

When Will We Be Able to Worship Together Again?

Dearest GA Family:

Last week, Deacon Phil Holzman and I Zoom attended a synod sponsored meeting with Dr. Michael Osterholm, the Minnesota epidemiologist who currently consults about the corona virus on many national news programs. At our meeting with him, Dr. Osterholm addressed an audience of church leaders about when we can expect to resume worshipping together in our sanctuaries. A recorded video of his presentation is available on the Minneapolis Area Synod website (<http://mpls-synod.org/>), and I encourage you to watch it. (His presentation is the last 35 minutes or so of the video.)

The upshot of Dr. Osterholm's message is that he does not expect congregations to return to communal worship any time soon. And if we do, he expects it will be incrementally as we find our new normal with how we worship in the face of a virus threat that will, undoubtedly, remain long after the separation orders are lifted.

This is deeply disappointing news for me - I so miss seeing every one of you on Sundays. But, of course, until those who are charged with knowing these things tell us it's safe to be together again, we will continue to worship remotely, from our homes, through the wonders of Zoom. In the meantime, please know that the church council, Phil, and I will strategize how to bring us all back together in the safest way possible.

As with all things, please do not hesitate to let me know if you have questions or concerns about this matter. And please do let me know how I can best pastorally serve you in this time.

May abundant mercies and joy be yours.

Pastor Susan



Greetings from a Deacon in Quarantine

It's hard to believe that two months have gone by since we have held our last in-person worship service on March 8! Thanks to the wonders of modern technology we are able to gather together virtually using Zoom and worship together over the Internet. Those of us gathered on Sundays can see each others' faces and talk with one another before and after worship. Pastor Susan and I, along with our audio support person Nic Hentges, meet in the sanctuary each Sunday. It's not an ideal arrangement, but it allows us to continue to worship "together" during this time when we are apart.

We are using Zoom to have other ways of connecting as well during this time...a weekly choir chat on Wednesday nights, a Wednesday morning Coffee Hour, Tuesday night Happy Hour, committee and Church Council meetings, etc. Our Saturday email blast has become a lifeline of communication, going to 157 people each week with news about the church. If you don't receive that email and would like to get it, please let me know. If you don't have Internet and would like to know how to call into our Sunday services on your landline phone, please call me and I will see that you get instructions.

Pastor Susan and I have continued our church work from our home offices during this time, again thanks to the wonders of technology. Our phone system at church allows calls made to our extensions to come immediately to our emails. It's been wonderful to keep in touch with so many of you during this time, but I miss our gatherings for worship so much! Be safe and stay healthy until we can be together again.

Deacon Phil Holzman



There are ways you can stay connected to your GA family during this time when we are not able to gather in person. The activities listed on this page can help you do just that. If you have any questions about any of these activities or ministries, contact the person leading that particular ministry or contact Pastor Susan or Deacon Phil (their contact information is listed on the next page of this newsletter).

Sunday Zoom Worship – 9:30 a.m. Every Sunday

See the Saturday email each week for Zoom invitation link.
Or contact Deacon Phil Holzman for call-in information.

Tuesday Evening Zoom Happy Hour – 8:30 p.m. Every Tuesday

This is open to everyone in the congregation – a time to get together for informal conversation on Zoom, at a later hour, perhaps after children are asleep. Grab a snack and your favorite beverage and join us. Here's the log-in information: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83459003434>. Meeting ID: 834 5900 3434. Or contact Deacon Phil Holzman for call-in information.

Wednesday Morning Coffee Hour – 10:00 a.m. Every Wednesday

Join Pastor Susan and Deacon Phil for coffee (or your favorite beverage) for a time of conversation on Zoom. After two meetings the first week, we've settled on having one meeting each week - on Wednesdays at 10 a.m. There's no agenda; just join in for a time to connect and chat with fellow GA members. Here is the Zoom invitation: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83981164226>. Meeting ID: 839 8116 4226.

Thursday Evening Bible Study – Resumes May 14

We are continuing our Thursday evening Bible study from Lent. It has been working on Zoom. Join us for Jonah. It is more just a big fish story! Thursday nights from 6:30-8:00 p.m. We begin May 14 and plan to have four sessions. If interested, email Joan at joanmitchell007@gmail.com and she will send you the Zoom link and the material.

Bible & Brews – Tuesday, May 19

The Bible & Brews group plans to meet the evening of the 19th on Zoom. Contact Sean Tessmer (seantessmer@gmail.com) for details and the Zoom invitation.

Community Meal News During the Pandemic

Joan Mitchell helped us all last month by sitting on her porch and watching for guests who came to the church door. She was able to distribute some gift cards for food. Thank you, Joan! For May, I will be at church on Saturday, May 23, to see if any of our guests come for our meal. I will have Cub gift cards for them. We will plan a huge outreach and celebration when we can once again gather in the church basement! God's love and peace to you all.

- Lynn Lurvey

From the Property Committee

We have an opportunity for you if you really miss church. We need church yard volunteers. If you are sheltering at home and want an outdoor activity, we are here for you. Come to church and do the following: *pick up sticks, weed, pick up trash, sweep and clean-up parking lots, spread mulch when next round of mulch is delivered!*

Bring a lawn bag or get one from Joan's porch (1510 27th Ave.). She will have rakes available that she will wipe down every day. When your bag is full, please bring it back to Joan's yard (or her garage pad). Please observe social distancing rules and wear a mask and gloves. Have fun and be safe and be community.

Questions? Call Joan at 612-331-2052. Thanks! The GA Property Team

May Finance Report

Inspired by God’s mission for GA and your love for our congregation, the congregation has contributed so generously to our church – even as we are physically apart. As a result, our finances are healthy. We are so grateful for your generosity. Thank you! In addition, Council voted to apply for a PPP loan. We were granted the loan and will use it to cover salaries and utilities for the next eight weeks. For now, we are in a financially safe and healthy position, but not perfect. Prior to April’s giving and our loan, we borrowed money from reserves to cover payroll. With consistent giving, we will rebuild our reserves for a strong ministry when we’re physically together again. Here are the numbers from March and April.

Andrea Carter,
Treasurer

	March 2020	March 2020 YTD	March 2019 YTD
Income	\$20,634.04	\$83,344.16	\$ 78,746.80
Expenses	<u>27,478.80</u>	<u>92,206.25</u>	<u>105,532.36</u>
Income-Exp.	<\$ 6,844.76>	<\$ 8,862.09>	<\$ 26,785.56>
	April 2020	April 2020 YTD	April 2019 YTD
Income	\$37,456.88	\$120,801.04	\$109,163.50
Expenses	<u>24,825.30</u>	<u>117,031.55</u>	<u>134,452.78</u>
Income-Exp.	\$12,631.58	\$ 3,769.49	<\$ 25,289.28>

Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church *A Reconciling in Christ Congregation*

Sunday Zoom Worship at 9:30 a.m.

Church Staff ...

The Rev. Susan Masters, Interim Pastor (Ext. 10)
pastorsusan@gachurchmpls.org
Cell phone (for pastoral emergencies): 612-327-7454

Deacon Phil Holzman, Minister of Word & Service (Ext. 11)
(Worship & Music, Parish Administration)
philh@gachurchmpls.org
Cell phone (for texts/calls): 320-304-1774

Dan Hager, Finance Manager (Ext. 14)
danh@gachurchmpls.org

Joel Lurvey, Contemporary Choir Director
joel.lurvey@gmail.com

Linda Lindahl, Church Custodian



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Ways You Can Give to GA During This Time When We Are Apart

1) Mail your offering to GA:
1509 27th Avenue NE
Minneapolis, MN 55418



2) Give electronically at our website,
www.gachurchmpls.org. Just click on the
“Donate” button on any page.

3) Sign up to give electronically through our
“Simply Giving” program. Email GA’s Finance
Manager, Dan Hager, for details. Dan can also
help you if you are interested in learning how to
contribute stock donations.

Gustavus Adolphus Church Council

Jenny Parker, President	Ed Huble
Sarah Larson, Vice-President	Erik Peterson
Cindy Bach, Secretary	
Andrea Carter, Treasurer	
James Hamilton	
Dee Kjera	