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May-July, 2020



the *Voice* of english lutheran

the SEASON of PENTECOST



DAILY DEVOTIONS by Pastor Mark Solyst

From March 16 through Holy Week (April 10), the staff of English Lutheran offered daily devotionals every weekday morning on our YouTube Channel. Beginning April 13, we cut back the Daily Devotionals to four days a week – Monday through Thursday. Through these Daily Devotionals, we hope to provide a bit of spiritual encouragement and guidance to help us all get through the crisis of Covid-19. These devotionals also allow us to maintain regular contact with members and friends of our congregation.

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Church Life during the Pandemic

By Pastor Mark Solyst

Life has changed because of Covid-19 and yet faith, values and most of what we do continues unabated. We still worship God; we still pray; we still love our family; we still serve our neighbors; and we still eat, sleep and wash the dishes. We do not, however, meet together and that lack of togetherness becomes a huge challenge for a community such as English Lutheran Church.

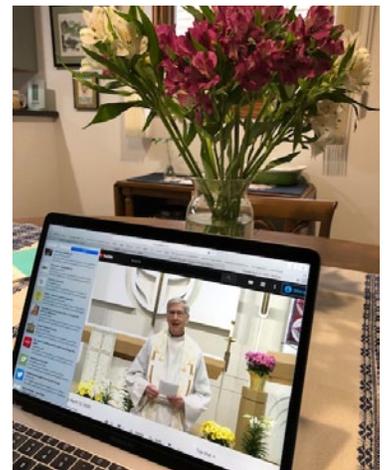
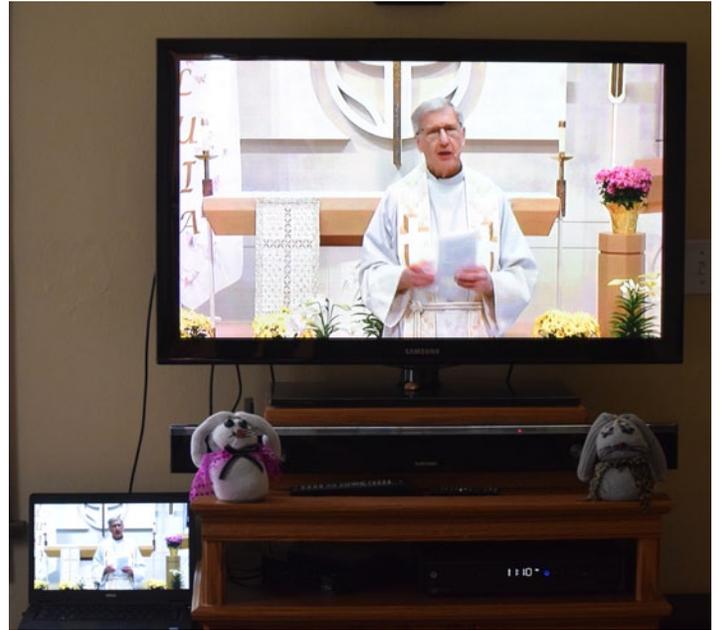
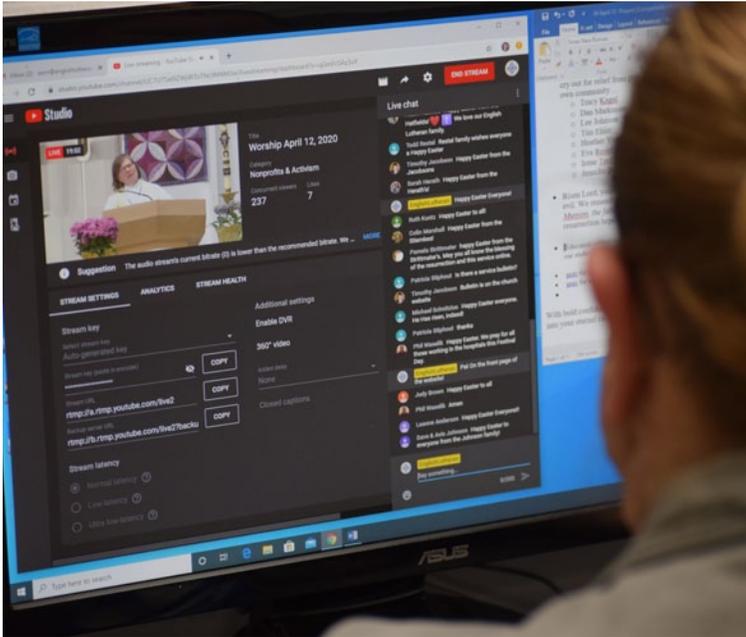
In this special issue of the Voice, we will outline steps our leaders and staff have taken in order to continue the ministry of our congregation and find alternate methods of staying connected. I thank God for my wonderful colleagues on staff

at English Lutheran Church. Although we are not in the office, everyone has found ways to contribute to the ministry of this congregation.

While we wait out this coronavirus pandemic, I encourage you to lean on your faith in Jesus Christ. Even when our future seems lost in a cloud of uncertainty, God can see what we cannot see. God has plans for our future as the prophet Jeremiah writes: “For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. (Jeremiah 29:11)

IN CHRIST
We Welcome, Worship & Work
IN THE WORLD

Worship AT HOME TOGETHER



BEGINNING SUNDAY, MARCH 22, we have live-streamed our 10:45 a.m. worship services on YouTube. These services are available at www.youtube.com/englishlutheran. The link for these services can also be found at www.englishlutheran.org.

Online worship created many technological challenges. Rob Ramseier, a member of our congregation, is a professional videographer and producer. He hauled his cameras and equipment into the sanctuary and in a week we were ready to worship live on YouTube. English Lutheran already had a YouTube channel which made the process somewhat less complicated.



Over 500 households viewed on Palm Sunday and 600 for Easter service. Generally, viewership has ranged from 350 to 500 households. The number of viewers is quite encouraging and obviously, many people watch online that would not otherwise be able to worship in our sanctuary. It feels strange to preach to a camera in an empty sanctuary. On the other hand, online worship provides many opportunities for creativity.

Worship

Time Changes May 24

English Lutheran typically changes to our summer worship schedule on Memorial Day weekend. This year we plan to offer one service on Sunday morning throughout the summer. In 2019 when we replaced our sanctuary carpet, we held only one Sunday worship service in addition to our Saturday service for six weeks. That experiment was well received and in January, the Worship Council decided to expand the one Sunday service concept to the entire summer for 2020.

Governor Ever's Safer at Home order preempts our worship plans for this summer. There may be limits on the number of worshipers who may gather in our sanctuary even into June and July. If nothing else, we have learned to be flexible during the coronavirus pandemic. Please stay tuned for updates.

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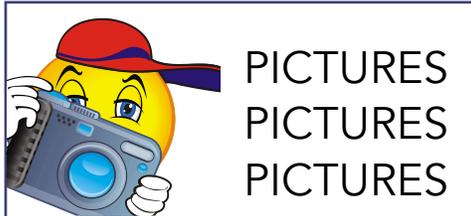
Terry Welch

Devotions continued ... from front page

The response to our Daily Devotionals has been overwhelmingly positive. These devotionals receive between 150 and 200 views and continue to be viewed even weeks after they are posted. Pastors Becky and Mark, Vicar Eric, and Niki, Kerri and Irene thank members who have sent notes of appreciation for these Daily Devotionals. Your support makes our efforts worthwhile.

You may find our Daily Devotionals on our YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/englishlutheran. Otherwise you can always find the YouTube button on top of our own website at www.englishlutheran.org. If you'd like to sign up for Daily Devotionals (sent Mon-Thu) or the weekly Friday E-Voice (sent every Friday), sign up on the front page of our website or contact Jennifer at 784.8876 x201 or jennifer@englishlutheran.org. (These are two different distribution lists, so please specify which list, or both lists, when contacting her.)

We also record these Daily Devotionals on our church's Prayer Chain telephone line. This audio recording can be reached at 608-784-8876, extension 203.



PICTURES PICTURES PICTURES

We would love to receive your pictures of how you stay connected to English Lutheran Church during Covid-19. Take pictures of watching our live-streaming worship services, confirmation students participating online or your own family devotions. Send these pictures, or anything else that seems interesting to Jennifer@englishlutheran.org.

Niki is also coordinating videos of our Sunday School students sharing their milestones. These videos of students reading Sunday lessons, praying the Lord's Prayer or saying the Apostles' Creed have been spliced together and inserted into our Sunday live-streamed worship services. We love it all!

Daily Prayer



We invite all members and friends of the congregation to join in a daily prayer. This prayer is included in our daily email blast Monday through Thursday. We invite people to join in prayer at a specific time each day based on the date. For example, on April 29 (04-29), stop what you are doing at 4:29 and join your friends in this common prayer. If you can't come back online to read the attached prayer, use the Lord's Prayer. This idea came from Craig Ubbelohde, the Executive Director of Bethany St. Joseph Corporation and a member of ELC.

STILL ON OUR RADAR

Several spring and summer events at English Lutheran have been postponed because of the Covid-19 pandemic. We plan to hold these events when the Safer at Home restrictions are relaxed. Options for the following events are still being developed:

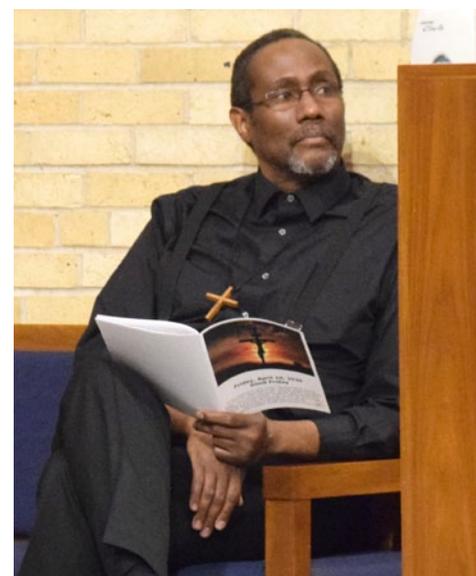
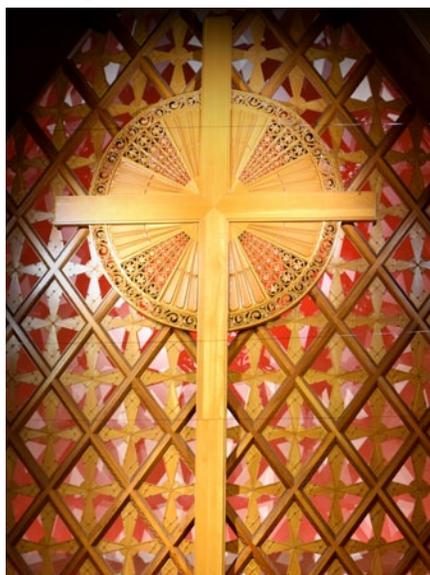
- Volunteer dinner
- Vacation Bible School
- High School mission trip
- First Communion for fifth grade students
- Milestone Sunday
- Senior Recognition – Quilts
- Rummage Sale

Worship

at Our Savior's Lutheran Church

During the pandemic, we have partnered with Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church and Bethel Lutheran Church to produce live-streamed 9:00 a.m. worship services at www.oursaviorslutheranchurch.net. We also live-streamed our Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services from Our Savior's Lutheran.

A surprising benefit of the coronavirus pandemic has been the opportunity to plan worship with our sister congregations. Trevor DuPey and Allison Langer have provided music for both Our Savior's and English Lutheran services. Pastor Becky has been a regular participant in the Our Savior's 9:00 a.m. service in addition to her role at English Lutheran Church.



Voted

Best of La Crosse

MARCH 31, 2020

English Lutheran Church, a congregation of the La Crosse Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, has been selected for the 2020 Best of La Crosse Award in the Places of Worship category by the La Crosse Award Program.



Each year, the La Crosse Award Program identifies companies and institutions that we believe have achieved exceptional marketing success in their local community. These are local companies that enhance the positive image of the Coulee Region through service to their members and our community. These exceptional companies and institutions help make the La Crosse area a great place to live, work and play.

Various sources of information were gathered and analyzed to choose the winners in each category. The 2020 La Crosse Award Program focuses on quality, not quantity. Winners are determined based on the information gathered both internally by the La Crosse Award Program and data provided by third parties.

School Kit Project 2020



The current pandemic has left us with much uncertainty, but we are still hoping to sponsor another School Kit project for 2020. Lutheran World Relief has indicated that there is a great need for school kits. Sue Marsolek has sewn over 650 backpacks – last year we filled 648. As things settle down and we are more certain of what life will look for us this summer, we will let you know how you can get involved. This has always been a fun way to end the summer and reach out to kids looking to get an education. We are hopeful we can do this again!

Kathy and Bob Weeks / Ministry Council



I thank everyone who shared best wishes and gifts at my “70th Drive-By Birthday Party.” It was wonderful to see everyone again. I have missed you! At the same time, I thank you for maintaining social distance and waving from your car windows. I am blessed to live and serve among such faithful, caring and joyful people.





dURING COVID 19



YOUTH MINISTRY

Our ELC youth miss coming to the church building and being a community, but they still know how to be the church when we can't be together!

We have been meeting virtually and discussing how we can be Jesus during this time! We have been praying together, and offering words of Hope for the future! Our youth have shared where they have seen God working and have also written prayer during this time!

Here are some God Moments and they have prayers shared.

Maggie Herath

1. I see God in my teachers, who have been checking in and making sure we are OK, and also giving us things to do.
2. Dear God, please help and support everyone who is suffering with

COVID-19, and give their families courage. Please give health care workers strength, especially those in New York City. Please comfort everyone who is scared and unsure, and guide us all through this difficult time.

Laurel Erickson

1. I have seen God at work through my mother because she is a doctor and is risking her life and health to go to work and help people.
2. I pray that we can all be supportive during this pandemic and stay connected with family members and friends.

John Herath

I have seen God in some way giving strength to those who are affected by this pandemic, whether it's those infected or family members of those who have the virus. I have also seen God through my school, because they continue to provide lunches even

during this time, as well as organizations like Wafer.

Wyatt Moe

1. A few youtubers are sharing food. People are doing their best to stay healthy and clean.
2. I pray that there will be enough food for every one to eat. I pray for enough cleaning products. I also pray that people stay healthy, Amen.

YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

During the pandemic all adults in their 20s to 30s are invited to join our Young adult small group. We will meet virtually over zoom every wednesday night from 7:00 p.m. -8:00 p.m.

Email kerri@englishlutheran.org if you are interested in joining! I will invite you to the next meeting I will host!



CONFIRMATION

Confirmation classes for 7th, 8th and 9th grade students resumed on Wednesday, April 15.

These class are all taught online using the Zoom platform.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

May - July
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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Puppet Shows

Our puppets, Billy, Sally and Fred, have been telling our gospel stories for our live-streaming worship services. These puppet based Young People's Sermons are the creation of Kerri Jahnke, our Director of Youth and Family Ministry. Based on early polling, Billy, Sally and Fred have received more votes than all the other worship parties combined! We thank our puppeteers, Kerri, Vicar Eric, and Niki, for making our gospel stories come alive for our young people (and old people too).

