

# The Promise

The People of Covenant are called to:  
**Gather, Grow and Go** Serve... With God's Love!



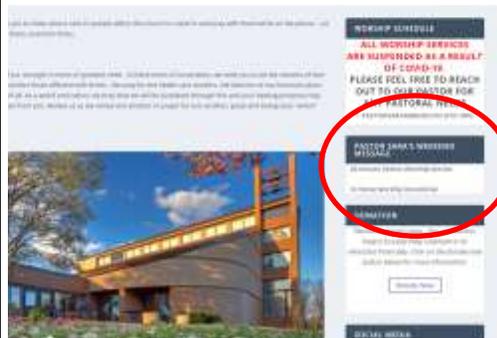
## April 2020

The Monthly Newsletter of Covenant Lutheran Church—ELCA



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Find links to Pastor Sara's weekly worship and devotional on the website!

To contact us during this time leave a voicemail at (608) 873-7494, we are checking voicemail daily. You are also welcome to email the church at [covlutheran@covluth.org](mailto:covlutheran@covluth.org)

We understand there are financial uncertainties during this crisis and pray for your welfare during this time. Here are some alternative ways you can **continue your offering**: online [here](#) or by sending your checks in the mail.

**Christ in Our Homes** daily devotional is available to pick up outside the front entrance of the church in a blue plastic container. Please limit one per family.



## Message from Pastor Sara

Get out of my business!! 😊 We have heard that said a time or two. Especially now with more togetherness in the home with spouses, children and families under one roof. Space for taking care of one's business is hard to come by these days. We all have business to tend to. The business of our own emotions and reactions to the Corona Virus. We each react to this business differently. There may be 4 people living in one home, and each person will deal with their business in their own way. Some will react by getting mad or angry. Some will get sullen and quiet. Others will get busy feeling there is more to be done. Whatever is your business, it is a perfect time to name it, claim it, and keep it your business.

Our society has been in the business of being overstretched, overstressed, over-busy for quite some time. This new routine of staying home with less to do is going to take time in getting used to. In these initial weeks it is tempting to fill the open spaces with more. It is an inclination of a faithful heart to feel like we should be doing more. I would encourage us to pray about what is the "more" we are seeking? And how can we assess the need to meet it by doing more.

We are still in the season of Lent. The wilderness experience is reality this year. Seek ye first the kingdom of God- Jesus tells us. What does that mean? It means taking care of your business, so that you get out of other's business. It means being patient and kind to one another. It means staying home when you are supposed to and not putting yourself and others at risk. It means finding contentment and peace when the inclination is to be busy and fill a void when that has been your habit.

This time is a gift to breathe and to reassess life and relationships. We are given an opportunity to find our own pathway toward God. Pray in your homes together. It does not matter what words, just say words that are on your heart. It will get easier the more you do it. Sing hymns that come to mind. These are angels' whispers. Read scriptures and sit. And contemplate. Just pop the Bible open and read a couple sentences. This is the more we can do. Pray, sing and read the scriptures. A solitude journey in the wilderness can be a transforming moment. We will be together again soon. Again, in a culture of fast, instant gratification, soon will not be soon enough. But this too is a gift as every experience we are going through has something to teach us. We can only learn this if we tend to our business of prayer, melody and scripture as the tools to get us through. The hope of Christ is within us. As Christ reaches our pain, we can feel the love of God deep within. Live in hope.

God be with you until we meet again,

*Pastor Sara*

## Council President's Message

Hello Fellow Covenantians!

Wherever you are as you are reading this month's Promise, God is with you.

I think that this is the most curious season of Lent I have ever lived through. I think that about the things we have all now "given up" for Lent, and it seems like we could continue to focus on what we can't do. Remember back on Ash Wednesday? We were encouraged by scripture and Pastor Sara to pray, fast, and give alms in secret? Little did we know that those words would become opportunities and directives in just a few weeks' time!

Pray for everyone you can think of – family members, neighbors, those who are sick and those who step into harm's way to take care of the sick, our national, state, and local leaders – those in other countries, scientists throughout the world who are working day and night to find a cure and a vaccine for COVID-19.

Fast from racism and rhetoric, false sources of hope as well as false sources of information that cause more anxiety. Deny yourself hopelessness. Feast on gratitude for every moment, in that moment. Give Alms – yep, I am going to talk about money. We have done all we can do to adjust staffing to decrease costs at Covenant. We need you to continue to support the church, regularly and as you are able, through online or mailed donations and offerings. We are using those gifts wisely.

Finally, I am looking forward to seeing everyone again as soon as we safely can.

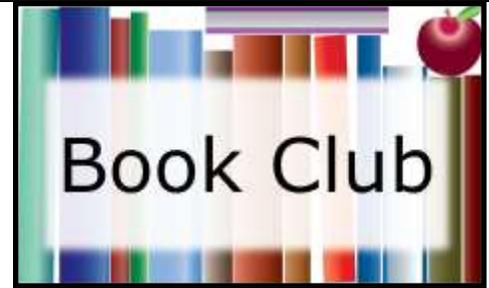
God is good (all the time)...

*Council President—Beth Dibbert*



### Covenant's Book Club

For April, Covenant's Book Club has chosen the book, *The Nickel Boys*, by Colson Whitehead. However, we may not be able to meet in person for the discussion due to the Coronavirus. Please contact Linda Muller ([lmsm@charter.net](mailto:lmsm@charter.net) or 608-576-6374) for information as to when and if we will meet in April.



Summary of *The Nickel Boys*: Whitehead dramatizes a strand of American history through the story of two boys sentenced to a hellish reform school in Jim-Crow-era Florida. The book is historical fiction based on the real story of a reform school in Florida that operated for one hundred and eleven years and warped the lives of many children.

The main character, Elwood, is kept on the straight and narrow by his grandmother. He is about to enroll in a local black college when an innocent mistake lands him in a juvenile reformatory called the Nickel Academy. Its mission statement says it provides “moral training”, but, is a chamber of horrors and any boy who resists is likely to disappear ‘out back.’ Elwood tries to hold onto Dr. King’s assertion “Throw us in jail and we will still love you.” His friend, Turner, thinks Elwood is worse than naïve. The tension between Elwood’s ideals and Turner’s skepticism leads to a decision whose repercussions will echo down through the decades.

The club’s book selection for May is *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens.

The book club meets the second Thursday of the month from September to May at 1:00. Meetings are sometimes held at church, at other times at a member’s home. For more information, contact Linda Muller at [lmsm@charter.net](mailto:lmsm@charter.net) or 608-576-6374. All are welcome.

## **Covenant News**

[www.covluth.org](http://www.covluth.org)

Worship online: The website will have a weekly video to hear a 20-minute service from Covenant. If you would like a printed copy of Pastor Sara's sermons or In Home Worship Devotions please call the church office and they will be sent to you.

In Home Worship: The website will have a weekly In-Home worship devotional to practice a service in your home.

Sunday School: Weekly activities and an abbreviated at home instruction time is sent to families.

Confirmation: Weekly online devotions are being sent to students. 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Confirmants are working on their Faith Statements at this time along with viewing the online worship service for sermon notes.

Keeping Connections: Pastor Sara is calling on the membership. Care Team is calling the Covenant membership that is age 80 and above. A few worship team members are calling various other Covenant members.

What can we do: Reach out and call one another, stay abreast of the Covenant communications, look at the website and Facebook publications.

### **In Home Resources**

#### **Hymns in Homes**

<https://hymnary.org/>

<https://www.hymnlyrics.org/>

[www.Youtube.com](http://www.Youtube.com) (then type in your favorite hymn and listen)

#### **Scripture in Homes**

[www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com)

<https://www.luthersem.edu/godpause/lenten-devotional/> (Luther Seminary Lenten Devotional -Godpause)

<https://www.elca.org/Faith/DailyBible> (ELCA- Daily Bible Reading)

#### **Prayer in Homes**

[www.plough.com](http://www.plough.com)

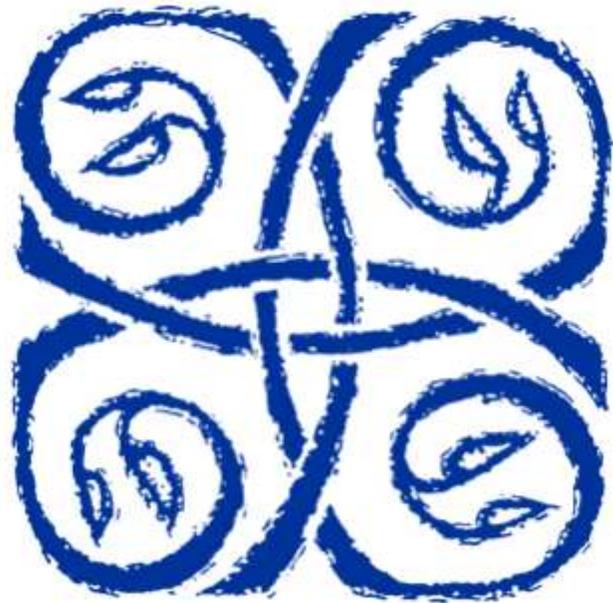
<https://www.plough.com/en/subscriptions/daily-prayer>

# In Loving Memory

## IN MEMORY OF

Leona Ehle

Lyall & Elaine Eng  
Family and Friends



## Covenant Lutheran Endowment Foundation, Inc.

Scholarship applications for the 2020-2021 school year are due April 1, 2020. The preferred method of applying is online at [http://](http://tinyurl.com/Foundation-Scholarship)



[tinyurl.com/Foundation-](http://tinyurl.com/Foundation-Scholarship)

[Scholarship](http://tinyurl.com/Foundation-Scholarship) Applications are also available on the Welcome Center

You may also contact Beth Hilgendorf, 608-279-1656, or email:

[Bookkeeper.CovenantFoundation@gmail.com](mailto:Bookkeeper.CovenantFoundation@gmail.com)

## MONEY MATTERS...REPORTING ON COVENANT'S FINANCES

The steady support of members and friends of Covenant has put us in a good financial position at the end of February. The table below summarizes February and YTD finances:

| ITEM                           | FEBRUARY<br>2020 | FEBRUARY<br>2019  | Year-to-date<br>(YTD) Actual | YTD<br>Budget    | YTD 201            |
|--------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Contributed income             | 21,697.25        | 23,712.26         | 44,647.25                    | 43,329.70        | 42,992.51          |
| Other income                   | 1,218.57         | 652.82            | 6,494.87                     | 9,993.30         | 1,252.90           |
| <b>TOTAL INCOME</b>            | <b>22,915.82</b> | <b>24,365.08</b>  | <b>51,142.12</b>             | <b>53,322.50</b> | <b>44,245.41</b>   |
| <i>Partnerships</i>            | <i>2,166.84</i>  | <i>2,642.33</i>   | <i>4,461.84</i>              | <i>4,516.21</i>  | <i>4,559.26</i>    |
| <i>Salaries &amp; Benefits</i> | <i>16,255.13</i> | <i>12,676.14</i>  | <i>40,546.50</i>             | <i>36,357.30</i> | <i>27,480.85</i>   |
| <i>Program Ministry</i>        | <i>2,369.69</i>  | <i>2,172.31</i>   | <i>3,219.55</i>              | <i>2,066.60</i>  | <i>2,855.22</i>    |
| <i>Education</i>               | <i>0</i>         | <i>0</i>          | <i>43.74</i>                 | <i>41.70</i>     | <i>0</i>           |
| <i>Stewardship</i>             | <i>0</i>         | <i>487.34</i>     | <i>42.75</i>                 | <i>166.70</i>    | <i>487.34</i>      |
| <i>Social Ministry</i>         | <i>30.13</i>     | <i>0</i>          | <i>30.13</i>                 | <i>0</i>         | <i>0</i>           |
| <i>Worship and Music</i>       | <i>1,430.10</i>  | <i>293.94</i>     | <i>1757.81</i>               | <i>1,012.50</i>  | <i>872.07</i>      |
| <i>Building Operations</i>     | <i>1,045.71</i>  | <i>11,970.30</i>  | <i>7,419.26</i>              | <i>9,083.30</i>  | <i>22,225.52</i>   |
| <b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>          | <b>23,297.60</b> | <b>30,242.36</b>  | <b>57,521.58</b>             | <b>53,244.31</b> | <b>58,480.26</b>   |
| <b>Surplus/(Deficit)</b>       | <b>(381.78)</b>  | <b>(5,877.28)</b> | <b>(6,379.46)</b>            | <b>78.19</b>     | <b>(14,234.85)</b> |

As I prepare this report March brings a very different reality to each of us. All of us face the need to care for ourselves and others by following guidelines to help minimize the impact of the coronavirus. Some of us now work from home. Some continue to work full time or even overtime in essential jobs to provide health care and food. Some of us now work fewer hours. Some have lost our jobs. We all have questions about long-term changes that we may face.

Changes have come to Covenant as well in March. We gathered to worship only March 1/2 and March 7/8. In worship we offer thanks to God in response to all that we receive from God's generous love and care for us. With thanks we offer monetary gifts that make possible the ministry we do as a congregation. That support remains important. Often offerings reflect the number of us who gather to worship; the more who worship, the greater the offering—the fewer who worship, the smaller the offering. Now even if we cannot gather physically to worship, we can gather virtually as Pastor Sara posts weekly worship online. We can offer our thank-filled support in one of several ways:

Mail your offering directly to Covenant at 1525 N Van Buren St., Stoughton, WI 53589. This costs you only the price of a stamp in addition to your offering.

Go to Covenant's website, <http://covluth.org/>, scroll down and click "Donate Now" on the right side of the page to make a secure online donation. That service costs Covenant a small fee of just over 1% of your donation.

If your bank or credit union offers online banking, you can use Bill Pay or something similar to send your offering to Covenant. In many cases there is no cost for this service to you or to Covenant.

I encourage you, if you are able, to continue or increase your offerings to Covenant in this time of uncertainty. Covenant's own ministries and those of our partnerships depend on us all doing what we can. THANK YOU to all who make ministry happen through Covenant!

Submitted by George Carlson, Treasurer

## Health Topics

### **SOUL FOOD: tips for well-being**

Focus on God's Word of assurance, Romans 8:31-39, especially these words, "...in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death...nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ, Jesus our Lord."

In these days when gloom can over-take us and threaten to plunge us into discouragement and anxiety, I'm blessed and uplifted by a daily PAUSE. If you're looking for a new way to do that, you might consider the following tips for your personal wellness. Maybe you'll consider making it part of your regular diet.

- 1) Light a candle. You may wish to play some music that speaks to your heart and is calming.
- 2) Take some deep breaths...INHALE...HOLD THE BREATH...EXHALE, being mindful of your body, the breath of LIFE, the gift of today, God's presence.
- 3) On your mobile device or computer, find the daily devotional, GOD PAUSE, from ELCA Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN, through their website: [www.luthersem.edu](http://www.luthersem.edu). Read the Scripture text, the devotional (written by alumni of this seminary), and brief prayer.
- 4) Be still. Listen to God's Spirit. Add your own concerns for family and friends. Pray for the Covenant family, for Pastor Sara, for the congregational council, for our community. Use the Covenant directory and begin daily praying for specific members, starting at the beginning of the alphabet, a few at a time. I have found it powerful in my own life to know that others are praying for me.
- 5) OPTIONAL: as you come to names of people you know in the Covenant family, you may wish to send them a hand-written note, or text, or email. You may wish to phone them, just to let them know you've thought about and prayed for them at that given moment.

Beginning in February, the Sunday morning prayer team began praying for about 20 – 24 family units during the month. Now, even though separated physically from each other, we are praying for our Covenant siblings in Christ. If you wish to have someone pray for you and your specific concerns, you are welcome to share those with Pastor Sara (608-873-7494); or with PRAYER TEAM MINISTRY captains:

Karen Hanson (608-469-7644) or Solveig Carlson (608-576-1747)

## Health Topics

### April 2020 topic: Food & Personal Essentials Pantries



The Stoughton community is blessed with three pantries: Personal Essentials Pantry-Stoughton and food pantries with Stoughton United Methodist Church & the City of Stoughton.

For information about hours, who can be served, lists of desired items, etc., see:

[www.pepstoughton.org](http://www.pepstoughton.org)

[www.stoughtonumc10.org](http://www.stoughtonumc10.org)

[www.ci.stoughton.wi.us/foodpantry](http://www.ci.stoughton.wi.us/foodpantry)

\*\*\*\*\*NEVER donate dented or outdated products\*\*\*\*\*

When donating food, please consider healthful items that are whole grain, low/no sodium, fruits in 100% juice, etc. For lists of preferred items for people with chronic kidney conditions or diabetes, visit [www.healthyshelves.org](http://www.healthyshelves.org) and click on the dropdown button at the top of the screen “healthy shelves rx”.

We can all help contribute to and improve the health of our community through our personal essentials and food pantry donations!

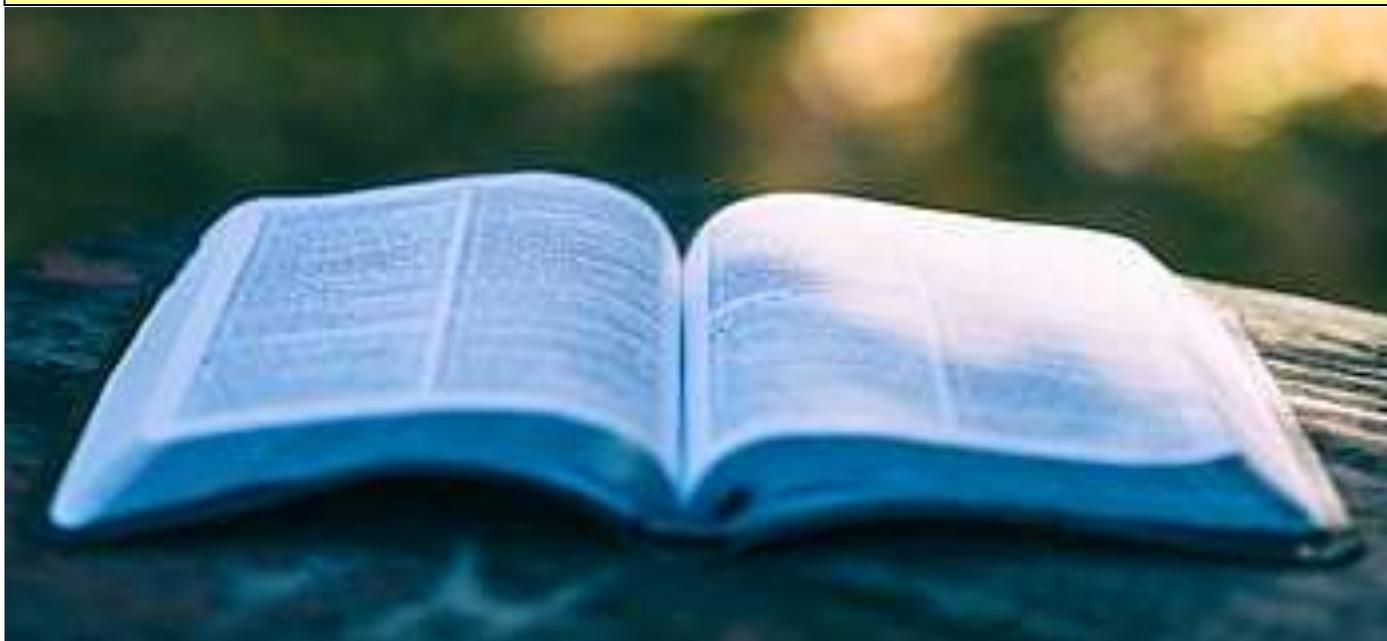
In faith and health,

Denise Pigarelli

### How to be Positive in a Coronavirus World

- Take time to appreciate your home: write a daily list of three or more things in and around your home for which you are grateful.
- Take time out to properly enjoy your coffee breaks; now is an excellent opportunity to have proper conversations with others over the telephone, steer the conversation away from Coronavirus or agree at the start that it's a banned topic.
- Listening deeply to others about their lives to connect with them via telephone; your family or friends over social media; try listening for ten minutes or more without interrupting – what have you're learned about them and yourself?
- Approaching your neighbor, perhaps over the phone or at a safe distance, to enquire about how they are getting on and what help they might appreciate, then listen and act.
- Listening deeply means seeking to understand the emotions and feelings which the person is expressing. If this is not something you normally do (because you are too busy thinking about your response to what they are saying or your own emotional reaction), then you have a golden opportunity to increase your sense of joy as your relationships grow.
- Explore your purpose, write it down, refine it, and, when you are ready, share it with others – this gives a powerful driver to your goals. “Mine is simply to enable the people around me to flourish – it's high-minded and non-specific because that suits me, but it might not suit you,” says one person.
- Handwriting (not email, text, or other social media) a letter expressing your thanks to someone from your past who helped you when you needed it – imagine how they will feel reading it.
- Telling those dear to you that you love them. – come on; you can do it more than you currently do, and now is a perfect opportunity.

## Health Topics



Is 9-1-1 the only emergency number you need?  
Check out the following **IMPORTANT NUMBERS TO CALL** for emergency or everyday reference:

- When you want God's assurance, call Romans 8:31-39
- When you are lonely or fearful, call Psalm 23
- When God seems far away, call Psalm 139:1-18
- When you worry, call Matthew 6:25-34
- When in sorrow, call John 14
- When you leave home for labor or travel, call Psalm 121
- When you need cleansing and pardon, call Psalm 51
- When people fail you, call Psalm 27
- When your faith needs reviving, call Hebrews 11
- When you want to be fruitful, call John 15
- When you are in danger, call Psalm 91
- When you grow bitter and critical, call I Corinthians 13
- When your prayers grow narrow or selfish, call Psalm 67
- When you need to re-focus, call Philippians 4:4-9

**GOD'S HELP-LINE 24/7:** "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me." Philippians 4:13

Call a listening friend, one who promises to carry the Christ-light for your journey!

## Blood Drive

*Spring into life.*

Give blood.



## **Blood Drive** **Covenant Lutheran**

1525 Van Buren St

**Monday, April 27, 2020**  
**1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.**

Questions?

Contact: Stephen Peterson

Phone: 608-480-0525

stevep72@yahoo.com

For an appointment call 1-800-RED CROSS  
(1-800-733-2767) or visit [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org)

Sponsor Code: Covenant

You can save up to 15 minutes when you donate blood by using RapidPass! Visit [redcrossblood.org/RapidPass](http://redcrossblood.org/RapidPass) for more information.

**Special offer from our supporter, Amazon: To thank you for coming to give blood April 1-30, we will send you a \$5 Amazon.com Gift Card\* via email. \*Restrictions apply, see [amazon.com/gc-legal](http://amazon.com/gc-legal). Terms and conditions apply; visit [rcblood.org/together](http://rcblood.org/together)**



Scan to schedule an appointment.



**Special Amazon Offer:** When you come to give April 1-30, 2020, you will receive a \$5 Amazon.com Gift Card\* via email.\*\* **Spring into action, schedule today!** Download the Blood Donor App | 1-800-RED CROSS

©2020 The American National Red Cross | 288601-01-RW | \*Restrictions apply, see [amazon.com/gc-legal](http://amazon.com/gc-legal). \*\*Terms and conditions apply; visit [rcblood.org/together](http://rcblood.org/together).

## Blood Drive

**Covenant:** We need your help! As you can imagine we are getting new updated information multiple times a day hosting blood drives right now. We will continue to communicate when we receive new information. The upcoming blood drive is more important now than ever. Here is the most current information regarding hosting a blood drive:

The April 27th blood drive is still on! The Red Cross will likely be overstaffed since they have had so many blood drive cancelations from schools and businesses. This number doesn't include blood drives that have been cancelled today. It's going to be in the thousands. It's scary if you need blood!

- Over the last few days, the Red Cross has seen blood drive cancellations grow at a concerning rate. To date, about **600** Red Cross blood drives have been cancelled across the country due to corona virus concerns, resulting in approximately **18,000** fewer blood donations. Increasingly troubling is that the Red Cross expects this number to continue to grow with the number of COVID-19 cases on the rise, making it difficult to sustain the blood supply for patients in need. That's why the Red Cross strongly urges blood drive hosts to keep hosting blood drives and for healthy, eligible individuals to schedule a blood or platelet donation appointment at [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org) to help maintain a sufficient blood supply and avoid any potential shortages.

### **Here are some points to share about blood drives at the moment:**

- Two federal agencies are urging people in the United States to continue donating blood during the coronavirus pandemic.
- The US Department of Health and Human Services, the US Food and Drug Administration and US blood banks are urging blood donations and trying to calm fears. They said in a statement that coronavirus **does not pose any known risks to blood donors during the donation process.**
- The FDA and HHS said the cancellation of blood drives means they are unable to keep the blood supply adequately replenished.
- “We need people to prevent the blood supply from getting depleted. We need it not to get to the point that surgeries are having to get canceled,” Marks said. “That’s something we absolutely do not want to have happen. To ensure an adequate blood supply we need people to come out and donate blood.”
- The FDA said there “have been no reported or suspected cases of transfusion-transmitted coronavirus and the virus poses no known risk to patients receiving blood transfusions.”
- “It is safe to donate blood,” said Admiral Dr. Brett P. Giroir, assistant secretary for HHS. “Part of preparedness includes a robust blood supply. Healthy individuals should schedule an appointment to donate today to ensure that blood is available for those patients who need it.”
- Kate Fry, chief executive of America’s Blood Centers, which collects close to 60% of the nation’s blood supply, urged people to donate before things get worse.
- “Blood donors are needed now more than ever. We cannot wait for the situation to intensify further before taking action,” Fry said. The blood supply cannot be taken for granted and the coronavirus only heightens the need for a ready blood supply.”volunteers or staff members are taking the donor's temperature. The temperature will not be recorded in EBDR and is not part of the regulated process therefore any staff member or volunteer can perform this task. If the temperature is greater than 99.5 °F or the donor refuses to take their temperature they are not permitted to enter the blood drive
- Enhance disinfecting by placing hand sanitizer at Check-In, HH, and Canteen area. Ask donors to use hand sanitizer prior to touching the tablets or laptops.
- All presenting donors must read the 2019 Coronavirus Stop Sign prior to obtaining the pre-screening temperature. This will allow the donor to self-defer prior to taking their temperature.
- Both volunteers and staff should use gloves throughout the donation process and change them in between every donor.

**A virtual community...  
together in spirit**



**ACTS**

At Covenant Together in Service

In these unusual days of “social distancing”, we are called to be mindful of each other, to find ways to connect with our neighbors, our church friends, those who live alone. So, it is with project-work that usually brings us together. Though we cannot come together to roll bandages, or make fleece blankets, we can do some of these things at home with resources that may be in our “stash” of materials or craft materials.

I am encouraging you to check the website for Global Health Ministries ([ghm.org](http://ghm.org)) with whom Covenant has been in partnership for 20 years or more. You can also Google: Global Health Ministries Hands-on Projects and find brochures for all of their hands-on projects, including the Newborn Kit. If you have any of these items, gently used, at home or if/when you shop, you can pick them up, you could set them aside for a time when we will collect and assemble them to bring them to a Synod assembly OR to send them to the GHM warehouse.

A special note about the Ivory soap: be sure to get the larger BATH-size bar (4-oz.) which can be found in 10-bar packs. If you are a seamstress or crafter, you may wish to check out the directions from GHM for making a diaper from a man’s white undershirt, or for the pin-less diaper.

Consideration is being given to making available fleece material and the directions for making Project Linus blankets at home. Watch for more details in announcements from Covenant on possible PICK-UP items, dates/times for at-home projects.

**KNOW THIS: “We always give thanks to God for you, remembering your work of faith and labor of love, steadfastness of hope in Jesus...” [I Thessalonians 1:2] AND...”Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, just as it is well with your soul” [III John 1:2]**



**The Reconciling in Christ Task Force held its first information session on Sunday March 8.**

Our congregation is in the process of discerning whether we are going to become a Reconciled in Christ Congregation (RIC). An RIC congregation is one that identifies itself as being welcome to members of the LGBTQ (people who are Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Transgendered, Questioning) Community. As part of this effort the RIC task force is holding several informational sessions to explain the process and obtain feedback from our congregational members. Our first gather was held March 8th. About 20 people in attended, including three young adults! There was some great discussion about the RIC process and what it would mean for our congregation. We watched a video entitled "Our congregation is already welcoming, why do we need to say so?" You can watch the video here:

<https://www.reconcilingworks.org/resources/ric/whysayso/>

We also discussed how we need to gracefully engage with others and that this process is a journey.

More information sessions will be scheduled at a later date. !



### Madison Area Jail Ministry

In the annual budget you will note that Covenant provides some financial support to the Madison Area Jail Ministry (MAJM). The following is an outline of MAJM's mission-- 1) to provide spiritual care to men and women of all faith traditions and beliefs that are incarcerated in the Dane County Jail, 2) to provide opportunities for various types of worship, 3) to serve as a resource to jail staff, and 4) to provide information and services to assist incarcerated people with a successful return to their communities. Each church supporting MAJM is to have a liaison; however, Covenant has been without a liaison for approximately a year and a half—until now. Kathy Andrusz, a member of the Social Action Team, has agreed to take over this role. As a liaison her responsibilities include prayer for MAJM, attending several training and brain-storming meetings each year, and to keep the congregation aware of the work of MAJM. Thank you, Kathy, for taking on this important role for Covenant.

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### Happy Outcome!

Covenant's Social Action Team was contacted by Kayla McDermot, SASD Social Worker, with a request to help a family who was moving into a new house and needed a couple of beds and a number of household items. We were able to get the needed items from the Lutheran Social Services Refugee Resettlement Program who ended the program in January 2019 but still have an inventory of items in storage. The items were delivered to the family and it was a win-win for everyone involved! "It's been truly amazing collaborating with you to get families in our community what they need. *I'm very grateful for all you've done, and I know this family is grateful as well!*" says Kayla McDermot, SASD Social Worker.

### Kegonsa Meal Update

Our response to the need of the ten Stoughton school district families changed, along with everything else in our lives in the last few weeks. After communicating with the Kegonsa Social Worker, we learned that instead of assembling meals for spring break it would be more helpful if we used our funds to purchase gift cards (to Pick N Save, Aldi, and Walmart). We then gave the school social work staff an envelope of cards for each family. (\$20 each to each store for each family = \$60, with twice that going for the one large family). A community volunteer agreed to be the point person for those families who lack transportation to shop. Thank you, Covenant, for all your help in supporting these families in need. The fruit donations from the congregation were put to good use. Pastor Sara delivered the fruit to the United Methodist Food Pantry. They were very thankful and the fruit will be enjoyed by their clients.

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### Thanks!

The Dean of Students at Fox Prairie Elementary reached out to Covenant asking for help in providing some needed items for students, specifically healthy snacks and clothing, such as sweatpants, sweatshirts, and T-shirts. A request was put out to the congregation and on March 6 the following were delivered to the school—14 T-shirts, 9 sweatshirts, 6 sweatpants, 2 winter hats, 1 pair of slippers, 1 pair of underwear, 1 pair of snow pants along with four bags of healthy snacks. Thank you Covenant for coming through again to help your community.



## Wider Church updates



### UPDATE FROM THE SYNOD COUNCIL:

- Synod Assembly
- Bishop Election Process
- Other Synod Events in 2020

Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic and associated social distancing orders, these are the decisions that the Council made on Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, regarding the 2020

Assembly, the Bishop Election Process and other Synod events in 2020.

- The council cancelled the May 1-2 Synod Assembly. Arrangements will be made to refund registration fees that have been paid. At this time, Synod Assembly registration is closed. At such time that the new date is scheduled, a new fee will be applied to those registrations which can be paid when registration re-opens. Those who have registered as voting members will be considered the voting members at such time as an assembly is held.
- The Bishop Call Committee expects to be able to continue its work on its current timetable, which leads to a May 1 posting of 4-6 nominees for the synod's consideration. Subsequent forums may be held virtually instead of in-person.
- We will look at rearranging the June 20<sup>th</sup> Assembly to include essential business from the May Assembly. This includes things like election of council members, task forces and committees; and passage of the 2021 – 22 Budget, although, the ability to hold a one-day assembly on June 20 is questionable. The Council anticipates holding a one-day assembly as soon as it becomes possible for a large group to gather; we will work on combining the election of a bishop with the several other business items necessary to pass at an assembly.
- We expect that any events going forward for the remainder of 2020 will be one-day events, possibly including in addition to a one-day assembly, a one-day Bishop's Convocation and a rescheduled LEAD event. Multi-day events do not seem prudent given the expectation that both congregational and synodical budgets will experience strain in the coming months.

The Bishop Call Committee, the Council and the Synod Staff have discussed how to keep the Call process moving forward on schedule. The assessment of those involved feel that with the use of telephones, electronic meetings, interviews and forums; the process will be able to stay on schedule.

From March 10 to April 24<sup>th</sup>, the Bishop Call Committee receives and researches the names coming from the Conference Nomination Caucuses. It will receive information, conduct interviews, and do background and reference checks. It is charged with bringing forward 4-6 nominees for consideration by the synod for election of a bishop.

May 1- Announcement of 4-6 Nominees

May 2- June 30 – 4 Forums are held involving nominees. All voting members are encouraged to attend at least one of these. Alternative formats are being discussed.

Between May 2 and June 20, **four Nominee forums** will be held. The Bishop Election Task Force will determine the format for these forums.

Everything related to the Bishop Election process can be found on the synod website. Click below for information about the process, nominating forms, Initial Consideration of Call, Bishop Candidacy Profile, Bishop Call Committee Members & Photo. <https://scsw-elca.org/2020bishopelection/>

## ***The Promise—April 2020***

The monthly newsletter of Covenant Lutheran Church—ELCA

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*The next issue of "The Promise." will be published in May 2020. The deadline for submitting items for the **May** newsletter is **Friday, April 24.***

*Please submit to submission form [here](#) or to [covlutheran@covluth.org](mailto:covlutheran@covluth.org).  
**Thank you!***

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