



PARISH PARCHMENT



Holy Redeemer
Lutheran Church

www.holyredeemer.church

December 2020

Growing to and for Christ!

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⁴ Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. Luke 2:4-5 NRSV

Dear Beloved Community of HRLC,

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!

As we come to the ending of the Church Year of Matthew, we tiptoe over the threshold into Advent and the new Church Year of Mark and we turn our faces and feet toward Bethlehem to await the celebration of our Lord's birth. Advent will be different this year. Due to the ongoing concerns related to the pandemic and recommended protocols

for keeping people safe, on Wednesday evenings we will offer live streaming Advent musical meditations at 7:00 pm and devotions as we prepare, watch, wait and pray. On Sunday mornings, we will mark Advent with the lighting of the Advent candles, hymns to set our hearts to preparation and messages of hope.

Now that the weather is colder and it's not as possible to meet up and sit outside, I'll be at the church from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm, Tuesday through Friday (unless emergencies arise and I need to be away from the building) if you'd like to stop by to visit and chat. Of course, we'll have masks and be covid-safe. Please contact me directly (320.492.6377 or pastor@holyredeemer.church) if you'd like to come over for conversation, share a prayer concern or would like to pray together. You can sure stop by if you're in the area. If you have a pastoral emergency or need to talk, please reach out at anytime.

As we begin our new year together, we'll be gathering various groups and committees online to continue our ministries and share the Gospel of Jesus and his love. The Outreach Committee has provided a way for us to share in the Christmas ministry of the Grateful Grannies. Please see the article on page 4.

We will gather for live streaming **Christmas Eve worship at 7:00 pm** and for **Christmas Day at 9:00 am**. Please watch for email updates about how we might be able to celebrate covid-safely this most precious and holy season in our journey of faith. There will be several opportunities to come for drive-up Holy Communion during our Christmas celebration. Also, I'm able to come by with Holy Communion safely to your home if that is more comfortable for you.

With all the angels and shepherds in the field tending their flocks by night, we will join our voices wherever we may be to sing *O Little Town of Bethlehem* and the carols of the season to welcome the Christ Child into our hearts again. I wish you and your loved ones a blessed Advent of holy waiting and a beautiful celebration of Christmas in the midst of all that challenges we face in our communities and families this year.

God is with us – Emmanuel comes with light and life!

Let's sing together with one voice the holy songs of his birth.

*O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth, the everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.*

Blessings, grace, hope and peace in the name of Jesus,
Pastor Jayne Thompson

Council Corner

Holy Redeemer's Council met on Thursday, November 12. (Meeting minutes were previously sent via email or postal mail, but a few highlights are listed here.)

Suspension: While the HRLC Reopening Task Force did not officially meet, several emails were exchanged following Governor Reynolds' November 10 proclamation. Current information and trends are not consistent with safely reopening the church to in-person activities, including worship. Worship will continue to be streamed on Facebook Live on Sunday mornings. Midweek Advent services will also be streamed on Facebook Live, Wednesday evenings (December 2, 9 and 16) at 7:00 pm. If you are unable to join the live stream, you can also watch the recorded version on either Facebook or YouTube later in the week.

The task force will continue to do its work and provide best practice recommendations. Council will continue to evaluate at their regularly scheduled meetings, the next of which is 10 December 2020 (also via Zoom at 7:00 p.m.).

Finances: During the month of October, we were short of our total budgeted income goal by \$1,561. This included a general fund shortage of \$979 and a building fund shortage of \$582.

Annual Meeting: Sunday, January 24 has been set as the date for HRLC's Annual Meeting. This is tentatively scheduled as a Zoom call immediately following worship. Watch you mailbox or email for more details as the date gets closer.

In addition, budget round table meetings will be held Sunday, January 10 and Sunday, January 17. These too are tentatively scheduled as Zoom calls immediately following worship.

Council Minutes: Council minutes, including additional financial details, are sent via email or postal mail approximately one week after the council meetings. If you have any questions, please ask a council member or contact the office.

SE Iowa Synod

An update from Bishop Current

Dear beloved people of God in the Southeastern Iowa Synod,

"How long, O Lord?", the psalmist cries in Psalm 13.

The Covid-19 pandemic cases have surpassed 51 million worldwide and the number of deaths is over 1.2 million, in the United States 239k people have died. In Iowa, Governor Reynolds reported at a press conference regarding the [November 10 State Public Health Emergency Proclamation](#) that the average statewide positivity rate is greater than 19% and the 14-day rolling average has been greater than 15% and numbers are on the rise. Governor Reynolds said, "Covid-19 is very contagious and spreading, we must do our part to contain and slow the spread to protect all Iowans."

The November 10 proclamation does not directly address faith communities but indicates that there should not be gatherings of more than 25 people indoors and no more than 100 people outdoors for the next 30 day period during this surge. **I highly recommend that congregations consider suspending in-person worship entirely and move to digital or at-home worship in order to reduce the potential for spread and to protect our neighbors.**

In addition, the emergency proclamation advises that we all work together to mitigate risk by wearing masks, washing hands, and practicing safe physical distancing; and that all Iowans minimize the time spent in public places. If at all possible businesses have employees work from home, consider cutting down on or eliminating casual gatherings beyond one's own household, and to postpone extended family holiday celebrations. If someone chooses to participate in a gathering, they might consider quarantining after the gathering to watch for symptoms and then to be tested so as to not spread the virus to others.

In the face of this surge and even with the recommendations in the emergency proclamation, long-term care and correctional facilities are continuing to experience the spread of the virus. Our healthcare systems are stressed and many organizations, businesses, and faith communities

are putting pandemic plans in place, and often changing those plans quickly.

You may, like me, long for some normalcy. You may be longing for a family Thanksgiving table. You may be yearning to sing together again, especially beloved Christmas carols. You may be yearning for a return to the Eucharistic table. Indeed, “How Long, O Lord? How long?” I pray that no matter how long, we will not lose sight of God who loves us and renews us even in the midst of pandemic fatigue. God who calls us to continue sharing the Good News for a world in need. God who is still reminding us to love our neighbors and to care for one another. How do we love our neighbor right now?

Washing our hands.

Wearing masks in public places.

Practicing physical distancing.

Limiting trips away from home.

Reaching out via phone, text, or digitally to those who may be isolated or lonely.

Considering the suspension of in-person worship and providing online/digital worship and/or providing worship from home materials.

By doing so, we can share in slowing the spread, protecting the most vulnerable, ensuring available healthcare for those who may need it, and holding firmly to hope that scientists, medical professionals, public health officials are endeavoring toward a vaccine and continued guidance for a new “normal.”

The Office of the Bishop staff is available to you. I am looking forward to time together with many of you via Zoom in these next weeks as we begin our shared ministry. Here is how the Office of the Bishop in the Southeastern Iowa Synod is going about our work as we navigate the pandemic:

Status of the Southeastern Iowa Synod Center for Ministry:

The staff is primarily working from home. The building that houses the Center for Ministry is closed to onsite meetings and outside guests. If it becomes necessary for a guest to visit the Center for Ministry appropriate physical distancing and adequate space, wearing masks, and contact of 30 minutes or less are expected. Other staff members should be notified that the building will be occupied.

Synod support and resources for congregations:

The staff at the Office of the Bishop is continuing regular work related to the support for congregations and ministries of the synod via email, zoom meetings, cell phone, and through the Center for Ministry’s main phone number. The Office of the Bishop staff will not attend in-person meetings at this time but will be happy to attend meetings electronically.

Bishop Current, Pastor Uthe, and Pastor Ostrem are available for preaching and teaching. Sermons and forums can be either live via Zoom or prerecorded with videos provided electronically in advance.

Val Harlynn is available to provide online worship resources, training for digital meetings, and digital engagement tips.

The Office of the Bishop staff will continue to do our best to support the congregations and ministries. We are in this together.

As we all continue to pray, “How long, O Lord? How long? But I trusted in your steadfast love; my heart shall rejoice in your salvation. I will sing to the Lord, because God has dealt bountifully with me.” (Psalm 13.1, 5-6)

We will sing to the Lord together in time... for now let us sing in our homes, in our hearts, through the screens for the sake of our neighbors.

Peace in Christ,
Bishop Amy Current

Additional Synod Information

For more information from our synod, visit <https://seiasynod.org/>. There you can find weekly newsletters (<https://seiasynod.org/news-events/news/>), messages from Bishop Current, and a number of resources related to COVID-19 (<https://seiasynod.org/covid-19/>).

Outreach

November Mission of Hope

On November 19 we delivered 100 box lunches to Mission of Hope. Nicole, Allison, and Courtney prepared the boxes, filling them with potato chips, applesauce, and cookies. Harold, Daphne, De, Jan, and Judy made the hoagies. Mission of Hope is very grateful to the Duo Day ladies for providing them with 15 quilts. Our thanks to Arlan and De for giving us packing boxes to use for delivering the meals. Thanks also to Marlyn Davidson for giving Mission cards & memo pads.

The next Mission of Hope is Thursday, December 17.

We wish our Holy Redeemer family a very Blessed Christmas and a Healthy 2021.

The Outreach Committee: Arlan, De, Loretta, Nicole, Jan, and Judy

4th Sunday Offering

In December, our designated fourth Sunday offering is scheduled for December 27. The proceeds from this offering will go to **Lutheran Chaplaincy Outreach (LCO)**.

LCO is a not-for-profit organization, that provides pastoral care to ELCA patients and their families at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics (UIHC). Thirty to eighty-five identified Lutherans are hospitalized daily at UIHC.

Grateful Grannies

As many of you know, we have had a wonderful partnership with Grateful Grannies to provide gifts to those in our community with great need. Grateful Grannies is having to make changes this Christmas season in order to consider the safety of the volunteers while shopping, organizing, wrapping, and delivery; and the fact that many students (including Jefferson) are not doing in-school learning until November 16th. Because the students are not in school, the counselors will not have had a chance to identify need and communicate with families. For these reasons Grateful Grannies has decided to supply gift cards to Jefferson, letting the counselors disperse to students as needed. The intention of the gift cards is to help the families with groceries, and also to purchase clothing. The need is so great this year.

The Outreach committee would like to request that those interested in supporting this much needed mission send money to Holy Redeemer, with a note to go to Grateful Grannies. Please send donations by **December 7th** so that we can send a donation check to the Grateful Grannies.

Appreciate your generosity,
The Outreach Committee

Linn Community Food Bank

As has been reported widely in the news, the pandemic, derecho, and holidays combine to create desperate need for donations at local food banks.

Our next Food Bank weekend (2nd Sunday of the month) is scheduled for December 13. We continue to thank you, as does Linn Community Food Bank, for your generous giving.

How to Give to Special Offerings

To donate to Lutheran Chaplaincy, Linn Community Food Bank, or other community partners, simply indicate on your offering envelope, the memo line of your check, or in a separate note. Counters will ensure it gets the proper designation and funds will be sent to the organizations. Thank you for your generous support.

Adult News

Small Group & Committee Activities

COVID statistics for Linn County continue to be inconsistent with reopening HRLC to worship at this time. However, limited in-person meetings can be held at the church.

If you would like to meet at the church, please contact Administrative Assistant, Jeff Hand, via email or cell phone (899-7688) for scheduling. This will help us to ensure that we can keep groups distributed on different days and do not have too many people in the building at one time. This is the best way we can care for one another in the coming months.

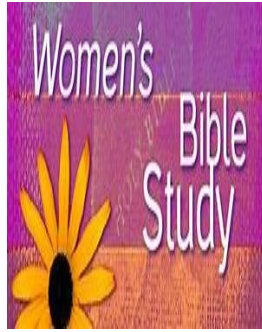
Guidelines for meeting: Groups must be limited to 10 or fewer people. All individuals must wear a mask and maintain 6 feet of safe distancing at all times. Please limit the length of all meetings and clean all surfaces at the conclusion of your meeting.

If you have any questions, please contact Jeff or a member of the task force.

Women's Bible Study

The Bible study for December is: ***"Singing, writing, moving connecting – Advent rituals for uncertain times."*** Bible passages from Luke 1:41-45; 1:39; 1:46-55; 1:26-38

(Copies are available in the WELCA notebook on the shelf under the women's bulletin board.) If you would like an email copy, please contact Jeff Hand, Administrative Assistant.



Bible Study – Advent

(from Laura Fowler)

After all the stress, sorrow and uncertainty of 2020, we are going into Advent. It will be a very different Advent this year.

Keep in mind, God is with you always. He has called you by name. He has given you a promise, a gift. We find this gift after the fourth Sunday in Advent.

We, as Bible readers, know that there have been many times of Waiting. We are in the middle of some very trying times right now.

1. Waiting to meet in church and share the Peace of God.
2. Waiting for our homes to become livable once again.
3. Waiting for the Debris to be hauled away.
4. Waiting for Hugs and to see Smiles and to hold Hands.

As Christians, we excel at waiting. We know in every crisis what the outcome will be. We know that the gift of Jesus Christ and the Promise God gave us will be there, no matter what, even if we don't see it right away. We are only human and we sometimes question God's Grace. God does not break PROMISES.

WAITING----WATCHING----PREPARING---

To

REJOICE

ADVENT

WIGS (Book Discussion Group)



The book for the month is: ***True Sisters*** by Sandra Dallas.

DUO (Do Unto Others) Day News

The cupboard has been cleaned out – 22 quilts to Grateful Grannies, 14 quilts went to Mission for Hope and 9 quilts were delivered to the Salvation Army. *Home Work* did very well!! We were able to pin some quilts together at church. Thanks to all who are doing quilt sewing! If anyone has any cotton fabric they no longer need, just drop it off at the church or call Jeri Hansen, 396-2882 and she can pick it up from you.

Lutheran World Relief in Action

(from Laura Fowler)

Within a decade after WWII, Lutheran World Relief expanded, not only to displaced Lutherans, but to many Global neighbors.

Our DUO day does quilts and donates other needed items. They go wherever there is need. Many stay here in our Community.

Many Lutheran Women's groups make quilts, care kits, school kits and more.

At Holy Redeemer we do collect Personal Care items that are distributed to places like Madge Phillips, Waypoint and others.

So please don't forget:

Those little toothpaste, brush and floss from your dental visit that you won't use.

When shopping, get an extra box of light days or socks and drop off at church or call.

Tell any in need about Mathew 25 and the Food Pantry.

Our DUO DAY group primarily is quilts!

Many go right here in our Community.

Some are sent to other states when they have disasters.

Some join the many thousands sent all over the World.

OUR HANDS-GOD'S WORK

Merry Christmas from LSI!

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." — John 1:5



As Christmas approaches, we give thanks to you! This year has been challenging for all of us, and we are grateful for the Iowans who have stepped up just for the sake of giving and helping LSI in 2020. Thank you for bringing the light of Christ to your neighbors who rely on these important services!

At LSI, we know many people experiencing deep darkness. We know parents who feel hopeless, with little resources to raise their young children. We know adults with disabilities who feel voiceless, with no support system or connection to their community. We know teens who are aging out of foster care, who fear they will never have a forever family to love them.

The holidays can be an especially difficult time for our neighbors who are so often overlooked in our society. In the spirit of giving, the spirit of love, and the spirit of working together, let us stand with them and lift them up this Christmas season. If you would like to learn more about how you can support Iowa children and families, contact Deb Whitford, LSI's director of philanthropy and church relations, at 563.676.2065 or Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org. LSI is also available to provide a customized virtual shared ministry opportunity for your congregation. If you would like to share the message of LSI with your community, please contact our Waverly office at 319.352.2630 to get started.

Wishing you a blessed and merry Christmas from LSI!

Our Mission: Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at LSIowa.org and Facebook.com/LSI.iowa.

Continuum of Care

As she prepared to celebrate her 18th birthday, Sam was also preparing to age out of foster care. She had

lived with her foster mom, Marty, for years and Marty wanted to ensure Sam had a smooth transition into adulthood. That's when they signed up for LSI's Host Homes program.

Provided through LSI's Services for People with Disabilities, Host Homes provides personalized care for Iowans with disabilities who find greater success living in a private family home instead of a busier community living environment with roommates. Individuals are carefully matched with a Host Homes mentor and live with them in their home, where they can build strong relationships and become better engaged with their communities.

Marty became a Host Homes mentor so Sam could continue living in her home and receive the same care and support she was used to. Sam is thriving and Marty gets to continue walking alongside her as she builds a bright future full of independence. They work on Sam's goals every day, including cooking and planning meals. Marty especially loves fishing and going on picnics with Sam and as a Host Homes mentor, she can continue serving as a foster parent to other Iowa teens.

Let's Do Lunch

Will not meet in December

Stewardship

Commitment/Harvest Sunday Update

Various members of the Stewardship Committee (chaired by Peggy Quandt and including members Rollie Harder, Amber Strong, Mary Buelow, Patrick Tomlin and Pastor Jayne) were happy to greet folks in person on both October 25, during the Reformation Drive-up Communion, and November 1, with a drive up to drop off pledge cards.

The Committee will be writing thank you notes to those who returned their pledges and following up with those who may not have had a chance to return theirs to the church.

If you have not picked up your 2021 offering envelopes, please make arrangements with Jeff, in the office, to pick them up.

Thank you from the Stewardship Committee

Stephen Ministry

Stephen Ministry: Help for Others



In this time of the pandemic when all seems to be on hold, when everything seems to be changing day by day, people can become overwhelmed by stress.

Though no one can predict what the future may bring, at this point, the Holy Redeemer Stephen Ministry team is still available to offer help for others.

Identifying people in need of one-to-one Christian care can be challenging in this time. How might you be able to help? Here's a review of the basic steps to pave the way for a friend or family member who may be helped by connecting with a Stephen Minister:

- 1.) Express care and concern in a way that feels natural to you,
- 2.) Tell the person about Stephen Ministry; give them a brochure or suggest they go to the website, stephenministry.org
- 3.) Get permission to pass along their name and phone number to our Stephen Leaders.
- 4.) If they are hesitant, encourage them to consider it based on your concern and what you've heard from them.
- 5.) If they agree, call Stephen Leaders (Marti Marz 319-551-1949 or David Adams 701-690-8573) with their name and phone number as soon as possible.

One more tip: You may tell what you know about Stephen Ministry. Our Stephen Leaders will share more details, answer questions and address concerns.

Thank you for your prayers and support of Holy Redeemer's Stephen Ministers and Care Receivers.

'... let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, ... encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.'

from Hebrews 10: 24

Worship & Music

Wednesday Evening Advent Services

Midweek Advent services – Wednesdays at 7:00 pm – will offer live streaming musical meditations and devotions as we prepare, watch, wait, and pray. Special music for these services will be provided by Jackie and the following guest musicians:

- December 2: Jack Hayes, guitar
- December 9: Gwen Ehler, piano
- December 16: Linda Singelstad, violin

There will be no midweek Advent services on December 23 before Christmas Eve.

Miscellaneous

In Our Prayers

Dick Smith and his family are in our prayers following the death of his wife, Le. Pastor Jayne officiated Le's memorial service on Tuesday, November 17. Le's obituary can be found at: <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/thegazette/obituary.aspx?n=leona-m-smith&pid=197103508&fhid=13711>.

Office Remains Closed

The church office remains officially closed. Reach Pastor by email (pastor@holyredeemer.church), text or cell phone: 320-492-6377. Admin Assistant, Jeff Hand, can also be reached by email (secretary@holyredeemer.church), text or cell phone: 319-899-7688. If you need to stop by the church, please contact Jeff to make arrangements. He stops at church daily to process mail and handle the limited tasks that cannot be done from home.



Thank You from La Vonne Hunter

Thank you to my church family for the cards and notes I received for my birthday. They were sincerely appreciated. Thanks – La Vonne.

Future Events

December 2020

Note: Activities in our building continue to be suspended except with council permission.

Dec 1 (Tue)	Bible Study (via email)	Dec 16 (Wed)	7:00 pm Advent service (FB Live)
Dec 2 (Wed)	1:00 pm Staff Meeting 7:00 pm Advent service (FB Live)	Dec 17 (Thu)	Mission of Hope Meal
Dec 3 (Thu)	6:30 pm Executive Mtg (Zoom) Committees (TBD - chairpersons)	Dec 20 (Sun)	4 Advent 9:00 am Worship (FB Live)
Dec 6 (Sun)	2 Advent 9:00 am Worship (FB Live)	Dec 21 (Mon)	Newsletter Deadline
Dec 8 (Tue)	Bible Study (via email)	Dec 22 (Tue)	Bible Study (via email)
Dec 9 (Wed)	11:00 am Pr & SM leader meeting 7:00 pm Advent service (FB Live)	Dec 24 (Thu)	7:00 pm Christmas Eve service 9:00 am Christmas Day service Office closed
Dec 10 (Thu)	7:00 pm Council Meeting (Zoom)	Dec 25 (Fri)	1 Christmas
Dec 13 (Sun)	3 Advent 9:00 am Worship (FB Live) Food Bank Weekend	Dec 27 (Sun)	9:00 am Worship (FB Live) 4 th w/e offering: LCO
Dec 15 (Tue)	Bible Study (via email)	Dec 29 (Tue)	Bible Study (via email)
		Dec 31 (Thu)	New Year's Eve (2021 can't come soon enough)

January 2021

(All Events Tentative and Subject to Change)

Jan 1:	New Year's Day	Jan 17:	9:00 am Worship Budget Roundtable (Zoom)
Jan 3:	9:00 am Worship	Jan 18:	6:30 pm SM Supervision – Group 1 7:30 pm SM Supervision – Group 2
Jan 4:	6:30 pm SM Supervision – Group 1 7:30 pm SM Supervision – Group 2	Jan 19:	12:30 pm Card Players 3:00 pm Bible Study
Jan 5:	12:30 pm Card Players 3:00 pm Bible Study	Jan 20:	Newsletter Deadline
Jan 6:	1:00 pm Staff meeting	Jan 21:	Mission of Hope Meal
Jan 7:	9:30 am Women's Bible Study 6:30 pm Executive Meeting 7:00 pm Committee Meetings	Jan 24:	9:00 am Worship 4 th WE offering – Souper Bowl of Caring Annual Meeting (Zoom)
Jan 10:	9:00 am Worship Food Bank Weekend Budget Roundtable (Zoom)	Jan 26:	3:00 pm Bible Study
Jan 12:	3:00 pm Bible Study	Jan 31:	9:00 am Worship 5 th WE offering – TBD
Jan 13:	11:00 am Pr & SM leader meeting		
Jan 14:	9:30 am WiGS 7:00 pm Council Meetings		



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Church Staff

Pastor Jayne Thompson

Pastor
 319-396-8547 ext 11
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Jeff Hand

Administrative Assistant
 (319) 396-8547 ext 10
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Jacqueline Murphy

Director of Music Ministries
 (319) 396-8547

Open Position

Custodian
 (319) 396-8547

Church Office Hours

Monday – Friday
9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Worship Services
Sunday, 9:00 a.m.
(Streaming on FB Live)



*If we live by the Spirit, let us also
 be guided by the Spirit.*

Galatians 5:25 (NRSV)



Holy Redeemer
 Lutheran Church

Join us as we grow to and for Christ!!!