

Cross of Glory & West Freeborn Lutheran Churches - December 2020

Sunday Morning Worship times:

Cross of Glory – 9:00 a.m.

West Freeborn will not be having services at this time



God of Good News

But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people”.
(Luke 2:10)

As we prepare to celebrate Jesus’ birth it is well to recall the words of Old Testament prophets who looked forward to the day when God’s Messiah would come. They place some lofty expectations on the shoulders of this individual.

Isaiah says that his name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace. Christmas is the day when we welcome God’s Messiah to the world, and we know that this Messiah arrives in the form of a baby born to poor parents out in a stable. Isaiah expects a lot from this baby.

Fortunately for us, and for the entire human race, Jesus was up to the demands. It then falls upon people like you and me to make known what God has done.

This is why it seems especially nice that God chose to announce the birth of the Savior to a group of shepherds. There is nothing altogether outstanding about shepherds. They were not rich, nor were they powerful. They were common, everyday, working class people. Of all the people that God could have chosen to send those angels to God chose that group of shepherds. Not the Roman Emperor, not the High Priest, not the CEO in charge of Jerusalem olive growers. Ordinary folk.

Today God could choose farmers or secretaries. God might choose mechanics or nurses or house painters. God might choose welders or factory workers or illegal immigrants.

Get the picture? When it comes to welcoming the Christ child, God chooses you.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Schwartz

Do-It-Yourself Bible Study

For our Bible study this month let's look at the readings for December 15. If you find this intriguing I hope that you will join others to go deeper.

The prophet Isaiah in this passage is addressing people who have been living as refugees in Babylonia for two generations. It has been a long time of homelessness, but they are finally being allowed to go home.

Read Isaiah 55:1-5.

The prophet begins by describing God's goodness to the people as something that is offered freely; they are being freed from captivity and it has not cost one cent. What does God give freely to you that you are thankful for?

Two generations of people have lived as refugees in Babylonia. It is to be expected that many, who have never known a different life, will prefer to stay in the place they have always called home and not bother to return to the land God promised they would have. Isaiah addresses this issue.

Read Isaiah 55:6-9.

The idea here is that returning to their homeland is also returning to God, and to refuse to leave and not build new lives in the land of promise is to turn your back on God, who knows what is best. Was there ever a time when you knew what God wanted but were not sure you were willing to follow?

Trusting in God is not always easy, perhaps because God always seems to be full of surprises. The opportunity to return to their homeland came as a surprise to the people of Israel, and was a rich opportunity.

Read Isaiah 55:10-11.

When something unexpected occurs it tends to be something bad, but not here. Think of a time when something good, but unexpected, happened in your life, and consider it in the way Isaiah describes the Word of God here.

Cross of Glory Trustees and Deacons Meeting - November 10th, 2020

Jerry Morstad called the Zoom meeting to order. Jerry Morstad, Jill Morstad, Rachel Knudson, Martin Johnson, Emily Wakefield, Linda Brekke, Steve Bakken, Ron Bartness, Paul Lynne, and Pastor Steve were present. Jerry thanked Emily for setting up the Zoom meeting. Pastor Steve led us in prayer. He asked whether we are still planning a Thanksgiving service so we put it on the agenda to address later in the meeting. Rachel Knudson read the secretary's report. Jill Morstad made a motion to accept the secretary's report. Ron Bartness seconded. Linda Brekke gave the treasurer's report. One of the CDs will be maturing on November 14 and we need to decide whether to allow it to roll over or take out the money. Linda was told by the bank that if we allow it to mature now but need to pull out the money before the next maturing date, there will be little to no penalty for removing the money. The heating system will cost \$25,000 but we have enough in our other accounts to cover the costs without using the money from the CD. Paul Lynne made a motion to leave the CD in the bank and allow it to mature again. Martin Johnson seconded. Paul Lynne made a motion to approve the treasurer's report and pay the bills as money allows. Steve Bakken seconded.

Old Business:

Back to the heating system—we were only able to get one estimate since Master Plumber did not come out to give us a second. The sole boiler we were using also went down so we need to move ahead with a solution quickly. Jim & Dude's have their supplies in the building and will be proceeding. The new system will have two units like our current system has.

New Business:

1. Pastor Steve says we can go ahead and have communion on Sundays. It will not be at the altar and will be done with individual sealed communion packets. We will go back to our typical communion schedule of twice a month. This Saturday, there will still be communion by appointment. We also discussed whether to remain open in light of the dramatic escalation of cases in Minnesota in general, and in our local area specifically. Judging by people who have contacted various council members, it appears that the opinions of the people who've been attending the services are that they would like for the church to remain open. It was decided that if the government mandate changes to restrict services, we can revisit this decision, but barring such a mandate, we will continue holding our weekly services with the standard restrictions to be followed.
2. We discussed the excellent job Allyson Olson at ARO has done as our accountant throughout the time we've been employing her but especially this year when she was able to assist us in obtaining some of the employee funding available through the CARES Act earlier in the pandemic. Martin Johnson made a motion to provide Allyson with a \$150 thank you gift for a job well done. Linda Brekke seconded.
3. The black printer cartridge for the new copier/printer was about to run out and Cindi wasn't able to order a replacement from Office Depot without a credit card number. Jill and Jerry stopped at the store but it wasn't in stock so it ended up being mailed to the church. It came very quickly through the mail. However, this raised an important lesson that we should have a card that could be used for online ordering for office supplies. Paul Lynne made a motion that there be a debit card linked only to the office account that could be used for such purchases. Martin Johnson seconded.

4. As Linda is now treasurer, it seems there is no longer a formal nominating committee. The question was raised as to whether the officers would be willing to maintain their positions. Rachel Knudson stated that she is looking at going back to school, possibly starting with classes in spring semester and since she is still currently working full time, she would prefer to hand over the secretary's role to someone else. If anyone would be interested in doing this job, please contact Jerry Morstad.

5. The Annual Meeting is scheduled for December 13. It will be a different experience this year, without being able to hold a potluck dinner in association with it. The meeting will be held immediately after church with people remaining in their pews. It was discussed that we have a Zoom link for people who want to attend but who aren't comfortable being there in person. Pastor Steve stated that he has the equipment to set up the laptop with the TV for increased visibility.

6. When we returned to the topic of whether to hold the Thanksgiving service this year, we mentioned that families aren't able to travel and gather like normal, nor would they be attending services together like we typically see. Martin Johnson made a motion to cancel the Thanksgiving service this year due to the pandemic. Steve Bakken seconded. We will encourage everyone to include additional donations for the New Richland Area Food Shelf for this season of giving, since we won't be designating a Thanksgiving offering and we have no idea what the pandemic numbers will be looking like at Christmas time. There are so many families who struggle with food insecurity and that has only increased with the challenges of the pandemic.

The meeting was adjourned. Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Rachel Knudson

West Freeborn Lutheran Church Council Meeting – November 10, 2020

The West Freeborn Church Council met on Nov. 10, 2020, via Zoom. . Members present were Glenn Ausen, Steve Ausen, Corky Modene, Pat Ehrich, Mike Ehrich, Sonja Honstad, Pastor Steve and Becky Ausen. President Glenn Ausen, called the meeting to order. Pastor gave a prayer.

Becky read the secretaries report. Sonja made a motion to approve the report as read. Steve seconded it. Motion passed. Pat read the treasurers report. Mike made a motion to pay the bills, Sonja seconded it. Motion passed.

Old Business:

- **Fall Bazaar:** We decided as a council to postpone it till next year.
- **East outside wall of the Church and the Altar Window:** Tuck pointing is coming along. Hopefully the window will be put in next week.
- **Building Insurance:** Glenn is going to meet with Mike Peterson at 8 AM, if anyone would like to come.

New Business:

- **Thanksgiving and Christmas Services:** Pastor will check with Judy about getting the violins together and doing special music for the recorded service.
- **COVID and church services:** It was decided we would try services for another month.
- **Next meeting:** December 01, 2020.

Corky made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Pat seconded it. Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,
Becky Ausen, Secretary

Special Text Meeting: It was presented at church on Nov. 22, 2020 as to what the congregation would like to do with the COVID cases rising in Freeborn County? **On Nov. 24, 2020**, we as a council discussed what to do. Steve made a motion that we should stop services for a while until the COVID cases go down in Freeborn County. Pat seconded it. Motion passed. Stay tuned as we will let you know when we will start having services in house. Please keep the church in your prayers.

West Freeborn Lutheran Church Council Meeting – December 01, 2020

The West Freeborn Church Council met on Dec. 01, 2020, via Zoom. Members present were Glenn Ausen, Steve Ausen, Corky Modene, Pat Ehrich, Mike Ehrich, Sonja Honstad, Pastor Steve and Becky Ausen. President Glenn Ausen, called the meeting to order. Pastor gave a prayer. Pastor talked about doing a Christmas video. If anyone would like to participate in this service, let Pastor Steve know. He is looking for Bible verse readers. Cross of Glory is going the have Christmas Eve Service, but there will be no singing. Becky read the secretaries report. Corky made a motion to approve the report as read. Sonja seconded it. Motion passed. Pat read the treasurers report. Mike made a motion to pay the bills. Corky seconded it. Motion passed.

Old Business:

- **East outside wall of the Church and the Altar Window:** Tuck pointing is coming along. Hopefully the window will be put in next week as the gentleman that is doing it, along with his son both had COVID 😞!!!
- **Building Insurance:** Glenn and Corky met with Mike at Harland Ins. They got a quote from him. The Grinnell Mutual insurance is cheaper with a lower deductible. Steve made a motion to change to this insurance company. Sonja seconded it. Motion passed.

New Business:

- **COVID update:** The Bishop has made the recommendation to close. After discussion, the council decided to remain closed for now.
- **Next meeting:** Should be annual meeting. Cross of Glory is doing their annual meeting after church and via Zoom in December. We will see how their meeting goes, before deciding how we are going to run the meeting.

We ran out of time and our ZOOM meeting got cut off. We each said our own Lord's Prayer which Steve Ausen sent to us via text message. Thanks Steve!!! 😊

Respectfully Submitted, Becky Ausen, Secretary

BONNERUP FUNERAL SERVICE REGRETS THE NEED TO CANCEL THE IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE OF THE SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE EVENTS SCHEDULED FOR DEC.5TH. WE WOULD LOVE TO SEE YOU IN PERSON, BUT THE CONCERN AND SAFETY OF OUR COMMUNITY IS BONNERUPS TOP PRIORITY. THIS YEARS' SERVICE TO HONOR YOUR DECEASED LOVED ONES WILL BE DONE BY LIVESTREAM ONLY. TO ATTEND THE HOLIDAY SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE BONNERUPFUNERALSERVICE.COM AT 7PM Saturday, DEC. 5TH OR ANY TIME AFTER THAT. THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND UNDERSTANDING AS WE ALL COPE DURING THESE UNCERTAIN TIMES AND JOIN US TO HONOR AND REMEMBER YOUR LOVED ONES FROM THE SAFETY OF YOUR HOME.



A special Thank You to Sawyer & Hunter VanMaldeghem
for assisting the Altar Guild with decorating the church for the Christmas season ☺

West Freeborn Quilting

Watch bulletins for any announcements about quilting resuming.

Statistics for Cross of Glory Lutheran Church

SUNDAY	ATTENDANCE	GENERAL FUND	IMPROVEMENTS	MISSIONS	CEMETERY
11-1-20	18	\$ 2,120.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
11-8-20	16	2,830.00	500.00	0.00	0.00
11-15-20	17	1,570.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
11-22-20	17	570.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
11-29-20	22	1,370.00	50.00	50.00	0.00
TOTALS		\$ 8,460.00	\$ 550.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 100.00

Thanks so much for continuing to support the church during these uncertain times.



Wed. Night Church School @ CG – 6:00 p.m.



Church school will meet on Dec. 2nd, 9th & 16th.

Dec. 23rd & 30th will be Christmas break.

West Freeborn Usher List – 2020

December - *Omer Emstad, Glenn Ausen, Steve Hoelscher

(West Freeborn is not holding services at this time)

Cross of Glory email address: cgwf@smig.net - Cross of Glory Website: www.crossofglory.weebly.com

West Freeborn Website: www.westfreebornlutheranchurch.weebly.com

Jerry Morstad, Cross of Glory President 507-373-0085 - Glenn Ausen, West Freeborn President – 845-2867

Church Office – 507-845-2818 – Fax # - 507-845-2732

Stacie Madson, West Freeborn Custodian 845-2525

Pastor's cell phone: 507-250-6694 - Parsonage Phone – 845-2825

Cindy Morstad, C.G. Custodian - 845-2255 (home) – 402-4577 (cell)

Alvin Morstad, C.G. Custodian – 845-2813 (home) – 402-4612 (cell)

