

St. Luke's EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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From the Rector

By Martha Kester

As we move into an unprecedented 12th month of COVID restrictions I saw a sign while driving which said "I'm ready to live inprecedented times." I've heard people say we need to get used to the new normal but I disagree; none of this is normal and instead of acquiescing we need to work to move back into a sense of normalcy; to move back into a place where we are being the gathered community worshipping the living God.



Fear, anger, frustration, angst is not the way God desires us to exist. This has caused us to live in a state of unknown where often we have no power

to control even our own schedules. Sadly this causes some people to lash out, which is what we saw in the despicable actions at the Capitol recently and in so many cities over the summer. On the other hand, some react by circling the wagons, looking to protect themselves from outside forces. Yet how should we as Christians be reacting and handling what is going on?

I believe neither lashing out nor circling the wagons is an appropriate response for those of us professing to follow Jesus as our Lord and Savior. I look at what happened to the early church when persecutions started with the killing

of Stephen. It forced them to move outward to finally start fulfilling the great commission given by Jesus before his ascension. At the very end of the Gospel of Matthew we are told: **And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."** (NRSV Matthew 28:18-20)

We need to be about what Jesus wants us to be about; mainly as our mission at St. Luke's states 'to enlarge the kingdom of God.' Just like every place else, finances are becoming tight, yet we continue to carry on with our outreach ministries.

Continued on page 2

Military Care Package Opportunity

The last unit Martha served with in Iowa has been deployed to Kosovo for a year. If you would like to send a care package we are sure they would appreciate it.

Packages may be sent to
Cory Van Sloten who took
over her position when she
transferred to the NE Guard:

Cory Van Sloten
RC-E, HHC, KFOR 28
CMR 09
APO, AE 09240

Annual Report Available

The Annual Meeting was held via ZOOM on January 31, 2021.

A copy of the Annual Report was emailed to all members for whom we have email addresses.

If you would like to receive a hard copy please request it from the parish office at (515) 277-0875.

Though how we continue to support them also becomes a challenge. For example I was thinking about Mercyline and Mercy the two young girls in Kenya we have committed to support so they might get the education necessary for their future. Every year our Shrove Tuesday dinner is the main fundraising effort for the \$2000 or so we need to fulfill our commitment. With how things are going that dinner won't happen, yet the need remains.

So much at the church has been put in hiatus or been modified in some respect. However, I believe at this time we should be seeking to find more ways to reach out not cut back. May we all be inspired by Jesus' words remembering he is with us in our circumstance, in these unprecedented times, not in spite of them!

As we begin this time of Lenten self-reflection may we all seek to find new ways to reach out as followers of Christ, working to expand his kingdom.

God bless
Martha+

From the Senior Warden

By Alex Jenson

St. Luke's family,

Last year was, without a doubt, a challenge for the church and for each of us personally. Because of the pandemic we had to spend the majority of the year apart from our family and friends. The St. Luke's family also had to make changes in order to keep one another safe and healthy.

One of the major changes St. Luke's made was offering live-streamed services and pre-recorded videos via our Youtube channel. The leadership team and I know how important the weekly services are for members of St. Luke's so we wanted to do everything we could to make the virtual experience as fulfilling as the in-person experience as we could. With an investment in a dedicated camera and laptop, we have been offering high-quality videos every week! And with the help of Steve Elfvin and Ben Frambach, we have a small team of people who will continue to produce videos every week.

One thing that didn't change during the pandemic was the strong financial support from St. Luke's members. I want to thank everyone who continued to give and pledge in this uncertain environment. Our 2021 budget is facing a shortage but because of your past and present stewardship St. Luke's has financial reserves and will be able to continue to focus on ministry.

On a related financial note, some may be wondering about the status of the 2nd Priest Capital Campaign. St. Luke's is encouraged that despite the financial strains of the current economic situation, we have raised the necessary funds and pledges to support a 2nd Priest. However, since St. Luke's is not worshipping together in its full capacity, the 2nd Priest search will be delayed until we can worship and operate together fully.

Looking forward to seeing and worshipping with all of you soon,

Alex Jenson

Lay Eucharist Visitors Winter 2020

By Kristine Crisman

Being an EV has brought me great joy. To watch a sense of peace come over the people we visit after they receive the communion is beautiful. Communicating with them about the sermon, the readings and letting them know about events and what's happening is a wonderful way to bring St Luke's to the people that are unable to be there. For me, while I'm preparing the wine and wafers for a visit is another way to become closer to God. Whether the person you're visiting is able to participate fully with you or not it is truly a moving experience that I feel honored to be a part of and what I think is one of the most important things St Luke's can do for others.

For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. — John 6:33

Ways to Join in Worship:

In-Person Sunday Worship **Suspended**

Sunday morning services are officially not allowed due to the current COVID rates. Stay tuned because we will resume as soon as possible!

Sunday Morning Devotion Video

Martha records a devotion and Spiritual Communion each Sunday and will be available by 8a.m. on either our Website www.stlukes-dsm.org or You Tube channel www.youtube.com search for: St. Luke's Episcopal Church Des Moines, IA.

In-Person Weekday Worship **Continues**

Bishop Scarfe has approved the continuation of our weekday services in groups of 4-5.

Monday, Tuesday at 5:15 p.m.

Wednesday at 9:30 a.m.

Friday at 7:00 a.m.

Saturday at 8:00 a.m.

Online Worship

Livestreams are currently suspended.

Zoom Worship Every Thursday

Evening Prayer led by Karen Schoville & Susan Mathison each Thursday Night.

Please join with your audio on mute so that you can participate in the service, but not create confusing audio feedback.

Topic: Evening Prayer with Hymns

Time: This is a recurring meeting, Thursdays at 5:15PM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88139222887?pwd=U0Q2RTVzSS9sUGhpV2lZRVozWFp3UT09>

Meeting ID: 881 3922 2887

Passcode: 408710

staying informed

These links as well as the most up to date changes are available in our e-Bulletin each week.

To subscribe:
email Angela in the parish office at stlukesdsm@netins.net and ask to be put on our e-Bulletin list.



History

By Kristine Crisman

History: {N} *The study of past events, particularly in human affairs*

When I think about history, I think about things that happened hundreds of years ago, like the Revolutionary War. Of course there are other events that were not so long ago such as 911.

When it comes to St. Luke's history, I wonder what the parishioners--future and present--of St. Luke's, will think about how we handled everything during the Covid19 pandemic.

I hope they know we **tried**. We tried to keep services in person and do it as safe as possible. We tried to keep everyone connected as much as we could. We tried to celebrate all our religious and special holidays We tried to visit the sick and give communion. We tried to feed the hungry and help in our community near and far. We tried.

What we did **accomplish**: We held services in person and also streamed them so not only our parishioners, but hopefully countless others were able to see us and hear the Gospel. We called the people of St Luke's to check in and see how they are doing and if anyone needed help with getting groceries, rides to appointments etc. We celebrated Easter in June but we celebrated in the resurrection of Jesus!

We unfortunately were unable to give communion to the sick, but we held them up in prayer every day and contacted their family members to see what we could do to help. We donated money to the homeless shelter so they could buy food for the homeless.

St Luke's is over 100 years old and has seen and been through a lot. God willing we will be here another 100 years to worship, pray, give thanks and enlarge Gods Kingdom.

For with God nothing shall be impossible
— Luke 1:37

Lenten Offerings...

Friday Stations of the Cross in Lent:

Since we are still not allowed to gather which will most likely extend through Easter. We will be offering Stations via zoom every Friday of Lent at 7pm as we did during our June Holy Week last year. If COVID restrictions go away this will become in person in the sanctuary.

Feb 19, 2021 07:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)
Every week on Fri, until Apr 2, 2021, 7 occurrence(s)

Feb 19, 2021 07:00 PM	Mar 19, 2021 07:00 PM
Feb 26, 2021 07:00 PM	Mar 26, 2021 07:00 PM
Mar 5, 2021 07:00 PM	Apr 2, 2021 07:00 PM
Mar 12, 2021 07:00 PM	

Topic: Evening Prayer with Hymns

Time: This is a recurring meeting, Thursdays at 5:15PM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85046540139?pwd=bGJZY0ZTUXlaM3dvWHd6U2Vvc3oydz09>

Meeting ID: 850 4654 0139
Passcode: 726207

Lent Madness:

Yes we will compete in Lent Madness once again - the Sainly Books have arrived and if you'd like one either stop by church to pick one up or let us know so we can get one to you. As usual if you want to play; fill out the bracket along with a \$10 registration fee no later than Ash Wednesday February 17th for your chance to win a Golden Halo Mug and to designate which outreach project receives the money collected.

Lenten Study:

Wednesday evenings 7-8 via zoom beginning February 24th we will be looking at various Saints from Lent Madness (only those who already have been voted off so not to sway the contest) Join us to talk about your own favorite Saint! If COVID restrictions go away we will move to an in person meeting.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83285438318?pwd=anQ5RjVqZFVvRm9ST1JPNjJ1cUhkUT09>

Meeting ID: 832 8543 8318
Passcode: 647449

Community

By Vince Carter

No man has ever been completely prepared for fatherhood when it arrived. How could he ever be ready for an immediate change to his lifestyle, his identity, and his financial status in a matter of a few hours? He is confined to work and home. He is no longer a name but the father of that adorable child. The cost of raising a child is staggering to practical economics. Many new fathers are forced to give up items planned and saved for over time. A new car or a new boat might no longer be in the realm of possibility. His facial expression goes from confident and competent husband to a look of profound confusion. One expression on a new father's face projects happiness and at the same time an unconscious stare at his surroundings. Pediatric nurses are accustomed to that look and go out of their way to help reassure the new parent that he will be all right. Not the same but all right.

Eventually, fatherhood will become his accustomed way of living. The man will find great pride in his offspring. He will also find great responsibility associated with his new role. I observed a man like that the other day while I was driving to the grocery store. There was a young girl operating a small electric motorized scooter on the sidewalk. She couldn't have been more than five years old. She had the scooter cranked up to full throttle and seemed exceedingly happy with her travel speed. Her hair was being swept back by the wind and a contented smile cracked her face. Approximately half a block behind her was a man I assumed was her father. He was jogging at a brisk pace. He seemed to be trying very hard to keep up with her but was losing the race. She appeared to be pulling further and further away from him. The expression on his face revealed a tired and panic-stricken man who was

losing control of his charge. I recognized that look because it appeared on my face a number of times in the past. Keeping up with your children is frightening and exhausting sometimes.

When I was first married, an older parishioner gave me some revealing advice. He said if I wanted to be a good father then I should be the best husband I could be. By so doing, he claimed the children would learn the concept of a loving family by example. I believe he was right. My children claim I was a good husband. Not the best but all right. I am fortunate they turned out well. I'm sure the church had something to do with that circumstance.

I am encouraged by the young men at Saint Luke's, some of them fathers and others not. The fact that they attend church says they are on the right track. Their committed journey to God makes them good examples for their wives and children. Those without children will be partly prepared for fatherhood because they will be the best husband material. They will understand that there is love and safety in God's presence in their lives. Some day, should they find themselves running after a five year old daughter on a fast scooter-and they will be running as fast as they can-they will understand God is sitting on the seat next to her. I have no clue if that jogging panic-stricken parent caught his daughter before disaster struck. I suspect he did. Fathers and mothers both find an inner super strength in times of potential catastrophe. I believe God plays a part in those situations too.

I have faith God the Father still looks down with grace on my children. They are parents themselves. My daughter is a good mother and my son is a good father. They no longer try to scare me to death. I am contented that with or without me they will be all right. Not the same but all right.

Finance Committee Report 2020/2021

The financial condition of St. Luke's is the strongest it has been in the past decade:

- During 2020 staff and all bills were paid in full and on time
- During 2020 expenses were managed carefully and savings were realized
- Assets are at the highest level in a decade
- A reserve fund of \$150,000 was established
- The 2nd Priest campaign goal has been met

Several factors elevated the financial situation despite the pandemic.

1. Expenses have been managed carefully over the past decade. In 2020 both budgeted and actual expenses were less than 2011 budgeted and actual expenses.
2. St. Luke's received a generous gift from the Estate of Carol Vavra.
3. Funds were received earmarked for a 2nd Priest. Those funds will be held in a separate account until the time is right to move forward.
4. St. Luke's received a Paycheck Protection Program "loan" of \$17,880. It is expected that the loan will be forgiven in full. Those funds covered the 2020 loss (\$5,080). The remainder of the PPP funds (\$12,800) are included in the 2021 budget.

The Vestry believes the best long-term approach to the pandemic is to prepare for a full return to services and activities. To honor that we will maintain our staff and manage expenses carefully.

Planning for the 2021 budget assumes that until full services return income will be less. Pledges and Open Plate, the two biggest income lines, are budgeted at reduced levels for 2021. Without those reductions the 2021 budget would balance. Both of those dips appear to be a symptom of the times and, hopefully, will recover in 2022. Fortunately, there are sufficient reserves to supplement giving for many years.

St. Luke's can continue to focus on Enlarging the Kingdom as we have sufficient resources to weather this storm.

God Bless,
Jim Fleming and George Wilson,
Finance Committee Stalwarts

Music Notes

By Akira Mori



WELCOME TO OUR NEW ORGANIST—AKIRA MORI

Hello, St. Luke's Parish! I am honored to be selected as your new organist. When I took a few organ lessons during my undergraduate music studies at Tamagawa University (Tokyo, Japan), I never dreamed I would someday actually be an organist! I have a fair amount of keyboard skills (piano) but have never served as an organist. This is a good transition for me. I like the challenge! Thank you for giving me this opportunity.

Music is my life. Shortly after those organ lessons in Tokyo, I transferred to New England Conservatory (Boston) where I received my bachelor's degree in flute performance. From there I went to Indiana University and received my master's degree in orchestral conducting. I have conducted professional orchestras in the U. S., Japan, Russia, Poland, Romania, England, and elsewhere. I have taught and conducted student orchestras at Tokyo College of Music, University of Louisiana, University of Minnesota, and currently at Drake University where I am Director of Orchestral Activities.

As an orchestra conductor, I am used to reading at least twelve lines of music at once in the orchestral scores. I am used to having to coordinate 60-100 musicians in the orchestra and have even conducted those orchestras with choruses and/or opera singers. But believe it or not, reading three lines of organ music and coordinating 3 ranks of organ stops is much more challenging for me!

It is sad that COVID has prevented me from being able to play for services at the beginning of 2021 as planned. However, I am busy selecting music for future services, familiarizing myself with the wonderful Reuter organ at St. Luke's, exploring the collection of chorus music available at the church, and practicing preludes and postludes for future needs. Hopefully, we will all be together for a worship service soon.

I should introduce my wife Maryann. She is really the organist of the family. (She has played for over 30 years.) She currently serves as organist for two different churches in the metro. She subbed at St. Luke's on Thanksgiving Day, so maybe a few of you have already met her. Maryann and I have lived in Des Moines almost 13 years. We moved here when I accepted the position at Drake University. Maryann is a librarian and is a consultant for the State Library of Iowa. I look forward to meeting many of you, and I hope that when situations improve, you will sing loudly and maybe even consider joining the choir!

Kenya Project IFAGE

St. Luke's continues to support Mercyline and Mercy with their education. Despite current challenges both Mercyline and Mercy continue to make progress with their studies. Domnic Misol provided the following update:



Thank you so much for your greetings and best wishes to Iowa and Christians of St. Luke's Church, Des Moines. We are sad to hear that you are struggling with second wave of covid-19 pandemic. We pray for you. In Kenya too, we are experiencing second wave of the virus and the government is taking bold steps towards its containment. Pray for us too.



Thanks for your prayers and support for Mercy at Nyamira Girls High School, and Mercyline at St. Aloyce Reru, they are doing well, and Mercyline is currently back in school since October as per the government's directive for all candidates to resume classes as they plan to sit for the National Examination for Secondary and Primary education. We hope Mercyline will graduate sometime in 2021, but exact exam date for Mercyline's candidate class is not yet released. For Mercy, she will resume/report back to school on 4th of January 2021.

Should Mercyline be successful in her studies and exams she can advance to a higher level. We wish her that success and are prepared to support her as she progresses. The support for both Mercyline and Mercy comes from individual donations and the proceeds from the Shrove Tuesday Pancake celebration. In December St. Luke's sent \$2,000 to cover 2021 tuition and fees for both Mercyline and Mercy. Currently there is \$58.12 remaining for 2022 support. When St. Luke's regathers fund raising for 2022 support will resume.

A huge thanks to the members of St. Luke's for supporting these young women as they work towards achieving their education, a steppingstone to their future dreams! Please keep Mercyline and Mercy in your prayers for health, safety, and successful studies.

— Jim McLallen, Denise Stowman, George Wilson

Outreach 2020

KING, MOULTON, CALLANAN, & MONROE SCHOOLS

2020 was a year of flexibility. Service to the King Pantry started inside the school, took a mandated hiatus, returned to the parking lot for the summer, and moved to the Friendship Center once school resumed since volunteers were not allowed into schools.

Team King started serving only King; by year end we were also serving Hope/Bethel Mission, Moulton, Callanan, and Monroe. We deliver, pack, and distribute weekly at the Friendship Center for King, Callanan, and Monroe. We deliver and unload at Moulton.

The majority of the food comes from FoodBank of Iowa (FBOI). It would not happen without their stellar cooperation. HyVee and Campbells Nutrition contribute the rest.

The majority of the families at each school subsist below the poverty line. Their children are often hungry, an impediment to learning and positive behavior.

So why is Team King dedicated to this outreach project? We are Christians so helping those with less is who we are.

Team King consists of volunteers from the Vineyard Church as well as St. Luke's. Fortunately in December Maggie McKinney and Morgan Crisman volunteered to help with distribution!



We moved lots of food, almost 50 tons!

Total	97,847 lbs or 48.9 tons
King (FBOI)	59044 lbs
King HyVee	564 lbs
Bethel HyVee	2334 lbs (delivery)
Monroe FBOI	1756 lbs (delivery)
Moulton FBOI	34149 lbs (delivery)

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

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