

Pastor's Report to Congregation Council
August 20, 2024

This past month was somewhat of an unusual month for me due to the fact that I spent a week of it at the Chautauqua Institute serving as the Lutheran House pastor and engaging in continuing education. The week's theme was "Water: Necessity and Crisis." The many lectures throughout the day focused on water, from microplastics to the beauty of the Great Barrier Reef. What made the week so enthralling and engaging were the many lectures offered by National Geographic representatives. Part of my responsibilities as the house pastor was to lead worship on Sunday and Thursday evening, offer a one-hour lecture on a selected topic (I chose to talk about sabbaticals), connect with the other "house chaplains," and make myself available to the residents that week. Additionally, I chose to begin each day in worship with the community at the main lecture hall. It was most certainly a good way to spend a week learning, and I'm especially thankful to June Trenty for encouraging me to apply to serve there for a week.

Much of the month was spent in committee meetings, visiting with members of the congregation, and performing administration duties in the office, especially beginning to plan for Fall activities and discussing how things might look in covering duties while Deacon Lindsay is away on maternity leave. My Mutual Ministry committee met on July 30th at Joe Obermeier's house (thanks for hosting).

Regarding worship this past month, we welcomed 15 new members into the life and ministry here at St. Matthew. It's such a joy to continue to witness the Holy Spirit blowing through our church and drawing people into our life together. We blessed the teachers, children, and the backpacks they carry as they start off yet another year of learning. We heard from the Luther League as they presented a short video from the ELCA Youth Gathering and heard some of what they wrote in thanksgiving for the event.

Synodically, I served as emergency coverage for Pastor Jim Watson at Zion Lutheran while he was away on vacation for 2 weeks. I also spent an hour and a half on a Zoom meeting the Synod office required entitled "The Trajectory of the Eucharist."

Looking ahead, next month will also be an unusual month of ministry for me as I take advantage of weeks 2 and 3 of vacation for the year. Pulpit supply is in place for September 1, and Deacon Lindsay will lead worship services September 8 as Sunday School Teachers get installed and Rally Day kicks off the academic/programming year here at St. Matthew.

In Christ, with Christ, for Christ!

Pastor Steve Mahaffey