



Fields of Grace Newsletter

<https://fieldsofgracemn.com/>

Vol. 9, Issue 9 Bernadotte, First & Swan Lake Lutheran

April 2020

FOG cancellations and postponements

All Fields of Grace church activities through April 9 are cancelled or postponed.

That includes:

- Wednesday supper/worship, April 1
- FOG Ham Bingo, Saturday, April 4
- Palm Sunday Service/Confirmation, Sunday, April 5
- Maundy Thursday/Good Friday Combined Service, April 9

We're holding out hope that Easter morning services can be held. An announcement will be made closer to that time.

The following events will be rescheduled when the time is right:

- Confirmation
- FOG Ham Bingo
- First Communion Preparation
- Food for Kidz Food Packaging

Staying connected...

Our congregation and parish presidents are working with Pastor Heidi to find ways for you to attend to your spiritual lives.

Pastor Heidi started sharing Wednesday and Sunday sermons by email and on the web page last week. With help from Andrew Rasmussen, she is working to broadcast sermons and prayers on Facebook and/or YouTube.

Our churches are not abandoning you...we just have to find new ways to do things to get through these times.

You can connect with FOG at:

<http://fieldsofgracemn.com> (web page)

Fields of Grace MN on Facebook (this was the Bernadotte Facebook page, now converted to Fields of Grace)

Please remember the church's needs

Although we're not holding services, church expenses do continue. Please remember the church in these times.

Fields of Grace is working to set up online giving but, until we do (or even after), you may send your offerings to the following:

- BLC: Ruth Klossner, 34085 515th Ave., Lafayette, MN 56054
- FLC: Jorja Langhoff, P.O. Box 14, Lafayette, MN 56054
- SwLk: JoAnn Gieseke, 29540 State Hwy 4, St James MN 56081
- FOG Haiti Mission Project: Brad DeBoer, 31706 601st Ave., Winthrop 55396

The baptism of Ashtyn Kay Klingler

In Holy Baptism we hear God's command to "go and baptize." We hear the promise of grace that comes through baptism. And then we experience that Word joined to the water. Normally, baptism is done in community, but there are circumstances, like the one in which we now find ourselves, that present challenges.

Thankfully, Jesus tells us a community can be as small as two people. With that affirmation, a small group of people gathered at First Lutheran recently to celebrate the baptism of Ashtyn Kay Klingler, daughter of Megan (Griebel) and Nick Klingler. Welcome into God's family, Ashtyn!

Ashtyn's sponsors are Laci Thedens and Kristi Klingler. Her grandparents are Erik and Tara Roth, Gary Griebel, and Ken and Laurie Klingler. Her great-grandparents are Yvonne and Mike Griebel, Susie and Buck Wendorff, and Jim and Jeanne Albrecht.

Ashtyn was born February 7.



FIELDS OF GRACE WORSHIP SERVICES

Swan Lake Lutheran—8:00 a.m.—Communion the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month

First Lutheran—9:30 a.m.—Communion the 1st and 4th Sundays of the month

Bernadotte Lutheran—11:00 a.m.—Communion the 2nd Sunday of the month

Pastor Heidi's Reflection on these troubling times

The situation in which we find ourselves is new (to us), but is it unprecedented?

One hundred years ago, the "Spanish Flu" spread around the world. It took a long time for the world to recognize the seriousness of the epidemic. But the disease sharply spiked in October 1918, prompting cities, states, and countries to take more decisive action.

Cities like Indianapolis, IN; Washington, D.C.; and Philadelphia, PA all ordered social distancing similar to what we're now experiencing, plus the closing of non-essential businesses, quarantines in houses, and schools shut down. This included churches, that were either asked or outright ordered to suspend worship services.

Yes, one hundred years ago the church experienced exactly what we are experiencing now—closing down and suspending worship during a pandemic. Churches back then faced the same difficulties we're facing.

For nearly all of its history, the church has been defined as a group of people connected and gathered together. When everyone couldn't gather together in one place, they gathered together in multiple places. When circumstances prevented some from gathering, the church went to them to provide care and the sacraments. When persecution meant punishment, imprisonment, or death for those who clung to their faith, they met in secret, away from public eyes. The church has always been physically connected in some way. Rarely has the church had to exist when physical contact was impossible on such a massive scale.

This is one of those rare times when physically gathering

together and coming into contact with each other is dangerous. The disease can spread between people who haven't even touched, because it is carried in respiratory droplets on the air expelled from human lungs. Even the bubonic plague that caused the Black Death in the fourteenth century CE allowed priests like Martin Luther to remain in their cities and towns to minister to the sick and dying.

But when a disease as contagious as COVID-19 presents itself, the precautions that Luther took simply aren't enough. Physical isolation is required to slow the spread of this disease.

Yet, I think we are equipped to continue being a church together during times of isolation. Technology allows us to communicate instantly by cell phone and via the Internet. For many people, such contact provides the only real, safe, life-giving social interaction in their lives.

That is why I am imploring you to stay connected with your church family. We are working on using technology to connect virtually—standby for details as we get it set up—but I also want to encourage you to use old-fashioned ways of connecting.

Check the names and addresses of members who live in care facilities or who are being cared for in their homes (below). Please write to them. Tell them about your day. Send cards. Call. And remember to pray.

The church accompanies the suffering and shares burdens, adapting as it needs for the sake of those it serves. We must accompany our people for as long as it takes. All that will matter is that we did the best we could to ease the suffering in mind, body, and spirit of those we accompanied, and rely on the faith of Jesus Christ to do the rest.

Fields of Grace members in care facilities or being cared for at home

Bernadotte

Elaine Holberg
635 3rd St., Apt. 5
Gaylord, MN 55334

Verone Langhorst
638 3rd St., Apt 32
Gaylord, MN 55334

Ken Martens
1314 8th St. N, Rm 318
New Ulm, MN 56073

Dave & Sandy Martin
47476 350th St.
Gaylord, MN 55334

Carol Monson
P.O. Box 442
Winthrop, MN 55396

Gerry Peterson
720 23rd St. N.
New Ulm, MN 56073

Mildred Ross
638 3rd St., Apt. 13
Gaylord, MN 55334

Dennis Swenson
6309 Burnham Cir., Apt. 118
Inver Grove Heights, MN
55076

Vern & Neva Paulson
33080 533rd Ave.
Lafayette, MN 56054

Betty Peterson
1850 Sarazin St., Apt. 145
Shakopee, MN 55379

First Lutheran

Stanley Youngblom
1314 8th St. N, Room 204
New Ulm, MN 56073

Audrey Wise
1314 8th St. N., Room 322
New Ulm, MN 56073

Ardis Lokensgard
1100 1st Ave. S., Room 243
Sleepy Eye, MN 56085

Darlene Ulrich
P.O. Box 372
Lafayette, MN 56054

Ardis Lund
720 23rd St. N.
New Ulm, MN 56073

*PLEASE REMEMBER OUR
MEMBERS WITH A CARD,
LETTER, OR PHONE CALL*

To contact Heidi: 507-766-3471 or pastor@fieldsofgracemn.com

APRIL 2020 WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

First Lutheran Church

Greeter: Jeff Donnay
Ushers: 12-Bill Youngblom, Bob Youngblom; 19-joint at Bernadotte;
26-Landon Uhde, Marti Uhde.
Readers: 12-Linda Youngblom; 19 & 26-Tanisha Selbrade
Liturgist: 12-Charlie Hartley; 19-Jeff Donnay; 26-Jorja Langhoff
Coffee Servers: 12-Men's Breakfast; 19-joint at BLC; 26-Sue Helget,
Katie Nelson
Altar: Lila Ellies, Jorja Langhoff, Shelly Langhoff
Visiting: Lila Ellies, Mary Martens

Bernadotte Lutheran

Greeters: Tim & Beth Anderson
Acolyte: Marissa Anderson
Readers: 12-Shaun Anderson; 19-Steve Sjostrom; 26-Tim Schulz
Ushers: Trish & John Gieseke, Austin Gieseke, Ron Johnson, Scott Johnson
Communion (April 12): S-Trish Gieseke, C-Elias Webster, U-Ruth Klossner, Tim Schulz
Coffee Servers: 12-Easter Breakfast; 19-open; 26- Sjostroms.

Subject to when/whether worship services resume, depending on conditions

We're looking for YOUR database form

All FOG members are being asked to fill out database forms so that our church records can be updated. Database forms were distributed at our churches, by mail, and with a previous newsletter.

Please, please, please complete a form (another copy is being sent with this newsletter) and get it to Pastor Heidi or mail it to Trish Gieseke at 52000 Fort Road, New Ulm, MN 56073.

GoServ Global banks

Remember those little "grain bins" you got at church several months ago? They're to collect donations for Safe-T homes for Haiti. Please continue to put your loose change (or bills) into the bins. The bin bank offerings will be collected by August 1.

MN Valley WELCA news

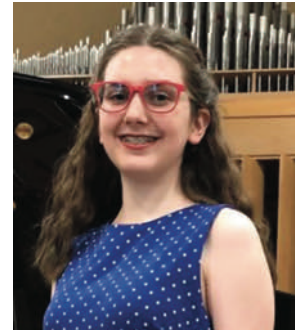
The Spring Gathering of the Minnesota Valley Conference (scheduled for April 14) has been cancelled.

The Fall Gathering will be held at First Lutheran Church in Hector, but no date was listed.

Notice was just received March 27 that the May 2 SW MN SWO Convention has been cancelled. There is no rescheduling date.

Good News Item

Hannah-Nikyta Youngblom of First Lutheran, a freshman at Laurel Springs private online school in West Chester, PA, was spotlighted in the school's publicity in March. Youngblom was called "A Mathematician in the Making" for her love of and accomplishments in math. When not working on her studies, Hannah-Nikyta dances, plays the piano, writes, and even reads about one of her favorite subjects: espionage. She also volunteers as a Sunday School teacher at FLC.



Bernadotte treats Sibley County DAC cleaning crew



The Bernadotte church council treated the Sibley County DAC cleaning crew to a pizza party Monday, March 2. Since the event was originally scheduled for February 17, it was something of a Valentine's party, with the council giving the workers chocolate hearts, Valentine's mugs, and more. DAC has cleaned the Bernadotte church for nearly 30 years and does a super job!



Youth served Lenten soup suppers



The FOG confirmation youth were busy at the weekly Lenten services that were held February 26 and March 4 & 11. The first two services were at Swan Lake with the third at First Lutheran. With help from their families, different kids served on different weeks.



Like so many other events these days, the following are subject to change:

Christian Education schedule Sunday School

Scheduled to resume April 19

Wednesday School—Grades 5-9

Classes are scheduled for April 15 & 22

Council Meeting Dates

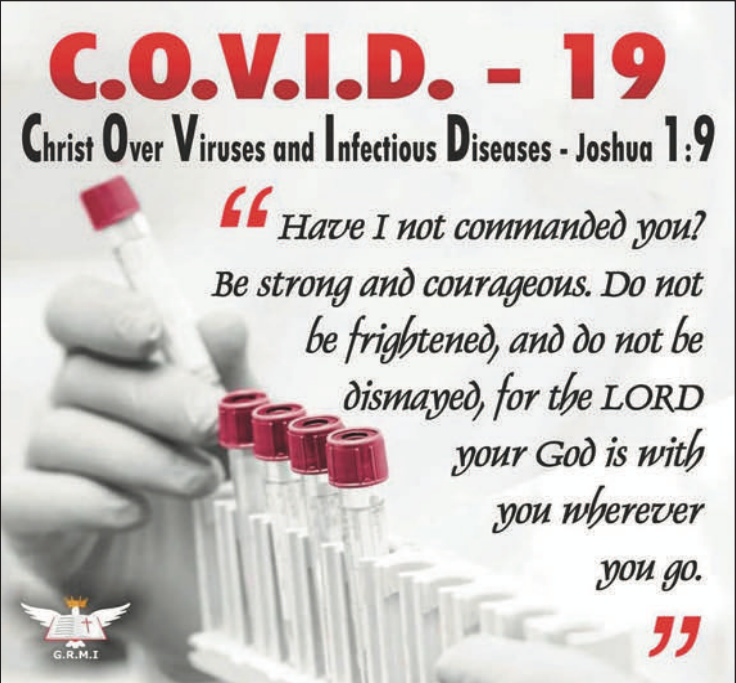
- First Lutheran Council— Mon., Apr. 3, 5:30 p.m., FLC
- FOG Council— Wed., Apr. 15, 6:30 p.m., FLC
- Bernadotte Council— Mon., May 18, 6:00 p.m. , BLC

Event planning at Bernadotte

- Park Clean-up, Saturday, April 11, 9:00 a.m. (Alternate date, April 18). IF weather/ground conditions are appropriate, IF members have time, and IF they see things that need doing (like picking up branches), feel free to do them anytime. Questions? Call Jerry Oscarson at 276-6930.
- NO BLC Easter Lily Garden due to COVID-19 and uncertainty of having services (checks for those who paid are being returned)
- BLC Ice Cream Social, Wednesday, June 3, Church park
- Outdoor Services—Sundays, July 5 (Joint Service), and August 2 and 30, 9:30 a.m. Music with a message.
- NO Swedefest this summer.


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In another matter, the BLC Cemetery Committee approved, early this year, that the cost of cemetery plots will increase from \$300 to \$400 on July 1.



C.O.V.I.D. - 19
Christ Over Viruses and Infectious Diseases - Joshua 1:9

“ *Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.* **”**



A Prayer for Today

May we who are merely inconvenienced,
remember those whose lives are at stake.

May we who have no risk factors,
remember those most vulnerable.

May we who have the luxury of working from home,
remember those who must choose between preserving their health or making their rent.

May we who have the flexibility to care for our children when their schools close,
remember those who have no options.

May we who have to cancel our trips,
remember those who have no place to go.

May we who are losing our margin money in the tumult of the economic market
remember those who have no margins at all.

May we who settle in to quarantine at home,
remember those who have no homes.

During this time when we can not physically wrap our arms around each other,
let us find ways to be the loving embrace of God to our neighbors. Amen.

