

Life together

Olsburg-Walsburg Lutheran Parish

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*Next newsletter articles will be
due October 26.*

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From the Desk of Your Pastoral Leaders

In keeping with the normal format of our monthly newsletter, we yield to a letter that we received via e-mail from a pastor whom we don't know but respect because of the wisdom he offers this hurting church. In addition, a chart has been enclosed to help all at Walsburg to discern the ramifications of the conversation and possible decisions that are before the council and congregation. We are interested in creating a common language and a tool for discernment for the days ahead – a conversation that affects the entire community, including Olsburg. We encourage you to read and pray about the letter and chart that follows. We are always available and are interested in tending relationships in these times of wrestling so please call if you want to chat. God is in the middle of all of this – it is just hard to see sometimes. May you dwell in God's hope and peace, Sonja and Gordy

Reflections on Sexuality and Certainty

It is sad to see a relationship spiral out of control. We have witnessed family or friends embroiled in conflict as hurt and pain feeds on itself until a relationship is destroyed. We have been there ourselves-wanting to hurt another as badly as we feel we have been

hurt-as a teenager when parents fail to understand, as a spouse deeply betrayed, as a parent when helplessness turns fear and disappointment into rage.

As I write this, the church I serve is in turmoil. After having struggled with the issue of sexuality for decades our church in assembly has decided gays and lesbians in committed monogamous relationships may serve as pastors in our church. Some see this as a moment of grace as our church welcomes all people as they are, as Jesus did. Others see this as a betrayal of two thousand years of Christian tradition and in direct opposition to the Bible.

I am troubled by the certainty of both sides. For a church like ours, whose theology is Biblically based scripture is foundational. On the other hand words translated as 'homosexual' have a range of meaning in Hebrew and Greek, none of which is 'consenting intimacy between committed adults.'

While deeply troubling, conflict in the church is neither new, nor surprising. The Biblical book of Acts recounts the turmoil that ensued when the early church struggled with the issue of circumcision and whether it was necessary for people of faith. The

only scripture they had at the time clearly indicated it was necessary yet the church ultimately decided it was not.

One hundred sixty years ago churches of many denominations split over the issue of slavery. Those who supported slavery had the strongest Biblical support. There are a wealth of Bible verses assuring them they were right. "Slaves, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling..." was a favorite. Of course these verses were ripped out of context, as are verses in support or opposition to our church's current decision.

At one point in our church history those who were divorced were prohibited from serving as pastors or church leaders because Jesus clearly taught that divorce was not God's will. While no one in their right mind would contend divorce is a good thing, most would agree that it is, sadly, sometimes a necessary thing-and that God's final word is a word of forgiveness and grace, not condemnation.

Forty years ago our church was in turmoil over the issue of whether women could serve the church as pastors. Then, too, there was scriptural support for those in support and those in opposition.

There are two constants in issues dividing the church over the centuries: absolute conviction and a reliance on scripture to support this conviction.

Each person must prayerfully discern the meaning of scripture, not only about controversial issues but in our daily faith walk: where am I the prodigal? the self righteous older brother? Where am I called to be the forgiving parent? I cannot definitively tell you God's final word. I can caution you against those who do.

The Bible tells us those who were certain of God's will, and harbored no doubt of what God would have them do, stoned the

prophets and crucified Jesus. In contrast, those heeding God's call wrestled with doubt: Abraham, Moses, Jeremiah, Job, Thomas, Mary, Martha, Peter all experienced doubt and despair as they lived as God's faithful people. Even Jesus himself cried out on the cross, "My God, why have you forsaken me?"

The conclusion is inescapable for Bible believing Christians. The more certain you are right, the more likely it is that you are wrong. This is a troubling notion.

It is even more troubling if we take it out of the realm of theological disagreements and put it where it belongs: in our own troubled relationships; as a troubled teen, a betrayed spouse, a disappointed parent. Our hurt blinds us to our own part in the failed relationship. Our conviction makes us deaf to appeals for understanding.

It is always easier to see the sins of another than our own. More convenient too, since it does not require anything of us.

I am not certain if my position on ordination of gays and lesbians is correct. I pray that it is. I do know that both I, and you, dear reader, are mistaken when we think the problem in our troubled relationship lies solely with our spouse, our parent, our sibling, our boss, or our neighbor.

May God grace our certainty with doubt, for doubt opens the door to God's Spirit working in and through our lives and relationships, bringing hope and healing to our church and to our own troubled lives.

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**Possible Ramifications of the Different Options Being Discussed at Walsburg
Working Copy – Draft #2**

<p>Option #1: Do Nothing</p>	<p>Option #2: A corporate vote to go to an already existing church body</p>	<p>Option #3: Wait until CORE Organizes and join them</p>	<p>Option #4: Declare as a Non-Denominational Congregation without a Guiding Body</p>
<p>Pastoral Leadership: Pastoral Leaders continue service</p> <p>Church structure and financial processes continue</p> <p>No lawyers needed to negotiate any process of leaving</p> <p>The corporate emotional culture will improve with decision to stay in the ELCA</p> <p>Children's Ministry may rebound as the church is seen as emotionally safe again</p> <p>Actions Needed: Healing rituals- vote of affirmation A new way to be in a community that agrees to disagree A process to enter into learning with respect A stewardship program that will help the congregation understand what it means to be the church and the function of money in our faith journey A clarified mission and identity work with forward moving actions</p>	<p>Pastoral Leadership: Pastoral leadership stays in the ELCA and break-off community assumes the existing process of the new body.</p> <p>Church resources and financials - unknown</p> <p>During the waiting period attendance and giving will most likely decrease.</p> <p>The break-away group will need to invest time and energy in the transition.</p> <p>The corporate emotional culture could be split and will bleed over into the community.</p> <p>Actions Needed: Decided by the process of the judicatories of the new and old bodies.</p>	<p>Pastoral Leadership: Will continue until a vote thereby voiding the agreement with the sister ELCA congregation. Process to get a new pastor (unknown and not approved) would be decided by new judicatory</p> <p>Church resources and financials would be decided by the process that may or may not be administered by the new upper judicatory of CORE...if they are even accepted in the ELCA.</p> <p>During the waiting period – at least a year away, attendance and giving will decrease making Walsburg financially vulnerable.</p> <p>The corporate emotional culture will deteriorate as people feel pushed to choose a side.</p> <p>Actions Needed: After a vote – the process is decided by the upper judicatories of the ELCA and the new synod... <u>if they are accepted as a separate synod within the ELCA.</u></p>	<p>Pastoral Leadership: Will continue until a vote thereby voiding the agreement with the sister ELCA congregation. You then find your own pastor.</p> <p>After determining which assets may or may not stay in the ELCA, you manage the assets and deficits just like any other small business (of which 70% fail in their first three years). You become a new mission start in an old building.</p> <p>If you dissolve as an ELCA congregation you need to reapply for 50C3 status, adopt a new constitution, new polity, etc...</p> <p>Each time you go through a pastoral transition you have the potential to adopt a new theology.</p> <p>The corporate emotional culture could split and will bleed over into the community.</p> <p>Actions Needed: Vote The rest is unknown because there is no guiding body</p>

Olsburg Council Minutes



The Olsburg Lutheran Church Council met on Wednesday, August 19, 2009.

Members present: Laura Clifton, Jim Nelson, Pastor Gordan Sandquist, Sonja Sandquist, Joyce Cantrell, Kristi Fronce, Kirby Burklund and Willis Poppe. Mike Apley joined the meeting late.

We opened the meeting with prayer. Sonja led the group in a Bible reading.

Reports

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

Treasurer's report: Kirby moved to approve the report. Kristi seconded. Motion carried.

Pastor's report: Pastor Gordy started Clinical Pastoral Education today. The class is held in Salina. It provides guidance on skills needed for hospital visits. He will attend the class on Wednesday's.

The council discussed the vote to be held this week at the ELCA convention on the Human Sexuality Statement. Anyone can watch the vote by accessing the ELCA web site. There will be a live stream into the meetings both Thursday and Friday. Pastor asked that we be thinking about what we would like to do for Thanksgiving services. Do we want to try something different?

There is a large rock pile outside the church. It's been there for a long time and probably needs to be moved. After looking at the rocks, the council discussed the possibility of making a prayer garden. A goal was set to have something done with the rocks by Arbor Day - April 30, 2010.

Pastor Gordy has scheduled a "Staff Appreciation Day" for Sunday, September 20th following church services. A reception will be held to honor our church staff.

Committee Reports

Cemetery: Joyce is creating a list of names to be sent letters asking for donations to the Olsburg cemetery fund. This list will consist of family members of those buried at the cemetery.

Property: Kirby has found someone to work on the church roof. He will have more information at the next meeting. He has also contacted someone about the PA system. They will be coming to the church in September to look at the system.

Old Business

Vacant Council Position: There are two individuals who expressed an interest in filling the vacant position.

Church Pictorial Directory: Pastor Gordy has scheduled directory pictures to be taken by Olan Mills at Olsburg on November 17th from 3:00-9:30pm. Pictures will be taken at Walsburg on November 23rd and 24th from 3-9:30pm. Pastor will organize a group to be in charge at each church. We are guaranteed to have the pictures by Christmas.

Front Doors of the Church: The doors need to be sanded and oiled. Jim said he would help do the work.

Nativity Scene: The council discussed whether or not we should purchase a new nativity scene for the church. We will look at possible options and report our findings at the next meeting.

New Business

Cabinets for Sunday School: The Sunday School is in need of some additional space for supplies. Kristi asked if we could inventory the old cabinet in the corner of the basement to make room for supplies. There may still be a need for additional space since the old cabinet is not deep. The council agreed there are probably several things in the older cabinet that can be thrown away. The Sunday School teachers will look through the cabinets and report back to the council.

Christopher Williams Concert: Jan reported there will be a concert in Manhattan on October 17th and 18th.

Confirmation: Confirmation for Douglas Apley, Shane Adams, Mikayla Vargo and Madison Vargo will be held on October 25, 2009. It was mentioned we need to get the confirmation pictures for those years that are missing and we need to designate someone to take a group picture for this year. Also, a reception in honor of the confirmands is being organized.

Elections: Kristi, Jan and Jim are the council members whose terms will be ending. They will be on the committee to create the ballot. They will need to meet soon to prepare for the October election.

In closing, Pastor Gordy stated he would announce the results of the vote from the ELCA meeting during church next Sunday. We may have a meeting in the next couple of weeks to discuss the results of the vote.

The meeting adjourned with The Lord's Prayer.

Rite of Confirmation at Olsburg on Reformation Sunday

On October 25th, during 9:00 AM worship three youth will participate in the Rite of Confirmation declaring their intention to participate more fully in the life of the church as a baptized and confirmed member of the church. They have been through a two year time of preparation to help them discern wisely how it is that God calls them to be in the world with all of their gifts, time and talent. We will celebrate with Madison Vargo, Makayla Vargo and Shane Adams as they lead us through worship, share their faith statements and feast with the community at a reception following worship. All are welcome for this wonderful day of celebration.

Reformation Sunday – WEAR RED!

On this day we celebrate the heart of our faith: the gospel of Christ – the good news – that makes us free! We pray that the Holy Spirit would continue to unite the church today in its proclamation and witness to the world, In the waters of baptism we are made one body; we pray for the day that all Christians will also be one at the Lord's table. ("Sundays and Seasons, p.288)

Why do we wear red for worship? It is a color of the Holy Spirit – the same Spirit that moved in the heart of Martin Luther as he studied and discerned how the faith was and is alive and changing in the church each and every day.

Confirmation

Confirmation is off to a fabulous start this year. Please keep the following Middle School Youth in your prayers as they gather each Wednesday night to engage in community building, learning and praying: Kyle Clifton, Jon Nelson, John Burnett, Emma Glessner, Codie Webster, Leslie Froberg, Monique Sandquist, MacKenzie Desbian and Shelby Peter.

We are studying Luther's Small Catechism and are focused on the Ten Commandments and how this law is both commandment and love for our lives of faith in community with so many other people in a complex and changing world.

Life together

October Meeting Location: Walsburg

Wednesday, October 7th 7:00 – 8:15 PM
Father and Mother
Wednesday, October 14th 7:00 – 8:15 PM
Safeguard Life
Wednesday, October 21st 7:00 – 8:15 PM
Remain Faithful
Wednesday, October 28th 7:00 – 8:15 PM
Protect Property

Middle School Night Time Madness!

(5th – 8th Grade Youth)

Friday, October 30, 2009

7:00 PM Mixers & Group Builders
7:30 PM Sardines
8:00 PM Night Time Capture the Flag
8:45 PM Pizza and a Movie
10:50 PM Candle Power Prayers
11:00 PM Pick-up

Location: Olsburg Lutheran Church

What to bring: warm clothes, flashlight, and a friend or three (membership at the church is not required!)

High School Youth and Adult Sponsors are needed for all the madness!

Luther League Service and Leadership Project

Help Facilitate Middle School Night Time Madness!

October 30th
7:00 – 11:00 PM
Olsburg Lutheran
Contact Sonja if you can help!

Luther League – Corn Maze and Campfire at the Nelson Farm!

(17705 Shannon Creek Rd., Olsburg, Kansas – just outside Olsburg)

Sunday, October 18th

4:00 - 6:30 PM (guess)

Cost: \$5 each! Adult leaders and drivers are free!

All Area 4 Youth will be invited (although it's short notice) to gather at the farm and explore the maze, play some games and gather around the campfire for hotdogs, smors and a short worship! Wear warm clothes. Invite your friends! All are welcome.

Women's Small Groups "A Woman's Heart – God's Dwelling Place"

Women's Bible Study Groups will be formed based on day and time and location preferences so don't miss out on a chance to bond with your Soul Sisters at the "Loving Well" Retreat!

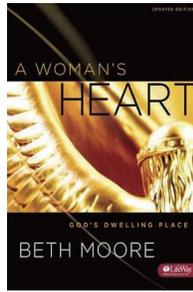
Consider meeting with a small group of women, 11 times (one – two times each month) between October and April using the Beth Moore series, "A Woman's Heart: God's Dwelling Place."

Within each group of 8-10 women, a leader will be chosen to facilitate using the videos provided. From the back cover: *Lead women to discover the joy of dwelling in God's presence. Perhaps no Old Testament event so dramatically illustrates God's persistent desire to relate to his children as the building of the tabernacle in the wilderness. Through the tabernacle God initiated a deeper relationship with God's chosen people by bringing reconciliation and revealing God's glory. And certainly, no Old Testament event so richly prefigures the coming of the true tabernacle, Jesus Christ.*

Beth Moore invites women to enter the sanctuary and let God reveal marvelous mysteries to them. This in-depth, biblical study explores the fascinating account of the building of the tabernacle, the significance of its intricate design, its pivotal role in God's work, the grand fulfillment of God's purpose through Jesus Christ, and its variety of meanings for their walk with God today. Women will be challenged to prepare their hearts, like the holy of holies, to become a home for God's love and glory – a dwelling place for the Most High God.

All large group session material will be provided (compliments of Sheridan Lutheran in Lincoln, Nebraska), each member will need a Participant Book that includes five days of study material for each session (typically there will be 1-2 sessions each month). Participant Books are \$15 and can be ordered from Sonja. Remember, we want to start meeting in October so don't delay, sign up now!

One group will be meeting on Monday nights, twice a month, working with schedules as needed.



Olsburg Adult Education

Enough: Discovering Joy through Simplicity and Generosity

We gather on Sundays at 10:00 AM following worship in the front of the worship space. Our study consists of a viewing of a short DVD clip, some readings, bible exploration, conversation of our current context, and prayer.

What we have learned so far is that money and possessions are powerful forces in our lives and they become dangerous when they sole defining factor in our lives. Our goal is to always remember how God is present in the situation and to what God calls us as disciples of the living Christ in a world that is complex and sometimes fearful.

LifeKeys Discovery Retreat

Friday, November 13, 6:00 – 9:00 PM

Saturday, November 14, 9:00 – 4:30 PM

Cost: \$20 (includes book and workbook)

Location TBD (either Walsburg or Olsburg)

Bring a sack lunch on Saturday.

Refreshments will be provided by group participants.

Sign-up Deadline: October 25, 2009

Contact Sonja or Gordy Sandquist, certified LifeKeys Trainers!

LifeKeys is an organized approach for people to discover who they are, why God made them and what they do best – orchestrating all the ways God has gifted them.

The seminar will help each person explore their Life Gifts, their Spiritual Gifts, their Personality Type, Values, and Passions and then put them all together to form a flush out a personal life mission statement. All of the self discovery work is meant to culminate in empowering all participants to discern and then act as God's hands and feet in the world as a response to the wonderful ways that God creates, loves and redeems all of creation.

Olsburg and Walsburg to hold annual Elections

Both Olsburg and Walsburg will hold the annual congregational elections on Sunday, October 18th immediately following worship.

October birthdays and anniversaries

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

Birthdays

- 2 Gene Henry (W)
Price Oman (W)
- 4 Norma Coutermarsh (W)
- 5 Wava Peterson (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)
- 10 Charity Johnson (W)
- 11 Mary Lou Gibbs (O)
Theresia Hagenmaier (W)
- 12 Jamie Hageman (W)
Jason Hageman (W)
Lotta Larson (W)

- 13 Eldon Sundgren (W)
- 14 Patty Nelson (O)
- 16 Joseph Hubbard (O)
Marjorie Grater (W)
Norman Johnson (W)
- 18 Jan Cooper (O)
Kim Bulk (W)
- 20 Callie Webster (O)
- 21 Cajsa Larson (W)
- 22 Eric Nielson (W)
- 24 Jean Peterson (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)

- 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)

November 1-8

- 1 Christopher Deetjen (W)
- 2 Alan Hubbard (O)

All Saints Day – November 1, 2009

The festival of All Saints occurs just as the landscape in the northern hemisphere heralds the dying of plants and the quiet of winter rest. In like manner, the readings and liturgy of this day call us to rejoice in all the saints: those who have died and now rest in Christ, those who live now, and those yet to come.

As the church year draws to a close, we hear warnings about the end of time, stories of crisis and judgment, and parables of loss and death. The Christian community speaks honestly about human frailty and mortality.

At the same time, we confess our faith in the risen Lord, in the communion of saints, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. While both life and death may bring us fear and uncertainty, the liturgy calls us to hear the Lord's promise that he is with us in life and in death. Christ has claimed us in baptism and nourishes us in the communion of his body and blood. He leads us to the new Jerusalem. There we shall join all the saints in praise of God, who has turned our graves into the doorway to eternal life. ("Sundays and Seasons", p. 302)

Members in service this month

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

Walsburg

Ushers: Loren Oman, Norman Johnson, Travis Hageman, Brad Haller

Greeters: Norman & Janice Johnson; Brad & Dena Haller; Travis & Kristin Hageman; LeRoy & Claryce Bohnenblust

Communion Ushers: Dennis Peterson, Jay Peterson, Doug Kraemer, Larry Bestwick, Gene Henry

***Acolytes:** 10/4 Garrett Olson, Rachel Peterson; 10/11 Alexis Reed; 10/18 Rachel Rheaume; 10/25 Monique and Symone Sandquist, Rachael Peterson, (cross bearer)

***Lay Assistants:** 10/4 Doug Kraemer; 10/11 Kim Nelson; 10/18 Jamie Hageman; 10/25 Brianna Olson

Flowers for Church: Volunteers (please contact Altar committee)

Altar Committee: Carol Deetjen, Janet Neilson, Kim Bulk

Olsburg

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

Communion Assistants: 10/4 Jim Nelson; 10/18 Kirby Burklund; 10/25 Joyce Cantrell

***Acolytes:** 10/4 Nick Cooper; 10/11 Shelby Adams; 10/18 Shane Adams; 10/25 Bailee Howland, Jacob Nelson, Blake Vargo

***Lay Assistants:** 10/4 Kathy Monser; 10/11 Kristi Fronce; 10/18 Luellen Kasselmann; 10/25 Kyle Clifton

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.**

Life *together*

Olsburg-Walsburg Lutheran Parish
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NEW PICTORIAL DIRECTORY

Mark your calendars! Both Walsburg and Olsburg Lutheran Churches will be publishing a new joint pictorial directory through Olan Mills. The photography dates are:

Olsburg: Tuesday, November 17, 3:00 – 9:30 PM

(contract # 45338, Phone # 785-747-7831)

Walsburg: Monday and Tuesday, November 23 & 24, 3:00 – 9:30 PM

(contract #45335, Phone #785-293-5367)

Sign-ups for appointments will begin immediately online at www.signup.olanmills.com or in person at the church during the month of October. If you are interested in helping out as a host during the photo days, or you could help with sign-ups after church, please let Pastors Gordy or Sonja know.

Anyone not registered by early November, will receive a contact from Olan Mills to set up a time.

Each participating household will receive a complimentary directory and 8X10 Custom Color Portrait. Purchased photos will be available before Christmas as family gifts.

Remember, our pictorial directory won't be complete without you! Thanks

Walsburg's SALT (Stewards Attending Life Together)

All are welcome to be in a life-giving community who gathers together for bible study, prayer, discernment and service in action in our community. This is a missional group that desires wholeness in the worshipping community and is looking to act concretely on the promise of Christ in the world. We are not called to be comfortable as the church but rather we are called to dwell in the living Word, discern God's call and to bear fruit in the world – to serve in the world. This is the work of the church and it is important that this piece of our life together gets some attention.

Next Steps:

1. Indicate that you are interested in this type of gathering.
2. Indicate which time you are able to meet and how often each month.
3. Get your bibles ready.
4. Pray and dwell in the Word – the written Word and the living Word.
5. Show up to participate with open minds, open hearts and open hands.
6. Start over again.