



The Pacific Hills **Messenger**

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER — PACIFIC HILLS LUTHERAN CHURCH — JULY 2, 2020 — VOLUME 5 NUMBER 26

HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY!

What will you do to celebrate the Fourth of July? Maybe you will have a picnic and set off some fireworks or maybe you will just spend the day with friends and family and enjoy a long-awaited day off.

This week, on the 4th of July, we will celebrate our nation's 244th birthday. On this day we celebrate the precious gift of freedom because of the price others have paid. The ideal of freedom is one that our founding fathers believed valuable enough to risk everything on. They risked their fortunes, their families, their reputations and their sacred honor. They risked their very lives and many of them paid for our freedom with their blood and the blood of their children.

Today as we worship in security and comfort, we do so because thousands of young men and women have given their lives and shed their blood on foreign soil. They died in forsaken places with names not remembered so that we could experience the joy of freedom. No, freedom is not free. The price is always paid in blood.

Freedom can also be lost. Together, as a country, we are witnessing the fraying of our society. The 40th President of the United States once said, "Freedom is a fragile thing and is never more than one generation away from extinction. It is not ours by inheritance; it must be fought for and defended constantly by each generation, for it comes only once to a people. Those who have known freedom and then lost it have never known it again."

So, freedom is a gift paid by others and it can be lost. This is true spiritually as well. Christ Jesus paid for our eternal freedom with his most holy precious blood, and it can all be lost if we turn away from Christ and back to a life of unbelief and sin. St. Paul said, "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery" (Galatians 5:1). Such wise words for us to consider on this Independence Day!

Blessings,
Pastor Drebes

Church Events

In July, guideline changes continue relating to coronavirus distancing: Families to stay together distancing 6 feet from others.

Sundays	<u>July 5, 12, 19, 26</u> 8:00am Eucharist 10:30am Eucharist
Tuesday	<u>July 7</u> 9:00am Care Ministry Committee 10:30am Missions & Social Min.
Thursday	<u>July 9</u> 6:30pm Tai Chi 7:00pm Elders Board
Sunday	<u>July 12</u> 11:30am Worship & Music Committee
Thursday	<u>July 16</u> 6:30pm Trustees Board
Tuesday	<u>July 21</u> 7:00pm Directors Board

Sunday's altar flowers are given to the glory of God by Danny and KangAe Reyelts.

Thank you to the Care Ministry Committee and all my friends who made my 100th Birthday Party a very Happy Day. I will be reading over and over the beautiful, cards, special wishes, thinking about the time visiting, enjoying the flowers and many decorations. I can't say the words to thank you enough. Millie Scheef

Sunday Worship Notes -- The Elders and Pastor recommend that everyone wear some kind of face covering in worship. Also, there are no children's messages on Sunday mornings, due to social distancing requirements. Thank you.

Welcome, Zach Hastings, Director of Music! Zach is a native of Ankeny, Iowa, and served Lutheran congregations for seven years in Iowa and Minnesota. He joins Pacific Hills as Director of Music beginning July 1. Zach studied organ performance at Iowa State University, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in music in 2016. He has been an organist, bell choir director, and director of worship primarily in the central Iowa area. He continually seeks opportunities to grow as a musician through various conferences and seminars. Zach currently serves on the Central Iowa American Guild of Organists (AGO) Executive Committee, and on the American Guild of Organists Young Organists (AGOYO) National Board. He is a retirement benefit analyst for Principal Financial Group. He is in the process of relocating to Omaha, and is searching for the "right" house for himself and his Goldendoodle, Merlin. Lastly, we would like to welcome Zach with a card and gift card shower. If individual members have in mind to bake something for Zach, please keep in mind that he has a gluten allergy. Welcome Zach and thank you for sharing your gifts, in praise and worship to the Lord, with all of us at Pacific Hills Lutheran Church.

We thank and praise God for Carol Goodwin, and her sharing her time and talents with us as our interim organist! Carol is a talented organist, and generous with her time and patience. We have been blessed to have her. We hope to welcome her as a substitute should occasions arise.

OUR SOCIALLY DISTANCED COMMUNION PRACTICE

The Ushers will dismiss one pew at a time, alternating between the pulpit and the lectern side, so that there are only a very small number of people present for Communion at any given time to maintain social distancing. When you come forward you will take a prepackaged communion kit from the center of the chancel. Pastor will be standing in the center at the spot marked with a P. You will then proceed until you are in position in front of the altar rail, again no kneeling or touching the rail. Once you are in position you will be instructed to "take and eat" and "take and drink." Once you are dismissed you will dispense with your used cup and depart down the side aisles to your seat. Those seated in the transepts will be ushered up from their respective sides.

BIBLE VERSE of the Week

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened,
and I will give you rest"

(Matt. 11:28)

Tai Chi on Thursday, July 9, at 6:30pm, There will be no class July 16th. Class will be held outside in the grass south of the south parking lot. Chairs will be provided and disinfected after class or you can bring your own. Questions, call Sandra, #402-571-8407.

Returning to God, Tithes and Offerings During the Pandemic

As you know the church's ministry and expenses continue even though services and programming are a bit different. You can still give your tithes and offerings by mail. You can set up your bank account to give electronically or you can utilize MyEOffering. There is also a link to MyEOffering on our web page, on the top menu. Our web page is: www.PacificHillsLutheran.org. You can sign up at <https://members.myeoffering.com>. Your church needs people like you to continue their regular patterns of giving despite virus-related closures to maintain current ministry. Consider the following passages: **2 Corinthians 9:7** - Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. **Malachi 3:10** - Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need. **Proverbs 11:24** - One gives freely, yet grows all the richer; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want. **Luke 6:38** - Give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you."

One Way to Support Pacific Hills' Foundation

If you are required to take a required minimum distribution (RMD) from your IRA, you might not like the taxation associated with that. One option would be to use a provision by the IRS that allows you to make qualified charitable contributions (QCDs) directly from your IRA to a ministry (up to \$100,000/year), such as the Pacific Hills Lutheran Church Foundation. Being smart about which asset you use from which to make your contributions can save tax dollars, possibly allowing you to increase your gift. Do you want to know more? Craig Stirtz, a gift planning counselor who has assisted our congregation and the foundation, can help. Contact Craig Stirtz at 402-616-0312 or craig.stirtz@lfnd.org.