



The Shepherd's *staff*

THE NEWSLETTER OF HOLY SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH | MAY 2021 | ORINDA, CALIFORNIA

LET'S MAKE MAY MEMORABLE

May 2021 appears to be a month chock-a-block full of promise for both our congregation and our community!

- We're returning to in-person worship in our Sanctuary (*see page 3 of this newsletter for more details*) and are planning for a gradual re-opening of our church campus to events and activities on-site!
- We're upgrading video technologies in our worship space so that those who are home-bound (by condition or choice) may more fully participate in the worship life of our congregation!
- Contra Costa County is making significant strides toward transitioning from the "orange/moderate" tier to the "yellow/minimal" tier — which will bring with it significant additional easing of restrictions in our community.
- COVID-19 vaccines are now available to all persons age 16+ and there are numerous local locations wherein you can get your shot. (*If you need help obtaining a vaccine shot, contact our Church Office and we'll help you get yours!*)

These signs of hopefulness are indeed reason for a twinge of excitement, for thankfulness and for rejoicing.

But even those among us who have been fully-vaccinated are urged to our new-found freedoms as an opportunity to serve our neighbors in love. Saint Paul was talking about just such freedom when he wrote *"For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' (Galatians 5:13-14)* By continuing to wear our masks, by conscientiously practicing social-distancing, by being patient with local health restrictions for a little while longer, we may yet aid those whom God would call 'our neighbors'. For — as Doctor Luther was fond of saying — ***"God does not need your good works, but your neighbor does."***

EVENTS SCHEDULE

We encourage you to join in the following events — virtually and/or in-person:

Every Sunday at 9:30 am — Our weekly in-person worship opportunity resumes!

Every Sunday at 9:30 am — Our in-person worship services will be "Live-Streamed" via Facebook @HSLCORinda

Every Sunday at 10:30 am — An abbreviated Coffee Fellowship will resume on the patio following our in-person worship services

Every Sunday at noon — A recording of our weekly 'Worship Video' should be accessible via our webpage at www.holyshepherd.org or our Facebook page @HSLCORinda.

Third Sundays from 10:30a to 11:30a — Following morning worship on the third Sunday of each month, our Sanctuary is open for socially-distanced Holy Communion. (*Join us on May 16th!!*)

Tuesdays at 7pm — Our weekly 'Adult Ed.' Bible class will continue to meet online via Zoom until further notice. Zoom Meeting ID# is 882 9062 7131 (no password required)

Mission Partner Update:

INTERNATIONAL HEALTH PARTNERS

Dear Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church,

Your recent and generous gift of \$4,050 for the mission of IHP helps to make many things possible to improve healthcare in Tanzania! Thank you!

IHP is subsidizing the salaries of the clinic staff so that patients are only charged a fraction of the real cost. You're helping keep our clinic open and operational amid COVID!

Dr. Lucas Kaji was the ophthalmologist we worked with at Nyakato. Now his daughter Irene (pictured right) is doing an ophthalmology residency at Muhimbili Medical Center in Dar es Salaam. You're helping ensure quality health care in East Africa for years to come!



International Health Partners is a medical mission project that Holy Shepherd has supported for nearly two decades, both through budgeted "Giving Beyond Ourselves" and directed support from individual members. They are working to ensure that the youngest of East Africans have access to quality medical care, and that God's healing gifts are made available to all.

This note of 'thanks' comes to us from Paula and Denny Lofstrom who have spent these days of COVID-19 'penned up' at home in Arkansas, awaiting their next trip to Tanzania. In a follow-up phone call with Pastor John, Paula noted that these days of COVID have been the longest time that Denny and Paula have been away from their work in Africa for nearly three decades!



Kaadhim Jambia is a 20-month-old toddler. His nanny left him alone with water boiling on an open fire on a mud floor. Kaadhim tipped the pot's contents onto himself and sat screaming in the mess. His neighbors rescued him and brought him directly to our clinic that night. Kaadhim received pain meds and antibiotics. His wounds were cleaned and treated with Telfa bandages and his parents brought him back daily for dressing changes (pictured right). After only a week, we're pleased to report that it appears he will recover completely from his severe second degree burns. You're helping impact the lives of hurting families with the healing love of God! Know God's blessings in gratitude, and know that you ARE helping!!

Asante Sana! (That's 'Thank you very much' in Swahili) Denny and Paula

We Remember in Prayer

Prayers for Healing

- Glo. & Ber. Enstrom
- Dou. & DoL. Timmons
- MHe Wagner
- Vic. Gess
- Dr.B and Car. Weyand
- Sus. Morgenstern
- Pet. Johnson
- Hen. & Car. Kramer
- Judy Butler
- Dic. Tissue
- Kat. Bradshaw

Prayers for Comfort

- Har. Howe
- Rol. Benseler
- Mar. & Kri. Lindahl
- Mar. McGill
- DeL. Riveness
- Mar. Norleen

Prayers for Those Serving

- Meg. Howard
- Bri. Henson
- Pet. Kler

May Celebrations

Birthdays

	13th Lin. Hudak	Nic. Klein
2nd Joh. Hudak	16th Rit. Sobolev	31st Wal. Sheldon
3rd Joh. Behrsing	19th Joh. Heidt	<u>Anniversaries</u>
5th Jul. Clark	Ali. Kling	14th Berchtolds
6th Car. Gamble	22nd Cor. Sheldon	25th Jays
7th Pet. Johnson	24th Jan. Kjell	27th Tschudis
Eri. Schoenfeld	Bet. Valentine	
10th Vic. Gess	26th Dav. Lausch	
Ter. Olson	28th Tho. Henry	
13th Car. Sueoka	30th Sam. Kemp-Bye	



LIFE TRANSITIONS

It is with a heavy heart that we relay the news of the passing of Bruce Neujahr on Monday, April 19th. At the time of his passing, he was at the Bruns House, a end-of-life care facility operated by the Hospice of the East Bay in Alamo.



For many years, Bruce served as an active member and congregational leader among us — as a ever-steady bell-ringer in Shepherd's Bell, as an investment advisor to the Church Council, as a member of the Finance Team and Church Council, and as a tireless advocate for youth and family ministry.

Bruce is survived by beloved wife Diana, children Mike and Kathy, their families and extended family in Nebraska. Please hold the whole of the Neujahr family in your prayers as they lament the passing of a man who was truly a servant of God. Memorial service plans are pending.



We rejoice with Braden Engel and Amy Leedham at the Baptism of infant daughter Aila Peberdy Engel on the weekend of April 24th! Congratulations to Aila, Amy and Braden — and welcome to the Family of God!

WHAT TO EXPECT AS WE RETURN TO WORSHIP

(Phase One of our 'Return to Campus' Plan)

As we begin to reopen our campus, our first target involves re-opening our Sanctuary to in-person worship on Sunday mornings. Because Contra Costa County remains in the 'Orange Tier', the following stipulations will necessarily be in place as we gather for worship on Sunday May 2nd at 9:30am — and will remain in place until further notice.

- **Sanctuary attendance will necessarily be capped at 50%** (100 persons). While we do not anticipate that this will be burdensome, please be aware that there is a hard attendance cap in place.
- **Worshippers are required to don a face covering / mask** prior to entering the Sanctuary and remain masked throughout the duration of the service. Masks will be made available to those who need them.
- **Worshippers are encouraged to speak/sing-along 'quietly'** to the words and songs of the worship service, so as to minimize exhaled droplets and aerosols.
- **The first two rows of pews in the Sanctuary will be 'closed' to seating**, so as to ensure significant physical distance between worship leaders and worshippers.
- **Our worship leaders will be unmasked.** Per State Guidelines, our instrumental musicians, vocalists, readers and preachers may be unmasked, as they are expected to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and are expected to maintain social distance from others while performing.
- **The size of our worship teams and choirs will be limited**, so as to allow significant physical distance between worship team members.
- **Sanctuary doors and windows will remain fully open**, so as to ensure adequate ventilation of our worship space while the building is occupied.
- **Holy Communion will be shared only on the 3rd Sunday of the month** — following the completion of the worship service and done in the manner we have shared since last Fall — to minimize risk of infections.
- **Coffee Fellowship will only be offered outside** during this initial re-opening period — and will be limited to beverage offerings only.
- **Our weekly worship services will also be live-streamed via Facebook and posted on the church website** for those who do not feel able to return to a community worship setting at this time.

Thanks for your patience and understanding!

The Pastor's Pen

A Word from Pastor Pam Schaefer Dawson



Our country, and the whole world, have lived through a scary, sad, and challenging year. Nearly all of us are only one or two degrees of separation from someone who has had COVID-19, and many of us know someone who has died from it. In the midst of this pandemic, we have each individually and collectively done our best to follow safety guidelines, which have, for over a year now, meant that we have been physically distancing from one another.

We have not worshipped together in our sanctuary since March 15, 2020. In doing these things, we have been caring for our neighbor. In doing these things, we have been helping to slow the spread of the virus. In doing these things, we have prepared a way for the vaccine to be effective in helping us reach "herd immunity." (I didn't like that term much at first, as it seemed to be implying that we were cattle, or some such, but the term is growing on me now.) Whether willingly or begrudgingly, we have followed directions, and now, with the vaccine becoming widely available, it seems we are turning a corner.

Holy Shepherd's Council voted for a return to in-person worship beginning on May 2 and have put in place many continuing safety guidelines (see details in the adjacent "What to Expect ..." column). I am both excited and apprehensive about this new step we are taking together — mostly excited. The thing that concerns me the most is that, with the safety guidelines in place, it will not feel the same as we remember that worship felt. People, upon seeing one another after a year's absence may want to embrace, may even go in for a hug (on autopilot), leaving everyone feeling awkward. In some cases, people may feel unable to say no to an unwanted hug. We will need to be careful and be sensitive to one another's needs.

Transitions are hard, sometimes scary. But we do not walk through them alone. Christ, the Good Shepherd, walks through this transition with us. And with us, I believe he is rejoicing that we will again be worshipping together in our sanctuary.

FOUR WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU

Beginning May 2nd, we will offer four weekly options by which you can access the worship life of our congregation. While we hope and pray that COVID-19 subsides in the near future, we anticipate that all four of these options will continue to be offered in the days and months ahead.

Option #1

In-Person Worship in Our Sanctuary

We resume in-person worship at 9:30am each and every Sunday morning beginning May 2, 2021! For more details about 'what to expect' (including pandemic precautions as mandated by our local health Department), check out the article on page 3 inside this newsletter!

Option #2

'Live-Streamed' Worship on Facebook

'Live-streaming' capabilities are currently being installed in our Sanctuary so that you'll be able to watch / worship with us at home or when you're away. Simply logon to our Facebook page @HSLCORinda at 9:30 on Sunday mornings and you'll see and hear as if you were there!

Option #3

Video-Recorded Worship Online

Following worship on Sunday mornings, our 'live-streamed' video will be posted to both our Facebook page and our website www.holyshepherd.org. (Please note that the quality of these videos will differ from the pre-recorded / edited videos Pastor John has been producing for us for the past year.)

Option #4

Printed Sermons Mailed to Your Home

If snail-mail still works best for you — and you don't yet feel comfortable out and about in the community — contact Lisa Verley in the church office and ask to have the weekly sermon mailed to your home. (If you are currently receiving the weekly sermon mailing, fear not! Your subscription will automatically be continued.)

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'Happy Mother's Day'
to all to whom those
words apply!

Mother's Day 2021 is May 9th