

## Transition Musings

*from Susan Masters, Interim Pastor*

Long sigh .... Who could've known on Friday, March 13, when we closed up the church and moved our worship service online that, three and a half months later, we'd still be closed and worshipping virtually? While I am so grateful for technology that allows us to stay connected, I also deeply grieve the loss of our capacity to be in the same room together, whether for worship, committee meetings, or other GA events. I so miss your three-dimensional faces!

Sadly, as of this time (late June/early July), we still have no idea when we will be able to gather for in-person worship. Friends, it's not out of the question that we won't worship in person again until 2021. It's devastating even to type that .... Bishop Ann Svennungsen has, wisely, I think, asked that churches in our synod not return to in-person worship until health care experts are more confident we can do so safely. When it is finally safe to open churches again, Bishop Ann has asked each congregation to submit to her a preparedness plan that details steps to be taken to keep everyone as safe as possible. The Church Council will soon appoint a team of people to put together GA's preparedness plan, which we will share with the congregation when it's ready. (Please don't expect it at least until the fall.)

Understanding that this time of separation will last longer than anyone expected, the Congregational Life Committee is organizing some events and projects that will hopefully keep us connected to one another in this difficult time. Please watch the "Gazette," our Facebook page, and the weekly email blasts for information about these events and projects as they are rolled out. And if you have ideas for ways to strengthen our bonds during this time, please do let Jenny Parker (Council President), Jenny Arneson (chair of Congregational Life), Deacon Phil Holzman, or me know – we'd love to hear from you! And, as always, if you are particularly struggling in this time of separation and lockdown, please let us know that, too. We want to support you in any way we can.

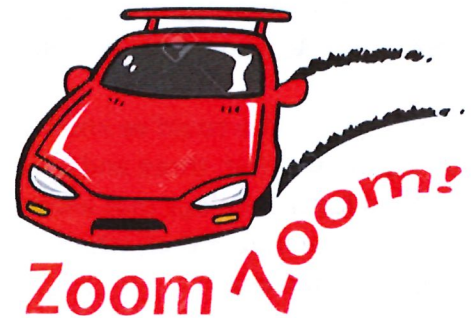
The past month has been very difficult for our city, as the death of George Floyd pulled back the curtain on racial injustice that people in communities of color (BIPOC) have been describing for years. The evidence of the systemic racism in our city (and our country) is no longer deniable, and it has left many of us wondering what our response should be as Christians. A reading of the gospel of Jesus makes clear that, as his followers, we are called to engage in the world in a way that shines light in corners where injustice and other evil exists. GA leadership takes seriously that call, and in our Church Council and appropriate committees, our leaders are considering together how we, as a community of faith, should respond. One of the steps we've taken is officially to appoint Amanda Hakemian as GA's Racial Justice Liaison to the synod. The Council has also established a Racial Justice Committee to work with Amanda to bring matters of racial justice to the forefront of our ministry at GA. This new committee is wide open to anyone who wants to help our congregation think more intentionally about faith and race. Please watch the usual channels for more information about opportunities to lend your voice to the struggle for justice for all people.

You have made my call to be your interim pastor a joy and delight since I began walking with you nine months ago. How much more so in these past four months as you have kindly shown me patience and love and support in this very challenging time. What a lovely congregation you are. I am so grateful. Thank you.

With warmest regards and love,  
*Pastor Susan*

## Greetings from a Deacon in Quarantine

Four months ago I didn't know what Zoom was! Can you believe that? Now it's how I do the vast majority of my ministry, including Sunday morning worship. That's almost unbelievable. Zoom worship, Zoom Coffee Hour on Wednesday mornings, Zoom Happy Hour on Tuesday nights, Zoom Choir Chats on Wednesday nights, Zoom committee meetings, Zoom Church Council meetings, Zoom Staff Meetings with Pastor Susan each week...they've all become the norm as we have had to keep ourselves separated from one another. Don't get me wrong...I'm deeply grateful for all this technology that allows us to stay connected and do business in this way. But I miss seeing all of you in person. I can almost count on one hand the GA members I have seen in person since this pandemic began: Pastor Susan; Nic Hentges, who runs our audio for worship on Sunday mornings; Jenny Parker and Andrea Carter who come into the office twice a month to count the offerings that you so generously continue to send in; Joan Mitchell who comes and signs the checks that Dan Hager prepares to pay bills; and Cindy Bach, who came to play her flugelhorn for June 7 worship. I will see a few more people who will help me assemble this "Gazette" for mailing; but I haven't seen them yet. I bumped into Mary Larson at Cub Foods one day; and I saw Pat Norring-Johnson and Cheryl Johnson as they left the Farmer's Market last Thursday as I was coming back to the office. The rest of you I have only seen on my computer screen. While I'm thankful that I can see you that way, I really miss you all!



I still come to the office one morning/day per week to go through mail and do other tasks that can't be accomplished remotely; but the vast majority of my work takes place from my home office. When I'm at church, I've started posting 6-10 minute videos of organ music on GA's Facebook page (and my own personal Facebook page). If you haven't seen/heard my organ music postings, I invite you to listen to them by going to GA's Facebook page and finding them there. It's one way I find I can share my ministry of music during this time beyond Sunday morning.

Our Congregational Life Committee has come up with some ideas for us to stay connected over the summer months. Please take a look at them (listed elsewhere in this mailing) and participate as you are able. The committee will have more ideas as we move into the fall. We want to do our best to keep everyone connected as a church family during this difficult time. Please know that you can call, email, or text me anytime you have questions or concerns about church business. I love hearing from GA folks. Until we see each other again in person, I'll be seeing you on Zoom!

In Christ,

Deacon Phil Holzman

[philh@gachurchmpls.org](mailto:philh@gachurchmpls.org)

612-789-7256, ext. 11 (leave a voice message)



**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.



**T**here 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).

### **From the Congregational Life Committee**

Our Congregational Life Committee looks forward to taking advantage of the warm summer months to offer new ways to connect in a safe way. In the next few weeks, you can look forward to:

1. **A Prayer Vigil** – Sunday, July 12: There is so much in our world right now that needs our prayers. We will organize safe shifts for individuals or family units to enter the sanctuary and offer prayers.

Points of Contact: Jenny Parker or Dee Kjera

2. **Bible and Brew**: It's back! And, it's outdoors! The Bible speaks about social justice - resources will be available at the Prayer Vigil. Join Bible and Brew as they dig deeper into those verses.

Point of Contact: Sean Tessmer

3. **Crafting**: Find a project to go and join us outside GA. We can socially distant but still have some time together.

Point of Contact: Cindy Bach

4. **Scavenger Hunt**: For our kids (and the young at heart). We will have our own GA Amazing Race. We will organize with social distancing in mind.

Points of Contact: Jenny Arneson and Amanda Hakemian

5. **Drive-By Visits**: We are going to connect by car. We look forward to a little car parade and some special hellos from the front porch.

Points of Contact: Deacon Phil, Dee Kjera, and Pastor Susan

Contact any of the individuals on the committee if you would like to be involved. Stay tuned in weekly emails and other communication for specifics about these events.

### **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 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.

## **Sunday, July 5: A Synod Led Worship Service**

On July 5, Bishop Ann Svennungsen and her staff will again lead worship for the congregations of the Minneapolis Area Synod. When they did this in May, GA used only the recording of the bishop's sermon - but this time we will use the entire service. Pastor Kelly Chatman will preach, and music will be provided by the music team from Redeemer Lutheran Church in North Minneapolis. Because the service was recorded in a sanctuary (St. Phillip the Deacon LC in Plymouth) and it includes a full service of music, Pastor Susan and Phil will participate in the service from their homes. We hope you will join us for this service as you normally would!

## **Prayer Vigil at GA**

A prayer vigil for peace and healing will be held at GA on Sunday, July 12, from 11a.m. -5p.m. The purpose of this vigil is to engage in a period of intentional contemplation set aside for meditation, prayer, and scripture reading. Devotionals on the topics of peace, social justice and healing will be available during the vigil to help guide your prayers. During the 6-hour prayer vigil at GA, we invite individuals, or family units, to sign-up for a 15-minute time slot. Watch the Saturday email blast for information on how to sign-up for a time slot. Please plan to attend this day of prayer for our community and world.

## **Distance Community Meals Continue!**

In June, July, and August, we will have tables set up outside with the baked goods from Cub foods and \$10 gift cards for local restaurants and grocery stores for our guests. We will keep it simple. Distribution is from 5:30 - 7 p.m. on the 4th Saturday of each month. We look forward to more connected days in the future! Thank you for supporting the work of the community meal. - Lynn Lurvey

## **Volunteers Needed!**

Six days a week, community groups including Gethsemane Lutheran Church, the A Mother's Love Initiative, and New Salem Baptist Church work together to provide a food distribution in North Minneapolis. This food distribution is serving people who have been hit hardest by both the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent civil unrest, and takes place in the parking lot of the W. Broadway Cub Foods.

GA is partnering with First Lutheran of Columbia Heights to provide a team of 4-5 (or more!) volunteers every Saturday, noon to 3 pm. Volunteers will help sort, pack and distribute food.

If you are interested, please go to this link to sign up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0548ABAA29A2F58-volunteer>. Questions can be directed to Amanda Hakemian ([amanda.hakemian@gmail.com](mailto:amanda.hakemian@gmail.com)).

If you would like to support this effort financially, please direct donations to GA with "food distribution" noted in the memo line.

## **Racial Justice Liaison Appointed and Committee Formed**

For several years, the Minneapolis Area Synod has invited congregations to appoint a Racial Justice Liaison. This person serves as the primary connection between the congregation and the racial justice work of the synod, as well as facilitating this work within the congregation. Over the last two weeks, Pastor Susan appointed Amanda Hakemian to be the first Racial Justice Liaison for GA, and the church council has created a Racial Justice Committee.

If you would like to join this new committee, or have questions, please reach out to Amanda ([amanda.hakemian@gmail.com](mailto:amanda.hakemian@gmail.com)). A meeting time will be chosen based on the availability of those interested, and meetings will be held via Zoom for the foreseeable future.

## No Summer Children's Musical This Year

Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Kim Huseonica and I have made the difficult decision that we cannot stage a summer children's musical this year. This will be the first time since we began in 2011 that there will be no summer musical at GA. There is no way to stage a musical using social distancing; and our sanctuary is always full for our performances in August, which is also not possible this year. We sincerely hope to return in 2021!

- Deacon Phil Holzman

## Frolic Summer Fun!

We have missed you and your little ones. Here is a mini Frolic lesson you can do at home.

### NOAH

**Read:** Read the story of Noah and the flood from the Frolic Bible, the Spark Bible, or another storybook.



**Act:** "Retell the story using toys and colorful cloth as story props, encouraging your child to help. Explore what Noah had in the boat. Name the different animals. Together arrange the rainbow-colored fabric to remember God's promise."

**Play:** Gather toys and objects that float and fill a bucket with water. "Encourage your child to drop the objects one by one into the water. Together watch the objects float, swirl the water gently with hands, and move each item with your breath. Infants can enjoy feeling and splashing in the water. Blowing air and swirling water remind me of God's creation of wind and water."

**Paint:** "Paint or color a rainbow with your child. Point out the colors. If colors mix, label the new color. Talk about all the colors in the rainbow. Learning rainbow colors connects me to God's promise."

### Pray:

"Dear God,  
Thank you for your rainbow promise. (Swoosh arms across the sky.)  
Thank you for your rainbow promise. (Swoosh arms again.)  
Amen. (Make praying hands)"

God took care of  
Noah, his family,  
and all the animals.



## **Congratulations to our Graduates**

We want to congratulate the following GA members who graduated this spring from high school and post-high school programs. As is our congregation's custom, the high school graduates will receive a quilt made by our quilting group. Congratulations to the following people who have completed educational milestones this spring...

### **High School:**

Carly Hendrickson  
Marshall O'Meara  
Alyssa Schuette

### **Undergraduate Degrees:**

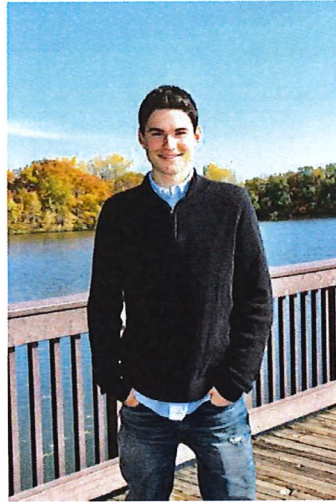
Matthew Rosebrock  
Kallie Schuchard

### **Graduate Degree:**

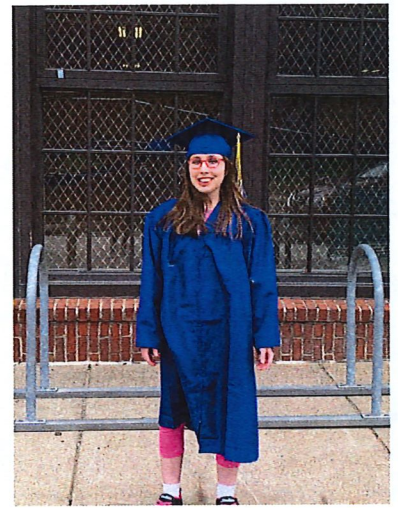
Jenny Tessmer



*Carly Hendrickson*



*Marshall O'Meara*



*Alyssa Schuette*



*Matthew Rosebrock*



*Kallie Schuchard*



*Jenny Tessmer*

## June Finance Report

Thank you, for your generosity! Your giving along with the PPP loan has allowed ministry at GA to continue during the stay at home order. Please note that "May Actual" numbers reflect offering giving and expenses not covered by the PPP loan. We will utilize the loan through at least the remainder of June.

Next Finance Zoom Meeting: Thursday, July 9, at 6:00 p.m.

*Andrea Carter,*  
Treasurer

	May 2020 Actual	May 2020 YTD	May 2019 YTD
Income	\$23,686.22	\$144,487.26	\$130,158.32
Expenses.	<u>\$ 4,843.04</u>	<u>\$121,874.59</u>	<u>\$158,324.23</u>
Inc-Exp.	\$18,843.18	\$ 22,612.67	<\$ 28,165.91>

### GA is Hiring a Finance Manager

Our Finance Manager, Dan Hager, has indicated his desire to resign his position. We are currently looking for a part-time person to fill the position at 8 hours per week. You can view the job description on our website or get a copy by emailing Phil Holzman. Please feel free to share this information with qualified people in the community who might be interested in this position.

## 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 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE  
Minneapolis, MN 55418



2) Give electronically at our website,  
[www.gachurchmpls.org](http://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  
Sarah Larson, Vice-President  
Cindy Bach, Secretary  
Andrea Carter, Treasurer  
James Hamilton                      Ed Huble  
Dee Kjera                                      Erik Peterson