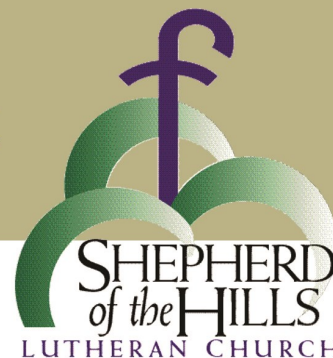


Shepherd's Voice



May 2021

“Now it’s our turn”

By Pastor Scott Searl

As Judge Cahill read the guilty verdict there was a palpable sense of relief. A collective breath was taken on behalf of George Floyd and his family. For a moment the Spirit gently blew through our community. After a year of tension, protests and anticipation, calm fell upon the city of Minneapolis. While justice may still be a ways off, accountability gives some respite. At the same time we must not let this moment of calm postpone the need for our continued growth.

As a family of faith we are being called by this same Holy Spirit to walk down the path of justice, mercy and love. All of us need to be held to account for our racial bias. The systemic change that is needed is not impersonal. The system is us and we are the system. We are the police and the police are us. So it is our hearts, minds and souls that need to be transformed. When hearts recognize our sin, our privilege and our prejudice, we can collectively confess and feel that same Spirit of forgiveness and hope. After confession and forgiveness we can begin to live, speak and act differently. This is the promise of the resurrection.

We have been given a special financial gift from Augsburg University to engage a process that can help us move the needle in our community of faith. We have hired three local consultants to provide us with education, worship, and community engagement opportunities designed to reveal our bias, introduce us to new ways of being and thinking, and help us build relationships with those around us who are not represented in our faith community. The team is being led by two members of our SOTH community: Julie Showers, a longtime member of Shepherd, a former church council president and someone who works regularly around issues of diversity, equity and inclusion at the University of Minnesota. And Christa Meland, a former church council member, the communications director for the Minnesota Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church and someone who cares deeply about racial justice. We are grateful for their leadership.

Our three consultants for this project are: Justice Feldman who grew up in the City of Hopkins and has worked with corporations like Cargill and the Minnesota Twins on issues of racial and social justice. David Scherer is a local artist and educator who grew up in Minneapolis, works at Luther Seminary and has had a long career in hip-hop music and church work. Joe Davis is a local musician, poet, activist and educator who attended Luther Seminary, has spoken at the ELCA national youth gathering and produced music with the Lutheran campus ministry at the

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	Adam Driscoll
Vice President	Open
Treasurer	Steve Hanneman
Financial Secretary	Ryan Erickson
Secretary	Open
Serve	Nate Lichy
Worship & Music	Julia Buteyn
Building & Facilities	Peter Barott
Learn	Stephanie Nordin
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!

Pr. Scott Searl	scott@sothchurch.com
Pr. Sherri Otto	sherri.otto@sothchurch.com
Intern Pr. Anne Schaefer	anne.schaefer@sothchurch.com
Shawn Wacholz	office@sothchurch.com
Kaye Wothe	kaye.wothe@sothchurch.com
Blair Prax	blair.prax@sothchurch.com
Church web site	www.sothchurch.com

Pastor's Message continued from page 1

University of Minnesota. We are grateful to have these three seasoned and faithful leaders work with us. Over the next year we will seek to move our internal compass toward a more equitable and diverse world view where all are loved, included and recognized as children of God.

As we begin, please keep our small team in your prayers. Additionally if you are interested in joining the planning team, please contact pastor.scott@sothchurch.com. We would love to have two more members of SOTH join us. This is an opportunity for all of us to recognize the ways in which God is calling us do be transformed. This project is one of the answers to the question, "what can I do?" While we all catch our breath in this moment of accountability, it will soon be time to begin to walk toward justice and peace as a family of faith. Now it is our turn for confession, the opportunity to feel forgiven, and grow in newness of life. Look for more to come.



President's Post: We've Carried On

By Todd Biewen, *Outgoing Council President*

Shepherd of the Hills opened its doors in 1954, and in so many ways this past year, 2020, was like every other year at Shepherd:

There was worship, liturgy and song,
There was prayer, fellowship and caring,
There were thoughtful and inspiring sermons,

There was Love in Action in the community,
There were bells, horns and laughter,
There was baptism,
There was piano and organ,
There was sharing of our gifts.
Despite the doors of Shepherd being closed, we've carried on.

This past year was truly a unique year in the history of Shepherd of the Hills. Early in 2020 there was general awareness of a virus spreading across the Pacific, but it seemed far away and inconsequential for our country, especially for our life in Edina/Hopkins, Minnesota. In February, Pastor Scott mentioned for the first time at a Sunday service that church leadership was keeping their eye on the latest news of the progression of the virus. Then, in just a matter of days the virus was here on our west coast. And then quickly, cases were showing up in Minnesota. By March of 2020 people were becoming sick across the globe; a global pandemic was declared by the World Health Organization. It was clear that Shepherd of the Hills would not be able to steer clear of the Covid-19 Virus.

Guidance from health experts was that this virus would not allow people to congregate together, and this would be the case for us at Shepherd of the Hills. In a normal cold and flu season, we were used to worshipping together and only modifying our behavior by sharing the peace with a wave, rather than a handshake. But this nasty bug carried its virulence through the air, requiring us to physically separate from each other.

Thinking back to the time when Shepherd's doors were closed for worship, many felt this would change things for a matter of weeks and then we would return to normal in our church, work and social life. But, as we all know, life did not return to normal. And now, the global pandemic has continued into 2021 and continues to impact every aspect of our lives.

Thank God for Shepherd of the Hills, where
There is study, teaching and learning,
There was celebration at Christmas,
There was celebration at Easter,
There were pledges made and kept,
There was sadness and mourning,
There is love of God and each other,
There is abundant faith.

Continued above

President's Post continued

Despite the doors of Shepherd being closed, we've carried on. Even in the year of a pandemic... especially in such a year, it's been a blessing to have Shepherd has a church home, wouldn't you agree?

This month brings my tenure as Council President to an end. It's been my honor to serve in this role.

Peace to you. I look forward to seeing you in the sanctuary!
Todd Biewen

Yours, Mine and Ours

By Adam Driscoll,
Incoming Council President

Hello from your new council president. Our family first began attending Shepherd in 2014, and became members shortly thereafter. It didn't take long before we were getting asked to help with this quick task, or join that small group, and I have come to understand the way in which this congregation takes ownership of our mission while being quick to share that ownership. One is not a new member here for long, and you are never a provisional or probationary member. I hope we understand how powerful and unique that is. We have tremendous members with decades of involvement and sense of ownership of this special place, but they do not withhold that sense of pride and ownership, rather, they share that with anyone who walks through our doors (or into our Zoom room). With that, I am honored to get to serve in this role for the time that I'm asked to do so. We stand on the foundation of generations of loving leaders of this family and owners of this mission. Thank you for entrusting me to lead our council. I look forward to seeing you soon, in Zoom, and when we return to the Sanctuary.

Adam Driscoll

NEW HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP!! Grades 9 – 12

Contact Pastor Sherri with questions/comments at sherri.otto@sothchurch.com or call 612-251-1342. Looking forward to hearing from you!!

WAM

Our last night of WAM for the program year will be May 5.

6:30 start time for K - 2nd grade and 6:50 start time for 3rd - 5th grade, via ZOOM. 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!



FRONT PORCH FELLOWSHIP

Get Together with Pastor Sherri and/or Pastor Anne

Pastor Sherri and Pastor Anne would love to better get to know the people of SOTH! Will you join us for

conversation?? We will come to you, bring our own chairs, and sit on your driveway, porch, patio or lawn. If you'd rather come to us, we would welcome you on the back porch of the church as well. **Sign up available at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0c4ba9ab28a5fbc34-gettogether>**

Please review the available slots and click on the button to sign up. Only sign up for one slot at this time. We are very much looking forward to meeting you!

PANDEMIC E-PICTURE QUILT DISPLAY

During the many months of the pandemic, many of us have turned to a new hobby, completed projects, and figured out creative ways to have fun without going far. We would LOVE to see what you've been up to this past year!

We are requesting that you email us a picture showing what you've been up to this past year to be put together in an electronic patchwork quilt display collage. The display will be for us all to enjoy, appreciate, and "catch up" with one another.

Please send pictures to Kaye Wothe, Faith Community Nurse, at kwothe@comcast.net by May 31st



CHURCH OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD

By Pastor Sherri Otto

As a first-call Pastor, we are given several opportunities for training. I recently attended a training put on by The Center for Leadership Engagement. This was our second meeting with them and we discussed three separate topics: World Views, Leadership and Intercultural Competency and lastly Church and the Neighborhood.

This month, I would like us to focus on Church and the Neighborhood. In the hopefully near future, we will begin to gather for outdoor worship, begin to see each other in person and begin to form new and lasting relationships with each other.

But how do we see ourselves as “Church”? When you think of Shepherd of the Hills, who are we?

During our conversation at this training, the speaker posed three scenarios that churches find themselves in and we talked about the difference between these three things. They asked us three questions which I pose to you now:

- Is SOTH a church IN the neighborhood?
- Is SOTH a church FOR the neighborhood?
- Is SOTH a church OF the neighborhood?

The first question is fairly obvious and speaks about location. We are in the Hopkins/Edina neighborhood and if people in the surrounding homes were asked if there were any churches near them, they would probably tell them about us. The second question is a little less obvious. This would represent what we do for others in our neighborhood, how we give to those around us, how we help out the neighborhood.

The third question is really at the heart of the matter and possibly the hardest question to answer. Being “of the neighborhood” means that we are intertwined with our neighbors, that we are going outside of the doors of the church and joining others in conversations, in their struggles and in their joys. It means that you don’t have to be a “member” to have all of us be a part of the community. It means that when we meet someone, we automatically assume that they have assets to offer no matter what they look like or dress like, and that in our conversations, we learn from them and with them, rather than teaching them how to do things “our way”.

Pastor Kelly Chatman told us a story about a time during a service, when there were noisy adults and kids in the back of the church eating potato chips. One of the members complained to him and wanted them to be talked to because “that is not what you should be doing during church.” Pastor Kelly stated that he started to walk back to talk to them and stopped. He thought, “What is more important here? The fact that they are eating potato chips or the fact that they are here worshipping?”

Continued above

Church of the Neighborhood continued

There are times when we forget what worship is all about. We get wrapped up in the timing, (needs to be less than one hour!), in the music and liturgy, in the sermon and in the cookies and coffee hour. This is who we are and what we have learned. And hear me when I say, there is no shame in this. But perhaps, if we step back and look at our neighborhood, there may be a different way of doing things. Perhaps, we can imagine a way to invite or go out and meet people in our neighborhood, to be the work of the church rather than just attend a church.

When we come back to worship, whenever that may happen, my hope is that we welcome all people, that we take risks and open up conversations, hearing stories from our neighborhood and challenge ourselves to be a church OF the neighborhood, with a holy imagination where noisy kids and chip-eating adults are welcome!

Peace,
Pastor Sherri



How to Evolve From a Pandemic

By Kaye Wothe, Faith Community Nurse

I know I wrote a bit about this last month, but as more people are vaccinated, I am getting more questions about this, so here is a little repeat from last month, along with some additional information.

First, let me say as I write this, the number of COVID cases, hospitalizations and deaths are going up at a rapid pace, impacting a lot of younger people. This is likely due to the variant being so much more contagious. So, if you have not been vaccinated, you need to continue to isolate, not gather indoors, physically distance and wear masks more than ever. Not only is this not over, but in some ways, it is worse, due to the increase in how contagious it is, and it's harder for the un-vaccinated to stay safe when you want to re-engage like vaccinated people and open business, sports and schools.

If you are vaccinated, here is a list of ideas for how to evolve from the pandemic with less stress (as requested by many vaccinated people I have talked to recently):

1-Start slow. Be aware that people have been vaccinated at different times, some still have not had the opportunity to be vaccinated and are at varying levels of comfort with gathering again. For example, plan to gather outside or inside with one other family or couple who has been vaccinated. Start with people you trust. Find someone it is safe to process your concerns with. Talk through plans together, encouraging people to speak to what they are comfortable with at this time. There are varying degrees of trauma from the past year, each person needs to be allowed to work through that without judgment.

2-Identify which of your responses are from your emotional center and which are from your cognitive self. Check your concerns against what you know cognitively about COVID-19, vaccine efficacy, CDC recommendations. See this website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated.html>

3-It is still appropriate (and required in many places at time of writing this) to wear a mask in public spaces, and even when it is not required, you certainly can wear a mask if it adds to your personal feeling of safety. Many cultures have done this for a long time and continue to in certain settings and with certain medical conditions. While people are still being vaccinated, I have continued to wear mine in settings that were not required out of respect for others' comfort levels who were not vaccinated or were not aware if I was vaccinated.

Continued above

How to Evolve from a Pandemic continued

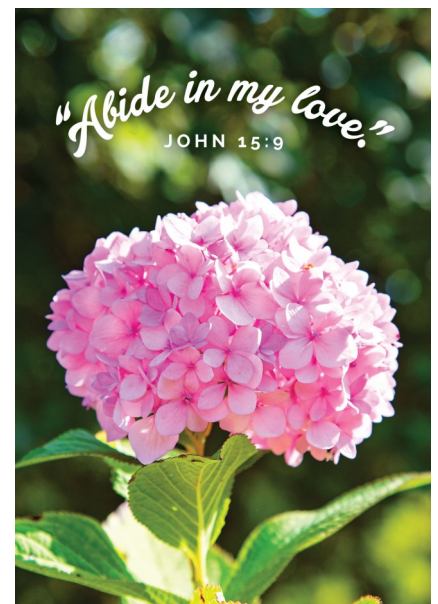
4-Normal is a loaded word in whatever setting it is used. In the pandemic, we have heard “normal” referring to before COVID-19 (BC-19), then “new normal” during the pandemic (DP), and now, as we evolve from the pandemic (post pandemic, PP), what kind of “normal” is it? Following the CDC guidance, each of us can determine how we evolved into a post-pandemic normal that feels safe and meets our needs for social interaction, consumerism and re-entry into the world around us. There will be a PP normal, but it will evolve at a unique rate for each person. Take time to know what that will look like, and require care for each other, recognizing everyone has to navigate their own experience and needs.

5- What we cannot control is how those around us will re-enter public spaces, so be prepared for that. If you are vaccinated and following guidelines, likely you are safe, but if it is too stressful, stay away from those spaces until you do feel safe, or slowly re-enter knowing you have to lean into those fears a bit in order to push past irrational fear. For example, when I see someone with their mask off or under their nose, my unfiltered response is to want to confront them because the lack of basic respect to others it demonstrates, risk it poses to others, and it upsets me. So, I either decide to avoid as many of those situations as I can, and/or before I am in them, I review in my mind how I will sift my response as a vaccinated and hopefully safe person. Fortunately, most of these settings offer opportunity to distance from the person with mask-etiquette issues.

6-Make a mental list of ways you will respond to others you encounter who do not share your views of the pandemic, political subjects, social justice, etc. I highly recommend a book called, Think Again, by Adam Grant. It provides some great guidance for how to enter those situations in a healthy way for all with a focus on asking questions and avoiding preaching, prosecuting or politicking.

Safe Summer Gatherings

At SOTH, I know I share some values including caring conversations, not jumping to judgment, hearing and seeing each other’s struggles and most of all, sharing the hope of resurrection as a co-child of God. I miss the safe place it is (for me and hopefully all) to debate life’s deeper questions, learn and have fun. In talking to people of all ages, many of us are missing this connection and yet are struggling to imagine re-entering being together safely. With all this in mind, we are working on offering good, old-fashioned game nights outside at SOTH this summer. We will start out with one a week in June and then, based on attendance, decide if we continue at that pace or just have one every couple of weeks or less. Our goal is to offer something for all ages, young to old(er). We are working to schedule them at a time we hope works best with those most likely to come, welcoming people any time in the window of time we are gathered (come when you can!). We will be wearing masks and setting up to encourage distance-keeping, assuming the COVID variant war will still be raging. Anyone wanting some input or willing to be part of the volunteer team, can contact Kaye Wothe (kwothe@comcast.net) with that information



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.

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!

Creation cannot be forced; it must come as a gift to both the creator herself and the world around her. One of my favorite songs by Sara Groves has the lyrics:

I've been here before – staring at a blank page, waiting for the touch.

Chasing down a muse that don't like me much.

I have stared down more empty pages – blank slates than I care to admit. Swirling thoughts, polarized voices echoing through my brain... thoughts that I cannot hear clearly enough to actually get the words to the paper. At the same time, though, I fear what I would write. How can I be sure that I agree with my own thoughts? Creation feels like commitment.

God, before the first day of this Earth, created from nothing. This could not be forced... God was not chasing down a muse or waiting for a touch. God breathed life into our planet, and into us, out of pure desire. This month, I have learned that ministry paves the way for countless opportunities to partner in this joy of Creation. Even in small ways like authoring devotions or sermons or prayers or worship services feels like small ways in which I get to partner with God in Creation. This is the invitation of the Resurrection – new life, new perspectives, new creations!

Lesson #2: A vocation in ministry does not mean that all parts of my life will reflect the same personal devotion to Jesus. A few weeks ago, my husband and I were talking about the Prodigal Son, to which one of my children asked. “who is that?” Ugh... I have taught Sunday School, Confirmation, and high school ministry for 15+ years... how does my own child not know one of the most well-known stories in the Bible?! Ministry – caring for God’s people, teaching, serving, and leading in Jesus’ name still require intention.

If I did not intentionally teach my child about the Prodigal Son, they certainly are not going to learn it through osmosis.

Pastoring demands intention.

Last lesson this month: time flies! OK, so I didn’t need this internship to learn this, however, I have already been with SOTH over three months. That is 20% of my internship over before I have been in the same room as most of you. This surprises me and makes me so excited for the months to come where I can meet each of you! Holding out hope that it will be soon!

Grace and peace!

Pastor Anne



SOTH SUMMER GAMES 2021 June 9 and 16 ~ 6:00-8:00 pm

We are excited to announce the SOTH Summer Games!

We will be meeting in the SOTH parking lots and lawn areas with easy and fun summer games for all ages. Art projects and chalk available also. Kids need to have a parent with them.

Our gaming dates will be June 9 and 16th from 6pm-8pm.
Come whatever time you can and leave when you must.

We will offer takeout picnic dinners from local restaurants in order to support them and to make easy transitions for families after work and other events of the day. Watch for information on game nights and to RSVP for meals in the Tuesday emails!

We will take pandemic precautions continuing to recognize kids have not had the chance to be vaccinated (ie. wear masks, outside only with bathrooms available inside, households eat at own table, hand sanitizer available, etc.). Contact Kaye Wothe or Andy Schultz with questions, ideas or want to volunteer. 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

Tuesday., June 8, 7:00 pm,
(note date change!)

“The Giver of Stars”
by Jojo Moyes

Wed., July 21, 7:00 pm

“The Dearly Beloved”
by Cara Wall

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

Why Central American Migrants Are Arriving at the U.S. Border

By Paul J. Angelo,
CFR (Council on Foreign Relations) Expert
March 22, 2021 3:00 pm (EST)

Thousands of people are arriving at the U.S. southern border after fleeing the Northern Triangle countries of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. President Biden is reviving efforts to tackle the problems that are prompting them to migrate.

Why are people leaving the Northern Triangle?

Economic precariousness, government corruption, crime, violence, and—increasingly—climate change are all driving migration from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. A majority of Guatemalans and Hondurans live below the poverty line, and most people in the Northern Triangle are employed in the informal sector, which deprives them of social protections and insurance. The pandemic, which has disproportionately affected Latin America in public health and economic terms, has laid bare governance deficiencies across the region. Meanwhile, the erosion of democratic checks and balances by populist politicians and corrupt officials has left many Northern Triangle residents exasperated and disenfranchised.

Despite seeing reductions in homicides, the Northern Triangle countries remain among the most dangerous in the world. High rates of domestic violence and gang recruitment of minors have contributed to a surge in unaccompanied children and families journeying to the U.S./Mexico border.

Likewise, after a decade of shifting weather patterns and resultant food insecurity, back-to-back Category 5 hurricanes struck Central America this past fall: the storms eviscerated subsistence farms, killed hundreds of thousands of livestock, and devastated large scale agricultural production. Many people in the region have family ties to the United States and, in the face of such adversity, migrate with the hopes of reuniting with loved ones and improving their lives.

What are Biden's policies toward the region?

President Biden's approach largely relies on reviving policies that were starting to show success late in the tenure of President Barack Obama, as well as undoing unhelpful policies [of the previous] administration.

The Obama administration increased U.S. assistance to the Northern Triangle to \$750 million in a bid to address the root causes of migration following a 2014 uptick in asylum claims by unaccompanied minors. Those efforts were beginning to bear fruit, with homicides dropping in the region's most dangerous neighborhoods and internationally supported anticorruption commissions making strides in holding venal officials to account. Biden, then

Migrants continued

the vice president, became the Obama administration's de facto envoy to the region and oversaw its U.S. Strategy for Central America.

In 2019, the [previous] administration froze that assistance over regional governments' purported failures to curb migration, and progress on addressing the drivers of migration was halted. . . .

The Biden administration is now seeking \$4 billion to put development, security, and anticorruption efforts back on track. This assistance would be directed to civil society organizations, reform-minded public institutions, and vulnerable communities with the aim of reducing poverty, curbing violence, and building climate resilience. Government-to-government aid would be strictly conditioned on the implementation of anticorruption measures. Such targeted assistance would likely not bear immediate results but represents the only enduring option to reduce irregular migration from the region. . . .

Meanwhile, Biden is reactivating the U.S. asylum system to ensure compliance with international law. In addition to processing asylum claims from unaccompanied minors, some families, and individuals waiting in Mexico under the Migrant Protection Protocols, his administration restarted the Central American Minors program, which allows at risk youth to apply for U.S. asylum from their home countries instead of applying only after making the dangerous journey to the U.S.-Mexico border.

*Submitted by Paul Bohnsack,
Immigration Ministry Team*

Continued above

Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church
500 Blake Road South
Edina, MN 55343

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