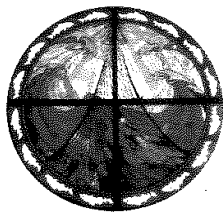


Co-Pastors

The Rev. Christian G. N. Holleck
The Rev. Tiffany Nicely Holleck

Music Minister

Rodney Schuller

**Parish Administrator**

Lois Thomas

Administrative Assistant

Diane Stauss

Custodian

Rebecca Catron

St. Peter's Lutheran Church

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Wednesday,
March 28, 2018

Dear members and friends,

We would like to take a few minutes to explain the Church Council's recent decision about worship service times. For the past several months St. Peter's has been assessing the best way to meet the worship needs of our congregation and community, our younger families and our aging parishioners. After much discussion, prayer, and valuable input from the Worship Options Task Force and the Worship and Music Committee, it was proposed and unanimously approved by the Council that moving forward our year-round schedule be:

- Beginning on the Sunday after Christmas until Palm Sunday, we shall hold one Sunday Service at 9:30 a.m. with Sunday School and Adult Education following worship.
- Beginning on Palm Sunday through Christmas, we shall hold two services, at 8:30 and 11:00 a.m. with Sunday School and adult education between the services.

This means that beginning, Sunday, April 8, our worship will be at 8:30 and 11:00 a.m. We would like to share with you some information about the process and deliberations that brought us to this decision.

The Process

Following the Congregation-wide visioning process in the Spring of 2017, and as part of the Strategic Planning process, four task forces, open to all members of the congregation, were established. One was "Worship Options." This task force eventually met at a joint meeting with the Worship and Music Committee where, together, recommendations were presented, discussed, and modified. After a very lengthy and heart-felt meeting it became clear that there was no consensus. Nonetheless, a recommendation was sent to the Church Council, noting difference of opinion on a number of issues. The Church Council deliberated over the course of two meetings, taking extra time for bible study, prayer, and intentional conversation with some of the church's fragile elderly as well as families involved in Sunday School. In the end, the Church Council did not endorse the earlier recommendation but did come to a prayerful – and unanimous - decision.

The Deliberations

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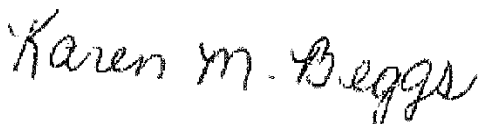
Deliberations and discernment were complex and wide-ranging, including these topics:

- energy and fellowship present at one well-attended service but also the benefits of offering members and non-members options, especially during summer months
- declining attendance at St. Peter's (and most churches) but also the realization that total attendance is less with one service
- the ramifications for those with health issues that make an early service extremely difficult or impossible
- the impact on the Altar Guild, special music, Sunday school teachers, pastors and staff, including the nursery caregiver
- the recruitment of worship assistants
- attendance statistics
- what other churches are doing
- possible implications for outreach
- when summer visitors attend
- keeping as much continuity as possible in worship times
- and offering mid-week options

Moving Forward

We are a changing church in changing times. This is both exciting and unsettling. Council members have committed to supporting the 11:00 am service through attendance as least once a month. We are exploring suggestions for enhancing the worship experience at the second service and to continue the fellowship developed over the winter. Further questions can be directed to me or the officers.

Christ is risen. Alleluia, everyone!



Karen Beggs, Congregation President

"O come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!
For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand."

Psalm 95:6-7
