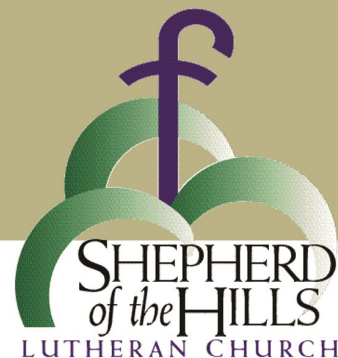


Shepherd's Voice



April 2021

"The Hope of Scars"

By Pastor Scott Searl

Then Jesus said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it on my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"
John 20:27-28

A few years ago this story captured my attention in a new way. After all the Easter festivities, after all the trumpets and shouts of "Christ the King is risen today!" had faded away the story of our so called "Doubting Thomas" appeared. What grabbed my attention is the fact that Jesus, now resurrected, invites Thomas to see and touch the scars of Jesus's crucifixion. Jesus's resurrected body is healed, but not perfect. Somehow the trauma of the cross has indelibly marked the hands and side of God.

This strange fact makes me wonder about a number of things. Why was Jesus's body not completely healed and somehow restored to a pre-crucifixion state? What does it mean that Jesus's body carries scars into his resurrected life with God? Why would God retain this trauma in Jesus's body and not restore Jesus more fully? Are those scars that Jesus carries with him too important to simply forget about and remove? Are they just proof that Jesus was actually crucified? All this makes me wonder if the scars somehow remind God of the real pain and suffering of human life and the lasting scars that trauma can leave on people's bodies and souls. Jesus is healed, and at the same time it seems that Jesus carries the scars of his crucifixion all the way to the heavenly sphere.

The trauma of the past year is deep. There is the pain and loss of more than 520,000 people who have died. The apocalyptic traumatic violence of a police officer killing another human being while others videotaped the event. The discomfort of a city traumatized by fire and vandalism. The realization that many of us have willfully ignored the cries of far too many who have been killed. The wounds of this past year are deep, and we will carry the scars with us into whatever new normal awaits us. I believe Jesus carries these same scars, all the way to God. I believe that these scars are not trivial, and worthy of our reflection. I hope we will allow these new scars time to be exposed to the air so that they will heal. I hope we will not ignore them preferring to deny the trauma and simply move on. To do so would be to live a lie.

I am grateful that Thomas doubts and insists on seeing and touching Jesus's scars. I believe that Thomas is less doubtful about Jesus's resurrection and more doubtful about Jesus's death. After all it's difficult to believe that God, the creator of life itself, would suffer real pain,

Continued on page 2

**Shepherd of the Hills
Lutheran Church
500 Blake Road South
Edina, MN 55343
(952) 935-3457**

Staff:

Pastors	Scott Searl, Sherri Otto
Assistant/Visitation Pastor	Fred Jensen
Music Director	Emily Koski
Intern Pastor	Anne Schaefer
Faith Community Nurse	Kaye Wothe
Administrative Assistant	Shawn Wacholz
Building Manager	Blair Prax

Church Council Members / Officers:

President	Todd Biewen
Vice President	Julie Luers
Treasurer	Steve Hanneman
Financial Secretary	Ryan Erickson
Secretary	Adam Driscoll
Serve	Nate Lichy
Worship & Music	Julia Buteyn
Building & Facilities	Peter Barott
Learn	Open
Communications	Jill Miller
Care	Dave Cousins
LMCC	Open
Evaluation	Chris Polston

Telephone & Voice Mail Extensions:

Worship Times	1
Directions	2
Shawn Wacholz	11
Pastor Scott Searl	12
Pastor Sherri Otto	13
Intern Pastor Anne Schaefer	14
Blair Prax	15
Emergency Message Mailbox	24
Kaye Wothe	25

Shepherd Online!

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Pr. Sherri Otto	sherri.otto@sothchurch.com
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Pastor's Message continued from page 1

real death, and find himself with real scars. It's difficult to believe that God, in Jesus, would prefer to highlight scars rather than perfection. Yet, that seems to be the case. The scars of the pandemic, racial injustice and isolation will come with us into our next new reality. There will be healing and restoration ahead for certain. And there will be scars left to remind us. I imagine that Jesus's scars give God an even greater sense of grace and love for the difficulty of human life. I imagine that the scars of Jesus can give us a greater sense of grace for ourselves and each other. I imagine that when we allow others to see our scars, when we allow our scars to be carried all the way to God in heaven, we are healed and humbled and made new. I imagine the scars of Jesus reflect his humanity and bring divinity to ours. I imagine that it is the promise that God is with us in our pain, revealed in his scars, that heals us. I imagine that Thomas declares, "My Lord and my God!" because in Jesus's scars, Thomas sees his own, resurrected.

RETURN TO WORSHIP UPDATE

Greetings SOTH Friends,

The Return to Worship Team continues to meet regularly to review SOTH's guidelines for Worship and other activities. We are encouraged to see the vaccines continue to roll out and at the same time the trends are improving in terms of daily case counts! Certainly something to give us all hope as we look ahead!

We thought it might be helpful to share some of the criteria for when we'll be worshipping together again.

- When the worship staff is vaccinated
- When the community has had the chance to become vaccinated
- Return team will evaluate community risk conditions and review State/CDC guidelines

In the current scenario, we anticipate outdoor worship starting in June and that we might resume inside sometime this summer. Of course all of this is contingent on the broader trends that might impact this timing.

We want to reiterate that our first priority is the safety and health of our staff and community! We have been and will continue to be a community of faith that cares for each other!

Peace to all!
Worship Return Team





President's Post: Learning from Our Giving Shepherd Community

By Todd Biewen, Council President

Sharing of my financial resources is neither an easy subject for me to discuss, nor a practice that has been easy for me to do. I trace this back to my upbringing,

when giving wasn't something that was evident to me in our household. One memory I have of my early childhood is of my parents sitting at the kitchen table with their monthly bills, discussing how to pay them. I remember they would talk about how, by paying only the minimum amounts, they could at least send something to everyone. They might not have known it at the time, but I was an observant little bugger! The reality for my parents was that with five young children and one teacher's salary, they just didn't think much about financial giving in those early years, and they didn't have the luxury of sharing with their children of how they were supporting others. At the same time, our house was full of love, we had enough to eat, we had a roof over our heads, and as the youngest child I had plenty of hand-me-down clothes, some with patches in the knees and elbows! I don't think my parents would mind my telling you all of this, and the good news is they have come to be very generous in their giving, and have been for many, many years. And, they share just enough about their giving habits to set a good example for their kids and grandkids.

Lately, I've been noticing the ebb and flow of my own financial circumstances, as our kids enter and exit college, as they become independent and self-sufficient, as they get married - ouch, and how all of this influences my own attitudes on giving/sharing. That's why I was interested in an article I came across in my recent issue of Rotary Magazine. The article featured a 12th century philosopher, named Maimonides. Maimonides was quite the prolific person - he studied Aristotle extensively, he was an astronomer, he was Cairo's greatest rabbi of the time, and later in life he became a renowned physician. The focus of the Rotary Magazine article was not so much on Maimonides, the man, as it was about one of the things he created, his Eight Levels of Charity.

Here it is, Maimonides Eight Levels of Charity, with each rung of the ladder representing a higher degree of virtue:

Level 1 is the lowest level, when the donor is pained by the act of giving.

Level 2 is giving cheerfully but giving less than able.

Level 3 is giving cheerfully and adequately but only after being asked.

Level 4 is giving before being asked.

Level 5 is giving when you do not know who is benefitting but they know it is you who is giving.

Level 6 is giving when you know who is benefitting and they do not know it is you who is giving

President's Post continued

Level 7 is giving when neither the donor nor the recipient knows the other's identity.

Level 8 is the highest level, giving whatever it takes to enable the recipient(s) to be self-reliant.

I've found the construct of the levels to be helpful in a number of ways. The metaphor of a ladder makes sense to me and I appreciate how at Shepherd it is suggested to us that we strive to step-up in our giving. In examining the eight levels, I notice that my giving, and the way I feel about giving can be different, depending on my own circumstances at the time and how motivated I am to give in each specific situation. I realize I have moved up the ladder over time, but I still have a way to go to consistently reach the top. Another thing I know is that I benefit (and I think we all do) by being a part of such a giving community as Shepherd. For example, it's helpful to me to hear from Pastor Scott that some of you are asking him where you can direct your federal stimulus money. Hearing such a question is both instructive and inspiring to know how some of you are thinking about how you can support others in need.

Obviously, I've touched on a topic this month that is personal to each of us and is not something we talk about openly. But, even though we don't talk about it, I see that we are still learning from one another. I realize now, how by being in a community of givers, I learn better how to give. We can learn from someone like Maimonides, and we learn from each other in this wonderful giving congregation. Giving is contagious, I do believe!

Thanks be to God for this community of thoughtful givers!

Peace! Todd

Continued above

Learn

NEW HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP!! Grades 9 – 12

Please join us on Sunday, April 22nd from 4-5:30 to kick back, relax and reconnect with friends. We will meet on the N. side of Shepherd of the Hills, patio area. Bring a lawn chair and a friend!! Snacks will be provided! Contact Pastor Sherri with questions/comments at sherri.otto@sothchurch.com or call 612-251-1342. Looking forward to seeing you!!

WAM

WAM will resume on April 7th, 6:30 start time for K - 2nd grade and 6:50 start time for 3rd - 5th grade, via ZOOM.

With the weather getting nicer, I'm hoping to have some of our activities outdoors. I will email you with details when that can take place. If you have any questions, please contact me at sherri.otto@sothchurch.com or call 612-251-1342. God's blessings to each of you!

Story Time

Story time is happening for anyone ages 2-5, on Wednesdays at 6:00pm. This is an opportunity for the youngest of our Shepherd community to connect with each other for a time of music, story and prayer. If you are interested in joining our group, please join us via ZOOM or contact Pastor Sherri at sherri.otto@sothchurch.com or call 612-251-1342.

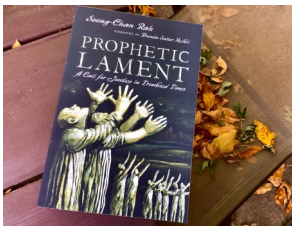


Women's Breakfast

Date: April 17, 2021 AT 9:00 am on Zoom
Topic: "Sleep and Well-being"

U of M Center for Spirituality and Healing
Speaker: Dr. Michael Howe, U of MN
Bakken Center for Spirituality and Healing
Description: University of Minnesota

Neurologist Dr. Michael Howe is the Vice Chair of Education and Medical Director of the Center of Sleep Performance Training. Many women struggle with sleep issues! Dr. Howe reviews some of the popular theories as well as adds many new and helpful resources / suggestions to try to improve your sleep quality and quantity.



Wednesday Speaker Series

Date: Wednesday, April 7, 2021
from 6:30-7:30 pm via Zoom

Topic: Prophetic Lament:
A call for justice in troubled times

Speaker: Dr. Soong-Chan Rah

Description: When Soong-Chan Rah planted an urban church in Cambridge, Massachusetts, his first full sermon series was a six-week exposition of the book of Lamentations. Preaching on an obscure, depressing Old Testament book was probably not the most seeker-sensitive way to launch a church. But it shaped their community with a radically countercultural perspective.

The American church avoids lament. But lament is a missing, essential component of Christian faith. Lament recognizes struggles and suffering, that the world is not as it ought to be. Lament challenges the status quo and cries out for justice against existing injustices.

Soong-Chan Rah's prophetic exposition of the book of Lamentations provides a biblical and theological lens for examining the church's relationship with a suffering world. It critiques our success-centered triumphalism and calls us to repent of our hubris. And it opens up new ways to encounter the other. Hear the prophet's lament as the necessary corrective for Christianity's future. (From the publisher Intervarsity Press)



Annual Meeting

Sunday, April 25 at 10:15 am
following 9:30 am worship

We have had a wonderful year of ministry and our church council is looking forward to the opportunity to tell the story! We will take a bit of time to give an update on future plans. In addition, we have a few council members who are transitioning off the council and we will need to vote in our new council members. We hope you will make plans to join us, there is good news to share and a hopeful future to envision.



Be Curious. Be Real. Be in Community.

By Pastor Sherri Otto

I was at the Minneapolis Area Synod Tool kit last month via Zoom and attended one of the sessions put on by Kate Reuer Welton, who is the pastor for Lutheran Campus Ministry at the University of Minnesota. I was looking for some guidance on youth ministry and found that she was speaking about young adults in college. Feeling a bit naïve that I hadn't realized this, I decided to stay and listen. And I'm so glad that I did. Pastor Kate talked about the "tag line" or mission statement that sums up the ministry at the U of M. It is "being curious, being real and being in community". Pastor Kate went on to explain the importance of these three things in the life of a college student. But I think it can relate to all of us today.

Being curious, especially in our polarized world, is something that Pastor Kate stated everyone should try to be. But there is often not a lot of room for doubt and questions to take place, particularly when it comes to "religion. It is hard to think it is okay to be curious about God, the Bible or any of it. Pastor Kate suggests that what we need to do for the young adults in our lives, is to allow them to find room for that curiosity. To make room for questions about faith and God and ask an important question, "Where do you see God in your life?" They may not have an answer, they may say they don't see God, but ask the question and then listen.

Especially with the young adults in our life and even with our confirmation students, there is so much going on in their lives. From trying to figure out who they are, why they are in college or high school, what they want to become, who their true friends are, etc. we sometimes miss the chance and opportunity to show them that we as a community of faith, love them and care for them. It becomes less about all of those unanswered questions and more about the relationships that they have formed.

Being real and authentic is the next piece that Kate talked about. This is the time where you want to hear stories, to listen carefully and attentively. Let the young people in our community know that they don't have to perform or be perfect. Let them know that they are loved and free to live out their passions and feel joy from within for just being who they are as God created them to be.

The last piece is about being in community. One of the most powerful things is to have mentors that can walk with each student and listen to their stories. As they learn from the mentor and the mentor learns from them, relationships form, some that will last a lifetime. Pastor Kate spoke about three levels that take place in a relational mentorship. Level 1: I am noticed. Level 2: I am named. Level 3: I am known. As each of these happen there is an increased sense of belonging. A belonging to a church that loves them and a God who knows them and will never leave them.

This is my hope for each of our students here at Shepherd. To be curious, to be authentic and to be in community.

Be Curious continued

I leave you with a quote from William Martin:

Do not ask your children to strive for extraordinary lives.

Such striving may seem admirable, but it is the way of foolishness.

Help them instead to find the wonder and the marvel of an ordinary life.

Show them the joy of tasting tomatoes, apples and pears.

Show them how to cry when pets and people die.

Show them the infinite pleasure in the touch of a hand.

And make the ordinary come alive for them.

The extraordinary will take care of itself.

May God bless each of you in your curiosity, authenticity and community!

Pastor Sherri

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

Maundy Thursday

April 1, 2021 at 6:30 pm online

We will look at Jesus's new commandment to love one another, acted out in bread and wine, and experienced in the washing of feet.

Good Friday

April 2, 2021 at 6:30 pm online

The service will include readings and hymns. This service makes use of gradually diminishing light to symbolize the approaching darkness of Jesus's death.

Easter Actions continued

Recently, I was outside walking and was approached by someone in the neighborhood I was walking in. When I saw him approach, I put on my mask unsure about how close he would get, etc. He said he was fully vaccinated, and I said I was, too. I kept my mask on as he asked his question, and then before we parted, he asked me why I had put my mask on since I was vaccinated. I told him this:

1-I did not know if he was vaccinated.

2-He could not know if I was vaccinated until I told him.

3-I want to respect other people's need to both be and feel safe, as well as to be respected. If that means I put my mask on, that's easy! I will do it every time. I do not want to live in a culture that is all about me, especially at the cost of the community around me. Most times it is much harder to figure out or act in ways that reflect this. Wearing a mask is the easiest thing I have ever done to be a contributing community member and to signal that I believe in God and in His gift of scientific knowledge.

This past pandemic year has felt to me like a full year of lent in many ways. A time of isolation, quiet contemplation, a time of remorse, sorrow, fear, confession, darkness. In the summer, we prayed in the garden, in the winter, we reflected on and examined our life in the often too-quiet cold darkness. The pandemic forced us to shed lots of the "extras" in our daily lives. We got back to the basics. There was no reason to shop as we were not going anywhere, there were no big parties to stock up for, gym memberships were frozen, classrooms were no longer full of school supplies, team sports equipment and practice time was not needed, and hair grew at will for both humans and pets. Things we took for granted, or even complained about freely were not missed treasured events.

Continued on page 7



Easter Blessings

One of my favorite quotes from, "A Story to Tell, Devotions for Lent 2021," was from March 10th, "God did raise Jesus from death and is at work still today to bring life out of death and hope out of despair. As we move forward into each new day, Christ's loving presence will never leave us."

In the last couple of weeks, several people have quietly mentioned to me their realization of having some anxiety about the return to "normal." Like most people, they very much look forward to it, but they are self-aware enough to realize there will be some re-learning to do regarding re-socialization. Plus, if you think it was hard to be on the telephone or ZOOM together during divided politics, racial justice discussions, science vs. conspiracy theories, and/or debates about masks and shut downs, just imagine how much harder that might be when in person together. We can do it, but it helps if we plan for it.

The mental health professionals would suggest a few things that return to some level of being together with others again. Of course, this starts with following the guidelines to getting vaccinated as soon as you are able, and taking appropriate precautions to preventing spread of disease and new variants (that risk taking us into another pandemic) until we get to endemic rates of disease (this is acceptable disease rates like we have tolerated in the past for the flu yearly, etc.)

1-Start slow. Once vaccinated, start by getting together with one other person or household who is also vaccinated or is at very low risk for illness. Do that a few times to get the hang of being with others again. Slowly expand on the number you gather with, if it is deemed safe by the experts. After being alone all year, being in a crowd will, for many, be a bit overwhelming, and, honestly, we are still some months from that being safe.

2-Many people have experienced trauma during the pandemic, maybe they are a medical professional who saw a lot of people terribly ill and die, maybe that happened to someone they love, maybe they were ill and very scared or have long-term issues related to illness, or maybe the many other losses they experienced during this year have marked them emotionally including extreme isolation, not going to school, even returning to commuting to, and being in, the office which has some added stress. So, give yourself and others you are with some grace and space to care for those hurts and move slowly toward healing.

3-Decide how you want to be perceived. Have you become more aware of aspects of your identity during this time that lead you to want to change how you are perceived? Do you want to be seen as someone whose opinions and actions are all about what is best for you, or that you recognize we all have challenges and as a community are called to care for one another in respectful ways?

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Easter Actions continued from page 6

Kids missed school, adults missed going into work or working at all, all ages missed gathering at church, etc. Our perspectives changed. The way we viewed and lived life changed. Things we had complained we could not get time for, i.e., family meals, suddenly became an everyday occurrence.

Now, as we celebrate Easter and round the corner to spring, our hope blooms. Hope for forgiveness and the promise of resurrection, hope for longer days, warmer temps and green grass to contrast the beautiful blue sky. Hope for some return to being able to be together and do the things we once took for granted (even complained about) but discovered the treasures of our daily lives.

So, in this hope what will our actions be? Will we simply race out and return to the busy world that once consumed us as families and people? Or will we carefully choose one by one, moving gradually back to the discerned, distilled, and selected parts of life we have been blessed to view from the isolation of this year and realize what really was important to us? How will we act now to show who we are and what we value?

Will they know we are Christians by our love? Trust me, they will not know we are Christians by us sitting in judgment of others, acting unjustly and by not caring for others in public health ways. Remember the 1985 song, "We are the World?"

We Are the World
"There comes a time
When we heed a certain call
When the world must come together as one
There are people dying
Oh, and it's time to lend a hand to life
The greatest gift of all
We can't go on
Pretending day-by-day
That someone, somewhere soon make a change
We're all a part of God's great big family
And the truth, you know, love is all we need
We are the world
We are the children
We are the ones who make a brighter day, so let's start giving
There's a choice we're making
We're saving our own lives
It's true we'll make a better day, just you and me..."

The pandemic has been a whole-world experience. For me, getting food to Africa in 1985 was tricky. Who do I trust to give money to that will actually get food there into people's hands and mouths across the world? But with the pandemic, our actions are so simple and doable. Mask, wash hands, distance, and get vaccinated!

Will we continue to wear masks when recommended to protect others and show our care for everyone, not just ourselves? Will we be open to

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Easter Actions continued

vaccination to help our population at large be safe? Will we believe history and science over conspiracy theories? Will we make decisions based on the greater good for all and not just what we perceive is best for ourselves and our contingent?

Will we see our world as a collection of all God's children who we are called to love and care about each in our small, yet important way? Will we choose how busy we get so we still have time together for meals, conversations, and growing together?

While the last year has been extremely difficult, the days ahead will have challenges, too, including decisions like these. Also, re-learning how to be out in the world and together again while still being true to what we believe. I very much look forward to the return to some sort of "normal," and yet I know I will be challenged by this. Remember, in Holy Week the disciples did not know what would happen, they could not imagine how it would turn out even as Jesus tried to prepare them. We have the luxury of knowing how the story ends with a new beginning, new life. We know there is incredible hope at the end of the week. Just as in the pandemic we now can have very real hope to return to yet another new normal that each of us and our collective community can choose to make better than the normal before the pandemic. Please join me in praying for discernment and strength to re-enter the world in ways that serve all God's children as reflected in my words and actions each day. The Lord knows I need help to do better every day.

In Community and Walking Toward the
Light of Hope with You,
Kaye Wothe
Faith Community Nurse

Staff Reflection and Youth News

God's Great Big Tent

Stories of Radical Welcome

VBS – June 21-25, 2021

9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Shepherd of the Hills

Shepherd of the Hills and Calvary Lutheran are joining together to bring you “God’s Great Big Tent, Stories of Radical Welcome”!

In Jesus’s time, people had to be, think, and act a certain way in order to be acceptable in society and to God. Jesus showed us a different way. In our time, little has changed. People find that they need to be, think, and act a certain way in order to be acceptable in society, and some say, to God. Jesus calls us to a different way. Jesus calls us into community—community with one another as the Body of Christ, and community with our neighbors, regardless of who they are. God’s Great Big Tent emphasizes community building, both within and beyond congregations.

Join us for an amazing outdoor experience of music, games, drama and fun!! Registration is available on our web site or by contacting Pastor Sherri at sherri.otto@sothchurch.com. We will be looking for volunteers to be large and small group leaders and will also need volunteers to help with food, games, stories and music. Please contact Pastor Sherri or Pastor Anne if you are available to help.



At Every Turn: Insights from the Intern

By Intern Pastor Anne Schaefer

Welcome to my little corner of the world. As an intern pastor, I am learning a great deal about what it means to be called to ministry. Each month, I will use this newsletter space to reflect on the wisdom that has come my way. I will likely learn a great deal about God, the Church, this congregation, faith, myself and grace. Thanks for being part of my journey!

Lesson #1

Worship planning is delicate and tricky! As a pastor, we strive to lead people into real, tangible worship of our real, tangible God. This is meant to be an authentic event between our community and our God. But the reality is also that this cannot be a slow, dry ordeal. A sermon needs to keep people’s attention; the music needs to connect with people; the prayers and confessions need to resonate with everyone’s hearts and minds. This becomes a logistical balancing act of negotiating authentic worship with entertainment. Both sermon writing and liturgy planning have deepened my prayer life in hopes that my real and tangible God is the real author of every part of the worship experience.

Lesson #2

There are so many ways to serve God by serving God’s people. In a single week this month, in addition to preaching and planning worship within our congregation, I toured a homeless housing ministry, participated in planning for asylum seekers housing, was trained as a social justice chaplain for the upcoming trial for the murder of George Floyd, and helped other pastors plan camp and VBS ministries. God’s love has many faces, but the challenge is to actually notice them. Each of the ministries that I experienced were because I was invited into them by someone else. Invitation is key to helping others notice the faces of God’s love.

Lesson #3

Boundaries are hard, and they take on many forms. Between our time, our energy, our possessions, and the personal info that we share... I ask questions like how much is required of me? How much is too much? How much do others really want from me? What does God desire? I’ve learned that the starting point to managing all the different boundaries is to be clear about expectations – God’s, mine and others’. If I get my head around the differences and be honest about whose expectations are guiding me, then it feels more like conducting a symphony rather than a circus.

Grace and peace! Pastor Anne



Covid-19 Vaccine Information

By Kaye Wothe, Faith Community Nurse

As the COVID-19 vaccinations began to roll out I reached out to those members in the first groups being offered the vaccine to help guide people to navigate accessing the vaccine as soon as possible when they were eligible. As this progresses the groups eligible for vaccine are less obviously defined etc. so it is hard for me to identify who I should reach out to next. With that in mind I want to share some basic resources, and encourage you to contact me if you have questions about the vaccines safety, efficacy, and ways to access it. First, fill out Minnesota's Vaccine Connector tool (see link below). I have several other tools, etc. besides the Vaccine Connector that I am happy to share with you if you are interested.

The first general public groups who were offered the vaccine were age related only. This was relatively easy for the health systems electronic medical records to sort for who those people are. This allowed the health systems to generate email invitations to vaccine appointment sign ups through the electronic medical record and/or to generate an invitation on the opening page of the electronic medical record. So if you are a patient of or have ever had a visit of any kind in a health system and have an electronic medical record (e-health record) I suggest you make sure you know how to access your e-health record and are receiving emails through it (i.e. I receive email appoint reminders through mine, or notifications of test results after I have seen the Dr. that come through my e-health record). Then when your group is able to get vaccine I suggest that is one place you watch for an invitation to get vaccine. There are many other ways developing every week via drug stores, the convention center, vaccine hunter, etc. I am making every effort to track the variety of places and ways to connect with vaccine so feel free to reach out to me if I can help. If you find something helpful please let me know about it so I can use it to help others.

<https://vaccineconnector.mn.gov>

If you have questions, hesitancy or concerns about the vaccine I am happy to discuss that with you and also would encourage you to discuss those questions with your primary health care provider especially if they are specific to your own health care concerns. I can not overstate how very important it will be for as many of us to be vaccinated as possible to end the pandemic, and move to a endemic rate of illness with COVID-19, especially related to new variants. I am hearing some poorly sourced untrue rumors about the vaccine that hold no scientific or medical based merit. It's the old adage, don't believe everything you hear (or read).

Kaye Wothe
Faith Community Nurse
kwothe@comcast.net

SOTH Book Club

Book club at SOTH is open to all, male and female. Please feel free to join us. We have 2-3 copies of each book. All books will be available all year if you want to read ahead. Please read the book and return ASAP so another person can borrow the book for reading also. We try to get 2-3 readers to be able to read one copy.

For questions please contact Kaye Wothe, Faith Community Nurse at kwothe@comcast.net

Book Club Schedule

Sun., April 28, 6:30 pm,
"White Fragility"
by Robin DiAngelo

THANK YOU FROM MEALS ON WHEELS

We want to thank you during this Lenten season for the very huge part SOTH has played in our survival this year. Your church has been the place where over 25,000 meals were served in 2020—a very big increase than our first year together. The need continues to grow during these challenging times!

Also, your members helped deliver those meals and even provided Christmas gifts for every client. Thank you for inviting us to be a part of this wonderful place.
~ Meals on Wheels

Mental Health Connect Resources & Education



MENTAL HEALTH CONNECT
Mental Health Resources and Education can be found on their webpage:
<http://www.mhconnect.org/events>



FEATURING...



Kelli Nielsen
The Grief Guru
"Advancing Through Adversity"



Joe Davis
Artist, Educator, Speaker
"The Healing Community and Vulnerability"

3rd Annual Breakfast of Hope Thursday, May 20, 2021

Are you living the life you want? Learn how to live your life intentionally with nationally known speakers Kelli Nielson and Joe Davis.

Join us for Mental Health Connect's 3rd Annual Breakfast of Hope!

Kelli, The Grief Guru, will speak about "Advancing Through Adversity." Kelli is passionate about helping others get "unstuck" to find peace, hope, and joy again after experiencing loss. She will discuss how to navigate through adversity in an intentional and productive way. Kelli is also a prominent author consultant and teacher.

Joe, Artist and Educator, will speak about "The Healing Community and Vulnerability." Joe employs poetry, music, theater, and dance to shape culture. His work's been featured on BET, CNN, and VH1. He's the Founder and Director of the multimedia production company The New Renaissance, the frontman of the emerging soul-funk band, The Poetic Diaspora, and co-creator of JUSTmove, racial justice education through art.

For more information or to purchase a ticket, go to mhconnect.org/events



**IMMIGRANT
MINISTRY**

Asylum Seekers: Trauma, Coping Mechanisms, and Boundaries

Submitted by Paul Bohnsack

Anxiety and depression as symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are common in asylum seekers. Such symptoms are normal reactions to the trauma and stress they have experienced. Since every person has their own way of coping, being flexible with the asylum seeker's coping mechanisms without judgment is the goal. We will need to respond to with understanding and acceptance, rather than being judgmental or trying to "fix" the behavior.

There are cultural differences in how we heal from trauma. Asylees need to heal from their trauma in their own way. Even if we would handle the trauma differently, we need to respect the asylee's way of coping. However, it is also not necessary to walk on eggshells around them.

This healing takes precedence over their need to initiate their new lives, including work. Time and space for healing must come first.

BOUNDARIES

There is no expectation for asylum seekers to share their stories with us as sponsors. If asylees decide to open up to us about their experience, we should not allow the way we treat them to be colored by the narrative we've been told or that we've told ourselves. As difficult as it may be for us to hear their story, it is not our place to project our shock or discomfort on to them; it's still the story that they lived and survived. We must listen intently and respectfully acknowledge their valor and resilience.

We need to listen and process the information without judgment. It is extremely important to control our reactions and not show shock or pity toward the asylee. Neither one serves them well.

If asylum seekers choose to share their experience, we must remember it is their experience and they are sharing it with us. No matter what we have read or heard, this is their reality - and ultimately, it is not about us. Feeling uncomfortable is a normal part of engaging in something new and different from our own reality.

We can express hope for the future and the life asylum seekers have the opportunity to build. It is not expected that we will understand, but it is expected that we will accept who the asylees are or have become as a result of challenging circumstances.

Asylum Seekers continued

CONTEXT

It is important to understand the role that the United States has played in the instability, violence, and poverty that is real in Latin American countries today, specifically Central America. It is also important that we not become involved in commentary about one's home country without an actual understanding of the culture. Learning about that culture should come from those who have lived in it directly. We will need to be earnest in learning, listening, and absorbing, but think twice about offering an opinion or comment unless it's steeped in actual knowledge we have.

(My thanks to Asylum Seekers Sponsorship Project and Ileri Bravo, Allison Beaufort, and Laura Coleman)

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Dated Material

A graphic for an Easter service announcement. It features a vibrant, multi-colored watercolor background in shades of yellow, orange, red, purple, and blue. In the center, there is a cracked egg with a yellow top half and a green bottom half, with two white cracks. The text "HE HAS RISEN" is written in large, white, serif capital letters across the middle. Below it, the phrase "Join us for our Easter Service" is written in a flowing, golden-yellow cursive script.

HE HAS RISEN
Join us for our Easter Service

Find hope this Easter. We welcome you to join us online to celebrate and experience new beginnings in Christ.
Worship begins at 9:30 am on zoom
www.sothchurch.com/homeworship