

**Report of
Pastor for Parish Life
The Rev. John H. Brock
December 2020 & Annual Report**

I entered 2020 with plans on taking a three month sabbatical. I was hoping to do some reading, relax a bit, and also visit other large congregations (membership of 2,000 or more, including ELCA and others) to see how they handled their membership rolls, home visitations, pastoral care, and other related ministries. That very quickly went to the wayside, as we all took a hard turn in Totally Unknown Territory.

I must say, in my biased opinion, that our staff and volunteers did an Astounding job of getting us to go from ZERO streaming presence online, to weekly online worship, within a matter of One Week. Many other congregations struggled to make the move, or were doing so using only phones or tablets. The first week we were online, we were able to use an actual camera, and the sound system in Fellowship Hall. We received feedback on those early broadcasts. While we received many thanks, we also received what I sure was meant to be “constructive criticism” from some member, who apparently were expecting professional quality camer work from our consumer grade equipment and team of volunteers. I feel we have only improved from there. I am glad the finance committee took to heart the recommendations of the IT/AV Team about new equipment. What we now have installed (all through volunteers) has increased our ability for many different types of worship and recordings.

The staff has, I feel, risen to new heights as to our move online. Between worship, education, concerts & music, we have proven that as a congregation we are capable of change, adaptation, and a willingness to not only Try, but to actually Do and Succeed at New Things.

During the quarantine, I altered my sabbatical to only be the month of August. I was able to get some reading accomplished, specifically concerning associate pastor ministry, and historical race relations in the US.

December went quickly, with planning, redoing, and re-planning yet again, the various Christmas Eve worship services. In all, I believe both the online times of worship, as well as the never-before-tried Parking Lot worship, were all very successful.

I look forward to being able to gather together in person, once we are all vaccinated, to join our voices in singing praises to our Lord.

God's peace,

Pastor John Brock