

Gather & Serve Newsletter

Living Christ's Love, we invite all to worship, learn, disciple
and serve

April 1, 2021



*Now the green blade rises, from the buried grain.
Wheat that in the dark earth, many days has lain.
Love lives again, that with the dead has been.
Love is come again like, wheat arising green.
~ Now the Green Blade Rises*

In the time I've gotten to know you all, it's no secret that I love the "old" hymns. I don't love them so much because I'm a traditionalist when it comes to worship. I've come to love them because they recall memories of my days growing up on the farm, and as I've gotten older I've come to better understand the beginnings of my faith that still guide me today.

The Easter hymn I share above has always spoken to me. I remember planting winter wheat in the fall, and getting excited in the spring to see the first shoots of that wheat emerge from the ground – signs that our labors would bear fruit in the coming season. That winter wheat was always there, waiting for the moment that when conditions were right, to emerge in a way that offered a glimpse of joy. A glimpse of hope.

So much has been dormant – not just this past winter, but this past year. In some ways, it can seem like there's no end to the dormancy, things being shut down, and the lack of normalcy. Yet, the promise of Easter is that God and God's love springs forth. Perhaps it is not in the ways we expect, but the signs are always there. I believe those signs are there, waiting to be noticed, and waiting to renew our hope and excitement for a life in service to God and to neighbor.

As spring comes, and we have more opportunities to safely gather and get to know each other, I'm excited and hopeful, as we continue to journey alongside each other as God's church!

Pastor Aaron

Worship Assistant, Assisting Ministers...whatever we call them, we need you!

Now that Pastor Aaron is about 6 months into his call with us, the time is right to consider adding persons interested in assisting with worship leadership. (Or as Pastor Aaron says, “you’re likely getting sick of hearing only me talk.”)

What does an Assisting Worship leader do? They will be responsible for leading portions of the service – prayers, reading the Old Testament lesson, and the ending dismissal. There may even be the occasional opportunity for preaching, if you’re interested in that!

If you’d like to learn more, or volunteer, please contact Pastor Aaron or Tammy Jarvi. Thank you!

Building and Grounds

Pastor Aaron and I had a discussion about a spring cleaning. We would like to reintroduce this tradition that serves a multitude of needs. Clean church, fellowship, ownership and just for the love we have for our sacred place. I will put up a sign up sheet in the fellowship hall. We pray to get between 20-30 souls to make this possible. We are very fortunate to be custodians of past generations who have placed this building in our care. Lets preserve it for them. God Bless John Gilb

Look for the sign up sheet in the Fellowship hall—or email Melissa@ourfatherschurch.org to get on the list to help.

Spring Cleaning and Barbeque

When Saturday April 24th

Time 10am -2pm

Council Minutes

Our Father's Lutheran Church
Minutes for Leadership Team Meeting
March 2, 2021 7:00pm

Devotion – Pam Hoekstra
Prayer

Attendance – Pam Hoekstra, Amy Krcil, Brian Walton, Amy Jacobson, Shannon Sand, Dan Schiller, Tiffany Distad, Chandler Drummond, Pastor Aaron, Rick Fuglie

Administrative/Personnel:

Pastoral update (attached)

Humidifier replacement approved

Holy Week registration capped at 50 people – Melissa to work out details

Discussion on future outdoor services

FM Transmitter needs to be purchased

Possible need to enclose or cover pulpit area

MPLS Synod- 2 council members get first change; can open to congregation if spots do not fill

Finance:

Treasurer update – Amy

Banking information and authorization transfers are being processed

January contributions down – February looking better

Giving campaign – Pam

Looking for volunteers to address new ways to increase giving within the congregation

Brian commented announcing the “need” can fill the void

Tie together needs and interest can lead to increased giving

Adopt an “expense” program

Amy mentioned adding a pop up to ZOOM to give better access for those at home

Introductions:

Council members general introductions – All

CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE:

Internal Ministries:

- Potential to add monthly invitee to discuss shared ministry at Our Fathers
 - Way to add better understanding
 - Brian to invite Paul – Will put a beginning of next meeting
- Building capacity guidelines – new information from Gov Walz
 - Currently no fire marshal capacities at the church
 - All old rules still in play
- Transition of key
 - Executive council members will be given keys to church
 - All other key needs addressed on individual basis

Outreach Ministries: No new discussion

Building and Grounds:

- Proposal to improve sound systems, AV, and broadcasting capabilities - Aaron
 - Brian and Dan in investigate and report back
- Follow up on schedule for improvements and timeline for building improvements - Amy

Meeting schedule:

- Exec - to continue with 3rd Tuesday
- Council – to continue with 1st Tuesday

Devotion Schedule:

- Dan – April
- Tiffany – May
- Amy – June
- Rick – July
- Amy – August
- Chandler – September
- Brian – October
- Shannon – November
- Amy - December

Sunday School

Last fall, our Sunday School Students studied a curriculum about the Lord's Prayer.

Starting in January, we have chosen one student each Sunday to lead the group in saying it out loud. A lot of the older students who have heard it many times are able to get through the entire prayer from memory! Others are able to remember most of it with just a little bit of help. Our youngest students have been able to lead the prayer with a teacher whispering each line in their ear first.

Regardless of their level of memory, the enthusiasm that each student has shown while reciting the prayer has been so fun and so inspiring to see! Our goal is to be able to lead the entire congregation in the Lord's Prayer during a church service before the year is through.



Men's Group

But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

Isaiah 40:31

Have we put our hope in the Lord, or have we put our hope in our own strength and abilities? Our own strength can fail us, our abilities can falter. The Lord will not let us down. Sometimes it can be hard to see what God is doing through us. Sometimes we need to take a break from our business to see that hope God so freely offers to each of us. We need to share that hope with other Christians, other men, traveling this journey with us.

The Men's Group invites all men to join us for discussion and fellowship on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of each month from 7:30am-9:00am. We are meeting both in-person in the large education room and online with zoom.

A few updates from our recent meetings:

- Our Men's group will not be having a retreat this spring. With ongoing concerns about Covid-19 safety, we are going to wait until March, 2022, for our annual retreat.
- We are working to include a more regular Bible study as part of our meetings. Paul Bolstad will be leading discussions based on the book Making Sense of the Bible by Adam Hamilton.

Zoom link:

<https://zoom.us/j/99923907662?pwd=ZkRuSFFUb3dnaURjNE0zczFEWHZRZz09>

(meeting ID and passcode are part of the link)

The men's group also has regular email communications using google groups. To subscribe to the men's group emails, send a request to:

oflc-mens-group-316+subscribe@googlegroups.com

***Do you know of someone who does not have a computer? Or has troubles getting online? Would they like to be mailed our Gather & Serve Newsletter and other pertinent correspondence? Please let me know their name and address and I would be happy to get them on our mailing list. Or have them call the church office and leave a message.

Financial Statement

	CURRENT YEAR MTD			PRIOR YEAR MTD	
	Actual 2021	Budget	Better/ (Worse)	Actual 2020	Better/ (Worse)
February Contributions					
Giving	\$ 25,748	\$ 17,000	\$ 8,748	\$ 19,420	\$ 6,329
February Expenses					
Payroll/Stipends/Prof Fees	9,686	10,251	565	15,349	5,663
Charitable Contributions	3,251	1,070	(2,181)	600	(2,651)
Building Expenses	3,899	4,676	777	5,652	1,752
Utilities	1,718	1,755	37	1,620	(98)
Printing & Reproduction	236	236	-	472	236
Supplies & Other Expenses	237	977	739	2,162	1,925
Total Expenses	19,027	18,965	(62)	25,855	6,828
Net Income	\$ 6,721	\$ (1,965)	\$ 8,686	\$ (6,435)	\$ 13,156
Total Cash Balance	\$ 87,297			\$ 64,102	
Designated Cash Balance	\$ 53,384			\$ 52,075	

The above financials reflect cash basis activity where actual cash received is compared to cash paid out for expenses. *WAY TO GO OFLC! In February, we caught up with our year-to-date budget resulting in \$1,870 favorability in net income.*

Contributions were higher than budget even with the \$5k from January that was deposited in February. For the year, we are about \$1.8k ahead of budget.

Expenses were slightly over budget mostly driven by charitable contributions. Charitable contributions are budgeted each month, but will be paid on a quarterly basis. Since this statement is based on cash activity, November and December payments were made in February. This is all offset by lower expenses for the building where we didn't get as much snow as expected. Also, there was lower supply expenses due to some 2020 adjustments made.

Included in this analysis is a comparison to February 2020. Expenses are overall lower this year than last.

The **cash balance** for February 28, 2021 is \$87,297 which is a higher cash position than in 2020. Designated cash did not change much year over year with the building fund making up most of the balance. We continue to have a kitchen fund, seminary scholarship, social concerns, and ministry as our other designated cash funds.

Any questions can be directed to accounting@ourfatherschurch.org

Nourishing Hope

Nourishing Hope continues to meet a significant and growing need in our communities. Our distributions begin at 3:00 p.m. and we have people beginning to line up at 12:30 p.m. Along with our ecumenical partners, we are serving over 700 families each month with boxes of fresh produce, meat, and dairy items. This is a fun and lovely way to serve. We are blessed to be a blessing in this way.

We do continue to need to expand our volunteer base, both for the monthly food drop and for the senior meal delivery. Please contact kim@ourfatherschurch.org or call 763-477-6300 for more information or to volunteer



Free Fresh Produce and Dairy

Sponsored by NourishingHOPE Food Drop and Second Harvest Heartland

Boxes of fresh produce and dairy products will be available for drive through pick up on a first come, first served basis
All are welcome

Tuesday, April 13
3pm -until gone

Locations for pick up

Corcoran

St. Thomas Catholic Church parking lot

Delano

Light of Christ Lutheran Church parking lot

St. Michael

Colonial Mall

Montrose

Montrose United Methodist Church parking lot

Rockford

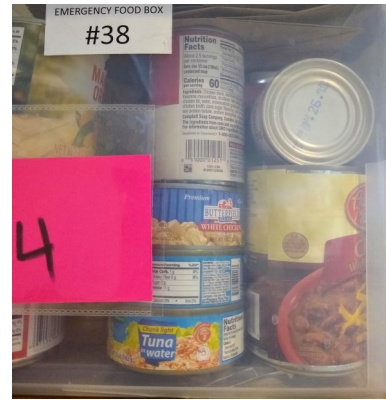
Our Father's Lutheran Church parking lot

Buffalo

Buffalo Covenant Church parking lot

Appropriate distancing and COVID mitigation practices will be employed

Community Outreach



Have you noticed these boxes above the coat rack? Our Father's is hosting these emergency food boxes from WCCA. In an emergency, individuals-in-need can receive these meal supplies. This program allows for extended hours of access and smaller distances between people and food security resources. It also provides a method for Wright County Community Action to connect with those experiencing crisis or poverty, introduce them to local resources such as a food shelf, and encourage them to take further action in reducing any negative impact their situation holds. Contact kim@ourfatherschurch.org or call 763-477-6300 for more information.

Senior Meals

Senior Meals: Do you know of someone over the age of 60 who could benefit from this FREE meal delivery?

Please share! We are also looking for Delivery Drivers!

If interested in helping please contact kim@ourfatherschurch.org or call 763-477-6300



Open to anyone 60+

Confidential

Home Delivery

Made from scratch

NO-COST MEALS FOR SENIORS

WCCA and Catholic Charities have partnered with Nourishing Hope to provide seniors ten made-from-scratch, frozen meals per delivery, which can be microwaved or oven-cooked to heat.

If you live in **Wright County** (320) 963-6500 ext. 274 or ext. 241

If you live in **Hennepin County** (763) 477-6300 or email nourishinghope.oflce@gmail.com

WCCA WRIGHT COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION

NourishingHOPE at OFLC



A CALL FOR HELP!

Love INC Heartland Bedding

We have been careful with social distancing, and are looking forward to being able to visit with neighbors more easily, even the day when a hug will be possible!

Our current needs: Pillows (New)

Thank you!



Do you have a love for flowers and plants?? Then you are the person/s for this!

The building and groups is looking to recruit someone to help with watering and possible adding to our plants at the church. Also to work on the flower garden out front.

We can help with supplies.

If you have an interest in helping us out in this area please contact

Melissa@ourfatherschurch.org or call the church office. 763-477-6300

Thanks

Easter Flowers

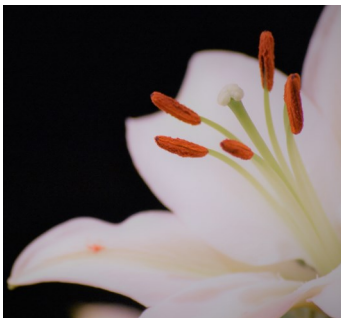
In memory of and In honor of:

Donator

Ken & Kathy Lunderby
Amy, Curt, Madi Jacobson
Pam Hoekstra
Gail Swanson
Suzanne Otten
Amy Krcil
Becky Miller
Wendy & JD Gustafson
Deb Dickman
Lisa Barden/Brian Walton
Jackie Anderson
Paul & Ruth Durand

In Memory Of

Oscar & Mildred Lunderby
Colton Jacobson
Sean & Adam
Our Family
Nona & Jack Daniels, Vivianne & Mark Daniels
Our Family
Jesus
Barb Strehlow
Violet Whitehead
Gods Love, All those we Love, Loving One Another
In Honor of our many blessings
In Memory of our Parents



GOOD NEWS ABOUT THE COMBINE

The Harvesters of Hope project to assist small farmers in the Iringa Diocese of Tanzania involved the congregation at OFLC in a way that showed how great things could be accomplished when working together.

Many members helped in various ways to meet the challenge that had been laid before us by Ray Menard of the Cheetah Development organization. It was truly inspirational to see what was accomplished back in 2014/2015 to assist Cheetah in bringing new hope to small farmers, many of whom were our fellow Lutherans there in Tanzania.

The John Deere 3300 combine we purchased for \$4000 was modified in the workshop of Jim Strehlow's son, Steve. He loaded it into a 40' container for shipment by sea and it arrived there in May, 2015. Steve and wife, Sheri, Brian Walton were a team led and guided by Paul Bolstad in October and November 2015 to Iringa to train Cheetah employees to operate the now modified combine as a mobile corn thresher.

Changes in the government led to changes in Cheetah's situation; the new government created many obstacles that were ultimately too much to overcome. So Cheetah Development had to shut down and the combine was stored at the Danish Mission Compound where Cheetah had their offices. And there it sat as Paul tried to redeploy the combine with other organizations that were working with farmers.

Finally, in 2020, we found a new partner to put the combine to use. He is a second generation dairy farmer near Iringa with long experience in using farm machinery. He has agreed to take responsibility for the combine and make it available to nearby small farmers who need an efficient way to thresh their corn at harvest. Some of these farmers are the same or similar ones to that Cheetah had plans to serve.

So, here is our combine doing what we hoped it would do back in the beginning...

We expect to have further updates on the use of the combine at Kibebe Farms Ltd., our new partner, especially during the next harvest season starting in July and continuing through October.



About OFLC

Mission Statement

..Living Christ's Love we invite all to
worship, learn, disciple & serve

Office Hours: By appointment Please call.

Phone: 763-477-6300

Website: www.ourfatherschurch.org

Staff Contacts:

Pastor Aaron Fuller: pastoraaron@ourfatherschurch.org

Office Admin: Melissa Ungaro Melissa@ourfatherschurch.org

Community Connector: Kim Haggen Kim@ourfatherschurch.org

Music/Bell Choir Director: Tammy Jarvi tjarvi@charter.net

Council Members:

Tiffany Distad, Diane Dorrel, Chandler Drummond, Pam Hoekstra,
Amy Jacobson, Amy Krcil, Shannon Hunter, Dan Schiller, Brian
Walton

Executive Team Members:

Rick Fuglie, Chandler Drummond, Aaron Fuller, Pam Hoekstra,
Amy Krcil

Information

Prayer Requests:

Do you have a prayer concern? The prayer chain will confidentially lift up prayers on your behalf, a friend or loved one. Know that you are surrounded in your time of need.

Contact: Shirley Bolstad,
pbolstad@aol.com

Would a palm cross or prayer shawl comfort you or a family member?

Contact: Norie Siers,
ncsiers@gmail.com

Newsletter Deadline:

Deadline for articles, photos or announcements is the 15th of each month. Send to:

Melissa@ourfatherschurch.org

WORSHIP TIMES

Sunday 9:00am Wednesday 7:00pm



Join us for Zoom Coffee hour. It will go on right after worship on Sunday Mornings. Stay on the Zoom meeting and catch up with folks!

(No need to log on to another meeting!)