

Pastor Judy Brennan – Associate Pastor for Caring Ministries

Cross of Christ Lutheran Church – Annual Report 2020-2021

Phew! What a year it's been!

Once we realized that the quarantine was going to last longer than a few weeks, I tried to shift the ways I could consistently offer pastoral ministry to the people of Cross of Christ. My efforts also focused on other ministry avenues to help keep our community connected to God, to each other, and to our neighbors. Here are some highlights from the past year:

Facilitating Zooms!

- Quilters met monthly to check in with each other and share their quilting projects.
- LARKS met monthly to plan activities – including the Ernst Schwidder Liturgical Arts project and the Cross of Christ Trivia event.
- Happy Hour with Pastor Judy – This weekly group has been going strong since it started. It brings attendees together get to know each other better and give mutual support. While we have a light-hearted name and share many laughs, we have also shared various challenges and many thoughtful insights.
- Book Study – I have facilitated two different book discussion groups. One on prayer called *Help, Thanks, Wow* by Anne Lamott and another about themes in the Bible titled *Inspired: Slaying Giants, Walking on Water, and Loving the Bible Again* by Rachel Held Evans.

Pastoral Care

- I continue to offer pastoral ministry through phone calls, emails, and texts.
- I manage the PrayerNet emails and have added a password protected "Updates" section on our Cross of Christ website with Kristie Walker's assistance.

Other Caring Ministries

- I organized "Caring Caller" volunteers to reach out to various members to check in and help people stay connected.
- Judy Giseburt and I now organize and support the volunteers who participated in the Greeting Card Ministry.
- PACK (Practicing Acts of Christian Kindness) – I organized this program three times over the past year. Interested participants give three small gifts to "practice kindness". These gifts go to members of Cross of Christ, as well as friends, neighbors, family, and strangers.
- Holiday Gift Bags for homebound and other members – Cross of Christ members donated items and funds to fill gift bags and volunteers helped to deliver these bags during the Christmas Holiday.

Service Ministry

- I continue to participate in and organize a rescue bread program to distribute among ministries of Cross of Christ including Sophia Way, Helen's Place, and Congregations for the Homeless. This group informally call themselves the "Bread Fairies".
- I worked with Judy to organize the Easter donation project to support tree planting programs. 300 Trees is a local group in Bellevue and ELCA Good Gifts has a fruit tree program overseas in developing countries. Cross of Christ donated over \$800 to these two programs.

Worship & Reflection

- I have been writing the prayers to accompany the daily devotions that are emailed out to members for over a year. Pastor Dave is now helping with that too and we plan to continue as this still seems to be a regular part of the day for many members.
- I occasionally participate in remote worship and help out with readings, prayers, preaching, and leading worship.

- I helped Judy plan the "Holy Week in a Bag" project and helped Pastor Dave with the distribution (along with some great volunteers!).

Wider ELCA Community

- I attend local clergy cluster meetings, the NW Washington Synod Convocation, and our NW Washington Synod Assembly. I try to attend other synod meetings when time allows.

It has been a very busy year and I remain grateful to be a part of such a wonderful community of both staff and lay people who are doing their best to adapt to our ever-evolving environment. I will continue to serve in whatever ways I can. Thank you all for your support of me and my ministry!

Sincerely,

Pastor Judy Brennan