



August 28, 2020

"When Can We Do That Again?"

This was the question I came back to after some restoring time away and I was thrilled it was being asked. To see Pastor Justin lift up the bread and the cup and to catch glimpses of people's faces through the live-stream gathered together at State Park Speedway made my heart flutter with joy and my eyes well with tears – even as the finish line painted on the pavement behind him made me acutely aware that we are far from the finish of this particular season of our lives together.



To be the body of Christ broken for the world depends on being nurtured with the body of Christ. We have been fasting from the Eucharist, and many are hungry.

I'm happy to share that our next in person worship will be **September 13, 2020** – Rally Day. This will be weather dependent – since technology is required to make video and sound happen. This time we will try for an outdoor worship service in the church parking lot so that we can compare how things go now that we have some logistics down for the speedway.

When we do gather for in person communion at outside service, Saint Andrew will begin to offer communion to those who are watching the live stream as well. This is something we will try out together on **September 13, 20, and 27**. The elements can be received in advance and you can pick them up at church or during “drive through” hours, which are still being planned.

To make all of this happen we need some volunteers – communion stewards, who are willing to bring communion to those who may not be comfortable coming out, and to help us with pick up hours. We will need a crew of people willing to usher again at this outdoor service. Most importantly, we are in dire need of people willing to sit on the worship ministry to help take care of the planning.

Especially as we begin to think of possibilities for advent and Christmas – there is a real need for creatives who can help us brainstorm innovative ways to connect people to church. We will also need logistical brains who can help us to organize people and resources. And of course, we need “do-ers” – the hands on people who can help to make things happen. If you are interested in volunteering in any of these capacities, please call the church office.

This past weekend my mom informed me that the Bishop of the Methodist church in Wisconsin is strongly urging no churches meet for in person services until 2021. Their church has chosen to not meet until Easter of 2021. For us – there is no “end date” but rather, a set of criteria and a phased approach, which you can watch and listen to [here](#). The Wisconsin Council of Churches has urged a thoughtful and slow approach as the school year unfolds. Their recent wisdom included the invitation to begin rethinking Advent and Christmas.

There's a part of me that wonders – why did we wait so long to resume communion? And then there's the reality that so many decisions – BIG decisions – have come down the pike so quickly, one after another, after another – that waiting to consider the implications of offering virtual communion felt faithful, too. What changed my thinking was an article sent by a Saint Andrew member titled, “On Hoarding Eucharist in a Hungry World” written by teaching theologian and author, Diana Butler Bass. You can find that article [here](#).

Bass writes, “I've worried that in withholding communion, the church has been, in effect, hoarding the bread and wine, restraining the healing beauty of Eucharist when hungry people most need to feast. A forced fast is no fast – it is in expression of institutional power over and against God's people in a time of emergency.”

As some watch the DNC and RNC unfold, as we hold together the need to pray for healing from the brokenness we have watched in Kenosha and other cities around the country, as we pray for Jacob Blake's healing and for his family, and also for the care and protection of law enforcement and national guard members responding to the cries of those aching – it seems that now is the time for the broken body of Christ to be made whole at least in one place: at the table.

And at the table, there is always a place for you.

An Order for Communing in a Pandemic

by Anonymous

*She took a loaf of bread,
broke it and gave it,
half to the hungry, the poor, the millions
whose gap-toothed pantries
are emptying,
dwindling sand racing
through the widening neck of an hourglass
and she felt the weight
of a sacrament pressing
into her soul
as the body and blood of Christ
spilled out of doors,
into streets,
into homes,
flowing as freely,
as slick and messy,
as uncontrolled,
as it did from his own tortured body,
as if God really could be present
everywhere and in everything.*

Pastor Jenn

An Option for Elementary School Virtual Learners

As a building with empty classrooms and with a mission to be “open to all”, Saint Andrew is providing space for learning as the school year begins in order to reach out to community members and support both elementary students and their parents. This is a difficult time, and many simply need an alternate space and connection to others to make virtual learning a spiritually healthier experience. Church council heard a

presentation from Pastor Jenn and enthusiastically supported the idea, as it fits within the parameters of Phase 1 in Saint Andrew's "Plant to Gather."

Members may sign up to utilize the space in pods (groups of no more than ten adults and children) at no cost to members and their friends (members and non-members alike). Pods may use classroom space, outdoor space, bathroom space, and WiFi passwords which will be designated in advance. At least one parent must be present for each pod. Saint Andrew staff are not available to supervise virtual learning. A building use form and waiver will be required to be submitted and there will be no charge for use of the space. At this time, pod must be convened by a Saint Andrew member who will serve as the primary contact between that pod and the office.

Two blocks of time, Monday-Thursday, are available to each pod per week and will be offered on a first-come first-serve basis. To sign up for a slot of time, please email info@salc-wausau.org with preference for time of day. Three blocks of time are available in the morning (8:15am-11:45am) and three blocks of time are available in the afternoon, after lunch until the end of school day. Upon receipt of your request, you will receive a reply with confirmation and follow up information.

A special back to school blessing will take place for all students, teachers, parents, school staff and administrators on the live stream and at outdoor worship on **Sunday, September 13.**

Time to Exercise Compassion

All of God's children are connected by the Holy Spirit. This invisible phenomenon links us together in a Holy Chain, one that is never ending; an eternal chain that reaches around the world, that climbs mountains, rushes through the waters, and floats among the clouds. We are linked together- God calls us to be actively connected, continuously strengthening the bonds link to link. We must seek to be active by showing each other grace, love, and compassion.



As Christians, we tend to use these words without realizing the weight they hold-so how do we take the love and grace for all of God's children and put it to work? This is where compassion steps in and works its magic.

I'm not talking pixie dust, or a rabbit pulled from a hat kind of magic. The magic behind compassion is the action required to keep it going. So someone might ask, what exactly is compassion?

Compassion: (noun)

Sympathetic pity and concern for the sufferings or misfortunes of others.

Compassion motivates people to go out of their way to help the physical, mental, or emotional pains of another and themselves.

I wanted to take some time and unpack the intricacies of this term and really take the time to break down something familiar to us as Christians but might be a little unclear.

Compassion is all about action. It starts with empathy, which focuses on making a connection with someone else's hurt and experience. We see this everywhere in the Bible-it is the first step to all the miracles Jesus performed in the Gospels. He recognized the hurt these people were feeling, which he was able to do as a man incarnate, while taking the next step and moving directly to action, asking himself how he could help.

Obviously, we are not equipped to perform miracles as Jesus was, but this does not mean we are unable to meet each other with grace and exercise compassion. In our own suffering, we can connect with others who are suffering as well. This links us together. From here, we can take our empathy and turn it outward, to start building connections that lead to acts of compassion. Compassion is the joining in others suffering and finding our basic common ground of humanity. In recognizing each other's humanity, we are moved to act with compassion. To ask ourselves, "how can I help?". To make decisions about our actions and reach out to those in need. We do this because Jesus did-we do this because Jesus, whether we realize it or not, shows us infinite compassion every day of our earthly lives.

"For the Lord will not reject forever. Although he causes grief, he has compassion for us according to the abundance of his steadfast love; For he does not willingly afflict or grieve anyone." Lamentations 3:31-33

God uses our moments of suffering as a reference point-we remember our own afflictions and pay it forward, treating those around us who are suffering with love and patience. Listening to their grievances and putting them ahead of their own. This week, I challenge you to find a story from one of the Gospels and really dig into it. Find the moments of compassion and sit down to reflect on it. How can you better practice compassion in your daily life? How can you be more empathetic toward your

siblings in Christ? How can you send this love and kindness to even a stranger? I pray that you can exercise compassion to those around you today and always, as God has done and always will for you.

Michelle (she/her)



Learn About tRiBe!

We are reimagining our fall programs at SALC. One of the goals of the Faith Formation Ministry is to develop Small Groups that allow self-management with faith growth, community, social, and relationship-building connections. From that idea we developed tRiBe (To Remember I Belong), a way for families to create a faith community and create a place where kids and adults can learn and experience being known, heard and seen.

We will be hosting an informational meeting via Zoom on **September 1 at 6:30 PM** to explain our ideas and expectations of these small groups, as well as offer some other learning opportunities for members of all ages

Click [here](#) to join the meeting.

Meeting ID: 871 0809 9931

Passcode: 556187

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