

The *Intercom* In Church and Community



From the Senior Pastor Returning to 909 W. 33rd Street



The time has arrived. On June 18, the Governing Board accepted the recommendation from the Resume Task Force and made the following decisions:

- Normal Office Hours here at OSL resumed on June 22. The office is once again open and staffed Monday through Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.
- In-person ministry activities and in-person outside events are, as of June 22, able to be held at OSL as well.
- In-person indoor worship will begin on Sunday, July 5. Celebrate worship will be held at 8:45 A.M., and Festive worship will be held at 10:15. In-person Saturday worship will begin on July 11, at 5:00 P.M. Outdoor Celebrate worship will be held at 8:45 A.M. on July 12, August 9, and September 6, weather permitting

Social distancing measures will be in place to ensure the safety of all who gather at Our Savior's.

From congregational president Dan Van Schepen: "The board gratefully acknowledges the members of the Resume Task Force as well as those who contributed to their work: Jill Franken (Sioux Falls Public Health Director) and her team at the Sioux Falls Health Department, Michelle Anderson (OSL Faith Community Nurse), Dennis Drey and Dennis Hanneman (OSL ushers), Paul Davidson

(Communion Team Leader), and Pr. Randy."

As I've stated previously, though we are living through a pandemic, the church has never closed. We've merely adapted to the circumstances and sought alternative ways to live out our mission of proclaiming Christ and nurturing faith that connects to everyday life.

This has happened at the local level, but it has also happened at the national level through the ongoing ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. What you will find in this edition of *The Intercom* is a sample of how our ELCA has been engaged in God's work using human hands throughout the world during these extraordinary times.

As we move forward into a time when we are able to gather in person for worship and other church programming, let us remember that our calling as followers of Jesus is to tend to the needs and wellbeing of our neighbor. Therefore, let us be diligent in wearing masks, washing our hands, and maintaining proper social distancing when we are together and wherever we go. We are the church, for the sake of the world.

Be well and press on,

Pr. Randy Gehring

ELCA Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations

By Kathryn M. Lohre

Kathryn M. Lohre, Assistant to the Presiding Bishop of the ELCA, is Executive, Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations and Theological Discernment. This article is adapted from that office's newsletter.



I am writing to you from my makeshift “home office,” which is nothing more than a plastic folding table facing out a window. Next to me is the stack of books and papers I brought home with me from the Lutheran Center nearly two months ago, along with my eldest son’s pile of middle-school math worksheets. My beloved predecessor, Bp. Don McCoid, often encouraged me to embrace life’s multiple vocations, but I’ll admit this feels like a master class.

So much has changed for all of us in such a short period of time, and *is* changing daily. Shifting our ecumenical and inter-religious relational work from in-person to virtual spaces has its challenges and limitations, and we are finding new and innovative ways to engage. While ongoing dialogues and activities are convening vir-

tually, novel educational opportunities and large-scale prayer and advocacy events are also taking place online—reaching people way beyond the choir. Our endeavors toward Christian unity, mutual understanding and the common good have not been canceled!

All of us have experienced or undertaken new projects aimed at amplifying love, hope, and solidarity amid this crisis, and providing resources to people in need. Here are but a few recent examples of our engagement:

- The National Council of Churches, Christian Churches Together in the USA, and Churches Uniting in Christ collaborated on an unprecedented common Easter statement and witness.
- The World Council of Churches hosted a webinar, “Church Apologies for Racist Past: Moving From Statements to Prophetic Action,” and dealing with the realities of racist rhetoric and violence in light of COVID-19 and with the churches’ response.
- ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton invited Rabbi Rick Jacobs, president of the Union for Reform Judaism, and Dr. Sayyid Syeed, president of the Islamic Society of North America, to cooperate on a video message, “Interfaith Solidarity in the Midst of a Global Pandemic,” that was posted on the eve of Passover, Holy Week and Ramadan.
- The World Council of Churches’ Thursdays in Black Ambassadors issued a statement and video message addressing the “dual pandemics of COVID-19 and sexual and gender-based violence.”

About Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations

The ELCA is committed to visible unity among Christians as well as mutual understanding and cooperation for the common good between Christians and people of other religions and worldviews.

The ELCA Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations staff in the Office of the Presiding Bishop is responsible for supporting, enriching and coordinating the ecumenical and inter-religious life of this church across its various expressions, and enhancing the public commitments of this church in Lutheran, ecumenical and inter-religious circles.

What does this mean?

- We convene bilateral dialogues with other church partners, such as the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and the African Methodist Episcopal Church.
- We cooperate with partners, such as The Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches, and the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA.
- We facilitate the ecumenical and inter-religious work of congregations, synods, and churchwide ministries by offering resources, convening the Lutheran Ecumenical & Inter-

religious Representatives Network, supporting the reception of our full-communion agreements through the work of the coordinating committees, and serving as liaison with full-communion churches and dialogue partners.

- We accompany others, including our inter-religious partners, through initiatives such as the Shoulder to Shoulder Campaign (“Standing With American Muslims. Upholding American Ideals”).
- We provide resources and information about opportunities for ecumenical and inter-religious formation throughout the ELCA.

As a church, we must consider anew our calling and commitments as we live into a world that is both ecumenically diverse and multi-religious. Three key ELCA documents, or declarations, currently serve to guide this critical work: “A Declaration of Ecumenical Commitment” (1991), “Declaration of the ELCA to the Jewish Community” (1994), and “A Declaration of Inter-Religious Commitment” (2019). In 2020, work will be undertaken to develop “A Declaration to the Muslim Community.” ♦

Links referenced here may be found at <https://elca.org/Faith/Ecumenical-and-Inter-Religious-Relations>.

- The ELCA presiding bishop and consultative panel on Lutheran–Jewish relations sent a Letter of Solidarity With Jewish Partners and the Asian American Community to Jewish signatories of a solidarity letter addressed to Asian American and Chinese communities.

Creativity is contagious, and in a time of physical distancing it is the connective tissue among us. Our relationships may be best in person, but we are finding that they can flourish in other settings, too. Virtual spaces are now firmly part of our rapidly changing ecclesial, ecumenical and inter-religious landscape. In this 50th-anniversary year of Earth Day, we might begin to see the benefits for our beloved planet when we spend more time on Zoom than in airplanes. We are laying the groundwork now for a bold future of experimentation and risk-taking seeking unity, justice and peace.

Two weeks ago, when the national Christian–Hindu dialogue convened via videoconference, participants were invited to share their experiences and insights in light of the pandemic. Dr. Lo Sprague of the Guibord Center — Religion Inside Out told us how participants in a recent online interfaith youth event said they did not want to get back to the way things were or even a “new normal,” but that they “wanted to get back to *better*.” Yes.

The global pandemic has touched all of us directly, whether through anxiety, fear, illness, racism, death, or grief. The body of Christ, the human family and the whole inhabited earth are suffering and ill. Please know that I have been praying for you and your families, that you are safe and healthy and have what you need. I have never been more grateful for the real-life relationships we share in this virtual space. ♦

Links from this article may be found at <https://bit.ly/2Z2GTKI>.

Ministry Spotlight: Lavada Woods

Lavada Woods, OSU's Financial Assistant for the past ten years or so, has retired from Our Savior's as of June 30.

Her cheerful demeanor and faithful dedication will be missed. Thanks, Lavada, for all you've brought to OSU! ♦



Ministry Spotlight: Pr. Ray Engh

The OSU community was saddened to learn of the death last month of the Rev. Ray Engh, whose long ministry service included pastor at Our Savior's and Assistant to the Bishop of the South Dakota Synod. This is adapted from the full obituary found at millerfb.org.

Raymond H. Engh, retired minister and formerly of Sioux Falls, died in Minneapolis at the age of 87, on June 7.

Ray was born October 11, 1932, in Conrad, Montana, to the Rev. Harold and Evelyn (Larson) Engh. He grew up in Florence, South Dakota, and attended Augustana Academy and Augustana College. At Augustana College he met Joyce H. Sunde, whom he married in 1954 on his graduation day, June 7.



After serving in the army, Ray attended Luther Theological Seminary in St. Paul, graduating in 1960. He was called to parishes in Hadley/Chandler, Minnesota (Hadley/Trinity Lutheran), Sioux Falls (Our Savior's Lutheran), and Fort Dodge, Iowa (St. Olaf Lutheran). During these 16 years as a parish pastor he was especially involved in youth and camping ministries. This led to four years as the director of Lutherdale Bible Camp near Elkhorn, Wisconsin. After a short time with the national ALC office (DLMC), Ray served as associate in the South Dakota Synod Office for 15 years until his retirement, traveling extensively with roles in churches and Bible camps throughout South Dakota.

As a father, youth and parish pastor, camp director, and synod staffer, Ray impacted thousands of people with his quiet compassion, wit, and wisdom. His work with the youth of Our Savior's created lifelong friendships and guidance. He accompanied hundreds of youth to outdoor camping programs each summer, and nurtured a thriving youth group during turbulent times of the Vietnam War. He played key roles in integrating the Bible camps of NeSoDak, AMR/Outlaw Ranch, and Klein Ranch into the organization Lutherans Outdoors in South Dakota.

Ray is survived by his wife, Joyce (Sunde) Engh, children Michael (Susan), Richard (Gabriele), Daniel, and Judy (Tim Bowman); brothers Ken (Solveig), Phil (Marlys), and Jim; sisters Dorothy (Bill) Harstad and Lois (Byron) Hildahl; seven grandchildren and three-plus great-grandchildren, along with many nieces and nephews and their families.

For those who wish to honor his memory, gifts to Lutherans Outdoors in South Dakota or other Lutheran outdoor ministries would be most appropriate. Other fitting charity gifts could be to Save the Boundary Waters, Augustana University, or Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls. ♦



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Worship Services

Saturday Evening – 5:00 P.M., Sanctuary, *beginning July 11*

Sunday Morning, *beginning July 5*

Celebrate Worship – 8:45 A.M., Celebrate Center

Festive Worship – 10:15 A.M., Sanctuary

Television and Internet

Celebrate: 9:00 A.M., KTTW (cable channel 9; channel 7.1)

Festive: 1:00 P.M., KSCB (cable channel 30; channel 53)

Facebook Live, 8:45 and 10:15 A.M.

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Faithful, Hopeful, Loving Generosity

Your support of OSL's mission to proclaim Christ and nurture faith that connects to everyday life is life-changing, both for you and for those whom our ministry reaches. Thank you! May God bless your faithful, hopeful, loving generosity.

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