



SHINER
LUTHERAN

QUARTERLY

CONNECTIONS



Holy Week 2021

This installment of Weekly Connections will likely reach you in Holy Week. On Palm Sunday, Christians all over the world begin to slow down and contemplate on the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. This week is not like other weeks. Holy Week brings with it the true depth of God's love for the world.



Palm Sunday

The beginning of Holy Week is marked by Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem on a donkey. John 12 says that the crowds cut palm branches from the trees and shouted, "Hosanna!" 1 Kings 1:33-35 connects the riding of a donkey with a king. Palm branches have a history and symbolism of the desire for the people to be free of tyranny. Jesus liberates us from the tyranny of sin, death, and the devil.



Maundy Thursday

Maundy Thursday is taken from the Latin word, *mandatum*, which means mandate or command. Jesus commanded the disciples in John 13:34-35 that they should love one another. Maundy Thursday is connected closely with foot washing, as Jesus washed the disciples' feet, and with the institution of the Lord's Supper.



Good Friday

The question I get nearly every year is, "Why do we call it *good* Friday if Jesus died that day?" True, this is the day that Christians set aside as a solemn day recalling Jesus' suffering and his death on the cross as recorded in John 18-19. While we know that Jesus rose from the dead, Good Friday is a time to ponder how the Lord took on our sins. Good Friday is good because it shows us that Jesus was willing to lay down his life for all people.



Easter Sunday

The Resurrection of Our Lord is the most joyous of all our celebrations. Jesus has been raised from the dead! We proclaim, *Alleluia!* He is risen! He has risen, indeed. *Alleluia!* Easter means that nothing can separate us from God's love for us in Jesus Christ, not even death (Romans 8). Easter is not just one day but an entire season that lasts 50 days in the church, ending with the festival of Pentecost.



A Note from Pastor Chris

Blessings to you and your family. As we celebrate Holy Week and the Easter season together, I pray that you will be with us as the church. Whether you worship in-person or online, you and I are the church. As Shiner Lutheran Church, we continue to move forward in mission and ministry.

Pastor Chris Reinold

Ministry Areas in Action

WORSHIP

During the winter quarter, both in-person and online worship continued. An exception to this pattern was the week that the severe winter storm hit Texas. Sunday February 14 in-person worship was canceled, but a skeleton crew managed to record an online worship service. By Ash Wednesday on February 17, an even smaller crew fought the sporadic electricity and recorded a service. A blessing this quarter was the addition of new assisting ministers including Julia Fojt and Emma & Teena Davis. Monthly “Communion in Cars” took place. Both afternoon and evening Lenten services were held during the five weeks of Lent. March ended with *Hosannas* and Palm Sunday.



Learning

The challenge of teaching and learning in a pandemic time continued throughout winter quarter. Our Wednesday night GIFT program resumed meeting each week with just a few exceptions (winter storm, spring break, Holy Week). The pandemic modifications for spacing and meals remained in place. Our camper list was finalized with seven campers and Pastor Chris registered and paid. Teena Davis offered to plan a Hamburger Fundraiser for April 17. The funds raised will help our youth attend the Lutheran National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis in 2022.



FAITH FORMATION

service



During the past quarter, David & Kristine Schroeder, with help from our members and others, provided a meal for the homebound or elderly as a “Neighbors Helping Neighbors” function in memory of Evie Kollous. Behind the scenes, we resumed our monthly support of the breakfast meal at the Methodist Church in conjunction with Food Pantry Day. One group of domino players began meeting occasionally for a game, cautiously canceling the event when needed. Our Soup Ministry kept delivering homemade chicken noodle soup to those in need of healing. Our Hospitality Team helped with GIFT meals and planned receptions for spring. Hospitality also worked many hours sorting and reloading the many plates, pots, and utensils that were in storage during the kitchen project.



A primary mission of our Witness Ministry remains the streaming of weekly services on our Shiner Lutheran Facebook Page. This was most valuable during the week of the severe winter storm. In January, Church Council affirmed that the purpose of our Shiner Lutheran Facebook Page is to support and encourage our congregation and provide the platform for sharing our worship services and activities. Links to an online calendar, archived Connections publications, and electronic giving can all be found on our website at www.shinerlutheran.org. For traditional print communication, Karen Blohm volunteered to again write newspaper articles as needed. Weekly news is sent via email through the Weekly Connections format.



Ministries Areas in Action



SUPPORT

We are blessed that the severe winter storm did not result in any major repair issues for our facility. During the past months, the kitchen project made great progress. Following the work by Michael Pokluda Construction, Brian Pokluda donated much time and effort installing the backsplash and completing finish work throughout the kitchen. Many donations of materials and money supported this project. The Property Team scheduled Landscape Clean up Days in February and March. Because of the severe freeze and massive leaf drop, volunteers worked both days of the cleanup with additional work to follow. Both landscape and lawn are maintained by volunteers. Another facility issue has been our internet connection in the sanctuary. After much research and discussion, we should see a new internet drop into the building along with hardwiring both the office and access points to provide quality wireless internet service through our facility. A few donations have even been received to help cover some of this expense. The Support Mission Group discussed the ongoing need to update our 1992 constitution and bylaws. Tammy Guettner, Sandra Blum, Shannon Blaschke and Sharon Jaks all agreed to continue the work begun by Howard Stridde and try to get the document submitted for approval in September. The Mutual Ministry Team met in support of Pastor Chris during March. The scholarship application deadline has passed and Scholarship and Endowment Committees will be meeting to discuss funding and awarding of scholarships.



Guettner, Sandra Blum, Shannon Blaschke and Sharon Jaks all agreed to continue the work begun by Howard Stridde and try to get the document submitted for approval in September. The Mutual Ministry Team met in support of Pastor Chris during March. The scholarship application deadline has passed and Scholarship and Endowment Committees will be meeting to discuss funding and awarding of scholarships.



We have many silent servants and others that thrive on remaining totally anonymous. Nevertheless, we recognize with gratitude both those listed and not listed. Our congregation is truly blessed! We say thank you to...

- Brian Pokluda for being our on call fix-it guy for commodes, doors, and all kinds of minor maintenance and repair problems in addition to major projects.
- Holly Heinsohn for agreeing to serve on council to fill a vacancy until the next annual meeting council and for conducting an online fundraiser for youth.
- Gladys Muehlstein for her many years of cooking homemade chicken noodle soup for our Soup Ministry.
- Robbie Caka for caring for the sanctuary and loading the pew pockets with attendance slips and envelopes.
- Diane Schroder for taking our food donations to the Shiner Community Food Pantry.
- David & Kristine Schroeder for the "Neighbors Helping Neighbors" meal that models Christian caring. Thanks also to Pastor Chris, the Volkmanns and the Davis Family for helping with deliveries of the meal.
- A.J. Jaks for covering the faucets for the severe winter freeze as the temperature was dropping.
- Pastor Chris, Gemayel Heinold, Ronnie Bruns, Howard Gloor, Tammy Guettner, Kristin Neal, Teena Davis and Brian Pokluda who created and streamed one or both services during the winter storm.
- All who helped on either landscape clean up day or behind the scenes including: Karen Pokluda, Brian Baker, Sandy Machacek, Daniel & Mallory Volkman, A.J. & Sharon Jaks, Ronnie Bruns, Kristin Neal, Brian Pokluda, Scott Fojt, Tammy Guettner, Merle Richardson, the Zaruba Family and Pastor Chris.

Our Congregation

During the Winter Quarter, the following parochial events took place:

Layne Daniel Moeller, son of J.D. and Kristin Moeller, was baptized on January 31, 2021 and became a baptized member of our congregation.



Clifton Willie Renken, a life long member, passed away on March 9, 2021. Services were held for Clifton at Buffington Funeral Home, with Pastor Chris Heinold officiating.

Administration



On January 3rd, the 2021 Church Council was installed. The January Council meeting included a discussion of appropriate use of our Facebook page. At their February meeting, Church Council accepted the resignation of Faith Darilek and appointed Holly Heinsohn Kropp to fill that position until the next congregational meeting. Throughout the winter quarter, Church Council monitored the best practices for pandemic safety. In March, a special called meeting addressed the lifting of the state mask mandate. At that time, the Council decided to strongly recommend wearing masks in our facility out of love and concern for others and continuing other modifications for worship.

2021 CHURCH COUNCIL

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| • Sandra Blum | • Mike Vaughan |
| • James Davis | • Holy Heinsohn Kropp |
| • Debbie Ealy | • Shannon Blaschke |
| • Janis Richardson | • Kristin Neal |
| • Brian Baker | • Brian Pokluda |
| • Danna Murrile | • Pastor Chris Heinold |
| • Matthew Sternadel | • Vicar Daniel Volkmann |

THANK YOU to those serving as the 2021 officers:

President: James Davis
Vice-President: Brian Pokluda
Secretary: Kristin Neal
Treasurer: Sandra Blum



On Sunday February 28, **Mission Groups** met for the first time in a year. After a light lunch, leaders gathered by groups for Worship, Learning, Service, Witness and Support. New leaders were integrated into groups as each area discussed the effect of the pandemic on their areas of ministry. Suggestions were gathered for the return of various ministries as more people are vaccinated and restrictions are removed. Mission Groups will meet again on May 16 to continue their strategic planning and implementation.

We thank the following leaders who participated in the February Mission Group Meetings:

- Worship—Brian Baker, Ronnie Bruns, Tim Harris, Gemayel Heinold, Debbie Ealy
 Learning—Kristin Neal, Kim Zaruba, Michele Pokluda, Erika Baker, Teena Davis
 Service—James Davis, Norma Goetz, Mary Ann Fojt, Carol Harris
 Witness—Matthew Sternadel, Chuck Stratman, Karen Blohm, Mallory Volkmann, Sandy Machacek
 Support—Sharon Jaks, Suzanne Rabke, Tammy Guettner, Sandra Blum, Shannon Blaschke, Brian Pokluda



Scheduled office hours are Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday from 9 am –Noon. Other staff hours are flexible. Please leave a message at 361-594-2345 or email shinerudml@att.net for assistance.

For security reasons, the office entrance may be locked at other times even when staff is in the building. Usually the entrance from the parking lot into the Gathering Place remains open for building access throughout the day. Our email is checked remotely (shinerudml@att.net) when the staff is not in the office. Pastor Chris can be contacted directly at his church cell number (830-203-2906).

Administration & Finance



New Offering Envelopes

Some members have not yet returned to in-person activities and have not picked up their 2021 envelopes. As part of maintaining active membership, a contribution of record is needed. Offering envelopes help the financial secretary record these contributions. Envelopes may be picked up in the Gathering place; After Easter, we will mail or deliver the envelopes if members have been unable to pick them up.



Noisy Offering

January Noisy Offering of \$104.10 was put in the Camper Fund. In February, \$120.55 was sent to the Texas Severe Storm Fund thru Lutheran Disaster Response. The March Noisy Offering was designated for youth. Since 2021 camp expenses have already been met, the March offering was set aside for youth attending the 2022 National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis. Loose change (or bills) are gathered as a special Noisy Offering on the last Sunday of the month for special mission work. Faith formation is supported through camping and youth gathering participation.

BUDGET REPORT



According to the dictionary, a budget is "an estimate of income and expenditure for a period of time." For our congregation, a budget team proposes a budget for the calendar year that must be approved at the annual meeting.

As of the end of February 2021, our expenses tracked at 1% less than the budget had estimated, so we are in line with the plan. By far the greatest portion of our budget goes to pay our pastor, staff, utilities, etc. and then fund our ministries. We continue to list the building loan as a separate budget item, but it is also monthly expense that must be paid. Our facility, as well as our debt, belongs to the congregation. Of our total budget, only about 3.5% is sent out to support the greater church in our local conference and synod.

Estimating income is more complex. As a congregation that does not use pledges to estimate church income, we courageously trust faithful giving. Recurrent giving that occurs regardless of attendance has been our mainstay. Monthly giving and electronic giving tend to be recurrent. Some members have also begun sending recurrent or special gifts to the church directly from their tax sheltered retirement funds, a process that eliminates taxes on their withdrawals. Even with that faithful giving, our weekly offerings vary widely. This has always been true—giving to the church varies by weeks and by seasons. Often finances may look dim until end of year giving or special gifts appear. We try to be good stewards in spending, but also have trust in faithful generosity as we move forward living out our mission.



Planned legacy giving enables churches and non-profit organizations to continue to exist, despite the uncertainties of offerings and donations. Such gifts have come to our congregation throughout the past, either in monetary funds or by means of oil leases. Our congregation, unbeknownst to us, was listed as one of the beneficiaries of the John and Elda Fritsche Charitable Trust. Both John and Elda have passed away and funds from the trust will be distributed over the next few years. The Fritsches were not members here, but Elda worshipped with us and later was treated as "one of our own" through our nursing home ministry at SNRC. The total amount of this gift will not be known until all trust funds are dispersed. Any amounts received will be set aside until our Finance Team and Council review our policy on bequests. We are thankful for this blessing that will help us continue our ministry and mission.

Ways to Serve or Give



Our congregation has traditionally functioned with faithful volunteers who tend to the altar and chancel area—candles, communion preparation, altar paraments, banners, liturgical decorations etc. We are grateful to all who have graciously served, but realize much responsibility sometimes has fallen upon just a few people. In the coming months we will be working to restructure this area of ministry into an Altar Guild. This would help share the responsibility and joy of serving among a trained group of people. Pastor Chris and Gemayel Heinold will be working on this project. Who should serve on Altar Guild? Baptized, worshiping, communing Christians who are filled with gratitude and are called to serve with a sense of joy, praise and reverence for our worship space, liturgy, and the people of God. Please prayerfully consider if serving on Altar Guild would be one way you could serve God and his people.



WORSHIP LEADERS

Another way to serve is by participating as a worship leader. Ushers, greeters, and gift bearers (usually families with children) are needed for each worship service. Young people serve as acolytes. Older youth can choose to lector, and we recently added some high school aged youth who have volunteered to be assisting ministers. Training and support will be provided for these leadership position; talk to pastor or call the office if you are interested. For our musicians, we hope to welcome new members in choir and hand chimes when those groups restart in late summer. For those with technology aptitude, we have a critical need for sound and video technicians. Our volunteers here are doing a terrific job—but we rely on just a few people to handle all the worship services and facilitate online streaming. Prayerfully consider if you can volunteer to help as a leader to enable others to worship and praise God.

SPECIAL GIVING:

- Bring nonperishable food to our little red wagon in the Gathering Place. These donated items will go to the Shiner Community Food Bank.
- Contribute coins or cash to the Red Barn Bank in the Gathering Place. These funds will add to the GIFT Mission Project to buy chickens (\$10 each), goats (\$50 each) or other animals that will provide families in need with an ongoing source of food.
- Specify an offering for special needs such as World Hunger, Lutheran Disaster Response, or Cross Trails Ministry.
- Support our own youth with a gift supporting attendance at the 2022 Lutheran National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis or 2022 Summer Camp.
- Support faith formation by donating towards Vacation Bible School expense or GIFT.
- Donate & dedicate flowers for Sunday worship. Sign up for future dates in the office.

Plan for future giving: John Dellis, from the Lutheran Foundation of the Southwest, recently visited our congregation and lectured at a worship service. He is available to help plan future giving as a legacy to others. Information below details a webinar that will be offered a number of times and can help you to look towards legacy giving.

Generosity in All Seasons: Everything that we have is a gift that God places in our care during our lifetimes. How to plan a legacy that will reflect your faith and values will be discussed during “The Way Forward to Legacy Generosity,” a webinar on planning legacy gifts for family and ministry. This webinar, presented by Lutheran Foundation of the Southwest, will be offered at 2 p.m. on two Sundays – April 11 and April 18 – and at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, April 13 and at noon on Thursday, April 15. Register at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C49A8A629ABFFC25-theway>. For more information contact Deacon John Dellis, (830) 305-2758, jdellis@lfs.org.

Looking to the Coming Months



- The month begins with the last days of Holy Week and worship services on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Easter Sunday on April 4 is filled with worship, an hour of Breakfast Fellowship, and a trip to sing outside at the nursing home followed by an Easter egg hunt. Easter morning finishes with a session of Communion in Cars for those who choose to commune in the safety of their vehicles.

- Sunday April 11 is a special date as five eighth graders will be confirmed. Briana Baker, Olivia Fojt, Rakin Wallace, Jadyne Shimek and Kyle Zaruba will become full voting members of our congregation. A reception hosted by our hospitality team will honor the confirmands following worship.



- Saturday April 17 brings the Fireman's BBQ contest and Car Show. Our junior high & high school youth, with help from parents and other adults, will serve hamburgers at the event, raising funds for a trip to Minneapolis next year for the Lutheran National Youth Gathering. See Teena Davis if you are able to help.

- Sunday April 25 brings the special recognition of 2021 graduates. Our two high school grads, Cheyenne Moore and Ty Winkenwerder will receive special recognition during worship and will be honored by a reception following the service.



- GROWING IN FAITH TOGETHER—Wednesday April 28 brings special end of year GIFT celebration held at the Merrem Pavilion at Green Dickson Park. Beginning at 5:30 pm, a group lesson, games, fun and specially grilled hamburgers will be the final GIFT meeting for this school year.



- We will celebrate Mother's Day with a special Polka Worship Service on Sunday May 9. Bring your mother and enjoy worshipping polka style!

- Shiner Lutheran Scholarships will be officially awarded.



- We will celebrate Father's Day with a special Country Gospel Worship Service on Sunday June 20. Put on your boots, bring your dad, and enjoy worshipping country gospel style!



- All aboard! Our Vacation Bible School will be riding the Rocky Railway on Monday through Friday mornings July 12-16. Planning has begun—please let Kristin Neal know if you are able to help in any way with this opportunity to share God's love with children.



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SHINER LUTHERAN CHURCH QUARTERLY CONNECTIONS SPRING 2021

Welcoming members, friends and visitors to worship with us in person or on the Shiner Lutheran Facebook page



Thursday April 1—MAUNDY THURSDAY

1:30 pm—Brief Worship with Holy Communion

*7:15 pm—Worship with Holy Communion

Footwashing will be offered



Friday April 2—GOOD FRIDAY

1:30 pm— Service of the Cross

*8:00 pm—Tenebrae Service of Darkness



Sunday April 4—EASTER SUNDAY

7:30 am—Easter Worship (in sanctuary)

8:45 am—Breakfast Fellowship Hour

9:15 am—Flowering the Cross

9:30 am—Sing outside @ SNRC followed by Egg Hunt

*10:15 am—Easter Worship

11:45 am—Communion in Cars

EASTER SUNDAY

** Indicates services that will be live streamed on Facebook*