

# St. Thomas Lutheran Church News

## July 2021

XXXXIII Issue 7



### From the Pastor

Beloved,

We have to be clear that the challenge is still before us. We have run out of words to describe everything we've seen since COVID-19 hit the scene. We've called it historic and unprecedented. With joy, we see that life is beginning to stabilize. The great many restrictions we have endured are being lifted, most notably some of the fear and anxiety for our safety and the safety of our families. Even those of us with as-yet-unvaccinated children are beginning to feel the pressure valve release ever so slightly. But, even so, beloved, we have to understand that the challenge is still before us.

When people go through traumatic events, their first task is to find safety and stability. In order to move onto the other tasks, you must first know that you are safe and are not at risk of being re-traumatized. Once we are safe, then we can begin to make meaning and understand what has happened to us. First, we remember and mourn, and then we find ways to integrate what has happened to us into ourselves. I'm not a trauma expert, but I imagine these two parts are more of a dance than steps. This might be hard to process just now, but we will be mourning this time and working to understand what it means to us for the rest of our lives. At the same time, *so is everyone else*. And, this all is the challenge on which we are embarking.

We are not headed back to where we were before. There is no normal, and, if we are honest with ourselves, we don't really want to head back there. We are forever changed by what has happened to us and our old answers will not serve us. That can be a scary truth. We will have to admit that we have been changed. We will have to admit that our world has changed. And, let's be honest, the rate of change in the last several decades has been rapid, and COVID has

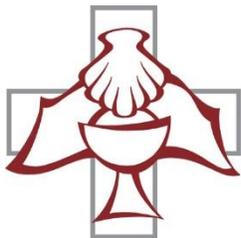
merely made it exponential. For example, how many of us had experience with video conferencing before COVID? Now, many of us are fluent in Zoom. But there is more: some of our neighbors threw caution to the wind and others have been positively zealous in their unwillingness to take any risks. We will have to work to understand all of this inside ourselves and inside our communities. The challenge is still before us.

But we are not unprepared for this. We have a promise from God that in this moment where we find ourselves, God is with us. In the final story of John, Peter, who you may recall, denied even knowing Jesus, Peter, who had, that same night, sworn his undying allegiance to Jesus, acted like he did not know Jesus—he decided to go fishing and a couple other disciples went with him. Even though they knew that Jesus was risen, even though they were safe, they were still trying to make sense of everything that had happened. They tried to go back to the old way. Fishing. For fish. And it didn't work out. That wasn't where they were called anymore. The old answers won't serve them anymore. But, look, there on the beach is Jesus with breakfast. And the conversation revolves around the only thing that can send us out in hope for what yet may be: love. Jesus asks Peter, "Do you love me?" And after asking three times, Jesus tells them the awful truth that Peter will be traumatized again. And still, Jesus says, "Follow me." The challenge is still before us.

Beloved, it is no easy task to follow God in this life through whatever befalls us. It is no easy task to trust that even in this moment God is with us, that God is calling us. And so we trust, that even though the challenge lies ahead, "the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ." May it be so. Amen.

God bless you,

*Pr. Adrienne*



### **Announcements**

Save the Date!

Pr. Adrienne's Installation on the First Anniversary of our Ministry Together

September 12, 2021

4pm

Bishop Bill Gafkjen, preaching



### **Giving**

St. Thomas is supported by your generous donations. We are so grateful to our members for supporting our congregation throughout our long closure. Gifts to St. Thomas were down in the month of May, and while it is common for giving to slow during the summer months, the ministry of the church doesn't slow down at all! Worship, Vacation Bible School, work with our Ministry Partners all depend on your gifts. In addition to giving in the offering plate or box at Sunday worship, you can also give on our website, [stlconline.org](http://stlconline.org) or on our mobile app. To get our mobile app, search for "Vanco Mobile" in the app store. Once downloaded, enter St. Thomas's code, RTTMYX. Many members have had trouble with setting up regular giving via Tithe.ly, so we are transitioning our online giving to Vanco. You can make both one-time gifts and establish regular giving through the mobile app. Thank you for your generosity.

## **From the Minister of Youth & Christian Nurture**

### **River of Life Vacation Bible School**

We had a wonderful adventure in the River of Life VBS!



Our time together was short, but rich. In just three afternoons together, the students heard the stories of God creating the earth, God providing water in the desert and God claiming Jesus as God's own Son. Students also learned about how many people around the world depend on water for their livelihoods and how we can help protect our water sources. We even got to practice cleaning up a dirty river!

Each day included a craft, including creating dove ornaments to add to the St Thomas Christmas Tree that will be auctioned to support New Hope for Families. Games were always a hit with plenty of running and water and fun! We also collected items to be distributed by Beacon in order to help those who are experiencing homelessness to be healthy and comfortable through the hot summer. Thanks to the congregation's generosity, we collected 40 pairs of socks, 19 lip balms, 18 deodorants, 14 bug sprays, 12 water bottles, 7 sunscreens and numerous razors, foot powder and candy bars. The children also colored notes to go with the items to remind recipients that "You are loved!"



Thank you to all the children who came and the parents who participated alongside them. Thank you for helping us in this first step of returning to children's programs!



Thank you also to our many volunteers who made this a reality: Sharon Fawbush, Sarah Fogleman, Irene Fogleman, Isaac Fogleman, Pastor Amanda Ghaffarian, Kaye Hill, Leah Iversen, Peter Iversen, Kristin Marsh, Pastor Adrienne Meier, Jan Sinn, Melody Smith and Deacon Allison Ward.



### **Planning for Sunday School**

We are making plans for children's Sunday School for this fall and we need your help! Please take a few minutes to answer [this 5-question survey](#) to help us with our planning. Look for more information about our plans for children, youth and adults coming in August!



### **More Family Fun**

Join us on Tuesday, July 6 at the Switchyard Park Spray Pad! We will be there from 6-8pm hanging out between the spray pad and the playground. Come play with us and bring a picnic dinner if you want!

### **Word in the Woods**

On Tuesday, July 27, we will gather at the Griffy Lake Boathouse parking lot at 7pm for a 1.5 mile hike woven together with worship. We look forward to spending time in God's presence in creation. Adults, middle school and high school youth are welcome to join on their own or children are invited to participate with their families. Please RSVP to Pastor Lecia ([pastorleciabeck@gmail.com](mailto:pastorleciabeck@gmail.com)) by Monday, July 26.

## **LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY AT IU**

Campus ministry during the summer is a bit different than campus ministry the rest of the year. Most students involved in the ministries are dispersed to various parts of the country working at summer camps, summer jobs, or internships. Some stay connected via text, email, or social media, but others choose to pause and rest from anything campus related.

For Campus Ministers, summer is a time where much of the behind-the-scenes prep work begins to happen. Booking locations for fall retreats, gathering curriculum resources for Bible Studies, writing grants for upcoming service projects, reaching out to various congregations to connect with both incoming and current students, planning future ecumenical activities with other ministries on campus- these are just a few of the tasks that are on the to

do lists of most campus ministers. Summer also allows the opportunity to attend continuing education conferences and network with others for idea and resource sharing.

Rose House Campus Ministry at IU Bloomington is no exception to this Spirit led season filled with ideas, excitement for the future, and collaboration with other ministries. There are lots of great plans in the works for when students return to campus in August and lots of opportunities for St Thomas and the students to connect with each other. Stay tuned to future newsletters and weekly announcements to see how you might take part in some of those activities.

For the rest of this summer and beyond-may God inspire you, strengthen you, walk with you and help you to discern and discover where the Holy Spirit is moving around you. May your witness to the world help make Jesus known and may your life reflect the love of God always. Amen.

Peace,  
Pastor Amanda †

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### **God's Work Our Hands**

You are invited to join us at Rose House 314 S Rose Ave Bloomington, IN on the morning of Saturday August 7<sup>th</sup> for our annual God's Work Our Hands Service Project. There will be opportunities to do a variety of activities to help Rose House Lutheran Campus Ministry get ready for the new academic year. Examples of projects to be completed include but are not limited to- yard work, sanding and painting our picnic table, and assembling welcome kits. All ages are invited. More details to come in the weekly announcements closer to August.

### **Do you know a student planning to attend college in the Fall?**

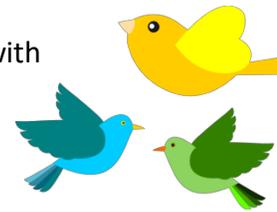
Help us to get the students in your life connected with campus ministry whether at IU Bloomington or at another college/university. Please go to the LuMin website and fill out the refer a student form: <https://www.luminelca.org/refer-a-student/>

### **St. Thomas Mission Endowment Fund Call for Proposals:**

The Mission Endowment Fund provides funding for special projects at St. Thomas Lutheran Church, local outreach, and missions beyond the local community. **If you have a project in need of funding, please submit an application before July 31<sup>st</sup>.** Application forms can be emailed. If you have questions, please contact the church office or Keith Knipstein, Chair of the Mission Endowment Fund Committee.

## **FIBER ARTS SPIRITUAL GROWTH GROUP (SGG)**

Fiber Arts is for the birds! Come learn how to make different bird crafts with the intergenerational Fiber Arts Group Saturday, July 24th from 10 am-12 pm. We will meet at church in the conference room (and follow COVID protocol) or via zoom!



Bird ornaments are being made for a Christmas tree that will be decorated and given to New Hope for families as a fundraiser this Fall.

Please contact Leah Sinn Iversen or Pamela Grenfell Smith for any questions about the gathering!

**Please consider becoming a worship volunteer.** For the summer opportunities are set up/tear down for the 10:15 outdoor service, also lector and usher/greeter.

Please consider bringing your own lawn chair to the 10:15 outdoor service if possible.



## **From League of Women Voters-Bloomington Monroe County:**

The Bloomington Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority [<https://www.facebook.com/groups/BloomingtonDeltas>], an LWV-BMC community partner, is hosting a shoe drive to raise funds for the organization. Collected shoes will be used to support micro-enterprise vendors. These are small businesses in developing nations, typically operated by one person or family and friends. Drop off your gently worn, used and new shoes at St. Thomas Lutheran Church, 3800 E. Third St., Bloomington, on July 10, from 2:00 to 5:00 pm.



**DONATE YOUR GENTLY  
WORN, USED AND NEW  
SHOES TO THE  
BLOOMINGTON ALUMNAE CHAPTER OF  
DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY, INC.**