



UNITED PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL:

Light of Christ
St. John's Windish
St. Peter's

Greetings my Friends!

Since the beginning of the Pandemic, communication has been even more challenging than normal! While our websites are filled with a great deal of information about the many ministries that are actively occurring within our midst and our email ministry is stronger than ever, we have come to realize that many within our community of faith have not been able to “keep up” with the multitude of ministries that we are offering during this time.

Today, we are hoping to be able to share with you the many ways that the UPG Parish in partnership with St. John's Windish Lutheran Church have continued to advance God's reign within the world in spite of the global pandemic which has changed all our lives. This document is “just the tip of the iceberg.” If you would like more information on any of the ministries that are shared, please contact us and we would be happy to have a staff member get in touch with you to share more information.

We hope and pray that this document will give you a better idea of all the wonderful ministries occurring within our midst.

Peace and blessings,
Pastor Jerry & Pastor Suzanne

Our community of faith at worship

Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have worshipped our Lord each week. “Live Streaming” worship equipment was coincidentally purchased just two weeks prior to the pandemic. This worship is placed on Facebook each Saturday evening at 5PM. Over the course of the weekend we average approximately 280 people worshipping with us. Holy Communion was added to this worship in June of 2020.

Recently our congregational councils have approved funds to purchase higher quality “live stream” equipment. This equipment will be housed on our St. Peter's campus and will enable our community of faith to offer much higher quality live-stream worship celebrations. We are looking forward to receiving this equipment and utilizing it to the glory of God!

Recently our congregational councils approved expenditures to purchase technology for people who do not have the internet at home to be able to join our “live stream” worship through cellular data systems. We look forward to the opportunity to welcome our sisters and brothers in Christ to worship who have been unable to join us due to a lack of technology in their houses.

Outdoor in person worship has been added to our weekly worship schedule since the beginning of August. This worship is held at the Lutheran Center Sunday mornings at 9:30 AM and will continue although to accommodate Sunday School we will move the Sunday morning outside worship to 9 AM beginning Sunday, August 30, 2020.

Our community of faith continues to learn

Weekly Bible studies are held via “Zoom” over the internet every Thursday evening at 6:30 PM. This ministry alternates between Pastor Jerry, Pastor Suzanne, and Vicar Jamie Edelman.

A leadership retreat was held via “Zoom” on May 30 which had approximately 50 people from across the UPG and St. John’s Windish Lutheran church (More information about the outcome of this retreat can be found on the attached document “Transitional Task Force.”)

Sunday school was held for our children through the Spring of 2020 on Sunday morning via “Zoom.” Plans are being made to host Sunday school in September on our Light of Christ campus outdoors following our worship.

An incredible Vacation Bible School was shared this year at various locations around the Lehigh Valley. The VBS focused on God’s Creation and was held at the “Lehigh Valley Zoo,” Jacobsburg state park, and the DaVinci Center. In all nearly 60 people attended these wonderful ministries.

Our community of faith continues to offer spiritual reflection

Daily prayers and Scriptures have been offered for our community of faith to view each day of the pandemic.

A daily reflection from Carol Henn of St. John’s Windish Lutheran church is posted on our website.

Two pastoral reflections are offered each week through our “Just for You!” column.

Our “46’ers” have their own “blog” section on our web site with wonderful reflections.

Our community of faith continues to gather in Fellowship

Weekly our young people in 4th to 6th grade gather on “Zoom” for chats about the Bible and fun activities. This ministry has produced some fun and exciting publications such as “Harry the Hair” exploits during the Easter Season and more recently “remembering the Saints” ministry.

Our Jr/Sr. High School youth ministry has conducted regular “Zoom” gatherings since the beginning of the pandemic and has hosted a few outdoor gatherings which have found our youth playing volleyball, going to an ice cream store, and just having fun together.

(Unfortunately, the ELCA Youth Gathering scheduled for 2021 at Minneapolis, which our young people were looking forward to being in attendance, has be postponed until 2022.)

Calls for Compassion and Caring has allowed people across our three communities of faith to get to know one another, while making sure that all are doing well. More than 5,000 calls have been made across our community of faith!

Our community of faith continues to advocate for and share ministry with those in need:

Here is a list of ministries of outreach that have taken place during the pandemic (including those sponsored by GWOH/SAM and those that have been led by Thrivent members):

Contributions from UPG and St. John's Windish members have made possible the construction of two simple water wells in African communities (a program of ELCA World Hunger); we hope to add a 3rd well.

Contributions of \$500 have been donated to each of three local food pantries on a rotating basis since March from the two Pastor's Discretionary Funds.

Calls from those needing food or assistance to pay their rent have been received and satisfied with donations of gift cards and the two Pastor's Discretionary Funds.

Volunteers have continued to serve at local pantries on distribution days.

One of our youth in the scouting program is designing and building an outside pantry on the Light of Christ campus.

One Thrivent action team provided Calvary Pantry with non-perishable breakfast foods.

Three Thrivent action teams provided activity bags/fun bags for children at the Boys and Girls Club, Northeast Community Center and the Hispanic Center Lehigh Valley.

Two Thrivent action teams provided a luncheon meal for two local medical agencies by partnering with a local deli to support their business.

One Thrivent action team provided school supplies to fill cloth back packs sewn by UPG members for Lutheran World Relief (to be assembled on our UPG Day of Service).

One Thrivent action team will provide supplies for three outreach activities on our Day of Service (Ft. Hill Cemetery cleanup, rock painting with inspirational messages, and car wash). UPG and St. John's Windish members are collecting plastic bags that will be crocheted into sleeping mats for the homeless of our community (in preparation for our Day of Service).

Over 100 facemasks have been provided to people within our community of faith that were lovingly created by people within our community.

Our Parish Nurse has been busy during the pandemic

She has published 11 articles on Covid-19

She has provided videos on hand washing & mask wearing

She has actively participated in developing guidelines for returning to in-person worship

She has participated in many on-line research seminars to aid in understanding & mitigating Covid-19

She has conducted phone consultations with infectious disease specialists to aid in understanding & mitigating Covid-19

She has spoken with many parishioners either via phone or in person to answer questions about Covid-19

She was a guest speaker to our 46er's group "hanging out with them sharing information related to Covid-19.

The 46ers (Young people who are between 4th to 6th grade) have had a busy summer despite our "fun" new lifestyle! Weekly meetings through the summer months allowed us to meet new friends and learn lots of new skills.

We learned how to stretch our bodies through yoga and "Pound" workouts with our friends Kizzmett Pringle and Amanda Benjamin!

We've had exciting bible adventures reading the book of Jonah and the parable of the withered fig tree. We even had some acting guests Samuel Pygatt and Dametria Selmore who were gracious enough to donate their time to play Jonah and God!

We started watching The Chosen, a new tv show about the life of Christ with our friend Jess Panora, whose friend plays the Apostle James!

We learned how to take care of ourselves, our family, and our friends through the coronavirus pandemic with the help of our own Parish Nurse Donna Musselman!

We've brainstormed lots of new and exciting ways to give back to our community when we are able to meet in person again, including: a block cleaning, a tiny library, sponsoring a canned food drive, and special surprises for Teachers Appreciation Week.

Most importantly, we've learned that some of the best medicine for quarantine is spending time with each other, even when we can't meet in person.

From all the 46ers, thank you for helping us make our club a reality. Thanks be to God!

PS: if YOU want to be a member of our club, reach out to Josh Gulotta at 717.269.5265. We're always looking for new friends to hang out with!

Our Jr./Sr. High Youth have been very active during the pandemic

We have regular meetings via "Zoom" and a few outdoor gatherings.

In the spring we met weekly to learn more about God's story for the world and for all of us.

A video was created and placed on our website highlighting our young people and some of our High School seniors.

We have shared three outdoor gatherings. Two at which we gathered in fellowship to share in lawn games such as volleyball and kickball, and one in which we walked to the Bethlehem Dairy store.

We supported a blood drive in memory of Ben Knauss on August 1.

We've learned the value of being in one another's presence and working together during this time.

If you know of anyone who might be interested in receiving more information about our Jr./Sr. High Youth ministries, please contact Tracy Haas or one of your pastors.

Ministries of the Christian Education Team which occurred during the pandemic of 2020 from March 15, 2020 through August 17, 2020 (the date of the report)

Twelve weeks of original Sunday School lessons were written by Lynn Terry for two age levels with adaptations within each for different age groups. The lessons were based on the lectionary. One lesson was written for preschool through 2nd grade and one lesson was written for 3rd grade through high school. These lessons were emailed to all families whose children were registered for the 2019-2020 Sunday School program held on the Light of Christ Campus and St. John's Windish. The lessons were also posted each week on our Light of Christ Youth Facebook page and were included on our UPG web page.

Bible Story Time Sessions were recorded each of the 12 weeks to correspond with the Sunday School lesson of the week. These videos were placed on our LOC Youth Facebook page. Technical difficulties prohibited them from being included on our UPG web page. Lynn Terry, Tom Keener, Matt Pizsel along with other technically abled people tried to no avail. Ann Nonnemacher, Karen Schoch and Lynn Terry created the videos.

Weekly Sunday School Zoom classes were held for three age groups: preschool through 2nd grade, 3rd through 6th grade and 7th through high school. The children of St. John's Windish were included in these lessons as well as their teacher, Kelly. Lynn taught the lessons with support from the parents of our youngest children, Josh Gulotta, Ann Nonnemacher, Kelly Johnston, Pastor Suzanne and Pastor Jerry, Karen Schoch, Michelle Harvey and Tracy Haas. The 3rd through 6th grade class and the 7th through high school class were followed by a youth meeting.

Our Sunday School children created artwork and/or notes to send to all our UPG and St. John's Windish homebound members.

Our children and youth were encouraged to create inspirational chalk drawings for neighbors, family members and friends. Photos of their drawings were included on our LOC Youth Facebook page.

Children and youth were encouraged to send us their original artwork depicting signs of God's Love which were displayed on the UPG FB page.

Confirmation Classes were held in the spring on Zoom for our 8th and 9th grade students. The students were encouraged to attend our virtual worship services and to let Lynn and Pastor Jerry know when they attended. Lynn continued to record their attendance and participation. They had an option to record a musical selection to be placed on our soundcloud by Josh Gulotta. They were encouraged to write a brief summary of the sermon from the services they viewed and to send it to us.

Our confirmation students were encouraged to let us know how they helped out at home with their family members and in their neighborhoods during this time.

The graduates of the UPG and St. John's Windish were honored with a yard sign which Lynn and Kenda Riley coordinated and delivered. Many of the graduates were home and visited which was met with thankfulness and joy! Our 2020 high school, college and grad school graduates: Dallas Holmes, Cailey Sanchez, Francesca Piscitello, Sydney Symer, Katie Dalla Piazza, Josh Gulotta, William Pelletiers, Luke King, Robert Wagner, and Kayleigh Vasquis.

Our Sunday School year closed with a Drive Through Event on June 7th on our LOC Campus. All of our Sunday School teachers and Pastors attended. A gift bag was purchased for each student which was based on the theme: He's Got The Whole World In His Hands. A frisbee and beach ball were imprinted with the theme. A bubble wand, angel bear and sweet treats were also included. All of the teachers wore masks and kept their distance as we met the families along Worthington Avenue. Karen Favinger, Rosalie Aduccio and Jon Terry helped with the set up. Jon provided refreshments for the teachers. Lynn and Ann Nonnemacher delivered the gift bags to the homes of the children who could not attend the event. They were very happy to see us. We wore our masks and maintained social distance.

Family Vacation Bible School was held the week of July 20, 2020: Exploring God's Natural World! Sixty different people participated throughout the week. July 20th: trip to the Lehigh Valley Zoo, July 22nd: Jacobsburg State Park, creek exploration, butterfly garden, picnic lunch, Noah's Ark Story and Songs, July 24th: BrickLive Ocean Exhibit at the DaVinci Science Center.

Meals and Gift Cards were delivered first weekly and then monthly to two families affiliated with the Light of Christ Child Center. Kenda Riley purchased the gift cards and made arrangements for three meals to be prepared by Dave at David's Italian Market in Emmaus. Jon and Lynn Terry picked up the meals and cards and delivered them to the families. This ministry is ongoing.

The Sunday School Staff met outside on the lawn of LOC on August 10, 2020 to make plans for outdoor Sunday School. The three congregational councils approved the start of Sunday School in person, outdoors, beginning September 20, 2020.

A School Supply Collection was held from August 16th through the 30th for area children and youth in need of supplies.

Submitted in peace and love with prayers for an end to the pandemic and for all to remain in good health.

Lynn Terry

Our community of faith continues to advance in areas of technology

A UPG website has been established bringing together both Light of Christ and St. Peter's websites to one location. This website is updated daily with most recent information available.

St. John's Windish Lutheran Church continues to maintain a wonderful web site that is updated regularly.

We send out daily emails through "Constant Contact" to all people of our community of faith who desire to receive them.

Monthly updates with videos are available through email and are placed on our website.

We continue to search for ways in which the power of technology can be utilized to advance the Kingdom of God within our world.