

West St. Olaf Lutheran Church



East St. Olaf Lutheran Church

OCTOBER 2026 HAPPENINGS

Pastor Paul Thompson Cell: 507-273-8504 (call before driving to office) Email: pthomp821@gmail.com

Websites: eaststolaf.org ...OR.... weststolaf.org

Gina Moser, Secretary: Email: eastwest@kmtel.com Office: 365-8222 Cell: 507-951-4964



WEATHER-RELATED CHURCH CANCELLATIONS: To verify if there is a cancellation for a church service or church activity, **please check: KTTC TV (channel 10), or online at www.kttc.com** and click on the tab for **WEATHER** - then click on **Closings and Delays**. Decisions are made by council presidents and pastor.



October Worship Schedule

EAST EARLY at 9:00 am for Oct. (*East coffee after church*)

JAM at 10:00 am at West (*also West coffee*)

WEST LATE at 11:00 am for Oct.

NOTE: CONFIRMATION SUNDAY at both churches: October 25 (with communion)

OFFERINGS: Our congregational councils ask you to prayerfully continue your financial support for church. Please be sure to make your check out to "West St. Olaf Church" or "East St. Olaf Church" and mail to:

West members mail to: Dave Peterson 25378 720th St., Hayfield, MN 55940

East members mail to: Bryan DeCook at 7583 80th Ave. SW, Stewartville, MN 55976

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,



We are members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We are all quite familiar with the "Lutheran" part, the "Church" part, and the "America" part. But for many, the "Evangelical" part is just a big word. There are many denominations that claim the title "Evangelical", but not all of them understand that word in the same way.

Dr. Winstone Persaud from Wartburg Seminary in Dubuque describes it this way: "Those who are evangelical pray for others—publicly, warmly, and lovingly. And, to be very clear, the prayers are not for others to do what I want them to do—like believe and be baptized—but instead, the prayers are for God to do something, to work in their lives for good: to bring them healing, peace, and grace; to give them strength and courage; to give them wisdom and grace. As a Christian, I pray for others to enfold them in God's arms, to bring them into God's care, and to comfort and encourage them with God's presence."

This definition has nothing to do with being conservative or liberal, or about styles of worship, or about our place in the world. It's about bringing of God's grace to the world through loving service. We do a lot of that at East and West. But it also sometimes means to actively and joyfully use and share the name of Jesus. That's a word we Lutherans often fail to say in public. It's a word we sometimes don't say even in our homes. But it's a word, a name, a person whom we praise, and whom we are called to follow.

God bless you all,
Pastor Paul Thompson

Membership Updates, WELCA News, Serving Schedules, Invitations!

MEMBERSHIP INFO

God's blessing to our Confirmands who will Affirm their Faith **Sunday, October 25** at East & West St. Olaf:
WEST: Scott Cocuzzi, Reese Hazelman, Benjamin Laxen, Lauralee Olson, Kaleb Palmersheim, and Cole Twaddle
EAST: Adyson Pyfferoen

WEST WELCA NEWS

Fall is here! We have moved into our 3rd season for 2026. "CHANGE" Things change each day for all of us. We are blessed to have a steadfast Lord who never changes. He is our foundation, our ROCK!

September was busy! **Thank you:**

- 1.) To our Chairpersons-Mary Brandt & Nancy Peterson and Altar Guild-Mary Brandt & Sandy Iverson.
- 2.) To those who brought school supplies for the school kit mission. We completed 35 kits this year. Great job!
- 3.) To those who brought food and worked for Sunday School Rally Day/New Member Sunday.

October Chairpersons-Margaret Senjem & Sandy Iverson, and **Altar Guild**-Jane Estby & Sheryl Wohlers

Oct. 6 Quilting 9am/sack lunch

Oct. 7 Quilting 9am/sack lunch

Oct. 11 9:30am Confirmation Recognition (6 Confirmands)

Oct. 14 1:00pm WELCA meeting:
Host-Jane Estby, Study-Pastor Paul

Oct. 20 9am Lefse/Doughnut baking

Oct. 22 9am Lefse/Doughnut baking

Oct. 24 9-11:30am FALL BAZAAR
 Contained in this newsletter is our bazaar poster. Thank you for volunteering to help!

Oct. 25 11am Confirmation Service with Communion

Looking ahead: November 8th is the date for West's Pastor's Appreciation dinner. Be sure to write it on your calendars. *continued...*

Enjoy these fall days and drive safely as the farmers will soon be traveling to their fields to harvest.

Sisters In Christ,
 Nancy & Sharon

WOMEN OF EAST EVENTS

OCTOBER

Oct. 11 is Confirmation Recognition
Coffee for Addy Pyfferoen!

NEW day for meetings for Women of East: 2nd Sun. each month... so next meeting is Oct. 11 after coffee.

Oct. 25 is Confirmation Sunday!!

NOTE we are postponing two big events: 1.) Our Fundraiser Raffle & Potluck Brunch is being moved out to late April. 2.) our Meatball Dinner is moving out to February.

Every Tuesday: Quilting in the church basement / sack lunch



SERVING SCHEDULES

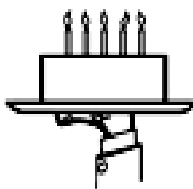
WEST—SEPTEMBER

Ushers: Pete D. organizes
Deacon: Debbie Schuck
Altar Guild: Jane E., Sheryl W.
Acolytes: check online sched.
Stewardship:
 1st Sun.— Luther League
 2nd Sun.— JAM or B.O.E.
 3rd Sun.— WELCA
 4th Sun.— Church council
 5th Sun.— Church council

EAST—SEPTEMBER

Acolytes: Ushers covering
Altar Guild: Meghan Ohman
Deacon: Terry Ziemann
Coffee Servers:
 1st Sun.— Quilting Sisters
 2nd Sun.— Sarah Circle
 3rd Sun.— Circle 4
 4th Sun.— OPEN: *Contact Marilyn Carlson, if willing*
 5th Sun.— S.S. or Council

Help us celebrate Larry Himle's 80th birthday!



During West's 10am coffee hour on **Sun., November 1**. Larry requests that there be no cards/no gifts. Birthday cake and other accompaniments will be provided. *Hosted by Larry's family.*



Join Us in celebrating Joy's 95th Birthday!

Sunday, November 15, 2026
 1:00-4:00 p.m. West St. Olaf Chapel

West St Olaf Lutheran Church

70640 260th Ave, Hayfield, MN 55940



Fall Brunch & Bazaar
Saturday, Oct 24, 2026
9:00 ~ 11:30

Brunch Menu

Bacon & Egg Lasagna
Fruit

Sweet Breads
Orange Juice/Coffee
Price \$10.00

Children 6-12 \$4.00, 5 & under free

Mission Hayfield Community Pantry

Bazaar

LEFSE, Rosettes, Krumkake,
Donuts, Baked Goods, Crafts, Quilts

Directions

6 miles East of Hayfield on Hwy 30,
2 miles North on 260th Ave

OR

8 miles South of Kasson on Cty 13,
1 mile East on Cty 4, left on 260th Ave



Traditional Call Process Overview for Congregations & Councils: SEMN Synod

The time between when a rostered leader announces his or her resignation and the next 'settled' roster leader begins his or her call is a special time in the life of the congregation. It is a time filled with hope and expectation, of questioning and experimentation. It can also be a time of anxiety.

The first and foremost task of the congregation and of its leaders during this time is spiritual reflection and prayer. Prayer, bible study, and regular devotions will keep the congregation spiritually centered, responsive to the movement of the Spirit, and focused on what God's hopes for this congregation and its mission are.

A Four Phase Process

The congregations of the SEMN Synod participate in a Four Phase Call Process.

Phase I: The Leave-taking/The Transition-time

At the point that a rostered leader announces that they are resigning their call at the congregation, a representative from the Office of the Bishop will meet with the congregational council to orient them to the call process. It is also at this time that information about transitional pastoral support is shared with the council in order that they might make the best decision about how the congregation and ministries will be cared for upon the departure of the current rostered leader. It is during this phase that a conversation is had regarding what it means for a rostered leader to leave well and the expectation to honor boundaries set forth by the ELCA between the congregation and the leaving rostered leader. This is also the time to celebrate the ministry that the rostered leader and the congregation have shared and the council forms and appoints the call committee.

>>> SEE ALSO, IN JOINT MEETING MINUTES: Section on Pastoral Boundaries, specifying all the things a pastor cannot do, after leaving/retiring (this info is listed in September joint minutes).

Phase II: Self-Study Process and Ministry Site Profile Completion

In this phase, the call committee participates in an orientation facilitated by the assistant to the bishop. The call committee explores vision and ministry needs of the congregation by engaging the congregation in a self-study which may be accomplished through a variety of ways. The self-study leads to the completion of the Ministry Site Profile (MSP) which becomes an integral document shared with potential candidates as their first exposure to who your congregation is. After the MSP is completed and before it is officially submitted, a congregational town hall meeting may be held to review and comment on the MSP. This is attended by the Assistant to the Bishop in call process. After final edits are made to the MSP, it is submitted by the call committee on the ELCA website.

Phase III: Interviewing Candidates/Discerning the Candidate of Choice

Once again, this phase begins with an orientation of the call committee. In the orientation the call committee will discuss its interview protocol, develop questions for candidates and prepare packets of information for candidates. It is also at this time that the call committee will elicit nominations of pastoral candidates from the congregation. When the call committee is ready to begin interviews, they will receive names of candidates from the Assistant to the Bishop in Call Process. The call committee engages in first interviews with each candidate that is presented to them. After the first interviews are completed, the call committee chairperson communicates with each candidate as to whether they will retain or release the candidate. The call committee engages in second interviews and gathers other information (including sermon and reference checks). The call committee discerns the candidate of choice and, with mutual consent from the candidate, presents the candidate of choice recommendation to congregation council. The congregation council sets the date for the special congregational call meeting.

Phase IV: Preparing for and Welcoming the New Pastor

The pastor, the council president and the Assistant to the Bishop coordinate a date for the installation of the new pastor. An Assistant to the Bishop will be present to perform the rite of installation. Congregation council and call committee plan activities to welcome the new pastor (and family) to the congregation and the community.

MEETINGS REGARDING ST. OLAF PARSONAGE:



To inform all as stated in our church constitutions, on October 18, the East and West church council presidents will hold an informational meeting at each of their respective churches regarding the future of the parsonage. They will explain the three choices that the church councils decided and voted on at the last joint council September meeting, along with how and why they arrived at making this decision.



On November 1 the East and West churches will each hold a congregational vote at their respective churches. The ballot will consist of three choices: Leave as is, remove it or sell on the open market.

LOCAL EVENTS

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH'S COUNTRY STORE at 73297 310th St. Racine, MN

Thursday, October 1 from 4-7:00 pm. Dine in or carry out: Pulled Pork and Turkey Sandwiches, Salads, Home-made Pies. PRICE: Adults: \$12. Kids 10 & Under: \$4. *Bake Sale, Craft Sale, Cookbooks, Rugs.*

OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN ROCHESTER FAIR-TRADE MARKET: Our Savior's Lutheran Church Rochester would like to once again invite you to our 18th Annual Fair-Trade Market on October 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 2026.

Hours: Friday, Oct. 2nd, 3-7pm,

Saturday, Oct 3rd, 9am-4pm and Sunday, Oct 4th, 10am-1pm.

FIRST LUTHERAN BLOOMING PRAIRIE LUTEFISK & MEATBALL DINNER

MEAL IS Saturday, October 10 with 11am, Noon, or 1pm seatings: RESERVATIONS & PREPAYMENT REQUIRED. \$28 per meal (children 5 years and under are free).

TICKET SALES BEGIN on Monday, September 21 at 10am – Reserve & Pay Online at flcbp.flocknote.com OR by Phoning During Office Hours: 507-583-6621.

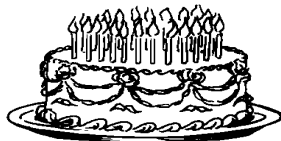
GOOD EARTH VILLAGE GOOD GIFTS GALA: Thursday, October 15, 2026 at Rochester Golf & Country Club 3100 Country Club Rd. SW Rochester. Join us for an inspiring evening of dinner, auction, community, and generosity in support of the life-changing ministry of Good Earth Village. What to expect: A delicious dinner and fellowship, silent and live auctions, live entertainment, special guests, and an inspiring program.

Learn more and buy tickets at <https://goodearthvillage.org/good-gifts-gala/>

Oct. Birthdays: EAST

4 Lilly Rand
6 Matthew Nelson
7 Brenda Exe
12 Lyle Carstensen
14 Doug Bakken
18 Manford Viker
18 Eric Herness
19 Tammy Baier
20 Brian Mueller
20 Thomas Myhre, Jr.
27 Gary Kearns

Happy Birthday!



28 Mel Schultz
29 David Distad
29 Terry Carstensen
29 Paul Meier
30 Liam Finseth

Oct. Birthdays: WEST

4 Jenny Twaddle
5 James Kylo
5 Bobbi Gunsallus
7 Larry Himle
8 Caden Ziegenhagen
9 Leah Beyer
10 Todd Beaver
13 Diane Himle
13 Nikolas Aasen
18 Bryan Schroeder
21 Julia Smith
21 Drew Johnson
23 Jacob Dahle
23 Antonia Fjerstad
23 Grasyn Hiam
28 Jean Thoe
28 Nicole Johnson
28 Greer Tiegen
31 Philip Senjem

ATTENTION! ATTENTION!!

» East Raffle Fundraiser is POSTPONED until late April.



»» Also, East's Meatball Dinner is being POSTPONED until into February.

EAST WELCA MINUTES FOR SEPTEMBER:

We held our first "after church" meeting in September, *as the second Saturdays seemed to get filled up with traveling and family events during the summer.* Amy Schwarz called the meeting to order. We looked at the upcoming events on the calendar, and with Pastor's retirement parties, the Council putting on parsonage informational meetings (and a parsonage voting Sunday), plus Confirmation on Oct 25th, we just couldn't work-in the Meatball Dinner and the Raffle at this time.

It was decided that the Meatball Dinner will take place in February, and the Raffle Fund-raiser will take place in late April.

This will give us time to plan, time to advertise, time to breathe. *Our initial dates looked great when we put the WELCA calendar together in January of 2026, but relevant happenings come up, and we need to be able to flex, to meet the needs of the church.* Jane will contact our secretary, Gina, and make sure the newsletter and upcoming calendars have the dates removed; and the rescheduling information listed.

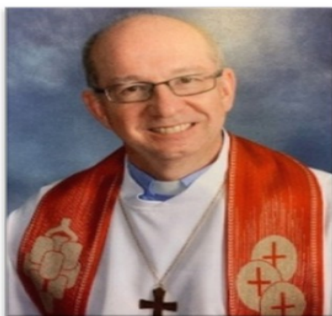
Creating an individual mailing for the Raffle in April was discussed, so each member will be personally invited and have the opportunity to participate.

Pastor Paul and Jana's retirement recognition at East will be November 15, and it was decided to have Gleasons cater the event with a full meal. Jane will call and get us on the calendar, and verify if they will make a meal for us on a Sunday.

Amy is heading up the Holiday Palooza at East St Olaf on December 5. If you are interested in purchasing a table-space, and selling your wares, please let her know.

Amy.Jorgenson23@gmail.com

Submitted by Jane Williams, East WELCA Secretary



**East St. Olaf
Retirement Appreciation
Lunch for**

**Pastor Paul & Jana
Sunday, November 15, 2026**

11:00am Worship, then Noon Lunch

Wishing you the best!



JAM and LUTHER LEAGUE EVENTS!!!

We have a few upcoming events we'd like to share with you so you can mark your calendars. We hope your child(ren) can join us for these upcoming events! We're looking forward to a wonderful year of learning, fellowship, and fun together. ~ Blessings, Board of Education ~

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4: [for Luther League + JAM]

NEW DATE for PARSONAGE TOUR + TVERBERG CABIN

Please meet at the Parsonage at **9:30 a.m. on Sun., October 4**. Norm Senjem will be joining us to share the history of both the Parsonage and the Tverberg Cabin. *This event was originally scheduled for today, but due to a scheduling conflict, we have moved it to October 4.* This is a co-sponsored event for both Luther League and JAM students, and parents are welcome to attend as well! Please RSVP to Alli's email by Thurs., Oct. 1st, so we can give Norm an accurate headcount.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11: [for Luther League + JAM]

CRAFT SUNDAY

During the Sunday School hour, JAM and Luther League will have a special craft session. *Each group will participate in a different, age-appropriate Christian craft.*

- **JAM:** A craft tile celebrating our church

Luther League: A sea glass mosaic craft

You can view an example of the sea glass craft – linked in the email sent to families. To make sure we have enough supplies for everyone, please RSVP to Alli's email for your child(ren) by Thurs., Oct. 1st.

Luther League: Upcoming Events thru January!

	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	JANUARY
	HESSE'S HAUNTED TRAIL Claremont 	HAYFIELD FOOD PANTRY Packaging Thanksgiving meal kits + ice cream at Uncle Mony's 	CHRISTMAS PARTY! Wrapping gifts for our adopted families + pizza party + holiday games 	AIR INSANITY TRAMPOLINE PARK 

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
				1 <u>Deadline to RSVP to Alli H. for LL & JAM events on Oct. 4 & Oct. 11</u>	2 <u>Pastor's day-off</u>	3
4 9:00 am EAST Worship, Comm.  <u>East coffee follows</u> 9:30 am LL & JAM Field Trip to the Parsonage & the Log Cabin- parents welcome too!! 10am West coffee 11:00 am WEST Worship, Comm. 	5	6 9:00 am West Quilt/sack lunch 10:00 am East Quilt/sack lunch 6:00 pm EAST Council meeting	7 9:00 am West Quilt/sack lunch 7:00 pm BOTH: Conf. class @ West	8	9 <u>Pastor's day-off</u>	10
11 9:00 am EAST Worship then >East Confirmation Recognition /Coffee > East women's meeting follows 10am LL & JAM have CRAFT DAY! 9:30am > West Confirmation Recognition 10 West Coffee hour 11:00 am WEST Worship Pastor to a Retreat	12 Pastor @ Fall Theological Retreat 7:00 pm WEST Council meeting	13 10:00 am East Quilt/sack lunch Pastor @ Fall Theological Retreat	14 1:00 pm West WELCA meeting Host-Jane Esbty Study- Pastor Paul NO CLASS for Confirmation (MEA)	15	16 <u>Pastor's day-off</u>	17
18 9:00 am EAST Worship - NO comm. >> EAST meeting about Parsonage <u>East coffee follows</u> 10am JAM classes 10am West coffee 11:00 am WEST Worship - NO comm >> WEST meeting about Parsonage	19	20 9:00 am West Lefse & Donut Making Day!! 7:00 pm DEADLINE to submit info for next newsletter	21 7:00 pm BOTH: Conf. class @ West	22 9:00 am West Lefse & Donut Making Day!!	23 <u>Pastor's day-off</u>	24  9:00-11:30 am WEST FALL BAZAAR & BRUNCH!!! <u>All are welcome to attend!!</u>
25 Confirmation! 9:00 am EAST Worship, Comm.  Confirmation Day! <u>East coffee follows</u> 10am JAM classes 10am West coffee 11:00 am WEST Worship, Comm.  Confirmation Day!	26	27 10:00 am East Quilt/sack lunch	28 7:00 pm BOTH: Conf. class @ West	29 NEWSLETTER DAY at Office 9:10- print 9:25- fold 9:35- collate	30 <u>Pastor's day-off</u>	31 COMING IN NOVEMBER: RETIREMENT Appreciation Dinners for Pastor Paul & Jana (see ads on pgs. 6 & 7)



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EAST OFFERINGS

((08/23 and 08/30/2026) Current \$3,219. Benevolence \$145.

(09/06/2026) Current \$13,477

East St. Olaf Council Minutes Sept. 1, 2026

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Randy Robinson

Members Present: Jeff Beaver, Pete Exe, Gary Kearns, Bryan DeCook, Randy Robinson, Danny and Terry Ziemann, Jen Briske

Devotions: Shared at joint meeting

Pastor's Report: Shared at joint meeting

Secretary's Report: Read and approved.

Financial Secretary's Report: 3 months (June/July/Aug). \$ 4,482, \$4,441, and \$7,245.

Treasurer's Report: Church electric; high usage month. LP is full and paid. Paid for mowing in July (5 mowings), parking lot \$9,800 paid to Elcor for parking lot. Culligan, elevator permit paid (confirmed), pest control paid. No questions on report.

Deacon's Report: Sent thank you to Bob and Dawn for their generous donation to the church. Sympathy card sent.

Trustees Report: Filled the hole with pea rock under the gutter/drain near the parking lot on the southeast side of the church. Furnace filters checked/changed where needed. Need to start gathering snowplow bids/determine snowplow plans.

Education Report: Addison Pyfferoen confirmation.

Parsonage Report: No report.

Old Business: Discussion of how to determine active church membership over the past two years.

Pastor has announced his retirement and need to begin reviewing the process and next steps. A representative will be attending the joint meeting in September and a call committee formed in the future for selection of a new pastor.

Additional thought of getting Pastor and Gina's offices moved over to the church. Add to the September joint meeting for WSO input and feedback.

Note for trustees to begin looking for snow removal options and seek out some bids.

New Business: Question to the board if we would include discussion of what the plan will be for land, parsonage with the heritage association. Board will discuss further with joint council.

Adjourned

NEXT MEETING: October 6th, 6:00PM at East St Olaf. (First Tuesday of the month).

Respectfully Submitted by Jen Briske



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WEST St. Olaf Council Minutes: Sept. 1, 2026

Attendance (P = Present)

Pastor Paul	P	Deb Schuck	P	Ben Horejsi	P		
Greg Brandt	P	Sheryl Wohlers	P	Clay Hazelmann			
Dave Peterson	P	Mary Brandt		Hans Estby	P		
Cindy Stoppel	P	Sue Hyland	P	Chad Thompson	P		
Jenny Twaddle	P	Carma Bjornson		Del Senjem	P		

Meeting called to order by Greg Brandt.

Agenda approval: Motion made to approve agenda by Deb and seconded by Sheryl, motion carried.

Pastor's Report: To be reviewed at joint meeting.

Secretary's Report: Report read, motion made to approve by Deb and seconded by Hans, motion carried.

Financial Secretary: Report reviewed and discussed. Motion made to approve by Sue and seconded by Chad, motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Report reviewed and discussed. Motion made to approve by Cindy and seconded by Deb, motion carried.

Boad of Education Report: Nothing to report.

Deacon's Report: Cards sent: Thinking of you to Carma Bjornson, Dudley Davis, and Judy Jones.

Plans are being made for the congregational dinner Sunday September 20th at 11:00 to celebrate rally day & new member.

WELCA completed a successful school kit mission. Thank you to those that donated school items, sewed backpacks, and deliver to Lutheran World Relief.

New quilting session begins next week. Wednesday September 9 Pastor Paul will lead us in Bible study at 1:00pm.

Plans are being made for the annual Fall Bazaar on October 24 from 9-11:30. Come for brunch, crafts, quilts, baking, and join the fun.

November 8th will be an appreciation dinner at West for Pastor & Jana. More details to follow.

Thank you Sue for being August deacon and thank you to all volunteers that served coffee in August.

Trustees Report: No updates.

Old Business: LP contract was completed.

New Business: Chad made a motion to remove the financial & treasurer's reports from the monthly newsletter and seconded by Dave, motion carried.

The date to decorate the church for Christmas was se for November 22 after service.

Motion to adjourn: Motion to adjourn was made by Cindy and seconded by Deb, motion carried. Closed with the Lord's prayer.

Submitted by: Cindy Stoppel, West St. Olaf council secretary

Next Meeting: Next meeting will be Monday, October 12th at 7 pm.

Joint Council Meeting Minutes

September 1st, 2026 at 7:00pm at East St Olaf

Meeting called to order: Randy Robinson

Devotions: Pastor led opening devotions and prayer.

Pastor's Report: Upcoming events with Zumbro River Conference, Fall Theological Conference and upcoming vacations. Completing confirmation preparation and purchase of ongoing materials for confirmation. 8 books to be ordered for this year and ~\$7 per book (Pastor will confirm price).

Heritage Association: Letter sent to both council Presidents asking for thoughts on discussion of land for the Heritage Association. In the event the decision is to sell the parsonage as a whole with land, the HA would like to purchase and maintain a piece of the plot to own and maintain. Rock Dell township is aware of the request and there is a 5 acre minimum for land transfer, unless there is a variance, which the church would need to apply for if in support of selling the property to HA.

Secretary's Report: June minutes reviewed by Cindy.

Parsonage Committee: Request to look at the gutters for cleaning/repair if needed. Likely will need to hire a service to complete and will look to the Parsonage Committee to determine next steps. Recommendation to hire someone to maintain the boiler system to ensure heat throughout the Parsonage (or is there a need to winterize/drain the system).

Education Committee Report: Nothing needed, ready for Sunday School to begin

Old Business:

Parsonage Project: Motion last meeting to present 3 options for the Parsonage. Next steps are to complete informational meetings for both congregations. October Newsletter/Bulletins should be used for communication. Recommendation to have informational meeting on October 18th following church service. Informational meeting and communication should include the criteria for availability to vote. Our church constitution requires must be present to vote (no proxy or absentee voting allowed). Suggestion to have voting meeting first Sunday in November. Eligibility goes back current and preceding year for donations and for communion and voter must be confirmed. **Motion by Bryan DeCook that we will host an informational meeting re: parsonage on 10/18 and host a voting meeting on November 1st. We will follow the guidelines presented by our constitution for voter eligibility and communications of these proceedings. Deb Schuck 2nd the motion, no further discussion. Motion carries unanimously.**

Pastor and Gina moving their offices – joint board decision and timing. Discussion of what is needed and should timing be this year prior to Pastor's retirement. Rooms need to be emptied, prepped, and determine internet placement. Discussion will be tabled until after the vote in November.

New Business:

ELCA Consultation for new Pastor Selection: Introduction of roles and persons at East and West. Rev. Streed introduced herself and explained her role working with our Bishop. Introduction to the call process (4 phases) and initial meeting is to look at phase 1. Rev. Streed will continue to work with the board and call committee as our parish works through the process. Recommendation that there are 2 ministry site profiles (one for each congregation). Once submitted, Phase 3 will begin, which is the candidate interviews. A church congregation will be needed for final selection. Phase 4 is the welcoming of our new Pastor. Interim Pastors are available and expected to be engaged.

Continued on next page...

BOUNDARIES ONCE A PASTOR LEAVES A CONGREGATION:

It is also helpful for the congregation to understand the ethical boundaries regarding pastoral acts by former pastors and deacons. In the ELCA, there is a very clear understanding of these pastoral boundaries. These apply both to rostered leaders who accept another call and those who retire.

Once a rostered leader has left a call, that person:

- **May not** do funerals for persons from a former congregation.
- **May not** do weddings for persons from a former congregation.
- **May not** interfere in the life, pastoral care, or mission of that former congregation.
- **May not** return to or engage in the life of the congregation.
- **May not** retain membership with the congregation.

Interim Pastor will assist with getting the Ministry documentation and other transition needs completed. Can be brought on by Council vote. Typical time between Pastor leaving and new Pastor starting is one year. Rev. Streed will begin the Interim Pastor search once permission is received from the Joint Council and what the amount of compensation is available along with FTE for the Pastor.

Q from Hans: What is the pool of Pastors looking for with FTE? Interims are looking for Interim work only, more open to part-time or full-time and not typically be considered for permanent placement. Overall for Pastors accepting calls, full-time is preferred the majority of the time.

Next steps: Discuss and vote on engagement of Rev. Streed to begin the search for an Interim Pastor. Able to begin interviews prior to Pastor Paul's retirement date. Motion to initiate the Interim Pastor search and determine compensation package. Greg and Randy will pull financials and councils agree to begin the process. All members in favor.

Motion to Adjourn: Hans motions to adjourn, Danny 2nd, motion carried

Close with the Lord's Prayer

The next JOINT COUNCIL meeting will be December 14th at 7pm at West St Olaf (*with individual meetings starting at 6pm*).

Submitted by Jen Briske

In Praise of Liturgy

Liturgy, as the order of Christian worship, is a type of ritual. Through praise, thanksgiving, remembrance, supplication and repentance, it provides a basis for coming into communion with God.

As an ancient ritual, liturgy connects today's worshipers with prophets, apostles, martyrs, and millions of common believers going back to the first century Church. Through liturgy we commune with fellow Christians at the altar, and with the Communion of Saints.

Rooted in sacred Scripture, with emphasis on proclamation, hearing and response, liturgy uniquely expresses the Living Word of God. Inspired words once spoken or sung with passion by prophets and psalmists in the Old Testament come to life again. The inspired words of evangelists and apostles in the New Testament penetrate our hearts as a two-edged sword, bringing repentance and renewal – immediately, or gradually.

Through liturgy, Christians are invited to enter sacred time – moments such as the last supper, crucifixion and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. It's almost like being with the disciples on the night of Christ's betrayal, or at the foot of the cross with Christ's mother, her sister Mary, and Mary Magdalene. Intimacy with the Living Word is saving and transforming.

There may be tears. Think of the moment of the second cock's crow, when Peter recalled Jesus's prediction that Peter would deny him three times – he, who had shortly vowed to stand by Christ no matter what. Matthew records: "And he went out and wept bitterly." How many times have each one of us betrayed Christ – through cowardice, silence or shameful behavior?

My personal memories of liturgical enthusiasm go back to age six. The pastor was reading from the Gospel of John, chapter 21. Jesus told Peter, who was fishing unsuccessfully with some other disciples, to cast the net on the other side of the boat. They did so, and caught so many fish they couldn't haul them in. Wow! said a little boy. Everyone laughed.

Martin Luther introduced congregational hymn singing into the liturgy. I think of Pastor Melom, who sang the liturgy so beautifully that I committed it to memory without trying. The opening and closing hymns were always the same: "Holy, Holy, Holy" and "Savior Again to Thy Dear Name." I loved to picture the saints "casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea." Much later I learned this heavenly image came from Revelation, chapter 4. And the plea to "Guard thou our lips from sin, our hearts from shame, that in this house have called upon thy name" was a potent reminder against taking the Lord's name in vain.

Sunday School had its own kind of liturgy at West St. Olaf. We began by singing "Spirit of God Descend Upon My Heart." From this I learned to temper my expectations: "I ask no dreams, no prophet ecstasies, no sudden rending of the veil of clay; No angel visitants, no opening skies; but take the dimness of my soul away." After 60 years, the memorized hymn keeps on reminding. Just as my mother said would happen.

Of late, I have given more attention to the liturgy of the Lord's Supper – imagining Jesus at table with the disciples, saying "Do this in remembrance of me." This holy act of remembrance somehow brings us into communion with Christ. Savor the mystery, I tell myself. Don't try to understand.

The modern age tends to denigrate ritual and rote learning as unthinking and superstitious, in contrast to the methods of science and critical thinking. But to the earnest Christian, liturgy opens one to experiences of the sacred that lie beyond the reach and ken of science and rationality.

To appreciate and fully experience Christian liturgy requires preparation. Familiarity with Scripture, a positive, expectant attitude, and close attention to each part of the worship service are ways in which participants can open themselves to receiving God's grace through Word and Sacrament and Song.

~ Norman Senjem ~

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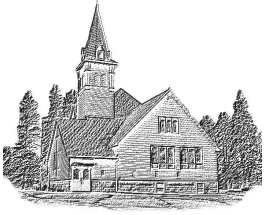
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