

Lifetogether

Olsburg-Walsburg Lutheran Parish

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Reflections by Pastor Keith

A big question hangs over us these days. "How long?" How long will the schools stay open? How long will there be fall sports, such as football and volleyball and cross country? How long before we can see loved ones quarantined at home or living in nursing homes? How long will we have to wear masks? How long must we social distance? Behind all these questions is the big question mark - how long will the coronavirus continue to plague us and disrupt our lives?

I certainly don't know the answer. I am hoping for the best. I am praying it won't be long before we no longer have this cloud hanging over us. But I suspect we will be fighting this battle for some time to come.

Psalm 13 raises this very question. The Psalm begins, "*How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?*"

It can feel like God has forgotten us. It may even feel like we have forgotten each other. It can feel that way when we are not able to spend time together as we once did. It can feel that way when we don't see each other as often as we did before this virus began spreading around.

We miss each other! And well we should. After all, we are the Body of Christ. We are connected to one another, not just through family ties, not just because we are neighbors, not just because our kids or grandkids go to the same schools, and so on. We have a stronger connection than all of that because we are connected to each other through Christ!

Let's make sure we stay connected to each other! Let's reach out to one another. If we can't sit down and have coffee together or share a pew at church on Sunday morning, we can reach out in other ways. We can talk on the phone. Send cards. Give care packages. Connect on social media. And most of all, we can pray for one another.

We don't want to drift apart. The connections we have with one another are far too valuable to just drift apart. Now, perhaps more than ever, we need each other. As 1 Corinthians 12 reminds us, "*If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.*" We are the Body of Christ!

After asking, "How long, O Lord?" Psalm 13 concludes with these words, "*But I trusted in your steadfast love, my heart shall rejoice in your salvation. I will sing to the*

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Lord, because he has dealt bountifully with me."

Like the Psalmist of old, the key is to keep focused on God's steadfast love. It is God's love which will get us through whatever we must face in the coming days. Let's keep rejoicing in God's salvation. Yes, God will help us day after day. God will come to our rescue. Because of Jesus' death and resurrection, we can be confident of God's salvation.

Keep the faith. Love God. Love others. Be the people of God!

The peace of Christ be with you,
Pastor Keith

The Bible from Beginning to End

Once again, we are going to take a journey through the Bible from beginning to end. Starting September 13, we will start at the beginning of the Bible with the book of Genesis. Then week after week we will follow the story through the Old Testament and then through the New Testament and end up in the Book of Revelation.

We took this journey last year. But this time we will listen to different Bible readings and build on what we learned last year. Again this year we will use the Narrative Lectionary as our guide. A lectionary is a series of readings. The Narrative Lectionary is a series of readings designed to tell the narrative or story of the Bible as a whole. The Narrative Lectionary was developed by teachers at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota. There are four series of readings. We used one of them last year; we will use another one this year.

Our goal is to help all of us become better acquainted with the overarching story which the Bible tells. We will trace the Biblical story from beginning to end because we believe that knowing the Biblical story is crucial to mature Christian faith. Whether

you are a seasoned student of the Bible or whether you are just beginning to learn the Biblical story, the journey we will be taking through the Bible will help all of us learn and grow.

The Bible has been a source of spiritual strength, inspiration, and guidance for countless people over the centuries. They have looked to it because of what it has to say about God, about human beings, and about our daily lives. Join us each Sunday (either in person or on Facebook) as we enter into the world of the Bible and discover how this amazing story speaks to us today.

Outdoor Worship

Since the beginning of June we have been worshipping outdoors. Both councils have said we should continue worshipping outdoors as long as the weather permits. On any given Sunday if the weather is not conducive to outdoor worship, we will move inside.

The services at both churches are held in shaded areas near places to park so that those who desire to remain in their cars may do so. Worshipers are asked to bring lawn chairs or blankets to sit on. Everyone is urged to practice proper social distancing and to wear a mask while interacting with others.

Folks at home can worship online by accessing the Facebook page of their respective churches. Printed copies of the sermon are available upon request.

September birthdays and anniversaries, joys and sorrows

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

September Birthdays

- 4 Shirley Strauss (W)
- 5 Jeff Howland (O)
- 7 Codie Webster (O)
- 9 Amber Befort (O)
- 10 Shelly Burklund (O)
Richard Strauss (W)
- 15 Monica Hargrave Schultz (W)
Sarah Diamond (W)
- 17 Cole Schultz (W)
- 18 Noah Plummer (O)
- 19 Brian Clifton (O)
- 20 Joshua Hagenmaier (W)
Morgan Vargo (O)
- 22 Steven Johnson (O)
Jared Fronce (O)
- 25 Mylene Davis (O)
Chris Deetjen (W)
- 28 Ray Miller (W)
Donald Cobler (O)
- 30 Kraig Kasselmann (O)

September Anniversaries

- 1 Dallas and Mylene Davis (O)
- 4 Alan and Kristin Bohnenblust (W)
- 5 David and Jeannette Pultz (W)
- 12 Gregg and Alice Marie Gibson (O)
Rick and Irene Johnson (O)
- 16 Bart and Norma Coutermarsh (W)
- 19 Carl and Jane Larson (W)
- 20 OJ and Monica Schultz (W)
- 26 Ernest and Marjorie Grater (W)
- 27 David and Rosie Ahlerich (W)
- 30 Kent and Mary Nelson (O)

+ We rejoice with Mary Alice and Nick Cooper on the birth of their daughter, Hadley Rea Copper on August 8. The Coopers are part of the Olsburg Lutheran Church.

+ We rejoice with Trey Burklund and Brooklynn Zoeller who graduated from Blue Valley High School in May, and with Kylea Ricketts who graduated from Riley County High School in May.

+ We sorrow with the family and friends of Arlo Peterson who joined the saints in the Kingdom of Heaven on June 2. Arlo was a member of Walsburg Lutheran Church.

+ We sorrow with the family and friends of Ramona Johnston who joined the saints in the Kingdom of Heaven on July 9. Ramona was a member of Olsburg Lutheran Church.

+ We sorrow with the family and friends of Nancy Holt Whitesell who joined the saints in the Kingdom of Heaven on July 15. Nancy was a member of Olsburg Lutheran Church.

Members in service

Olsburg

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

Walsburg

***Lay Readers:** 9/6 Jane Larson; 9/13 Lynn Hargrave; 9/20 Lori Rogge; 9/27 Linda Toomire

***Greeters and Ushers:** Rob & Alicia Scofield; Carol Wiens; Nathan Wiens; Amanda Campbell; Linda Toomire

***Communion Ushers:** Marlene Jenkins; Lee Hartford

***Acolytes:**

Altar Committee: Dena Haller

**** Walsburg volunteers at the Food Pantry during September**

***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.**

***Ushers:** Dan Holt; Kraig Kasselmann; Casey Nelson; Curtis Gutsch

***Communion Assistants:** 9/6 Coleen Esping; 9/20 Karl Kasselmann

***Lay Assistants:** 9/6 Kathy Monser; 9/13 Tom Nelson; 9/20 Karl Kasselmann; 9/27 Kraig Kasselmann

***Altar Committee:** Kathy Monser; Kristi Fronce

***Acolytes:**

A Reminder

If you are not able to worship on Sunday mornings, don't forget to mail your offerings to the church. Our work goes on in many ways.

Olsburg people may send their offerings to the financial secretary at:

Alice Gibson, 113 S. 1st St, Olsburg, KS 66520

Walsburg people may send their offerings to the financial secretary at:

Lynne Berry, 14180 Crooked Creek Rd., Leonardville, KS 66449.

Stay Connected

A great way to stay connected is through our newsletter. We want everyone to receive it - either by email or by postal mail. If you want to receive the newsletter by email, give your email address to our parish coordinator, Shelly Burklund. Her email address is sburklun@ksu.edu.

Are you receiving "Pastor Keith's Reflections?" If you would like to receive these email messages, give your email address to Shelly. Do you know someone, a friend or a family member, who might want to receive them? Give their email address to Shelly.

Olsburg Lutheran Church Council Highlights from July

The Olsburg Lutheran Church Council met on Wednesday, July 8, 2020 at 7pm.

Karl Kasselmann called the meeting to order. The meeting opened with a discussion on grace and forgiveness.

- ✚ Pastor asked for feedback regarding outdoor services. He also asked if we can get a second microphone so we can return to having a reader during Sunday services. David will check on

getting an extra microphone from the Legion. We will make the switch to having a reader next Sunday, July 12th.

- ✚ Karl contacted Midland Exteriors. They are planning to make the exterior repairs in the next couple of weeks. The money will come from the Doris and Leona Veleen fund.

- ✚ We have received a bill from Terry Johnson for cemetery gravel. The cost was \$500. There is no charge for his work. David moved to get a \$50 gift certificate from The Farmhouse to show Terry our appreciation. Gregg seconded. The motion carried.

- ✚ Karl noted the plan for installing the carillons is still in the works.

- ✚ Karl will soon be contacting Lester about the work on the graves.

- ✚ Invoices for Landon Schreiber's mowing will go to Jim Nelson for payment.

- ✚ The Council discussed donating money to the Travis Belville Go Fund Me account. There is \$1,066.01 in the discretionary fund. Gregg moved to donate \$250 to the fund; Kristi seconded. The motion carried.

- ✚ Swedish Supper: Luellen Kasselmann was present and let the council know that plans for the Swedish Supper are moving forward. Unless the Covid situation worsens or mandates are put in place, she continues to make plans for the supper. There will be actions implemented to make certain safety requirements are met. Luellen also noted she has been contacted by someone who has volunteered to purchase the beef for the supper this year.

- † The Council received a “thank you” from Brooklyn Zoeller for her scholarship.
- † Historical records were updated by Luellen Kasselmann and Alice Gibson. They put together these records in anticipation of the 140th celebration that was planned for Olsburg. The celebration has been canceled but the report is available for anyone who would like a copy.
- † Karl asked if there have been any updates on the Pastor search. Pastor Keith noted that the search committee received information on a candidate from California with over 35 years of service. Affordability of paying someone with this much service is a concern.
- † A new refrigerator will be purchased for the kitchen.
- † A new Calling Tree is in the process of being activated.

Walsburg Sunday School Begins September 13!

Our children's Sunday School may look a little different this year, but one thing hasn't changed: our commitment to share the love of Jesus with children that attend weekly Sunday School at 10:00 a.m. each Sunday!

Starting on Sunday, September 13, at 10:00 a.m. the children, teachers, and helpers, will gather outdoors (weather permitting) on the north side of the sanctuary for a 30-40 minute Christian Education time. To ensure the safety of our children and volunteers, we are asking children and staff to wear a mask. We will work on social distancing while seated at picnic tables and participating in activities.

Sunday School curriculum/lessons will tie in with Pastor Keith's sermon texts for the day. Our focus for the Sundays in September will be on creation with children participating in activities that illustrate all that God created, how we care for God's creation, and how we care for each other.

Children will be divided into three age groups: (1) Preschool; (2) Kindergarten, Grades 1 and 2; (3) Grades 3, 4, 5.

Volunteers are needed. Please contact Sheri Storer if you are able to come on Sunday mornings and help with the children's activities.

We all look forward to seeing our children in Sunday School and Church.

David moved to adjourn the meeting; Gregg seconded. The meeting adjourned with The Lord's Prayer.

Walsburg Lutheran Church Council Meeting Highlights

The Walsburg Council met on June 3, 2020. Below are some highlights from the meeting.

- † Window restoration began the week after Easter and is on schedule to be completed in July.
- † Pastor Keith was thanked for all his work in preparing Daily Reflections and will continue with reflections once or twice a week after we resume church services.
- † Logistics for resuming church services and activities according to the Plan approved by the Bishop was discussed.
- † Council is obtaining bids for the parsonage basement drainage/moisture problem.

Swedish Supper 2020

This is the time of the year when we start making plans for our annual Swedish Supper, and, this year, making plans amid the Covid-19 is challenging and changes will need to be made. We are not going to be able to use the grade school to host it. So, what should we do? We are looking for any ideas, suggestions and comments you might have regarding our annual Swedish Supper. Please contact me, or any member of our church council with your ideas or concerns.

A congregational meeting will be held on September 13, 2020 following our regular worship service where a decision will be made as to hold, or not hold, our Swedish Supper this year.

Between now and then think about what you feel would be the best, safest solution for our Swedish Supper and bring them to church with you on September 13th.

Luellen Kasselmann

Olsburg Sunday School News

ALL ABOARD join us on the Rocky Railway train taking off September 13th after church. You will learn about Jesus' power and how it pulls us through the mountains and valleys. The train ride will last about an hour. There will be singing, a bible story, crafts, games and snacks.

The Rocky Railway Train show will be October 25th during church.

Conductors: Linda Kasselmann & Kathy Ricketts

News from the Riley Food Pantry

The Food Pantry shelves are once again well-stocked thanks to many generous donations. Looking ahead, September is Walsburg's month to staff the Food Pantry. I will be there each Saturday morning and will welcome having one more person to work with me. Client hours are 10 a.m. to Noon. We meet the clients at the door to get their paperwork; fill the order, then set the bags outside for client pickup. Let me know if you would like to help and which Saturday works best for you.

Mobile: 785-632-1220

Email: rbaer@kansas4hfoundation.org.

Thank you!

Manhattan Walk to End Alzheimer's – October 18

COVID-19 has changed many things including Manhattan's Walk to End Alzheimer's. One thing has not changed and that is a commitment to ending Alzheimer's. The Alzheimer's Association Walk to End Alzheimer's is moving forward in 2020, and this year, Walk is everywhere – on every street, trail, treadmill, country road, etc. To ensure the safety of our walkers, volunteers and staff, we won't physically gather as a large group the the Manhattan City Park this year. Instead, on Sunday, October 18, Walsburg Walkers will walk on their own, with family or with the Walsburg Walkers Team.

We are all walking, fundraising, and working together because the same thing motivates us all: a world without Alzheimer's and all other dementia. Together, we make a difference.

To sign up to walk with the Walsburg Walkers on Sunday, October 18, at 10:00 a.m. around our church's property, please register at www.alzwalkmanhattan.org. Or, please contact Linda Toomire or Sheri Storer, if you would like to join us in walking.



The church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming and sanctifying activity in the world. That is the statement of purpose for congregations and for synods in our respective constitutions. How do we live out that purpose? It is not simply a matter setting goals and priorities. It is about discerning God's mission for us. That assumes, rightly so, that God is active in the world, creating, redeeming, and sanctifying.

How do we participate in this activity of God?

In many ways we're forced to ask this question with new insights. This time of the pandemic has drawn us into what many have been calling a "liminal" space – between what has been and what has been revealed as the "new normal" or way of being church. In this liminal space, as the reality of the pandemic was unwinding in our midst, the synod council and synod staff gathered to discern together the activity of God, identifying some core values that could guide our participation into God's activity in these days and in the days to come. We want to expand the conversation and invite you into a time of discernment. This is something we had begun to do prior to the pandemic but as with so many other things, we found ourselves needing to "pivot" and step back to embrace a new reality.

Each month, September through January, at your council meetings or other leadership gatherings, we invite you to take 15-20 minutes to pray, reflect on Scripture, and talk with one another about one of the core values identified by synod leadership, always open to other core values that might emerge in this time of discernment. These monthly discernment conversations around the core values will be included in the synod's e-newsletter and posted on the synod website:

<https://www.css-elca.org/visioning>

September – Love of Neighbor

Next newsletter items and articles will be due Sept 23.

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

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