



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



The Journey

St. John Lutheran

August 2020



Pastor Scott's Corner

It is a very different August, just as it has been a very different 2020 beginning in March of this year. As I am writing this article Covid-19 Cases continue to explode in Southwest

Virginia. I know that there are churches that have started back to "in person" worship on Sunday mornings, however we at St. John have not. We continue as a part of the Highlands Conference to provide an online worship experience each Sunday morning at 10:00 AM on Facebook and YouTube. You can participate at 10:00AM on Sunday or at a convenient time later in the week.

The Congregation Council at the July meeting, along with me, decided to wait to begin "in person" worship through August and evaluate the Covid situation at the August meeting as to status of worship in September. We are beginning the process of preparation for "in person" worship by forming a Task Force to help put the necessary procedures in place for safe worship. Please know that we all want to get back to "in person" worship, however it needs to be in a safe environment. As we move forward, and if the statistics begin to improve, there is a possibility that we will start back with Outdoor Communion on Sunday afternoon, watch for information on the Website and Email.

I thank you for your continued generous monetary support as we move through this very difficult time. As you see in the Financial report St. John is doing well in the area of Finance at this point. Please continue to support the ministries of St. John. Thank you, thank you!!

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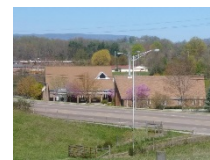
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Quick Links

ELCA.org

www.stjohnabingdon.org
[Virginia Synod](#)

Sunday Worship



Worship Online 10:00 AM Sunday
on the St. John Facebook Page and
the Highlands Conference YouTube
Channel

Staff Listing

G Scott Homesley
Pastor, Cell: 276-525-5801

Joan Shaver - Admin Assist

St. John August Birthdays

August 1st--Frank Morris
 August 2nd--Ken Croghan
 August 3rd--Ed Davis
 August 5th--Charlie Garnett
 August 11th-- Robin Homesley, Joan Shaver
 August 12th-- Bonnie Van Dyke
 August 13th--Carolyn Church
 August 14th--Joel Rosen
 August 19th--Vickianne Dotten
 August 24th--Jared Kluttz
 August 26th--Sue Croghan
 August 30th-- Brandon McKee
 If we missed your August birthday, please let the church office know.

Office Phone: 276-628-6215

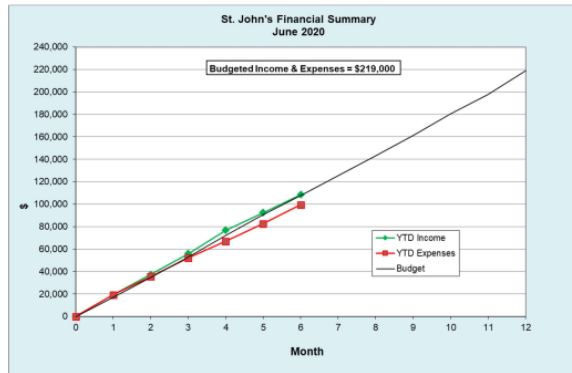
Wrenda Fuller -
 Music Director
 Cell: 276-701-3677

St. John's Financial Summary 7/15/20

We are happy to report that, despite these very difficult times, St. John's financial condition continues to be sound. As of June 30, St. John had \$108,400 in income and \$99,500 in expenses, leaving a \$8,900 surplus. Thank you for your generous support!

Please stay safe and healthy, and please continue to support St. John through this difficult period!

The Finance Team



St. John's Financial Summary Table			
	Budget	Year To Date	Projected Year-End
Income	\$ 218,900	\$ 108,400	\$ 220,600
Expenses	\$ 219,300	\$ 99,500	\$ 201,100
Balance	\$ (400)	\$ 8,900	\$ 19,500
Total Reserves		\$ 78,062	\$ 88,662
Designated Giving		\$ 4,304	\$ 4,304
Checking Account		\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000
Available Reserves		\$ 63,758	\$ 74,358

Prayers

Richard Brumleve, who is now back at home.



Lisa Roberts, recuperating at home following successful surgery at UVA.

James "Randy" Sheets, in need of a kidney transplant.

Prayers of Christian Sympathy for the family and friends of JoAnn McSwain Trent, grandmother of a friend of Chris Dixon, who passed away recently.

We pray for all on the front lines: doctors, nurses, medical personnel. We especially pray for Kelly Read, who is with Mt. Rogers District Health Department; Alex Depew, who works in a hospital in Richmond; and Kayla Nobles Abrego, Sue Croghan's granddaughter, who is a nurse in Littleton, CO.

Continuing prayers for: Helen Findley, Doris Vaught, Ben Vaught, Jerry French, Sara Kluttz, Vicky French, Holly Salmon, Elaine Counts, John Norman, Gabe Cross, Kyler Milligan, Dave Mullins, Danny Bailey

Homebound:

Marty Dunn, Vickianne Dotten, Frances Grim, Ann Godsey, Barbara Wright, Nancy King

Military:

US Army SPC William Salmon, at Ft. Wainright, Alaska

Army Reserve SSgt Brandon McKee

US Army 1st Lieutenant Caleb Findley

US Army Zach Skipworth

Marine Sgt. Zachery Martynuik

Marine Major John Wilson

US Airman Dylan Blevins stationed in S Korea

If you have names to add (or ones to be taken off) the prayer chain, please email Joan at the church office.

Financial Support during the Covid 19 Virus

Thank you/ Thank you/ Thank you

First a thank you for your continued generous support to St. John Lutheran Church. You will notice in the report above that offerings are remaining consistent during this difficult time. As we end April, initial giving for April is also very good. So thank you for your continued support.



A reminder that there are several ways to continue your giving:

1. Mail in your donations to:
St. John Lutheran Church
807 E. Main St.
Abingdon, Va 24210
2. Credit Card/Debit Card giving on the St. John Website: www.stjohnabingdon.org
3. Simply Giving
4. Online Payment directly from your bank.

Again, Thank you!!!!

Calendar for August

**Worship: Sundays 10:00AM on Facebook
(available later in the day on You Tube)**

Book Group on Zoom: August 23rd, 3PM

**Property Work Day: Saturday August 8th,
8AM until done. No lunch provided, as we
are observing Covid-19 safety measures.**

**Upcoming in September: Food Pantry,
September 7th-11th--closed Monday**

**Sept. 7th, volunteers needed Tues. 8th
and Fri. 11th.**

AUGUST BOOK GROUP

Our Book Group selection for August is How to Be An Antiracist, by Ibram X. Kendi. The discussion will be on Zoom Sunday, August 23rd at 3PM. A link to join will be sent out later.

From Council President on In-Person Worship

Dear friends in Christ:

It is July 29 as I write this, and the number of positive Covid-19 cases in Washington County stands at 157. In the 28 days (data is current through 5:00 p.m the day before) since the beginning of Phase 3, positive Covid-19 cases here in Washington County have increased 145%. This statistic alone is significant, and due in part to relaxing requirements that were part of Phase 1 and Phase 2.

Council met on Thursday July 23 via Zoom. Normally Council takes off the month of July; however, this year we knew that there were issues we needed to address, one of which is returning to in-person worship. We learned that none of the other Highlands Conference Churches plan to return to worship during August. Additionally, we learned that the pastors of the Highlands Conference have agreed to continue to produce virtual worship services for each Sunday in August. After lengthy discussion, Council voted to delay return to in-person worship through the month of August. We will resume this discussion at the next scheduled Council meeting on August 20.

Out of an abundance of caution due to increasing positive cases across Southwest Virginia, we collectively could not in good conscience recommend return to in-person worship. As an individual, I miss worshiping with you, my friends and siblings in Christ. When my sons were teenagers, I often advised them about good and bad habits, and how easy it is to form bad habits and how we have to work to facilitate good habits. I view worship attendance as a good habit-one that takes effort on our part, but also one that benefits us individually and

collectively. As much as I would like to be sitting in the "Spencer pew" in our sanctuary on Sunday mornings, I know that as a Lutheran and as a Christian, decisions on behalf of St. John should always be made in the best interest of all of my St. John brothers and sisters. As members of Council, but also as our each other's keeper, our love and responsibility for the entire body of St. John is a higher priority than personal freedom.

We are however working on a plan to return to in-person worship when safe to do so. But we will do this cautiously balancing the needs of individuals with the health and safety of the entire congregation. Returning is not as easy as simply opening the doors. For example, we will have to deep clean prior to and after each worship, provide separate ingress and egress, provide signage, and physically distance attendees in pews. We will have to re-train ushers, and get volunteers to help with the planning and implementation of these strategies. So if you are willing to help, please let me know.

Meanwhile I am thankful for the technology and ability of the Highlands Conference. May God's peace be with you all.

Bill Spencer

Council Nomination Time!

When you think about worshipping God, what comes to mind? Praying, singing, going to church? How about serving on Council? The purpose of this article is to get all of you, the congregation as a whole, to start thinking about Church Council elections this fall, and the need for the nominating committee to start identifying names of nominees for the election. Council will establish a nominating committee in August, so expect to be asked. Better yet, approach a current Council member and volunteer! There is no better way to see how your Church is run than to be a member of Council! The three members rotating off Council this year are Ken Croghan, Chris Meacham, and Bill Spencer.

As you know, I use the term "election" loosely as constitutionally; Council nominee names are selected by lot. Each year, three new members rotate off Council so three new people have to replace the ones rotating off. Selecting Council members by lot has biblical connotations. The primary reason for "casting lots" is to

render an impartial, unbiased decision on important matters. In Proverbs it is written, "[t]he lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord." As a Christian, I believe God has a plan for each and every one of us. Let the Holy Spirit into your heart and ask for guidance. God will choose, he will not put you in a position to fail, but he will put three new Council members in a position to use their time and talents for the good of St. John.

There will be a congregational meeting in September to "cast lots." Please prayerfully consider putting your name in the hat and let God enable us to choose the Council. My goal is to have 5-7 nominees in place prior to the congregational meeting notification. Seek out a Council member and be the first to put your name in the lot!

Peace.
Bill Spencer
Council President

Faith is not belief without proof, but trust without reservation.