



July 2020 Update

Dear members of Christ,

I would imagine that you, like me, had hoped that all this pandemic “fun” we are having would be behind us by now. Yes, it was wishful thinking, I know. So, some of you might be wondering where we are at and what’s up? Good news – God is still in control of everything! What we don’t know and understand He has already seen and knows. Our God is the creator of heaven and earth. There is nothing that he does not know or can not do. But remember, He is God – we are not. Isaiah tells us, **“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the Lord. “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”** It is enough for us, or at least it should be, to know that God knows! So, we trust Him. We put our total faith and confidence in Him alone. We continue to pray to Him for help and healing. Help for all we need and healing for all the hurt.

As far as our worship life at Christ, I am happy to announce that the Gospel is still being proclaimed uninterrupted, though maybe not as all of us would like. We are still able to reach all our members through social media platforms like the radio, YouTube and Marshall community access stations. I am happy to hear that many of you are taking advantage of this as a way of staying in contact with your church, and more importantly, with your Lord and Savior. I am also happy to note that we are also reaching people who are not members of our church via these means. If you want to see a silver lining in all this maybe it is that someone who would not set foot in a church or has been straying, is now hearing about the love and forgiveness of their Savior. The Holy Spirit can work in this way too.

Some of you have elected to return to worship in the church proper. Many still do not feel comfortable doing so and, at this time, that is okay. We might all have our own personal opinions as to what is right or wrong, good or bad and that is just what they are, “personal opinions”. For there is no right or wrong, good or bad. While we might not all agree, Christian love does not allow us to judge on matters like this. Paul tells us, **“In humility value others above yourselves”** (Philippians 2:3). **“Honor one another above yourselves”** (Romans 12:10). As we think about Christ’s sacrifice for us, his Spirit will then enable us to gladly self-sacrifice for others, putting the needs of others ahead of our own personal preferences. **“May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had”** (Romans 15:5). After all, isn’t that what Christian brothers and sisters do? Isn’t that how we reflect the love of Jesus?

So, what’s next? You are asking the wrong person! I wish I knew but I don’t. But someone does and when He is ready He will reveal what it is. In the meantime, we will continue to do what we can to stay connected to Christ. We will do what we can to honor God as we honor and respect each other.

May God bless and keep all of us in His loving care,

Pastor Schreiner

Monday Worship through July

Since we did not know how many people would feel safe returning to in person worship at church we elected to add an additional Sunday service for the summer as well as continue to offer a Monday evening service. The council was going to evaluate how things looked and if we might need to add a fourth service or drop a service if numbers dictated action. We have found that the 10:00 AM service on Sunday is being fairly well attended but the Monday service numbers have been very low all summer. For that reason, the council has elected to continue the second service on Sunday but drop the Monday service beginning in August. We also continue to evaluate all aspects of our worship life at Christ. If things continue as they are with concerns over the virus additional changes that we feel will benefit the members might be made. We pray God continues to bless our efforts at honoring Him and serving you.

Confirmation

I am happy to report that eight young Christians stood or will stand before God's altar and pledge their faithfulness to Him, even to the point of death. While we had to move our normal Confirmation date from the first Sunday in May to June 21 all went well. Wait, that is not entirely true. Two families were not feeling well that day and so were not able to make the special service we had for the Confirmands. So, those two are being confirmed this Sunday, July 19 in a special service following our late service. God willing, by noon on the 19th all eight will be confirmed! Below is a list of these new communicant members and their parents. We pray that God continues to strengthen their faith and keeps them close to Him until He takes them to Himself.

Alex Michael Heil – Son of Craig and Kristin Heil

Peyton David Hoflock – Son of Charlie and Heather Hoflock

Martin Larry Krenz – Son of Aaron and Susan Krenz

Chloe Jane Kulla – Daughter of Chad and Deanna Kulla

Connor Lee Martinson – Son of Bob and Mary Jo Martinson

Shelby Jenna Neyens – Daughter of Tim and Jennifer Neyens

Wyatt David Pullman – Son of Chad and Angie Pullman

Lukas John Stelter – Son of Geoffrey and Tricia Stelter

VBS

The church council has voted to not have VBS this year for obvious reasons. We look forward to coming back strong next year. We will have to wait and see what the month of September brings as we look ahead to Sunday School!

Worship in the Park

The council also voted not to have our annual worship in the park potluck picnic this year. I'm sure you can understand why we are not having the picnic but you might be thinking that we could hold worship outside. While we could do that, as it stands we still need/want to record the 8:00 AM service for radio and YouTube. The possible issue comes in that while we don't have many who have elected to come back to church for in person worship we don't know how many might have attended a park service. If the weather would not cooperate we would have to hold that service in the church. If we would have more than about 70 who would have attended we would not be able to follow our social distancing policy at church. So we felt it best to just keep it simple this year and once again, God willing, come back strong next year.

Organ

Last we heard we are still on pace to have our new Allen G220e organ arrive here in Marshall in early September. You might recall that the cost of this new wonderful worship tool is just over \$50,000. The council is happy to report, that in spite of all we are going through, we have already collected about \$16,500. Thanks to those who have given to this fund! Contributions can be made anytime by just putting a check in an envelope and marking it Organ Fund. If you want to e-give there is an organ fund designation you can chose. How wonderful would it be if we could have this paid off by the time we hold our dedication service for it!

Financial Picture

Even though things might look very different in the church and school the past few months one thing has not changed and that is the need to continue to support the work we do in sharing the gospel with members and nonmembers alike. God is certainly blessing us in that way as the financial picture looks very good considering all that has and is going on in the world. Our year to date budgeted offerings are actually up from last year at this time. In the same time period January – June 2019 offerings stood at \$172,604 and in 2020 they stand at \$182,759. We pray God's people continue to practice good stewardship of the gifts that our gracious God has given them.

Samuel Update

As of the publication of this overall update we are still not 100% sure what the start up of school will look like this fall. It is our hope and prayer that students will be able to be here in person and enjoy the learning and social interaction that children need. Be assured that whatever the first day, and those that follow look like, the children's, as well as faculty and staff's health, is a foremost concern. Continue to pray that God will not only make clear to us the best path but also allow us to follow that path in a safe and beneficial way for all involved.

New Teacher

Our new preschool teacher/director has moved to Marshall and is starting to get her feet wet as to what the program will be like for the coming school year. Her name is Miss Chole Doble and she is ready to get going in the fall with teaching God's little lambs. When you meet her be sure to welcome her to her new family at Christ and Samuel. We will probably not be able to have our normal meet and greet coffee hour after church but don't let that stop you from a six-foot welcome! Continue to keep her and all our faculty in your prayers. Here is a little more about her.

I was born in New Ulm, Minnesota, but moved to Michigan before I was one. I have lived in Michigan for most of my life, with the exception of living in Indiana for 2 years. My parents are Cory and Jill Doble. My dad, Cory, is an executive director of engineering and my mom, Jill, works at a fabric warehouse. I have 3 siblings. My older brother, Ethan, is teaching in Valentine, Nebraska at Zion Lutheran, with his wife Emma. They are expecting a baby girl at the end of July. My younger sister, Kennedy, is a senior in high school at Michigan Lutheran Seminary, and my younger brother, Seth, is a junior. I also went to Michigan Lutheran Seminary in Saginaw, Michigan for high school and then went on to Martin Luther College. I graduated with a degree in Early Childhood Education back in May. I am also a Type 1 Diabetic. I was diagnosed when I was 11 years old. I love to paint canvases and do DIY projects during my free time. I will be getting married in December 2021. My fiance's name is Brady Kollmann and he is from Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. He is attending the University of Oshkosh in Oshkosh, Wisconsin where he is studying chemistry. I am excited to begin my ministry in Marshall!

Dear members of Christ Evangelical Lutheran,

Thank you for the warm welcome to your town and your congregation. I appreciate all the thoughts and the generosity you have shown through the gift cards. I am excited to get to know you all more and become a part of the congregation and school. Thank you again for keeping me in your prayers as I transition out to Marshall and begin my first year teaching.

God's blessings!

Chloe Doble

House Sale

For those who might be wondering about the 410 Village Dr. house and property sale – things are still progressing. There were a number of items that needed to be worked through but thus far we have not received any objections on the due diligence documents, the title work, or the survey. It looks like all can be completed by the end of August 2020.