

GROWING

Grace

The Monthly Newsletter of Morning † Star Lutheran and
Monroe United Methodist Churches

LOOK INSIDE FOR:

What's Happening in Worship	pg. 2
Bishops' Message's	pg. 3 and 4
Outreach & Fellowship	pg. 5 and 6
Church Business	pg. 7

November 2021

Greetings in Christ!

Is it possible to imagine what it will feel like, be like, look like, and sound like as we come back together on November 7th of 2021 to worship in person for the first Sunday service since March 8th, 2020, some 20 months ago?

On March 8th of 2020 we Baptized Elise Rosé Conahan into the kingdom of God and therefore into new life. We, as the people of God representing the Body of Christ promised to: *support Elise Rosé, and pray for her in her new life in Christ.* When asked: *Will you nurture one another in the Christian faith and life, and include Elise now before you in your care?* We responded overwhelmingly - **We do.**

Might we remember and imagine once again these words and in place of Elise Rosé put our names in place of her name and all the names of our siblings in Christ.

At the baptismal font we lifted up these words: *Pour out your Holy Spirit, the power of your living Word, that those who are washed in the waters of baptism may be given new life. To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.*

(Put Your name here), *beloved child of God, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever. Amen.*

During this very fluid and everchanging COVID-19 world, might we open up our clenched fists filled with frustration, loss and grief, anxiety, anger, resentment, the notion of going back to normal, fatigue, loneliness, broken relationships, lost time and missed opportunities, COVID guidelines which may seem impersonal and restrictive, and so on, (you fill in the stuff you have clenched in your tightly closed fists).

Might we then imagine that when we open our tightly closed fists that all of this falls out and with arms outstretched and palms wide open, we are able to let go, let it all fall away for a new reality by receiving God's love, grace, and the new dreams God's has dreamed for us as we live out the law of love for each other, the world and ourselves as we work with the guidelines set before us.

It is good to remember what the past has been like but it is better to understand that it is also a time of new beginnings, remembering that God is with us, for us and has given us all that we need and the vision to move forward, calling and guiding us as two congregations under one umbrella, and faithfully remembering that God is real and present as we work to be still and quiet to listen and hear God's voice for us.

We are in a moment, a new time to perhaps consider so much about our past, present and future.

This moment is now, and the future of the church is wide open. Can we imagine and enter into God's dream for us? We will get through this together as God's beloved.

Can we remember and imagine once again these last verses from the baptismal service:

Jesus said, I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will have the light of life. Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

See you in church on All Saints Sunday, November 7th or online and be prepared for new life, new beginnings, and a new reality of our life together. Let us celebrate and be glad even though worship may look a bit different, and the experience may have some guidelines which seem unnecessary and restrictive but we will be together once again worshipping our God, Jesus the Christ and the Holy Spirit.

Let your light and the light of God's love, grace, mercy and peace shine before others,

Pr. Malcolm

November 7, 2021 — 10:00 a.m.



Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, your Leaderships' top priority has been the health and safety of our entire community: congregation members, visitors and staff. As safety measures and increased vaccinations continue to bring tremendous progress in the fight against COVID, we are excited to safely re-open to our church building for in person worship, beginning on All Saints Sunday.

Because seating will be limited, we are implementing a reservation system that will allow 16 households to reserve their seats, including the balcony. This is the link to follow to the reservation site: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F48A9A929AAFDCF8-worship>. The reservation system will open Monday morning each week and stay open until Friday evening.

Following guidance and best practices from the Governor, Mayor, Department of Health, the CDC, and church guidelines, **face masks and social distancing will be required in all public areas of the church and church grounds.**

And for those who aren't quite ready to, or simply can't join us in person yet, we invite you to continue worshipping with us online each Sunday as we will be live streaming the service at 10:00 am on our YouTube channel. The service will be edited and reposted later in the afternoon if you missed the livestream.



We would like to honor the saints in your life, your loved ones that have passed away. If you would like your loved one's name included in the prayers during worship, please email Kathi at msslcmorningstarlc.org. Please send your email by **November 2nd**.

Daylight Saving Times ends on Sunday, November 7. Remember to set your clocks back the night before!





From the Spirit, November 2021

From the Bishop: What is Our Purpose?

The ELCA's Statement of Purpose is found in every congregation constitution, every synod constitution and in the ELCA Constitution. In the ELCA Constitution (4.01) we read: "The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world." This same Statement of Purpose is found in the NWWA Synod Constitution S6.01 and in the Model Constitution for Congregations C4.01. I encourage you to read ELCA's entire Statement of Purpose. It is beautiful and energizing. (Find the constitutions here: <https://www.lutheransnw.org/resources/constitutions>)

When I read the Statement of Purpose, it helps me remember who and whose I am and what I am called to do and to be. You see, sometimes we forget. Sometimes we forget what it means to be children of God, redeemed by Christ, and sent into the world. Sometimes we get caught up in finances or building maintenance, we get lost in petty disagreements and who should do what and so many other things, that we forget that we are created, empowered, called, and sent by God – by GOD – to live into and to share what God is already doing in the world – in God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying work in and for the world.

How do we live into this Statement of Purpose? Below I propose three ways that we can (there are many more but I only have so much space).

Relationship: There are so many people in this world who are lonely, who are discouraged, who are anxious, who are tired. There are so many who feel unloved, unwelcomed, unwanted. They are living in your neighborhood, they are shopping at your grocery store, they have kids in school with your kids or grandkids, they are walking by your church every day. They are looking for relationship and for friendship. In a 2019 survey by CIGNA, 61% of working people identified as lonely. Did you catch that? Over half of people who are working are lonely. And this survey was taken before the pandemic. I can only surmise that the number is higher after 18 months of COVID life. Other studies I have read state that loneliness and isolation lead to physical and emotional difficulties as well as societal polarization. This is obviously a problem in this country. So, how do we have deep meaningful conversations so that people feel welcome and heard? Have connection and deep friendship? How does this fit with our Statement of Purpose?

Impact: There are so many people in this world who are looking to do something meaningful, to change the

world for the better. There are so many people who wonder how they can make a difference, how they can positively influence their communities locally, nationally, and globally. These people are living in your neighborhood, they are shopping at your grocery store, they have kids in school with your kids or grandkids, they are walking by your church every day. They are looking for impact in this world. How can they be our partners in the ministries we are already doing and in the ministries they are doing? How can we listen to them to hear what other ideas might come through the Holy Spirit working in them and through their innovation? What partners do we need to multiply the impact of your ministry site in your neighborhood? How does this fit with our Statement of Purpose?

Transformation: There are so many people in this world who are looking for transformation, for new life, for a new path. There are so many people who have lost hope in institutions, in the church, in their lives. These people are living in your neighborhood, they are shopping at your grocery store, they have kids in school with your kids or grandkids, they are walking by your church every day. They are looking for resurrection. How is your ministry site set up to not only welcome those searching, but honoring who they are? How do they know that their story is welcome? How is the good news shared with those who have never heard it and are desperate to hear? How does this fit with our Statement of Purpose?

I invite you to look at ELCA's Statement of Purpose – or your own congregation Statement of Purpose and discuss in your councils, Adult Forums, small groups, and elsewhere. What other questions or thoughts come out of what you read?

Together may we live drenched in God's love and sent out to share the Good News. For we are created, redeemed, called, and sent to live into and share in God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.

Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee
bishop@lutheransnw.org



Greater Northwest Area Cabinet encourages vaccination as an act of love

From Bishop Stanovsky's Blog, October 13, 2021

When the Greater Northwest Area Cabinet met in September, we discussed much of the work that is ahead of us this year. Pastoral consultations, charge conferences, connectional ministry opportunities and, of course, appointments. Lament permeated these discussions as we shared stories of the prolonged

continued on next page

continued

pandemic and its impact on so much of what we all do. The vaccination status of our ministry leaders across the area was one topic that we discussed. **Our Greater Northwest Area Cabinet is fully vaccinated**, as are most of the staff working in the conference and district offices across the region. From conversations with so many of our local leaders, we suspect the majority of our pastors, and many if not most of local church and ministry staff are also fully vaccinated.

This is all a good thing because we know that vaccination is not only practical and wise, but also an act of love. We trust the science that tells us that vaccines significantly reduce the chance that we will get infected, hospitalized, and die because of this virus. And we love our neighbors enough to do all we can to avoid spreading this disease to them.

Throughout the pandemic, John Wesley's Three General Rules have guided our response, including to the vaccine: Do no harm, do good, and stay in love with God. Getting vaccinated is yet another way we can faithfully respond from our Methodist tradition.

Jesus tells us how to manage difficult times when siblings of Christ do not see eye to eye on an issue: Treat people in the same way you want them to treat you (Luke 6:31 CEB). This isn't a call to "me firstness." It is how we live out our faith. In the context of vaccinations and this pandemic, it calls us to get the shot – I don't want someone else getting sick because of me just as I don't want to get sick because of someone else – it is how we treat others as we want to be treated.

We sincerely hope that many who read this message will have already been vaccinated. Please consider a booster shot if and when it is recommended for you.

For those who remain unvaccinated, we would implore you to do so unless there is a medical reason you cannot. For those who have questions, we would strongly encourage you to reach out to your doctor or other health care professional, and to trusted friends or colleagues who have been vaccinated to have an honest conversation about your concerns. We care about you, your health, your family, their health and for all those with whom you are in ministry.

Finally, for those who are long vaccinated and find themselves frustrated at times with those who are not, let love guide your words and actions, whatever those may be. May we be moved to be ever generous in spirit, and even in action as we partner with others to provide access to vaccines, however they may be constrained.

In continuing prayers for you and our shared ministry!

Elaine JW Stanovsky

Bishop Elaine JW Stanovsky

Dispelling the Dark

As I write this, I'm sitting in the dark without power. When I'm plunged into darkness, my first reaction is to go and get light so I can see. The interesting thing about light is not just that it lets us see more clearly but it also dispels the darkness around us. When the power first goes out, I go grab a lantern or flashlight but not to look at. I don't set it down on the counter and walk away. I put it close to me so I can see from its light. The closer it is, the more I can see to do what I need to. The farther away I am from the light, the more I get swallowed up by the darkness.



John 8:12 says, "Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, 'I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.'"

I could write a book on what this verse means to me but what spoke to me this time as I read it, was the idea of drawing close to Christ to dispel the dark. The darkness of anxiety, the darkness of pain, the darkness of sadness is pushed away and the closer I draw to him, the further away that darkness is. **"He who follows Me will not walk in the darkness."**

We live in a time with a lot of darkness. Shadows envelope us and make it hard to see where we need to go. They make it hard to see what we need to do. But we shouldn't look around at the shadows and expect them to go away. We need to draw close to Christ, our light, so we can see clearly. Christ's light will give us clarity and the closer we get, the more the darkness is pushed away.

Jasmine Ray-Symms

www.jasmineraysymms.com



SUNDAY WORSHIP ATTENDANCE



Average monthly views for
YouTube and Facebook services:

October: 47 September: 54
August: 59

Care

This month we will be celebrating our country's Thanksgiving Holiday. It began in the late 1600's as a day for giving thanks and sacrifice for the blessing of the harvest.

I've been reflecting on what I'm thankful for. One of the things I'm thankful for is that our church will be reopening soon. I must admit I had to work hard to be thankful because of all the restrictions imposed on us by Covid-19. I grow weary and want things to go back to "normal".

I found comfort and guidance when revisiting The Prayer of St. Francis:

*"Lord, make me an instrument of your peace,
Where there is hatred, let me sow love,
Where there is injury, pardon,
Where there is doubt, faith,
Where there is despair, hope,
Where there is darkness, light,
And where there is sadness, joy.
O Divine Master,
Grant that I may not so much seek
To be consoled as to console.
To be understood as to understand,
To be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life."*

In Peace, Love, and Hope,

Rhonda Morgan
Care Coordinator

Happy November Friends!

This happens to be my favorite time of year, and it has nothing to do with Pumpkin Lattes, although I will admit they are delicious.

Fall and Winter remind me that even Nature needs rest; a time to be still, hibernate and save our energy for the beautiful Spring just around the corner.

It feels like we have been in a "hibernation" for the last year and a half, with the expectation that things will all be "back to normal" soon. We are ready to come out of our homes, shake off the cobwebs and enjoy the experience of fellowship together. I'm not sure what our new "normal" will look or feel like, but if we use the Seasonal metaphor, I know it will be as special as seeing that little flower spring up out of the Ground.

My hope is that your hibernation has been fruitful, and that our time together again will feed and refresh our souls.

Blessings to you,

Marla Wardell
MSLC Secretary



November Birthdays

9 Jill Sumpter	12 Missy Maxson
10 Ken Gross	27 McKenzie Sumpter



**Facilities
Update
10/26/21**

The new railing is now complete on the deck in front of the office. A bit of siding repair and new non-slip tape on the ramp remains to be done but will be within the next week or so. Effort now is on replacing the little free pantry. It has suffered weather damage to the extent that the roof cannot easily be fixed so we are building a new one. It will be pretty much identical to the old one except will have steeper roof pitch and shingles instead of shakes. Hopefully we won't have repeat of water damage in the future.

Thanks everyone for the help.

Jay Morgan

MSLC Facilities Leader

MSLC and MUMC
Women's Book Club

Our next get together is
Tuesday, November 16, at 6:30
at the home of Kathi Cooley.
(629 Monroe St., Unit B, Monroe
425-293-8694)

We're reading
"The Elephant Whisperer"
by Lawrence Anthony.

*Come even if you haven't
finished or read the book!*

**THE ELEPHANT
WHISPERER**



TOEvenber begins TOEday!



November 1st kicks off our Sock Drive for those in need.
Why socks, you ask?

- According to the Mayo Clinic, in cold enough conditions, **frostbite** can occur in 30 minutes or less. Warm, well-fitting socks can prevent this.
- Clean, well-fitting socks are a vital part of **keeping feet healthy!** The impact is immediate and ongoing!
- Wearing the right socks for the right activity can go a long way towards foot health. Those struggling with homelessness don't have that option. But new **socks help!**
- Clean and well-fitting socks are an important part of managing the effects of **diabetes.**
- **Walking barefoot exposes feet to injury, infection and pain.** Limbs can be saved with just a simple, "healthy" pair of socks!
- **Sepsis (or blood infection)** can start from a simple blister on the foot. Healthy socks keep more than just feet healthy, they can save lives!

BRING THE NEW SOCKS TO CHURCH WITH YOU ON SUNDAY MORNINGS OR THE CHURCH OFFICE ON TUESDAY & THURSDAY AFTERNOONS. CALL KATHI IF THOSE TIMES DON'T WORK FOR YOU: 425-293-8694. THANK YOU!

Hear the Good News!!

Thank you to Nannette Missel who decided to spend **100% of her Girl Scout Fall Products Proceeds on food for the Little Free Pantry!** Your generosity is appreciated by the many people you have blessed.

God Bless you, dear Nannette!



Huge thanks to all for your consistent and continued support of the mission of the United in Grace Churches: Morning Star Lutheran & Monroe United Methodist.



Donations of food or money to buy food are **ALWAYS** needed. With the cooler weather coming, that need is sure to grow. The pantry could **especially** use the following:

fruit cups, soup, canned meals
(Spaghetti, chili, etc.), tuna,
Vienna sausage, milk

Checks for shopping are welcome. Mail to: 412 S. Lewis St., Monroe 98272. Write "*Little Free Pantry*" in the memo line. Or bring a check on Sunday morning!



NOVEMBER 2021 MORNING STAR LUTHERAN CHURCH

NON-DESIGNATED OFFERINGS AND EXPENSES			
	2021 Budget	August Actual	September Actual
Offerings	\$ 8,930	\$ 7,060	\$ 9,648
Expenses	\$10,163	\$10,140	\$ 9,683
Surplus/deficit		- \$ 3,080	- \$ 40

ADMINISTRATIVE CONGREGATION MEETING



DECEMBER 12, 2021 11:00 A.M.

2021 MSLC COUNCIL

Administrative Director Missy Maxson	206-437-2535
Treasurer Brian Johnson	452-503-8352
Community Relations Cindy Gulbranson	425-210-2095
Facilities Jay Morgan	425-903-1678
Secretary Marla Wardell	360-794-4072
Ministry Director Jill Sumpter	360-348-7231
Worship Kathi Cooley	425-293-8694

We will be electing our 2022 Council and approving the 2022 Budget at the Administrative Congregation meeting on December 12, at 11:00 am. The meeting will be held on Zoom unless informed otherwise. You will be receiving a Zoom invite and log-in information next month. You must be present at the meeting to vote.

The following council positions are up for election or re-election:

Communications Ministry Director

If you would like information about any of the positions, contact any member of the Nominating Comm, Cindy Gulbranson, Jill Sumpter, Christopher Missel and Patty Tompkins, or call the church office.

NOVEMBER 2021 MONROE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Hi All –

Happy November! Hope you have all been enjoying the fall colors (if not so much the falling leaves!) and are staying healthy and safe and doing well!

As you can see below, our finances continue to be great, thanks to you faithful giving and loving support!

As we enter the season of Thanksgiving, please know that you are all great blessings to our church and ones that we are so very thankful for knowing and partnering with to do God’s continued work and sharing in his blessings, love and care.

May you all have all have full plates, full hearts and full hands of joy and blessings on this coming thanksgiving and all through this Thanksgiving season.

Nancy Franke – Financial Secretary


Tanya Hubbard – Treasurer

2021 MUMC LAY LEADERSHIP

Board of Trustees Co-Chairs Chris & Don Hoerner	360-563-9309
Finance Chair Mike Obrigt	206-369-5028
Treasurer Tanya Hubbard	425-210-2095
Financial Secretary Nancy Franke	360-794-6954
Staff-Parish Relations Committee Judie Esqueda	951-201-0061
Membership Secretary Rhonda Dean	425-359-2851
Lay Leader to Annual Conference Nancy Franke	360-794-6954
UMW President Jasmine Ray-Symms	425-223-9866
Recording Secretary Margaret Ray	509-432-3029

TREASURERS REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER 30, 2021

	September	YTD
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$ 6,639.43	\$ 63,963.49
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	\$ 6,581.06	\$ 59,209.39
FOR THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER	+ \$ 58.37	YTD + \$ 4,754.91

 Morning Star Lutheran Church

 Monroe United Methodist Church

412 South Lewis Street
Monroe, WA 98272-4149



November 7: ALL SAINTS SUNDAY with Holy Communion - Scripture: Rev 21:1-6 a; John 11:32-44
November 14: 25TH PENTECOST Worship - Scripture: Hebrews 10:11-25; Mark 13:1-8
November 21: CHRIST THE KING with Holy Communion - Scripture: Rev 1:4b-8; John 18:33-37
November 28: THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT - Scripture: Jeremiah 33:14-16,1 Thessalonians 3:9-1, Luke 21:25-36

CONTACT US:

Pastor Malcolm Brown

Email: prmalcolmb@gmail.com Phone: 360-794-2111

MONROE UNITED METHODIST

Office Administrator: Jasmine Ray-Symms

Phone: 360-794-8863

Email: office@monroeumonline.org

Music Director: Lee Ann Obright: 206-369-1621

Website: www.monroeumonline.org

MORNING STAR LUTHERAN

Office Administrator: Kathi Cooley

Cell Phone: 425-293-8694

Phone: 360-794-2111

Email: mvlc@morningstarlc.org

Music Director: Jill Sumpter: 360-348-7231

Website: www.morningstarlc.org

YOU are invited to WORSHIP!
Morning Star Lutheran Church
and
Monroe United Methodist Church

JOIN US
this weekend
ONLINE

The service is ready for viewing Sunday's
after 6:00 a.m. and is available all week,
all the time.

YouTube

