

GROWING IN *Grace*

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

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June 2021



It is with hope and a deep longing to connect with family and friends that I, along with all of you, pray that soon we will have enough of our church family and our communities vaccinated that we may gather and enjoy the summer with a renewed sense of wonder. Remember that every vaccine gets us one step closer to being connected.



I remember as a child how wonder filled and extraordinary summer always was. If you have lost some of this wonder yourself, I invite you in these next months to take a child into the wonders of God's creation. Watch them play and live in God's grace and his unfailing faithfulness that surrounds you from the warmth of the summer sun on your face to the squeals of a summer parade.

The season after Pentecost is the longest season of the church year is often called ordinary time and yet in Mark's Gospel, we will hear great, not so ordinary, but extraordinary, stories of Jesus. We will hear stories that will remind us of the relationship of Jesus' life in our lives today, life on life, living daily as baptized, forgiven, blessed, gifted, and named as beloved children by God.

We will be challenged through the scriptures to become good neighbors and be a blessing to them. No, not so ordinary time indeed!

I invite you this summer to have some "Abiding time" and/or "Sabbath rest" with God, and with family and friends. Find time to intentionally rest and abide with God, listening to the voice of God comforting you and giving you rest and peace. This could be as part of vacation time that is used in part for rest and renewal or a part of each week. Listen for God's voice in the thin silences of your days; see God's abundance and beauty in all that is around you. Know that God is in all of creation and in all of the people who intersect with you this summer from the grocery clerk to those who serve us coffee or food or ice cream, to the child playing in the park, from families taking a walk together, to the person on the street whom you struggle to look directly into their eyes.

I invite you to smile a lot this summer and as we are able, to celebrate the gift of time with our family, friends, and the loves of our lives as we strengthen and go deeper into our relationships. Have fun; share meals together, enjoy the sun when we have it and laugh, laugh a lot with others. Hold each other in the stuff of life that gets us down and hold each other as the sun sets each day, because tomorrow the sun will rise, and the promise of a new day and new life have been given to us by God through the continued resurrection of Jesus the Christ. Know that all of this is of God and God is waiting and longing for time with you. The gift of time and presence you spend with your loved ones are seeds that will last a lifetime and will change your life and the lives of those you touch. The seeds will grow, and beauty of the blooms of love and grace will be abundant and leave a permanent mark long after we are gone.

I leave you with these words by Seattle playwright Stephen Dietz:

"What do we affect during our lifetime? What ultimately, is our legacy?" I believe, in most cases, our legacy is our friends (loves). We write our history onto them, and they walk with us through our days like time capsules, filled with our mutual past, the fragments of our hearts and minds. Our friends get our uncensored questions, and our yet to be reasoned opinions. Our friends (loves) grant us the chance to make our grand, embarrassing, contradictory pronouncements about the world. They get the very best, and are stuck with the absolute worst, we have to offer. Our friends (loves) get our rough drafts. Over time, they both open our eyes and break our hearts..."

continued on next page

Emerson wrote,

'make yourself necessary to someone.' In a chaotic world, friendship (love) is the most elegant, most lasting way to be useful. We are, each of us, a living testament to our friends; compassion and tolerance, humor and wisdom, patience and grit. Friendship, not technology, is the only thing capable of showing us the enormousness of the world.'

May God's abundant grace and love bring you wonder and awe, and may the gift of family and friends bring you love and grace in these summer months!

Pastor Malcolm

Join us
as we worship together on ...
June 6, 2021
at
10:00 am

Join Zoom Meeting:
<https://greaternw.zoom.us/j/91560677767>
Meeting ID: 915 6067 7767



Pastor Herb Shao
of the NWWA Synod,
will provide the sermon.

Scripture and reflections for the day:
Psalm 130; 2 Corinthians 4:13-51; Mark 3:20-35
A house divided against itself cannot stand. Jesus makes this observation in light of charges that he is possessed. He is possessed, not by a demon, but by the Holy Spirit. We who have received the Holy Spirit through baptism have been joined to Christ's death and resurrection and knit together in the body of Christ. Those with whom we sing and pray this day are Jesus' family. With them we go forth in peace to do the will of God.

Guest Preachers

The NWWA Synod is providing pre-recorded sermons from the rostered synod staff members for the first Sunday of the month through October.



Meet with a group of friends after the live service and enjoy time together discussing the readings of the day or anything else you'd like to talk about!

Sunday Worship attendance	Average monthly views for our YouTube and Zoom services combined:	
	<u>May: 46</u>	<u>April: 45</u>
	<u>March: 56</u>	

OFFICE / ANNEX CLOSED JUNE 16 - JULY 5

The church office building is being painted in June. In view of that, it's necessary to restrict all visitors and employees from access to the building, decks and porches.

If you need to get in touch with MSLC by phone, please call 425-293-8694. The email will still be checked regularly. The MUMC phone will remain the same and will be answered remotely.



To the very dear men and women of Morning Star:

Although I can't physically be with you any longer, due both to Covid and to advanced old age and infirmities, I want to tell you a story... when Jackie Trump first invited me to attend Morning Star, you were all meeting next door to Village East at the Senior Center for Sunday services. Because I had just had my knee "replaced" and could no longer drive, after many weeks of invitations, I finally surrendered to Jackie's continued suggestions. Now, as a life-long Catholic, a retired (20 years) Sister of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, I came over one Sunday morning with my trusty walker. And I've never looked back!

That Sunday morning, I met the greatest group of Christians EVER! For 7 years we worshipped together, until I finally surrendered to God's Grace and joined Morning Star ELCA under the spiritual guidance of Pastor Sarah. I've never looked back... "O happy fault" the Bible says. And what a blessed GRACE of God for me!

I'll be 88 in June, as you will see in the monthly birthday list - but what you may not know is the gifts all of you have been in the life of my soul. INSPIRATION? Yes, oh yes, that and so much more. There are too many of you to thank personally for the wondrous, multiple graces which have come to me through your examples over the years. So, I'll just remind you how precious you are to me and the Lord, and say "Well done, good and faithful people of God!" God bless you, each and every one of you! You are in my prayers morning and evening, every day.

With all my love, in our precious Savior's name, until we meet again in His presence,

Old Jane Kelly



Village East Worship & Study has RESUMED!

The group is meeting at the Village East Apartments on Village Way. They study the word of God and share in Holy Communion at 1:30 p.m. on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays each month.

Contact Jim Olson for information:
jolson5859@frontier.com
425-483-8548

Hazel's Little Free Pantry NEWS!

As the office/annex building will be unavailable during June, the pantry will be temporarily moved to the covered portico on the south side of the church.

Please don't leave donations at the office during this time, but instead call Kathi or Cindy to arrange a drop-off.

Pantry Needs: chili, canned meals, cereal, shelf stable small milk, Vienna sausage, and fruit cups.

Thank you!

Questions?

Call or text Kathi Cooley: 425-293-8694
Or Cindy Gulbranson: 425-210-2095



From the Spirit, June 2021

I began my Bishop's Report for the 2021 Synod Assembly on May 15, 2021 by quoting Paul in his letter to the Romans, "I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed throughout the world."

I am so glad to be the Northwest Washington Synod with you – as we walk, journey, travel together. We are connected as the body of Christ – as siblings in Christ – together. We are the Northwest Washington Synod in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Together in Jesus Christ we are freed by grace to live faithfully, witness boldly, and serve joyfully. As people forgiven and redeemed, beloved and welcomed, we are called to embody God's grace in speech, action, and relationships. I am reminded daily that it is Jesus Christ who loves, welcomes, and forgives. As baptized children of God, we are called to participate in this love, hospitality, and forgiveness. I am thankful for all of you for your love, your welcome, and your forgiveness.

We on the synod staff have agreed to embrace the following statement as we work together with the congregations and ministry sites of this synod: "Trusting in the Spirit, we are journeying together with God's people so that all may discover and participate in what God is doing among us through Jesus."

Further, there are five focus areas interwoven in the work that we are doing as we journey together in Christ:

1. Faithful Innovation
2. Youth and Young Adults
3. Leadership
4. Connection
5. Racial Justice

I'd like to lift up a few of the actions from the 2021 NW WA Synod Assembly:

- We had our first online assembly with 332 voting members in attendance on Zoom and over 200 following along on our Facebook Livestream.
- We approved the Recommended Changes to the Constitution that were forwarded from the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.
- We approved the changes to the Constitution proposed by the Synod Council (with a minor amendment to have the Nominating Committee changed to 5 persons).
- We elected persons to the following: Synod Council Committee on Discipline Consultation Committee Voting Members to the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly
- Approved budget.
- We shared videos from our ministry partners and synod committees/teams.
- Announced Grace Grants recipients.

As we do the work of this synod, I am reminded that it is not us but the Spirit that leads and guides. Trusting God's promises and participating in the Holy Spirit, we have reached places beyond what I thought possible. We have exceeded priorities and we are moving forward towards God's preferred future. I am grateful to be on this journey with you.

Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee



May 18, 2021

Greater Northwest Area clergy and lay members of Alaska, Oregon-Idaho and Pacific Northwest Conferences,

Let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith...

After deep reflection, conversation with my family and consultation with trusted colleagues, I am withdrawing my request for retirement, effective January 2022, to continue my assignment to the Greater Northwest Area. I hope and pray that postponing retirement will relieve anxiety and contribute to an orderly transition of leadership for all the conferences in the Western Jurisdiction during this extended pandemic interruption of normalcy. I am not naming a new retirement date at this time but hope that it might follow in-person general and jurisdictional conferences in 2022, with the election and assignments of new bishops, for a new quadrennium, beginning January 1, 2023.

I never intended my retirement to add to the uncertainty of this wilderness passage. I originally named January 1, 2022 as my retirement date so that my retirement would coincide with that of Bishop Hoshibata and possibly, Bishop Hagiya. At the time, we anticipated regular in-person general and jurisdictional conferences in the fall of 2021, when new bishops might be elected to begin serving as the new quadrennium began with the new year.

Since that request, general and jurisdictional conferences have been put off again, further postponing election and assignment of new bishops. In light of these delays, the timing of my requested retirement is no longer helpful.

I have a renewed sense of focused mission for this extension of my active service and look forward to continuing to work with lay and clergy leadership of the Alaska, Oregon-Idaho and Pacific Northwest Conferences.

Jesus is nudging and tugging the church to engage people and communities with the faith, hope and love of Jesus Christ in ways that bind up wounds, transform lives and overturn systems of exclusion and inequity. We can't stop now.

I'm still running the race with Jesus. Won't you pull up your socks, tie your shoelaces, strengthen your weak knees, and join me for the next leg of the race?

Elaine JW Stanovsky

Bishop Elaine JW Stanovsky

This past week news resources have been reporting hate crimes against Asians, African Americans, and those who have a different faith practice.

In the last two weeks we've witnessed renewed conflict between Israel and Palestine with no resolution in sight.

Our government reflects a deeply divided country not able to find common ground.

I've been disheartened and I've felt powerless ... And then I was reminded we would be celebrating Pentecost on May 23 and I no longer felt powerless, knowing I have been empowered by the Holy Spirit! I found this prayer and was comforted by the poetic words. I hope you will feel comforted and empowered, as well:

*We ask for your forgiveness, Lord,
when we forget
the power that lies within,
and trust instead
upon our human strength.*

*Remind us of that glorious day
when your Spirit
transformed the lives of those
who hid in fear,
into men of power.*

*Renew these hearts which have grown cold
with flames of fire,
as on that Pentecost,
that this might be
the church that you desire.*

God bless you all, empowered servants! You reach out every day to those in need of love and grace and you inspire me!

Rhonda Morgan
Care Coordinator

God Sees Me

"You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 5:6-8



Each of us have different roles we play: mother, daughter, worker, friend. We act a certain way, wanting to be seen as competent, successful, pulled together in all ways. But, to be honest, sometimes it's just an act. We hide our imperfections, afraid to let others see the real us. Sometimes, we even try to hide from God. Instead of coming to Him on bended need, acknowledging our sin and weakness, we stay away. We want to "handle" it ourselves. The thing is, we aren't fooling anyone. God see us and it's ok.

God doesn't need us to be "perfect". He KNOWS we're not. God doesn't condemn us because we fall short. God sees us where we're at: the tired parent who has been worn down by, "mom, Mom, MOM!". God sees our struggle to care for aging parents, honoring their presence but fearing their loss. God sees us as we're pulled into so many directions, working, volunteering, caring for friends, family and community. God sees our desire to serve even though we frequently fall short and that's ok. We cannot hide our true selves and we don't need to.

God sees our hearts. God sees our intentions. God sees our failures and loves us anyway. God sees us with all our imperfections and doesn't turn away. We get caught up in our lives, worrying about what other people think of us. We're caught up in ourselves whether it be for an inflated ego or negative self-esteem. BUT it doesn't matter how others see us or how we see ourselves, it matters how GOD sees us. We're blessed with the ultimate gift: He not only sees us, He accepts us. All we need to do is say, "Thank you!"

Jasmine Ray-Symms

425-223-9866

jasisymms@outlook.com

www.jasmineraysymms.com

June Birthdays and Anniversaries *

Happy Birthday and Congratulations!

6	Alan Barr	23	Jay & Rhonda Morgan
8	Jenny Schroeder	24	Jesse Paietta
9	Joel & JoLynn Garrison *	25	Jerry Esqueda
10	Ken & Patty Tompkins *	28	Rick & Marian Hart *
12	Jeff & Jenny Schroeder *	29	Gwen Paietta
12	Judie Esqueda	30	Brian Johnson
16	Old Jane Kelly		
17	Kathi Cooley		
20	Joe & Holly Hilton *		
20	Patty Tompkins		
22	June Heaton		
22	Keith & Milly Krause *		

JUNE 2021 MORNING STAR LUTHERAN CHURCH

<u>NON-DESIGNATED OFFERINGS AND EXPENSES</u>			
	2021 Budget	March Actual	April Actual
Offerings	\$ 8,930	\$ 7,661	\$11,823
Expenses	\$10,163	\$ 8,927	\$ 5,750
Surplus/deficit		- \$ 1,266	\$ 6,073

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

**2021 MINISTRY & MISSION CONGREGATION MEETING
THURSDAY, JUNE 24TH, 7:00 P.M.**

It's been a year since we met on Zoom for our 2020 Ministry & Mission meeting. Some things have remained the same — we're still worshipping online and a lot of us are still working from home, but there are also new developments — we've started a new mission, Hazel's Little Free Pantry, and the study at Village East has started back up.

As before, the meeting will be held on Zoom. Pastor Malcolm will offer his year end report, and the council will update you on the past, present, and future worship and ministry plans.

Instructions for Zoom (how to log on, navigate, etc.) will be sent to your e-mail before the meeting, or you'll receive a call if you do not use e-mail. If you do not have access to a computer, we can help you with that too.

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://greaternw.zoom.us/j/96534380542> Meeting ID: 965 3438 0542

Email the office at mslc@morningstarlc.org if you have any questions.

Please plan to attend.



JUNE 2021 - MONROE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

2021 MUMC LAY LEADERSHIP

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

RE-OPENING THE CHURCH

Morning Star Lutheran and Monroe United Methodist churches have organized a Re-opening Committee to develop a plan for re-opening the church building sometime in July. To help us to meet everyone’s needs during this transition, we have a brief one-page questionnaire which we would like everyone to fill out.

If you receive your newsletter via email, please print this page (one for each household member) and mail the completed form to the address listed below. The questionnaire is also on our Facebook pages and web-page, or you can follow the link below.

Please respond **ONLY ONCE** to this questionnaire.

Mail to: 342 S. Lewis St.
Monroe WA 98272

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YXV56CN>

1. When and under what circumstances would you feel safe and comfortable returning to in-person worship.

2. How likely would you be to attend an in person church worship service (Please check one of the following alternatives)

- I would always attend on-line.
- I would mostly attend on-line.
- Sometimes I would attend on-line and sometimes in person.
- I would mostly attend in person.
- I would always attend in person.

3. How urgent do you feel it is to return to an In Church Building Service?

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
Not at All Urgent			Very Urgent	

4. Some members would feel safer if they knew that most of the participants were vaccinated. If you would be willing to share, please tell us if you and members of your family have been vaccinated for coronavirus. (Please circle all relevant answers)

Self	Spouse	Children over 12	Children under 12
YES	YES	YES	YES
NO	NO	NO	NO

5. (Please answer the following question if you are involved in worship in any capacity.) Do you think you could participate and help support both an on-line and an in-person worship service? (Please mark one answer)

- Definitely Yes
- Possibly Yes
- Don’t Know
- Possibly No
- Definitely No



Morning Star Lutheran Church



Monroe United Methodist Church

412 South Lewis Street

Monroe, WA 98272-4149



June 6: 2ND PENTECOST ~ Online worship with Holy Communion ~ Scripture: Psalm 130; 2 Corinthians 4:13-51; Mark 3:20-35
June 13: 3RD PENTECOST ~ Online worship ~ Scripture: Psalm 92:1-4; 12-15; 2 Corinthians 5:6-10; (11-13) 14-17; Mark 4:26-34
June 20: 4TH PENTECOST ~ Online worship with Holy Communion ~ Scripture: Psalm 107:1-3, 23-32; 2 Corinthians 6:1-13; Mark 4:35-41
June 27: 5TH PENTECOST ~ Online worship ~ Scripture: Psalm 30; 2 Corinthians 8:7-15; Mark 5:21-43

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

worship
ONLINE

**Morning Star Lutheran Church &
Monroe United Methodist
Church**

**The service is ready for viewing
Sundays after 6:00 a.m. and is
available 24/7.**

YouTube



Alleluia!! We'll be coming back to the church and worshipping in person soon. As a way to celebrate, we want to decorate the sanctuary with butterflies!! Not real ones of course, but ones that you color and we can put on the walls.

Please print a copy the butterfly for each member of your household and color it. Mail it to the church office or bring it with you on our first day back together (date to be determined).

Alleluia!!



Re-Opening the Church

Morning Star Lutheran and Monroe United Methodist churches have organized a Re-opening Committee to develop a plan for re-opening the church building sometime in July. To help us to meet everyone's needs during this transition, we have a brief one-page questionnaire which we would like everyone to fill out.

Please mail the completed form to the address listed below. The questionnaire is also on our Facebook pages and web-page, or you can follow the link below.

Please respond **ONLY ONCE** to this questionnaire

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Monroe WA 98272

1. **When and under what circumstances would you feel safe and comfortable returning to in-person worship.**

2. **How likely would you be to attend an in person church worship service (*Please check one of the following alternatives*)**

- I would always attend on-line.
- I would mostly attend on-line.
- Sometimes I would attend on-line and sometimes in person.
- I would mostly attend in person.
- I would always attend in person.

3. **How urgent do you feel it is to return to an In Church Building Service?**

1	2	3	4	5
Not at All				Very
Urgent				Urgent

4. **Some members would feel safer if they knew that most of the participants were vaccinated. If you would be willing to share, please tell us if you and members of your family have been vaccinated for coronavirus. (*Please circle all relevant answers*)**

<u>Self</u>	<u>Spouse</u>	<u>Children over 12</u>	<u>Children under 12</u>
YES	YES	YES	YES
NO	NO	NO	NO

5. **(Please answer the following question if you are involved in worship in any capacity.) Do you think you could participate and help support both an on-line and an in-person worship service? (*Please mark one answer*)**

- Definitely Yes
- Possibly Yes
- Don't Know
- Possibly No
- Definitely No