

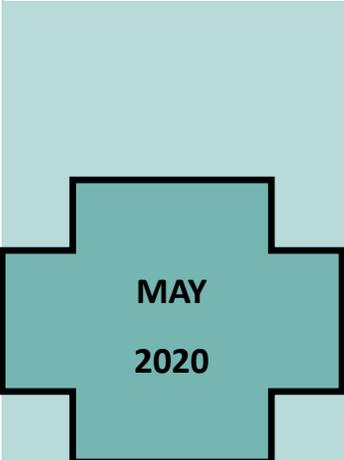


Helping Our Community

“In times of crisis, look for the helpers.” This famous quote from Mr. Rogers is as true today as it ever was. In this time of need, it is important we help each other and praise those people willing to serve others. Serious Juju is one such organization which has stepped up to help our community. Serious Juju is a ministry to skateboarders – both kids and adults – giving them a place to hang out, have fun, and learn about the love of Jesus. Serious Juju has also dedicated itself to providing food to kids and families that are hungry. During this time of social distancing, Pastor Miriam and the Juju Board have continued this mission of helping teens and their families. Currently, Serious Juju Ministries is collecting food and essential items, packing them up in boxes, and delivering them to vulnerable families in our community. Bethlehem Lutheran Church has agreed to help in this endeavor by offering use of our facilities for storage and workspace, as well as volunteers to help assemble and disseminate the packages to those in need. We are truly thankful for Pastor Miriam and her efforts, but they still need help. If you would like to know more about how you can be a part of this program, please contact Pastor Miriam at 406-212-0999 or email at jujukalispell@gmail.com.



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We are a Christian community rooted in the gospel of Jesus Christ that gathers to worship, learn and share, and reaches out to welcome, witness and serve.



It's been suggested that we – individually? as a country? the whole world? – are at war with COVID-19. I get it... I too, would like to kick the crap out of this thing that has wreaked havoc on the lives of so many – stealing people to die alone, leaving family members to grieve with-

out friends to hug, messing up the economy, displacing workers, shuttering businesses, cutting short schools and proms and graduations, holing up vulnerable people with those who victimize them, driving medical professionals to suicide. If we could nuke the virus, I would push the button myself.

War is a metaphor that we understand. We know what it means to support and encourage one another in times of war. War gives us purpose and meaning – it points us toward our values. Even when there is death, if war is to blame, then honor and pride can remain.

War is a good image. But is it the best one? Or should it be the only one we use to relate to this pandemic?

Theologian Deanna Thompson (no relation) is a professor at Hamline University in St. Paul, MN. In 2008 she was diagnosed with stage IV cancer. Since then she has written extensively about how illness and faith might coexist. In *Glimpsing Resurrection*, (Westminster John Knox Press, 2018) she “writes about how those living with cancer are often cast in the role of warriors, enlisted to do battle with their cancer (whether they like that metaphor or not). She suggests setting aside the war language in order to ask what it would mean to negotiate life with a serious illness, to live well with loss.” (Mahn, J, *The Christian Century*, April, 2020)

There has been already, is now, and will be a time and reason to fight COVID-19. But might we also begin to ask what it means for us to live well with this pandemic and the loss it brings? Will we learn to live alongside the virus in-so-much as we recognize its danger – but also what it has to teach us? COVID-19 will impact each of us, even if some of us don't catch it. It has already informed us about personal space, hygiene, the busy-ness of families, how much money we spend on eating out several times a week, worship at home, and the value of stopping to listen – really listen – when someone responds to our, “how ya doin'?”

And to that extent, God is in the virus. God is asking us to see both the good and the bad, the light and the dark, the blessing and the pain. If we defeat and destroy the virus, but do not grow into the reality of how we are being transformed during our time with it, we will have missed a portion of God's grace.

You are in my prayers as are your families, all our friends, and the people of our world. May you be blessed, and may God guard your days in peace.

Joy in the journey,
Pastor Scott

Flowers for Heroes

Since we're not gathering for worship, we haven't been purchasing fresh flowers to grace our space on Sunday mornings. But we want to give you a chance to still bring beauty and love into the life of our community.



Give to "**Flowers for Heroes**" - the usual cost of Sunday flowers, **\$25** (or more) - and we'll pass that money on to the Kalispell Regional Hospital Foundation's fund for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Send your check to the church or [give online](#)... be sure to select "Flowers for Heroes" from the To: categories.

To be clear, we aren't giving actual flowers to the hospital, rather a donation to the PPE fund. Multiple people can give each week and you can give more than just one week... and these "flowers" will last a lot longer than the ones in a vase!

You can, however, share a personal message with the staff at KRMC letting them know how grateful you are for the work they are doing during these difficult days... send a card or letter to 310 Sunnyview Lane Kalispell MT 59901 or email foundation@krmc.org



It's time for some good news! Our parents, Vernon and Thelma Johnson, lived honorable lives and taught us many things. Through the good times and the

tough times they always tithed. Their generosity was gracious in their living and continues even to this day. As we are given the responsibility of distributing their estate, we are honored to execute their wishes. Gifts have been made to Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp, which was an integral part of Mom's faith building years, and also Stillwater Lutheran Church, where Mom grew up and Dad & Mom were married. And Bethlehem Lutheran Church, where they worshiped for most of their lives, has received \$80,000. This is an unrestricted gift that we trust will contribute to the ongoing mission and ministry of our Church and its partnership in the world. Please join us in giving thanks God every day for their love and legacy. - Debbie, Brent, Brenda, and families

Treasurer's Report
April 2020

Philippians 1: 3-5 NRSV

"I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now."

Paul's words of thanks to God for those in Philippi who continued to share the gospel, reflect my thanks to all of you, members and friends of Bethlehem Lutheran Church! And as Paul prayed with joy for those folks, I also pray with joy for you!

Even during this time when we cannot worship together, you share the gospel through your continued offerings in support of BLC's mission work within our congregation and beyond our doors. And you share the gospel through extending your friendship, concern and love for others in acts of service: phone calls to those who might be alone, shopping for people who need to remain at home, and many other ways you creatively find to give of yourselves and your time.

This written report is to accompany Our Church's Financial Health chart shown below. The figures in the chart are through March 2020, since as of the writing of this report, it is the end of the third week in the month of April 2020. In my reports, I want to reflect the information that church council reviews at each month's council meeting, which was held as a Zoom meeting in April.

As you see in the chart, offerings were less than we need monthly to support our budget, but expenses for March were also less, and our cash balance through March was in the positive at \$32,778.00. I am confident that with your continued support through the offerings you mail in or choose to give online, your church's financial health will remain good! And hopefully soon, we can once again worship together in our sanctuary with songs of praise to God who is in our presence always!

My prayer for our congregation is that we continue to trust in our Lord, listen for his guidance and find his joy that continues to lead us forward.

May God bless and keep you in faith, hope, love and good health!

Blessings,
Anne Taylor, Treasurer



Income/Expenses for March

Income		Expenses	
March	\$27,406	March	\$29,486
year to date	\$219,651	year to date	\$208,462
Total budget		\$432,517	
Needed per month		\$36,043	

BLC COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

(Meeting conducted via Zoom)

April 14, 2020

Treasurer's Report (Anne Taylor)

· March Income \$27,406; expenditures \$29,486; ending balance March 31st \$32,778. She and Bryan Gilbertson are still investigating the Portico changes to salary and lay staff retirements.

Music Director's Report (Marshall Jones)

· Has had to be flexible with plans for May & June depending on what will be happening.
· Has been posting devotions, communion hymns on Facebook.

Pastor's Report (Pastor Scott Thompson)

- Extended 'thanks' to Marshall for all the extra he's been doing.
- Is of opinion that "we'll be in closure mode until end of May, at least".
- Will proceed with Communion the 1st Sunday of the month.
- Is starting an online Bible study on Book of Acts, on Thursdays at 1 pm. Starting 4/16/20 via Zoom and Facebook Live.
- Has been using Zoom for "Coffee with Pastor Scott" on Wednesday mornings. Is a way to 'check in' with congregation – about a total of 20 people have engaged so far.
- Reported that Serious JuJu is using Fellowship Hall for food storage and boxing, delivering food boxes on Saturdays.
- Kellie working on a Congregation Directory – names, addresses, phone #'s, emails, no pictures.
- Synod Assembly canceled for 2020. It will be in Billings next year.
- Confirmation Sunday postponed until October 25.

Old Business

- Kids space in Sanctuary discussed. Is on hold until able to come together to plan and implement.
- John Erfle reported that Property Planning Committee has not yet convened.

New Business

- Paycheck Protection Program loan discussed at length. It was stressed that as long as the criteria is met, the loan would actually be a grant that doesn't have to be repaid. Motion made and approved to submit paperwork for the loan (8 in favor/3 opposed).
- Reopening regarding CoVid-19 recovery discussed. Plan is to follow Governor's directive as to what size groups, etc.
- Proposal of \$15,000 for two 75" video screens in the sanctuary plus smaller screen for choir was discussed. Figure does not include electrical and framing. A congregant has donated \$5,000 towards the project. Pastor will contact others about donating. Motion made and approved to proceed with the project.
- Motion made and approved to cancel May 3rd Semi-Annual meeting. Committees asked to submit written reports of their activities by May 18th for publication.

Next meeting is May 12th. Judie Cundy to host the meal (tentatively); Peggy Aagenes-Janzer to give devotions.



Worship together on the radio at 10:30am each Sunday - KOFI, 1180-AM or 104.3-FM. Or watch our live feed at Facebook Live. You can print a copy of the bulletin on www.bethluth.org/resources. It includes the songs - words and music! - and the scripture readings. A video will also be posted on the Bethlehem Facebook page and on the website.

Church council has determined that we will try for May 31 as a target date for **resuming in-person worship**. Note that this is a hoped-for, target date that may have to be reassessed. Also, some restrictions about gathering will certainly have to be part of our coming together. Pastor Scott, the staff, members of council and other knowledgeable folks are working on some guidelines that will keep us and our community safe. As those are developed over the next couple of weeks, we will share them with you. We all want to gather again soon, but we also want to be smart.



Ministry groups such as Bible Studies, Prayer Shawls, Choirs, etc. will not meet during the month of May. Also, public groups that use are facilities (Cub Scouts, Irish Dancers, Weavers Guild) will not be meeting.

If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Scott.



Blood Drive... Mark your calendars for May 26. We will be hosting a Blood Drive. Information about signing up to be included in the weekly bulletins and online at www.bethluth.org.



Brandon	Bernard	5/2
Maverick	Kalvig	5/3
Elley	Alvord	5/5
Caitlyn	Lofgren	5/5
Annette	Gunderson	5/7
Jennifer	Cronk	5/8
Paula	Buckley	5/8
Logan	Dorrington	5/10
Olive	Louk	5/12
Dale	Veile	5/12
Gay	Anderson	5/12
Dawson	Woepfel	5/13
Don	Stadler	5/13
Rylee	Hill	5/16
Bryan	Gilbertson	5/20
Gaylynn	Nelson	5/23
Greg	Adkins	5/23
Stephanie	White	5/23
Sandra	Lindlief	5/24
Tage	Johnson	5/25
Peggy	Ellingsen	5/26
Jane	Mildren	5/29
Judith	Hartford	5/29

Jared Portnell, Peggy Ellingsen, Glenda Roepke, Jay and Elizabeth McKell, Mary Larson, Bill Arlint, Art Smith, friends and family of Myron Johnson.

The deadline for the June newsletter is May 18th. Thank you! - Kellie

<u>Church Council</u>	
<p>President: Paul Holmgren</p> <p>Vice Presidents: Amber Brohn Duane Anderson</p> <p>Treasurer: Anne Taylor</p> <p>Secretary: Janet Veidt</p>	<p><u>Committee Chairs</u></p> <p>Christian Education: Vicki Nytes</p> <p>Fellowship: Peggy Aagenes-Janzer</p> <p>Outreach: Karen Fisher</p> <p>Property: Bill Pursell</p> <p>Stewardship: John Erfle</p> <p>Worship and Music: Judie Cundy</p> <p>Youth: Tony Nelson</p>





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