

## *FROM THE PASTOR*

### The Cure for Racism

In light of recent racial conflict, I would like to share a personal story from my ministry. Many years ago, I served a congregation in Alaska. One of my members was an African-American gentleman named Jim Peterson. He had married a white woman, named Betty. I never knew exactly why they moved to Alaska, but I wonder if it was because of the racism he experienced in other parts of the country.

Jim showed great kindness by being very welcoming to me and my family. Regularly, he would take our family out to eat and we had great conversations. As I got to know him better, our conversations deepened as we would discuss more serious issues. After a while he would share the pain he felt from discrimination from others – even in the church. It opened my eyes to see things I hadn't seen before – the subtle and often unintentional ways we act less kindly toward those who are more different from us than toward those who are more like us.

As the bonds of friendship grew, he would gently and patiently point out my sinful biases. It was uncomfortable. But he did it as a friend and with a spirit of forgiveness. We realized that racism will never go away in this life – even among Christians. Just like every other sin, it will plague us until the good Lord comes again. More importantly, we recognized that God has provided a cure for this sin - Jesus. Jesus, the one who suffered the greatest injustice of all, paid for all our sins at the cross. Jesus' cross proclaims the good news that he has forgiven us all. He loves us all the same. We are all precious in his sight. Such love moves us to love everyone as he has loved us.

Jesus is the only cure for racism. Hate-filled shouting, self-righteous pointing, endless debating, violent vengeance, will never truly cure what is wrong with us. Neither does denying or minimizing the sin of racism. Only the love of Christ can bring down the wall of hostility. When we come together around the message of his cross, we find the strength to humbly listen to each other, to overcome our prejudices and learn to live in true Christian love and harmony. And yes, this will be extraordinarily difficult, as we continue the age-old battle with sin, but through Christ we will find victory.

Jim is now enjoying that eternal victory in heaven. He is praising the Savior with that great multitude "from every nation, tribe, people and language" (Revelation 7:9) where all strife and division between people is no more. I look forward to reuniting with him there and rejoicing together in the love of Christ that brought us together in this life.

May we all grow closer to Christ and see that though we may all come from different cultures and backgrounds, Christ unites us. He created us all. He gave his life for us all. He wants us to be in heaven with him. May his love lead us to sympathize with each other in our struggles and lift one another up in love. "I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love (Ephesians 4:1-2).

# JERUSALEM RETURN TO WORSHIP PROTOCOLS

The Lord calls us to love our neighbor as ourselves. We therefore wish to resume public worship with a spirit of Christian caution and care. Why? We are our brother's keeper! We are concerned for each other's health and well-being. The state of Illinois has allowed churches to reopen worship granted health and safety guidelines are followed. For this reason, Jerusalem is implementing the following procedures when we re-open for public worship services. We ask that you take the opportunity to review these procedures before you attend worship and do your best to follow them when you come.

## Before you come:

- Attendance will be capped at 50 at each service. Please register for worship in advance by e-mail ([secretary@jerusalemlutheran.org](mailto:secretary@jerusalemlutheran.org)) or phone (847-965-4750).

## When you arrive:

- Doors will be propped open or manned for entrance/exit. Please don't congregate in the entry. Enter the sanctuary and be seated as promptly as possible. If you wish to visit with people, wait until after the service and you can visit with them outside maintaining proper social distancing.
- Hand sanitizer will be provided at the church entrance when you arrive/leave.
- Handshakes are not encouraged at this time.
- Please wear a mask or face-covering if you are over three years old. (A limited supply will be available). Families with young children are asked to sit in the pews near the back. Pastor Kehren will wear a mask but take it off when he is up front leading worship.
- There will be a few chairs reserved in the very back and balcony for anyone who wishes to sit at a greater physical distance from the rest of the group.

## While at worship:

- Six feet of social distancing at all times (we will sit in alternating pews). Attendance will be capped at 50. Please register for worship in advance by e-mail ([secretary@jerusalemlutheran.org](mailto:secretary@jerusalemlutheran.org)) or phone (847-965-4750).
- Instead of hymnals, the entire service will be printed in a service folder. Please do not hand the bulletins back in after the service. Take them home with you or put them in the recycling box near the door to the sanctuary.
- We will not pass the offering plates. Please drop offering in an offering plate near the door to the sanctuary.
- We will not pass the Friendship Registers. A greeter will confirm your registration in the entry as you enter.

## After worship:

- People will be ushered out from the back pews first in order to avoid congestion and maintain recommended distancing.
- People are encouraged not to congregate in the building. If you would like to visit with people, please go outside and visit while maintain a six-foot distance between family groups.
- There will be no coffee or snacks at this time.
- The sanctuary will be cleaned for the next service.

## In General:

- Those who are sick or think they may be sick are asked to stay at home.
- We encourage those in vulnerable categories to consider staying home as well and enjoy worship online.

# CHURCH NURSERY

The nursery will not be available for church services until a later date.

## CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Our next congregational/voters meeting will be Sunday, July 12<sup>th</sup> after the 10:30 am service. We will have to ratify the call extended to Ginny Kehren to teach at Jerusalem, and to renew preschool teacher calls to Tanya Kalbach and Laura Boughton. We will also approve the budget for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. No food will be offered and we will practice social distancing.

## JERUSALEM'S FINANCIAL BLESSINGS

In the past year, we have seen some different financial challenges, and yet the Lord continues to provide for our congregation financially. Pray boldly!

This past school year saw some lower enrollment that caused a higher than expected subsidy from our church. And, now we are seeing the impact of COVID on both our offerings and income through the school. In both cases, the Lord continued to bless our mission through strong church offerings and now a government program that has allowed us to keep paying our staff. We understand that the weekly numbers in the Caring and Sharing don't always show the big picture. It only shows offerings compared to budget (this does not represent cash in our checking account and does not include the school financials). We traditionally end up the fiscal year (and school year) at the end of June in good standing against budget, as we did this year. The next six months are always a struggle to catch up due to lower giving over the summer months.

The church and school have been blessed with government loans to help to cover salaries which has helped us bridge the gap during this difficult time. We are following the rules of the loans and don't anticipate needing to repay them. This is truly a blessing. We pray this will get us through the summer without having to dip into the line of credit.

We do continue to incur normal maintenance expenses (i.e. some new carpeting for classrooms). Our new school sign will be installed in the coming months which is not fully funded by donations yet. Any shortfall will come out our maintenance budget.

I continue to be impressed by the dedication, service, and hard work of our staff and council during these challenging times. Thank you! Our congregation meeting to review the budget for the coming year is scheduled for Sunday, July 12<sup>th</sup>. We expect members to comply with the same social distancing rules in place for church at this meeting.

Lastly, we will be sending out instructions in the future on how to take advantage of our electronic giving program.

God's blessings, Patrick Ruehrdanz, Congregation President

## NEW CHURCH AND SCHOOL LOGOS



We have updated our logos for both Jerusalem church and school. Look for the new logos in future mailings and publications.



## Farewell Vance Family:

If you were in the Morton Grove area last Friday, June 19<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 pm, you may have heard a symphony of vehicles honking their horns. This was in honor of the Vance family. A farewell car parade was well attended by church and school families wishing the Vance family well before they move on to their new church and school home in Crete, Illinois. The Vance family thanks all of the families for their cards, gifts, and encouraging words. We wish them God's richest blessings in their new home.



## Jerusalem Soccer Camp

Our Soccer Camp is scheduled for July 13-16 from 10:00 am until noon. As of now, we are tentatively planning on having the camp with reduced hours, size limitations, and other safety precautions. As we receive more information in the upcoming week, we will provide you with updates.

## School Sign Fundraising Update

**We only have about \$9k to go for our sign to be fully funded!** REMINDER: MAKE ANY CHECKS OUT TO JERUSALEM LUTHERAN SCHOOL. If you have questions, please contact myself Patrick Ruehrdanz at [Patrick.ruehrdanz@gmail.com](mailto:Patrick.ruehrdanz@gmail.com) or Principal Vance at [djvjag@gmail.com](mailto:djvjag@gmail.com).

# School News



## Letter from Principal Duane Vance:

Hello Jerusalem Families:

The Illinois State Board of Education recently released guidance for schools and school districts to consider as they move forward with plans to reopen in the fall. This document is over 60 pages and contains information regarding a number of things. Jerusalem's Executive Committee will be working through this document in the coming weeks to see how we can best apply it within our setting.

I wanted to also let you know that I've been able to listen in on discussions regarding some area school districts' tentative approach as to how they plan to proceed and how Jerusalem is considering its reopening.

As of right now, most public schools in our area do not believe they will be able to properly socially distance kids if the entire student body is on campus. The popular idea that is emerging is to send one half of the kids to school two days a week, the other half for two days, and one day to be a teacher planning/disinfecting day. The three days that the children would be at home would be distance learning days. This distance learning will look differently than it did in March-May. The learning that was attempted then was more of an "optional learning". It was not to be graded, or if it was graded, grades were not allowed to fall below the marks that students received in the previous grading term. That will not be the case in the new year. Distance learning will now be mandatory, assessed, and used to determine final grades.

As a side note, I am also aware of at least one high school district that intends to only return this fall with distance learning as of now.

Jerusalem is in a unique situation. We have large areas of space when it comes to classrooms and other areas where learning can take place. We also have a much lower student to classroom ratio than our local public schools. That means Jerusalem intends to return this fall to **all students on campus five days a week with proper safety protocols and procedures in place**. Those protocols and procedures will be studied and implemented over the course of the summer and certainly could change (for better or for worse) as the COVID situation evolves. Jerusalem's teachers will also have a distance learning plan in place to smoothly transition to that environment if a mandatory lockdown were to be implemented again.

I wanted to share this information with you all now because our local school districts will be announcing their plans soon (within the next two weeks), and I wanted to make sure that you all were aware of our plans to try and help eliminate any confusion.

Feel free to be in contact with any of our teachers if you have questions. We all hope you are having a great start to summer (officially) and wish all of you safe fun and relaxation in the upcoming weeks. God's blessings on the rest of your week!

In Christ,  
Duane Vance

Kindergarten Registration will be Saturday, July 11<sup>th</sup>, from 10:00 am-12:00 pm. You may enter the building at the church entrance. Please look for an email from Mrs. Epple providing detailed information about this event. We look forward to seeing you there!

# Jerusalem Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Pastor Jonathan Kehren  
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## Summer Worship Schedule

Thursday 7:00 pm

Sunday 8:00 am and 10:30 am

Online Worship on Facebook and YouTube

*“Our purpose is to serve all people  
with the gospel of Jesus Christ on  
the basis of Holy Scripture”*



We will have in person worship on Thursday at 7:00 pm and Sunday at 8:00 am and 10:30 am.

It is important for our life of faith to gather together for worship as the Scriptures tell us (Hebrews 10:25) so that we can encourage each other and be encouraged in Christian living. At the same time, we want to be concerned for each other's health and well-being so we follow proper health and safety protocols.

If you are coming to worship, please register for in advance by e-mail ([secretary@jerusalemlutheran.org](mailto:secretary@jerusalemlutheran.org)) or phone (847-965-4750). If you get the voice mail, please leave a message indicating which service you wish to attend and how many are coming.