



The monthly Newsletter of:

April 2020

# Agnus Dei Lutheran Church

Gather in Grace

Grow in Faith

Go in Service



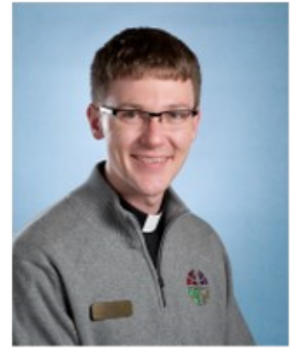
Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

The congregation of Agnus Dei Lutheran Church celebrates the amazing diversity of God's beloved children. We welcome all, regardless of age, ethnicity, abilities, faith background, race, family configuration, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression. We enthusiastically invite you into this worshiping congregation as we strive to share God's inclusive love with everyone in our community and in our world.



## From Our Pastor

"To other men, the present might not seem to be a suitable time for a festival... Now, indeed, everything is tears and every one is mourning, and wailings resound daily through the city because of the multitude of the dead and dying... For many terrible things have happened already. First, they drove us out; and when alone, and persecuted, and put to death by all, even then we kept the feast. And every place of affliction was to us a place of festival: field, desert, ship, inn, prison; but the perfected martyrs kept the most joyous festival of all, feasting in heaven." (Dionysius of Alexandria, from Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*, VII:22:2,4)



Beloved, grace and peace to you. This is, beyond all doubt, a strange time. I've heard many refer to the COVID-19 pandemic as "unprecedented," but sadly, it is all too preceded. Although (thankfully) none of us have experienced pandemic or epidemic before in our own lives, this has happened many times before. Bishop Dionysius of Alexandria wrote in the 3rd century about the horrors Cyprian's Plague visited upon the people of that city. For all of human history, death has been a constant companion.

In some ways, this novel coronavirus is like the ashes we smeared on our foreheads 5 weeks ago (back when we were still touching each other!). It is a reminder of our mortality, a reminder that death is something we cannot escape. Like those ashes, it is also an invitation to consider what is most important in life, and a call to place our trust in the One who has conquered death once and for all to give us eternal life.

We can think of this pandemic as a Lenten fast imposed on all humanity. We must fast from physical gatherings, from unnecessary errands, from the public contact to which we are accustomed. Fasting can help us focus our attention on finding God by showing us where God is not: God is not in the creature comforts we must give up, God is not found in good health or a steady income, which many now are losing. Where do you see God in these times? How is God still at work?

Perhaps one of the toughest questions we must ask ourselves is this: how do we celebrate the feast of the resurrection in a time of fasting? Bishop Dionysius noted that during the plague, many felt it was not an appropriate time to celebrate the Easter festival; and yet, to those who had been saved, he writes, every place of affliction was a place of festival. Even now in our communal affliction, Christ's resurrection is being made manifest. Even as people in our community, some our own friends and neighbors, fall ill and die, we still celebrate the resurrection.

For better or worse, our Easter celebration will overlap with this great Lenten fast in which we find ourselves. I encourage you all to take this time to intentionally focus on what God is doing in the world around you, and where God may be calling you in this time. It may be to greater service, or perhaps simply to greater spirituality. We can use this pandemic season to grow closer to the Source of All Life through prayer, sacrificial giving, and fasting--the spiritual practices of Lent--as well as other practices like daily phone calls to friends or regular walks along the harbor.

As we journey together through this wilderness time, keep your eyes on the Pillar of Cloud and Fire that leads us, and on the Rock from which our living water flows. By God's help, humanity and the Church has survived thus far, and God will not fail us now.

Yours in Christ,  
Pr. Seth



Please let Pastor Seth know if you are in need of pastoral care. If you would like to be contacted please call the office at 253-851-6222 or email [pastorseth@agnusdeilutheran.org](mailto:pastorseth@agnusdeilutheran.org)

## Agnus Dei During the COVID-19 Pandemic

As you are aware, many changes are happening in response to the health risk we all face during this time of global pandemic. Not only for individuals, but for the church as well. In this difficult time our ministry may look different but it hasn't stopped. While we cannot physically gather in person, our worship has gone "livestream." Our personal connections are limited to phone calls, texts, and Facebook messages. Where we once gathered to meet around a conference table, we now gather at screens to meet online. These changes have been made in rapid time and we are learning as we go. It seems that just as adjustments are made, our situation changes and more adjustments are needed.

Rest assured, although our building may be closed, our church remains open. We are developing strategies to keep connected, formalizing ways to be sure that no one falls through the cracks. Your church staff and committees are continuing the work of the ministry we share, we are just doing it remotely!

Keep your eye out for email messages and frequent updates to our webpage; we are posting helpful information there. We are also looking into group texting so information can be distributed quickly. Phone calls to the church office are being forwarded so don't hesitate to reach out if we can be of help. The work of the church continues.



*Weekly text study attendees gather online Wednesday mornings at 10am through the meeting app, Zoom*



*For comfort and for healing:*

- \* Marian Ano
- \* Barbara Ausich
- \* Deb Brueckner
- \* Audrey Clinton
- \* Alynne Gootkin
- \* Richard and Marilyn Hermstad
- \* Dave Kulman
- \* George Mitchell
- \* Jack Oakes
- \* Joannah Powers
- \* Anne Sapp
- \* Hal and Myra Snider
- \* Johnny Tierny
- \* Rose VanderKlomp
- \* Trudy Wagner
- \* Dick Werner

*In service to our country:*

- \* Jason Barelli, U.S. Navy
- \* CAPT. Jenny Nussbaum, US Public Health Service

## A Message from Our Council President

Greetings from your church council.

I miss my church friends and our worshipping together. It is my prayer that during this virus epidemic that this finds you all well until we can once again worship together.

Church routines have certainly changed but some committees are still remotely functioning. The church council has met on line with a program called Zoom where we can hear and actually see each one as they speak.

Be aware that our Sunday and Wednesday services are being transmitted via the internet. You can access the service at 6:00 pm on Wednesdays and 9:45 am on Sundays. The videos remain online so you can watch them any time. You can reach them on our website, [www.agnusdeilutheran.org](http://www.agnusdeilutheran.org)

Please be aware that our expenses continue as our staff continues to do their services plus power, water, phone, internet, maintenance, etc., continues.

I encourage you to continue to submit your contributions to our church so we don't get too far behind.

God bless each and every one.

Gene Kuest, council President



## Organ Progress

About 35 people visited the Fritts Organ Shop early in March. They toured the workshop and saw many completed parts for our new organ along with the specialized tools used to create each piece. A video presentation showed the metal being cast on a bed of sand to create the pipe metal for the pipes in the organ. From the large wooden pedal pipes to the smallest metal pipes, trays of completed pipes were waiting to be put inside the organ case. The decorative woodcarvings above the façade pipes are also in progress.



## Little Lambs Preschool

*A Ministry of Agnus Dei Lutheran Church*

**"The Building is Closed, but the spirit and mission of Little Lambs is alive and supporting our Gig Harbor Family"**

On 11 March, Washington State's Governor Inslee directed a statewide closure of schools between 17 Mar~27 April. (Little Lambs closures follow the Peninsula School District.) Pastor Seth's task force prepared and council approved Agnus Dei's virus plan for worship, staff continuity, attendance, closure, cleaning and safety. In a special meeting on 14 March, the Little Lambs Board finalized and approved our portion of this overall congregational plan that directly impacted our staff, tuition, parents and their child's attendance.

- The LL Board used three guiding goals in developing our plan: 1) to preserve the integrity of the Agnus Dei mission to the community through Little Lambs; 2) continue to care for our Little Lambs families and community, without whom we wouldn't have a program; and 3) care for our staff by continuing to pay and support them as best we can because they are the ones who breathe life into the school's mission. Sadly, we closed our school on 16 March with plans to reopen it for children on 27 April. Only time will tell how the plan continues into May and June; the Board will review and evaluate the weeks ahead during our April meeting.

To assist children and their families :

- Miss Shannon and the teachers have been emailing families ideas and activities to keep their preschoolers engaged and remain in electronic contact with their students as needed.
- The past week, teachers have been holding video read alouds and Miss Shannon has been video chatting with preschoolers. She reports that it has been very entertaining.
- The Lambs staff is maintaining the cleaning standards within our office/classroom spaces and have locked the classroom doors to minimize unintended entry.
- We have closed the playground to children for the duration of the closure for safety and sanitary protection.
- We look forward to an amazing May and end-of-year school closure in June.

Dave Marquardt, Little Lambs Preschool Board Chair





## Minister of Programs, Sister Ann Shultz

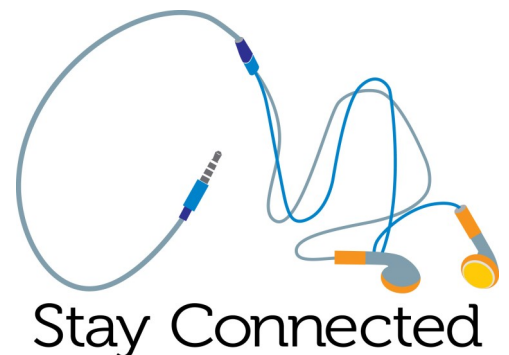
During this pandemic, I am working on new and creative ways for us to stay connected and continue to be church together during this time of coronavirus exile. Here are a few of the things I am working on:

- 1) Creating small groups to check in on each other, help out one another when needed, and build relationships. Currently groups are about 15-17 people. If we get more people to volunteer as group leaders, we can make these groups smaller. If you are willing to serve in that role, please let me know.
- 2) Emails with devotions, prayers, and family activities. (Copies will be snail-mailed to those without email)
- 3) At-home Sunday School
- 4) I have created a private Agnus Dei Facebook group where we can have community conversations and connect with one another. This is a private group that will only be visible to group members. To join this group, search for "Agnus Dei Lutheran Church in Exile" on Facebook and request to join. Alternatively, email me ([sisterann@agnusdeilutheran.org](mailto:sisterann@agnusdeilutheran.org)) and I will send you back an invite. (The link I emailed out earlier does not seem to be working properly.)
- 5) I'm also considering some "virtual" social activities -- like Yak & Yarn, happy hours, and/or game nights via Zoom.

If you have any ideas or suggestions of ways we can be of assistance in this difficult time, please don't hesitate to let me know.

Stay healthy!

Sister Ann



### March Project– Homeless Kits

In March we collected and bagged up helpful hygiene items to be distributed to persons who are homeless. 100 of these kits have been delivered, some to homeless vets in Bremerton and some to Nativity House in Tacoma. Thank you all for your generosity. Your gifts were gratefully received. Also, many thanks to Thrivent for a \$250.00 grant to supplement your donations and a big shout out to Beverly Buster and to Linda Ribary for help with shopping and delivery.

FYI: Finding a point of distribution in Gig Harbor or KPN was difficult. If anybody has knows who is doing distribution here, please call the church office or let Ronnie Kulman know.



*Boxes of kits ready for distribution.*



*We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair;  
persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.*  
2 Corinthians 4:8-9 NIV Bible

Dr. Andrew Weil once stated, "Health is a dynamic state of balance that breaks down occasionally, resetting itself at a new level." It's a good adage to remember in our current state of flux.

Not that long ago, children were in school. We only needed to stay home from work if we were sick. The COVID-19 virus has deeply affected all of us. It has changed the way we shop, the way we interact, the way we learn, the way we worship, the way we work, the way we play, and the way we plan for the future.

A month ago, we would not have used phrases like "social distancing," "flattening the curve," or "self-isolation." Now, these words are as familiar as the names of our grandchildren. How are you coping with COVID-19 and all of its restrictions? All of these changes in our lives can be a strain on our state of wellbeing. Let's look more closely at our new reality.

### **Social Distancing and Mental Health** (Information from Washington Department of Health)

We need each other. Being isolated from other people can make our physical and mental health worse and can trigger anxiety and depression, especially if you live alone. Social distancing is hard on our bodies and our emotions. When we add to this the worries about unknowns—will I get sick? will someone I love get sick? what will happen to my job?—we layer on additional stresses to our physical and mental health. If you find yourself lonely, stressed, or anxious, pay attention to these emotions and take action:

1. Avoid watching, reading, or listening to news reports that cause you to feel anxious or distressed. A near-constant stream of news reports is not calming. Seek out information from reliable sources like the Washington State Department of Health or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention just a couple times a day. "Fact check" what you see on social media. Spread good information.
2. Stay connected with others and maintain your social networks. Go for a walk and wave to your neighbors (from a safe distance!). Ask them if they are well or if they need anything.
3. Introduce structure into your day. Structure and routine may be helpful for people with mental health vulnerabilities, especially during times of uncertainty. Even if you are working from home or if your life looks completely different right now, try to maintain familiar routines in daily life as much as possible. For instance, we'll feel better if we shower, get dressed, and eat breakfast every morning.
4. Check out these resources to help support your mental health or that of a loved one:

[Care for Your Coronavirus Anxiety Toolkit](#)

[How to Help Someone with Anxiety or Depression During COVID-19](#)

[Resources to Support Mental Health and Coping with the Coronavirus](#)

And if you are in crisis, don't hesitate to call the 24-Hour Crisis Line at 866-427-4747 or text HEAL to 741741 to get confidential text access to a trained crisis counselor at any time of the day or night

Remember, you can find great information on the state's new web portal for information about COVID-19 ([coronavirus.wa.gov](https://coronavirus.wa.gov)), on the Department of Health website ([www.doh.wa.gov](https://www.doh.wa.gov)), or on the CDC website ([www.cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)). Or you can call the COVID-19 hotline at 1-800-525-0127 and press #, or email them at [DOH.Information@doh.wa.gov](mailto:DOH.Information@doh.wa.gov).

## Simply Breathe

Yoga gives a great deal of attention to the sacredness of our lungs and yogis have long been paying attention to their breath. We are wise to focus on practices that strengthen, tone and cleanse the respiratory system by expanding lung capacity. Developing this awareness is one of the great gifts and contributions of yoga.

Caring for our health and well being is imperative, especially at these challenging times. Remember that deep breathing is one of the best things you can do to keep your immune system strong. During deep breathing, the diaphragm moves lymph, and your lymphatic system supports your immune system.

Well-being exists at all levels, body, mind and spirit. Give attention to each of these areas in the way that speaks most to you. You may prefer walks in nature or practicing yoga. You now have time to set a schedule for prayer and meditation. Be mindful of how important it is to get adequate sleep and rest. Try to cook and eat as healthily as possible. Stay well hydrated. Find your way to maintaining balance within all areas of your being, an essential to your health and wellness.

With our typical daily activities temporarily canceled, we are aware of what we are missing, but let's choose instead to focus on what we **do** have and what we **can** do. This pause in our lives will create a deepened sense of gratitude when the crisis ends and we return to our familiar daily activities with newfound joy and appreciation.

God bless and stay well.

Zoe Holmes, RN

## We Celebrate...

### APRIL BIRTHDAYS

1	Gail Brandt
3	Ginny Eilers
5	Kathryn Duncan
6	David Salge
8	Pam Martin, Daryl Daugs
11	Gloria Witt
12	Laura Farley, Devin Irons
13	David Moore
14	George Kenefick
15	Austin Moore
16	Audrey Clinton
17	Olin Hogeberg, Virginia Witt-Abbott
18	Kathy Fox, Peter Wagner
20	Alex Meacham, Mary Francis
22	Chris Stephens
23	Sue Burnett, Olivia Iversen
24	Jenny Nussbaum
25	Jackie Kimball
26	Dianna Carlson, Mike Evans
28	Susan Luebeck, Beverly Buster
30	Coni Liljengren

### APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

1	Leif and Katie Dobszinsky
3	Lance and Marilyn Colyar
9	Kimberly Morgan and Paul Gross
17	Robin Winslow and Heinz Malon
10	Al Abbott and Virginia Witt Abbott

## Daily Prayers

### Matins (Morning Prayer)

O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out (*or stay in*) with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### Compline (Night Prayer)

Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, comfort the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for your love's sake. Amen.

*From Evangelical Lutheran Worship*



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>29</b> 9:45 AM Worship with Holy Communion	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b> 10:00 AM Weekly Text Study via Zoom 6:00 PM Midweek Lenten Worship	<b>2</b> 10:00 AM Church Staff meeting via Zoom 4:00 Peace Lu- theran Dinner	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b> Palm Sunday 9:45 AM Worship with Holy Communion	<b>6</b> 7:00 PM Vespers	<b>7</b> 7:00 PM Vespers	<b>8</b> 10:00 AM Weekly Text Study via Zoom 7:00 PM Vespers	<b>9</b> 10:00 AM Church Staff meeting via Zoom 7:00 PM Maundy Thursday worship	<b>10</b> 7:00 PM Good Friday Worship	<b>11</b> 7:00 Easter Vigil
<b>12</b> Easter Sunday 9:45 AM Worship with Holy Communion	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 10:00 AM Weekly Text Study via Zoom	<b>16</b> 10:00 AM Church Staff meeting via Zoom	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b> 9:45 AM Worship with Holy Communion	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> 1:00 Gather Bible Study via Zoom	<b>22</b> 10:00 AM Weekly Text Study via Zoom	<b>23</b> 10:00 AM Church Staff meeting via Zoom	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b> 9:45 AM Worship with Holy Communion	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 10:00 AM Weekly Text Study via Zoom	<b>30</b> 10:00 AM Church Staff meeting via Zoom	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

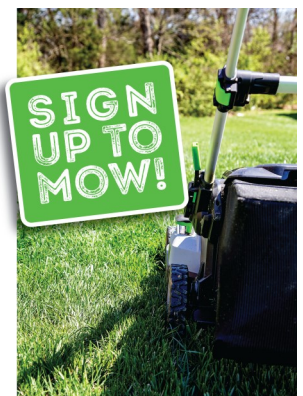
All services can be viewed at the appointed time by clicking the livestream link at <https://www.agnusdeilutheran.org/connecting.html> the videos will remain up for later viewing.

At this time our You Tube channel has 60 subscribers when we reach 100 we qualify for a custom URL, which will make it easier for folks to find it. Be sure to hit “**subscribe**” and encourage your friends and family as well!

### ***Little Time & Even Less Talent Needed:***

**How can you help the church in this time of social distancing??**

Well, very simply. Spring is upon us even though we're restricted from social contact. Warmer weather will certainly make the grass in front of our beloved church grow. Besides, as was mentioned in an email blast to many in the church, weed & feed fertilizer was applied in late March to ensure the dandelions didn't grow faster than the grass. Soon, the grass at the front of the church will need cutting on an almost weekly basis. Everything needed, short of about an hour of one's time and very little talent, is available in the mower shed outside behind the choir area. Gas cans are filled with ethanol-free gas, sharpened blades installed, filters & oil replaced, etc. If you can help in this effort, coordinate with Don Krump . He'll keep a list of who volunteers to do what when. His email is: [dsjetsetters@aol.com](mailto:dsjetsetters@aol.com) & cell is: (415) 676-9811. He will handle the north hill, rear of the church & the parking area by the barn. After all, this would be a great way to get some fresh air, exercise and time alone!



Agnus Dei Lutheran Church  
10511 Peacock Hill Ave NW  
Gig Harbor, WA 98332

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

*The monthly newsletter of*

Agnus Dei Lutheran Church  
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Submit newsletter items, subscription requests and address  
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*Congregational Vice President: Beverly Buster*

*Council Secretary: Greg Jackson*

*Treasurer: Julie Bell*

*Faith Community Nurse: Zoe Holmes*

*Faith Community Nurse: Gwen Daugs*

**Council**

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Kuest, Larry Mjelde, Bob Nussbaum, Linda Zehnder*

**Little Lambs Preschool**

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*Financial Secretary: Kimberly Morgan*

*Little Lambs Board: Margaret Duncan, Dave Marquardt, Nels Peterson,  
Rob Powers, Maggie Rodgers*