

From the Intern Pastor Megan. . .

Dearest Family of Christ,

I think I speak for most (if not all) of us when I say that two years has gone by *waay too fast!* Two years ago, we embarked on a journey together. I accepted God's call to ministry through Luther Seminary's experimental and intensive MDivX program, and you accepted the call to be my teaching congregation. Through your grace, generosity, and devotion, I have experienced tremendous learning and growth over two years. You have gifted me more opportunities to practice ministry than I could possibly recall here, but let me give a little recap by the numbers. In the last two years, you have helped me to:

Preach **35 sermons**

Lead **15 different ministries**, from Vacation Bible School to Women's Bible Study

Create **7 new programs**, including Play and Praise and Messy Church

Given pastoral care to folks from **ages 9 to 90**

Design **6 different types of services**, including a liturgical season and a memorial service

Produce, in partnership with Pastor Brent and many of you, **89 videos**

Practice ministry in **8 different settings**, including outdoors on Christmas Eve at **-5°F**

Complete **29 courses** and **400 hours** of clinical pastoral education



Of course, you have also supported me in many ways that cannot be quantified, in ways that you likely have not even realized. Your love and community have carried me, directly and indirectly, through a host of other experiences: my first two years as a licensed driver; the death of my beloved grandmother; the coronavirus pandemic and the loss of my parents' jobs; the adoption of my pup pup, Nisse; the publication of an academic journal article; my living in recovery from an eating disorder (ARFID); and the completion of a theological anthology, co-edited with one of my Gustavus professors. All of these experiences, both ministry, academic, and life-related, have been invaluable in shaping me as a child of God and a Christian public leader, and your accompaniment has been a greater blessing than I could have even asked for.

Many of you have asked me where I am headed next on my vocational journey. I can now announce with pride and joy that I will be ordained this summer, and my first call will be at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Davenport, Iowa. This pastoral residency (a two-year position) is a chance for me to keep developing those gifts and skills you helped me cultivate. Once my first call is finished, who knows! I may go on for a PhD in theology or I may pursue my lofty dream of becoming a pastor in Denmark. I will just have to wait and see what God has in store for me!

Although our paths will soon diverge, Family of Christ will always be a part of my vocational journey and I a part of yours. I am not a big believer in the philosophy that everything happens for a reason, but I do believe in the Holy Spirit and the Spirit's ability to bring the right people together at the right time. You, dear Family of Christ, are my people, and I will forever sing praises to the Lord for you. From the bottom of my heart, *thank you*.

With love and gratitude,
Pastor Megan

Worship...

In Person Worship

In Person worship continues at 9:30 AM we will again have worship services in the sanctuary for a limited number of people. We ask that you register ahead of time on the FOC website or by contacting the church office so we can plan for you. When you register there will be some procedures that we ask you follow that will help keep us safe.

On-line Worship Continues

Online worship will continue to be our main form of worship in this time of pandemic. Please join us online Sundays at 9:45 AM or anytime after that. Online worship can be accessed through the church website.

Outdoor Worship

As summer approaches we will periodically have outdoor worship experiences. Please join us from your car or bring a chair as we worship God in the nature around us and share the word with God's creation. Our first outdoor worship will be May 23rd weather permitting.



Pentecost Sunday May 23rd - Wear Red and Worship Outside

The spirit of God is a live and moving here at Family of Christ. Join us as we celebrate the birthday of the church and the remembrance that God continues to move in and through us as a community through the Holy Spirit. There will be noise makers, balloons, all sorts of fun and we invite you to wear Red. Bring a chair or blanket and join us for Outdoor worship weather permitting.

Return to Worship and In-Person Activities at Family of Christ



As we continue to add in-person activities we ask that follow the following precautions set forth by the CDC and the Smart Team:

- * Masks must be worn at all times.
- * Please practice safe social distancing.
- * Please wash or disinfect your hands on a regular basis.



Children, Youth and Family...

First Communion

We are looking to have a First Communion Class for those 1st grade and older, or those whose parents feel their child is ready. This is a time for both the youth and their parents. We will hold the class at church in a socially distanced way to keep us safe. Please contact Pastor Brent or the office if you are interested in being part of this group.



Light Night - Youth Group Summer

Now that the regular Wednesday classes are over for the school year, we look ahead to summer volleyball! This is a great way to stay connected to the youth at Family of Christ throughout your summer. Volleyball will start on Wednesday, June 2nd. Stay tuned to Sunday bulletins for updates! Volleyball nights are also referred to as LIGHT Night... We meet at 7:30pm in the youth room (rain or shine). We visit, do a check in and have a little study and then we head outside for some super fun games of volleyball. IF it is raining, we will have indoor activities planned. We usually finish about 8:30pm.



Youth Camping Trip

We were not able to plan a mission trip this summer due to Covid 19, but we would like to take a little trip. In August we would like to bring all youth 6th-12th Grade on a three day camping trip to Lanesboro for fun, tubing, and getting to know God better. Look for more information in the next couple of months.

Summer Camp Registration

Camp is on this summer in person at Luther Park with Covid Protocols in place. We would like all who have completed Grades 1-12 to join us for a few days or week of fun July 25-30. The theme is "Around the World". Come eager to try new foods, learn about new cultures and "travel" to different parts of the world all while at Luther Park! We will be again giving \$150 scholarship to each camper. Contact the church office or Luther Park Danbury for more information.



Mental Health Awareness Sunday, May 16th

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. The magnitude of mental illness in this country is staggering. According to the Surgeon General, one in every five Americans experiences a mental disorder in any given year and half of all Americans have such disorders at some time in their lives. These illnesses of the brain affect all of us, regardless of age, gender, economic status or ethnicity.



Mental illness affects the mind, body and the spirit. It is a real, common and treatable illness. Mental illnesses are far more common than cancer, diabetes, heart disease or arthritis.

Family of Christ can be an important part of the recovery process through education, support and by helping individuals and families feel part of a caring community. On May 16th our worship service will acknowledge this journey that so many of us face and begin the process of becoming a community that is safe and supportive of those who are experiencing mental health. Please contact Pastor Brent if you want to be a part of this important worship service.



Summer Community Events

Join us every other Wednesday Evening this Summer as we come together for an Intergenerational VBS. This will be fun for the whole community. We will meet outside weather permitting. We invite you to bring your own supper (picnic or take-out) from 6:00-6:30 and then stay for fun and faith formation from 6:30-7:30 PM. We will need lots of help for this. Contact Pastor Brent or the office if you can help.

Adult Education

As online and in person worship continue we would like to invite you to join us for a return to Adult Ed. At this time we will meet online and we will start with a series called Resurrection Is...

Easter isn't just a onetime event, but it's about becoming something new, claiming our identity in the Risen Lord, and preparing for our ministries as the body of Christ. Living in the Resurrection we become renewed people, discover our true gifts, connect with our God-given passions, live in community, and make an impact in the world. Deep down this is exactly who we are called to be both as children of God and as a community of faith. Joining a timeless community of Easter people we will walk through the Gospel and Psalms to wade into the Resurrection mystery.

Join us at 10:45 AM Sundays as we look at this important topic. Link can be found on our main page.



THANK YOU....

Thanks for your continued generosity to Family of Christ.
Your financial gifts have helped us grow our ministry in these uncertain times.

THANK YOU from Trinity Care Center:

"Your unfailing & unending love for Trinity doesn't go unnoticed. Than you for always praying & loving us. We appreciate it more than you'll ever know! Thank you!"

Trinity Senior Campus

Recently we have been helping teachers from Orchard Lake Elementary with supplies they need to help with students learning. Here are some thanks from the staff and students:

"Thank you for the headphones. That was generous. God Bless You." Dias

"Thank you so much for all of your kindness, generosity. We are very grateful. Thank you all." Fatima

"Thank you for donating the headphones to our school. Now our teacher doesn't have to spend a lot of money." Terran

"Thank you so much for helping!" Mykah

"Thank you for the headphones. I like using them. They have great quality. Thank you so much." Charlie

"Thank you so much for the amazing donation. We use headphones a lot for videos and tests and they are going to be so helpful for our class." Olin

"Thank you so much for getting our school (our class) these very nice headphones!" Watts

"Thank you for the headphones. Love you guys." Annabelle

"Thank you for the headphones, all of us love them so much, again thank you for the amazing headphones! Your Friend," Delainey

"I really appreciate the headphones you gave to our class. They are really helpful when the whole class needs to watch a something on their device." Jacob



March—The Drawer = \$1378
(plus many pairs of socks and underwear)

February—Feed 360 Communities Food Shelf = \$3180
(plus over 20 bags & boxes of food)



January - Feed My Starving Children = \$1530
Your gift is providing 6,375 MannaPack™ meals to those around the world who need it most

Be sure to check out the church bulletin board for written Thank Yous!



Mission of the Month
Community Outreach Fund

Last year we began to establish a fund to support local missions and individuals in need. This has helped us financially meet the needs of teachers at Orchard Lake Elementary, care for local families with critical temporary housing, provide meals for those journeying through medical struggles, and support one another in all sorts of new ways. Consider helping us grow this fund to meet the needs of those amongst and around us.

Intern Pastor Megan Blessing and Farewell!

Our intern Pastor Megan is finishing her time with us and will be heading towards her first call as a pastor. Join us during and after worship on May 23rd as we say a special blessing and celebrate our journey together. Worship will be outside and we invite you to write a card or do something special to thank and bless Pastor Megan.



Family of Christ Staff Ministry Team:

Lead Pastor: Pastor Brent Eler
Pastoral Intern: Megan Eide
Administrative Admin: Linda Bauer
Musicians: Mary Wescott, Morgan Jones,
Laura Porter-Jones, Rebecca
Nystuen, Ann Mikiska
Custodian: Kelly Kritsberg

Family of Christ Lutheran Church
is a member of the **ELCA**

Email us at: office@familyofchrist.com
Visit us at: www.familyofchrist.com

Telephone: 952-435-5757

*“FoCus” is a monthly publication of Family of Christ Lutheran Church.
Please contact the church office to submit items for publication in our newsletter.*

Youth Room Renovation

As we continue the process of renovating our youth room we need some help with some removal of desks and installation of shelves. We are looking for a couple people to partner up and do some of the renovations so we can start the next stages of painting. We would like this completed by the end of May. Please contact Pastor Brent if you can help.

Outdoor Worship Stage

We need of a new stage for our outdoor worship. The last one did it well, but we'd like to make a somewhat portable stage that will last for years to come. We are looking to have this complete for our outdoor worship on May 23rd. Contact Pastor Brent if you can help.



Outdoor Grounds Planning Team

We are looking at finding ways to better improve the use of our outside space. Contact the office or Pastor Brent if you want to be a part of this meeting to lift up ideas to make our outdoor space more usable. Ideas that have been lifted up include a playground, picnic shelter, nature trails, and a labyrinth. Help us investigate how we can reach out to more of the community. Contact the church office for more information .

Community Garden

Family of Christ's community garden is almost ready for its fifth season. The Garden will provide a place for people to grow food and flowers, and perhaps friendships! The 10' x 10' plots are \$25 fee for one plot and \$10 each additional. This includes access to water and some community tools. We also invite you to donate 10% of your harvest to the 360 Communities Food Shelf.

Contact Linda at the church office for registrations and plot assignments.



May Schedule

Sunday, May 2:

9:30am In Person Worship

9:45am Online Worship

Sunday, May 9:

9:30am In Person Worship

9:45am Online Worship

Sunday, May 16:

Mental Health Awareness Sunday

9:30am In Person Worship

9:45am Online Worship

Sunday, May 23:

Pentecost - wear Red

Pastor Megan Blessing

9:30 Outdoor Worship

9:45am Online Worship

Sunday, May 30:

9:30 In Person Worship

9:45am Online Worship

Vision Statement

Family of Christ seeks to be a Grace filled family of God, living the Gospel through faith, love and compassion.



Our Core Values F-A-M-I-L-Y:

Fait

Acc

Meaningful relationships

Impact

Love

Youth