

Life together

Olsburg-Walsburg Lutheran Parish

inside...

page 2

page 3

Members in Service

page 4

Other Items of Interest

*Next newsletter items
and articles will be due
April 27.*

From Your Pastoral Leaders...

Preparing for the Three Days (Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Sunday)

In a Japanese tea ceremony, every movement is scripted. There is a proper way for guests to take off their shoes as they enter. There is a ritual for how guests admire the room, the art, the tea bowl, and the tea itself – before, during, and after drinking the tea. The host also has a whole script of movement as she performs all the details of serving tea to her guests. Because of the time and care taken to communicate and soak in every detail, both host and guest leave having experienced new awareness, awakening, gratitude, peace, even delight.

The Three Day are this kind of threshold experience. As the assembly gathers for these three days of worship, many of the movements are highly scripted. There is an order to these days and important roles for both host and guests. On Thursday, we take off our shoes. We tell the truth and are forgiven. We share a meal, we watch carefully as illusions are stripped away. We wait and watch. On Friday, we recall the trial, torture, suffering, and crucifixion of Jesus. We give thanks for God's continuing

presence in pain, grief, and death. We pray for the whole world. We adore and bless the one who powerfully triumphs over death. On Saturday, we recount how God creates and saves God's people, carrying them through the waters of baptism, breathing life into dry bones. We remember our own baptisms. We sing "Alleluia" and rejoice in Christ's resurrection.

When time and care are taken to communicate and soak in every detail, we have the opportunity to leave this three-day liturgy with new awareness, awakening faith, gratitude, peace, even delight. In short, God changes us. (Sundays and Seasons)

Olsburg Council Highlights

The Olsburg Church Council met at 7:00pm on Wednesday, February 18, 2009. Vice Chairman Jim Nelson called the meeting to order. Pastor Gordy led the group in prayer.

Members present: Laura Clifton, Kirby Burklund, Jan Cooper, Jim Nelson, Pastor Gordy Sandquist, Joyce Cantrell, and Kristi Fronce.

We opened the meeting with a reading from John 17:21b-24. A short group discussion followed the reading.

Reports

Secretary's report: Joyce moved to approve the report. Jan seconded. Motion carried.

Treasurer's report: Treasurer, Laura Clifton, presented the report. After a brief discussion, Jan moved to approve. Joyce seconded. Motion carried.

Pastor's report: Pastor Gordy asked if there could be a small fund established to be used at his discretion for ministry purposes. At times, there are events or activities where he or others incur out-of-pocket expenses. It would be nice to be able to reimburse individuals. Pastor Gordy also reported that the confirmation students have prepared and delivered meals to those in need. He mentioned that Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services would be held at both Olsburg and Walsburg. For the other Wednesday Lenten services, we will be alternating between the two churches.

Committee reports:

Property committee – Kirby mentioned that someone will be coming to look at the soffits and fascia sometime. He will report back on the costs at our next meeting.

Old Business

Parsonage funds: We continued discussion on options for these funds. The council will discuss further at our retreat to be held on Saturday.

Goals for 2009: We will discuss further at the retreat.

Annual Performance Review of the Pastor: A committee needs to be established to complete a review once Gordy has been here a year. The council needs to choose a committee.

Willis Family Fundraiser: Following our retreat on Saturday, the council will help set up tables and offer whatever assistance is necessary for the fundraiser.

Luther League Sweetheart Dinner: The event was well attended with 90 to 100 served. The next Luther League fundraiser will be bakery items from the Alma Bakery. These items will be delivered around April 1st.

Cemetery Work: Mike Apley is organizing the work. Phil Pfiefley will be discussing dirt work with Terry Johnson.

Council Retreat: The council will meet from 8:00am until noon at the Kaffee Hus on Saturday, February 21st to discuss leadership and goals for 2009.

New business

Mission Investment Fund: We are researching how comparable the rates are for these funds. They are not insured. The council needs to continue research on these funds.

Use of Church Basement: Jim had been approached about the possibility of using the church basement for school classes. The council decided more information was needed regarding the specific use before a decision could be made. Jim will research further.

Mid Week Offering: We discussed how the funds could be used to help those in our area who may be in need. Gordy would handle the requests and disbursement of funds. This would be confidential and at his discretion. Gordy will notify the congregation during church of the intended use of these offerings.

Constitution: Gordy is organizing a group to update the constitution.

Insurance Review: Laura will try to have someone visit with us at the March meeting regarding church insurance and whether or not we need to make changes. She will visit with Susan Adams as to what work has been done so far and what companies we may want to visit with.

Life Together is published monthly by the Olsburg-Walsburg Lutheran Parish. Deadline for calendar and other items is the last Monday of each month.

Editor/Parish Coordinator

Shelly Burklund
Cell 785-532-9853
Home 785-468-3370
sburklun@ksu.edu

Pastoral leaders

Gordon and Sonja Sandquist

Home 785-293-5603
Gordy cell: 785-747-7831

Sonja cell: 785-747-8084

gsandquist001@luthersem.edu
sonja80465@aol.com

Parish Information

Olsburg 468-3500
olc@olsburglutheran.org
Walsburg 293-5367

The meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

April birthdays and anniversaries

If you know of a member whose birthday is not listed, please contact the church office.

Birthdays

- 2 Kelsey Rothlisberger (W)
- 7 Roger Bohnenblust (W)
Travis Hageman (W)
Jackie Frintrup (O)
- 8 Irene Johnson (O)
Roger Sundgren (W)
- 9 Aneta Hagenmaier (W)
- 10 Jennifer Halsted (W)
- 11 Kelsey Nelson (W)
Christopher Hubbard (O)
- 13 Brian Johnson (O)

- 15 June Johnson (W)
- 17 Patsy Johnson (O)
Tristin Kraemer (W)
- 18 Myron Larson (O)
- 19 Russell Peterson (W)
- 20 Trenton Hargrave (W)
- 22 Fern Johnson (W)
Alan Peterson (W)
- 25 Haley Arellano (W)
- 26 Doug Kraemer (W)
- 28 Kevin Burklund (O)
Kirby Burklund (O)
Jacob Nelson (O)
Susan Adams (O)
Emma Bohnenblust (W)
Rob Scofield (W)

May 1-7

- 2 Cindy Olson (W)
Jessa Kulp (W)
- 3 Zachary Holt (O)
- 8 Bryon Nelson (O)
Crystal Strauss (W)

Anniversaries:

- 2 Vern and Kim Bulk (W)
- 11 Kevin and Barbara Burklund (O)
- 18 Ray and Jennifer Miller (W)
- 20 Eldon and Beverly Sundgren (W)
- 21 Steve and Peggy Johnson (O)
Gary and Carla Hageman (W)
- 30 Jamie and Kristi Hageman (W)

Members in service this month

Thank you to these members for their service to the parish during April.

Walsburg

Ushers: Forrest Johnson, Kermit Sundgren, Richard Strauss, Kenneth Neilson

Greeters: Kermit and Jessie Sundgren, Ray and Jenny Miller, Richard and Shirley Strauss

Communion Ushers: Dena Haller, Christopher Deetjen, Cindy Kulp, Albert Lee, Don Nelson

***Acolytes:** 4/5 Garrett Olson, Rachel Peterson; 4/9 Rachel Rheaume; 4/12 Symone Sandquist John Burnett, Emily Lee; 4/19 Emma Glessner; 4/26 Alyssa Kulp

***Lay Assistants:** 4/5 Kris Burnett; 4/9 Doug Kraemer; 4/12 Kim Nelson; 4/19 Jamie Hageman; 4/26 Brianna Olson

Flowers for Church: Altar Committee.

Altar Committee: Kim Bulk, Janet Neilson, Roseanne Johnson

Olsburg

Ushers: Brian Clifton, Tom Nelson, Mitch Adams, Blake Vargo

Communion Assistants: 4/5 Jan Cooper; 4/9 Kristi Fronce; 4/12 Donica Nelson; 4/19 Jim Nelson

***Acolytes:** 4/5 Kyle Apley, Nick Cooper, Shelby Adams; 4/12 Byron Nelson, Bailee Howland, Joathan Nelson; 4/19 Shane Adams; 4/26 Codie Webster

***Lay Assistants:** 4/5 Kyle Clifton; 4/12 Laura Clifton; 4/19 Laurine Catt; 4/26 Lee Cantrell

Altar Committee: Coleen Esping, Joyce Cantrell

***If you are unable to be present for your assignment, please find a replacement and contact the church office so the correct name will appear in the bulletin.**

Walsburg High School Senior Recognition Dinner

The Walsburg Outreach/Fellowship Committee will host the high school senior recognition potluck on Sunday, April 19 immediately following church. Drinks and table service will be provided.

K-State Lutheran Campus Ministry House Thank You

A huge thanks goes out to Jessie Sundgren for sewing the valances for the bedrooms at the campus ministry house. We will keep you all informed of the house transformation as the ministry continues to be shaped for the students at K-State!

Olsburg needs volunteers

Olsburg Lutheran Church is looking for volunteers to be on a task force to explore various options on how we should manage the funds from the parsonage sale. If you are interested, or you would like more information, please contact a council member by April 19.

Life together

Worship News

Palm Sunday Procession of Palms

April 5th during worship

In keeping with each church's tradition, please be ready to enter the worship space with palms on this special day.

Luther League Pancake Feed at Walsburg – following worship on Palm Sunday

Maundy Thursday Worship and Congregational Drama

April 9th

7:00 PM – Olsburg

8:15 PM – Walsburg

Gather with the community for rituals and dramatic storytelling centered on the night during which Jesus gave the community the sacrament of communion. We will end with silence and the stripping of the altar.

Good Friday Tenebrae Service (Latin for “darkness”)

April 10th

7:00 PM – Olsburg

8:15 Walsburg

Tenebrae was the name given to the medieval predawn morning prayer celebrated by monks during the last three days of Holy Week. In the monastic practice, it was a service of prayers and readings from scripture. As the light began to dawn, the candles used for reading were gradually extinguished, so that at the end of the service, the rising sun provided the necessary light for reading and singing.

In the service presented during this evening, the extinguishing of candles will be placed within the reading of the Passion according to John, the ancient gospel narrative for Good Friday, eight candles are used. Following each section, a candle will be extinguished.

Sunday Morning Easter Service

This is our Passover with Christ from darkness to light, from bondage to freedom, from death to life. This is the culmination of Holy Week and the pinnacle of the church's year. The resurrection is proclaimed in word

and sign, and we gather together to hear ancient stories of our faith, welcome new sisters and brothers at the font and share the food and drink of the Promised Land. Raised with Christ we go forth into the world, aflame with the good news of the resurrection.

Sunday, April 12th

Sunrise Service (time TBD) – Walsburg Lutheran

9:00 AM Worship – Olsburg

11:00 AM Worship – Walsburg

CONTEMPORARY / ALTERNATIVE WORSHIP – YIPES!

Saying the words out loud, let alone in print can strike fear in the leadership of many churches. Why? It is one of the top ten anxiety producers in churches – right up there with money. It doesn't really make sense though. Our calling as a church is to worship the Lord our God with all that we have – that is one of the primary ways that we stay connected to God and to the community.

So, in an effort to make sure that everyone is aware and maintaining a healthy state of emotion, we approach this topic as a conversation about dreams, discerning the calling God might be offering the community – especially the youth among us. If we stop the conversation at “how,” we will be defeated right away.

The questioning might start like this: “What might a Sunday night service, once a month, look like? Why would we do it? What makes worship “Lutheran?” Who might have the gifts to lead it? Where might it happen? Where is God in all this?” The last question is probably the most important question.

If you are interested in this conversation, contact Sonja Sandquist. The foundation of any effort like this will involve a grassroots effort of many people in cooperation with the church council that helps bring order to the church.

Luther League (Sr. High Youth Ministry) News

Palm Sunday Pancake Feed

Walsburg Lutheran Church
Sunday, April 5th
Following worship – around noon
Free Will Offering
All donations (up to \$500) will be matched by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, Chapter 30322.

All proceeds will help send youth to the National Youth Gathering in New Orleans this July.

Luther League Cemetery Clean-up Day

April 10th
Olsburg Lutheran Cemetery
Time – TBD

National Youth Gathering Meeting for Participants

April 19th
4:00 PM at Walsburg
All are invited to the group building!

Luther League Plant Sale

May 9th at Olsburg Lutheran Church
Watch for details and get your flower beds ready for some beautiful annuals!

Confirmation / Youth News

Olsburg Sunday School

The Olsburg Sunday School will be sharing music with the congregation on Palm Sunday. Don't miss their precious voices singing praises!!

Confirmation / Youth News

Confirmation Schedule for April

April 1 – class following worship at Olsburg
April 8 – No Class
April 15 – No Class
April 22 – Class at Walsburg
April 29 – Class at Walsburg

Camp Tomah Shinga

Camp Tomah Shinga is just around the corner! The Early bird registration deadline has come and gone, but more friends can still sign up for an incredible week of camp. Our designated week is Week #3: June 14th – 19th.

Children's Ministry

VBS Dates Will Be Chosen Soon!

Both Walsburg and Olsburg will be looking at dates for the community to gather for VBS fun that is both enriching and outreaching. Get ready for great music, bible study and connecting with friends!

Walsburg Little Ringers

The Little Ringers will be sharing their music with the congregation during Holy Week. Don't miss this precious offering of music!

Walsburg Children's Church

Sunday School won't be gathering during the summer, but younger children will be invited to a worship experience geared for them during the readings and the sermon, returning during the Hymn of the Day. (Parent's, we know that this is the part that is hardest for kids). Sonja will provide the curriculum, but adult leaders are needed to guide the children once a month. Contact Linda Toomire, Terry Peterson, Mary Kay Henry or Jennifer Kulp if you are able to offer you leadership. Training will be provided!

Nicodemus Moments: Places of Growth

This very morning I was thinking about how central baptism is to the Lenten Journey – the whole idea of death and resurrection and the implications of new life and how it all affects the details of our family. While I have spent years studying it and teaching it and proclaiming it, I had a Nicodemus moment. If you remember correctly from John 3, Nicodemus was one of the religious leaders who snuck in late at night to have a heart to heart with Jesus. Upon hearing his question, Jesus said, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” Nicodemus paused, and said, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?” I imagine a dead silence to follow the statement as Jesus looks at the leader with compassion. He says again, “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit.” I also imagine a Nicodemus looking at Jesus with pleading eyes that confess, “I don’t get it.” So, I confess, like Nicodemus, that sometimes I don’t get it. I understand the ritual, the words, the stories behind the words and the power of God. I have to admit that it is easy until I invite that word to take root in my life and mess with the organized ideas and judgments that I hold. I love the concept and power of new life when I am in over my head with no where else to turn. I love it that I can lean into a promise that proclaims that nothing can separate me from the love of God through Christ Jesus. It is the other stuff with which I wrestle. It usually has to do with decisions on how to act or speak. I wrestle with how I respond to the gift of baptism with my life. Do I always convey a sense of love when I speak and judge others? Do I offer help when I could just as easily sit back and wait for others to move on the opportunity? Do I risk making myself vulnerable by speaking up to offer a new way or an idea? Do I share not only my possessions but my life, my time and my love with others? Do I separate myself and my family from others who are different from us economically or culturally? Do I honestly give Christianity a good name when I am out and about or do people see a hypocrite? Ouch. Do I really want to keep asking these questions? Yes and this is why:

“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” That is good news so we engage in this cleansing ritual. By the power of the Word that created the world, we are re-created. We are born again through the Spirit:

“We have sinned against you in thought, word and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart. We have not loved our neighbor as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us. Renew us and lead us, so that we might delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.” Then the pastor declares the entire forgiveness of sins.

This is familiar to all of us on Sundays. What if we ended our days with this as a prayer every evening. What if we not only thought those words, but let those words slip down and take hold of our hearts? What if we meditated on this idea: we are sinners and we are claimed by God through the waters of baptism. The water and the Word cleanse our lives and quench our thirst for living water – living love – that flows through our lives for the world. Worse yet, what if we don’t? There are days that I don’t live out of this kind of center – what about those days? I think those are the days when my baptismal promise lives in the shadow of my own ego and sinful self. These are times when I become more important than God. The good news is that God’s promise is unaffected. Each day we get a “do over” and hopefully we honor the giver of the gift.

As we move to the concrete story of death and resurrection in the life of Jesus, I invite you to a Lenten discipline of the Examination of Consciousness – a review of your life each and every evening. This is a prayer that asks each of us, what needs to be put to death and what freedom and love might take hold in my life? My prayer for you is that you dwell in places of light, love and freedom to the glory of God.

See the next page for an explanation of the Examine of Consciousness.

Examination of Consciousness

How do things stand between me and God?

Where am I coming from and where is my life in Christ growing?

The following exercise usually takes about 15 – 20 minutes.

Take time to thank God for the good things that came into the day. Even the smallest details count. (Examples: sunshine, a breeze, food, words of encouragement) In this reflecting, I may come across some action that I did, an emotion or desire that was offensive or sinful. I ask for God's forgiveness on these matters.

Second, having thanked God and confessed any sin, I ask that God will give me the gift to see clearly how I am growing more fully alive to God in the gifts for which I am thankful and also how my human brokenness can keep me growing.

Thirdly, I then examine carefully what my actions, thoughts and desires tell me about my relationship with God, with myself and with others. Sometimes it might be a single event: losing my temper, resisting making a commitment or decision, procrastinating, or finding great joy at a piece of news. Patiently, I ask myself what my action or attitude meant. Did it embody love of God or fear and distrust? Did it suggest that I have gotten overcommitted, and why would I get overcommitted? Did it suggest that I do not approve of my life or my relationship with someone?

At other times, I might find a pattern emerging in the day – anxiety or worry all day long, erupting with an angry response over little things, demanding someone's attention constantly, withdrawing from others and avoiding conversation. With great patience, I ask myself, what this pattern might mean about my belief in God, my trust and love for God.

Still at other times, the climate of my life might emerge as clearly as the day's weather. I'm dissatisfied with my work; I have a lingering resentment with something someone did to me. Perhaps, I'm deepening in my awareness of God's love for me – I'm praying to God all day long about a matter that I desire. What does this thought or pattern say about me and God?

Fourth, then I take what I have learned to prayer. I speak to God and tell God whatever I need to say. I let God surprise me with insight and console me with faith and hope. As larger themes and emotions come up, I bring those to God. I ask God to teach me about these matters and I pray for acceptance of these teachings.

Fifth, I determine to keep my spirit filled with gratitude, and to take steps to get rid of mind-sets that separate me from the Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier. I visualize a change in my attitude, releasing fear and asking to grow in my faith in a new and special way. I set my mind to accept any other change or shift in myself that would come along, for God is the Master of my life and myself. I place my trust there, and not in myself.

This summary is based on Ignatius de Loyola's [Consciousness Examine](#) and adapted by Rhonda Bostrom of Sheridan Lutheran Church.

Sonja's Book Review

Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community

By, Robert D. Putnam

Back cover:

Once we bowled in leagues, usually after work – but no longer. This seemingly small phenomenon symbolizes a significant social change...Drawing on vast new data that reveal Americans' changing behavior, Putnam shows how we have become increasingly disconnected from one another and how social structures – whether they be the PTA, church, or political parties – have disintegrated. Until the publication of this groundbreaking work, no one had so deftly diagnosed the harm that these broken bonds have wreaked on our physical and civic health, no had anyone exalted the fundamental power of these bonds in creating a society that is happy, well educated, healthy and safe.

At 500+ pages, I don't recommend reading this book unless you are really interested in sociology as a stepping stone to getting your head wrapped around some of the changes that we are experiencing as a community. If that is the case, this book is incredibly helpful. Why this book now? It is Lent...let me explain.

Lent is a time that we take careful review of our lives in Christ as individuals and as community. Community can be church community, family community, city community, school community, county community...and the list goes on and on. It is any group in which I find myself as a participant, leader or follower. Review of our community lives, especially groups that have existed for a long time can sometimes be painful especially if they are in decline. We are confronted with questions that don't have clear answers and then as an act of denial, we sometimes gloss over the parts that can cause grief and pain and just pray they go away. Sometimes that works and sometimes it doesn't. Putnam's research suggests that the organizations that have existed through the century are those that held on to the core identity and then adapted to the changes that were offered in the changing contexts. This process is always much harder than it sounds.

For the church, the spiritual question is always, "What does God call us to?" In addition, Putnam offers some additional steps to consider:

1. Name the issue. Many wouldn't be surprised that the changing character of work is a contributor to our current situation.
2. Address both the individual and the corporate realities. Establishing a better community cannot happen through the actions of one person...or pastor.
3. Reclaim the importance of both education and religion as launch pads for investment in the greater community, in the spirit of unity not uniformity.
4. Challenge yourselves to choose to reconnect with neighbors and friends. "Henry Ward Beecher's advice a century ago to 'multiply picnics' is not entirely ridiculous today. We should do this, ironically, not because it will be good for America – though it will be – but because it will be good for us."

I appreciate Putnam's offering and I end this article with a caution. The church is not just another organization that has a mission, goals and strategic plan. The church is a living organism that is more about the business of discernment grounded in the greater story of faith. While we desperately want the answer and the 10 point plan, our best course forward is to always ground ourselves in Scripture, offer God our concerns and listen twice as much to our neighbors and God for how we are to be a community that reflects the best of the Kingdom of God – through our words and actions. We do know that God calls us to love and serve our neighbors. We can act on that right away. The rest we hold in discernment and in faith... knowing that the great picnic that defines the people of God offers strength and hope for the journey. Maybe that is why the church has been around for 2,000 years. Picnics are built right into the system.

Life together

Graceways Bible Study

First three Mondays of the week!

7:00 – 8:30 PM

Walsburg Memorial Hall

All are welcome to explore the book of Mark! Join Gordy and a colorful cadre of other disciples who are journeying through this Gospel.

Women's Minsitry

Loving Well Women's Retreat

Steering Team Needed!

Women are busier than ever... and lonelier than ever.

A retreat from the Beth Moore Series invites women into a time of bible study, sharing, laughing, playing and praying that will prove to be fuel for the soul. The question is "When?" When do we gather the sisters together? If you are interested in lending your wisdom, leadership or time to organizing this retreat, contact Sonja Sandquist. The martial and facilitator are already lined up. The questions that remain are: who, where, when and what should we eat?

Olsburg LCW Salad Supper

"Everything I Know I Learned in My Garden"

Wednesday, April 29th at 6:30 p.m.

Ladies in the community are invited together for fellowship, a salad supper and a short bible study.

The program will be presented by Pastor Sonja Sandquist. Please call Alice Gibson, 468-3523, by April 24th, if you plan to attend.

God's Sonflowers Cluster II-E

God's Sonflowers Cluster II-E Spring Gathering is April 25, 2009 at First Lutheran Church in Clay Center. Registration begins at 9:30 am, cost is \$3.00 per person. The theme of the gathering is "Angels of Grace". The Love Offering will go to the Rebecca A. Morrison House in Salina. Monetary donations are welcome as are in-kind items from the wish list below.

If anyone would like to go, talk to Kathy about car pooling.

Wish List

Toilet paper

Paper towels

Laundry pre-treater

Napkins

3 oz bathroom cups

Homemade cookies, bars, breads

Coffee

Fabric softener sheets

Boxes of facial tissues

Bleach

Dishwasher soap

Food storage bags

Packaged snacks

Bread machine mixes

Gift cards to Wal-mart, Sams, and Dillons

Address Corrections: Please contact Shelly Burklund if you have an address change. We are charged for returned newsletters. Many thanks!

Life *together*

Olsburg-Walsburg Lutheran Parish
12351 Union Road
Leonardville, KS 66449

Address Service Requested

PRSR STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
Olsburg, KS
Permit No. 2
