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1509 King Street
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July - August, 2021



the *Voices* of english lutheran

the SEASON of PENTECOST

COMING TOGETHER

by Pastor Glen Bickford

When English Lutheran was formed in 1898, most Protestant churches services were held in the native languages of immigrants. For a few denominations that meant English. For Lutherans that meant mostly Swedish, Norwegian and German. The Catholic church services were in Latin, of course, but still tended to cluster by nationality. In my hometown of Owatonna, there were Irish, German, and Eastern European Catholic Churches.

English Lutheran was different. It held its services in English to welcome all people, not just of a people of a particular nationality. That was quite progressive back 125 years ago. Most churches I've served started English services in the 1920s or 1930s. Yet in 123 years this church has yet to achieve racial and cultural integration even equal to the mostly white demographics of La Crosse and the surrounding communities. Why is that?

I cannot answer that definitively. Each of us in our churches must look within ourselves to understand why. I pray it is not conscious choice (nor do I believe that), but rather the legacy of our ancestors: we have customs that may not attract other ethnicities, or are the results of unconscious choice, or even

continues on page 3

RE-OPENING UPDATE - from the Re-opening Team

The COVID19 pandemic has continued to evolve and we have now reached a new phase. We are grateful these last months have brought:

1. continued progress in the COVID19 vaccination campaign,
2. low and falling COVID19 disease rates in our community,
3. updated CDC guidance stating that fully vaccinated individuals are (generally speaking) neither at risk themselves nor a risk to others concerning spread of COVID19.

With this good news the reopening team is recommending a number of changes to our safety precautions around worship services and meetings. For example, preregistra-

tion to attend worship will no longer be required and strict attendance limits will no longer be in effect. However, we will still require six foot distancing and face masks for now.

Our next phase goal is to make it easier for people to attend and participate in church functions, but to do so in a way that does not cause undue risk.

Because COVID19 is still present in the community (albeit it at low levels) and our youth have not yet had the opportunity to be vaccinated, we will continue important safety precautions for now including universal face-masking during indoor worship services and physical distancing.

continues on page 4

IN CHRIST

We Welcome, Worship & Work

IN THE WORLD

Welcome Brittany Thummel

Adult Choir Director

Brittany is a graduate of Viterbo University with BS in Music Education and a BA in Vocal Performance.

She has participated in local theatre productions and has performed as a soloist with the La Crosse Concert Band and area churches. This summer, Brittany will be the music director for the La Crosse Community Theatre's Youth Production of "Frozen Jr." She frequently serves school districts as a WSMA certified judge, judging Solo and Ensemble festivals around the area. Brittany has served as a cantor at English Lutheran for three and a half years as well as assisted with the Children's Christmas Programs.

Brittany teaches 6-12 vocal music at Bangor Middle/High School. In addition to her classroom duties, Brittany directs the Musical Theatre productions as well as the vocal jazz program.

This summer, Brittany will be reaching out to all the existing choir members. If anyone is interested who has not been involved previously, please email the church office for information on how to connect with Brittany.



Worship Times

June 1 - August 22

Saturday 5:00 p.m.

Sunday 9:30 a.m.

August 28 and 29

5:00 p.m.....Holden Evening

livestream and in person

9:30 a.m.....no service at English

10:45 a.m...at Copeland Park

livestream and in person

Beginning in September

Saturday 5:00 p.m.Sunday 8:30

(live-streamed) and 10:45

Holden Evening Prayer on the PATIO

July 3 and 24

August 7 and 28

5:00 p.m. Saturday services

Saturday services, we will be worshipping outside by the bell tower. The format will be Holden Evening Prayer, a sermon and Communion.

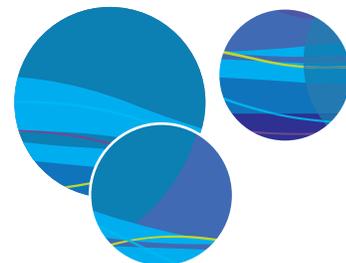
Please bring your own chair and join us on the King Street side of our building on the *newly paved patio*!! There will be chairs available for those who do not wish to bring their own. If using one of ours, arrive early to get one set up.

River Service at COPLAND PARK

August 29 at 10:45 a.m.

Copeland Park

800 Copeland Ave, North La Crosse



Immediately following the worship service there will be a *prepared lunch provided for everyone*. After lunch, there will be *multi-generational activities* to enjoy.

Welcome Alli Langer

Director of Children's Music Ministries

Alli has been a part of English Lutheran for seven years. She first attended English while working on her B.A. degree in vocal performance at UWL. Alli has been a professional nanny for seven years and a private music teacher for five years. For the past five years, Alli also has lead the music portion for the youth musical theatre camp through the La Crescent Appleseed Theatre, as well as helping with the Christmas Program at ELC and Sunday School Music.

Alli is excited to start this new chapter of the Music Ministry for our children and youth at English Lutheran!

Coming together ... from front page

simple habit. Or something else entirely. That is for each of you to ponder.

To overcome this institutional exclusivism, we must work consciously examining our church and its way of being. It is possible that we cannot change what the church is to attract others without altering it unrecognizably but I cannot believe that's the case. What is most human about any of us and our faith (our need for God and need for others) is basic to all cultures and nationalities.

People are people, people of faith are people of faith, worldwide. But in order to understand how we must change we must get comfortable with other peoples. We can't expect them to come as guests to English Lutheran and stay as family if we don't know what we have to change to make this church a truly comfortable place for other ethnicities.

If we can't expect others to come to us, we must go out to bring them here or go to them and learn. Only when we understand others can we know what we need to change and what we need to change to. Each of us make a conscious effort to

connect with other cultures, and our church with other churches, if that's where those other cultures are how best can we do that?

Rev. 7: 9-10a After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God!"

That is the culture of heaven and what God intended when God created different peoples. That all people should worship God together. How can English Lutheran achieve that, within our walls, and outside our walls with the cultures of La Crosse. We're not there yet, but we could be, in time, and with conscious choice. So let's pray about it, act on those prayers and ask God to help us make it so.

GIFTS, MEMORIALS AND PASTORAL ACTS

UNDESIGNATED

In Memory of: Jerry Ruff
by Howard and Nancy Mills, and Jon and Cara Hartfield

BAPTISMS

05/08 Vicki Lynn Hass

DEATHS

05/21Marian Reichgelt

FIRST COMMUNION - May 22

Benjamin Bleidorn, Bethany Eber, Jonathan Ehler, Charles Endrizzi, Ellie Falkenberry, Caleb Farmer, Marian Heckman, Brecken Jackson, Evan Markos, Henry Martin, Samuel Mueller, Christian Rose, Jackson Schultz, Landon Trushenski, and Alivia Wappler

NEW MEMBERS - May 29 and 30

Larry, Vicki, and Maggie Hass, Jerry and Debbie Mayer, Alexis Dunnun and Jay Woodhouse

TRANSITION TEAM UPDATE

The survey results continue to trickle in, settling in at over 200 responses, well over 40%. Understandably, naming the top five ministry tasks for the senior pastor had many different responses, but there were three standouts: Preaching and Worship (150 responses), Building a Sense of Community (91 responses) and Administration (81 responses). The next two highest after these three were Pastoral Care and Visitation (49 responses) and Spiritual Formation and direction (46 responses).

It is clear you want a senior pastor who can manage a busy church such as English Lutheran, but one who relates as much to people in crisis and with an eye to their spiritual direction. Those tasks receiving 25 or more responses include Recruiting and Equipping leaders (32 responses),

Christian Education (27 responses), Evangelism and Mission (26 responses), Strategic Mission Planning (26 responses) and Innovation and Creativity (25 responses).

If it's not a contradiction, you want a pastor who can run a large church, with the ability to relate well to all members but who actually does spend time with all members, not just a select few leaders. You want a generalist who relates to everyone but can also administrate, rather than just an administrative pastor. That is an interesting challenge for the call committee, especially if you also want a healthy pastor who doesn't overwork.

What English Lutheran appears to be most excited about is getting beyond COVID

(and its restrictions). That includes ministry in the community, fellowship and worship. And getting a new senior pastor.

The transition team should be done with its Ministry Site Profile (MSP) by the end of June, and then it needs to be approved by the Vision Board and Bishop Boerger (and perhaps the next bishop?) before it can be sent to prospective pastors. The call committee will be formed at a special congregational meeting June 27 th and then trained by synod staff and hold a mock interview. Then it can receive Rostered Leader Profiles (RLPs) and can begin the selection process.

Pastor Glen Bickford

Seekers Bible Study

Begins September 9
Meets every Thursday
9:39 to 11:00 a.m.
English Lutheran

Our fall session will start out with a study and discussion of the Gospel of Thomas: The Hidden Sayings of Jesus based on the translation and interpretation of Harold Bloom and Marvin Meyer.

The four week opening session will focus on early Christian scriptural writings and will be co-led by two Seekers members - Ron Rogers and Mike Schnitzius.

Books will be available for purchase at the first meeting on September 9.

We look forward to meeting in-person again after a year of meeting on Zoom and would love to welcome new members to join us this fall."

Mike Schnitzius

Coffee & Fellowship

after Worship in July



We are so excited to bring back some of the easy feeling of talking with your church friends after worship. Coffee and juice will be served outside after worship.

Reopening ...from front page

The HVAC system in the sanctuary and narthex will be upgraded by summer's end and the improved airflow will give us even more confidence to relax safety precautions in the future—assuming local COVID19 rates stay low.

We expect to announce more changes in the coming weeks as we seek to thoughtfully undo the safety precautions that were put in place due to the pandemic. We recognize that some may think we are moving too slow and others may think these changes are too rapid. We are trying to balance the many interests while placing a high priority on safety and being guided by the evolving public health guidance.

We ask, as always, for your patience and understanding as we continue to progress and hopefully wind down this pandemic experience over the coming months. Please feel free to reach out to any member of the reopening team if you have questions or want to discuss further.

MISSION SUPPORT

Specialized Ministries of the ELCA and ELC

We often think of ministry as only those things done through our individual church. But, did you know that there are specialized ministries which your regular offerings help to support? These specialized ministries reach directly into the primary social structures and institutions of our world. As they encounter people in the midst of these everyday settings, those who serve in specialized pastoral care seek to extend the love of God in Jesus Christ to individuals — any and all people — at the point of their deepest need.

The focus of ministries in chaplaincy, pastoral counseling and clinical education begins with human need, addressed by God's love in Jesus Christ. These ministries are missional by nature. They embody the church's initiative to minister to people who are ill, imprisoned, elderly, troubled, conflicted and afflicted. We see these ministries reflected locally in our hospitals, long term care facilities, hospice, jail, etc.

English Lutheran Church members are involved in these specialized ministries. In addition to the valuable volunteers

who assist in these settings, there are several ELC members who are either ordained or lay ministry trained to serve as Chaplains. These include:

- Gundersen Pastoral Care
Irene TenEyck as a Lay Chaplain, and Robert Lynn who is currently enrolled in the chaplaincy training program
- Eagle Crest Communities
Pastor Dennis Johnson, Associate Chaplain
Pastor Mark Jolivette, Retired Naval Chaplain, (who was highlighted a few months ago in a VOICE article)

If you would like more information about the Gundersen Clinical Pastoral Care program please Google: Gundersen Clinical Pastoral Education or visit link below.

Thank you for your support of people in these ministries as well as the many other specialized ministries of the ELCA. Susan Johnson, and Mike Schnitzius - Mission Interpreters.

*Susan Johnson, and Mike Schnitzius
Mission Interpreters*

www.gundersenhealth.org/patients-visitors/spiritual-care/clinical-pastoral-education/



High School Youth Night

These Select Sundays from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
June 27, July 11 and Aug 1

Weekly Service Opportunities

Once a week there will be an opportunity for youth grades 7-12 to serve. Types of work, times and days will vary to allow more people to participate. Service projects will be located on site at ELC and also off site aroundtown. Watch for a letter in the mail with all the details and keep an eye on the e-voice and our social media platforms for the latest details.



Family Outdoor Movie Night

We've got the big screen and the popcorn! Bring your bug spray and your lawn chair. Come out for a fun movie night in the parking lot at ELC. Festivities will begin at 6:30. Movie (TBD) will start about 8:15.

CHURCH OFFICE

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INTERIM SENIOR PASTOR

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PASTOR

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

July - August

the SEASON of PENTECOST

OUR VISION

BY THE GRACE OF GOD,
ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH
SHALL BE A HEALTHY,
MISSION-FOCUSED
CONGREGATION

full of life

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LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF SCHOOL KIT PROJECT

After more than a year living with Covid-19, we asked ourselves and the church staff, “What now?” “What will the 2021 Lutheran World Relief School Kit Project look like?” Here are the questions – and the answers we received from the staff.

Can we ask ELC members to purchase and donate school supplies and bring them to church? YES! We can begin collecting school supplies in mid-July. Bins will be available in the narthex to collect supplies from our members. Remember, items for school kits include only these items: 70 page notebooks, unsharpened pencils, 2 1/2 inch erasers, 24 count boxes of crayons, blunt tip scissors, 12 inch/metric rulers, pencil sharpeners, and blue or black ball-point pens.

Sue Marsolek and others have been busy sewing over 700 backpacks so we need to obtain a lot of supplies to fill these backpacks! Last year we used three Thrivent Action grants to purchase supplies. If you are able to apply for an Action Grant please contact Kathy and Bob Weeks.

Can we have a pack-out Sunday where the kits are blessed, and then have members fill the kits into boxes for shipment? YES! Sunday, August 22 has been set as our pack-out date. After a blessing of the supplies during the church service, members of all ages and abilities can help us fill the backpacks. This has always been a fun event! There will be a sign-up sheet in the narthex as well as an on-line registration. PLEASE sign up ahead of time!

Can we serve food? YES. There will be food! We will wait till closer to that date and assess the Covid19 situation in the community with the staff and establish a

procedure for our meal that day.

We are excited to host a school kit project as we did prior to Covid19. Watch for future announcements in the E-voice! And – if you are able or willing to apply for an Action Grant – or are willing to bulk order some supplies, please contact us!

Ministry Council / Kathy and Bob Weeks

