

THE SENTINEL July 2020

Central Lutheran Church | 1000 Easton Rd. | Dallas, TX 75218 | www.centrallutheran.org
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God calls us to proclaim the Gospel and demonstrate Christ's love for all.



By Martin Luther:

- To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible
than to be alive without breathing.

- If you are not allowed to laugh in heaven, I don't want to go there.



Dear Church,

I think I **might** now understand what it feels like to be retired – you suddenly shift gears away from your place of employment, are cooped up in the house with your spouse, and have even less time to do more things. No, I don't have a honey-do list that's growing; no, I'm not trying to master 5 new languages; no, I'm not becoming a master gardener. I'm just trying to get by with the essentials – making sure I don't forget appointments, being prepared and showing up for events on time (what day is it?), keeping up with the world events outside the bubble of our home, and not neglecting my spiritual life. Yeah, about that last one.

Jesus had a thing or two to say about that. The world seems different through the eyes of the faithful. Jesus prepared his disciples for uncertain times, sending them out with only the bare minimum, no fancy education – simply sending the disciples out to show an expression of God's love to all those they would meet. He knew the road would be rough. He warned them that the political and social events would challenge their steadfastness and ability to accomplish this work. But he still sent them forth and the people saw God at work. They healed and proclaimed a word of grace and reconciliation.

I can say that I've seen God's love at work in the spiritual care you've shown to me and one another. My heart is bursting with love and gratitude for all who have offered prayers, written cards and sent their love in support of my surgery. I feel better every day and I have witnessed the power of prayer. Thank you for love and encouragement.

I've seen God's love at work in the commitment to White Rock Center of Hope as we continue to support the center with our labor and food goods for their pantry. Thank you for being God's hands and voice here. I know that it's been difficult to put the usual food on your own table, let alone finding food for those in need.

I have seen God's love at work in the continued meeting of our groups (choir, bible study, Hooked on Love, Lydia Circle, etc.) through Zoom and worship via Facebook Live. I've heard you process what's happening with love, tenderness and even grief. You have extended invitations to hear God's word Sundays online, we have reached family and friends afar in ways that we never have before. You have shown up to the Thursday "Conversations at Briarwood", where we do the hard work of learning about racial reconciliation and learn the relevant role of the church through all of this. (Haven't been to Conversations at Briarwood? Do it! Good stuff!)

These are the ministry moments that so wonderfully fail to go into retirement. So if you hear me yell "get off my lawn", you may need to stage an intervention. That's not the most loving thing, and it shows I've finally cracked. But instead, continue in ceaseless prayer and devotion, loving and trusting in God first. Just show up emotionally and listen. Let God lead your hearts; that's where a transformation of spirit truly takes place.

May God continue to dwell richly within you!

+KMT



Pat Buie	07/01	Blake Jutton	07/03
Jeannie Sanchez	07/03	Jordan Soose	07/03
Bruce Staffeld	07/03	Ralph Parker	07/07
Sloane Staffeld	07/07	Robert Krause	07/08
Timm Wikelski	07/08	Eleanor Fiducia	07/10
Rick Bruick	07/11	Tena Ferris	07/12
Starleen Frye	07/12	Trevor Johnson	07/13
Jonathan Quill	07/14	Max Green	07/15
Geetha Doss	07/18	Mary Swenson	07/18
Lesley Raef	07/19	Randall Farrow	07/21
Faye Zimmermann	07/21	Meredith Whisler	07/22
Jordan Haefling	07/23	David LeVasseur	07/24
Steve Pickett	07/25	Theresa Brown	07/26
Nancy Anglin	07/27	Promise Galloway	07/28
Jacob Nagel	07/29		

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Youth — TJ Goins
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happy

ANNIVERSARY

Timothy & Susan Wrobbel	07/09	37 years
Mike & LeAnn Oxley	07/14	13 years
Amy & Sheryl Kjorlien-Lewis	07/22	04 years



Giving Update

These are challenging economic times for the Central Lutheran Church community as we cope with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. During our latest church council meeting, we learned that contributions to Central Lutheran Church were off by approximately 40 percent in May. Yes, that's a significant drop. But, God will sustain us as the incomes of our members fluctuate.

Check-writing is still the most popular way of contributing to CLC. Many members are simply mailing their checks to the church office (1000 Easton Road, Dallas, TX 75218). The checks are being safely collected and deposited.

But, there are other ways of giving:

*Givelify - an app in the app store on your iPhone
(be sure you choose Central Lutheran - DALLAS [1000 Easton Rd, Dallas TX]) More about Givelify here: <https://www.givelify.com/>

*Vanco - an app on your iPhone or online. More details here: <https://www.vancopayments.com>

*Set up payments to Central Lutheran from your bank like you do for your other online bill paying.

*Paypal - you can send funds to central.lutheran.dallas@gmail.com

....And, please don't forget the White Rock Center of Hope. They are helping the needy every single day and could also greatly use your financial support.

I'm very honored to be your stewardship representative at CLC. Please reach out to me if I can be of assistance.

Paul Chambers

paulchambers@aol.com

214-966-4876



Central Lutheran Church
1000 Easton Road, Dallas, TX 75218

Sunday School 9:00 a.m.
Worship Service 10:30 a.m.
Communion Every Sunday

Rev. Kristina Truhan, Pastor
Music Director: Harold Knight
Youth Director: Jennifer Nixon
Office Administrator: David LeVasseur



Iago: "Oh boy, he's cracked. He's gone nuts" (Aladdin)

"God, give me patience, and give it to me right now" – paraphrasing James W. Moore (author)

Chances are you or someone in your house has uttered something similar to one of these two comments over the past 12 weeks. While the government's handling of the COVID-19 virus has been perplexing at times, there's no doubt that the virus could represent a significant risk to some members of our Church family. This is, as you know, is why the government shut down society and is now slowly trying to figure how to re-open. As you have seen, it's a process of frequent changes and evolutions. As your church council, our many jobs include preserving the physical church and doing a better job maintaining the personal connections with our members. It is also our responsibility to figure out how to phase in "live services." Because each member may have different comfort levels with returning and/or health concerns, we anticipate that our 'online' services that are currently streaming on Central Lutheran Church's Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/CentralLutheranDallas>) will continue even once we resume live church services.

So when will we return to live services??????

Central Lutheran Church is listening to guidance from Dallas County Health officials and the U.S. CDC, which is currently suggesting that the earliest time a church can start meeting in person again is only after Dallas County has 14 days of declining number of cases. While Dallas has had a number of up and down days since mid-April, there has not been any long-standing trend of 'declining days' (as of the date of writing this e-mail). But we are thinking positively so that we can be prepared to reopen. Once Dallas County experiences 14 consecutive days of a declining number of cases (which will likely take some time because testing is ramping up and is likely going to reflect a number of previously-unknown / asymptomatic cases / positive antibody results). We have spoken to a number of other churches and there are a number of local churches currently considering their "re-openings" in early-to-mid July. But even when Central Lutheran Church can once again begin meeting in person, it will not mean that everyone should meet in person right away:

Members who feel sick should stay at home.

Members at higher risk (reluctantly) should consider staying at home, too.

We all know that each of us is longing to see our church family as soon as possible: **don't hesitate to call just to visit, to ask for help, groceries, meals, or just companionship.** We all love to talk and sometimes it's necessary to reach out and jostle someone out of their daily routine of just going through the motions.

Once we are able to get together, what would it look like? Initially, every family unit must sit at least six feet away – likely every other pew or even every other, other pew. This likely means that everyone will not be able to sit in "their" seat. Unsurprisingly, there are more, unfortunately necessary precautions that will be in place, including:

Entering the church while staying at least six feet away from everyone not in your house.

No shaking hands, hugs, etc. shared with your long-overdue friends.

No sharing of the peace. (remember, we all have to stay at least six feet apart!)

Communion will likely be postponed until a suitable manner can be found. In the meantime, council will continue to research ways to acceptably share in communion.

We'll likely have to change the entry and exit points or change how we come and go.

Our church council is continuing to meet and discuss additional precautionary measures, so this is just going to be a work in progress for a bit.

So while we are anxiously looking forward to returning to our more customary Sunday-morning services, please know that we are not only preparing for our return but also the next phases as our community continues to have increasing numbers of days with declining cases (or whatever the State's guidelines are in the future). As we get closer, we'll keep you updated on the temporary precautionary steps that will need to be taken – affecting how we enter and exit, where we sit, etc. – and we appreciate your patience and understanding. In the meantime, please reach out and let us – be it council members or other church members – to stay in touch, share your needs, concerns, and joys. We look forward to seeing you all as soon as possible.

Phillip E. Cannatti
President, Central Lutheran Church Council



VBS – Covid-19 style

At press time, a final decision has not yet been made about VBS this summer. We are sending a survey to prospective participants who've attended the past year or two and/or participated with Kids' Klub to help determine their comfort level and likelihood of participating.

IF we do proceed, VBS will be quite a bit different this year. The current plan will be to meet at the church outside in the shade for about an hour, socially distanced and wearing masks, sitting by family groups. (kids/families will not be entering the building) We'll share our usual opening activities including sharing the Bible lessons for the day. The science experiments and craft projects will be demonstrated then each child will be given a bag with that day's materials to create their own projects at home, lessons, and a snack. At home, they will have the opportunity to also go online for a live "dance party" to learn the music for each day.

As with so much right now, while we want to be able to continue this important ministry, we also want to ensure the safety of our volunteers and participants. While Dallas continues to be a hot spot with increasing Covid-19 cases at press time, we watch, wait, and pray for God's healing presence and guidance for our community.



Another great event in our "wait and see" category! Dallas ISD is still working out plans for how school will happen this fall and school year. Will it remain all online? Will students go to campus a couple of days each week and at home the other days? Will families choose to be either at home or in person? We currently don't know the needs for student supplies! We have tentatively scheduled our Bash for August 8th. This event, too, will likely look different with just come-and-go to get supplies, maybe pick up some pre-packaged (store bought or homemade) snacks or treats, and not have all the games & activities we've had in the past two years. More updates will be available when we know what student needs will be and can plan and prepare.





AUDITIONS!

We are very excited to announce an organizational meeting for a new radio play to be produced at Central Lutheran Church. Please join us via Zoom on Saturday, August 1st at 1 pm for “The Wonderful Wizard of Oz.”

Parts available include Dorothy, The Scarecrow, The Tin Woodsman, The Cowardly Lion, the great Oz himself, Aunty Em, and much more. The play format will be similar to our Christmas play. Everyone will be part of our fictional radio station, WCLC-FM. We will perform portions of the book, first published in 1900. It’s in the public domain. We will have to steer away from any lines that were used in the 1939 film with Judy Garland; the script and the songs used in the film are still under copyright.

We will conduct nearly all of the rehearsals by Zoom, so it’s going to be very convenient to participate. Our dress rehearsal will be at CLC, as well as the performance at a date to be determined.

Also as part of the program, we will be singing some popular songs from the period, 1900-1930. And I hope to have my brother David Chambers participate in some way. He owns the most valuable collection of Oz books in the nation and recently appeared on “Antiques Roadshow.” David lives in Austin, but I hope he can drive up and show us some of the rare first editions on performance night.

Please contact me at paulchambers@aol.com if you are interested in participating in this next production. I will provide you the Zoom link for our organizational meeting on August 1st.



Rooted in relationships

ELCA missionaries and pastors Rachel Eskesen and Zachary Courter are partners in work, life and ministry. The married couple has served in Central Europe since 2015, accompanying the Lutheran Church of Hungary (LCH) and Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Augsburg Confession in Serbia and coordinating the ELCA Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) program in Central Europe.

"We're filled with gratitude to walk alongside the YAGM volunteers and their host communities here in Central Europe."

Eskesen and Courter oversee a small group of YAGM volunteers, who serve schools, soup kitchens, homes for those with disabilities, nonprofits, refugee organizations, Roma communities and other ministries.

"One of the things I love about our program is matching the gifts of the YAGM volunteers to the needs of the communities with which they'll serve," Eskesen said.

"We're filled with gratitude to walk alongside the YAGM volunteers and their host communities here in Central Europe," Courter added.

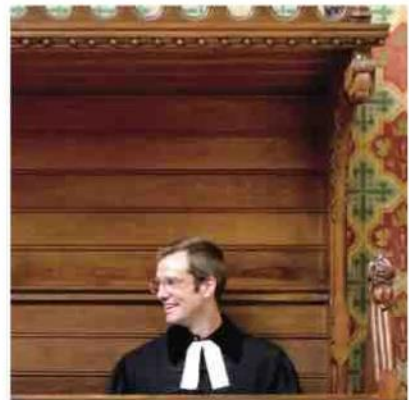
In addition, the couple preaches and presides at City Park Lutheran Church in Budapest and partners with its ministries.

Mission Support funding enables their work mentoring young adults and walking alongside companions in Hungary and Serbia.

Though the political environment there can be tough, Eskesen said she and Courter are inspired by the commitment of their colleagues to proclaim the gospel. The relationships they are forming — as they preach, teach, learn and receive the gifts of the global church — keep them grounded.

Eskesen appreciates how ministry abroad allows her and Courter to use their gifts and grow in faith. "We live in a global context right now that's increasingly polarized and isolationist," she said. "Every day, when we work with young adults, I can see how God is calling us to relationships that are bigger than any relationship we have. A big part of my daily faith experience is seeing not only how we can welcome volunteers into the communities that we love but also how we've been welcomed here."

To follow this missionary couple, visit their blog (zachandrachel.wordpress.com) and [Facebook.com/YAGMCentralEurope](https://www.facebook.com/YAGMCentralEurope).



ELCA missionaries Rachel Eskesen and Zachary Courter coordinate the ELCA Young Adults in Global Mission program in Central Europe. Your Mission Support dollars sustain their ministry.