

# July 2020 Newsletter



Christ Lutheran Church – Cottonwood, Minnesota

**Don't forget to  
remember . . . to turn to  
the back pages of this  
newsletter to participate  
in a Faithful Innovation  
survey.**

# Worship

## Opportunities at Christ Lutheran Church

**Beginning Wednesday, July 15, at 7:00 p.m. – a short meditative prayer service will be offered each Wednesday evening.** This will be the same service that is posted for the following Sunday's online service, played on local cable station 180, and offered Sunday mornings at the Drive Up worship outside the church building (weather permitting).

**Drive Up Service** – Sundays at 9:30 a.m. (front of church building)

**Prayer Service** – Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. (in the sanctuary following the guidelines within the preparedness plan)

**YouTube Online Service** (typically posted on Saturday mornings)

**Cable Station 180** – Sundays 10:45 a.m. (played repeatedly through Sunday) and Mondays at 4:30 p.m. (played repeatedly until 7:00 p.m.)

Turn to the next page for:

**“Drive Up” Worship Service  
Details and Information**

## **“Drive Up” Worship Service Details and Information**

- Tune your vehicle radio to *AM Station 1650*.
- Bulletins will be available online and a limited number in person – please share, if needed.
- Holy Communion Sundays (1st and 3rd): you are asked to bring your own bread/crackers and juice (illegal to transport open containers of wine).

### **We ask that you adhere to these guidelines:**

- If you are sick, please stay home. If you feel unsafe, worship will continue online and on the cable station. If weather is not conducive to “Drive Up” worship, please find the links emailed to you and cable station (Sundays at 10:45 a.m. and Mondays at 4:30 p.m.)
- Someone will guide you to park your vehicle. Please be patient as we learn what works best and the number of vehicles that may come.
- Each household must be in a separate vehicle and once you arrive do not exit your vehicles. You will be asked to only roll down windows on the driver’s side of the vehicles to maintain a safe distance between each vehicle.
- Please use the restroom before you arrive as we are unable to provide them for public use during the service.
- Offering can be left in a box in the church round about as you leave.



## COVID-19 Preparedness Plan Summary

Christ Lutheran Church  
126 Front Street, PO Box 166  
Cottonwood, MN

Christ Lutheran Church, with guidance from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in American (ELCA), has formulated a plan of action to safely re-open our facilities for in-person worship services and other in-person activities. As a community of faith, our primary concern is to follow Jesus' commandment to "love thy neighbor." This means it is paramount that we safeguard the health and well-being of our members, staff, and general public. To achieve this goal, this plan was developed in consultation with local health professionals and adheres to the guidelines set forth by Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Minnesota Department of Public Safety and the Minnesota Department of Health. *If there is a spike in the number of positive cases for the safety of all, in-person worship and activities may need to move back to other benchmarks including online/cable worship only.* Christ Lutheran Church will make every effort to enforce the guidelines put forth in this plan to ensure the safety of all. *We understand if you are not quite ready to join us for in-house worship and other activities quite yet. Online YouTube, cable station 180, and Drive Up worship will continue to be offered through the radio on 1650 AM.*

**General Guidelines:** As we re-open our church home for regular in-person services and other activities, there are certain individuals for whom it might be best to remain home and continue to enjoy virtual services until pandemic restrictions are lessened. These general guidelines provide some advice on making the personal decisions whether or not to return to in-person services.

- Those in high risk categories – over 65 years or immune-suppressed and with other underlying health conditions are encouraged to stay home at this time. Worship services will continue to be broadcast on cable station 180 and linked on YouTube.

- Anyone (staff or parishioner) who is experiencing any symptoms associated with COVID-19 should stay home. These include fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, headache, muscle pain, sore throat, or loss of taste and smell. Other less common symptoms include gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.
- Anyone who is living with someone who is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 (see above) should stay home.
- Anyone who begins to feel unwell while they are in the building should leave immediately and isolate themselves at home.
- Social/physical distance guidelines of 6 feet will be observed throughout the church building.
- All individuals *are strongly encouraged* to wear a face covering or mask when they are able while in the building with others. A limited number of face masks will be made available to those who do not arrive with one. This is to mitigate aerosol spread and to be mindful of fellow attendees. The wearing of a face mask is a sign of care for others, and it is recommended.
- At this time, we are limiting the building occupancy to 90 people.

**Worship Guidelines:** The following guidelines are a summary of the full Preparedness Plan that has been developed to make returning to in-house worship as safe as possible. A full copy of the Preparedness Plan is available on the church website at [www.christcottonwood.org](http://www.christcottonwood.org) under the Worship Tab. Printed copies are available through the church office. Please call 507.423.5100 if you would like one. The Wednesday evening prayer service will look a little different than a “normal” Sunday morning service we have shared together in the past. Here are some things to expect.

- Worship will be approximately 30 minutes in length.
- Upon arrival an usher will direct you to your seating. Markings will be used to indicate seating areas in the sanctuary that maintain a minimum social/physical distance of 6 feet. The first row should be no closer than 16 feet away from where worship leaders are likely to be since they need to project their voice further. Every other row of chairs will not be utilized and those that are will have alternating seating on both ends and in the center.

- The sanctuary of the church will be filled from front to back to prevent people from walking by others who may be seated along the aisles. The space will be emptied from back to front, again, to ensure social/physical distancing. Those individuals with mobility concerns may request special arrangements.
- Hymnals and children's activity bags have been removed from the sanctuary to help alleviate surface contamination.
- Music will be played, but singing is not recommended as studies have shown this to be a higher-risk activity that forcefully expels respiratory droplets into the air.
- If you are wearing a face mask, you are invited to softly joining in unison parts of the worship service. If you are not wearing a face mask, we invite you to mouth the words silently or speak them in your heart and mind. This prevents abundant spread of aerosols into the environment. There will be no loud speaking in unison, as with the liturgy, creed or prayers.
- There will be no physical contact at any point during the service. The passing of the peace will occur but will be done without physical contact.
- If there are children present in worship, there may be a children's message offered. However, children will remain in the seated areas with their family.
- There will not be passing of the collection plates. Offerings should be deposited in a designated area as worshipers enter/exit the sanctuary.
- Printed copies of the bulletin will be made available and minimal person-to-person contact will be implemented for distribution. The bulletins are asked to be taken home with individuals and disposed of in their own homes.
- Communion will be conducted with minimal person-to-person contact.
- Baptisms may be done on an arranged basis with limited contact and social/physical distancing. Please contact the church office with questions regarding this.
- All areas throughout the building used will be sanitized between services.

If you should have any questions about the Preparedness Plan, please contact the Task Force members: Susanne Lee, Amy Jo Remmele, Tracy Sterner, and Pastor Janel Kuester.

**Organist and/or Pianist  
— Position Opening —**



Christ Lutheran is seeking a part-time organist and/or pianist to accompany hymns and sung liturgy for one Sunday service each week, in addition to seasonable services for Christmas Eve, Ash Wednesday, Midweek Lent, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and other special services including funerals and weddings. This position involves piano accompaniment for special music groups.

Musical style is traditional with an emphasis on hymns, but would be open to other styles of music. Paid on a per-service or per-event basis.

View the full position description at the church website at [www.christcottonwood.org](http://www.christcottonwood.org)

Submit cover letter and resume to:  
[christlutheran@christcotton.com](mailto:christlutheran@christcotton.com)

**New Member  
Welcome to our Christ Lutheran  
faith community - Kit Mackenzie**

## People Are Hungry

In this very difficult time we are all experiencing, there are people all around the world that are hungry and are unsure from where their next meal will come.

For instance, in Minnesota, 1 in 11 households and 1 out of 8 children right now are dealing with food insecurity and hunger. Even in these challenging situations, with the hope of Christ's resurrection, we trust that with God's abundant love and care ALL people will be provided with their basic needs.

As you are able, consider making a monetary gift to any organization that helps those that are experiencing hardships in their life.

Among many others, here are just a few to keep in mind.

- Locally, Cottonwood Food Pantry and Kitchen Table Food Shelf in Marshall.
- Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Minneapolis.
- Second Harvest Heartland, serving Minnesota; \$1 provides 3 meals.
- ELCA World Hunger, serving the United States and around the world.

We are blessed to be a blessing to others!

*Thank you*



## Helping Our Minneapolis

The after-effects of the fires of grocery stores and other places of business in the Minneapolis area are going to be long term for those who live in the area. Holy Trinity Lutheran Church has been on the ground running since the death of George Floyd, the subsequent protesting, and the destructive damage of looters. They have provided a place of safety, mental health and spiritual care chaplaincy, food and other collections of diapers and laundry detergent. Pastor Ingrid Rasmussen, a daughter of this congregation, serves at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. They have set up a link to give financial contributions for the relief efforts. As you are able, here is the link to click to give: <https://htlcmpls.org/donate/> Once you select "other" in the fund designation options, another box will pop up and you are asked to type in the word "justice." 100% of gifts will be used to meet community needs." You may also send donations directly by mail:

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church  
2730 East 31st Street  
Minneapolis, MN 55406

The church council voted at the June 24 meeting to send a \$500 donation on behalf of Christ Lutheran Church.

## Cottonwood Food Pantry

The Cottonwood Food Pantry has been seeing an increase in need in the community this summer. We are thankful for all of the ways you support the pantry and serve our community.



The following is a list of staple items that Food Pantry sees a consistent need. Monetary donations are always welcome; you can mail them to Christ Lutheran Church, PO Box 166, Cottonwood, MN 56229; mark *Cottonwood Food Pantry* with your monetary donation.

### Donation Needs

- Canned Vegetables
- Cream of Mushroom Soup
- Peanut Butter
- Jelly
- Pasta of any kind
- Bisquick or Hungry Jack Pancake Mix
- Pancake Syrup
- Instant Potatoes
- Flavored Oatmeal
- Cheerios – any flavor

You can also contact Tracy Sterner (507-476-0215) with any garden produce or egg donations.

## Where are you these days?

from Pastor Janel

These past few months, I have been dwelling in the book of Psalms. There are many forms of Psalms – psalms of thanksgiving, of praise, of wisdom, of trust, of lament just to name a few. Each of these forms of psalms listed have gotten me through some easier days and some pretty tough days.

Early on in the COVID-19 days of the stay-at-home time, I read an article about how to recognize the stages of emotional responses that one would feel and navigate through. I have continued to reread this article and am finding it to be incredibly accurate. Maybe you, too, have had these same emotions, these same feelings? The article lists the following emotional stages:

**Optimism** – I think that most of you know me well enough that my nature is one of optimism, a hope-filled heart, an upbeat personality. At the beginning, I thought this would be a passing inconvenience of making some short-term sacrifices to make the long-term better. Maybe it was naïve and maybe it was being optimistic? [*from Psalm 73 “But when I thought how to understand this, it seemed to me a wearisome task, until I went into the sanctuary of God”*]

**Determination** – Then the days slid into weeks and even into months. Self-isolation was a determined state. Working from home only slipping silently and alone into the empty church to record worship services. I was determined to get out of bed every day and get dressed. I was determined to try to keep a “normal” schedule as much as I could. [*from Psalm 27 “Wait for the LORD; be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD”*]

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**Satisfaction and frustration** – Then “normal” became a “new normal” or as a friend stated a “new regular” because normal has not been a present word in my vocabulary for a long time now. I found days that were more productive than others and other days where I was extremely frustrated by not being able to do things the way I had been able to do it in the past. [*from Psalm 116 “For you have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling”*]

**Depression** – Then the feelings of struggling and restlessness and at times anxiousness came roaring in. I missed going out and seeing friends and family, the days and nights of living and working inside the same space was becoming too much for this extroverted, people person. [*from Psalm 119 “My soul melts away for sorrow; strengthen me according to your word”*]

**Anger** – Then another feeling began to overload my heart. I found that I was getting easily irritated by the slightest things. Being at the parsonage, working and living, began to feel more like confinement and punishment. Maybe it was even a self-punishment with a gallant purpose with protection at the core. [*from Psalm 30 “For his anger is but for a moment; his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may linger for the night, but joy comes with the morning”*]

**Acceptance** – Acceptance is a tough word sometimes. Admitting there is something that your heart needs that maybe you are not able to fulfill right now. If I am honest with myself, I think that the other feelings are all wrapped up on this feeling of acceptance. And it leads to where I hope that I can continue to find some sense of purpose again...in the seventh emotion. [*from Psalm 4 “There are many who say, ‘O that we might see some good! Let the light of your face shine on us, O Lord!’”*]

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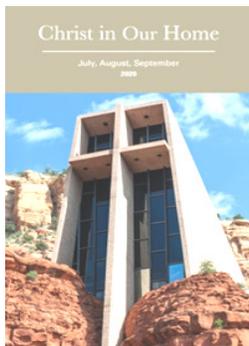
**Making Meaning** – Have you navigated these same emotions that I have? Where are you these days? Have you moved through them systematically or maybe even moved back and forth repeating some of them? Are you searching like I am for where this time can lead us into newness in the church? Where God can be heard anew? What new ways have we had to do ministry that is for the good? [from Psalm 13 “*But I trusted in your steadfast love; my heart shall rejoice in your salvation. I will sing to the Lord, because he has dealt bountifully with me*”]

My peace be with you as we continue to individually and corporately navigate these days and the emotions tied up in them.

—Pastor Janel

Article Referenced: <https://www.cntraveller.in/story/7-emotional-stages-lockdown-coronavirus-india/>

## Christ in Our Home Devotional Books



It's July. Are you missing your new three month “Christ in Our Home” devotional booklet (July-Sept)? They are available right inside the front doors of the church. Help yourself.

Augsburg Fortress has also extended its free emailed version from June 30 to September 30. It shows up in your inbox in time for morning devotions. Pop on over to this link or google “Christ in Our

Home email subscription.”

<https://go.augsburgfortress.org/christ-in-our-home-email-subscription>

## Scripture for July Worship

Wednesday, July 15 and Sunday, July 19  
Holy Communion  
Romans 8:12-25  
Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

Wednesday, July 22 and Sunday, July 26  
Romans 8:26-39  
Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

Wednesday, July 29 and Sunday, August 2  
Holy Communion  
Isaiah 55:1-5  
Matthew 14:13-21

## Mid-Year Financial Snapshot

By Melanie Olson

Because of your generosity in sharing of time and resources, we have continued to be able to reach out with God's never-failing love in countless ways even when we have been physically distanced. We are grateful for your financial gifts which allow us to continue the many ministries that we hold in common inside of God's mission for us here in this faith community.

Giving Year-To-Date: \$80,572  
Expenses Year-To-Date: \$94,382  
**Shortfall Year-To-Date: -\$13,810**

Weekly Offering Needed To Make Budget: \$ 3,671.15  
Monthly Offering Needed To Make Budget: \$14,684.60  
June 2020 Giving: \$11,169.00

## Raising the Roof

After several years of shingles needing to be replaced and leaking into the bell tower, the trustees have been working on roof replacement options. The trustees are recommending at this time to move forward with using a Standing Seam Metal Roofing product made by Weather Guard to replace the asphalt shingles that do not stand up to the weather and wind conditions on the slope deck of the roof line. This product (image below) has completely hidden fasteners and a 40 year warranty. The shingles will be removed, a synthetic felt would be put on the roof deck, and then a one piece seamless sheet from top to bottom placed over the felt.

At the same time, work will be done to fix the slope of the concrete near the front doors of the church building. This will include the removal of at least one window that has been leaking into the basement for several years.

The estimate of materials cost is: \$40,000. The trustees are working on receiving labor bids. The account that the replacement of the roof would be using is from the Edward Jones Investment Fund set aside for capital improvements of this nature. If you would like to make a donation towards the roof replacement, please mark your donation with “Roof Replacement.”



- Who We Are -  
CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH  
Mission Identity

The people of Christ Lutheran Church are daily  
✠ called into God's new creation,  
✠ empowered by the Spirit, and  
✠ sent to show the Good News of Jesus Christ  
bringing welcome, forgiveness, healing, renewal  
and hope to our neighbors here and in all the world

**Staff:**

Janel L. Kuester, Pastor, 507 423 5100; cell 651 726 4003  
pstrjanel@gmail.com

Rhoda Schmidt, Office Assistant, 507-423-5100 cell 507-829-1426  
christlutheran@christcotton.com

Melanie Olson, Accounting Assistant, 507-530-2064  
Melanie.olsen@usbank.com

Jon & Jeannette Myrvik, Custodians,  
(Jon) 507-828-2401 (Jeannette) 828-2407  
jeannette.myrvik@cygnusdelivers.com jjmyrvik@charter.net

**\*When calling the church office and there is no answer,  
please leave a message. We check for messages on a frequent  
basis.**

**Find us on Facebook:  
Christ Lutheran Church Cottonwood MN**

**Our Website: [www.christcottonwood.org](http://www.christcottonwood.org)**

**Mailing Address: PO Box 166, Cottonwood, MN 56229**

**Phones — Office: 507-423-5100 Kitchen: 423-5118**

**Synod Website: [www.swmnelca.org](http://www.swmnelca.org); telephone 507-637-3904**



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Faithful Innovation  
survey.**

**We are grateful that  
you have taken time  
to give your input.**

## **Please Participate with Feedback**

Dear Friends,

Partnering with the Southwestern Minnesota ELCA Synod and Luther Seminary, our congregation is participating in “**The Faithful Innovation**” journey, an opportunity to learn about how to engage the challenges and changes of being church in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. On this journey, we will learn how to make deeper connections with God, each other, and the community and to discover ways to engage and grow Christian faith in community.

As part of this learning process, we invite you to participate by giving feedback on these two questions:

**Question 1:**

How/where have you seen God working in Christ Lutheran’s online, cable, and drive up worship experiences while we are physically distanced from one another?

**Question 2:**

What stumbling blocks/obstacles/challenges have you encountered as we have been physically separated and worshipping online, watching on cable, and through drive up worship?

Please consider these questions and give us your candid response. We are grateful that you are willing to share how you see God at work during these challenging times. As you wish, indicate your name or remain anonymous.

**We would appreciate your response by July 24.**

**Thank you for your participation and response by returning the section on the next page, sending an email, or linking to the survey online.**

—Christ Lutheran Church Faithful Innovation Journey  
Guiding Team: Anne Isaackson, Shane Wee, Christine Wiatrowski, Pastor Janel Kuester

**Faithful Innovation, continued from previous page**

**Please respond by July 24 by using one of the 3 following options:**

If mailing to the church's address, remove response portion of the page below and mail to: Christ Lutheran Church, PO Box 166, Cottonwood, MN 56229 —OR—

Email responses to: [christlutheran@christcotton.com](mailto:christlutheran@christcotton.com)  
—OR—

Take survey online at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/L9PMX5D> (link on FaceBook)

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