



# Christ Lutheran Church REPORTER

**June 2020**

A Publication of  
Christ Lutheran Church  
113 Union Street  
Natick, MA 01760

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**Leaders of the Congregation:**

- George Hall, President
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- Edie Lohr, Treasurer
- Dorothy Nail, Secretary
- Carol Virshbo, Professional Leadership
- Laraine Marthinsen, Flowers
- Mary Avalos, Family Promise
- Robin Hurst, Family Promise
- Frank Miller, Financial Secretary
- John Whitlock, Resource
- Amy Lousararian, Endowment
- Edie Lohr, Altar Guild
- Phil Roberts and Kim Petot –WMWA
- Bruce Schnepper, Property
- Jeffrey P. Kinney, Stewardship
- Martha Cronin, Communications
- Janice Laakko, Visitation/Card

**Congregation Council:**

- George Hall (2020)
- Dorothy Nail (2020)
- David Pellauer (2020)
- Hannele Saramo-Raja (2020)
- Hilding Hedberg (2021)
- Celeste Larson (2021)
- Amy Lousararian (2021)
- Peter Miller (2021)
- Edie Lohr (2022)
- David Ripp (2022)
- John Whitlock (2022)
- Ellen Zagajeski (2022)

God continues to be at work in creation, and through the members of Christ Lutheran Church, even while we do not yet gather in person.



Our church grounds change daily. The raised beds now have plantings, and the irises and rhododendron are now in bloom!

Drive by and have a look; better yet, come by on June 6 for some spring gardening. (See inside for details.)



## Pastor's Page

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According to aides to Gov. Charlie Baker, his decision a couple of weeks ago to include houses of worship among the first institutions to be allowed to begin to reopen stemmed from concern over a potential lawsuit (on the basis of the First Amendment) to demand that prohibitions on gatherings of more than ten people be lifted, which is an altogether reasonable calculation for an elected official to make.

The decision means that it is now up to faith leaders and the communities they serve to weigh what is permissible against what is “meet, right, and salutary,” to borrow a phrase from the Great Thanksgiving of the Service Book and Hymnal (the “red book” of 1958), that is, what edifies the Body of Christ, what is life-giving to the Church and wider community.

The Congregation Council has begun to consider what a phased in reopening of the building—and it will most assuredly be a phased in reopening— will look like for worship, other congregational activities, and community use: the benchmarks that will guide us, the safeguards we will enact, the measures of progress we will watch for, as well as any indications that we will need to take a step or two back. Guidance comes from many quarters: The Centers for Disease Control, our state government, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, our synodical bishop, and ecumenical partners. Most deeply, though, God’s Word, spoken to us through Holy Scripture, and most fully in Jesus of Nazareth, urging us always to care for our vulnerable neighbor, even at personal cost, will direct our decision-making.

The Congregation Council has appointed a COVID-10 Working Group to prayerfully engage with the guidance available to us and, in consultation with the Council and Worship, Music, and Visual Arts Committee, other congregational entities, and the membership at large, make recommendations as to how Christ Lutheran Church shall move forward. Your input is welcome. Members of the team are Lana Peta, Phil Roberts, John Whitlock, Joyce Simon, Bruce Schnepfer, and I. My thanks to each and all for their offerings of wisdom and expertise, time and energy.

In the meantime, I am enormously thankful to Music Director Tom Berryman, members of the WMVA Committee, image curator Rolf Larson, and all who have contributed to Sunday virtual worship with gifts of music, leading prayers, reading Scriptures, and simply tuning in to participate each week. The worship we have offered is perhaps less technically polished than some, but we have sought to strike a balance between high technical achievement and authenticity, and to recognize that reproducing the in-person worship we so miss is simply not possible. I hope that we are finding that balance, and am heartened by the patchwork quilt of faces each week, and even the faceless phone numbers in the mix.

Be of good cheer, dear church. God is with us and in us and wills us good.  
Peace in Christ.

Pr. Rebecca Bourret

## **Music Notes**

### **June 2020**

Thoughts on making music at Christ Lutheran these days...

Several basic principles and methods have guided the planning and production of online music for church, for Daily Reflections, for hymn sings and for weekly choir rehearsals.

Locally sourced: featuring members and friends of Christ Lutheran.

Recorded in advance to enhance fidelity.

Prepared and recorded for specific use at Christ Lutheran.

Some recording is done at Christ Lutheran, with appropriate distancing.

Some recording is done remotely and edited.

All music is edited through audio software.

The instrumental and vocal ensemble music has been recorded on separate tracks, edited and overlaid for final performance recordings.

Prelude and Postlude music is relatively short.

For the Sunday services, music, printed information and images are embedded in powerpoint documents that are shared in real time.

For Daily Reflections, the readings, reflections, prayers, images and music are embedded in a movie format.

For hymn sings, music, printed information and images are embedded in powerpoint documents that are shared in real time with live commentary.

For choir rehearsals, vocal conditioning is live, musical scores and recordings are embedded in powerpoint documents and shared in real time.

How can you have the best experience for online services, meetings and rehearsals?

Use headphones or earbuds.

Mute yourself when listening.

If possible, avoid wifi by connecting directly by wire to your router.

Multi wifi or router users in the same household will compromise audio and video quality.

When serving as a meeting leader or contributor, use a separate microphone and webcam.

Tom Berryman, Music Director

**Christ Lutheran Church's Semi-Annual Meeting** will be held Sunday, June 7, via Zoom, immediately following worship (at approximately 10:35 a.m.) We will receive reports, elect new members to the Congregation Council and Endowment Committee, and vote to ratify a change to the church's constitution.

A bulletin of reports has been emailed for your review, and "snail mailed" to those known to require hard copies. If you need a hard copy, and haven't received one, please contact Pr. Bourret.

**Also on Sunday, June 7, The Holy Trinity**, we will be treated with a sermon from ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton. Bishop Eaton has offered this gift to congregations and rostered leaders as a gesture of pastoral leadership during this pandemic.



## Summer Worship Time

Summer worship will continue to be held at 10:00. Log in on Zoom! The invitation and password are available on our website, [www.christnatick.org](http://www.christnatick.org). Feel free, as always, to invite a friend!



## Intercessors and Readers for June (including July 5):

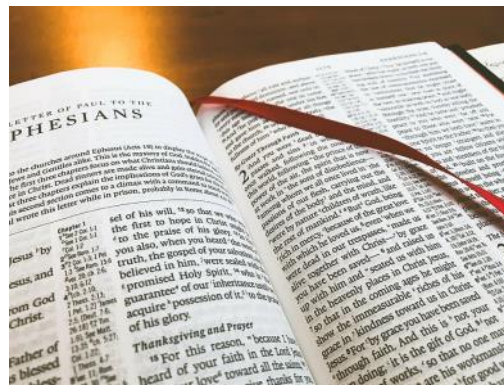
### Prayer Leader

May 31 - Joyce Simon  
June 7 - Cathy Gallagher  
June 14- Russell Pollard  
June 21- Mariane Swenson  
June 28- John Whitlock  
July 5 - Phil Roberts

### Readers

You have the names  
Celeste Larson Rolf Larson  
Beth Castro Robin Hurst  
Alan Avalos Amy Lousararian  
Lisa Eck Martha Cronin  
George Hall Ellen Zagajeski

All worship leaders are asked to prepare for Sunday worship on Saturday at 6:00 p.m. (via Zoom).



## Endowment Distributions Made

In the packet distributed in preparation for our semi-annual meeting, which we'll hold on June 7 via Zoom, you'll see all kinds of financial reporting. Be sure to take notice of the endowment Fund. The Endowment Fund was established at CLC for the purpose of supporting ministries and agencies doing God's work, serving our neighbors, beyond our walls. The fund normally draws on interest earnings, although in years when earnings are poor, monies may be drawn from principal in order to make distributions.

Recipients of these funds vary from year to year, and have recently included Lutheran campus ministries, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services, Resurrection Lutheran Church in Roxbury, and Natick Together for Youth. This year the CLC Endowment made its annual donation with \$750 donated to Natick Service Council and \$750 donated to Metrowest Immigrant Solidarity Network. If you have a recommendation for a gift, contact Amy Lousararian, who currently chairs the committee; and if you're interested in making a gift that will have a positive impact on our wider community for years to come, please consider making a contribution to the Endowment Fund to honor a person or an occasion, or to memorialize a love one.

## Minibus Update

Efforts to get the minibus purchased for Iglesia Luterana Cristo Rey have been stymied due first to issues with the company that originally agreed to ship the vehicle, and then restrictions related to the coronavirus.

Thanks to the persistence of Norman Bolles and Bruce Schnepfer, we are finally—we hope, we pray!—closing in on getting it moved to El Paso. Prayers for a safe and uneventful trip are requested! (Beverly won't be doing the driving-- )



We hope to be saying farewell at last to #71!

## Gardening Day June 6!

While we are not yet prepared to gather for in-person worship, we can, with precautions in place, safely come together for spring sprucing of the gardens and grounds. Weather permitting, we have set aside Saturday, June 6, from 8:30-12:00 for caring for the church's exterior.

What you can do to make the morning both safe and successful:

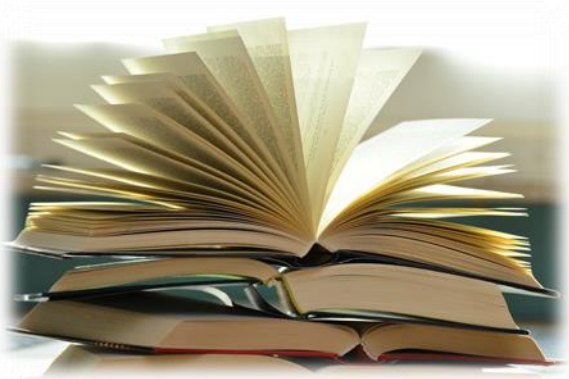
- Contact Pr. Bourret or Cathy Gallagher to indicate that you plan to come. (While it's unlikely we'll have too many persons, this will help us to be certain of it.)
- Bring gloves and garden tools, if you have them.
- Be sure to wear a mask.
- Stay home if you are unwell or at heightened risk for the virus.

*What we'll do:*

- Have hand sanitizer available.
- Have tasks in well-spaced areas of the grounds.
- Have tools available.
- Have individually-wrapped muffins to entice you.



## CLC Book Group



The CLC Book Group has continued to meet (virtually, of course) during the COVID-19 pandemic. Last month participants were invited to read and share a book from their own library written by an author outside the U.S. There was a wide variety, including:

- Born a Crime by Trevor Noah
- And the Mountains Echoed by Khalid Hosseini
- So Many Everests by Diana Webster and Victoria Webster
- The Exiles Return: A Novel by Elisabeth de Waal
- What is the What by Dave Eggers
- All Creatures Great and Small, All Things Bright and Beautiful, All Things Wise and Wonderful and The Lord God Made Them All by James Herriot
- First Lady: The Life And Times of Clementine Churchill by Sonia Purnel
- Sapiens by Yuval Noah Harari
- The Four Agreements: A Practical Guide to Personal Freedom by Don Miguel Ruiz
- Behold the Dreamers by Imbolo Mbue
- *The Book Of Rosy: A Mother's Story of Separation at the Border* by Julie Schwieter and Rosayra Pablo Cruz

The CLC book group has selected Monday, June 30, for its next (virtual) meeting date. Once again, rather than reading one book, participants are invited to choose a volume from their own libraries, with a common theme either fiction or nonfictional history from the WWII era. For an invitation, contact Marianne Swenson: [mswenson10@comcast.net](mailto:mswenson10@comcast.net).



Members of the group have also established a book lending box, located just outside the middle set of doors to the church building. Feel free to leave a book (making a note of it if you'd like it back), or to take one to read!

## Update from CLC's Family Promise Coordinators

Many of you have asked what's going on with Family Promise in the face of the Covid 19 pandemic. All families in the program when we last hosted (Feb. 23 – March 1) were moved out of the Day Center/ Congregations and into hotel suites. Since then, most of those particular families have transitioned out of FPM entirely and into private apartments, so a big step forward for all!

In the meantime, FPM continues to add families into the shelter program, with the expectation that they will be housed in hotel suites (each with 2 rooms and cooking facilities). This arrangement will likely last until the end of 2020. FPM asks that congregations continue to support families during our originally scheduled host weeks – in CLC's case, **coming right up June 21-29.**

**Gift card in small denominations (\$10 – 25) to local grocery stores (Stop and Shop, Roche Bros, Wegman's), as well as Target and Wal-mart are most welcome and greatly appreciated.** Please mail directly to Family Promise at 6 Mulligan St, Natick, MA 01760. Indicate your donation is from Christ Lutheran and is intended for use during our scheduled host week, June 21 – 29. No donations of goods, prepared foods, or groceries, please.

THANKS TO ALL for your continued support of this important ministry!



Even as we begin to think about steps toward reopening the building at 113 Union Street, it seems that our virtual presence is here to stay for the long term. (Perhaps it took a pandemic to move us more vigorously into the digital age,)

In light of that reality, a CLC Tech Committee is being formed to help advise us on effective use of Zoom and other technologies for Sunday worship and related questions. If you are asked to contribute your know-how, please prayerfully consider it!



# Family Promise Update



Dear Friends,

This week we were all able to take a breath and start to think about the future. With the Governor's release of a reopening plan, it was the first time many of us dared to imagine what life will look like in this strange new world.

At Family Promise we put strategies in place to manage the impacts of this pandemic beginning in March, but we're now beginning to thoughtfully look further into the future. We've created a COVID-19 work group with staff, board members, and a medical consultant to plan for the challenges we will face in the short and long term. Our plan will cover three areas:

- **Staff:** While the Day Center has been open with minimal staff over the past two months, we're figuring out how we will safely accommodate all staff and visitors when they are ready to return.
- **Guests:** Our families in shelter are continuing to stay in a hotel for now, but we are examining our shelter model to ensure it can accommodate safety and health concerns into the future.
- **Volunteers:** Our volunteers are the foundation of everything we do at Family Promise and we are working on developing safe, valuable opportunities for them to continue to engage with our mission and families.

As you can see, everything we are doing will be based on the health and safety of our entire FPM community. And while there are still uncertainties, we're confident and committed to developing a responsible plan that will embrace health concerns while providing essential programming for our families. We promise to keep you updated, so stay tuned.

In closing, we'd love to share a story of what still brings us hope despite these uncertain times. Last week one of the fathers in our program received his bachelor's degree from Salem State University with a double major in Chemistry and Biotechnology. A college graduation is always a source of pride, but this single father of three, working full time, and recently transitioning from shelter into an apartment is an incredible inspiration to us all. As his story illustrates so well, the darkest of times can often pave the way into a future that is brighter than we can imagine. Wishing you all a Happy Memorial Day and a future filled with hope.

*Sue*

Sue Crossley, Executive Director



**1** Remember in prayer the leaders, voting members and others of the Rocky Mountain Synod gathering online for a **digital** [Prayer Ventures for June 2020]

**1** This month has the most daylight of the year in the Northern Hemisphere and the least daylight of the year in the Southern Hemisphere. Give thanks that the gift of sunlight sustains all life on Earth and that the light of God's love and truth, shining through Jesus, gives us the gift of new life, purpose and direction as children of God.

**2** Remember and give thanks for the influence and example of people who have been martyred for their faith and courageous witness in the world. Pray that our own boldness of faith and service will dispel the fear of ridicule, persecution and death.

**3** Give thanks for our LGBTQIA+ siblings in Christ and ask that the Spirit empower us, individually and together as a church, to grow more welcoming and intentionally inclusive, to value the faith and gifts of all people, and to advocate for justice and respect for people who are marginalized and excluded in the church and society.

**4** Remember in prayer people who depend on seasonal employment for their livelihoods or who live with the uncertainty and anxiety of unemployment during the COVID-19 pandemic. Pray that the Spirit will make us creative and tireless in supporting and caring for others, especially our neighbors [in greatest need](#) — locally and globally.

**5** Pray for God to send the Spirit into our midst and renew humanity and all creation.

**6** In this season of storms and flooding, pray that our neighbors and communities will be safe and that we will stand ready to respond when disasters strike and leave our neighbors vulnerable, grieving and wondering where to begin rebuilding their lives. Give thanks for the work we do together through Lutheran Disaster Response bringing God's hope, healing and renewal to people whose lives have been disrupted by disaster.

**7** Pray that we will hear and respond to God's call to be disciples in the world, just as Jesus directed his disciples to visit every nation, make disciples, baptize the faithful, teach the ways and commandments of God, and spread the good news of God's ever-present love and mercy.

**8** Ask God to comfort those grieving the loss of loved ones from COVID-19, and pray that we will not forget them amid our new concerns and routines as communities and states open up again.

**9** Continue to pray for synod leaders making new plans for their assemblies with concern for the health and well-being of leaders, voting members and others. Pray that the Spirit will guide their plans and strengthen them in their work proclaiming the gospel, growing the church, serving our neighbor and doing God's work in the world.

**10** "When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established; what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them?" With humility and joy, give thanks and praise to God!

**11** Pray for God's wisdom and guidance as we work together and journey into the future as a thriving church, spreading the gospel and deepening faith for all people.

**12** Take time to reflect on nature, humankind, the earth and the heavens above — everything God has made — and pray that we will stand in awe and thanksgiving to God, proclaiming God's creation to be very good.

**13** In the absence of summer camp programs, pray for the leaders and staff of our outdoor ministries as they seek new ways to sustain their organizations' vitality, share the gospel and serve people of all ages in congregations and communities.

**14** Pray that we will respond eagerly when God calls us into the world together as disciples to carry on the difficult work of Jesus, sharing the good news, caring for our neighbors in their suffering and need, bringing hope where there is despair and bearing God's truth and light.

**15** Thank God for opportunities to enjoy nature, whether in a wilderness area, urban park, community garden or forest preserve. Give thanks for how nature and fresh air renew us and lift our spirits, and pray that our neighbors with mobility challenges can get outdoors to experience and enjoy the blessings of creation.

**16** Praise God for the work we accomplish together through ELCA Advocacy and for the faith-driven voice carried to our local, state and national leaders and legislators — a common voice advocating attention, justice and compassion for those neighbors and communities whose needs and concerns are too often ignored or marginalized.

**17** Give thanks that, by God's grace through Jesus Christ, our relationship with God is restored and that we can share in the glory of God without uncertainty or fear.

**18** Lutheran Services in America is a network of Lutheran social ministry organizations that connects over 300 health and human services providers throughout the country. Pray that we will engage with and support their work in serving the diverse needs of our nation's most vulnerable people, from infants to elders.

**19** God made us, and as God's people we enjoy the blessings of God's enduring love, faithfulness to every generation and redeeming presence. Lift up prayers of joy, thanksgiving and praise to God.

**20** Augsburg Fortress summer music clinics provide opportunities for musicians to learn new seasonal music, attend workshops, participate in hymn festivals and more. Pray that these participants will be inspired, equipped and strengthened, using their musical gifts to enrich our faith communities and reveal the glory of God.

**21** Living as children of God and followers of Christ is not always easy or well received by others. Pray that we will find comfort and courage in knowing that God abides with us, knows our every struggle and joy, and surrounds us with love and peace that are impossible to break or obstruct.

**22** Pray for our global companions, their ministries and the people they serve in this time of sickness and death, economic upheaval, social uncertainty and slow recovery.

**23** Pray for patience, comfort and courage: "O God, in the abundance of your steadfast love, answer me. With your faithful help rescue me from sinking in the mire; let me be delivered from my enemies and from the deep waters. Do not let the flood sweep over me, or the deep swallow me up."

**24** John the Baptist Sometimes we think of John the Baptist as a little wild and fanatical in sharing the good news of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Give thanks for whoever introduced you to Jesus, and pray for confidence and enthusiasm in sharing your faith and talking about Jesus in your own words.

**25** Give thanks for the creeds and confessions of our church that have helped us proclaim, teach and affirm our Christian faith throughout the ages. Pray that when we recite the creeds during worship, we will reflect on our membership in the body of Christ and on the truths central to our faith.

**26** Ask God to help us walk in the newness of life and freedom from sin we have through our baptism into the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

**27** Ask for the Spirit to guide the deliberation, dialogue and work of ELCA members, leaders and churchwide staff as they draft a social message on government and civic engagement, to be presented to the ELCA Church Council this year.

**28** Pray that every person we encounter in daily life will glimpse the Spirit dwelling within us — an infectious spirit of kindness, justice, humility and love.

**29** Give thanks for doctors, researchers and scientists throughout the world who have committed their lives to treating, preventing and eliminating diseases and to sharing their discoveries with the world for the health and well-being of all people.

**30** There may be times when we feel God has forgotten us or is ignoring us. Pray that God will forgive us when we are weak or doubtful, and ask the Spirit to restore our trust in God's steadfast love and concern.

**The Summer Reporter deadline is JUNE 20, 2020**



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