May 27, 2020

Dear Church Family,

We have many developments to report from East Union Lutheran Church as we continue to make our way through our pandemic-imposed separation. The Church Council has been using technology to safely hold meetings and discuss the business of our church. We know there are hopes, concerns and questions that need to be addressed.

1. WHEN WILL WE BE ABLE TO MEET AND WORSHIP TOGETHER?

This issue is being constantly reviewed. Pastor Sarah and the entire Church Council are very aware of the strong desire to resume our normal worship practices. We share that desire. We are also aware of the intense media focus on the issue, as well as the varying opinions held by other denominations and faiths regarding the decision to resume meeting in churches throughout the country.

We are not yet ready to identify a date when we will meet in our sanctuary for worship. Our intent is to listen to local health authority recommendations, but also to be aware that in our relatively small church––and with the older demographics of our congregation––we need to be particularly cautious about the potential impact on the health of our community.

We continue to have very strong participation in our Live Streamed Sunday Worship Services on Facebook. An FM Transmitter is in place to allow for drive-in church; This will begin soon.

1. HOW ARE PROFITS FROM THE SPRING PLANT EVENT BEING USED?

The Church Council decided, in advance of the 2020 Spring Plant Event, that the proceeds above cost this year would be directed back to the community through local charities. We advertised that at the event itself.

Thanks to the dedication of our magnificent grower, Kitty Seck, the work of many volunteers and the generosity of the EULC congregation and our customers we cleared approximately $13,000. The profits will be shared as follow:

* Independent School District 112 Angel Fund - $4,000
* Bountiful Basket Food Shelf (Chaska) - $4,000
* Cristo Obrero ELCA Congregation (Chaska) - $1,000
* East Union Elementary - $1,000
* Carver Elementary - $1,000
* Pastor’s Fund for Congregation and Community Members - $2,000

The Angel Fund provides lunches to students during the pandemic suspension of school and continues through the summer. The elementary schools use their gifts to provide weekend snacks, cover lunch money shortages for students, or to help with basic needs like winter clothing. The Pastor’s fund, with Executive Committee concurrence, will be used to assist with identified financial needs in the congregation or community. If you need financial assistance, please email or call Pastor. Your need will be kept confidential.

1. HOW IS EULC DOING FINANCIALLY?

Our congregational giving has remained very strong during this time. The Church Council diligently monitors our finances. Additionally, EULC has received funds from the Federal Payroll Protection Program that will enable us to cover approximately 2 months of our Payroll Expenses. Funds are in place for the Sanctuary Door replacement and for numerous other identified expenses. Thanks to all for your continued strong support! And please, keep it up!

1. WHEN WILL WE HAVE ACCESS TO THE FELLOWSHIP HALL?

To enhance security and create the ability to track contact happening in the Parish Hall the locks were recently updated and an electronic keypad was installed on the east entrance door. Thanks to the Property Committee for their work on this project. Requests for keys and entrance codes will be coordinated through the EULC Church Office. Thank you for your cooperation.

As with Worship Services, access to the Parish Hall will continue to be restricted for the foreseeable future and is dependent on guidance from local health authorities.

1. OTHER UPDATES?

The Sanctuary Front Door replacement project is delayed until the contractor returns to active business. The proposed remodeling of the Fellowship Hall Kitchen is also deferred until the economy returns to regular activity levels.

PASTOR SARAH’S COMMENTS: UBUNTU

“My humanity is bound up in yours for we can only be human together”

– Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

Archbishop DT is my hero. Truly. Sometime I’ll show you how much I adore him ~ it’s kinda dorky so I won’t put it in writing. One time, when I was in college, I boarded a bus with gobs of people I’d never seen before. We drove ½ way across the country, to Ashville, North Carolina. Why? Because there was a conference and the Archbishop himself was slated to speak. Not only did he speak – he joked, he preached, he giggled, he was incredible! I sat in the front row spellbound, just as I had been reading his books. After his speech they needed a few interested students to have lunch with him…

Back to Ubuntu – it’s 1 single word in Southern Africa – just 1 word. We need that word now: Yesterday Today Tomorrow Next Week This Summer.

It’s not about you. Or me. The Archbishop would quickly tell you it’s not about him either. Pointing to God. Shining Jesus’ Light. Celebrating the Holy Spirit’s work among us.

Proud to be yours,

Pastor