

Life Together

December 2010

Olsburg-Walsburg Lutheran Parish

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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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Next newsletter items and articles will be due December 27.

From the Desk of Your Pastoral Leaders

Sunday, November 28, marks the beginning of a new church year. This means a number of things – the colors in the worship space will change for Advent. It is a marking of time and a beginning of a new cycle in the Revised Common Lectionary. This new church year, calls us to re-evaluate who and whose we are as we continue to live together in community as the people of God.

We will be entering the “year of Matthew” as we begin cycle A of a three year cycle. Matthew is sometimes referred to as “the church’s gospel.” It is the only gospel narrative that contains the Greek word for church. Matthew is also the only gospel which has an extended discussion on “church discipline.” In this, it is a writing which focuses much on shaping and challenging us, disciples of the living Christ, to a life of active discipleship.

Looking back in time, Matthew’s original audience is primarily to a community of already existing disciples. It really doesn’t attempt to “prove” anything about Jesus or God to people who have not heard or who do not believe the gospel. The gospel of Matthew is focused on the significance of Jesus, his words, and his actions in order to

encourage and challenge disciples, meeting them where they are at. It is a gospel that is all about moving people into a deeper faith.

As I look forward in this Advent season, there is much that I am not sure of – this has been a challenging year that Sonja and I have shared with both Olsburg and Walsburg communities. I am sure of God’s grace, and the hope which is promised that will carry us through the uncertainty. There will be new expectations as we journey into this new year. And as we let the gospel of Matthew once again work on our hearts and minds, an active discipleship will be the gift as a deeper faith emerges.

I hope to see you this Advent season. May you continue to live the grace of God which passes all understanding.

Blessing and Hope -- Gordy

The Olsburg Lutheran Church Council met on Wednesday, October 20, 2010. Council President Jan Cooper called the meeting to order. Pastor Gordon Sandquist led the group in prayer.

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

Reports

Secretary's Report: Coleen moved to approve the report. Joyce seconded. The secretary's report was approved.

Treasurer's Report: Kirby moved to approve the report. Kristi seconded. The treasurer's report was approved.

Pastor's Report:

- ✚ Pastor Gordy distributed the adopted Sexual Harassment Policy for review. A brief discussion followed.
- ✚ Thanks goes out to Kathy Monser for playing the piano during services while Alice was recuperating from surgery.
- ✚ Thanks to Jan Cooper for the coffee maker given through Westar Energy funds.
- ✚ Once again this year we would like to have two Christmas Eve services. Last year the early service was well attended despite the snow.
- ✚ The confirmation retreat went well with the youth from three congregations attending.
- ✚ We will sell calendars once again this year for \$6 per calendar.
- ✚ The council discussed the Walsburg vote to determine if they will leave the ELCA. Pastor explained the process in detail. Discussion followed.

Committee Reports:

Altar Guild: Coleen announced the congregation is invited to decorate the church on Saturday, December 11th. We will decorate at 4:00pm. The Outreach and Fellowship Committee will provide pizza during this time. The Altar Guild will set-up communion for both Christmas Eve services.

Property Committee: Danker Roofing will be coming next week to make repairs. The cost will be anywhere from \$500 to \$1,000.

Old Business

Sexual Harassment Policy – The policy was reviewed and approved.

Memorial Plaque – Jan is looking for new plaques.

Projector – Memorial funds are available to purchase a projector for the church. Pastor is looking for any sales that might be held during the holiday season.

Church Lawn Mower – The old church lawn mower was sold during the Olsburg garage sales.

PA System – Pastor contacted the synod to see if there were any churches in need of an old PA system. There was no one interested. We will contact an Olsburg American Legion member to see if they're in need of a system there.

New Business

Member Transfer – We were notified of two members of the congregation who will be transferring to a new church. Their transfer was approved.

Quarter Challenge – We will begin collecting contributions for the Quarter Challenge starting next Sunday.

Confirmation – We discussed arrangements for the confirmation that is being held on October 31, 2010. The council is in charge of the reception.

Blue Valley Yearbook Advertisement – Joyce moved that we purchase half a page for an ad in the Blue Valley High School yearbook. Coleen seconded. The motion carried.

Christmas Eve Services – Laura moved that we hold two services – one at 7:00pm and the other at 11:00pm on Christmas Eve. Joyce seconded. The motion was approved.

Kirby moved to adjourn the meeting. Coleen seconded. The meeting adjourned with The Lord's Prayer.

OLSBURG SWEDISH SUPPER

Olsburg Swedish Supper Tickets – Available from Luellen Kasselmann or Pastor Gordy

The meal is scheduled for 4:30 PM at Olsburg Elementary School on December 4th.

Join the community for a traditional Swedish Christmas Meal that has been running for 54 years!

BAKED GOODS AND HELP ARE NEEDED!

Baked goods are need for two events – the Luther League Bake Sale on December 4th and the Walsburg Cookie Plate Event on December 6th.

On Saturday, December 4th if you have your baked goods to the church window at Walsburg by noon, we will haul them over to the school in Olsburg.

Please mark if they are for the bake sale or for the cookie plates that the Walsburg LCW are constructing. Walsburg Luther Leaguers are needed to work the bake sale – pass the word around.

December birthdays and anniversaries

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

Birthdays

- 2 Loren Oman (W)
- 3 Willa Erickson (O)
Blake Fronce (O)
- 6 Carol Deetjen (W)
- 7 Kim Berggren (O)
- 10 Carla Hageman (W)
- 11 Beverly Sundgren (W)
Rita Nelson (W)
Alyssa Kulp (W)
- 15 Loree Allen (W)
- 17 Vern Bulk (W)
LaRae Kraemer (W)

- 18 Kylie Grater (W)
- 20 Brian Monser (O)
Garrett Olson (W)
- 22 Tom Nelson (O)
Brandon Rogge (W)
- 26 Heather Nelson (O)
Mildred Nelson (W)
- 28 Rick Johnson (O)
Kent Nelson (O)
- 29 Jerome Flohr (W)

Anniversaries:

- 2 Loren and Lorraine Oman (W)
- 9 Roger & Oneita Bohnenblust (W)
- 13 Allan and Paulette Kulp (W)
- 19 Raymond & Maxine Anderson (O)
- 22 Floyd and Julie Munson (O)

- 29 Dale and Eva Larson (W)
- 30 Russell and Terry Peterson (W)

January 1-8

- 3 Darnell Vargo (O)
- 5 Gavin Hargrave (W)
- 6 Gary Holt (O)
- 7 Kenneth Neilson (W)
- 8 Julie Strauss (W)

Members in service this month

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

Walsburg

Ushers: Russell Peterson, Mike Hagenmaier, Dennis Peterson, Scott Kulp

Greeters: Mike & Debbie Hagenmaier, Russell & Terry Peterson, Dennis & Donise Peterson, Scott & Jennifer Kulp

Communion Ushers: Don Nelson, Debbie Hagenmaier, Roger Sundgren, Doug Kraemer

***Lay Assistants:** 12/5 Debbie Hagenmaier; 12/12 Jennifer Kulp; 12/19 Gavin Hargrave; 12/25 (Julotta) Melissa Deetjen; 12/26 Doug Kraemer

Flowers for Church: Christmas-Altar committee

Altar Committee: Lynne Berry, Alicia Scofield

Olsburg

Ushers: Jim Nelson, Brian Clifton, Blake Fronce, Shane Adams

Communion Assistants: 12/5 Jim Nelson; 12/19 Kirby Burklund; 12/24 Joyce Cantrell

***Acolytes:** 12/5 Makayla Vargo; 12/12 Monique Sandquist; 12/19 Symone Sandquist; 12/24 (Christmas Eve) 7 p.m. Codie Webster, Callie Webster, Jonathan Nelson; 11 p.m. Nick Cooper; 12/26 Symone Sandquist

***Lay Assistants:** 12/5 Coleen Esping; 12/12 Jan Cooper; 12/19 Jonathan Nelson; 12/24 (Christmas Eve) Joyce Cantrell; 12/26 Kathy Monser

Kitchen Committee: Susan Adams

Altar Committee: April Brenner and Shelly Burklund

***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.**

WITH GRATITUDE

Thanks so much to all of the ways that you contributed to Pastor Appreciation day. We appreciate the gifts and the community from which they come.

IT'S TIME TO GET INVOLVED!

If you want to serve with altar guild, children's ministry or any of the other wonderful ministries of the church, please consider getting involved now as we look towards the future and re-group. Please contact your pastors or your council people if you have questions!

Walsburg Church Council Highlights October 2010

Members present: Pastor Gordon Sandquist, Dennis Peterson, Gary Hargrave, Cindy Kulp, Christopher Deetjen, Jamie Hageman, Don Nelson, Travis Hageman, Carl Larson, Doug Kraemer, Debbie Hagenmaier

Visitors present: Jill Reynard, Terry Peterson, Beverly Sundgren, Jean Peterson, Kristin Burnett, Carol Deetjen, Jessie Sundgren, Chris Deetjen, Jane Larson

The Walsburg Church Council met on Wednesday, October 6, 2010, at 8 p.m. at the church. Meeting highlights appear below. Minutes will be posted on the narthex bulletin board after they have been approved at the November meeting.

September meeting minutes were approved.

The financial report was received as presented. The general fund has a \$2,527.87 negative balance. The checking account balance is \$1,626.42.

Hearing of Visitors

Beverly Sundgren, congregational advocate with Thrivent Financial, requested that Walsburg collect a special offering on October 17 for the family of John Sutton, who is in need of a kidney transplant. Suttons are former residents of this area. Council agreed by consensus. Beverly will handle details and announcements for this Thrivent event.

Pastor's Report

John Burnett and Emma Glessner will be confirmed on October 31, which is Reformation Sunday. Bibles with imprinted names have been ordered. There will be a reception, organized by parents of the confirmands, in the fellowship hall prior to the worship service that day.

Pastor Gordy read a letter to rostered leaders from ELCA Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson.

Committee Reports:

Education – Sunday school curriculum was discussed briefly. Material was available at the meeting for anyone who wanted to look at it.

✚ **Church Property** – Church grounds cleanup is scheduled for Saturday, October 16 at 9:00 a.m. Report from Cindy Olson on the condition of church doors:

✚ Kitchen – Storm door is in good condition. The wood door could be refinished or replaced.

- ✚ Memorial Hall – Door is rotted on the bottom. New doors have material on the bottom that prevents rotting.
- ✚ Sanctuary – Doors are warped.
- ✚ **Parsonage** – The dehumidifier is not working.
- ✚ **Finance** – Committee will need to discuss where to get the funds to pay October bills. Treasurer Rita Nelson will contact Council President Dennis Peterson to discuss options.
- ✚ **Nominating** – Council moved to accept the proposed ballot for congregational elections to be held following worship on October 17.

Task Force – The task force final report and recommendation were presented. The recommendation of the task force is that Walsburg Lutheran Church:

1. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, following procedures outlined in the Walsburg Lutheran Church Constitution;
2. affiliate with another Lutheran body, such as the North American Lutheran Church or Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ;
3. expresses its intent to retain title to its property by transferring its affiliation to another recognized Lutheran Church body, according to the provisions of its Constitution, in Article C7.03.

Council approved, by a vote of 6-5, a motion to accept the task force recommendation and to hold a first vote on November 7. Notice of the special congregational meeting will be put in bulletins and in a mailing to congregational members. Voting procedures were discussed. To be a voting member, there must be a record of both communing and contributing in 2009 or 2010. The voting list will be finalized at the November 3 council meeting, and no one can be added to list after that meeting.

October and November communion ushers were announced.

The next council meeting will be Wednesday, November 3, 2010, at 7 p.m.

What's happening at Olsburg?

OLSBURG CHRISTMAS PROGRAM SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19TH

All are welcome to enjoy a morning of carols, children and a view of the Christmas Story through the lives of children. The community is invited to gather for fellowship following the program.

OLSBURG FOOD GIFT COLLECTION

The Olsburg Community is invited to bring non-perishable goods to be placed under the tree during the month of December after which they will be delivered to the Pott. County Food Bank.

OLSBURG CHRISTMAS DECORATING

All hands and voices needed!! Everyone is invited to the church **Saturday, December 11 at 4 p.m.** We will be decorating the church and Christmas tree. Those that wish to, can take a hayrack ride around town singing Christmas carols, then return to the church to help decorate. Tom Nelson is providing the horses and trailer for the hayrack ride. The Sunday school children and community children will be able to help with the tree after caroling. When we finish decorating, all are invited to head to the basement for a pizza party. Pizza and pop is provided by the Outreach and Fellowship committee. Altar Guild committee members will provide the dessert. If you have questions, please contact Kirby and Shelly or an Altar Guild member. We hope to see you Dec. 11!

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

Join together for worship of the new born babe!
Friday, December 24 at Olsburg – 7 PM and 11 PM

OLSBURG MONDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY

The Monday Night Crew will not meet in December but will regroup again in January on the 3rd at 5 PM to continue to discover how God put each of us together with gifts for ministry in God's world. All are welcome!

OLSBURG SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

The Sunday morning crew is gathering to spend time looking at 'While We Wait: Living in the Questions of Baptism' This is a study to look at some of the more unusual people in the family tree of Jesus and how they contributed to the efforts of Lord, before he was even born.

POINSETTIAS

It is time to purchase poinsettias for the Christmas Season. Check for sign-ups at church for all the details!

OLSBURG'S "NOTHING BUT NETS" TREE

Malaria is a preventable disease and yet countless adults and many children die from this disease everyday. Studies have indicated that the most vulnerable people to this disease are children and babies who go to sleep without a protective net. "Nothing But Nets" is an organization that is working to end this disease by providing nets to people in developing countries. During the last Central States Synod Assembly, the body voted to have each family in the synod donate \$10 to this effort that saves lives. We extend this opportunity to you. There will be a tree in the church. For every \$10 donation, a decoration will be placed on the tree as a reminder of how our gifts can make the world a more beautiful place. See the tree for more details!

What's happening at Walsburg?

WALSBURG'S BOXED GIFTS FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS AND MILITARY PEOPLE

Contact Dennis and Donise Peterson if you want to help assemble packages! It will happen on a Sunday after worship on **December 5th!**

WALSBURG CHRISTMAS TREE DECORATING AND SOUP LUNCH

This is definitely a job, but do you want to make it a party? The tree decorating people and the altar guild will be getting together to decorate the place for Christmas in December. Gather in Memorial Hall at noon for a soup lunch and find out where to help with decorating and preparing for the Advent and Christmas Season
Sunday, December 12th at noon

WALSUBRG CRADLE ROLL PARTY

All children who are Kindergarten and younger along with their families are invited to a special gathering of gifts, stories, bells, singing and snacks in celebration of the wonderful season of Advent and Christmas.

Saturday, December 4th at 10 AM
All are welcome!

WALSBURG MITTEN TREE

The children will gather around the mitten tree in December to hear the story of the birth of Christ. As a reminder of the cold night on which he was born and the way that God calls us to serve with our hands, all are invited to bring mittens for the mitten tree in Memorial Hall.

WALSBURG FOOD GIFTS

All are invited to bring non-perishable goods to place on the table around the mitten tree in Memorial Hall during the

month of December. Goods will be delivered at the end of the month to the Riley Food Basket.

WALSBURG LCW COOKIE PLATE CONSTRUCTION

Help is needed to assemble and deliver LCW Cookie Plates on Monday Night, **December 6th** at 6:30 PM in Memorial Hall. Contact Jane Larson if you have questions. Please note, Bible Study will happen the following Monday on December 13th.

WALSBURG CHRISTMAS PAGENT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19TH AT 11 AM

The youth, children and brave adults of the parish will be sharing a traditional Christmas Pagent with the community during worship. Help is needed to play all parts – including prophets, shepherds and wise guys. Mary and Joseph are a given. The congregation will sing the Christmas Hymns. Please contact Pastor Sonja to participate. Everyone is invited to bring some Christmas Cookies to share after worship in the Memorial Hall.

WALSUBRG MONDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY

The Walsburg Monday Night Crew will meet on **December 13th** at 7 PM. All are welcome at any time to join this group for study, prayer and conversation.

CHRISTMAS SERVICE

Saturday, December 25 at Walsburg – 6 AM (breakfast usually follows)
Please invite your friends and neighbors!

POINSETTIAS

It is time to purchase poinsettias for the Christmas Season. Check for sign-ups at church for all the details!

What's the Youth Ministry have planned?

SR. HIGH YOUTH MINISTRY

OLSBURG SWEDISH SUPPER BAKESALE

All Luther Leaguers who aren't working at the Swedish Supper are needed to help with the bake sale!

Be at Olsburg Elementary at 4:30 PM on Saturday, December 4th. The dinner will run until about 9 PM.

LUTHER LEAGUE CALENDARS

Don't forget to buy a calendar for Christmas gifts! They are \$6 and \$3 goes to the Luther League!

LUTHER LEAGUE CHRISTMAS PARTY AT THE PARSONAGE SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19TH AT 4 PM

All Sr. High Youth are invited to the third annual Christmas Party at the Parsonage. Bring a gag gift to exchange and a snack to share. We will play games, eat and have good old fun with the gift exchange.

MIDDLE SCHOOL MINISTRY

WOW (Walsburg – Olsburg – Waterville) CONFIRMATION

The group had a great time up in Waterville, hosted by Pastor Jeremy and the crew from their church. We have been studying the Old Testament Stories and will now move into the New Testament Stories of Jesus and the Church.

Schedule:

December 1 – at Olsburg

December 15 – at Waterville

MIDDLE SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PARTY WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 22 AT 7 pm

All Middle School Youth are invited to gather for games, crafts, food and a gift exchange. Bring something – gag gifts are fine – and be surprised and possibly shocked with your gift! Invite your friends. Adult help is needed to provide a safe and fun event. Contact Pastor Sonja if you can help!

SUNDAY SCHOOL MINISTRY

OLSBURG CHRISTMAS PROGRAM SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19TH

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Olsburg-Walsburg Lutheran Parish
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Lutheran World Relief Coffee Tasting at Olsburg

Everyone is invited to a Lutheran World Relief Fair Trade coffee tasting on December 12 following worship in Fellowship Hall. Four different coffees from LWR's Fair Trade partner, Equal Exchange, will be served. You will have the opportunity to vote on your favorites, win prizes, purchase coffee, and find out more about how Fair Trade is making a difference. With each purchase, you help farmers earn more for their coffee, gain access to credit, and fund much needed projects in their communities.

You help farmers like Jose Luis Castillo Vasquez, a coffee farmer in El Salvador. He says, *"I want to thank all of the congregations that purchase our coffee. Thanks to you, we have a seed of hope in our lives."*

If you have any questions please contact Kathy at (785) 410-2668.

The LWR Coffee Project ensures that more of the money you spend on coffee reaches the farmers who actually grow it. Fair Trade coffee is a simple solution that means the difference—quite literally—between surviving and not surviving for small-scale coffee farmers.

WHAT is the LWR Coffee Project? Micah 6:8 calls us, as Christians, to do justice, love mercy

and walk humbly with our God. The LWR Coffee Project helps Lutherans answer that call by improving the lives of small-scale farmers around the world.

WHY is Fair Trade important? Proverbs 13:23 says, "A poor man's field may produce abundant food, but injustice sweeps it away." Lutherans enjoy coffee as a regular part of their fellowship, unaware that the farmers who grew that coffee are probably struggling to make ends meet.

More information about the LWR Coffee Project and Fair -

- ✦ All of the coffee is fairly traded from farmer co-operatives in Latin America, Africa and Asia.
- ✦ Fair Trade helps people improve their lives and work their way out of poverty by making sure they get paid fairly for their labor and are treated with respect.
- ✦ Lutheran World Relief partners with Equal Exchange, a worker-owned cooperative dedicated to Fair Trade, to bring you the LWR Coffee Project.
- ✦ Each purchase directly supports the farmers who grow this coffee.
- ✦ For each pound of coffee, tea, cocoa, sugar and snacks sold through the LWR Coffee Project, Equal Exchange gives \$.20 to Lutheran World Relief to support its mission and ministry with small-scale farmers around the world.

Dear People of Olsburg and Walsburg,
Merry Christmas. We hope that in this season that you take time to experience the love of Christ that came to the world more than 2,000 years ago.

This past year has been difficult, yet there have been many glimpses of God and growth in faith that have been revealed. Our prayer as we go into the new year is that we all might be open to the holy surprises and callings that God may put before us.

With just our own strength and will it may be impossible, but with God all things are possible.

May you have Christmas hope all year long!
Sonja, Gordy, Symone, Monique and Molly Girl (the newest canine addition to the family)

