



SHINER
LUTHERAN

QUARTERLY CONNECTIONS

Growing together in grace and service

Fall Quarter 2020

Looking back at the last three months:

Weekly Sunday worship continued to be streamed on Facebook. In-person worship returned in August with safety precautions such as masks, social distancing, limited singing, and shortened services. "Communion in Cars" continued monthly to allow members to receive the sacrament in the safety of vehicles. Meetings remained virtual, but in-person contact also slowly began to return. Currently, more pieces of the worship service are gradually being reintroduced.

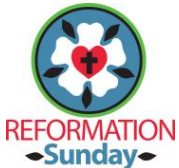
Looking ahead to the next three months:



- Our annual October Festival 500+ will not return until 2021.



- Sunday October 11th will be a Polka Worship Service. Bring a friend or watch online, but praise the Lord to the beat of polkas and waltzes.



- Sunday October 25th is Reformation Sunday and
- Confirmation for Emma Davis and William Stock. *Join in the celebration!*



- November 1 is All Saints Sunday. Let the office know of any loved ones you wish to include in our remembrance of those who have passed away during the past year. It will be Country Gospel Worship.

- Following worship November 15, our annual congregational meeting takes place to adopt a budget for 2021 and hold elections.
- November 22 is Christ the King Sunday, the last Sunday of the church year. We will celebrate with a special organ service, played by Vicar Daniel, who minored in church music in college.



- Advent services begin on Wednesday December 2 at 7 pm and continue for four weeks. Join the quiet contemplation of the Holden Evening Prayer service as we prepare our hearts for Christmas,
- Sunday December 20th at 10:15 am the special Christmas program worship will fill the sanctuary with song as the GIFT group and others present song, scripture readings, liturgical dance, and story telling in a worship service.
- Thursday December 24th our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service takes place at 5:00 pm and 10:00 pm to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior.

A Letter from the Pastor



UNITED EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN DR. MARTIN LUTHER CHURCH (ELCA)
 1103 North Avenue B
 P.O. Box 26
 Shiner, TX 77984

(361) 594-2345
PASTOR: The Rev. Christopher R. Heinold
Vicar: Daniel Volkmann



October 1, 2020

Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

We are in this together. We are called to be the church of Jesus Christ in this time and place. Now, I invite you to join me as we slowly return to in-person ministries as the church, together.

Pastoral Care

I am happy to visit you at your home. Because of the pandemic, some of our homebound have not received the Sacrament of Holy Communion in six months. I would be honored to bring a sealed, pre-packaged Communion vessel to you. I covenant to wear a face mask. If you desire a visit from the Pastor or Vicar, please call the church and let us know. It is not a hassle; it is a pleasure!

Mission and Ministry

Sunday Worship is at 10:15 am. Holy Communion is celebrated weekly in a way that maximizes personal safety. Face masks and social distancing are required inside the church at all times. Additional seating has been added in the balcony to help facilitate social distancing.

Wednesday GIFT Programming is at 5:30 pm. We serve a meal that has been prepared and boxed, and we have had an excellent response. There is adequate room for people to spread out and eat. Education is done with the utmost concern for quality and safety. Classes are available for all: PreK – Adult. Each Wednesday, GIFT ends with a common closing time in the Church Sanctuary.

Adult Bible Studies are also available. Wednesday morning Bible Study resumes on October 7th at 10:00AM. We will be studying the book of Genesis. A traditional Sunday morning Bible Study will resume on October 4th at 9:00 am. We will be studying the appointed readings for that Sunday. I will be leading both of these Bible Studies, and I invite you to find one that best fits your schedule.

Good Christian Stewardship

Your offerings make a difference! Christian stewardship understands that all of what we have comes from God. Good stewards use what they have been given wisely and to the benefit of others. During the height of the pandemic, the church was able to react quickly and reduce our operating expenses as many in-person ministries were suspended. Now that we are resuming these ministries, we trust that your offerings would also resume.

Building Fund offerings have been short of the mortgage, which means using reserves to cover the difference. Similarly, offerings to the General Fund have also fallen short in covering the budgeted ministry expenses. Your regular offerings make a difference, no matter the size!

Stewardship is an exercise that Christians practice. Like a learning skill or a sport, stewardship takes faithful practice. It is not an all-or-nothing ordeal. We get better at Christian stewardship the more we do it. The goal is not merely increasing the amount you give but instead developing an attitude towards seeing all that you have as a precious gift from God. Making an offering, therefore, is giving of yourself to God in a very tangible way. It is an act of faith and trust.

...and the Vicar

A Personal Thank You from Your Pastor

We are in this together, dear church. Thank you for the ministry we have done so far during this unusual year of 2020. I am eager to continue partnering with you as together we move through the Fall and into the Winter. I am excited for another Polka Service and then Confirmation in October. I am excited to baptize my niece and to celebrate Christ the King in November. I am already preparing for the season of Advent, and we are developing a new Children's Christmas Program in December.

Thank you for sticking with us through pandemic, through the good times and the bad. We have come this far by faith, with the help of God. My prayer is that you will continue to join me in serving the Lord in Shiner, Texas!

In Christ,



Pastor Chris Heinold

Members and friends of Shiner Lutheran Church:

The last 3 months have been a whirlwind of change for me and my family. My wife, Mallory, and I got married on June 20th, 2020. Shortly after that, on July 12th, we moved from across the country so I could start work here at United Evangelical Lutheran Dr. Martin Luther Church. Since July 12th I have gotten numerous experiences that, if I were in a typical seminary program, I would not have gotten for a couple years at a minimum.

For example, I have:

- Presided over worship
- Preached at worship
- Given a children's message
- Led adult education classes, both a Bible study and now a book study
- Preached at a funeral
- Assisted in planning, as well as being a part of, a funeral service

I have done all these things, and many more, all while starting school at the beginning of September. I am currently taking 9.5 online credit hours through Wartburg Theological Seminary, which is based in Dubuque, IA.

Looking to the future, I will continue to grow in my vocational journey of where God is calling me in life. This program puts me here in Shiner for the next 4 years, and I am looking forward to them. I hope I can continue to learn and grow with all of you, both in knowledge and community.

Thank you all for the hospitality and welcoming spirit with which you have greeted Mallory and me. I am so excited to see the places we will go.

Yours in Christ,

Vicar Daniel Volkmann



Ministry Areas in Action

WORSHIP

For Aug 23-Sept 30, attendance averaged 75, which includes in-car communion. The option of communion in cars will continue at least once a month.

In-person and online worship continue with safety precautions. Worship leaders are more involved. Acolytes are serving, and ushers have begun collecting offering and attendance slips, although the offering plates are not passed among members. (Greeters and gift bearers are not involved yet.) Seating is spaced, and communion is served in the pews. Worshipers stay in their seats throughout the service, and sharing the peace is done in sign language. Congregational singing is still somewhat restricted. Masks and distancing remain.



Learning

Three adult studies have resumed; "Looking @ the Lessons" Sunday morning, Wednesday mornings studying Genesis, and a book study during GIFT Learning. GIFT has resumed on Wednesday evenings, with a meal and learning time for Pre-K thru high school. For the meal, precautions are taken by spacing participants. Individually packaged meals are prepared by a crew. This involves more expense and volunteers, so donations to "GIFT Meals" and new volunteers are appreciated. A mission project for GIFT participants has begun: donations for "God's Global Barnyard" have already purchased a rooster!



service



Our Home Touch mail ministry continues for the homebound. The Hospitality Team is now helping with GIFT meals. Quilters packed up 165 quilts to send to Lutheran World Relief in November along with 52 school kits. Since returning to in-person worship, we have resumed our Noisy Offerings and sent over \$300 to our missionaries in Mexico and almost \$200 to the Shiner Community Food Bank. The Food Bank is again requesting food donations and will open for regular distribution Oct 15. Our fellowship ministries remain closed in general, but a few small group fellowships are again meeting with safety precautions in place.



God's work.
Our hands.

In September, God's Work Our Hands volunteer crews worked outside at homes and volunteers also packed 52 school kits for Lutheran World Relief.



Since in-person witness events like our Festival 500+ have been canceled, our witness ministry has focused on the streaming of worship services both while we were meeting only online and continuing now that our worship is blended with both in-person and online platforms. Since we returned to meeting in person, we have still averaged 283 online views per service. Some of these virtual worshipers are members who are homebound or staying home due to pandemic concerns. Still others tune in because they are out of town or the virtual service is convenient. Some watch from a distance, either connected to our congregation in some way or worshipping with us because their own congregation is not meeting at all. Some of these virtual worshipers have sent in contributions, appreciating our virtual connection. This ministry will continue.

During this time apart work has continued on website revisions. Our new website should be ready to go in a few weeks and we will be able to reach out in new ways.



Ministries Areas in Action



SUPPORT

Support ministries include all the behind the scenes areas that provide support and administration to keep our congregation functioning: staff, office, church council, endowment, finance, budget, and property. These areas have all continued functioning throughout the months of the pandemic. Council has met via Zoom but now has resumed in person meetings with a Zoom alternative if needed. The office has worked with a staff vacancy since June 1 but will work towards filling that vacancy sometime in the future. Our collaborative learner, Vicar Daniel Volkmann, works a 25 hour per week staff position and has already begun preaching and assisting in many areas. The Budget Team has met and proposed a 2021 budget and the Endowment Committee has met and made recommendations for using some of our endowment earnings for ministry. We look towards utilizing the financial expertise of our Budget Team to meet more often and include finance and budget planning throughout the year.

During the past months, facility maintenance and repair have continued. The parsonage AC unit needed repair during the heat of August with the fan motor replacement and other repair. The routine maintenance such as pest control and cleaning continued even while we were not meeting together. Outdoor upkeep of the landscape and grounds, including special attention to the newly landscaped areas kept volunteers busy. Insurance and office costs did not stop during shut down. The sink area of the kitchen as been completed. Starting October 17, the cabinet work in the remainder of the kitchen will begin. Please remember to use the doors into the Gathering Place to enter the building. The kitchen door will remain locked unless it is being used to load items directly in to the kitchen.



Our Congregation

During the past three months, three church members have entered the Church Triumphant:



Billie Gene Goetz, who passed away August 5, 2020 and whose funeral was held at our church.

Patrcia Bednorz, who passed away September 4, 2020 and whose future memorial service is still pending.

Dennis Nollkamper, who passed away September 14, 2020 and whose funeral was held at our church.



On September 27, we welcomed **new members Daniel & Mallory Volkmann** thru affirmation of baptism. Daniel is a Associate Member, as he retains membership in his home congregation while attending seminary. Mallory is joining as a full member. We are already blessed by Daniel's work here as our Vicar and Mallory's contribution leading worship singing and teaching the high school GIFT class.



We continue to recognize **baptism and wedding anniversaries** in prayer during worship. Those anniversaries along with birthdays will be listed on the announcement slides and in the worship guide when there is room.

Other **prayer concerns** will normally be voiced in the prayers for about three weeks, unless circumstances dictate otherwise. ALL prayer concerns need to be made in writing and given to the office staff or placed in the offering plate. Thanks!

Administration



Our church council has continued to meet during the pandemic, mostly online via Zoom, and recently as in-person and Zoom .

The terms of four members will end in December, but members may serve up to two consecutive terms. The nominations committee will be meeting during October to select nominees for the four positions. Elections will be held on November 15th at the Annual Congregational Meeting.

Please continue to support our church leadership in prayer.

2020 CHURCH COUNCIL

- Faith Darilek
- Tim Harris
- Kristin Neal
- Brian Pokluda
- Sandra Blum
- James Davis

- Loretta Krejci
- Janis Richardson
- Brian Baker
- Danna Murrile
- Matthew Sternadel
- Mike Vaughan
- Pastor Chris Heinold
- Vicar Daniel Volkmann

OFFICERS for 2020:

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



Our leadership Mission Groups in Worship, Learning, Service, Witness, and Support have not met the last six months due to the pandemic. The ministries of these groups have continued in a limited way and will slowly be opening up. We look forward to meeting as mission groups again before the end of the year.

Endowment Committee met October 1 and will be sharing their recommendations with the Church Council.

Budget Team met September 29 and is sending the 2021 proposed budget to Church Council. The proposed budget will be available in the beginning of November for members to review before voting on the budget at the Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday November 15th following worship.

Since June 1, the staff position of Office Assistant has been vacant. Due to the pandemic with reduced church activities, the position has not been filled, In 2021 we hope to return to two positions: Administrative Assistant (18 hours) and Office Assistant (12 hours).



The office will be staffed Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday from 9 am until noon.

Other staff office time will be flexible, but please note that on Mondays and Wednesdays the staff should be on site most of the day. Other times can be arranged by emailing or calling ahead.

Please note: During the pandemic, we began a weekly email update for those members and friends that are in the Shiner area or are closely connected to the congregation. That will continue, as we found we can be more timely communicating changes and updates. We have not published a monthly newsletter since March, although we did send out a Quarterly Connections in July. We plan to continue that pattern of weekly emails and a quarterly newsletter. Please update the church office if you would like to change any of your weekly or quarterly communication preferences. Thanks!

Finance, Budget, and Giving



Thank you for all your giving! Like all churches (and businesses) regular giving has dropped during the pandemic shut down. We have been blessed by some continued regular giving thru these months, as well as some designated special giving. We continue to reach out to those who would like to give by text or online. We've added giving thru Amazon Smile orders and continue to be blessed by giving thru Thrivent Choice by Thrivent members. Our pizza fundraiser in September brought in around \$1,100 for our youth. Noisy offerings brought in a total of \$805.03 for special missions in the four months we were able to have that offering. Our ministries would not be possible without faithful giving.

Some of our expenses were reduced during the pandemic shut down, but utilities, maintenance, insurance, salaries, etc. still must be paid. Our monthly mortgage payment has not been met by regular giving and we have used building fund money to meet the payment. We had planned for that shortfall and had put funds aside to help—even before the stress of the pandemic. Every dollar contributed helps!



New \$ Budget The NEW Budget for 2021 has been proposed by the Budget Team and sent to Council this month for their examination and approval. That proposed 2021 budget will be available for members to review in early November for consideration at the Annual Congregation Meeting that is scheduled for Sunday November 15, 2020 following worship.

WAYS TO GIVE:



IN PERSON: Bring your offering to church and place it in the large offering envelope as you enter the Gathering Place, place it in the offering plate as you enter church, or bring it to the office.

BY MAIL: Send to the church at P.O. Box 26, Shiner.

TEXT: Text an amount to 1-844-697-3838 and put it on your credit or debit card.

APP: Download GIVE PLUS Church App from App Store or Google Play. Find our church (United Dr. Martin Luther Church) and set up your donation.

ONLINE: Go to our electronic giving service (VANCO) and set up a direct draft from your bank or credit card, which allows one time or recurrent giving to all our funds. This is recorded just like in-person contributions towards your giving statement.

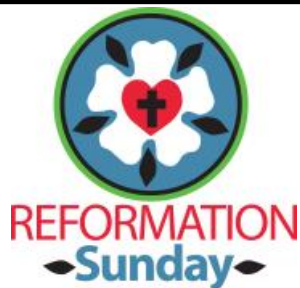
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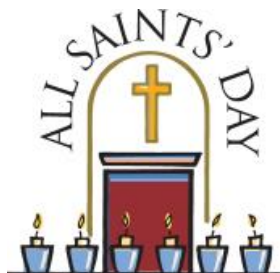
SHINER LUTHERAN CHURCH QUARTERLY CONNECTIONS FALL 2020



**Celebrate in Worship
Sunday October 25th
10:15 am**



**SUNDAY NOVEMBER 1ST
10:15 AM WORSHIP
COUNTRY GOSPEL**



**REMEMBERING OUR
DEPARTED MEMBERS
AND FRIENDS**

Mark your calendars:
**Sunday December 20th
10:15 am Worship
Children, Youth, and Adults**

