



acacia park

LUTHERAN CHURCH

A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Monthly news & updates

July 2020

Worship & Christian Education

In-person Sunday worship continues to be cancelled until further notice, but we are now offering Wednesday meditation and healing services at the church. For more information about attending one of the services, please see the article to the right.

Weekly Worship Bulletins.

Service of the Word bulletins will continue to be delivered to your inboxes on Sunday mornings via Constant Contact. We will also continue to mail out hard copies on Fridays to members who do not have email. If you have someone you would like to add to the list, please [email](#) and let us know.

Pastor's Sermons

Pastor Meagan's weekly [sermons](#) are available on our website.

Parish Events & Notes

July Church Council Meeting

Thursday, July 9th at 7:00 pm.

Zoom Worship & Coffee and . . .



Wednesday Meditation and Healing Services

Time slots: 3:00 pm, 3:30 pm, 4:00 pm, and 4:30 pm

Worship will consist of prayers, music but no singing, bible reading, message, and to-go communion.

You can sign up by calling or emailing the church office and leaving a message with your name, contact information and the time slot you would like to reserve. We are limiting each time slot to nine (9) people. We will confirm your time slot each Wednesday between 11:00 am and noon.

Sunday mornings, 9:30 to 11:30 am.
Weekly reminders with instructions on how to join the Zoom chat room are emailed on Saturday and also appear in the Sunday bulletins.

When you arrive at the church, please adhere to the following rules:

- use hand sanitizer upon arrival
- wear masks
- follow tape markings to your seat
- maintain social distancing

Ministry

If you need assistance or have any questions or concerns, you can get in touch with Pastor Meagan at pastormeagan@gmail.com or email the church office at acaciaparkchurch@gmail.com.

Please remember that you must call or email to reserve a time slot each week and receive confirmation of that time slot. We will not be able to include anyone who has not reserved a time slot.

Phone: 708-453-3662

Email: acaciaparkchurch@gmail.com

Phase-In Update

The state and the City of Chicago entered Phase 4 of Restore Illinois on Friday, June 26th. Council approved a phase-in plan that can be found on our [website](#). As we enter Phase 4, the state guidelines indicate that worship communities can gather again with restrictions in place. The council will be meeting over Zoom this week to discuss the next step of our phasing in. We want to do so carefully and thoughtfully.

People are on a spectrum of how they are feeling about Covid-19. People also have different views of what “being safe” means to them. Some are still limiting time out of their homes, not seeing extended family, and cleaning everything with a Clorox wipe before using it. Then there are people way on the other end of the spectrum who don't see the point in masks unless you are inside with non-family, are enjoying time with extended family at birthday parties, and are returning to enjoying movies and museums. Then there are people at every step in between.

Acacia Park wants to respect all views while also listening to science and being cautious, considering that many of our members are in high risk categories.

Pastor Meagan and her family took a Covid-19 test on June 25th, the day before this writing, and will share the results before we open to Phase 4.

Council will discuss what opening during Phase 4 will look like, and the information will be shared. As of right now we are offering four different worship opportunities:

Self-Guided Worship: Mailed out to that part of the Acacia Park Lutheran community who do not have internet access. If you know someone that would like to be added to the mailing list, please let the church office know.

Self-Guided Worship: Emailed out at 7:00 am on Sunday mornings. You can use the email as a guide at any point to have a moment of worship and reflection.

Zoom Worship before *Coffee and . . .* : Each Sunday at 9:30 am there is a Zoom opportunity to connect and catch up. For the first 20 minutes we will do the self-guided worship together.

Wednesday Meditation: Each Wednesday at 3:00 pm there is a 20-minute meditation worship service that includes confession and forgiveness, music played by Katherine, Bible

readings, reflection by Pastor, and to-go communion. Masks and physical distancing are required.

If a Phase 4 worship is decided, we will share the information with the congregation through email and Facebook. Also please note that if it is decided to move into a Phase 4 worship, we will be ready to do a downgrade of worship if there begins to be an uptick in people contracting the virus again. Please connect with Acacia Park through Facebook and also subscribe to our emails to stay up to date on this ever-changing situation.

From the Pastor's Desk . . .



Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Yesterday I was talking to my son about a dust cloud from the Sahara Desert that was going to turn our skies brown for a few days. Chicago is getting a dust storm, I told him. His response was, "That is another check on apocalypse Bingo," quoting the Disney movie, *The Emperor's New Groove*. 2020 really feels that way. We began the year with an impeachment trial; then Covid-19 became a pandemic, and our lives completely changed. It is the year of the 17 year cicada, and their sounds will begin in August. But before that the Murder Hornets are supposed to be arriving, and this week we are supposed to experience a dust storm in the Midwest. 2020 is full of surprises.

The one surprise that is both hard and good for us is the renewed discussion on racism in our country. The few days of riots were scary, but the true protests have not let up. They are still happening daily after George Floyd was murdered a month ago. Maybe you attended a protest in your community; maybe you support the effort, but you are not comfortable going into a crowd right now, so you are making financial donations to social justice organizations; maybe you

more. For most of us reading this pastor's message, we have seen the systems work for us. When we call the police we can expect someone to come to our door and help. When we look for a job we don't have to think about how to make a person want to hire us despite our skin tone. We expect our teachers in our school systems to be well trained. We expect access to groceries and pharmacies and doctors, which is not the case in so many other communities. We see a world that works for us, and we are confused as to why it isn't working for all.

This is part of the work we need to do as a church. The ELCA is the whitest denomination in Christianity. Norridge is a village that is 80% white, and we did not choose to live here by accident. Not only are we unaware of other cultures (how many of us knew about Juneteenth before this year?) we also make sure that we live in a way that makes it comfortable for us to not have to learn about how our comfortable living makes it uncomfortable for others to live. Right now, we are being asked to acknowledge white privilege and even learn more about it. There is a saying in the ally community that we are not free until all are free. This is the work we are doing right now, and we are doing it because it is our Christian call to do so. If you have questions about how it is our Christian call to hear the calls of oppression and learn more, please join us for a weekly book study on *Dear Church* by Lenny Duncan. We plan to begin the book study on Tuesday, July 7th by reading two chapters a week and gathering over Zoom.

As we continue this journey through 2020, let us use this time of staying in

are praying; maybe you are confused and don't understand why all this is happening.

2020 is a confusing year. It is challenging us and pushing us more than we thought we could be pushed, and we are being asked to do some hard soul searching and self-reflection on how the ways systems are set up in America benefit few and harm many

place and physical distancing to do some self-reflection and learning together as the body of Christ. I look forward to learning from you as we do this book study together.

In Christ,

Pastor Meagan

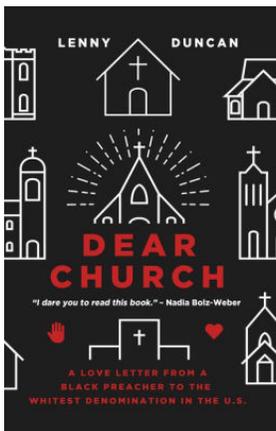
From the ELCA

ELCA Reaffirms Commitment to Combat Racism and White Supremacy

The ELCA has reaffirmed its commitment to combating racism and white supremacy "following the recent murders of Black Americans," the Conference of Bishops said in a statement. The ELCA's social policy [resolution](#), "Condemnation of White Supremacy and Racist Rhetoric," was adopted by the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.



"We grieve with, pray for and stand in solidarity with the families and friends of all whose loved ones have been and continue to be victims of injustices run amok, racist violence and the insidious venom of white supremacy," the statement read. [Read the full statement](#) and find additional resources for education and participation in [ELCA Racial Justice Ministries](#). (*Seeds Monthly, June 2020*)



Book Study

**Tuesdays, July 7, 14, 21, 28; August 4 and 11
6:30-8:00 p.m. via Zoom**

Join Pastor Meagan as we read *Dear Church: A Love Letter from a Black Preacher to the Whitest Denomination in the U.S.* by Lenny Duncan, the unlikeliest of pastors. Formerly incarcerated, he is now a black preacher in the whitest denomination in the US: the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Part manifesto, part confession, and all love letter, *Dear Church* offers a bold new vision for the church to take on forces of this world that act against God: whiteness, misogyny, nationalism, homophobia, and economic injustice. Duncan gives a blueprint for the way forward and urges us to follow in the revolutionary path of Jesus. You can purchase a copy of the book at [Broadleaf Books](#). It is also available for Kindle and NOOK readers.

The church will have four extra copies of the book available for \$13 each by Friday, July 3rd. If you are local, Patti Mann will drop one off at your house; call/text her at 773-885-9686. First-come, first-served basis.

Join Zoom Book Study Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83718778554?pwd=YlFuZ3pqWVNLUndqaUVhM1VYTmxRdz09>

Meeting ID: 837 1877 8554

Password: 522183

One tap mobile
+13126266799,,83718778554#,,,,0#,,522183# US (Chicago)

Dial by your location
+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Meeting ID: 837 1877 8554
Password: 522183

A Note From the Treasurer

Hello to everyone. I hope this note finds you safe and healthy. I miss you. On behalf of the congregation, I would like to personally thank each of you for your continued support, contributions and prayers throughout the Covid-19 epidemic. This support has enabled the congregation to continue its ministries. I think it is important for you to know what we have been working on during this time from a financial perspective.

With the help of the ELCA church-wide synod, the church council voted and applied for a PPP loan. It was approved and received last month. It carries a 1% interest rate, and if used for certain expenses it may be waived in its entirety. It will pay for Katherine to come back and play on Wednesdays and for Dawn to work a few more hours each week. In addition to the loan, the ELCA metro Chicago synod granted APLC with monies to purchase supplies that will be needed when church services begin again. This grant does not have to be paid back. I am grateful for both the church-wide and metro Chicago synod's help and guidance. Their assistance really helped our congregation during this time.

A few weeks ago APLC was bequeathed monies from Gail Olson's estate (Gail is a former member who passed away several years ago). These monies as well as the loan and grant came exactly when APLC needed it for bills; God does work in mysterious ways and is with us. Thanks to these gifts and blessings, we have not had to touch any of the monies in the Morgan Stanley Fund during this crisis.

Most importantly, I want each of you to know that from a financial perspective, the church is doing fine. With that being said, if you are in a financial hardship and must stop contributions for a while, please do so, and take care of yourself and your families first.

Thanks again and peace and blessings to you.

Patti Mann

Treasurer's Report

As of May 2020

	Year To Date (YTD)	YTD BudgetTrended	Variance
Offering Income	\$19,026.00	\$19,916.67	(\$890.67)
Other Income	\$21,457.28	\$10,666.67	\$10,790.61
Expenses	(\$45,099.71)	(\$46,789.80)	\$1,690.09
Net	(\$4,616.43)	(\$16,206.46)	\$11,590.03

Acacia Park Community Announcements

Food Drive: Pastor Meagan will collect non-perishable food at the church on **Friday, July 3rd from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm**. The front doors will be open and boxes placed in the vestibule for dropping off bags of food. Pastor Meagan will be available in the Narthex, behind the glass doors, for social-distance prayers.

If you would rather someone pick up a bag of food from your front porch, we will do that on Saturday morning, July 4th. Have your bag on your porch by 9:00 am for pick up. Please email Pastor Meagan at pastormeagan@gmail.com or call/text her at 773-885-9686 for pick up. Please keep pick up local: Norridge, Harwood Heights, Northwest Side of Chicago

Lutherans and Netflix: The Netflix series *Sweet Magnolias*, written by ELCA member Sheryl Anderson, is currently streaming and features a fictional ELCA congregation. The main characters turn to their church for the community, grace and support that Lutherans can count on. Meanwhile, the Rev. Noah Hepler of Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Atonement appeared on season 5 of *Queer Eye*, with his congregation and his mind set on getting a makeover from the Fab Five. Give these great Lutheran-featuring shows a watch!

Prayer Requests



Allie: nurse at Lutheran General Hospital

Jackie: nurse

Susan Mari: medical student

Shar & George Wyatt: loss of loved one

Katie, Gene, Sean, Megan: grocery store employees

Kelly Smith: nurse

Diana O'Connell: 911 dispatcher

Rich O'Connell: firefighter

Sheri, Lauren, Dan, Kevin: Costco employees

Carlie Figliuolo: paramedic

Haley Stec: paramedic

Frank Stec: EMT/paramedic student

Erv Siemers: health

Family of Doris Mellinger: condolences

Stewart: general prayers

J.: for the promotion she is seeking

Nettie Richards

Burse Wince

Bonnie Wince

If you have loved ones working in hospitals, grocery stores, or other essential-worker capacities, please share their names so that we may lift them up in prayer. You may also share other prayer concerns such as lost jobs, health, anxiety, etc. Email your prayer requests to: pastormeagan@gmail.com or acaciaparkchurch@gmail.com.

Psalm 89:15-16 Happy are the people who know the festal shout, who walk, O Lord, in the light of your countenance; they exult in your name all day long, and extol your righteousness.

Acacia Park Lutheran Church | acaciaparkchurch.com

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708-453-3662 | acaciaparkchurch@gmail.com



Church office hours: Monday through Thursday, 10:30 am to 1:30 pm

