



CONCORDIA  
Lutheran Church

# Connection

MAY 2020



BIBLE STUDIES | SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES | STAFFING UPDATES



# PASTOR'S NOTE

PASTOR MEGGERS | DMEGGERS@CKHOME.ORG

As of this writing, Missouri businesses allowed to reopen and limitations on social gatherings will be lifted as long as the six foot social distance is maintained starting on May 4. But wait...St. Louis and St. Louis County are extending the Stay at Home restrictions until at least May 18. I say that to highlight that answering the “when” of our gathering together for face-to-face worship again is not easy-going. So while we keep our eye on and eagerly hope for an answer to the “when”, Concordia staff and leadership are working on the “how”.

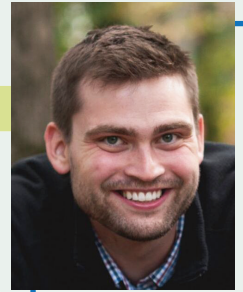
How will we gather? What will social distancing look like in worship? How will we ensure sanitary conditions? In short, how will we love you and serve you and keep one another safe even as we crave our coming together again? We miss you. We love you. We will be working with you in order to JOYfully and safely celebrate our Lord's love for us in all its fullness.

Meanwhile, God has been doing marvelous things among us, with us and through us. You are making the Love of Jesus known as you join one another in online worship. You are becoming tremendous ambassadors of the church as you hit that “share” button. We have comments and stories from around the nation of people that are “going to church” for the first time in a long time and loving it. One Dad from Minnesota shared this, “I think this is the first time my girls (ages 5 and 7) have ever actually listened to a whole sermon.”

Zoom has become a regular part of my life. It enables me to keep in touch with our staff, with area pastors and church leaders, and with our own Missouri District leaders and resources. My favorite Zoom experience is when I gather with other brothers and sisters in Christ for Bible Study. Pastor Steve Carter was able to Zoom the last few weeks of Lighthouse Bible Study. Jeanette and I are part of a monthly home bible study that recently met via Zoom. Pastor Matt Hoehner, Exec. Director of Christ Community Lutheran School, began a Sunday morning Bible study via Zoom. Would you believe there were over 60 folks in attendance this past Sunday? I hope your eyes, like mine, are being opened to some wonderful new opportunities for us to expand our Bible Studies. I hope our eyes are being opened to how we can use these digital tools to reach those who are outside our buildings. I ask you to share your stories of how God is working in these unique times.

# PASTOR'S NOTE

PASTOR SCHULTZ | JSCHULTZ@CKHOME.ORG



**The Scriptures remind us,** "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works which God has prepared in advance for us to do (Ephesians 2:10)." In every season of ministry, God has prepared good things for us to accomplish. There is never a moment in time which He has not equipped us for everything we need to carry out His plans.

We learn this truth in Confirmation. Here, we learn, grow, and fully appreciate the mystery of God's work in our lives and what He is calling us to do. In Confirmation, we learn about the Ten Commandments, Baptism, Communion, The Lord's Prayer, and so much more. But all of these things point to the work that God has prepared for us and in which the Spirit of God is equipping us. Ephesians 5 tells us what this looks like in our lives. It looks like love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

But how we talked about these truths looked different this year. For the second half of the year we met mostly online. Our Confirmation small groups continued to meet digitally to laugh, learn and love. Our students watched digital lessons of their Pastors teaching, completed service hours, their Bible story projects, and watched online services. And even though we could not see each other face-to-face God was still equipping us to do His good works.

And now Confirmation is over at Concordia for the year. We will take our normal Sabbath rest for the summer and reconvene in the Fall. However, God's work is never done. We will be offering an optional online Bible study for Junior Youth on Wednesday nights now that confirmation is over. See Nathan's article on page 6 for the full details.

What these Confirmands learned and what we all learned is this, God's is working through us right now. We are equipped for everything that we need because of Jesus who is with us. Until we can see each other again face-to-face, continue to grow in this love and mystery of Jesus. God is doing good through you. I look forward to our walk in the Lord together. "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in times of trouble (Psalm 46). May God richly bless you this Easter season and always.

# ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

KRISTIN ANDERSON | CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER | [KANDERSON@CKHOME.ORG](mailto:KANDERSON@CKHOME.ORG)



Our church life turned upside down in March with ministry, worship, where staff works and even what we work on. In the midst of all the turmoil some processes are “essential” – we still receive offerings, pay our bills and transition staff.

## Finances

One of the questions I am often asked is “How are offerings during COVID and what will they be by the end of the year?” Offerings in March were down 5% and in April down 12%. As for May and beyond, it is difficult to predict as times and conditions continue to change and we are living in a scenario not seen before in modern times. However, one thing I do know is that over the 16 years I have been at Concordia, members have always stepped up when the need arose. You always gave from your heart in times of plenty and especially in times of need. So, I do pray but also am confident in our continued ability to provide, regardless of the circumstance, inspirational worship, transformative discipleship ministry, meaningful ways to support our community and most important of all outreach opportunities to share the Gospel.

## Staffing Updates

### ***New Director for Sanctuary Worship***

We are excited to announce that Dr. Jim Marriott will be returning as our Director for Sanctuary Worship this summer. Jim primarily serves as the Director of Music Arts at Concordia Seminary and is looking forward to leading our choir, instrumentalists and worship. His partnership with us will be a blessing to Concordia.

### ***New Interim Director of Communications***

Jenna Dehn, current Communication Director, will be transitioning full time to Christ Community Lutheran School (CCLS) over the next couple months.

Concordia welcomes lifetime member, Maddy Spall as our new Interim Communication Director. Maddy graduated in 2017 from Stephens College with a majoring in Communications with an emphasis in Graphic Design. Maddy is also in school pursuing another degree but hopes to work around her busy schedule so she can serve at Concordia. We are excited to bring Maddy onboard.





# FAMILY ACTIVITIES

REBECCA SCHULTZ | CHILDREN'S MINISTRY DIRECTOR | [RSCHULTZ@CKHOME.ORG](mailto:RSCHULTZ@CKHOME.ORG)

We have been getting used to a lot of new changes! Change in schedules, change in school, change in policies, change in socializing, etc. but God hasn't changed.

We can find comfort in how God is described in Hebrews 13:8 "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." From the beginning of time to now, God has not changed. What comfort we can have in the God who rules over all still rules over all. He has not changed. Although how we share God's Word with your kids at Concordia has changed - the importance of sharing the Good News of our loving God as not!

## Bible Story Video and Lessons

Each week a Bible story will be shared through a video posted on our children's page on our website: [ckhome.org/article/children](http://ckhome.org/article/children). Along with the video we provide lessons, crafts, and activities for kids in preschool-5th grade. You will also find a weekly devotion, coloring pages for kids and adults, and links to some of our favorite KidsMin songs!



## Zoom Storytime and Sing-Along

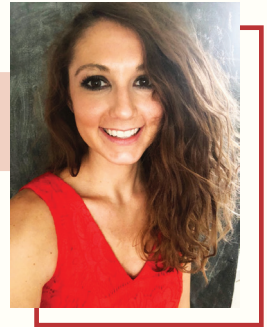
Join us for a Zoom Storytime and Singalong for preschool and kindergarteners each Monday at 10:00am and see some familiar and new faces! Find the link on our website ([CKhome.org/article/children](http://CKhome.org/article/children)) or join with **Meeting ID: 930 7582 6805 and Password: 600581**. Send it to other families with young children to share the fun!



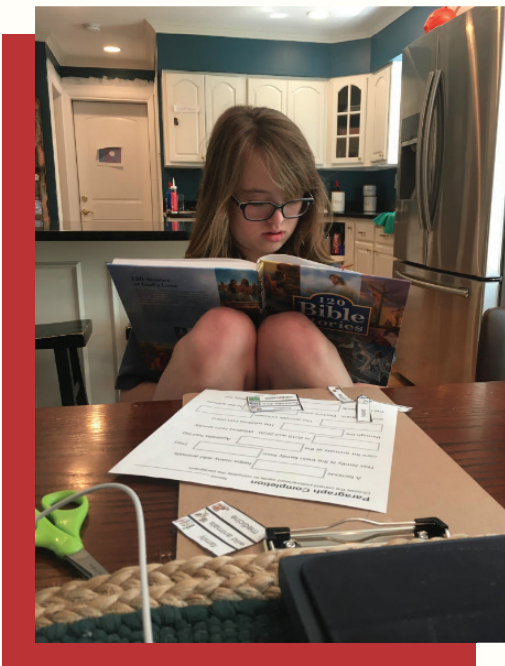


# SPECIAL NEEDS MINISTRY

JESSICA CRAWFORD | DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WITH SPECIAL NEEDS  
JCRAWFORD@CKHOME.ORG

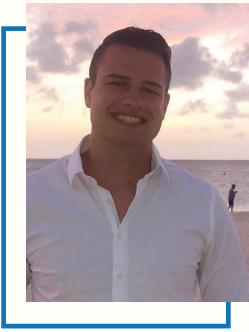


Children thrive when their environment and routines are consistent and predictable, but this is even more important for children with disabilities. With this in mind, we have strived to replicate our Sunday-morning experience for at-home learning!



Each week families can access a five-day unit on our Home Ministry portal ([CKhome.org/article/special-needs](https://ckhome.org/article/special-needs)) along with a video lesson and music to sing along to. The unit covers one Bible story that focuses on one Bible truth. A selection of new and predictable activities and crafts round out the lessons to reinforce the learning. For the past few weeks, families have been learning that “God takes care of us.” What better time than now to be reminded of that!

This past month, families also received calming kits from our sensory room partner, The Synapsory! These kits were full of calming sensory materials to assist children and families as they navigate this unprecedented and unpredictable time.



# YOUTH ACTIVITIES

**NATHAN DEHN | YOUTH DIRECTOR | NDEHN@CKHOME.ORG**

Tik Tok is a great app to express yourself and laugh at funny videos. My favorite videos are people doing mundane tasks while playing the “bored in the house” audio clip. Is your youth getting bored in the house? Encourage them to connect with other youth and join in the fun we are having every week!

## Senior Youth Zoom Bible Study:

Join us every Tuesday at 8:00pm for a 60 minute online Bible study through Zoom. There are few things in life that have as much impact on us as mass media. Especially while in quarantine, media has a tremendous influence on our culture, and we must be aware of the direct influence it can have on us. For the next several weeks we will be discussing how media plays an influence in our lives and how we, as Christians, should respond to media.

Anyone in high school is welcome to join!

Download the zoom app on your mobile device and click on the meeting link below.

**[zoom.us/j/4207947093](https://zoom.us/j/4207947093)**

## Senior Youth Daily Devotion:

Each week we dive into a new daily devotion through the Bible app. High schooler’s are able to read an impactful devotion on their time and share their thoughts with everyone else doing the devotion. It’s a great way to get into God’s word every day! Go to

**<https://CKhome.org/article/senior-youth/>** to find the devotion we are doing each week.

## Junior Youth Zoom in God’s Word:

Confirmation is over, but we still want to talk and have fun together! Join us every Wednesday at 7:00pm for a 60 minute Bible study through Zoom. Jeremy Dehn, our confirmation game master has planned exciting games to play every time we meet. Anyone’s invited so make sure to tell your friends and send them the Zoom link!

**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88563310733>**

## Summer Programing:

Summer is around the corner!! We are evaluating all of our summer programs on how to best serve the children and youth of our congregation and community while maintaining safety. Please keep on the lookout for communication about our summer activities and how we plan to still share God’s love this summer.

# WORSHIP ARTS

BRENDAN KNORP | DIRECTOR FOR THE WORSHIP ARTS | BKNORP@CKHOME.ORG



Is anyone else ready for church to return to something more normal? I know that I certainly am! When it comes to the online “Home Worship” videos I put together each week, I’m always aware of the compromises we are making to try and bring worship to you at your home instead of in community.



Every church is handling it differently based on where they are, who is on staff to create content, what restrictions they are honoring, what resources are available, and I’m sure many more details unique to their context.

Every one of us has had our lives affected. I’m cognizant of the fact that we are each struggling in our own way. I think all of us are trying to do the very best we can given the circumstances. It has reminded me of the importance of extending grace and patience with one another, especially when things don’t go the way we think they should or meet our perceived needs. And that brings me back to my first question - the one about being ready for “normal” again.

For the past 6 weeks, I’ve been imagining and anticipating a worship gathering at Concordia when we’re all united once again. The room is filled with singing, choirs, warm welcomes, fellowship, communion, hugs, joy, unicorns, rainbows... you get the idea. But once again, COVID-19 enters the picture and starts to dismantle that vision little by little. We’ll open up the doors again, but it will likely feel slow. We’ll still be sitting in little household groups separated from others at the other end of a pew. We could be wearing face masks. Kids won’t be gathering at the front for a Children’s Message yet. The “order” of worship may look more like these videos we’re doing now than what we were used to. Some of our population who are the most vulnerable won’t be there. We’ll still be offering a worship opportunity from home via livestream video of the services.



It has really dawned on me that I have to begin managing my expectations for what a return to congregational worship looks like. I've had a few people share with me over these past few weeks that what we are doing now doesn't "feel like worship/church". I empathize with them because, of course, it can't. On the day that the doors open on Saturday evening and Sunday morning, it still won't feel like worship/church as we have known it. That reality doesn't feel good to me and I'm sure it doesn't for you either. So that leads me to a better question: what is God teaching us through all of this? Is it patience? Is it a deeper understanding of what exactly it means to "worship" Him? Is it learning to appreciate what fellowship is? Is it a new understanding of what it means to be missional now that worship is something people are sharing services with families and friends online? Do we once again ask what it means to Be Still, Be One, and Be Faithful?

It's probably yes to all of these. Here's what I know for sure and what I want you all to hear. I want to face the future with optimism. This is still God's Church and we are His people. Let's not think small or look towards the coming months with fear. When it comes to ministry, let's see opportunities for us to GROW in faith, purpose, mission, generosity, mercy and love. It's not trying to hide the fact that we all grieve for the things we've lost or might not get back. It's knowing that, in spite of our circumstances, Jesus has overcome, and so we will too.

***"Do you now believe?" Jesus replied. "A time is coming and in fact has come when you will be scattered, each to your own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me. "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." -John 16:31-33***



# SHARING LOVE

SHARON EMA | DIRECTOR FOR THE HEALING ARTS | [SEMA@CKHOME.ORG](mailto:SEMA@CKHOME.ORG)

## “Are you being called?”

Our congregation has been blessed by volunteers who are ready to reach out to others. One way has been by our “callers.” Concordia has made over 800 calls to members, and continues to do this ministry weekly. These calls bring the love of Christ during these interesting times. Our volunteer callers were randomly assigned, and some have found reconnection with friends from the past, experience new connections and friendships, and others help connect Concordia members to meet needs like delivering groceries to their home. These blessings continue as those who were once called are now volunteering to make calls. We have more calls to make!

With the current social distancing, these contacts help to bridge the distance between us and God’s love with all that He has for us. We all need to hear God’s promises and love for us during these changing times. He uses us to reach out virtually at this time to bring His comfort and hope and to share each other’s burdens by listening and caring.

Let us continue to do what we can for our neighbors and community as we stay at home. Let us follow recommendations by the CDC and show our love for our neighbors and help to keep them safe. We can love others at a distance with precautions. A new way to show love for them!

## Another way to call, be a SpiritLifter

Keep in touch with family, friends, neighbors and fellow members at Concordia through a phone call or sending cards and letters. Join them in devotion and prayer. If you would like a list of names and numbers to call, please contact Sharon Karleskint at [skarleskint@CKhome.org](mailto:skarleskint@CKhome.org).

*“2 Corinthians 1:3-4 (NIV) “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.”*



## Prayer Square Ministry

Prayer squares are knitted or crocheted squares usually with a cross design. The ones who are making these squares pray for the person who will receive the square. These squares are designed to easily hold, put in your pocket or display as a reminder of the Lord's presence with you.

If you are interested in making some of these prayer squares, there are many websites with patterns to choose from. (Note: some places refer to them as "prayer cloths.") A couple of websites to look at:

**<http://southernbellecrochet.com/free-pattern-mini-prayer-cloth/>**

**[http://oslclaurelprayershawlministry.files.wordpress.com/2014/11/prayer\\_cloths\\_cross.pdf](http://oslclaurelprayershawlministry.files.wordpress.com/2014/11/prayer_cloths_cross.pdf)**

## Prayer Team

Concordia has a prayer team ready to pray for you. You may add a prayer request online at [ckhome.org](http://ckhome.org) website under the menu tab or submit requests to the Church office. We desire to keep you and your home in prayer during these times of need and joy!

Consider praying for those on the list this week. The prayer list is on Concordia's website after the prayer request form. **<https://CKhome.org/connect-from-home/prayer/>**

***If you have an immediate need for pastoral care, please call Sharon Karleskint at 314.822.7772 or after hours emergency at 314.283.6507***

# CALM OR NOT?

CHARLIE & DEBBIE DAVIS | DDAVIS@CKHOME.ORG



If your household is like ours, although you are trying to appear calm on the outside, you are feeling anything but calm. Like many of you, COVID-19 has forced both of us to work from home while balancing the educating and entertaining of our five-year old. We are isolated from our extended family, including our older children and aging parents, and missing the interaction with co-workers, friends, and our church family. For the most part, we are together 24/7 as a family, finding many joys in that togetherness, but at the same time we find ourselves losing some perspective and perhaps taking our anxieties about the situation out on the one people we love the most, each other. We have had more than one silly disagreement in the last few weeks, forcing us to stop and think about what changes we needed to make to support and encourage each other while intentionally working on our relationship.

I was reminded of a book by Max Lucado called *Anxious About Nothing, Finding Calm in a Chaotic World*. This book is based on Philippians 4:6, Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. He introduces the reader to the CALM acronym for prayer. Lucado asserts that in times that we are worried, when our life seems chaotic or out of control, we can use this acronym to pray, putting these actions into practice to remain calm.

- C** Celebrating who God is
- A** Asking God for help
- L** Leaving the problem with him
- M** Meditating on the good thing

For more ideas for building relationships during these times, see <https://CKhome.org/article/relationships/>



## **Encourage one another and build each other up. 1 Thessalonians 5:11**

Even during this time of social isolation, fear and uncertainty we can still strive to be the light and the love of Christ and spread joy to others in the process. That's where CK Members on a Mission comes in! During the months of May, June and July we encourage you, as a family, to perform at least 20 missions that spread joy and the gospel.

We know that each family is unique so we have included 45 different acts to inspire you. We also encourage you to include the message of Christ's love whenever you can! If decorating the sidewalk, then include a great big beautiful, "Jesus loves you!" If delivering cookies to a neighbor, then include an uplifting Bible verse!

Here's how it works: Visit **[CKhome.org/mission](http://CKhome.org/mission)** to download a printable "Mission Menu". Check off or color in the spaces next to the missions once you complete them. Once you have completed your 20 different acts of spreading joy, send a photo of the completed Mission Menu to Jessica at **[jcrawford@CKhome.org](mailto:jcrawford@CKhome.org)**. Then, your family will receive a yard sign to hopefully help encourage others to act as well.

**Be creative! Have fun! Spread joy!**

**Please follow all current CDC and County guidelines when participating in CK Members on a Mission.**

**MISSION MENU**

Color in or check off at least 20 missions, then send a picture of your completed Mission Menu to Jessica at [jcrawford@ckhome.org](mailto:jcrawford@ckhome.org). Visit [CKhome.org/Mission](http://CKhome.org/Mission) for full details & instructions.

- 1 Leave a note with a Bible verse and a word of encouragement on someone's windshield.
- 2 Pay for the meal of the car behind you in line.
- 3 Mail a card to a family member.
- 4 Donate non-perishable food to a food pantry.
- 5 Invite someone to online worship.
- 6 Share a Concordia post on social media @ckhomechurch.
- 7 Post a picture of your family participating in online worship. Tag @ckhomechurch and #ckmembersonmission.
- 8 Post a picture of your family members participating in lessons or Bible studies from the Home Ministry portal. Tag @ckhomechurch and #ckmembersonmission.
- 9 Write a prayer list as a family and hang it on your refrigerator. Pray for those people as a family.
- 10 Assemble a s'mores making kit and deliver it to another family.
- 11 Go on a family walk and pick up litter.
- 12 Record an uplifting video as a family and send to a friend or family member.
- 13 Write and send a thank you note to a healthcare worker.
- 14 Leave a generous tip when ordering food from a restaurant. Write Jesus loves you on the receipt.
- 15 Bake cookies and deliver to a neighbor.
- 16 Call a friend. Tell them why you are thankful for them.
- 17 Leave snacks and drinks for delivery drivers on your porch.
- 18 Pick or buy some flowers and brighten up someone's doorstep.
- 19 Paint kindness rocks and leave for someone to find on a walk.
- 20 Donate blood.

STAY SAFE &  
STAY CONNECTED!



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