

Messiah Lutheran Church

August 20, 2020; 6:00pm

Pastor's Report

Rev. Chuck Harris

Our Deacon, Traci Vatne, participated in her last worship service as a Messiah staff member on Sunday, August 9. It was a festive service, filled with video tributes, special music, and a socially distanced blessing. Traci is officially on staff through the end of August, but from August 10 through the end of the month she will be utilizing her remaining vacation days and is not available. Remember though, she has one last "official" day of work: an amazing celebration of her life and ministry at a real, in-person, blowout party that is TBD. When this party happens, it will be both an opportunity to say "thank you" properly to Traci and mark the end of the restrictions and distancing this pandemic has brought to our lives. In that sense, it will be a double celebration of love, joy, and hope!

We had two services of worship this summer with more than just the worship production team present. One was AOB Sunday and the other was Senior Sunday. Both had small groups of families present, and social distancing was maintained quite well. I am supportive of the idea of beginning to have a smaller group of folks present in the sanctuary. Maybe start with up to 30 people present beyond the worship production team. I'd ask that we do this once a month in September, October, November, and December. We can then evaluate how it is working and make further plans for 2021 based on our experience and how the pandemic is fluctuating.

Welcome to Church Council Josh and Christi. Both are finishing terms of two council members who have departed. The appropriate motion will need to be made to release Jaymie and Stephanie from their council duties and appoint Josh and Christi to the terms remaining. One term is up at the end of January 2021 and the other at the same time in 2022.

Auburn School District has officially informed us that they will not be utilizing their space in the building when classes start this fall. I have asked them to keep us updated as to when they will begin to have some kind of in classroom activities. I also let them know of the offer from Fikes to provide electrostatic sanitization. The lease for space with the school district continues through September 30, 2022. We are entering the fourth year of a five-year lease agreement.

A Stewardship Training Process (Beginning a Culture of Generosity), partially funded by the Southwestern Washington Synod, begins on Wednesday, August 26. Our Finance and Executive Team members will be participating via Zoom. We are also folding in this training to our fall stewardship process at Messiah. Other council members are welcome to participate. Let me know if you would like the Zoom links. Finally, please see the other attachment in this email for an outline of our fall stewardship process.

I have been receiving good feedback on the questions I sent out to select congregation members regarding a fall, online, adult forum. I am also attaching the feedback itself in another document on this email. As the feedback was requested to be back to me by the end of the day today, Monday, August 17, there may be a few more comments not posted to the document you are receiving early.

The Personnel Team will be meeting again on Wednesday, August 26 to consider the work of the Faith Formation Task Force and some information I am gathering.

This week (Tuesday through Friday midday) Kirsten, Ken, and I will be doing some camping in Grayland, WA. It will be a good few night to recharge and get ready for what is shaping up to be an intensive fall for the whole family.

Finally, it is hard to believe that this year began last January with our annual meeting, focusing on how to continue to implement our four mission priorities and then, in Lent, moving to community life during a pandemic. Since then, we have offered daily, recorded devotions; continued to feed our Auburn community on Sundays, Wednesdays, and Thursday; created the capability to worship, learn, and fellowship online; completed a Faith Formation Task Force project; celebrated Holy Week and Easter

from a distance; produced a popular and very widely shared VBS, and recognized AOB students and high school seniors with videos and drive through greetings and well wishes. It has been quite a year, and it is only August 17! Thank you, to everyone, for what you have done, and are continuing to do, to make Messiah an amazing and wonderful place for following Jesus.

Some mission-specific areas and updated comments below:

Worship

- Consider a slow and controlled re-opening of worship as noted above.
- Weekly Holy Communion has resumed.
- Two, small group, in-person worship services held on AOB and Senior Sundays.

FIKES

- Mark Sims is now setting aside and donating a Heat Screener with facial recognition for when we begin in-person worship. (See attachment)
- He is also providing additional thermometers for small groups, additional disinfectant products and masks for congregational use.
- Go Mark and Susie!

Staff

- The Personnel Team will meet again next week to review the work of the Faith Formation Task Force and hear from Pastor Harris regarding his assignments. Evaluation and evolution of staff duties and plan for future is ongoing.

Communication

- New website is being constructed. Delay of two weeks is being experienced due to server and hosting issues being ironed out. September 1 is new rollout date.

Building Use

- Building continues to be closed.
- Office is closed.
- The only scheduled groups continue to be Sunday afternoon and Thursday evening Community Meals. The meals are distributed outside as “grab and go”. Folks inside fixing food are social distancing.
- Same is true for Wednesday morning foodbank.

Operations

- Janitorial service continues to be 4 hours on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.
- Garbage collection continues to be bi-weekly with smaller bins.
- Temperature controls set with less people in building in mind.
- Walt Richards needs a big “thank you” for tending to a variety of building issues, most notably issues with the sprinkler system.

Care

- Lots of phone calling, emails, and Zoom chats
- Next Care Team Zoom meeting is early September.

Endowment

- Pastor Harris is submitting to the Endowment Committee a proposal for a one-year “re-engagement project” to help Messiah prepare for, and build out from, the ending of the pandemic. More at September meeting.