



FISHHOOK

June / July 2022

There is an irony in our world. We have more options and resources to connect with each other than perhaps at any time in history, and yet people report in studies and surveys that we may be the loneliest and most-depressed people in history. I'm not sure which comes first on this, but this appears connected to a mental health crisis being reported in our nation, which especially impacts our young people. As with anything else, many factors are at play here, and I certainly can't speak to all of them, but let me encourage a few timeless truths from Scripture that are often brought up as helpful, even from non-religious sources.

Sabbath (Abide in Christ)

Jesus taught us the Sabbath was made for us. We need rest. This does not mean phrenetic recreation that many Americans consider restful (when it isn't), but pulling away from all unnecessary labor for a time of restoration and recovery. The invitation to abide in Christ, found in John 15, captures the essence of Sabbath. **(continued on next page)**



I encourage you to spend joyful time with others this summer.

(continued from first page) It is a call to drink from the Living Water, to rejoice in Him whose we are, and to reflect on who we are and what God has prepared in advance for us to do—with Him.

I'd encourage you to think of Sabbath more as patterns and seasons than just "a day off." Each day can include some time to return to the Spirit's power through word and prayer; each week can have downtime built into it; and yes, it is a great idea to take a week or two or more away on restful vacation (or staycation). God wove these graceful times into the lives of His people, and we harm ourselves by avoiding them. Plan some downtime this summer!

Love One Another (Develop Authentic Relationships)

How is it we are all carrying devices that can connect us to anyone in the world, and yet we feel isolated or alone? I'll save a discussion on the merits of technical interconnectivity for another time; but for now I'll encourage you to spend joyful time with others this summer. Pools, parks, beaches, BBQs, morning or afternoon tea, or whatever floats your boat—make an effort to hang out with old friends, and try to connect to at least one new one.

I'd love it if the saints of St. Andrews reached out to each other and made connections with each other this summer. Again, someone old, someone new. I believe that would build the kingdom as well as any program we could put together.

Serve (Act in Faith)

I'm not talking about starting a program to tackle some great injustice in our community (although I won't stop you from doing so). I'm talking about when Paul told the Philippian church to humbly consider others as more important than themselves (2:3). I've found over the years that the more I think about myself, the less joy I experience. The more I think of caring for others—praying for them, encouraging, and helping them—the more my own concerns seem less significant. So I'd encourage you to look for simple opportunities to kindly serve others this summer.

Note—If you are in a place where these simple suggestions sound too herculean to consider, I'd really encourage you to reach out to one of our staff, a trusted friend, or a counselor, because it's possible you may be experiencing depression or anxiety that needs to be addressed with the help of others. Your mental wellbeing is very important!

Let us consider how we can encourage each other and build each other up through our rest, our gathering, and our serving this summer.

Peace to you,

Pastor Dan

Staff Updates

Practicing What He Preaches

Pastor Dan doesn't just encourage the congregation to take downtime...he is doing that himself! Please note that Pastor Dan, Pastor Brian, and Rachel McGehee will all be out of the office for periods of time this summer to be with their families. Deacon Kirk Hamilton will be on hand during the weeks both pastors are gone (805-766-2377), and Pam Farley will keep the office open as normal (Mon-Thurs, 8:30am-4pm; closed May 30 and July 4).

DCE Call Process

We have issued a call to Alissa Brege to be our DCE. Our sister congregations, St. Paul in Tracy and St. Peter in Lodi, have also issued calls to Alissa's husband Paul, who is a Lutheran school teacher. Since Paul and Alissa have three calls from our congregations to consider, please keep them in your prayers as they listen to the Holy Spirit's leading. We hope to hear by early June whether Alissa will accept our call.

Vacation Bible School, June 13-17



Register today!

Calling all kids 6 months old through 8th grade! VBS is a FREE week-long Bible adventure that runs Monday through Friday from 5:30-8:15pm. *Dinner is included on each of the five nights.* Children have a blast at VBS as they learn about God through songs, stories, crafts, games, dramas, and more.

Register your kids, grandkids, nephews, nieces, or neighborhood kids today by scanning this QR code or by picking up a packet from the church office!



Want to sponsor this event?

VBS is completely free to children and includes dinner and crafts. Would you like to help underwrite this ministry? Here are some estimated expenses your donations can help with!

Five days of dinner for 300 people: \$2,000

Paper goods: \$750

Temporary fence for safety: \$1,500

Designate a check, choose "VBS" on our online giving page, or text any amount to the number 84321 with "vbs." Text-to-give example: \$35 vbs



We need your help.

Love on kids! There are lots of ways to volunteer during VBS, from serving food to holding babies to leading a craft to teaching Bible stories. Check out the sign-up sheet on Sunday mornings or email Karen Kelly: neraknsteve618@gmail.com

All are invited for pre-party snacks!

Whether you're volunteering or simply want to experience some fun, come on over to church at 5pm before each evening's programming starts. If you wish, bring a treat to share and we'll meet up outside the kitchen by the soda machine for chit-chat.

- ★ Monday: Cookies
- ★ Tuesday: Bars
- ★ Wednesday: Sweet/Salty
- ★ Thursday: Cookies (yes, again!)
- ★ Friday: Your favorite snack



Ice cream for everyone on June 19!

During services on the Sunday following VBS, we'll be honoring dads and celebrating our week of work and witness at our 2022 VBS. After each service, Pastor Dan will be handing out ice creams for everyone. Sweet!



Serving Stockton and Beyond

Rahab Comfort Dog

Rahab's Bible verse is Joshua 2:11: "When we heard of it, our hearts melted in fear and everyone's courage failed because of you, for the Lord you God is God in heaven above and on the earth below."



As we enter the summer months, Team Rahab reflects on the months of April and May. The team has been working with first responders, schools, and support personnel stemming from the tragic events during this time. On May 4, Rahab and Pastor Dan attended the San Joaquin 2022 Peace Officers' Memorial. There were officers from all over the country and Rahab was there to comfort anyone who needed a quiet moment and a snuggle.

Since the last *Fishhook*, Hospice of San Joaquin held their annual Camp Caterpillar—a child grief camp for K-8th grade children who have lost a loved one in the past couple years. Rahab was invited to attend and brought comfort to the kids. *Our hope for you is unshaken, for we know that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in our comfort. — 2 Corinthians 1:7*



In May, Teams Rahab, Reuben, and Micah were invited to visit the students and staff at Madison Elementary School in Stockton. So many hugs and pets from all these kids! The students made a banner and thank-you cards for the Comfort Dog teams. There were families at Madison who were connected to Stagg High School where a student was tragically killed.

May was National Military Appreciation Month (with Armed Forces Day on May 21). Four members of Team Rahab are part of that family: handlers Mike Rehbein (Air Force) and Bobby Moore (Navy) and ministry partners Jeff Kramer and Cathy Pauley (both Army).

In early May, Team Rahab and Team Rueben were invited to a University of the Pacific de-stress event. Rahab and Rueben brought peace and comfort to students who were taking finals as they wrapped up the end of the school year. On another day, Team Micah and



Team Aaron joined Team Rahab to spend time with the Pacific Conservatory of Music students who were also completing their finals. *Out of my distress, I called on the Lord; the Lord answered me and set me free. — Psalm 118:5*

May 1-7 was Teacher Appreciation Week and Team Rahab wrote personal notes to the teachers and staff at Pulliam Elementary School, where Pastor Dan serves as a police chaplain. Team Rahab has enjoyed visiting the school over the months and loving on its students (and staff). We also thank Team Rahab members who are former or current teachers:



Miriam Deuel, Laura Moore, Bonnie Centers, and Barbara Britton. *Therefore,*

brothers and sisters, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities, you will never fall. — 2 Peter 1:10

On May 7, Good Shepherd Family had its last class and butterfly release, sending up butterflies and prayers for those who have passed away. Rahab, Amy Lapointe, and Barbara Britton joined the class and brought love and peace to the special-needs adults who were sad because it was the last class and grieving as they thought about their loved ones. *And I say, "Oh that I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and be at rest." — Psalm 55:6*

This is the third year that Team Rahab recognized the St. Andrew high school graduates. The team created a "Words of Advice for our Graduates" book and congratulatory cards.

Watch in the next *Fishhook* for fundraisers that Team Rahab is putting together (including a Bunco/dinner night!). Rahab, who turns 4 in June, will be at St. Andrews VBS from June 13-17, taking photos with the kids and hanging out for anyone who wants to love on her.

We are so thankful for the congregation and the community for inviting Rahab to bring mercy, compassion, and smiles to those who need to feel the presence of our Lord and Savior.

Hosting Homeless Families

Family Promise is underway! St. Andrews has been blessed to partner with Family Promise of San Joaquin County and we completed our first week of hosting on May 29. On each of our volunteering weeks, the program's families spend the evening at St. Andrews, stay overnight, and after breakfast are taken to Family Promise's facility for help with finding housing, jobs, etc. We provide all three meals each day they're with us, invite volunteers to socialize with the families in the evening, and two volunteers spend the night at St. Andrews. We are excited to join a ministry that has been a long time coming!

Our next week to host is July 31-August 7. Please talk to Pastor Brian if you'd like to become a volunteer! pastorbrian@stalc.org

Good Shepherd

Good Shepherd Family Ministry is so thankful to have completed a full season of its ministry. We held our sixth annual talent show on April 30 and the kids did a great job!

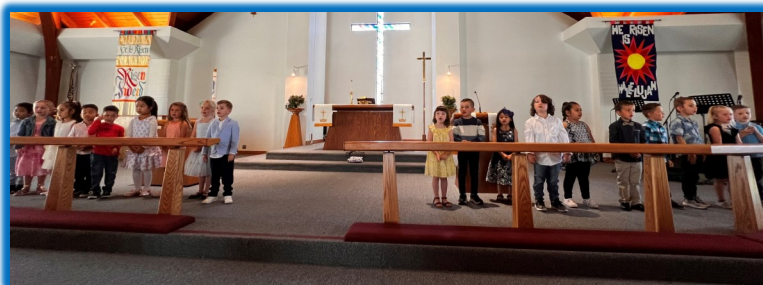
The last class on May 7 moved from our traditional balloon release to a butterfly release to remember all the friends and family who have passed away. Rahab also visited the group and the "kids" got a lot of comfort time.

July 10-15, Good Shepherd will be heading to Tahoe City with 40 campers and lots of volunteers for their semi-annual retreat. The group will be using the same VBS material as the church. We want to thank the Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) for the grant we received for the retreat which made it more affordable for the campers this year. Good Shepherd is certainly blessed by the kindness.



Newday Preschool

It was a great 2021-2022 school year! We are looking forward to an exciting summer school session packed with lots of fun activities. Enjoy these photos of our May graduation. We're very proud of these sweet kiddos!



Youth

Confirmation (H2H)

June 5, 10:45am — Confirmands will be confirming their faith during our contemporary worship service. We rejoice for Brandon and Aiden Carty, Isaac Deuel, Emily Marlowe, Maili Martin, Ricky Solina, Tyler Haley, Christopher Strong, Gabriel Baker, and their families!

Confirmands: Pastor Brian, Pastor Dan, Dr. Mike, and your mentors are so very proud of the spiritual growth seen in each one of you over this past year. Enjoy your summer off!

National Youth Gathering



Houston, here we come! After over a year of prayer, preparation, and fundraising, our students and their leaders are ready to experience what God has in store for them in this five-day, triennial youth conference. Speakers and leaders from around the country—including Zach Zehnder of *Forgiving Challenge*!—will be pouring their hearts and experience into encouraging the youth in their faith.

Thank you for all your financial and prayer support. Please continue in prayer for the whole conference, and specifically for the leaders and students from St. Andrews who will be attending:

Justin Centers
Tonya, Olivia, and Tyler DeSpain
Pastor Dan, Miriam, David, Emily, and Josie Deuel
Natalie and Savannah Johnson
Brooke Kelly
Zach Lew
Dillon and Chloe Marlowe
Dustin Moore
Justin Sherman
Luke and Dax Weber

Gathering in Groups

Small Groups



We realize many small groups take a break over the summer, but we would like to encourage you to have a summer BBQ or two. Invite others outside of your small groups like neighbors, etc. Shine the light of Jesus while sharing food and drink!

Please reach out to Kristin Winter (kristin@stalc.org) or the church office if you would like further suggestions for the summer or if you have any questions.

Sundays at 9:45am



Cross+Gen Thanksgiving

Thank you to everyone who participated in and supported Cross+Gen throughout this year, especially as we transitioned into 2022 with Tracy's departure. We have enjoyed developing relationships and growing in faith with each other, exploring Scripture and finding new ways of expressing and sharing our faith. May God bless and keep you all during these summer months.

The Cross+Gen Team: *Kara, Katie, Lanny, Dayle, Scott, and Holly*

Minor Prophets Study Open to All!

Please come by the library any Sunday at 9:45! You're welcome to come once, twice, or every week. Group discussions are fun and enlightening!

Charlie Johnson is finishing up a study on the Minor Prophets and then will transition to lessons on the New Testament.



MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers)

MOPS will be on summer break in June, July, and August. Please stay tuned in August regarding details on the future of this ministry at St. Andrews.

LWML

Our final meeting before summer is on **June 7 at 12pm**. *We will celebrate our year with a potluck luncheon.* Members, please bring a salad or a hot dish to share. Guests are welcome to come and enjoy! Please also join us in congratulating Sheryl Bettencourt on her many years of service as she steps down as president of LWML. Deb Johnson is taking the baton, so please contact her with any questions or comments. (You may call the church office for her phone number if you do not have a directory.)

Campus Life at St. Andrews

Cast Your Vote!



At **12:15pm on June 12**, hear the latest updates on our work in the community, our mission together, and our plans for the next year. Our Voters Assembly approves the budget for our fiscal year and (re)elects the officers and members of our Mission and Ministry Council.

This year we will be confirming the appointments of Jennifer Droge and Nathan Haley. If you have any concerns about them serving on the council, please let a member of the council or one of the pastors know.

Courtyard Improvements

We thank you again for your generous support of our campus improvement project. As of right now our plans are still awaiting approval from the city permitting office. We have received one contractor's bid and expect another within a few days of publication of this newsletter. With skyrocketing costs of materials, we are also in the process of value-engineering our plans and negotiating with contractors to receive the best value for this project. We will keep you updated, and don't hesitate to ask a council member for more information.

Beauty and Hospitality

Do you have an eye for beauty? A passion for hospitality? Want to help people feel welcome and uplifted on our church campus? While we're waiting on courtyard gates and shade structures, do you have ideas for additional ways we can bring a sense of invitation, belonging, and peace to those who come into our church spaces?

The Mission and Ministry Council is forming a facility committee and they'd love to have you involved! Please contact DeAnna Solina (deanna.solina@gmail.com) to learn more.



It's a Miracle! Or Is It?

Have you ever marveled that the candle of the Divine Presence never goes out? Or been surprised that there are no crumpled bulletins in your pew left from the previous service? Ever wondered how all those little communion cups get filled?

None of this is miraculous...it is the loving work of our altar guild. Please consider joining the team! With a simple training and only committing to help **four times a year**, you can participate in worship in a deeper way. Call the church office or email rachel@stalc.org.

