

Called to proclaim and celebrate the Gospel of Jesus Christ...

Continuing from pg. 1

In order for Jeremiah's prophecy to be fully realized, and in order for others to come to know Jesus as we know him, we are called to live our lives loving God and one another. In fact, during his time on Earth our Lord declared that the two greatest commandments we are to follow are about loving the Lord with all our hearts, and with all our souls, and with all our strength, and loving our neighbors as we love ourselves. As the weather turns colder, as we prepare ourselves for the coming of Fall, I pray that we will seek to live into a covenant relationship with Christ as his followers and his disciples. Let us demonstrate our faithfulness and our devotion to God through weekly worship (online or drive-in), daily prayer, by giving generously of our time and financial resources, and let us also show one another love in how we treat one another, and in how we speak to one another.

Blessings,
Pastor Ryan



YEAR-TO-DATE FINANCIAL COMPARISONS REPORT			
FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH	August 2019	August 2020	August 2020 Budget
Total Income	176,915.26	154,885.38	189,144.15
Total Expenses	173,685.92	136,103.43	204,615.22
Income compared to Expenses	3,229.34	18,781.95	

Thank you for all you give to First Lutheran Church. As of August 31,2020, we received a total of \$154,885.38 and spent \$159,490.87 so the negative balance for the year would have been - \$4605.49 but we received \$23,387.44 from the federal Payroll Protection Program so our balance is \$18,781.95. Through your generosity and with the payroll protection program loan/grant, we were able to meet all obligations through August but the grant funds are now gone so please keep FELC's financial stewardship in mind as we go forward in the year.

Jeanette St Germain Treasurer

Re-opening Plan Update

Hello FELC,

I hope you have all been able to enjoy this beautiful end of summer weather before getting ready for fall and the school year. September would normally be the start of our program year at FELC, but with no real change in the COVID situation, we will continue to have to find new ways to be together as the Church. With the numbers not really improving, our building will be closed through September at a time when we would normally be welcoming everyone back after Summer with our Rally Day Pie Social. We will continue to monitor all information and open the building again as soon as we feel it will be safe for everyone.

Our youth and adult Christian Education and Confirmation classes would normally be kicking-off shortly, and we plan to still offer them this year, but just like with Worship, they won't be in person for now. The Northwest Synod had an online meeting for our churches to share ideas on how to offer classes online and in alternate ways, and we had Pastor Ryan, along with our Parish Activities and Christian Education leadership attend this meeting. Look for information from them in this newsletter and the upcoming E-news on how and when our classes will be offered this fall.

Drive-up Worship continues to go well, and we will continue to offer it if the weather will allow this fall. If we are not able to Worship in the building again before the weather turns, we will work on ways to extend the drive-up option into the late fall and early winter. We have been brainstorming on how to do this including fully enclosing the "stage" outside so that Pastor Ryan can be protected from the elements. Or possibly having Pastor Ryan inside the Sanctuary and project him outside so you can still see him from the parking lot. If you have any other ideas on how we can Worship in alternate ways, please share them with us as we will consider every option!

We also continue to offer the online Worship videos, and if we can't extend drive-up Worship into Winter, online will be our default option. David Jones has been doing great work for six months now on the videos, but he would welcome any level of help in producing them each week. That could be anywhere from helping with music or captions, all the way up to taking over the full production. He made a really comprehensive training video on the process to create the Worship video and I'll be sharing that with everyone on the E-news list, so keep on eye out for that if you are interested in being a part of this work.

With each month we have a new hurdle to overcome, so thank you for sticking with us through this time as we find new ways to offer the different Ministries at FELC.

In His name,

Benjy St.Germain
FELC Council President

First Lutheran

Using Your Gifts to Serve

A Note from the Nominating Committee

There's no doubt that this fall will be drastically different from those we've known in the past. While questions about school and sports will continue, one thing we can count on is the work of our Nominating Committee as they seek to identify members of First to serve on various committees and boards.

In his letter to early believers in Rome, Paul reminds us that "For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us." (Romans 12:4-6)

Writing in the on-line devotional *God Pause* recently, Rev. Denise Fossen notes that "Paul's question to the Romans is: Now that we are followers of Christ, how then shall we live? Paul is calling us to present our whole selves—body, heart, and mind—to living out our lives expressed as faith in action."

She reminds us that "the community that is the body of Christ needs each and every one of us, working together through faith, discerning together God's will for us as we seek to live faithfully into God's future." (*God Pause*, 8/19/2020, available at luthersem.edu)

In the days and weeks ahead, many of us will be contacted by the Nominating Committee to support the work of First. As good and faithful servants, we ask that you prayerfully consider taking on the responsibility you're asked to fulfill. Yes, it may be a stretch out of your comfort zone. Yes, it might mean more meetings on Zoom. And, yes, it might just be a fulfilling way to serve our community, our faith, and our God.

Let us know you're interested in serving. We'd love to hear from you!

Paula Holmes.	360-424-3452	pholmes@comcast.net
Jonathan Thomas	360-707-1587	mojodada@gmail.com
Roberta Windham	360-424-2052	robertawindham1@gmail.com



2021 Budget Time

It's almost that time again, the budget process begins in September. Please check your budget and contact your council representative to discuss if any changes should be made. We will meet on October 13, 2020 to finalize the 2021 budget.

Thank you,
Jeanette St. Germain
Treasurer

Online Devotionals for Youth & Adults

Christ in Our Home

With the outbreaks of coronavirus disease in North America and around the world many people may be without a physical copy of Christ in Our Home. To assist with devotional life during this time, we are offering a limited-time complementary email subscription. [Sign Up](#)

Faith Lens

Weekly Bible studies that engage youth and young adults in connecting world events with the Bible, faith, and everyday life.
<https://blogs.elca.org/faithlens/>



AS WITH MOST THINGS, OUR WELCOME BACK RALLY DAY PIE SOCIAL CELEBRATION IS ON HOLD. HOWEVER...

WE INVITE OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL AND CONFIRMATION KIDS

TO A DRIVE-THRU BACK TO SCHOOL WELCOME ON

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13TH @ 11:30 AM

THEY WILL RECEIVE A BACK TO SCHOOL SURVIVAL KIT FILLED WITH THINGS TO KICK OF THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR.

IT'S OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL AND PARISH ACTIVITIES' WAY OF SAYING WE LOVE AND CARE ABOUT YOU AND WE WOULD LIKE YOU TO GET THROUGH THIS YEAR WITH STRENGTH, COMPASSION, AND THE LOVE OF JESUS!

The Spirit

Volume 37, Number 9
September 2020



Dear Beloveds,

Well, I have to be honest, when I first started writing and talking about COVID-19, I did not expect that COVID-19 would still be a “thing” in September.

And yet ... here we are ...

So ... is anyone else weary?

In this time of great anxiety, worry, the unknown, and the threat of COVID for ourselves and our loved ones, I am finding that prayer is ever more important. I would like to commend to you one prayer practice that I have found helpful. This practice comes from Ignatius Loyola.

Ignatius Loyola writes in his book, *Spiritual Exercises*, about the daily prayer he practiced called *The Examen* (or *The Examination* in English). He also encouraged his fellow Jesuits to do the same. (You might remember that Ignatius Loyola was the founder of the Jesuits during the 16th century). I encourage you to do this practice with others – perhaps with your family at a set time each day or with your congregation sitting outside in a circle (physically distanced!) or on Zoom. Of course, you are welcome to do this by yourself, too.

The Examen is a prayer of review - a short reflection back over the day, recalling events and taking note of your feelings. The purpose is to become more aware of the ways in which God has been present to you, the times when the Holy Spirit was drawing you towards life. Before beginning the five steps, prepare yourself by breathing slowly and consciously. Continue to consciously breathe throughout this practice.

Step One: Pray to understand and appreciate the past day. Look back on the last 24 hours. Make a list in your head and heart of all that happened in your life. You are welcome to write these experiences down.

Step Two: Review the day with gratitude. What brought you joy? As you look at the work you did, the people you interacted with, what did you receive?

What did you give? Where are you thankful to God? Pay attention to small things—the food you ate, the sights you saw, and other seemingly small pleasures.

Step Three: Pay attention to your emotions. When did you feel most grateful? Least grateful? When did you love? When were you loved? What drained the life from you? When did things feel out of place or off? When did you experience the fruits of the Spirit? When did it feel like a time of God’s absence?

Step Four: Choose one of your feelings or encounters (positive or negative) and pray from here. You might have a vivid moment of pleasure or peace. There might be something that at first seems rather insignificant. You might have great pain. Look at what you have chosen. Examine it. Pray about it. Allow the prayer to arise spontaneously from your heart—whether intercession, praise, repentance, or gratitude.

Step Five: Look toward tomorrow. Ask God for guidance in facing tomorrow’s challenges. Pay attention to the feelings that surface as you look forward. Are you doubtful? Cheerful? Apprehensive? Full of delighted anticipation? Allow these feelings to turn into prayer. Seek God’s guidance. Ask God’s Spirit for help and understanding. Ask for wisdom and protection. Pray for hope. Do all of this in the spirit of gratitude.

You are invited to pray the Lord’s Prayer as you end the Examen.

I pray for all of you, my beloveds in Christ. May you feel God’s love and grace with you in these times.

If you would like other resources or ways to pray, I also commend to you two smart phone apps: Centering Prayer and Pray As You Go.

We are in these strange and difficult times for awhile. But we are not in this alone. We are community. We are church. We are God’s beloved children. May you feel God’s Holy Spirit with you as we walk in Christ together.

In Christ’s Love,
Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee



Getting to Know...

VIC JOHNSON



Having celebrated his 98th birthday last month (August 31), Vic Johnson greets every day with a smile to share, which he's done in Mount Vernon since he and his late wife, Ann, moved here in April, 1987. Vic is the proud father of Paula Holmes and David Johnson, grandfather of Brooke and Bethany Holmes (both FELC confirmands) and Lisa Ann Johnson, and GREAT grandfather to Bethany's Ian and Iris as well as Brooke's Leif and Astrid.

A native of Amenia, North Dakota, Vic and his brother Walter hitchhiked from Fargo to Richland, Washington, in the summer of 1941, blissfully unaware how their lives would change in December of that year. In 1942, Vic became a soldier in the United States Army, spending most of the war stateside in a variety of postings, but serving for 10 months in the Allied Occupation Forces in Berlin from 1945-46.

His parents having moved to San Francisco during the war so his father could build ships to support the war effort, he came "out west" and, like so many, fell in love with The City. Brother Walt soon followed and on November 16, 1947, they decided to go ice skating. Though both agree one of them said it, they never could remember who: "if we don't meet some girls in five minutes, we're going bowling!" A few minutes later, in walked sisters Ann and Jane Hoke; 11 months later, Vic married Ann, cementing a loving relationship which lasted until the day Ann died on their 64th anniversary. Walt married Jane two years later and even today, Vic says "I'm sure glad we didn't go bowling!"

It's impossible to relate Vic's life story without reflecting on the gift God gave by sending him to Sutro's Ice Skating rink that night and His gift of having Ann arrive on time. In a few weeks it'll be the 73rd anniversary of that fateful event and he'll be sure to tell anyone who will listen what a blessing that has been.

In 1951, Vic and Ann moved to Redwood City, California, with Paula (born in San Francisco) and where David was born. He worked for several years for Libby, McNeill, and Libby, including a trip to Mount Vernon in the 1960's to check-out the cold storage between what is now I-5 and the railroad tracks. He also worked for the Retail Clerks union in San Francisco for several years before retiring in 1986, moving here with Ann the next April.

In the Bay Area, Ann, Vic, and the kids were actively involved with another First Lutheran, this one in Palo Alto. Ann, and later Paula, sang in the choir and, for 28 years, Vic was the treasurer. Both Paula and David were active with Luther League and guess who the adult advisors were: yep, Ann and Vic. Paula was confirmed and married there, David baptized and confirmed.

Here in Mount Vernon, they quickly became stalwarts at First, where Vic served as treasurer and Ann joined Paula in the choir. Together they started KGO...Kids Growing Older... taking seniors on day trips throughout the Northwest.

Ann's diagnosis of Parkinson's Disease changed their lives dramatically and for several years, Vic was Ann's primary caregiver. You know that thing you say when you get married? That "in sickness and in health, until death do you part?" Yeah... Vic took that seriously and on October 16, 2012, their 64th anniversary, he held her hand as she was treated to "one more surprise."

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Until COVID-19, Vic worshipped with his family in the second pew on the lectern side and now watches worship on-line at Mountain Glen, hoping we can return to worship in the sanctuary soon. David and Paula visit him daily, with Vic on the second-floor balcony and the kids below, utilizing a rope-and-bag conveyance to share meds, necessities, and treats like his daily milk shakes.

Every day, he reminds his kids how blessed we are to have had their mother in their life, how blessed we are to be able to see each other, and how blessed we are to be in this place at this time.

And that smile hasn't dimmed yet.



Neighbors In Need

The Neighbors in Need food bank is not accepting food donations at this time however if you would like to help our community members who are experiencing food insecurity, the food bank would welcome your financial donations.

Mailing Address:

Neighbors in Need Food Bank
P.O. Box 394
Mount Vernon, WA 98273-0394



Would you be willing and able to stop by the church on a Wednesday afternoon and record a reading, or prayers for an upcoming worship service? It is fun for the congregation to see our church family taking part in the online services each week. Every Monday I email invitations containing a link to sign up for a date & time to serve. I have been sending invites out to those on our lectionary reader list. If you too, would like to be sent an invitation to serve as a reader please email Holly at office@firstlutheranmv.org.



In the Mail...

Dear First Lutheran Church,

Thank you so much for rewarding me the scholarship. It means a lot that you thought of me and thank you for everything.

Love, Jackson Reisner

Thank you everyone, for the senior celebration parade. It was fun to be honored. Graduation was weird this year but it was nice of you to come up with such a fun way to celebrate during COVID.

Thank you for all the cards, well wishes and scholarship, I really appreciate everything.

Sammy Oliver

We are nurtured, prepared...

Educational & Mission Opportunities

FIFTY AND BETTER COURSES at California Lutheran University

Fall Session courses will be offered September 8 - October 20 virtually (online)

“Fifty and Better” is designed for those who are 50 years of age and older and want to continue learning — just for the enjoyment and stimulation of pursuing knowledge and social engagement through interactive courses and extracurricular activities. These are

University level courses — no exams, and no homework — the curriculum is designed to address the interests of our local community members. Students taking Lecture courses will be able to communicate with faculty via the chat function. Students enrolling in a Seminar course that accompanies a Lecture course will be able to use their cameras and microphones (Seminar courses will be limited to 15 students each.) [Learn about courses, cost and how to register here.](#)

RACISM IN AMERICA: UNFULFILLED HOPES AND DREAMS

Sundays at 10 am—September 20 thru November 15 on Zoom

An eight week course led by Rev. Arhiana Shek Dill, Developer Pastor of Iglesia Fey Esperanza and Rev. Rick Rouse, author of *The World is About to Turn: Mending a Nation’s Broken Faith* (2020). Among topics this course will cover:

- The Origin of Racism in America
- What Does it Mean to Be Black or Brown in America Today?
- What Does the ELCA Have to Say About Racism and White Supremacy?
- How Can We Move Forward Together With Equality and Justice For All?

Please pre-register for the course to get the ZOOM link by emailing either Rick (rwrouse@comcast.net) or Arhiana (pastorashek@gmail.com) . All participants are encouraged to read “Dialogues On Race” (student book) available for a donation of \$10 (or \$20 for those who wish to cover cost for those who can’t afford one). Copies may be picked up at Our Savior’s Lutheran (Everett) at the church office OR during the “drive-thru” planned for Sunday, Sept. 13. Contact Beth at the church office at 425-252-0413 if you need a copy mailed to you.

HUNGER IN THE TIME OF COVID-19: Life for Today and Hope for Tomorrow

Thursday, September 24, 5pm via Zoom

Rick Steves, guidebook author and travel TV host, ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, and Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee invite you to a virtual benefit – the first of its kind – for ELCA World Hunger. Our goal is to raise \$250,000 to confront hunger in the time of COVID-19. We are in a historic moment – a once-in-a-century pandemic, facing a global change in hunger that is unlike anything we have seen in our lifetimes. Domestically and internationally, hunger is increasing at alarming rates. At this event, you will learn about the unique ways ELCA World Hunger is responding. Our hosts will also discuss the ongoing root causes of hunger and poverty addressed in Rick Steves’ recent special “Hunger and Hope: Lessons From Ethiopia and Guatemala.” And, you will hear from ELCA World Hunger partners on the front lines of the current hunger crisis, who will tell you first-hand how your gifts make a difference. We are called by God to share hope in this time of hopelessness. Join us to face this global hunger crisis head-on, and continue to move toward a just world where all are fed. REGISTER to attend [HERE](#).

Sent to be the light of Christ in our world.



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**
God's work. Our hands.

This is Christ's church. There is a place for you here!

The ELCA is the church that shares a living, daring confidence in God's grace. Liberated by our faith, we embrace you as a whole person—questions, complexities and all. Join us as we do God's work in Christ's name for the life of the world.

First Lutheran

*Called to proclaim and celebrate the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we are nurtured, prepared,
and sent to be the light of Christ in our world.*

FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

2015 E. Blackburn Rd.
Mount Vernon WA 98274
Mailing: PO Box 777
Mount Vernon WA 98273

Worship Services

Sunday Worship 10:00 am

Church Office—office@firstlutheranmv.org

Website w/calendar www.firstlutheranmv.org

Join us on [Facebook](#)

Phone: 360 424-6832 - For Pastoral Emergencies, please listen to voicemail message for phone number of on call pastor

To reach our Staff:

Pastor- Pastor Ryan Rouse

Pastorryan@firstlutheranmv.org

Holly Oliver,

Parish Administrator- office@firstlutheranmv.org

Pete Olson,

Worship Accompanist- peterdonne@yahoo.com

Janna Beecher,

Parish Assistant-parishassistant@firstlutheranmv.org

Preschool Administrator- Chelsey Olsen—

preschool@firstlutheranmv.org Preschool Phone-360-941-4187

You are created uniquely by
God and you are welcome here.

Your Abilities· Age· Culture· Economic Status· Gender Expression/identity· Life Circumstances· Marital Status· Questions· Race· Sexual Orientation· are welcome here.

Our Congregational Leaders

President— Benjamin St. Germain

Vice President— Brad Pickett

Secretary— Sharon Lauch

Treasurer— Jeanette St. Germain

Trustees

Blaine Wollan, Brad Pickett, Donn Hollenbeck

Deacons

Gary Wiegand, Bob Ramborger, Doug Carter

Parish Activities

Frances Wraspir,
Karmen St. Germain, David Jones