

## Pastor Matt's E-note Jan 13, 2020

Dear Friends in Christ,

Many people have been asking how confirmation is working in this time of distance learning. Our COVID response and preparedness team made the decision earlier this summer to follow Central School's lead if numbers were increasing and a decision had to be made regarding online-only learning. After eight weeks of in-person confirmation, we sadly had to follow suit and switch to a distance learning model as well.

The confirmands are in their "catechism year" and have spent 12 weeks together thus far discussing Luther, the reformation, and our Lutheran confessions. These past three large group meetings have taken place over Zoom, an online meeting resource where the students can interact with one another, ask questions, and actually see one another's faces (if they choose to turn their camera on...we're working on this). I prepare a slide show presentation for each large group and I "share my screen" so we can follow along together. We begin with a "would you rather" ice breaker, we do some review from last session, and then we go over the next section of our catechism. After our large group time the students go to their individual small groups through Zoom "breakout rooms". These breakout rooms are hosted by their small group guides and the students discuss that night's topic and share their highs and lows.

Every other week is a small group only Wednesday. On these small group nights each group is free to do whatever they want with their time together. They can take on a service project together or they can simply have some fellowship and fun time. The purpose of small group nights is to bond together as a cohort, build trust, and have fun. One week a group might go to Feed My Starving Children for a meal pack and the next they might have a game night over Zoom.

Distance learning is not ideal and it is not what I had in mind when laying out the schedule and curriculum for this year. However, these young people are very resilient and I can see them grow in their faith, grow together as a class, and grow in their knowledge of our Lutheran traditions. A lot of things have been canceled due to this virus. But confirmation has not been canceled and these kids have shown me that the fun of learning has not been canceled either.

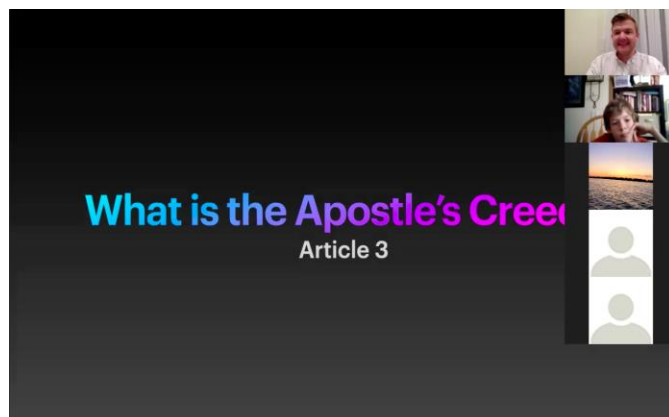
Please join me in praying for a swift roll out of the vaccine and a decrease in cases so we can return to in-person learning soon. There is a real possibility that this will happen before our program year is over. And continue to hold our confirmation youth in prayer as they continue their journey to affirm, for themselves, the words said over them in their baptism.

Speaking of prayer, many are feeling anxious about the instability, anger, and fear raging in our nation today. Please join us as we pray for our country, our first responders, and our leaders.

Rise up and come to our help, merciful God, for we are in need. Our spirits are weighed down with fear; our bodies feel as fragile as the dust from which we came. All that we have trusted seems hidden from sight. Although this moment has come upon our nation, you have not forgotten us. We do not trust in our own power or strength, but in your steadfast love in every generation. Show us your face in this time of trial, remind us of your faithfulness, and save us for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

-All Creation Sings, p. 49, "A prayer for a time of civic distress"

God's peace be with you,  
Pastor Matt



## Announcements

**Coffee Hour Bible Study** – Tuesday, January 19 at 8:30 am all are welcome, we will social distance

**Church Council** – Tuesday, January 19 at 6:30 pm

**Men's Fellowship** – Saturday, February 6 at 8:00 am at Hillcrest Café

**Women's Fellowship** – Saturday, February 6 at 8:00 am in All Saints Fellowship Hall

### STAY IN TOUCH WITH US

#### Email:

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For those who have local cable our worship services are on  
Jaguar channel 901 and Mediacom channel 8.

#### Offerings

- ~ Mail in your offerings to: All Saints Lutheran, P.O. Box 550 NYA, MN 55368
- ~ Drop them off (office is open Monday - Thursday 8 am - 3 pm)
- ~ Go to our online giving page: <http://www.allsaintsnya.org/about-us/online-giving.html>