

Lifetogether

Olsburg-Walsburg Lutheran Parish

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Next newsletter items and articles will be due October 27.

From the Desk of Your Pastoral Leaders

I just reading an article from Faith Inkubators that had a point worth repeating, but first a little background on the authors. Faith Inkubators is a think tank / curriculum publishing company that has been a pillar in the realm of intentional faith formation and discipleship training during the past 15 years. The founding pastor left parish ministry and mortgaged everything he owned in an effort to create a business that helps church bodies be intentional about faith formation experiences. Why would he do this? During his first years as a youth pastor he lost a kid who lost hope and took his own life. That pastor, Rich Melheim, was forever changed and intensely called and motivated to help the church participate in the faith formation of every child in intentional ways – ways that actually strengthened the support system of the child. Faith Inkubators are the people who bring us a version of Faith Stepping Stones – learning and rituals for gifting the child and blessing the family on the faith journey. They do good work. They also ask good questions about what we want to accomplish and how it is that our rich history as Lutherans plays into our future as disciples of the living Jesus.

The question is this: Where are we when it comes to Christian Education for children, youth and adults? The article I read summed it up this way: “We have 168 hours in a week and only one – maybe two of them are spent on intentional faith forming experiences.” Any

experienced teacher might wonder if this is enough time to really get anything done. This is not about blame or shame. It’s a simple fact. This is the paradigm of Christian Education across the nation and the bottom line is that fewer families are finding that Sunday School, Confirmation and Adult Bible Study make the list of important activities at all. Kudos to all who make the effort.

Now, we could get upset and complain and create all kinds of programs and activities to meet everyone’s entertainment needs, or we can get creative with the challenge in the current context. “Creative” is what Faith Inkubators is all about. They “get” that families are busy. So, they have reached back into our Lutheran roots to help us to remember that the church is a wonderful place for that formal education experience to happen. We need to keep inviting others to the fun. In addition, they remind the church that the Small Catechism was invented so that parents could do their own Christian Education at home. What we are talking about here is not more homework or a to do list but rather modeling and habits. They offer the FAITH 5. *These are five things that can be modeled in church every Sunday, in small groups and at home every night.*

1. *Share (highs and lows)*
2. *Read God’s Word – everyone*
3. *Talk*
4. *Pray*
5. *Bless*

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The three primary places for kids and adults to connect are these: car time, dinner time and bed time. So, at this point I offer them to you as a way to enrich your time together at the dinner table or right before bed. I myself have found that sharing highs and lows at the dinner table each evening gives everyone an opportunity to say what is on their hearts and minds. The grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins seem to expect it too. They don't have to wait until Thanksgiving to say for what it is that they are thankful. From a ministry standpoint, this experience creates an image of both confession and thanksgiving around a meal. How could Jesus not be knowingly present? From a mother's perspective, sometimes it is just good to have a positive focus when the inmates are close to taking over the asylum. A quick "What's your high and low today?" ushers us into a ritual of listening and learning about each other. Some days are better than others, but the habit is there. We don't have to wait until worship on Sunday morning to have a sense of spirituality. Our day to day activities often provide us with the time and space to pay attention to what God is already working on.

This is not to say that Sunday mornings aren't important for Faith Formation. I think they are extremely important. They are the springboard for the journey. For two hours each week, we spend time remembering who we are and whose we are – claimed by a promise that never abandons and never fails. The Faith 5 help us to allow those God Stories to become our stories when faced with the same challenges. Daniel helps us to be brave. Esther helps all girls to use wisdom, confidence and grace in situations of power. Jesus helps us to love those who are different from us, and Jesus helps us to be with those who suffer.

My prayer for you is that the living Word may dwell with you each and every day.
Blessings and Hope,

Sonja



Reformation Sunday

Sunday, October 26th – Wear red – the liturgical color of the day.

Reformation Day – October 31

Excerpt from *Sundays and Seasons*, p. 290

By the end of the seventeenth century, many Lutheran churches celebrated a festival commemorating Martin Luther's posting of the Ninety-five Theses, a summary of the abuses in the church of his time. At the heart of the reform movement was the gospel, the good news that it is by grace through faith that we are justified and set free.

With the 1999 signing of the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification on this date, the question of how the Reformation might be celebrated appropriately is a lively question, if Lutheran and Roman Catholics agree on the basic nature of the gospel, now what? This commemoration is less a victory day for Lutherans than it is an opportunity to be reminded of the reformers' belief that the church would always stand in need of reformation.

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A Parable about a Lifesaving Station

On a dangerous seacoast where shipwrecks often occur there was once a crude little lifesaving station. The building was just a hut, and there was only one boat, but the few devoted members kept a constant watch over the sea, and with no thought of themselves went out day and night tirelessly searching for the lost. Many lives were saved by this wonderful little station, so that it became famous. Some of those who were saved, and various others in the surrounding area, wanted to become associated with the station and give of their time and money and effort for the support of its work. New boats were bought and new crews trained. The little lifesaving station grew.

Some of the members of the lifesaving station were unhappy that the building was so crude and poorly equipped. They felt that a more comfortable place should be provided as the first refuge of those saved from the sea. So they replaced the emergency cots with beds and put better furniture in the enlarged building. Now the lifesaving station became a popular gathering place for its members, and they decorated it beautifully and furnished it exquisitely, because they used it as a sort of club. Fewer members were now interested in going to sea on lifesaving missions, so they hired lifeboat crews to do this work. The lifesaving motif still prevailed in this club's decoration, and there was a liturgical lifeboat in the room where the club initiations were held. About this time a large ship was wrecked off the coast, and the hired crews brought in boatloads of cold, wet, and half-drowned people. They were dirty and sick, and some of them had black skin and some had yellow skin. The beautiful new club was in chaos. So the property committee immediately had a shower house built outside the club where victims of shipwreck could be cleaned up before coming inside.

At the next meeting, there was a split in the club membership. Most of the members wanted to stop the club's lifesaving activities as being unpleasant and a hindrance to the normal social life of the club. Some members

insisted upon lifesaving as their primary purpose and pointed out that they were still called a lifesaving station. But they were finally voted down and told that if they wanted to save the lives of all the various kinds of people who were shipwrecked in those waters, they could begin their own lifesaving station down the coast. They did.

As the years went by, the new station experienced the same changes that had occurred in the old. It evolved into a club, and yet another lifesaving station was founded. History continued to repeat itself, and if you visit that sea coast today, you will find a number of exclusive clubs along that shore. Shipwrecks are frequent in those water, but most of the people drown!

This parable originally appeared in an article by Theodore O. Wedel, "Evangelism—the Mission of the Church to Those Outside Her Life," *The Ecumenical Review*, October 1953, p. 24.

Did you notice the date for when this was written? Fifty-five years ago... A lot has changed in these Olsburg and Walsburg communities since then, and I look forward to hearing more of your stories and discovering the hope which you live. **ONE THING HASN'T CHANGED** – the mission of the church is to those outside her life, and that can be a scary and uncharted future. God is leading us!

Blessings and
Hope
Pastor Gordy



Walsburg Council Highlights

The Walsburg Council met on August 27, 2008

- ✚ Pastoral couple reported no official acts in August.
- ✚ Jessie Sundgren reported that choosing of hymns has been made for Sept. and Oct.
- ✚ Tickets for the anniversary meal will be sold starting at the Ice Cream social, for the following two Sundays, with no sales after Sept. 28
- ✚ Designs were presented from Buchanan Signs for refurbishing church signs, and a vote was taken to choose the design.
- ✚ Council had planned to view selected web sites but could not be done because computer was not cooperating.
- ✚ Christmas party at parsonage is planned for the council and families on Dec. 12 at 5:30 p.m.
- ✚ The council declined with thanks the offer from Olsburg of a tree celebrating our 135th anniversary because it was felt that the church yard does not need another tree.
- ✚ Big B Co. (Buddy Brown) will be asked to repair a riser on septic system at parsonage.
- ✚ Rob Scofield will be asked to bid on painting outside of parsonage.
- ✚ Nominating committee needs to meet before the Sept. council meeting to prepare a ballot for Oct. elections and present it for approval to council.
- ✚ Agenda items presented by Sonja and Gordon Sandquist for council approval or as information included:
- ✚ Information on Confirmation Ministry. Approval of \$200 was made for funds for curriculum.
- ✚ Gideon's International was not approved to make a presentation.
- ✚ New member Sunday to be held Oct. 5. Greg, Kris and John Burnett will be received as members then.
- ✚ Gordon will hold an open-to-community meeting about the "Book of Faith Initiative"

begun by ELCA, which wants congregations to register to be a part of this initiative.

- ✚ "Bread for the World" Sunday, sponsored in part by Lutheran World Relief is Oct. 19.
- ✚ Church insurance was discussed and the council decided that they were satisfied with the insurance and the premium.
- ✚ Church Constitution is dated 1995 and council is asking for volunteers to review and present updates if needed.

Coming in November: Grace Ways Community Bible Study

All are invited to gather as a community to connect, study and pray. Our format will include both large and small group elements as we engage in bible study through the Lutheran Lens - the lens of God's grace. Prior to diving into God's Word as a community, we will be studying the framework through which we read the Word. We will spend 7 weeks with "Opening the Book of Faith: Lutheran Insights for Bible Study."

This seven-session course introduces practical methods and approaches to studying Scripture, and then reinforces the basics of scriptural interpretation with four integrated studies that build biblical fluency. Important communication tools, study principles, and discussion methods are unpacked for participants in a flexible, conversational format that encourages discussion, conversation, and sharing & setting a healthy foundation for a powerful Book of Faith experience.

Following this introduction, we will forge ahead by tackling specific books of the bible to get the full flavor or what each author is sharing and how God's Story is also our story. Cost of Books: \$13 (If you are unable to meet this challenge, please contact your pastors for other arrangements. We don't want money to stand in the way of your participation.) **Schedule:** Monday evenings, 7:00 - 8:30 pm at Walsburg Lutheran or Tuesdays mornings, 9:00 - 10:30 am at Olsburg Lutheran. We will meet during the first three weeks of every month beginning on November 3rd / 4th. Please invite your neighbors and friends. All are welcome.

Olsburg Council Highlights

The Olsburg council met on August 20. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by the vice chair, Jim Nelson, and we opened with prayer.

Members present: Susan Adams, Joyce Cantrell, Jim Nelson, Jan Cooper, Kristi Fronce, Kirby Burklund, Donica Nelson and Willis Poppe, Gordy Sandquist and Sonja Sandquist. Absent: Floyd Munson

Reports:

Secretary's report: The meeting minutes of July 16 were approved as presented.

Treasurer's report: The treasurer, Susan Adams, reviewed the report. It was moved and seconded to accept the report as presented.

Pastor's report: Presented under new business.

Property committee report: No committee reports.

Old Business

Parsonage: A draft of the letter to the congregation regarding the proposal to sell the parsonage was reviewed. The special meeting to discuss this matter will be held on September 14. The letter will be sent out prior to September 1.

- ✚ **Outside lighting:** Kirby Burklund will check with Mitch Webster to see if he is ready to begin the project
- ✚ **Handicap parking signs:** Joyce will make sure these are ordered.
- ✚ **Ice Cream Social:** Sunday School begins on September 7, and the ice cream social will be on September 21 from 11:30-1:30. On September 14 installation of the Sunday School teachers and all others involved with youth ministry will occur during the worship service.
- ✚ **Confirmation:** Confirmation classes will begin on September 3 with a kick-off night for parents and students. Confirmation classes will be on Wednesdays from 7:00 – 8:15 pm., and the same curriculum "Here We Stand" will be used. A request was made from council to approve expenses of \$80 for books and \$120 for other supplies for confirmation classes. Joyce Cantrell moved and Jan Cooper seconded that the funds be provided. Motion carried.
- ✚ **Walsburg 135th Celebration:** Jim Nelson will check with Walsburg Council Chair Albert Lee to determine whether or not a gift of a tree from our congregation would be appropriate.
- ✚ **Internet Service:** Fiber optic service to the church will be completed by August 21.
- ✚ **Luther League:** Luther League met on August 10. The Youth Convention will be held

in New Orleans next summer. Fund raising activities will be starting in September. The registration fee from the youth who wish to participate has to be received by September 1. Luther League will meet on the second Sunday of every month at 6:00 pm and will alternate each month where they meet.

New Business

- ✚ **Church insurance:** Susan Adams will contact Church Mutual Insurance Company to receive a bid.
- ✚ **Bread for the World:** Bread for the World Sunday is on October 19. ELCA is a supporting organization of Bread for the World which is an advocacy group whose goal is to increase awareness of hunger issues. The Council reviewed and approved the materials that will be distributed in church on October 19.
- ✚ **Communion Cards:** Pastors Gordy and Sonja had questions regarding our use of communion cards. The question arose as to whether or not the cards could just be placed into the offering plate instead of being collected by the ushers.
- ✚ **First Communion:** Pastors Gordy and Sonja had questions regarding our traditions regarding first communion. Typically, fifth graders are instructed and then receive their first communion. Currently, there are no fifth graders.
- ✚ **Bible Study:** Pastor Gordy will explore the new Bible study initiative called "Opening the Book of Faith" to determine the details of the initiative.
- ✚ **Sunday bulletins:** Discussed our bulletins and whether or not it would be useful to visitors and members to print the service in the bulletin. Council members will consider this and discuss with other church members.
- ✚ **Constitution:** Pastor Gordy would like to appoint a task force so that he and a couple of other members could update the congregation's constitution. It was moved and seconded to move forward with the task force. Motion carried.
- ✚ **Correspondence:** A letter was received from Wartburg Theological Seminary thanking us for our past support of Amanda Esping and inviting us to bless Amanda with our prayers, encouragement, and financial support for the 2008-2009 academic year. No action was taken at this time. A letter was received from member, Donald Cobbler, indicating his interest in mowing the cemeteries during next year's mowing season. He would like to do some work in the cemeteries this fall as preparation. The discussion of cemetery upkeep needs will be discussed at our September meeting.

Meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

Faith Milestone: Blessing of the Car Keys

Sunday, October 19th during worship
Driving for the first time is a rite of passage of huge proportions.



It is both a time of significant freedom and significant responsibility. For parents it can be a time of significant worry and wondering. For some youth, 16 is the magic number. For others, the farm use license comes at a much earlier age. Regardless, the church desires to both recognize this significant time with both a prayer for your safety and a blessing for your families as you embrace this new freedom and responsibility. **All who are driving, have been driving or will be driving within the next year are encouraged to allow the congregation to pray for your family.**

Bread for the World Sunday

Sunday, October 19th during worship
During worship you will have the opportunity to learn a little more about this organization that helps to feed the world. For more information check out the web at www.bread.org.



breadfortheworld
HAVE FAITH. END HUNGER.



Confirmation Update

We have 10 beautiful faces showing up for Wednesday nights:

Maddy Vargo, Makayla Vargo, Cody Webster, Emma Glessner, Douglas Apley, Jonathan Nelson, Jon Burnett, Kyle Apley, Shane Adams and Kyle Clifton. They are to be praised for their dedication and effort. Most of them come from volleyball and football practice, have dinner at church and then spend time doing connecting and learning events until 8:15 pm at night. To say the least, everyone is a little punchy by the end of the

evening. Please continue your encouragement of them and their efforts. They are an awesome bunch!

Schedule this month:

All meetings are from 7:00 – 8:15 pm at Walsburg, except the Hayride.

Blue Valley / Rock Creek Kids: contact Kathryn Apley if you need a ride.

October 1: No Confirmation

October 5: Serving at the Walsburg 135th Dinner (time - TBD)

October 8: *Moses*

October 15: *King David*

October 22: *Israel*

October 29 (6:00 pm.) Confirmation Hay Ride & Dinner at the Nelson Farm



Confirmation Hay Ride and Dinner at the Nelson Farm

Wednesday, October 29th

6:00 – 8:00 pm

Meet at the parsonage at 5:30 pm for any that want a ride from Walsburg. We will return around 8:00 pm. Bring \$5 (hayride – with real horses, corn maze, hotdogs and s'mores)

There will be no moon so wear gym shoes and jeans so you can play hide and seek in the corn field! Bring a warm coat.

Luther League Hay Ride and Dinner at the Nelson Farm

Sunday, October 5th

5:00 – 7:30 pm (or so)

Bring \$5 (hayride – with real horses, corn maze, hotdogs and s'mores)

There will be no moon so wear gym shoes and jeans so you can play hide and seek in the corn field! Bring a warm coat. Call Tom or Donica Nelson if you need directions.

October birthdays and anniversaries

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

Birthdays

- 1 Shea Sundgren (W)
- 2 Gene Henry (W)
Price Oman (W)
- 4 Norma Coutermarsh (W)
- 5 Wava Peterson (W)
Michael Kalmer (W)
Lindsay Bulk (W)
- 6 Alan Kulp (W)
- 7 Donica Nelson (O)
Matthew Hagenmaier (W)
- 9 Terry Peterson (W)
Dennis Peterson (W)

- Jamie Bohnenblust (W)
- 11 Mary Lou Gibbs (O)
 - 12 Jamie Hageman (W)
Jason Hageman (W)
 - 13 Eldon Sundgren (W)
 - 14 Patty Nelson (O)
 - 16 Joseph Hubbard (O)
Marjorie Grater (W)
 - 18 Jan Cooper (O)
Kim Bulk (W)
 - 20 Callie Webster (O)
 - 21 Cajsa Larson (W)
 - 22 Eric Nielson (W)
 - 25 Pam Holt (O)
 - 26 Jerry Erickson (W)
Larry Bohnenblust (W)
 - 27 Diana Hargrave (W)

- 28 Debbie Hagenmaier (W)
- 31 Robert Johnston (O)
Larry Bestwick (W)

November 1-8

- 1 Christopher Deetjen (W)
- 2 Alan Hubbard (O)
Casey Nelson (O)
Loren Oman (W)
- 3 Joyce Cantrell (O)
- 4 Mark Fronce (O)
- 6 Chet Rosell (O)
- 7 Pearl Peterson (W)

Anniversaries:

- 1 Jeff and Tami Howland (O)
- 6 Mark and Kristi Fronce (O)
- 10 Larry and Sandy Glessner (W)
- 11 Vincent and Marian Smith (O)
- 17 Wes and Coleen Esping (O)
- 19 Lee and Joyce Cantrell (O)
- 24 Ryan and Kim Gibbs (O)
- 28 Jacob and April Brenner (O)

Members in service this month

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

Walsburg

Ushers: Larry Bestwick, Gary Hargrave, Lance Haller, Arlo Peterson

Greeters: Gary Hargrave Family, Larry Bestwick Family

Communion Ushers: Russell Peterson, Jay Peterson, Jessie Sundgren, Larry Bestwick, Gene Henry

***Acolytes:** 10/5 Emma Glessner; 10/12 Chase Ricketts; 10/19 Cajsa Larson; 10/26 Cassie Miller, Rachael Peterson, Rachel Rheaume (cross bearer)

***Lay Assistants:** 10/5 Jerry Bohnenblust; 10/12 Kim Bulk; 10/19 Alan Peterson; 10/26 Jessie Sundgren

Flowers for Church: Volunteers (please contact Altar committee)

Altar Committee: Dena Haller, Janet Neilson

Olsburg

Ushers: Kirby Burklund, Jacob Nelson, Nick Cooper, Lee Cantrell

Communion Assistants: 10/5 Jim Nelson; 10/19 Donica Nelson; 10/26 Kirby Burklund

***Acolytes:** 10/5 Nick Cooper; 10/12 Shelby Adams; 10/19 Shane Adams; 10/26 Bailee Howland, Jacob Nelson, Blake Vargo

***Lay Assistants:** 10/5 Kathy Monser; 10/12 Kristi Fronce; 10/19 Laura Clifton; 10/26 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 135th Anniversary

Thank you to Olsburg Lutheran Church, the Confirmation Class and the Luther League for making the anniversary a special day by offering your time and talents during the dinner.

A special thanks to the leaders of the events: Dennis and Donise Peterson, Gary and Carla Hageman and Chris and Carol Deetjen for all your time and organizational skills. You're a blessing!



October is Quarter Challenge Month!

Join in the fun for the 10th Annual Camp Tomah Shinga Quarter Challenge.

October is Quarters for Camp Month. So show your support for the ministry of Camp Tomah Shinga by giving as many quarters as you can during the month of October! (Larger denominations are also appreciated!).

Central States Synod Update New Purpose Statement and Missional Directions

After much time and discernment, our synodical leaders have offered the following to help the ministry for the 204 congregations in the Central States Synod.

God is calling us to be a people...

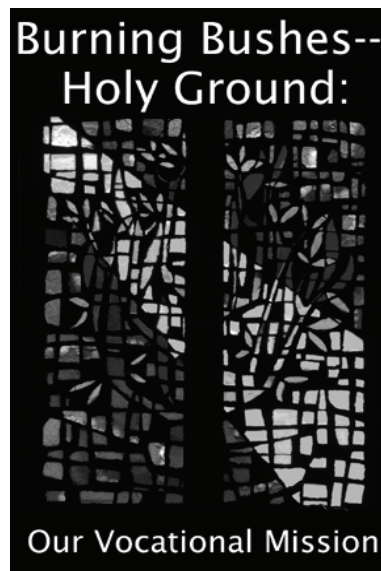
Changed by love
Sent in love,
To serve.

To offer more specificity and give focus to the area ministries, the following missional directions have been offered:

God is calling us to be a people engaged in...

- Igniting spiritual renewal
- Raising up leaders of all ages for the church
- Building bridges across the differences that divide our society
- Inspiring and equipping people to be a part of what god is up to in their everyday lives.

This is good stuff. As we gather in our groups and classes, we can begin to simply offer these as one of the lenses through which we see ourselves in ministry together. If you want more information on what kinds of ministries the Central States are engaged with, check out www.CSS-ELCA.org



Life *together*

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