



the vinebranch

a monthly publication of Abiding Savior Lutheran Church

July 2020

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These have been hard months for all of us. It has been so hard not being able to gather for worship, Bible study, fellowship, meals, learning, meeting and serving together. The doors have been locked. The building is so quiet and empty. We have never experienced anything like this before.

Our world is hurting, torn apart and unsettled. We have heard cries of pain and loss, anger and fear. We have felt fear, uncertainty and chaos in the world around us. We have witnessed hatred and violence and we have witnessed love and peace and people coming together to help others in need and to care for one another.

In the midst of it all, we have been praying—asking God for help, for protection, for shelter, for peace, for love to conquer hate, for mercy, for understanding, for healing.

Even though the church building has been empty you have continued to be the church in your family, neighborhood, community and the world. You have continued to bear witness to God's love and grace as you faithfully care for your families, care for children, teach them the subjects in school and about life, provide a home and safe place, pray for your children and for all children in our communities, cities and around the world. You have been caring for parents—especially elderly parents and grandparents. You have shared your love as you visited a loved one through the outside window so your loved one could see you and hear your voice when they were in isolation. You wore masks, shields, gowns and gloves and risked your own health to be able to spend one last hour with a loved one as they were dying. You have taken shifts to stay with your parents overnight to provide needed care. You have prepared food to share and prayed. You have been there for neighbors, for people at church checking on them, bringing food, running errands, making sure they are ok. You have made hundreds of face masks to help protect others. You are making and sending cards of encouragement and love. You are calling on the phone and praying for others. You have been collecting food for food drives, working in our community garden to help provide food for the food shelf and donating funds to people and places in need. You have been a voice for justice as you continue to learn and be a voice against racial injustice. You are wanting to learn and grow in understanding and you are praying for discernment, understanding, wisdom and for God to be at work in all of our lives. You have been faithfully doing your daily work as a calling to the neighbor. Many of you risking your own health to care for others.

The church building may be empty right now, but I give thanks to God for you as you are continuing to be the church in the world, in your everyday lives. Your lives matter. Your words and actions matter for the sake of the Gospel. God is at work through your lives, through your witness, through your love. You are needed for such a time as this. Thank you for your partnership in the Gospel from the first day until now.

Pastor Lisa

Outdoor Worship begins Sunday, July 12th

We plan to be outside (weather permitting) in our backyard for worship on **Sunday mornings at 10:00 starting July 12th**. We will reassess for August, but most likely we will continue to be outside. We will not meet outside for worship if the weather does not permit us to gather or the regulations surrounding COVID-19 say it is not safe for us to gather.

For outdoor worship, please bring your own lawn chairs, blankets, coffee and masks and spread out in the backyard of the church by the Brad's pad in the shade of our beautiful oak trees. Please be sure to use the restroom before you come. We all miss each other, but please refrain from all contact and follow social distancing guidelines. All of our outside worship services will still be streamed on Facebook Live and also we will be broadcasting using the FM receiver like we did for our drive-in worship service so people can hear the service in their cars from the parking lot if they so choose. We will designate certain parking spots with good views for those who wish to remain in their cars. If we can't be outside due to weather, we will stream the service from the sanctuary with staff only on Facebook Live.

Living in God's love, Abiding Savior Lutheran Church is a *welcoming* and *caring* family that *nurtures* spiritual growth, *shares* our Christian faith, and *serves* all creation.

VBS 2020 ALL IN! Online August 10 - 14

Yes, VBS is happening! Although we won't be gathering in person, we are hard at work planning and preparing an online VBS experience for families. Join us the week of August 10-14 to explore what it means to give your whole self to God as we focus on the theme ALL IN.

- Sing with us!
- Meet one of the pastors from Abiding Savior and Cross of Glory/Atonement each day as they share some time with you.
- Put your drama hat on and enter into a story experience. Move, sing, shout—go ALL IN!
- Have fun with daily crafts and activities.

Visit the church website (<http://abidingsavior.org/OutreachPro/vacation-bible-school-2020-all-in/>) to register. Registration is required to ensure that families receive the necessary resources and links for participation. Some items will be available as downloads, and packets with craft and other supplies will be assembled and available for pick-up the week before the program. There is no charge for these materials, but donations are welcome and appreciated.

Please feel free to contact Patty Mesenbring (patty@abidingsavior.org) with any questions.

ALL IN

Abiding Savior Preschool **Preschool News** Abiding Savior Preschool

We are moving ahead with plans to resume classes this September! Registration is open!! If you, or someone you know is looking for a great preschool, please visit our [web-site](#), call 763-784-5326, or email preschool@abidingsavior.org for more information or to register!

2020-2021 Preschool Registration



Tracy Nicholls, Director
preschool@abidingsavior.org | 763-784-5326



LAWN-MOWING TEAM

If you are interested in being a part of our lawn-mowing team this summer, please let the church office know!

MS/HS Youth Events

Wednesday Nights from 7:00 - 8:00pm

- July 1st: No Youth Group
- July 8, 15, 22, 29: We'll meet



Each Wednesday we will meet in the backyard at Abiding Savior for campfires, hammocking, games, and more! Mask wearing will be required and we will keep social distancing rules. Check out the [Abiding Savior Facebook page](#), your church emails and the Remind texts (send a text to 81010 with the message @8211redoak if you haven't signed up yet).

Reopening Plans

We do not currently have an official "re-opening" plan. The rules are constantly changing about reopening houses of worship and the guidelines from the Minnesota Department of Health and the CDC are quite stringent for churches that do re-open and will require a lot of staff and volunteer hours for compliance. It is for the safety of all of us that we are not moving quickly to gather together inside the building.

We are always re-evaluating this decision, especially as we get close to the fall and the start of the programming year. We also do not see a reason to open back up quickly and put people at risk, especially during the summer months. It is not safe yet for our aging congregation members and there is not as much regular programming during the summer. We continue to have a strong virtual presence. During July we will begin to offer more informal outdoor gatherings. Science has proven that the COVID-19 virus dissipates more quicker outside as opposed to inside. **Please see the front page of the Vine-branch for more information regarding outdoor worship.**

It is hard to be apart and away from our building, but for the safety of others we need to continue to wait and anticipate the joyous day when we will be back together again!

Stay connected via Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/abidingsaviorlc/>, our website <http://abidingsavior.org>, email (office@abidingsavior.org) or call 763.784.5120 with any questions.

Mission

Living in God's love, Abiding Savior Lutheran Church is a *welcoming* and *caring* family that *nurtures* spiritual growth, *shares* our Christian faith, and *serves* all creation.

May 2020
Financial Highlights

2020	Monthly	YTD
INCOME		
Current gifts and giving	40,578	206,307
Festival giving	3,985	18,700
SUBTOTAL	44,563	225,007
Other income	2,598	15,900
TOTAL INCOME	47,161	240,907
EXPENSES		
TOTAL EXPENSES	41,738	232,801
NET INCOME OVER EXPENSES	5,423	8,106
Benevolence paid	4,340	18,059

Stewardship Corner



Stewarding the Precious Resource of Time

So often when we think about stewardship we think about money. The definition of stewardship I like the most is that stewardship is what we do with what God has entrusted to us. You see, everything we call our own really belongs to God. This includes our lives. So in reality, our whole lives, every second of them, belongs not to us, but to God. This is true also of all our material possessions. God allows us to use them while we are here. We are not the owners, we are the stewards.

That being said, we are called to use our finances and our time wisely. Time is finite, we can never make more. During this Corona virus pandemic we have had a chance to examine time a little closer. I know that I have had more time at home, more evenings with my family. What a real gift to be forced to slow down and to use the resource of time in different ways. Parenting is a vocation from God, as is grandparenting, taking care of aging parents, being a spouse, a best friend, or so many other callings we have from God. Nurturing these relationships with family, friends, and with God take time and effort.

Pay attention to how you steward the time God has entrusted to you. Use it wisely showing love, caring for others, and yes, even self-care and resting. Time is a valuable resource that when shared with love, has the power to change the lives of others for the better. Keep caring, keep loving, keep volunteering, keep reaching out, and keep sharing of yourself and your talents. When you do, you make the world a better place in God's name.

Church Office Hours

We currently are offering very limited office hours for people to drop off envelopes or pick up devotional books. These hours are intended to be for business only, not fellowship! We ask everyone in the building to wear a mask at all times unless they are on screen making a live video. Office hours are:

- Mondays 9:00am—1:00pm (Katie will be in)
- Thursdays 8:00am—12:00pm (Connie will be in)

Notes of Thanks

In recent weeks, I have received a number of cards from members as I battle cancer and that is so heartwarming. We are the church and what an example of that! Compassion and caring has come my way even though it has been 18 years since I was your intern and 12 years since my short call at Abiding Savior. You put a smile on my face and radiate that love and joy that comes from our connection with Jesus. Thank you for that. It is so very appreciated.

—Pastor Carol Sinykin

Thank you for your thoughts, prayers, and cards following the death of Greg at a time when personal connections were not possible. I continue to reread your messages (three each evening) during my bedtime meditations - a quiet time to reflect on the life of a gentle man finally at peace.

—Linka Holey

Director Update

We are actively searching for a choir director for the senior choir and the kids choirs. We have received a number of excellent applications. Although we do not even know if we will have choirs in the fall, we are moving forward with the hiring process and we will find ways for the new director or directors to reach out and be involved in music for worship. A committee will be put together to help make the final decision on the candidates.

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Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/abidingsaviorlc/>

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Please consider receiving your
Vinebranch via email!

Reduce waste, help our church save paper
and the cost of mailing, and help us get
updates to you in a more timely manner!

If you want to go paperless,
call the Church office at 763.784.5120
or email us at office@abidingsavior.org.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Outdoor Communion & Prayer Time Wednesdays—July 8th & 22nd 6:00PM - 7:00PM

For those who are interested we plan to offer the opportunity to take communion outdoors during July and August on the second and fourth Wednesdays from 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM under the canopy in the parking lot. One of the pastors will be there with you to pray for you or a loved one and to celebrate communion. Communion will be done privately, socially distanced, and with sanitary precautions in place to avoid the risk of spreading COVID-19. Unfortunately, at this time, we do not feel it is safe for us to gather for Communion in large numbers during our outdoor worship services. This outdoor serving of Communion will provide a less crowded, more socially distanced way of offering communion to individuals or families. All are welcome at the Lord's Table!



Pastors & Staff

Ryan Brodin, Senior Pastor
Lisa Richardson Engen, Associate Pastor
Brad Mills, Intern Deacon & Dir. of Youth Ministry
Patty Mesenbring, Director of Children's Ministry
Janelle Schauer, Organist
Paul Weller, Bell Choir Director
Janet Wilcox, Parish Nurse
Katie Brouillard, Office Manager
Amy Haugen, Office Assistant
Connie Clausen, Office Assistant
Tracy Nicholls, Preschool Director
Steven Hill, Custodian

Help keep our contact information up-to-date! If you have a new home phone, cell phone or email address for electronic communications, please call the church office at 763.784.5120 or visit <http://abidingsavior.org/OutreachPro/update-my-contact-information/>.