



# the CHALLENGE



## From the Desk of Brennan Blue

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### Dear St. Luke,

By the time you're reading these words, I may already be on my 4-week Parental Leave period, celebrating the birth of Baby Blue #2. You'll find a copy of my Parental Leave coverage plan on the next page. In short: when in doubt, contact the office or one of our many capable leaders!

In the meantime, I'd like to highlight a couple of timely notes before my time away:

- The Session of St. Luke has increased indoor capacity for worship to 50 people, starting in July. If everything continues to go well, we may make an additional upward increase before the month ends. For those **streaming remotely**: we've encountered a couple of barriers to getting our livestreamed services onto Facebook and YouTube. We expect to overcome these barriers sometime this month. In the meantime, our services are always available for streaming from our website, [www.stluke.mn](http://www.stluke.mn)
- One of our "returning from COVID-19" goals is to worship as a full multigenerational community. Recognizing that our youngest will not be eligible for vaccination for a number of months to come, we are currently committed to retaining our face mask requirement as both a sign of solidarity with our youngest and a practice that will hopefully allow them to return indoors with us sooner.
- Finally, the Session of St. Luke is exploring a **kitchen renovation project** to expand our current kitchen and bring it up to city code (we are currently not allowed to provide any food service for public events). We hope to share more about the potential project and any fundraising efforts we may undertake as a community sometime next month.

That's all for now! Laura, Avery and I look forward to introducing St. Luke to our new little one soon!

Brennan

# Parental Leave Plan - Brennan Blue

## Coverage Plan for Key Duties While Away

### 4-Week Leave (Due Date: Sat, July 3)

#### Initiating Parental Leave Period

I will send word to Anne Deuring, Nora Elliott and Phyllis Messenger (Clerk of Session) once we are heading in for labor to cue the beginning of my period of leave and our coverage plan. I will have a pre-written away message ready to go for my email inbox, indicating the period of my parental leave and who to contact in my absence.

#### Worship Planning

Will be carried out by our capable worship staff. We have pre-planned themes in the works to help smooth the creative work while at a lower staff capacity. Times of sharing communal pandemic stories and testimony will be offered during some of our Sundays in July to allow for less sermon needs while offering a helpful vehicle for our congregation to reconnect.

#### Pastoral and Congregational Care

Pastoral care needs and information may be funneled to Anne, Nora, Judy Leatham (Chair of Deacons) or Jill Engeswick (Chair of BeFriends) to decide upon next steps. In general, we will share care leadership needs following the below guidelines:

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Weekly Congregational Care      | Deacons, BeFriends, Nora                                 |
| Significant Pastoral Care Needs | Nora   |
| Major Care Emergencies          | Call Brennan and we will determine next steps from there |

#### Staffing and Personnel Issues

Channel through HR, though please include Brennan via email (or phone call if urgent). Our HR members are Peg Keenan, Nancy Anderson, Lori Cocking and Todd Pointer. *Note: we've a great staff team and I'm not anticipating any issues here!*

#### Planning and General Leadership

Lay leaders, with special care from our Chairs and Elders. If Ministry Team Chairs or Elders have an urgent contextual question they would like to run by Brennan, please email Brennan directly and he will respond at his earliest convenience. Please only use this option when urgent. Feeling unsure about urgency? Connect with Anne, Nora or Phyllis and they will be happy to decide. Please do copy Brennan on our normal group email exchanges so that he can catch-up on any significant developments upon his return.

# Parental Leave Plan - continued

## **Pandemic Dynamics**

St. Luke has an established COVID-19 Preparedness Plan, Summer Transitional Worship Plan and Small Group Gatherings Protocols in place. If reduced or increased COVID-19 risks warrant changes in any of these COVID-19 safety plans, Anne, Nora or Phyllis will reach out to Brennan for consult.

## **Justice, Peace, Mission and Advocacy**

Questions about St. Luke's mission and advocacy work will be directed to Adele Lennig-Sullivan.

## **Communications**

Anne Deuring will quarterback our communications needs.

Brennan will pre-write Challenge articles for July before leave.

Weekly eBlast write-ups previewing the Sunday ahead will come from Nora.

## **Administration and Finance**

Administrative questions will be directed to Anne Deuring.

Staff support questions will be directed to HR.

Finance questions will be directed to Darla Monson or Don Davies.

## **Other Needs as They Arise**

St. Luke staff may reach Brennan directly via email, text or call, depending upon the urgency of the need. Questions, concerns or similar beyond the scope of our Chairs and Elders should be passed to Anne, Nora, or Phyllis who will decide whether Brennan should be contacted.

## **Presbytery and Session**

Brennan will inform the COM of Presbytery of the beginning and ending of my leave period. Clerk of Session Phyllis Messenger will moderate any Session meetings that take place during Brennan's parental leave. *Note: there is no July Session meeting planned at this time.*

## **Birth Announcement and Well Wishes**

Once through labor, rested and ready, Brennan will be sure to send a birth announcement of sorts with a few pictures in for Anne to share through the eBlast and Facebook.

Cards and emails of congratulations from congregants are welcome, though the Blue family will ask for no in-person visitors while they rest, recover and share in these formational weeks with their newborn.

# Session Slices

## From the Meeting of June 15, 2021

**Congregational Questionnaire:** The St. Luke community has been asked to participate in a questionnaire designed to provide key data for the Presbytery's Institutional Race & Equity Assessment, as well as to support congregational community building. The on-line survey takes 5-10 minutes to complete. Our survey window will be July 25-August 8; more info and instructions will be forthcoming.

**Parental Leave:** Session received Pastor Brennan Blue's Parental Leave Coverage plan, which outlines how (and by whom) his duties and responsibilities will be carried out during a month-long leave tentatively scheduled to begin with onset of Laura's labor. Session wishes the Blues well!

**The St. Luke Community Kitchen:** Session has been discerning a potential kitchen remodeling project to bring our kitchen up to city code. As a part of our early planning, the Session has approved a grant proposal to the Presbytery's Congregational Development Grant fund for assistance in the remodel kitchen - should the church decide to embrace the project later this year. Key to the grant and project is the hope of "embracing our calling as a hub for mission, ministry, arts and advocacy in the west metro." The Session anticipates sharing a vision for the project with the wider community later this summer.

**St. Luke Technology Upgrades:** Session approved a proposal to the Presbytery's 2021 COVID-19 Technology Support Grant fund. With these funds, we would expand our virtual/hybrid ministry offerings by creating a dedicated, mobile hybrid meeting setup and securing additional audio/video equipment to support multiple worship participants co-leading worship services together.

**Worship Transitions:** St. Luke's first in-person worship was held on Sunday, June 13 with 32 masked participants indoors, about 20 outdoors, and up to 35 logged in for "live" on-line worship! It was wonderful to be back together! Session discussed the importance of remaining cautious and continuing with indoor masking so that we can move to 50 participants in July and potentially allowing children and other unvaccinated participants to join us indoors later in July.

**Leadership and Transitions:** Brennan and Nora thanked Session members for leadership and flexibility during the last year of great change and transition. We will recognize outgoing Session members and Deacons during worship later in the summer, and hold a congregational meeting to approve new members in leadership positions. If you receive a call to serve, please respond thoughtfully and prayerfully to the opportunity.

# Minnetonka Coalition for Equitable Education

On June 6, 2021, at St. Luke Presbyterian Church, Minnetonka Coalition for Equitable Education student leaders Solveig Lee, Deepti Pillai, Sydnie Tolliver, Lena Pak, Eleanor Dolan, and others reported on the district's progress against the eleven imperatives in the form of a report card that measured the achievement of objectives the district set for itself in its "Statement Addressing Discrimination & Racial Justice." While recognizing the progress that has been made, the students made it clear that Minnetonka schools have much work to do. As MCEE says, "No equity. No excellence." The MCEE gathering featured nearly 100 people, making it the first public large public event to be held at St. Luke since the start of the pandemic.



Story and photos by Chris Sullivan



# Women Connecting

## Live and In Person - July 11 at 5:00 pm

It's time. It's finally time. Time for us to get together IN PERSON. If you are vaccinated and feel comfortable in a small group, come to Women Connecting on Sunday, July 11 starting at 5:00 pm on Sullivan's deck at 3506 Sunrise Drive West in Minnetonka. Hugging, talking, and dreaming of the future will abound.

We are going to be experimenting with a simpler design to make it easier for more women to participate. Rather than a potluck supper, just bring a simple snack to share

(absolutely nothing fancy-whatever you have in your cupboard). And plan to head home around 6:30. You will have the rest of the night to eat with your family, take a walk, or do whatever feeds you.

This event is open to all who identify as women and is a great way to get to know some of the wonderful



## July Birthdays

July 1 Jamie Kizilos-Clift  
July 1 Russell Williams  
July 4 Ari Resnick  
July 5 Jill Engeswick  
July 5 Carol Lowry  
July 8 David Lohman  
July 8 Dave Bosselmann  
July 9 Scott Haskin  
July 9 Brayden Honey  
July 10 Tina Phelps

July 10 Amanda Pointer  
July 12 Katrina Bergman  
July 13 Nancy J. Anderson  
July 13 Gwen Bottoli  
July 14 Kristi Byrlev  
July 14 Solveig Lee  
July 14 Ken Ribe  
July 15 Barb Blue  
July 17 Chris van Lierop  
July 18 Bob Thomas

July 20 Soren Lee  
July 21 Andy Hall  
July 22 Randy Schumacher  
July 24 Charles Hall  
July 25 Tracy Whitney  
July 25 Janet Kramer-Barr  
July 27 Lonnie Bell  
July 28 Liz Thompson  
July 28 Dan Goedken  
July 30 Kevin Magnuson

# Faith Formation

## Summer Outdoor Worship & FUN

We're back in-person each Sunday morning!

Rain or shine, join us at 9:30 am, at the backyard columbarium plaza at St. Luke for Sunday School coloring and playtime. At 10:00 am, Pastor Nora will offer a children's sermon on the playground or under one of our tents depending on weather needs.

Childcare is available at the playground through worship.

On the second and fourth Sundays through summer, you're invited to bring a picnic for a casual family lunch on the hill out back. After lunch, Pastor Nora will lead some informal children's and youth groups focused on care for the earth. Bring work gloves and clothes they don't mind getting dirty!

Contact [nora@stluke.mn](mailto:nora@stluke.mn) for more information

*Need more joy and purpose in your life?*

*Volunteer to help with children's ministries!*

*Contact Pastor Nora to find out how your skills and experience can serve the youngest in our community.*



# Climate Connections

## How are lettuce and oil connected?

You have no doubt heard about the MN State Appeals Court **ruling in favor of Enbridge's Line 3**. Per MPR on June 14: "The Minnesota Court of Appeals handed a major victory to Enbridge Energy Monday, affirming state utility regulators' approval of the Canadian company's Line 3 oil pipeline replacement project."

And maybe you saw former St Luker, Lane Ayres' letter in the Star Tribune during our recent 90+ degrees days that seemed to go on forever:

### "My Garden Wilts; the Planet Warms. JUNE 8, 2021

I have been an avid gardener in the Twin Cities for 47 years. Growing vegetables, and eating what I've grown from seed, gives me great pleasure. My "signature" crop is lettuce. I plant seeds in a cold frame as soon as possible in March. This year I grew nine varieties, all with different color and crunch profiles. Our family, and friends and neighbors, start eating it in early May. It lasts until late June or early July, when it starts to bolt and get bitter from the heat. On Friday I picked it all, something I've never had to do before. Lettuce simply can't withstand this way-too-early two weeks of temps from the high 80s to near 100. From melting glaciers to West Coast drought, climate change is happening now, and it's all around us. But we just sit here, watching the catastrophe come closer and closer. Now it's reached my backyard. *Lane Ayres, Edina*"

Science has told us that **more oil means more CO2** in the atmosphere which means our kids and grandkids will be facing this heat and more for generations. **We can't "just sit here watching the catastrophe come closer and closer"!**

**Here's something you can do** in a matter of minutes that can make a difference:

#### Contact President Biden:

**Call** the White House and Climate Office of Gina McCarthy by dialing: 888-724-8946. Tell them: "President Biden must honor the treaties and protect our climate by stopping the Line 3 tar sands pipeline now."

You can also [send an email message directly to President Biden using Minnesota Interfaith Power and Light's online tool here!](#)

Or you can join the groundswell of religious action and **post** this message on your social media: "@POTUS, people of faith are praying for you to #StopLine3. #Faiths4Climate"

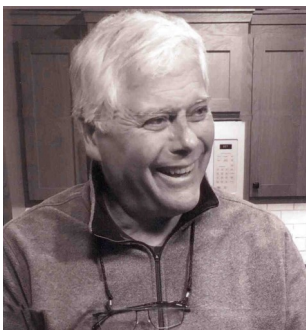




# July Calendar

| Sunday   | Monday           | Tuesday                                 | Wednesday                               | Thursday   | Friday                                  | Saturday                                  |
|--|------------------|---|---|--|---|---|
| 27<br>9:30 AM Sunday School<br>10:30 AM Worship<br>11:30 AM Family Picnic                                      | 28<br>7:30 PM AA | 29                                      | 30                                      | 1<br>7:00 PM ACA<br>7:00 PM Depression & Anxiety Support                                       | 2                                       | 3<br>9:00 AM Grounds renewal service day  |
| 4<br>●Independence Day<br>9:30 AM Sunday School<br>10:30 AM Worship  | 5<br>7:30 PM AA  | 6<br>9:00 AM Mac - Plymouth Youth Group | 7<br>9:00 AM Mac - Plymouth Youth Group | 8<br>9:00 AM Mac - Plymouth Youth Group<br>7:00 PM ACA<br>7:00 PM Depression & Anxiety Support | 9<br>9:00 AM Mac - Plymouth Youth Group | 10<br>7:45 AM Herma nos                   |
| 11<br>9:30 AM Sunday School<br>10:30 AM Worship<br>12:00 PM Youth Grounds Work/Fun<br>5:00 PM Women Connecting | 12<br>7:30 PM AA | 13<br>6:30 PM Earth Stewards            | 14<br>9:30 AM The Book Group            | 15<br>2:00 PM Challenge Deadline<br>7:00 PM ACA<br>7:00 PM Depression & Anxiety Support        | 16                                      | 17<br>9:00 AM Grounds renewal service day |
| 18<br>9:30 AM Sunday School<br>10:30 AM Worship  | 19<br>7:30 PM AA | 20<br>6:45 PM Session Meeting           | 21                                      | 22<br>7:00 PM ACA<br>7:00 PM Depression & Anxiety Support                                      | 23                                      | 24  |
| 25<br>9:30 AM Sunday School<br>10:30 AM Worship<br>11:30 AM Family Picnic<br>12:00 PM Youth Grounds Work/Fun   | 26<br>7:30 PM AA | 27                                      | 28                                      | 29<br>7:00 PM ACA<br>7:00 PM Depression & Anxiety Support                                      | 30<br>4:00 PM People Serving People     | 31  |

## Greg Smith Memorial Service



**September 18, 2021 at 11:00 am in the Sanctuary.**

# St. Luke Staff and Communications

## Every member and friend, Ministers

**Rev. Brennan Blue** (he/him/his), **Senior Pastor**  
952-473-7378, brennan@stluke.mn  
612-518-7737 cell

**Rev. Nora P. Elliott** (she/they), **Associate Pastor**  
952-473-7378, nora@stluke.mn  
801-556-1881 cell

**David Lohman** (he/him/his), **Music Director**  
david@stluke.mn

**Will Rand** (he/him/his), **Pianist**  
will@stluke.mn

**Darla Monson, Finance Secretary**  
952-473-7378, darla@stluke.mn or finance@stluke.mn

**Anne Deuring** (she/her/hers), **Secretary**  
952-473-7378, office@stluke.mn or anne@stluke.mn

**Randy Lofgren, Custodian/Sexton**  
952-473-7378

**Jill Engeswick** (she/hers), **BeFriendsers/Dementia Friends Coord.**  
952-426-2831, jillengeswick@gmail.com

**Joe Anderson & Brenda Davis, Sunday Morning Custodians**  
**Anna Flekke, Childcare Worker**

## OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Thursday  
8:30 am-4:00 pm

## MAILING ADDRESS

3121 Groveland School Road  
Minnetonka, MN 55391

## WEB ADDRESS

www.stluke.mn

## NEWSLETTER SCHEDULE

*The Challenge* is published monthly.  
The deadline for submitting articles  
for the August newsletter is:  
2:00 pm, July 22  
to office@stluke.mn

St. Luke Presbyterian Church  
3121 Groveland School Road  
Minnetonka, MN 55391

St. Luke is a joyful, inclusive and compassionate community on a spiritual journey  
seeking to do justice, make peace, act mercifully, and walk humbly with God.