



July 10, 2020

No One Belongs Here More

On Monday it was raining so hard that when I walked from my car to the place I was going I couldn't help but think of the baptism liturgy. I feel fortunate that we typically have so many baptisms at Saint Andrew that I have most of it memorized. The part that I keep circling back to this week is *"You belong to Christ, in whom you have been baptized."*

Sometimes the word *belong* seems like an odd choice to me. I am not a possession and don't *belong* to anyone. And yet, I feel thankful when I can find places in this world where I feel like I *belong*. (Side note: Just as I wrote that last sentence the song, *"Love lift us up where we belong"* popped into my head and won't leave!)

But then there's that sense of *belonging* as through you know you are at home in a relationship or a connection with the one to whom you *belong*. What cultivates that sense of belonging – especially as we together experience a crisis of feeling disconnected? Social scholar and story teller Brene Brown in her book, *"Braving the Wilderness"* discovered four practices shared by people who have a sense of true belonging – even as we work to come together in this time of isolation.

Make contact with people you disagree with. So long as it is not unhealthy for you, stay with the conversation and see if you can go deeper. When we simply “agree to disagree” we miss the opportunity to belong to the diversity our community is capable of holding. Diverse opinions and perspectives give us the gift of helping us to know ourselves better. “Tell me more...” is a great way to keep the conversation going. Or as Brene puts it, “People are hard to hate close up.”

Share collective joy and pain . Especially in these times this one is important. What church did for many was provide a collective experience where corporately we together heard weekly that we were forgiven. We were fed by bread together. Our singing lined up our physiology so that we could feel our breath and heartbeat in sync with the people next to us helping us to feel like we were a part of something bigger than ourselves. Research shows that when we feel more similar to others, we also feel more concern for them – and then listen better and stick it out longer. This helps us feel as though we belong.

Speak up (nicely) when you disagree. In order to be known, it’s important to be seen and heard authentically. Glossing over, avoiding, speaking over, not speaking... these things all hinder authentic belonging. By speaking up with kindness – we allow ourselves to be known regardless of how different our opinions may be.

Embrace the paradox. One can have principles and boundaries while at the same time showing compassion and vulnerability. Ultimately black and white thinking can further divide community. Finding our place in the spectrum of grey enriches the tones. Grey is, after all – a little bit of black and white together. Brene writes...

“ Stop walking through the world looking for confirmation that you don’t belong. You will always find it because you’ve made that your mission. Stop scouring people’s faces for evidence that you’re not enough. You will always find it because you’ve made that your goal. True belonging and self-worth are not goods; we don’t negotiate their value with the world. The truth about who we are lives in our hearts. Our call to courage is to protect our wild heart against constant evaluation, especially our own.”

Here is the truth, you belong to Christ. *No one belongs here more than you.* And because we belong to Christ we belong to one another. Take a look at some of the updates below on faith formation that help to cultivate belonging – and therefore, foster belief.

Source and reference:

https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_to_cultivate_belonging_in_a_divided_culture

Pr. Jenn

Vacation Bible School (VBS)

Faith Formation is creating a 4-week, at-home VBS experience for families. Starting July 19 we will post a short video each week for your children to watch that includes a bible story, a song, and a challenge for the week. We will also provide a list of fun activities that can be done at home.

This program was created with flexibility in mind. Families can engage in videos and activities whenever it is convenient!

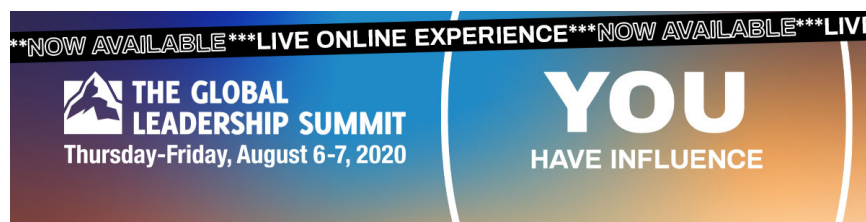
Videos and resources will be posted Sunday mornings to our Facebook page and under the **Learning** tab on the SALC website. of our plan looks like. You can look for that letter in your mail box soon or read it now [here](#).

Sunday School

Faith Formation Ministry met this week to discuss and re-imagine our in-person Sunday school format. With so many variables to consider, it was decided to not offer our traditional Sunday school classes this fall, with a plan to reassess in December. As an alternative, Faith Formation Ministry is developing a plan for small-group, family-based Sunday school programming. Families and members interested in participating will create small groups of around 10 people (kids and adults) to meet weekly and engage in a 12-week program for all ages. Curriculum and additional resources will be provided by SALC.

More details regarding registration, creating groups, and meeting options will be announced later this month.

Global Leadership Summit 2020 - August 6 & 7



Saint Andrew Lutheran Church is excited to host The Global Leadership Summit 2020 Online.

The GLS is an opportunity to access a wealth of leadership insight from a world-class faculty ready to equip and inspire you—no matter where you have influence. Now, more than ever, Saint Andrew is looking to equip its members with skills to lead our

church and our community. Leadership takes perseverance, dedication, and a commitment to stretch your mind, expand your heart and use your God-given gifts to impact your world in real and powerful ways.

On **August 6 and 7** , you're invited to join with thousands of leaders across North America for The Global Leadership Summit. This year the GLS is being presented online. Your registration will give you access to the 2-day livestream event and video recording for 7 days, giving you flexible options to watch. GLS will also be offering two replay events in October and November.

As a host site, SALC members can use the Priority Code: **LEAD2020** for a discounted price of \$99 until July 21 (reg. price \$169)

To register, [click here](#).

To view the 2020 faculty, [click here](#) .

Join the Stream Team

Do you enjoy videography or video production or would like to learn more about it? Consider joining the group of Saint Andrew members, the Stream Team, who support the video streaming of worship services. Six teams will be created for a rotating schedule about every six weeks. Interested? Send an email with your contact information to info@salc-wausau.org and someone will contact you with more information.

Fair Trade Products Are Back!



Fair Trade products are back! You can now order your favorites using our online order forms. After they are filled you can arrange to pick up your order at church. We have two forms for your use:

- + [Order form for Coffee, Tea, and Chocolate](#)
- + [Order form for Home Products and Clothing Items](#)

Your purchase of fair trade products help directly support the individual artisans and independent farmers from around the world!

From the Archives

July 1983 - “What is the Size of Our Church?” – by Pr. John Roseth

The size of Saint Andrew is not always determined by numbers...

Large numbers do not necessarily make a large church. Little numbers don't necessarily make a small church.

Any church is small if it loses its vision for evangelism. The challenge Christ gave us includes taking the Gospel to our own community, as well as other parts of the world. It's a “big” church—regardless of its numbers—that seeks to reach the lost.

Any church is small whose members think of minimums in church attendance, prayer, service, or giving. If the attitude is “How little can I do and still get by?” the church is little. It's a “big” church—regardless of its numbers—that thinks in terms of giving its best.

Any church is small if it doesn't challenge its young people with fulltime Christian service. It's a small church whose mothers and fathers have to apologize if their children consider the ministry. It's a “big” church—regardless of its numbers—that sends its best into the service of the King.

Any church is small where giving is measured in minimums, not maximums. The church budget is not what a church is costing; it is what a church is doing! Small churches give grudgingly. It's a “big” church—regardless of numbers—that gives of its means with great joy.

Our church, regardless of size, can become small by thinking small.

Christ in Our Home Devotional

Christ in Our Home quarterly devotional resource encourages readers to live out their faith daily. Each reflective reading is accompanied by a daily scripture reference and prayer for the day that follows the Revised Common Lectionary. Augsburg Fortress Publishing has extended the complementary email subscription for the third quarter (July-August-September). [Click here to sign up.](#) ***Copies are also available at church in a plastic bin outside the north (Chapel) entrance. Please feel free to stop by and pick up a copy.***

