

SALEM UNITED
CHURCH OF CHRIST

CHAPEL CHIMES NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2020

FIRST NOTES

May, 2020. **Another** one for the books.

A good portion of May has found us where we left off at the end of April: people largely in quarantine and a church that had not extensively used its building. However, on the afternoon of May 13th, the dynamics of things took a decided turn as the Wisconsin State Supreme Court struck down the provisions and penalties of the Safer at Home order. In the absence of an agreed-upon set of rules determined by the legislature and the governor, there were no longer the legal barriers for businesses to open or for religious communities to gather. City and county governance offered guidelines, but no continuation of the order or legal penalties. Suddenly, we all were free to decide a good number of things.

Yet, the events of May 13th didn't change certain things. The novel coronavirus is still out there, and while there is much we are still learning, there are certain things about this virus that are becoming more apparent to us. While it may be less lethal than originally believed, it is still a highly-contagious bug that can create severe, adverse conditions for the oldest among us and for those with certain, preexisting conditions. Yes, we are free to do certain things, but with that freedom comes a tremendous responsibility to do what is right, as best as we can determine it. One of the consistent threads that runs throughout the scriptures is that we are called to love our neighbors as ourselves and that our choices should reflect our love of neighbor.

Salem's leadership will be making some important decisions on how and when to open up our ministries to public, in person gatherings. Worship, of course, would be chief on that list. These decisions will not be made in haste. We will need to make adequate preparations and we will need to make sure that we will have supplies we need and procedures in place to do this when the time comes. We will need to make sure that we are doing all that we can to do no harm. We not only have our church community to think of but the wider community to consider, as well.

And, of course, the virus itself will shape those discussions. What will things look like three weeks after the opening up of the state-wide restrictions? Will the summer weather have any impact on the spread? How are things trending?

We will certainly keep you updated on what steps will be taken to open. In the meantime, until things are opened, we will continue as we have with on-line worship and other on-line educational and fellowship activities. We ask for your prayers and for whatever constructive input you may have to offer.

As I wrote last month (and it bears repeating) “We may be in uncharted waters at this time, but Jesus is the one piloting the ship and we will trust that the Lord of the church will help steer us through this situation.”

Lastly, I leave with you an expression of my deepest gratitude for all of you who continue to support the

church's ministries with your treasure, your time, your talents, and your prayers in these most unusual days. You continue to amaze me with your response, and I appreciate all you continue to do more than I can say. Thank you.

And again, if you have questions, concerns, or find yourself in a crisis situation, please do not hesitate to contact the church office by phone 920.892.7456 or e-mail (salemuccofficeplywi@gmail.com) or phone me directly (920.838.0405).

Shalom aleichem—Peace be with you.

Rev. Jim Hoppert

LECTIONARY READINGS

Sunday, June 7, 2020
Trinity Sunday

Hebrew Scripture: Genesis 1:1-2:4a
Psalm: Psalm 8
Epistle: 2 Corinthians 13:11-13
Gospel: Matthew 28:16-20

Sunday, June 14, 2020
Second Sunday after Pentecost

Hebrew Scripture: Genesis 18:1-15
Psalm: Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19
Epistle: Romans 5:1-8
Gospel: Matthew 9:35-10:8

Sunday, June 21, 2020
Third Sunday after Pentecost

Hebrew Scripture: Genesis 21:8-21
Psalm: Psalm 116:1-10, 16-17
Epistle: Romans 6:1b-11
Gospel: Matthew 10:24-39

Sunday, June 28, 2020
Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

Hebrew Scripture: Genesis 22:1-14
Psalm: Psalm 13
Epistle: Romans 6:12-23
Gospel: Matthew 10:40-42