



July 2016 Newsletter



St. Luke's Lutheran Church
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Christian Citizenship

You are the salt of the earth. Matthew 5:13

This month the citizens of the United States are celebrating its birthday. What should be our distinctive role in this celebration? As grateful children of our heavenly Father we will, of course, want to thank Him for the uncounted blessings He has showered on our land. Truly, He has blessed us beyond measure.

But we will want to do more than merely give thanks. Our Lord, who gave His life for us, has told us that we are to be “the salt of the earth.” That applies not only to our private lives as individual Christians but also to our civic lives as Christian citizens. As salt, we are to help preserve the health of our nation; we are to help prevent the spread of corruption.

Many sincere believers feel uncomfortable when it comes to taking part in governmental affairs. This is due, in many cases, to a lifelong misconception of the idea of “separation of Church and state.” The Christian is not only a practicing member of his church, he is (or should be) a practicing member of his community, his city, his state, and his nation. Having rendered unto God the things that are God's, he must also discharge his rightful obligations to the community in which he lives.

How desperately our nation needs the salt of Christian witness and action! Dishonesty, greed, profanity, divorce, and sins of sexual impurity are all about us. In concert with other God-fearing citizens we are to do all within our power to stay the spread of moral decay which threatens our land. Salt that is not applied is worthless. We are to pray, to speak, to work for the welfare of the land we love.

*Lord, while for all mankind we pray, Of every clime and coast,
Oh, hear us for our native land, The land we love the most. Amen.*

(This devotion is reprinted from *Daily Walk with God* by Herman W. Gockel)

<p>Worship Schedule Change</p> <p>Due to the holiday, our Monday evening service on July 4 will be moved to Tuesday, July 5 at 7:15 PM. Enjoy your Independence Day and give thanks for the freedom we have as a nation. We pray that God would continue to bless America!</p>	<p>Voters' Meeting</p> <p>The quarterly meeting of the voters will take place after church on Sunday, July 31. Beginning about 10:30 we will summarize the work of the congregation since the April meeting and propose the path forward. Agendas will be available in the church office by Sunday July 24. We will make every effort to conduct the meeting in an efficient manner so it can be done as quickly as possible.</p>	<p>Guest Preacher</p> <p>Nathanael Plocher, who has completed his first year at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, will be home at St. Luke's on Sunday July 31. He will preach during the worship services on Sunday and Monday. A door offering will be received to thank Nathanael for his work and to encourage him in his studies. Nathanael has one year of classroom studies yet before the vicar year. A final classroom year after that will complete his path towards the pastoral ministry.</p>
<p>Vicar Tim Leistekow</p> <p>We are preparing to welcome Tim Leistekow and his wife Calista to Vassar. Right now we are focusing on their housing and the details of their move. We hope to have a pantry shower for them, so they will have food and basic supplies when they arrive. His installation date is Sunday, August 14, and we will have a potluck brunch that day to celebrate.</p> <p>Remember that the vicar is still a student, here to gain experience in the broad scope of a pastor's work. Pastor Plocher will spend a good deal of time with him, especially early on, to give encouragement and advice. Do your best to help the Leistekows feel welcome and become a part of our congregational family. May we each be a blessing to one another!</p>	<p>Pastoral Acts</p> <p><u>Christian Marriage:</u> Lisa Wingert and Aaron Stallings 5-21-16</p> <p><u>Adult Confirmations:</u> Matthew Bess Kandace Mistura 5-29-16</p> <p><u>Released to avoid discipline:</u> Brian Hecht 6-14-16</p> <p><u>Removed:</u> Larry Rose, Jr. Shaylyn and Vaughn Smith Kevin Schultz Dereke Wilcox Kirsten Castillo Cecil, Paula, & Stephen Anklam Teresa List Albert & Michael Roberts Jeremy Bragg Wilbur Carrigan, Jr. Jamie Donnelly Stephen Roskiewicz Adam, Mary, Morgan, Jaxon, & Alyssa Levis Rebecca Somerville Ivan TerBush Rachel, Andrew, & Ella TerBush Brianna Cobb</p>	<p>Scholarship Committee</p> <p>This committee will meet in early July to determine the final grant amount for each of our nine students in Synod schools. Thanks to your generous donations, it should be about \$800 each. The distribution will take place after church on July 24. These are the students we want to pray for and encourage as they consider serving their Lord in the public ministry:</p> <p><u>Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary:</u> Micah Plocher Nathanael Plocher</p> <p><u>Martin Luther College:</u> Gabriel Plocher</p> <p><u>Michigan Lutheran Seminary:</u> Joshua Barnett Julie Marker Leah Plocher Reese VanLue Evan Korthals Morgan Einhardt</p>
<p>Nominating Committee</p> <p>A nominating committee will be seated at the July voters meeting to propose nominations for elections in October. If you are interested in serving on this committee, please attend the meeting after church on July 31. Meanwhile, also consider how you can use your skills in service to your congregation. A list of available positions is in the church office.</p>		

From the Board of Christian Education

Planning for next school year

Families who intend to send their children to St. Luke's School this fall are asked to submit their pre-registration information as soon as possible. Knowing who is in each grade allows for purchasing the needed materials for the entire year. Please take care of this important step right away. Any financial arrangements that may need to be made can be taken care of at a later date.



Anniversary Pavilion at school

At the end of the 25th anniversary year for St. Luke's School, we do not have enough special offerings to erect a pavilion. We will hold the gifts given for this project until such a time as it can move forward. The current total of offerings for the school pavilion is \$3,144. Special gifts can be given toward it at any time. We expect that the total cost of the structure will be about \$12,000. Thank you to all who have been interested in this project. It will not be forgotten, but will proceed at a later date.



Sunday School

A new year of Sunday School begins in September, but much work needs to be done before it can happen. Right now we are looking for those who will be interested in teaching a class. We will also need those who are able substitute for the regular teacher if needed. Sometimes two people will "team teach" a class, allowing for a flexible schedule throughout the year. Regular teachers meetings are held to help prepare teachers for the weekly responsibilities, and the materials provided are thorough. If you are interested in helping with Sunday School, please speak with Pastor Plocher now. The teacher orientation meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, August 23.

Vacation Bible School

Dive In! is the theme of our summer VBS this year. We are still building the team that will organize the activities and teach the children. The online signup is at signupgenius.com. Enter the following email address to find St. Luke's: jlfillhard@yahoo.com. We need another teacher, some music people, and plenty of teenagers who can help in each of the rooms. Speak with Pastor Plocher or Jenni Whitney if you have any questions.

Dive In! will be held for four days, Monday through Thursday, August 1-4. We will meet in the fellowship hall beginning at 6:00pm each evening. We will be done by 8:00. Registration sheets for member children and their friends are available at church and online at www.vassarlutherans.org



We are asking for food donations for the four days of VBS. A sign up sheet is posted. We hope to have at least 50 children each evening, plus about the same number of adults and helpers. Plan to bring a mixture of sweet and healthy snacks.

Ushers Needed

Barry Mays is beginning preparations for the Fall & Winter Usher Schedule. A number of men have indicated they can no longer serve in this way, so we have open spots in our schedule. We are looking for men who are willing to serve either as part of a monthly crew, or as subs to fill in when we have openings or special services. New volunteers will be assisted by our veteran crew to learn the ropes. Please speak with Barry Mays or the church secretary to volunteer. The schedule will be put in church mailboxes in late August for the school year.

Board of Elders

The Elders are continuing to reach out to those who have not been active at St. Luke's for a while. Letters are being sent to try to reconnect with people with whom we have lost touch. If it is your family or a neighbor who receives a letter, encourage them to respond and renew their connection with God's Word at St. Luke's. If no response is received, we will remove from our spiritual care those whom we are unable to serve. If any of those should want to return to worship and growth in God's Word, they are always welcome!

Do you know where we are?

The Elders are looking for contact information for the following people.

- Clifford Aulbert
- Lori Kukulski
- Serena Kukulski

We are unable to serve those we cannot contact. If you know where these people are, or have a lead that may help us track them down, please contact Kelly in the church office. If we do not make progress in the next month, the Elders will recommend that these names be removed from our congregation.

Church Council

With several larger items nearly settled in the congregation's activity, the Church Council is revising the budget for the rest of 2016 so it reflects our actual needs. We have had an interesting time. For the first half of the year, our expenses were reduced because we had one less called worker. We have taken on extra projects, however, and some of them are not yet completed. Our collective offerings still barely managed to meet our needs. As we look ahead to the vicar coming, our costs will increase by \$3,500 a month to support him. Our offerings will also need to increase in the same measure.

Final numbers will be presented at the quarterly voters meeting on July 31, but it looks like our weekly needs will again be about \$8,200. Our year to date average is currently \$7,100 a week. It is appropriate for us to rejoice in the abundant blessings given to us by our God. We are also determined to be faithful stewards of those blessings in our homes and in our congregation. May God bless you as you consider your gifts of thanks to your Savior regarding the support of St. Luke's.

Altar Flowers

If you wish to place flowers on the altar during this year, please sign up on the poster in the entry way. You are responsible for ordering the flowers for the date and making payment with the florist of your choice. Speak with the church secretary with any questions.



Board of Trustees News

Summer activity has begun for your Trustees. The carpets were cleaned at school in June, and we hope to also have the tiles stripped and waxed and polished by the end of June. A workday has been scheduled for Saturday, July 23 at 9:00am. We will inspect the school building and take care of minor issues. We welcome any who desire to lend a hand. None of the tasks are particularly specialized.

Several notable items are on the school list. Can you volunteer to help with any of these?

Wiping each of the mini blinds to remove dust accumulated through the year.

Painting: inside the main hallway needs a facelift. And, perhaps, one classroom, too?

Weeding the flowerbeds to keep the creeping ivy under control.

Maintaining the lawn as it grows or becomes dormant.

At the church property, we again want to thank those who keep the flower beds and the petunias watered and weeded. Your dedication is appreciated. You will notice that we are continuing to update the landscaping around the church. The old bushes will be pulled out soon and changes will be made to allow for easier maintenance and a fresher look. Thanks to Dave Einhardt for his expert skills in this regard!

We are contracting with professionals who will take care of the following items this summer:

Replacing the school roof

Sealing and striping the church parking lot

Fixing the cracked top of the bell tower so it does not deteriorate further

Resolving a plumbing issue from the sacristy bathroom

Four new computers to replace ten year old ones at school

The basement shower in the parsonage is in need of repair and replacement. This project is high on the priority list. Members who have expertise and time to accomplish this task are needed.

Thank you to all, for your willingness to participate in and to support financially the physical needs of your congregation and school.

Saginaw Street parsonage

As of the end of June, the Saginaw Street parsonage was sold. Closing was on May 31. We received the asking price, and there were no complications with the sale. The church council is proposing that the funds that exceeded the remaining mortgage (about \$5,000) be kept in the General Fund to offset the expenses incurred with the home (about \$7,000). Thanks again to all who helped ready the house for sale. Surely the Lord has been good to us!

Church sign project

Pastor Plocher is investigating how to make the church sign more visible. One idea is working its way through the system. We are hoping to have a logo and backlighting on the sign. Thanks to the chapel offerings of St. Luke's School families, we have about \$300 to work with. When details are more solid, they will be shared in the newsletter. Thanks to the school children for their generous gift!

<p>LMSG</p> <p>At St. Luke’s we encourage our members in the military with sermons and newsletters, either by mail, email, or online to keep them in touch with the Means of Grace and our congregation. A website has been created to assist us in that end and to also lend support to our veterans. Check out the Lutheran Military Support Group at www.lutheranmilitary.org. New things are being added regularly. It is a great resource for our military, veterans, and their families.</p>	<p>Retirement Celebration</p> <p>The members of St. John’s, Pigeon will hold a special service on June 26 at 4:00 PM for Pastor James Gorsegner to celebrate his retirement from the full-time ministry. You are invited to join them for the service and meal to follow. Pastor Gorsegner and his wife, Debbie, have bought a home in Reese and plan to join our congregation at St. Luke’s after his retirement.</p>	<p>LWMS News</p> <p>Profs. Norval and Kathy Kock spoke of the International Student program at MLS at the Rally at St. John’s, Pigeon on April 23rd. Peter Kim, a Korean student, hosted by Pastor Willitz’s family was at the meeting. The Kocks’ son is currently living in China teaching English. Profs. Kock travel to these different countries and meet the families of these students. It puts the family at ease to know that their child is in a safe environment and taken care of.</p>
<p>People of Grace Support Group</p> <p>Pastor Richard Starr of Trinity, Bay City has begun a support group for the families of those people who struggle with same-sex attraction. The next meeting will take place on Sunday, June 26 at 6:30 PM at Amazing Grace Christian Resource Center at 1901 Broadway, Bay City. The meeting will include a time of prayer, study of God’s Word, and confidential sharing in an effort to support Christian brothers and sisters who are hurting. You may contact Pastor Starr at 989-450-1708.</p>	<p>Contact Information Updates</p> <p>A gentle reminder from the church office:</p> <p>Please be sure to let the church office know of any address, phone, or email address changes. This is especially important for our members out of town, away at school or in the military. You can email the changes to the church office at stlukesvassar@sbcglobal.net, leave a note in the office, or call and leave the information on the answering machine. Help us keep your loved ones in touch with the Means of Grace by regular contact with St. Luke’s.</p>	<p>St. Luke’s mission boxes totaled \$82.89. Total from the 6 churches was \$1366.14 The Rally plate collection was \$256.00.</p> <p>New officers are: Susan Schwab— Vice President, Charlotte Kritzman - Secretary, Pastoral advisor - Pastor Schwab, Spiritual Growth Laywoman (1 yr) - Sharon Loeffler, (2 yr) - Jean Fritz; Sharon Gardy— CAMM reporter, who reported that they need toothbrushes for a child or small adult. We will collect these before the fall rally. CAMM sees kids from 0-5 years old.</p> <p>We are keeping the same World & Home Missions as last year.</p> <p>The Fall Rally will be at St. Paul, Mayville on Oct. 22nd with Pastor Loersch of Fenton.</p>
<p>Organ Concert at Mayville</p> <p>Prof. Rebecca Berg will present an organ concert at St. Paul, Mayville on Sunday, July 24 at 4:00 PM. All members of St. Luke’s are invited to attend.</p>	<p>Church Library</p> <p>The church library is a great resource for devotional materials for your personal and family use. We have a complete selection of People’s Bibles as well as books on different topics relevant to your Christian walk in faith.</p> <p>Take a look and check out a book!</p>	<p>June is our month to befriend a Mission. The World Mission: Pastor Brad Krause, and the Home Mission is Living Hope in Brighton, CO. They have no pastor at this time.</p>



Medical Background Request

St. Luke's is in the process of identifying those congregational members who have either a medical background and/or are trained in CPR. If a medical emergency should ever arise at our church, we would like to be able to quickly identify those in attendance at church or an event who may be able to assist in the emergency. If you have this experience or training, all that we ask is that you place your name and medical background on a sheet of paper and place it in Marc Augsburger's mailbox. This would be greatly appreciated!

Parish Nurse

We are in the beginning stages of obtaining information on the WELS Parish Nursing Program. If you hold a nursing degree and are interested in scoping out this program, please place a note in Marc Augsburger's mailbox. There is no obligation at this time.

From the BOCE

The BOCE is again requesting that those members who have children that will be attending St. Luke's Lutheran Elementary School this fall to please complete the pre-registration paperwork as soon as possible. One of our classrooms is expected to be nearly full and we need to know if there is additional room for any non-member children to be registered. Thank you for assisting us with this important task!

Thank You

Thank you to everyone who has pitched in this mowing season so far at the school! Many hands have helped to make the work light as we keep our lawns in tip top shape. Some additional mowing opportunities continue to exist. If you are interested in taking a week, please see the mowing sign-up sheet posted by the church office.

Volunteers Needed at the School

Numerous areas of the school will be painted this summer and include, but are not limited to, hallways, classroom(s) and lockers. If this skill and desire exists in your toolbox, please make sure to let Pastor Plocher or one of the Trustees know your desire to help.

**The LORD foils
the plans of the nations;
he thwarts the purposes
of the peoples.
But the plans of the LORD
stand firm forever,
the purposes of his heart
through all generations.
Psalm 33:10-11**

Treasurer's Update - May 2016

Budgetary Offerings: \$32,553.64
 (Requires \$37,431 per month)
 Budgetary Expense: \$30,574.09
 Net Income: \$1,979.55

Our General Budget Checkbook balance as of 6/15/16 is -\$11,109.72, which reflects our internal borrowing.

Rainy Day Fund Balance: \$14,609

Summary—Sale of Saginaw St. Parsonage:

Net monies after closing costs: \$126,739.34
 Payoff for LACE Loan: \$121,496.77
 Proceeds from sale: \$5,242.57
 Total costs associated with maintenance, monthly payments since November 2015, and repairs and sprucing up for the sale: \$7,260.17.
 Net Loss: -\$2,017.60
 Church Council decided the \$5,242.57 amount should be placed back in the General Budget Checkbook to pay bills, and payroll, etc.

Respectfully submitted,
 Bill Dudewicz, Treasurer

Memorials and Special Gifts

A memorial was given to the Roof Fund in loving memory of Fritzie Trinklein by Jim & Sally Zoellner.

Memorials were given to the Roof Fund in loving memory of Ronald Schnell by Nancy Klopff and Harrietta Botkins.

A memorial was given to the School Tech Fund in loving memory of Ronald Schnell by Mary Esther Rupprecht.

Memorials were given to the Rainy Day Fund in loving memory of Carol Baker by Allen & Adelia Jones, Mr. & Mrs. Erwin Engelhart, Mr. & Mrs. John Giltrop, and Mr. & Mrs. Don Weiskirsch.



Financial Update May 2016

Income	\$ 32,554
Expenses	\$ <u>30,574</u>
	\$ 1,980

*Monthly budgeted need is \$37,431.

Special Envelope

Contributions can be made to any of the funds below by using the special offering envelopes in the narthex or included with this newsletter. Be sure to name the fund on the envelope before you put it into the offering plate.

- Property Maintenance and Improvement Trust Fund—funds will be used for unexpected upkeep on our properties
- Scholarship Fund – distributed each year to students attending synod schools.
- Scholarship Endowment Fund – proceeds supplement the Scholarship Fund annually.
- Building Trust Fund – To pay for future building projects.
- St. Luke's Rainy Day Fund – this fund helps the congregation when cash flow is slow. Repayment of the loan to ourselves is made through your generous gifts to the General Fund and/or special gifts to this line item.
- Roof Fund—this fund will reduce the amount we need to borrow to replace the school roof.

Give thanks to the Lord
 For he is good.
 His love endures forever.