; it was approved by council.

Treasurer appointment It

Council Minutes cont.

was moved by Linda Gustin and seconded by Pr. Travis for Terry Dallas to be appointed as Treasurer of Peace Lutheran Church, effective October 13, 2020, and the resignation of Janet Wood to be accepted. Terry Dallas will be added as an authorized signer on the accounts at Columbia Bank with access to online banking and Edwards Jones, and Janet Wood's authorized signature will be removed as soon as practical. The motion carried.

Update the sign on the corner of 9th and Carden needs some attention, the plexiglass will cost \$70. It was decided to go forward with replacing it.

Clothes Closet has been downsized and moved to the Food Pantry overflow supply room. You can donate clothes for job interviews and coats that are in good condition.

Synod Assembly will be November 6-7 via Zoom. Our nominated representatives are Don & Cheryl Carlson, with Gayla Eckis & Linda Mattes as alternates.

Annual Meeting is January 24 or 31. We will be working on the budget starting in November.

Confirmands on October 25th we have 3 confirmands: Ella Guenther, Tori Estrada, Josie Nelson.

Vacant Council position we received a verbal request from Linda Gustin asking to step down from Church Council as she is moving to Walla Walla. Thank you, Linda, for years of service on Church Council; your input will be missed. It was moved by Pr. Travis and seconded by Gayla Eckis to accept Linda Gustin's resignation from Church

Council. Motion carried. If you are interested in serving the rest of Linda's term (till 2022) please let Carol Doherty or anyone on council know.

Heritage Station is doing drive by Trick or Treat this year and we would like to ask for donations of candy to help with this. We could fill treat bags with candy and a card from PLC for them to hand out.

Announcements, reminders, and updates:

Congregational members updating contact information.

Adjourned with the Lord's Prayer at 7:35pm.

Linda Mattes, Council secretary

Next council meeting November 9



Stewardship Update

As we are coming to the close of 2020, the Stewardship committee would like to update everyone on our financial situation so far this year. Obviously, it has been a strange year. We have not been able to hold live church services since March. Tax law changes have not been kind to not-for-profit organizations like ours that depend on donations. And, most importantly, some members of our congregation have experienced financial distress due to the pandemic.

All that being said, we have completed some major long-needed projects this year. And, we are close to completing a few more. First, with a combination of grants and giving we were able to install a new sound system, camera and web-streaming setup. This came just in time as we were forced to move to online services. With volunteer help, we were able to paint the basement. Now, we are close to finishing our sanctuary revitalization project by installing new carpet and painting the sanctuary. As our building ages it is important to keep up on the maintenance. We have been lucky to be mortgage free for many

years and this has allowed us to focus on upkeep. All of this has required a major fundraising push and we are thankful for so many of you responding with donations to make these projects happen.

That is the good news. The not-so-good news is that we have lagged behind in general fund giving this year. In such strange times it is difficult to dig down to specific reasons for this. Obviously, the financial repercussions of the pandemic on all of us play a role. The inability to hold live church services also plays a role. The giving for major projects is also a factor. It does look like with the help of some one-time giving and COVID relief funds we will be able to end the year better than we were thinking we would even a month ago. We are concerned going forward though. As such, we are including a VANCO Simply Giving form with this Newsletter. For those who don't know, VANCO is a way to give automatically to the church using your bank account or credit card. We now receive between 35-40% of our giving this way. It is extremely low cost to the church and helps stabilize our

giving especially in strange times like these. Please consider donating this way and if you have any questions about the program please call Mark Stansbury at 541-969-9029.

Also, the council will be working to call each member's household at least once a month while we are still unable to meet in-person on Sundays. If you have any stewardship advice or concerns please relay them to the council member during that call. We would love to hear your thoughts and advice.

Finally, we want to extend a huge thank-you to Janet Wood for serving as Treasurer for the past many years. She has been a tireless volunteer helping ensure the money is counted each week, the bills are paid and the bank accounts are reconciled. She has donated an immense amount of time to the church serving in that capacity and has done a wonderful job. She will be missed – please thank her for her good works the next time you run into her. The council has asked Terry Dallas to take over as Treasurer and she has kindly accepted. So, we are still in good hands.

Woolly alpacas graze peacefully in a field. Bhutanese refugee farmers till the soil and harvest the crops. Youth practice yoga. Single parents attend free child care classes. Family mission teams from all over the country come to serve. On any given day, a visitor to Tikkun Farm can see Mary Laymon's vision of a beloved community come to life.

Tikkun Farm, an experiment in community outside of Cincinnati, is the brainchild of Laymon, an ELCA pastor, and her husband, Greg York. *Tikkun olam* is a Judaic phrase meaning "repair the world," and over the past eight years, the couple has taken a run-down 3.5-acre farm in Mount Healthy, Ohio, and resurrected it into a place of wholeness and restoration.

Laymon understands the need for restoration. Her family struggled when she was growing up, and she is a survivor of child abuse. She grew up not attending church and later found the fundamentalist tradition before enrolling at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg (Pa.) (now United Lutheran Seminary).

Currently, Laymon serves St. Simon of Cyrene Episcopal Church in Lincoln Heights, Ohio, and before that was pastor of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Huntingdon Valley, Pa. It was at Gloria Dei, while organizing spiritual retreats and counseling those with trauma, that Laymon dreamed of supporting people as they recovered from traumatic childhood experiences.

She believes that everyone has

scars, as Jesus had. "Without Jesus' scars, his resurrection wouldn't have the same meaning," she said.

When Laymon and York first moved to their farm in 2013, the neglected property was a challenge, yet they saw it as a place where they could finally realize their dream of offering retreats. The couple invited the neighbors over to share their hopes for Tikkun Farm. They expected a handful of people—instead, a big crowd attended the first gathering.

A place for growth

From the beginning, Tikkun Farm has served a diverse community in a variety of ways. Most of the Bhutanese refugees who settled there were farmers in their home country. Laymon and York let them farm the land for free, using the harvest to feed their families and to sell. The alpacas are sheared and their wool is used to make felt.

"Mary not only provided us with a garden, she gave me the opportunity to be a camp counselor on the farm, which gave me credit hours in school," said Jharana Rai, a young Bhutanese woman studying to become a nurse. "Her after-school program helps my brother do his homework. I feel like what Mary has done for my community, only a few can do it. She is a great example of what one person can do to bring changes to a community."

The summer camps and after-school programs for the area's children were successful. But Laymon said she heard a clear call from God in prayer, telling her to focus on the parents because they were the heart of those families and needed extra support and guidance. Now parents come to the farm for practical help raising their families.

"Tikkun Farm took my breath away with the beautiful spirit that dwells in that place," said Lakresha Alexander, a mother who participated in the farm's classes. "I'm so thankful to experience that energy. 'Cooking on a Budget' was a class I dreamed about. Learning to make healthier meals for my family is one of the things I had been praying for."

"I thank God for creating Mary—and the love and passion she has to help children and adults find themselves!"

Tikkun Farm has received grants from ELCA Disability Ministries for its mental health programming and from ELCA World Hunger for its outreach to low-income families, including the "Cooking on a Budget" classes, self-care workshops and an aquaponics food system that will teach and employ youth.

The farm has also been supported by Trinity Lutheran Church in Cincinnati, both financially and with volunteers for the camp and after-school programs.

Laymon and York continue to invite more individuals, families and youth mission groups from across the country to spend a week living and working on Tikkun Farm. And Laymon, who calls herself a "pilgrim pastor," continues to dream big dreams and listen in prayer for God's guiding and loving voice.

We thank you for wearing a mask.

It shows you care about those around you.



Christmas Poinsettias

In spite of the disruption of our sanctuary and worship gatherings, we still intend to decorate the altar area with poinsettias for our Christmas service. We can order our poinsettias now until Dec. 13th. They are \$15 each, and may be taken home after Christmas, or delivered to you if you prefer. Proceeds from our holiday flower sales will be added to the sanctuary improvement fund.

If you wish to participate, this is what our Altar Committee needs to know:

Your name: _____

_____ Plants in memory of _____

_____ Plants in honor of _____

_____ Plants in honor of our newborn King _____

Poinsettias are \$15 each. Please make checks payable to Peace Lutheran Church and earmark "poinsettias", and mail or deliver your order to the church office by Dec. 13th.

Thank you for your support, and for making our sanctuary beautiful for the holiday season.



School Kits and Personal Care Kits for Lutheran World Relief

October 15th, the Quilts and Kits were loaded from our Church as well as the two Church's from Hermiston to be taken to Spokane,

on October 16th.

Peace Lutheran shipped, 62 Quilts, 34 School Kits, and 14 Personal Care Kits.

We want to thank everyone who helped load the trailer.

Wanda Penner

Peace Endowment Fund Helps Oregonians in Need

The Oregon Synod Wildfire Relief Fund was set up this summer to provide aid to congregations working to help with recovery from the impacts of the wildfires. The many people affected, as well as FEMA and

the leaders of the Oregon Synod Disaster Preparedness and Recovery Team tell us it's going to take resources and time to recover from these catastrophic fires. The Peace Endowment Committee voted to send

\$1000 to this fund and we encourage any members of the congregation who haven't already done so to make their own donation at www.oregonsynod.org. Thank you for your generosity.

Mask Prayer

A prayer as I put on my mask:
Creator,
as I prepare to go into the world,
help me to see the sacrament
in the wearing of this cloth—
let it be "an outward sign
of an inward grace"—
a tangible and visible way of living
love for my neighbors,
as I love myself.
Christ,
since my lips will be covered,
uncover my heart,
that people would see my smile
in the crinkles around my eyes.
Since my voice may be muffled,
help me to speak clearly,
not only with my words,
but with my actions.
Holy Spirit,
As the elastic touches my ears,
remind me to listen carefully—
and full of care—
to all those I meet.
May this simple piece of cloth be
shield and banner,
and each breath that it holds,
be filled with your love.
In your Name and
in that love,
I pray.
Amen
— Rev. Dr. Richard Bott, Moderator of the United
Church of Canada



Caption describing picture or graphic.

Upcoming Dates to Remember

November 11 ~ Veteran's Day
November 22 ~ Christ the King Sunday
November 26 ~ Thanksgiving
November 26-27 ~ Office Closed
November 29 ~ Drive Thru Communion

December 21 ~ First Day of Winter
December 24 ~ Christmas Eve
December 25 ~ Christmas Day
December 28 ~ Office Closed
December 31 ~ New Years Eve



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*May all the good things of life be yours, not only
at Thanksgiving but throughout the coming year.*

