

Life Together

July/August 2012

Olsburg-Walsburg Lutheran Parish

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*Next newsletter items and
articles will be due July 26.*

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Ten Reasons Why You Should Be Going to Church

I've just seen one too many articles on why people aren't coming to church. Admittedly, there are some good reasons. But I'd like to share my top 10 reasons why you could reconsider coming to church. Others will have different reasons and some may disagree with the ones I have listed, but here they are.

10. Coming to church doesn't mean you have no doubts about God or faith or religion. It means you have a place you can share with people who have their own doubts.

9. Bad stuff is going to happen in your life. It just is. A church community cannot be everything to everyone in times of crisis, but when the bottom falls out of your world, it's great to have a community to lift you back up.

8. Bad stuff is going to happen in your life, (part two). The time to build a relationship with God (and community) is not when life turns ugly, and you've run out of all other options. Attending worship regularly helps build a relationship with God and others that will give you a solid foundation when the winds blow and the storms come.

7. Not all churches are anti-something. Most of us are for people, for acceptance, for hospitality, for God's abundant grace. Really, we're out there. We just don't get the good press.

6. Any church worth its salt has really good food on a regular basis.

5. Churches offer paint-by-number opportunities to serve. Many people would like to help the poor, the hungry and the homeless, but they don't know how to get involved, how to make the time to be involved, or what they can do to really make a difference. Churches offer you ways to plug in to help those who need it most.

4. You've got a gift, probably two or three or more. Becoming involved in the ministry of a church will help you discover and use gifts you never even knew you had.

3. Not all churches are after your money. Good churches want you have a healthy relationship with money. Sure, churches need to pay the electric bill and the pastor and other staff, but money and the church is more about you than it is about the church. It's about your own relationship with money. World events have proven that it's much better to put faith in God than in a bank account. Church can help you with that.

2. Taking a break from our hectic lives to come to church is accepting the gift of Sabbath. Wayne Mueller says "(Sabbath) dissolves the artificial urgency of our days, because it liberates us from the need to be finished." We don't take Sabbath and come to worship because we have time and have finished up everything that needs to be done. We take Sabbath because it is time to stop, and we are designed to stop, rest and reflect.

1. Jesus is really cool. Even if you don't know if you can believe in the whole Son-of-God thing, even if you refer to the resurrection as the Zombie Jesus event and even though those of us already in church often do a lousy job of following him, come to church to get to know Jesus. The more you get to know him, the more you'll understand why people call his way The Way.

Adapted from Rev. Anne Russ

Council Minutes

The Olsburg Lutheran Church Council met on Wednesday, May 16, 2012. Jan Cooper called the meeting to order. Pastor Gordy began by reading from Matthew 28.

Members present: Jan Cooper, Laura Clifton, Kristi Fronce, Kirby Burklund, Woody Kasselmann, Jim Nelson, and Pastor Gordon Sandquist. Visitor: Lee Cantrell

Reports

Secretary's Report: Kirby made a motion to accept the report. Pastor Gordy seconded. The minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report: The treasurer's report was presented. Laura noted that the general fund is down about \$3000 from where we should be. Jim moved to approve the report. Kristi seconded. The report was approved.

Pastor's Report:

Gordy noted that there have been people in the church getting into cabinets and drawers. There have been some messes left behind and food has been eaten. We will put a notice in the bulletin asking people to watch for any individuals who may be coming in or out of the building.

Committee Reports

Property Committee:

- ✠ The PA system is not working. Kirby will contact someone about repair.
- ✠ Lee Cantrell was present at the meeting to discuss the work that needs to be done on the front doors. Lee does not have a sander so it would be difficult for him to do the work. Lee had a bid from Roy Hanne for painting the door and trim. Roy's quote was \$345.

Old Business

Front Doors : Woody made a motion to have Roy Hanne put the finish on the doors. Kirby seconded. Discussion followed. It was decided we would request the doors not be stained. Jim volunteered to talk to Roy. The inside doors need to be finished with oil. The motion carried to have Roy do the work on the front doors.

2nd Street Property : We discussed the demolition of the 2nd Street property. Jim may be interested in taking the storm windows. The stones will need to be moved. The vinyl siding needs to be pulled off also. There is no record of who owns the propane tank. There are flowers that could be dug if anyone wants them. The shingles will need to be hauled. We discussed renting a dumpster. It was the groups consensus that the work should be completed by the end of June.

Work Day at Church: It was decided we would have a work day on May 20th. Kirby will gather a list of chores to be completed.

Church Scholarship: Blake Vargo and Jacob Nelson were each awarded a scholarship in the amount of \$300 each.

Church Organ: Gordy will check on the bid for doing repair work on the organ.

New Business

Church Insurance: The cost for insurance from Charity First went up 67%. Discussion was held regarding coverage. The renewal is June 1st. Laura will contact Church Mutual to get a final quote from them. We may need to have a special meeting to make the final decision.

Kristi moved to adjourn the meeting. Jim seconded. The meeting was adjourned with The Lord's Prayer.

Missional Engagement Team

Walter Brueggemann writes that "Mission is where our greatest gift meets the world's greatest need."

...But how do we know what to do? This Fall, all are invited (from both churches) into this process of discerning what God is calling the church to be and do. During our monthly gatherings we will engage material from Pat Keifert's "We are Here Now" that will lead us along in the process of Dwelling in the Word; listening to the community; wondering; and then experimenting with small pieces of ministry. The final step, even in what might seem a failed effort, is to learn from the experience. The process is called the "innovation of diffusion." It is not linear like a strategic planning but rather faithful to the Word and open to the Spirit's nudgings. It places great faith in the gathered community who serves as the hands and feet of Christ in this world, here and now. It is pretty exciting stuff.

So, stay tuned for more information.

Ordination of Gordon L. Sandquist

August 19th @ 4:00 PM

First Lutheran Church in Manhattan

There will be a reception after the service.

More information will follow on how each congregation can help with this.

All are invited and welcome

PLEASE NOTE: We **WILL** have regular worship in each congregation this day.

What happened to the house?

The house behind Olsburg is gone. A hearty thanks to all the folks who helped make this happen. The home (with lot) was donated to the church last year, and after many forms and letters, was brought into tax exempt status with the church. It is now considered (for the time being) additional church parking.

July and August birthdays and anniversaries

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

July Birthdays

- 1 Joan Schweer (O)
- 3 Carl Larson (W)
- 4 Evelyn Larson (W)
- 6 Gregg Gibson (O)
- 7 Blake Vargo (O)
- 8 Sharon Hubbard (O)
- 9 Joshua Cantrell (O)
Amy Hageman (W)
- 11 Julie Munson (O)
- 11 Richard Gibbs (O)
- 12 Jim Nelson (O)
Claryce Bohnenblust (W)
Brett Dawes (W)
- 13 Jana Arellano (W)
- 17 Nicole Holt (O)
A.J. Berry (W)
Kristi Hageman (W)
- 19 Monica Kasselmann (O)
April Brenner (O)
- 21 Lilyan Oman (W)
June Campbell (W)
Toni Neilson (W)

- 22 Kristi Fronce (O)
- 23 Steve Strauss (W)
- 24 Nancy Whitesell (O)
- 27 Maxine Anderson (O)
Alan Bohnenblust (W)
Kyle Bohnenblust (W)
- 29 Kathleen Sundgren (W)
- 31 Amy Burklund (O)
Jennifer Miller (W)

August Birthdays

- 1 Lori Rogge (W)
Jane Gibbs (O)
- 2 Caleb Cantrell (O)
- 4 Darlene Larson (O)
- 6 Kim Gibbs (O)
- 7 Mickey Burklund (O)
- 11 Kathy Ricketts (O)
Don Nelson (W)
Symone Sandquist
- 12 Erin Stone (W)
- 14 Lee Cantrell (O)
Diana Nelson (O)
Janice Johnson (W)
- 18 Justin Campbell (W)
- 25 Mike Nelson (W)
- 26 Pat Erickson (W)

- Ryan Gibbs (O)
- Jeana Burton (O)
- 28 Arlo Peterson (W)
Devon Sundgren (W)
- 30 Willard Johnson (W)
Scott Kulp (W)
Brett Kulp (W)
- 31 Bill Monser (O)

July Anniversaries:

- 6 Roger and Kathleen Sundgren (W)
- 10 Justin and Amber Befort (O)
- 15 Victor and Cindy Olson (W)
- 17 Kraig and Monica Kasselmann (O)
- 21 Brett and Stacy Dawes (W)
- 22 Jessie and Kermit Sundgren (W)
- 30 Karl and Linda Kasselmann (O)

August Anniversaries

- 1 Tim and Sandy Zoeller (O)
- 5 Scott and Jennifer Kulp (W)
Lynn and Marla Webster (O)
- 9 Richard and Shirley Strauss (W)
- 12 Josh and Tricia Cantrell (O)
- 14 Jerry and Pat Erickson (W)

Members in service for July and August

Thank you to these members for their service to the parish during July and August.

Walsburg

Ushers and Greeters: July: Bill and Roseanne Johnson; Aneta Hagenmaier; Theresa Hagenmaier.
August: Brad and Dena Haller; Arlo and Wava Peterson

Communion Ushers: July: Vern Bulk and Carl Larson.
August: Lynne Berry and Dennis Peterson

***Lay Assistants:** 7/1 Lindsay Bulk; 7/8 Don Nelson; 7/15 Diana Hargrave; 7/22 Jenny or Cassie Miller; 7/29 Brianna Olson; 8/5 Kim Bulk; 8/12 Linda Toomire; 8/19 Janet Neilson; 8/26 Dennis Peterson

Altar Committee: July: Roseanne Johnson. August: Donise Peterson

Olsburg

Ushers: Jim Nelson, Floyd Munson, Gregg Gibson, Tom Nelson

Communion Assistants: 7/1 Kirby Burklund; 7/15 Coleen Esping; 8/5 Kristi Fronce; 8/19 Shari Holt

***Acolytes:** 7/1 Brooklynn Zoeller; 7/8 Callie Webster; 7/15 Codie Webster; 7/22 Kyle Clifton; 7/29 Kylea Ricketts; 8/5 MaKenzie Goff; 8/12 Jacob Nelson; 8/19 Monique Sandquist; 8/26 Nathanael Martin

***Lay Assistants:** 7/1 Coleen Esping; 7/18 Becky Avery ; 7/15 Jan Cooper; 7/22 Joyce Cantrell; 7/29 Kathy Monser; 8/5 Kristi Fronce; 8/12 Laura Clifton; 8/19 Lee Cantrell; 8/26 Patty Nelson

Altar Committee: July: Joyce Cantrell, Coleen Esping; August: Kristi Fronce, Kathy Monser

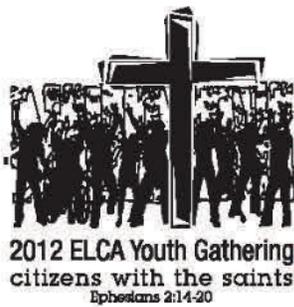
***If you are unable to be present for your assignment, please find a replacement and contact the church office so the correct name will appear in the bulletin.**

National Youth Gathering in New Orleans, July 18 – 23, 2012

The following youth will be attending the National Youth Gathering in New Orleans, Louisiana this July with Pastor Gordy: Shane Adams, Makayla & Madison Vargo, Kyle Clifton, Codie & Callie Webster, Monique & Symone Sandquist (along with Sonja and four youth from Waterville -- Quintin Blaske, Micah Kenworthy, Taylor Kenworthy and Morgan Stryker). They have spent the past year doing fundraisers in preparation for the big event. The group will be flying to the event from Kansas City and staying in a hotel near the convention center. In addition to taking in the sights and sounds of the New Orleans Culture, the group will spend each day doing bible study at the hotel, worship as a large group (approximately 36,000) at the Super Dome and closing the evening with devotions with our group at the hotel. Special events throughout the week include a day at the convention center for group building fun, a day of discipleship activities with the groups from the Central States and a day of practicing justice in New Orleans as our group participates in service work throughout the city.

The theme this years is "Citizens with the Saints." We will grow in our understanding of what it means when we say – "We are a church that shares a living, daring confidence in God's grace," as we live out "God's work, Our hands..."

Thanks for all of your support, prayers and encouragement!



National Youth Gathering Dates:

Getting Ready Meeting (covenant / packing list / airplane etiquette): Thursday, July 12, 7 PM @ The Sandquist Home

National Youth Gathering Blessing:

Sunday, July 15, 9:00 AM at Olsburg Lutheran (11 @ Walsburg)

National Youth Gathering Worship: *Faithprints From the Journey of Being a Citizen with the Saints*

Sunday, July 29 Olsburg: 9:00 AM Walsburg: 11:00 AM

Confirmation Mission Trip to Kansas City, May 2012



The starting point and foundation of Stewardship

There are a number of motives which can be appealed to so that the people of God might more fully give of their time, finances and skills in God service. All but one, fall short of the journey toward lives that imitate God's example of giving...

One possible starting point (or motivation) might be called *stewardship of investment*. "Give and God will bless you" is another way of saying it! Mark 10:29-30 could be seen as a foundation for this motivation – the Christian steward is one whose giving will be met by God's giving. We hear this in a number of different circles AND, with reference to stewardship, this starting point can be very misleading.

If we begin by presuming that we give in order to get, where does that take us? If we give to secure God's blessing, aren't we giving in order to procure God's favor? The Reformation erupted over just this issue in the sale of indulgences. In addition, if our starting point is "give and be blessed," what happens to stewardship when the giver encounters pain, suffering, or deprivation? Does the giving end until life improves? Or, does guilt induce more giving, so as to force God's hand?

A second motivator might be called "stewardship as crisis management. The church needs a new roof, the HVAC needs repair, there's not enough in the checking account to pay the bills... The needs and crisis (with this motivator) are real, and people do tend to respond when it's clear that backs are up against the wall.

But, with this starting point, what happens to giving when the crisis is met? When the bills are paid and the balance is "stable," what will be the motive for continued giving? If crisis management is the basis of Christian stewardship, does that mean the church must go through one crisis after another to push the right buttons so people will continue to give generously?

Another starting point (and maybe the most attractive) can be summed up in three words – "*It's your duty.*" It assumes that stewardship is your obligation to help shoulder the load. As an organization, this makes sense AND, even the motive of duty doesn't provide an adequate starting point for Christian stewardship.

There are a number of biblical texts which define such duties in explicit terms. The first six chapters of Leviticus go into lavish detail, and the tithe is seen as a favored beginning point for defining the duty of stewardship – to the point of making it a legalized yardstick as part of full "membership." But, applying a law to giving (imposing set percentages and sums), runs counter to our proclamation of grace. As the Apostle Paul reminds us, the reign of law is succeeded by the sovereignty of grace...

Don't misunderstand me! Exercising discipline in giving is a positive thing. Without discipline, stewardship – like waistlines – becomes flabby by lack of challenge. Really, tithing can be a valuable tool, either evaluating where we are in our giving or encouraging us to consider new levels of honor. But tithing, if done only as an imposed

obligation, does not benefit the giver. If tithing is only duty, it seems devoid of grace, and grace broadens our responsibilities – not out of requirement, but through invitation.

So, if these starting point motivations seem to come up short, where can we start so that we can experience most fully God's grace and still experience the joy of giving? The opening verse of Psalm 24: "The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world and those who live in it" is a good place to start. All faithful stewardship begins with this affirmation. All that we have, all that we are, all that is – all belongs to God. Whatever comes into our hands does so as a trust from God. We live in a God-given world.

John 3:16 helps us understand that all creation is not only God-given, it is also God-loved – a love made clear in God's own selfless act of giving...

Christian stewardship is all about imitating God's example of giving. Stewardship is our love taking form, through the giving of ourselves, nothing more – nothing less. It is an act of selfless thanksgiving and celebrates and responds to the favor that is already so freely given.

Stewardship that starts with God's sovereignty and love, challenges each person to new understanding. To affirm that the earth is God's declares that neat boundaries between what is "mine" and what is "God's" are deceptive. This kind of stewardship encompasses the whole (ALL) of my life – both spiritually and materially – not simply 2, 5, 10, or 20 percent of my possessions or time or skills.

What I do with "what I can spare" has little to do with stewardship. What I do with those things that matter most to me is how I strive to imitate God's giving. When we take God's sovereignty and love for stewardship's starting point and motivation, we will always have a reason to offer thanksgiving, a foundation for our faith, and a motivation to love more fully.

Follow-up to the "Cross Roads" process

We are a church that shares a living, daring confidence in God's Grace...

Do we want to live this? And if so, what would it look like?

If we believe that Jesus changes lives AND each of us continue to grow in our faith, -- What would fully formed Christian faith (and Disciples of that faith) look like in this place three years from now?

Both Church Councils will be looking at three immediate foci

Visitor Contacts

Visibility of Congregation and Ministry

Discovering what the "needs" in the community are

Visitor Contacts

How do we connect, re-connect and follow-up with visitors?

- ✚ Welcome pads, card in pew (place invitation in bulletin), book in entry
- ✚ Cards from congregation – letter from cong. and/or pastor
- ✚ Visit from congregation (bring a loaf of bread, coffee cup, etc)
- ✚ Most importantly – what are we doing and what can we do in the future to set forward a *principle* that “All are welcome?”

Visibility of Congregation and Ministry

How do we promote what we do, and intentionally invite the community to be a part of this ministry and congregational community?

- ✚ Mailings via zip code (could be during special festive or anytime)
- ✚ Prayer walks by members through different community neighborhoods
- ✚ Invite a friend Sundays
- ✚ Hand deliver fliers door to door
- ✚ Presence in area festivals (floats and such)
- ✚ Monthly/quarterly Sunday Breakfast

Discover what the needs in the community are...

This is a process that entails a more clear understanding and adoption of congregational vision and guiding principles. Both council have agreed to a day long retreat together with leadership and anyone else who is interested (**everyone is welcome**). We would open the day with short overview, and then focus on the 2, 10, & 16 chapter of the book of Acts.

We will discover 1) What did God do in the chapter you studied? 2) What did people of faith do in the chapter? 3) What key lessons would you say any church should learn/remember from this chapter? – We will do this in small groups so there will be plenty of activity.

This would be followed by a guided prayer time around the beginnings of developing a “purpose” statement (God’s purpose for our church is...)

The afternoon would entail developing guiding principles (using the Acts text as a form(ation) and outline of what these look like).

We will begin promptly at 8:30, and be finished by 3:00 PM. This includes a lunch break.

After a day like this, we can more fully emphasize the guiding principles or each congregation as we move more fully into action and mission. The hope is that each congregations “guiding principles would be adopted as a “continuing resolution” at the next congregational meeting.

Watch the bulletin for an upcoming date in October. And consider how you might participate...

Life together

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The Rite of Confirmation:

October 28, 2012

Symone Sandquist, Casey Nelson, Callie Webster have completed the two year formation process that we call Confirmation. They have studied the stories of the Old and New Testaments, and explored and memorized much of Luther's Catechism, as well as wrestled with tough theological concepts. They have participated in Christian Community with her peers and shared their prayers with them. Each of them has served the community in countless ways. After all of that preparation, these three will come before the Church Community and will affirm their faith as a follower of Christ. The promises that were made at their baptism are coming to fruition and so the community will celebrate.

Please stay tuned for more details on Symone, Casey and Callie's Rite of Confirmation. It is a time when they will give their statement of faith, as a witness of all the ways that the community has invested in them on the journey of faith. For that we give thanks.

