



The *Intercom* In Church and Community



From the Senior Pastor True Joy



My Dear Friends,

We are living through extraordinary times. The pandemic has impacted each of our lives, if not directly with illness and suffering, at least indirectly by altering our daily routines and reshaping how we view the future.

The pandemic's grip on our lives has also stirred our survival instincts, which compel us to protect ourselves and those close to us. This narrowing of perspective though, while not inherently bad, can work against us. Without choosing daily to view things more broadly, we run the risk of allowing fear to guide our decisions and shape our lifestyles.

But we are not pandemic people; we are people of faith, whose identity is formed in the waters of baptism. In baptism, God puts a claim on us and names us as God's own children. This is a gift of pure love, a gift that opens us to the possibility of living without fear, of trusting that everything we have and everything we need is given to us by a God whose grace and giving know no bounds.

These gifts, however, are not given for our sake alone; as ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton is fond of saying, "We are church, we are Lutheran, we are church together, we are church for the sake of the world." At the core of our baptismal identity is the call to be a blessing to others by being God-like in our generosity.

Here at Our Savior's, we hear this seminal call in our annual vision for ministry: *Out of abundance, we will celebrate God's grace, and boldly embrace and serve all.* We are striving, even in the midst of a pandemic, to embody the abundance of God's grace by being people who live generously. In this is our greatest joy.

In these extraordinary times, may you and yours know this joy as we celebrate again the gift of Jesus, and may your generosity be a welcome gift to a world gripped by fear and suffering.

With abundant gratitude for you,

Pr. Randy Gehring

Ministry Spotlight

OSL Food Ministry

“Trying to stay sane, number one!”

So says Debbie Theis, OSL’s Food Ministry Coordinator, when asked what she’s been up to during these long months of pandemic disruption. She laughs, but it’s a melancholy, head-shaking kind of laugh.

One might think Food Ministry is all but shut down during these days of COVID-19—after all, there are no Sunday breakfasts, Wednesday or Second Saturday suppers, or funeral luncheons these days—but such things were only ever the most visible part of a great many activities Debbie and her crew of dedicated helpers undertake all the time at OSL. As has been the case with most areas of ministry at Our Savior’s, there’s been a change in focus and emphasis, but the Food Ministry engine chugs merrily and busily along.

“I am spending time thinking of so many of our members who are on lockdown,” Debbie says. “How are they doing? Do they need anything? Are they healthy? Do they miss hugs as much as I do? Can I do anything to help them? So then I do what I do when I am worrying: I cook. I made meals for Dinner to Your Door last week, Tater Tot casserole and chicken noodle soup. I believe there are at least 75 meals there.”

Among OSL’s five Core Values, *Service*, *Generosity*, and *Community* stand out most significantly in regard to Food Ministry*. “What can I do to help our community with our Food Ministry?” Debbie wonders aloud. “I can feed people. So in addition to making the meals for Dinner to Your Door, I called and asked the ICU department at Avera McKennan Hospital if we could supply a lunch for them. They were so

**Learning and Worship are the other two, in case it slipped your mind.*



gracious and excited that we would think of them. They are busy, stressed, and understaffed because of what is happening. We provided a comfort meal of Tater Tot casserole, buns, and butter. Baker Bob Nelson donated his delicious cupcakes, and the staff and doctors in ICU ate every last bit.

“I am planning to do this again in December, for both hospitals. And if need be, we will do more.”

In that same spirit of serving the community beyond the walls of Our Savior’s building, Debbie continues to be deeply involved with OSL’s Campus Cupboard program. That program, launched this past spring through the efforts of the Love in Action ministry team, initially was designed to create “care packages” to be distributed to students at Augustana University who had to remain on campus over break because of COVID-19 restrictions. It quickly grew to where it made more sense to carve out a “store room” at Our Savior’s, staffed by volunteers, where students could come to pick up necessities (you know: mac and cheese, Ramen noodles—the major food groups for college students) to help them get by when the dining hall was closed. The success of Campus Cupboard

Christmas at Our Savior’s

Christmas Eve – 30-min Services

4:00 P.M. – Festive Worship, Sanctuary

(to air on KTTW at 9:00 P.M.)

5:00 P.M. – Celebrate Worship, Celebrate Center

6:00 P.M. – Festive Worship, Sanctuary

7:00 P.M. – Outdoor “Drive-In” Worship, South Parking Lot

Christmas Day

10:00 A.M. – Sanctuary

Because of the pandemic, events are more subject to change than usual. Keep an eye on oslchurch.com, Coming up at OSL, and OSL’s Facebook page for updates.



led to it recently being expanded to help OSL's neighbors at the University of Sioux Falls as well.

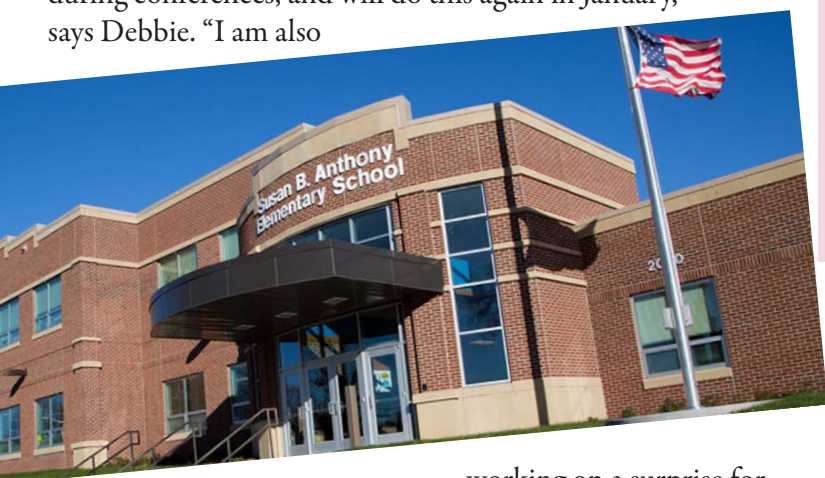
And, naturally, Food Ministry is in the thick of it.

"We are working with both Augie and USF," Debbie says, "providing food for students who may otherwise not be able to eat.

We have the Campus Cupboard open three times a week for students to come and take what they need. During the break at their schools, we will provide groceries for the kids who will be staying on campus—and also providing some extra, perishable items during this time, maybe even some Christmas cookies!"

OSL's Love in Action team also has a partnership with Susan B. Anthony Elementary School in central Sioux Falls, and Food Ministry is a major part of that partnership as well.

"We provided a lunch for Susan B. Anthony staff in October, during conferences, and will do this again in January," says Debbie. "I am also



working on a surprise for the staff during the holiday season. But I can't tell you what because it would ruin the surprise!"

Debbie's ministry isn't confined strictly to the kitchen, however: "I have been making calls to members, checking in to see how they are and if there is anything I can do for them during this very difficult time," she says. "On a day-to-day

ELCA Future Church Design

The Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has affirmed the proposed Future Church design that is focused on a renewed purpose to activate the entire church so that more people may know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice and love. The council, which serves as the ELCA's board of directors and legislative authority for the church between churchwide assemblies, held its electronic meeting November 12 through 14.



**Evangelical
Lutheran
Church in America**

Future Church is based in the belief that members, congregations, synods and the churchwide organization must work together to share the powerful witness of the gospel in the world and to invite more new, young and diverse people to experience God's grace in action. The new design identifies three priority areas: a welcoming church that engages new, young and diverse people; a thriving church rooted in tradition and radically relevant; and a connected, sustainable church that shares in a common purpose and direction.

The Future Church structure will be implemented in the churchwide organization on February 1, 2021. The structure will introduce three new home areas: Christian Community and Leadership, led by the Rev. Philip Hirsch; Innovation, led by Ms. Mikka McCracken; and Service and Justice, led by the Rev. Rafael Malpica Padilla. Approximately 5% of the churchwide organization staff will be separated as a result of the new design.

Read the entirety of the ELCA media release about Future Church design on the OSL website: oslchurch.com/from-elca-november-16-2020.

basis, I try to make myself available for folding mailings, stuffing envelopes, and rearranging anything that might need to be done. And even helping with communion, in a pinch!"

To be sure, COVID-19 has been something of "a pinch," with ingenuity and energy, Debbie and the rest of the Food Ministry team help keep OSL *Connecting Faith with Everyday Life*. ♦



OUR SAVIOR'S
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Worship Services

Saturday Evening – 5:00 P.M., Sanctuary

Sunday Morning

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

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

See page 2 for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day schedules

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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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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