

OUR SAVIOR EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

THE
CRESTVIEW LUTHERAN
NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2025



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“It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes out of the mouth of God.’”

- Jesus Christ Matthew 4:4

FROM THE PASTOR

The Lenten Season



The Lenten season of the Church year begins with Ash Wednesday. The word, “Lent,” is an old Anglo-Saxon word, Lencten or Lenchthen, which means the lengthening of days as spring approaches.

In the first century, Lent was only a period of forty hours in remembrance of the forty hours that Jesus’ Body was in the tomb. That forty-hour observance ended with an Easter service at 3 a.m. In the third century, the forty hours expanded to six days, known as Holy Week. These were days of strict abstinence. The observance of Holy Week began in Jerusalem in the fourth century, when the days of Holy Week were designated as follows:

- Palm Sunday – Jesus’ Triumphant entry into Jerusalem (Zechariah 9:9; St. Matthew 21:1-17)
- Monday – Jesus’ cleansing of the Temple (Jeremiah 7:11; St. Matthew 21:12,13)

- Tuesday – The Olivet Discourse (St. Matthew 24:1-25:46)
- Wednesday – Judas agreement (Zechariah 11:12,13; St. Matthew 26:14-16)
- Maundy Thursday – Institution of the Lord’s Supper (St. Luke 22:1-38)
- Good Friday – Our Lord’s Crucifixion (St. Matthew 27:32-56)
- Holy Saturday – The rest in the tomb (St. Matthew 27:62-66; 1 Peter 3:19)

Holy Week eventually grew into thirty-six days, as a tithe of the 365 days of the year. In the time of Charlemagne, (approximately 731 A.D.) four days were added to the thirty-six to make the present season of forty days. The number forty is appropriate for a time period of purification, as our Lord Jesus fasted and was tempted for forty days in the wilderness, Moses fasted forty days on Mount Sinai, Elijah traveled for forty days on the way to the mountain of God, and the Israelites spent forty years in the wilderness.

You may wonder why Lent consists of forty days when Ash Wednesday is actually forty-six days before Easter. This is because Sundays, being festival days, or little “Easters,” are not a part of Lent. Lent is a time to remember Jesus’ suffering and death. The pilgrimage during that time involves discipline and self-

denial. During Lent we learn to die to self. Sundays, although not considered part of Lent, are affected by the mood of Lent, in that most liturgical churches drop the Alleluia, the Gloria in Excelsis, and (from Judica until the Easter Vigil, the Gloria Patri) for those Sundays. In the past, weddings were forbidden during Lent. Organs were stopped, public entertainment was outlawed, and often royalty dressed in black during Lent.

The Meaning of Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday is the first day of the penitential season of Lent. It is called Ash Wednesday because of the ceremony of placing ashes on the forehead as a sign of penitence. This custom, probably introduced by Pope Gregory I, has been universal since the Synod of Benevento (1091). Sackcloth and ashes or torn clothes and ashes on the head have signified mourning, especially mourning of one's own guilt, or one's own loss, since Old Testament times.

- “And the Lord said to him, ‘Go through the city, through Jerusalem, and put a mark upon the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations that are committed in it.’” (Ezekiel 9:4)
- “That same day a Benjamite ran from the battle line and went to Shiloh, his clothes torn and dust on his head.” (1 Samuel 4:12)
- “On the third day a man arrived from Saul’s camp, with his clothes torn and with dust on his head. When he came to David,

he fell to the ground to pay him honor.” (2 Samuel 1:2)

- “Tamar put ashes on her head and tore the ornamented robe she was wearing. She put her hand on her head and went away, weeping aloud as she went.” (2 Samuel 13:19)
- “When David arrived at the summit, where people used to worship God, Hushai the Arkite was there to meet him, his robe torn and dust on his head.” (2 Samuel 15:32)

Ashes obtained from burned palm branches of the previous Palm Sunday (almost a year before) are used on Ash Wednesday. The pastor places the ashes on the foreheads of the officiating clergy and the congregation, while reciting over each one the following formula: “Remember that you are dust, and unto dust you shall return.”

The Message of Ash Wednesday

“Even now,” declares the Lord, “return to Me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.” Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and He relents from sending calamity. (Joel 2:13)

How does Ash Wednesday suggest that we prepare?

1. Repentance – admit one is a sinner in need of salvation through the forgiveness of sin.

2. Prayer - pray for forgiveness of Christ, for a broken and a contrite heart God will not despise.
3. Remember - Christ's death for your sins.
4. Anticipate - The victorious Resurrection of our Lord!

The Mood of Ash Wednesday

1. Expressed in color

The mood of Ash Wednesday is expressed in the liturgical color, violet. It depicts a feeling of quiet dignity, royalty, and repentance. Violet was the traditional color of a king's robe; Christ is King of kings. He told Pilate that His Kingdom is not of this world. The soldiers were mocking Him when they put a purple robe on Him to denote His being King of the Jews, but He truly is a King. Lent is a time for solemn and sober thought about one's sins leading to repentance.

2. Solemnity and sobriety

Lent is a time to become aware of one's sins. Traditionally Lent is a penitential season. This mood of sobriety is expressed not only in the liturgical color, violet, but in the music of Lenten hymns like "When o'er My Sins I Sorrow." During Lent, choirs normally omit processions. Weddings in this season are discouraged. The saying and singing of Alleluia is normally abandoned until Easter.

The Observance of Ash Wednesday

Many congregations observe Ash Wednesday with special midweek services and many, such as ours, still use ashes to mark a cross on the forehead.

Ash Wednesday is calculated backward from the date for Easter (which moves each year), and may occur anywhere between February 4 and March 11. The commonly stated rule, that Easter Day is the first Sunday after the Full Moon that occurs next after the vernal equinox, is somewhat misleading because it is not a precise statement of the actual ecclesiastical rules.

At Our Savior Ev. Lutheran Church, Crestview, we are pleased to invite you to make the most of Lent as a time of penitential reflection on Jesus Christ and all that God has done for us in His bitter suffering, His sacrificial death, and His victorious resurrection from the dead. Lent is a time to hear again His Words which create faith (Romans 10:17) and to rejoice in the free salvation that Christ has obtained for us.

SERVICE TIMES:

SUNDAYS

8:00 A.M. Individual Confession and Absolution

9:00 A.M. Adult Bible Class & Sunday School

10:00 A.M. Service of Corporate Confession and Absolution immediately followed by the Divine Service

WEDNESDAYS

6:00 P.M. Soup & Sandwich Supper

7:00 P.M. Midweek Vespers

THURSDAYS

8:00 A.M. Individual Confession and Absolution

9:00 A.M. Midweek Matins followed by "Coffee with Pastor"

FROM THE DEACONESS

To have a true understanding of Christian piety, a clear understanding of justification and sanctification must first be had. These two gifts given in Baptism are often muddled together in other theologies. In the Theology of the Cross (as confessional Lutheran's subscribe to), justification and sanctification are distinct yet inseparable. Both are given freely. Both are a result of Christ's work on the cross. But they are not the same thing. They are the two sides of the Baptismal coin, as it were.

Justification is the sole work of Christ in His suffering and death. If you grasp Luther's explanation of the 2nd article of the Apostle's Creed then you have a right understanding of justification. Anything other than placing our justification squarely on Christ (i.e. on our own effort to justify ourselves) ends in self-righteous works. If piety is placed on this side

of the "coin" then a pharisaical pious piety is the result. So where does Christian piety belong? Flip the "coin" over.

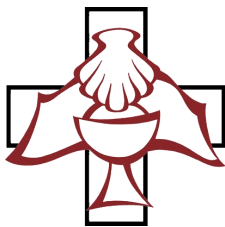
Sanctification is the sole work of the Holy Spirit given to us for Christ's sake. Sanctification is what makes the Church the Church; the gathering and enlightening of His children. The briefest explanation of sanctification is "the act of the Holy Spirit making us holy." We find a thorough explanation in the third article of the Apostles' Creed. Luther explains it this way in the Large Catechism:

"God has caused the Word to go forth and be proclaimed, in which He gives the Holy Ghost to bring this treasure home and appropriate it to us. Therefore sanctifying is nothing else than bringing us to Christ to receive this good, to which we could not attain of ourselves."

"This article (as I have said) I cannot relate better than to Sanctification, that through the same the Holy Ghost, with His office, is declared and depicted, namely, that He makes holy. . . But the Spirit of God alone is called Holy Ghost, that is, He who has sanctified and still sanctifies us. For as the Father is called Creator, the

Son Redeemer, so the Holy Ghost, from His work, must be called Sanctifier, or One that makes holy. But how is such sanctifying done? Answer: Just as the Son obtains dominion, whereby He wins us, through His birth, death, resurrection, etc., so also the Holy Ghost effects our sanctification by the following parts, namely, by the communion of saints or the Christian Church, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting; that is, He first leads us into His holy congregation, and places us in the bosom of the Church, whereby He preaches to us and brings us to Christ.

For neither you nor I could ever know anything of Christ, or believe on Him, and obtain Him for our Lord, unless it were offered to us and granted to our hearts by the Holy Ghost through the preaching of the Gospel. The work is done and accomplished; for Christ has acquired and gained the treasure for us by His suffering, death, resurrection, etc. But if the work remained concealed so that no one knew of it, then it would be in vain



and lost. That this treasure, therefore, might not lie buried, but be appropriated and enjoyed, God has caused the Word to go forth and be proclaimed, in which He gives the Holy Ghost to bring this treasure home and appropriate it to us. Therefore sanctifying is nothing else than bringing us to Christ to receive this good, to which we could not attain of ourselves.

Learn, then, to understand this article most clearly. . . . But whereby does He accomplish this, or what are His method and means to this end? Answer:

By the Christian Church, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. For, in the first place, He has a peculiar congregation in the world, which is the mother that begets and bears every Christian through the Word of God, which He reveals and preaches, [and through which] He illumines and enkindles hearts, that they understand, accept it, cling to it, and persevere in it.” (LC III, 35-42)

Piety originates in Word and Sacrament. We come together as His

Holy Church immersing ourselves in Word and Sacrament, in Christ Himself as the Holy Spirit draws us. From there we go about our living having been formed by the liturgy and catechism. We are renewed and refreshed, filled to overflowing with God's gifts to go then and serve and love our neighbor. Loving God, loving our neighbor: this is true Christian piety.

Sunday's Divine Service is the pinnacle of our week. But what about the next six days? During that time, spending time in God's Word, Lutheran teachings, catechism, prayer, devotion, and sacred music have a critical place in our Christian piety. These are means in which the Holy Spirit continues to make us holy in daily living (Luther's narrow sense of

sanctification). Piety is good for our whole being but does not end in us but in those around us. As the Holy Spirit draws us to Him, He also draws us outward to serve and care for our neighbor.

Lent is traditionally a time to revisit our Lutheran confessions. You will find in this newsletter a "Book of Concord Lenten Reading Plan." This is a free download from CPH which takes us through reading the Book of Concord over the 40 days of Lent. If you need additional copies, there are some located in the Narthex above the guest sign in book. I hope this finds a place in your daily piety and brings you joy and comfort in spending time in God's Word.

Blessed Lenten Season,
Dcs. Heather

Sunday Readings (Lectionary)

Date	Old Testament	Epistle	Gospel
Mar. 2	1 Samuel 16:1-13	1 Corinthians 13:1-13	Luke 18:31-43
Mar. 9	Genesis 3:1-21	2 Corinthians 6:1-10	Matthew 4:1-11
Mar. 16	Genesis 32:22-32	1 Thessalonians 4:1-7	Matthew 15:21-28
Mar. 23	Exodus 8:16-24	Ephesians 5:1-9	Luke 11:14-28
Mar. 30	Exodus 16:2-21	Galatians 4:21-31	John 6:1-15

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Our Savior Evangelical Lutheran Church

Council's Report to the Congregation



For 2024

Praise God from Whom all blessings flow! This report is meant to show what the Lord has done in His work with, through, and for His little flock in Crestview in 2024, as a matter of record and not as a matter of merit on our part. First and foremost, He has forgiven us by grace through faith in His Son, our Lord, and continually sustains us through the Holy Spirit by feeding us through His Word and Sacraments! All other events here in 2024 cannot be compared to this single Gift.

The Office of the Pastor. This was Father Parent's fifth year as the Lord's under-shepherd at Our Savior, from whose lips the Word of the Lord was preached in its purity and from whose hands and lips the Sacraments were administered according to Christ's command. He conveyed Christ's forgiveness to us at every opportunity, performed 10 baptisms, and received 18 new members. He also officiated at one funeral for our departed sister in Christ, Becky Williams. In September, he was elected by the pastors of our circuit to be the next Circuit Visitor and will be installed in Spring 2025. Lastly, in October Father Parent attended the Southern District's Church Worker's Conference in Slidell, LA.

The Office of the Deaconess. This was Deaconess Bien's sixth year of providing diakonal care to our congregation. With the help of God, she taught Sunday School to the children, led the Women's Bible Study, organized a yard sale & donations to support seminarians at Ft. Wayne (> \$5K), ran the Altar Guild, put together the monthly newsletters and provided a myriad of other blessings to the congregation behind-the-scenes. She also led the charge to purchase new rose and gold colored paraments for the Nave in 2024. The Lord was very busy in our midst working through His deaconess!

The Board of Elders. The board once again scrubbed the congregation's official membership rolls to remove those who have been absent for over five years, i.e. self-exclusion (not including shut-ins). They also continued to support the pastor at every Mass, serving as deacons and subdeacons.

The Board of Evangelism. In late 2024, the chairmanship of this board was in transition from Alex to Melania, who was set to take over in Jan 2025. During the transition, Melania became acquainted with webmastering details for our church's web site and took control of our FaceBook and Instagram accounts. She was well on her way to give our congregation's cyber-presence a much-needed facelift.



The Board of Education. The congregation completed the Bible study on heresies led by Father Parent and began one on the Book of Revelation.

The Board of Finance & Treasury. The congregation's financial status remained excellent throughout the year, as annual contributions exceeded annual expenses by \$10,000. But, there are challenges to come. The church's property insurance policy premium for 2023-2024 rose 36%, while the 2024-2025 premium rose another 70% while also requiring additional terms and conditions in a pre-binding agreement. The 2025 budget was approved in Nov, noting that Brian forecast significant future deficits due to expected continuing skyrocketing costs for property insurance, but which the congregation intends to overcome, God-willing. The 2025 budget also doubled our support to missionary Pastor Lehman, added an annual contribution to support Hope House (a Lutheran children's home in Crestview) and added dedicated budget items for our own Christian Education, Youth Ministry, and Social Ministry. OSELG also sent almost \$3,500 to the LCMS Southern District to support Hurricane Relief efforts. The congregation created a designated fund in support of the Deaconess-led initiative to purchase new paraments. That fund was closed in December, when the last paraments were purchased.

The Board of Social Ministry. Clare took over as Chairman of this board and set off an explosion of non-stop, fun-filled events for the congregation. Some examples include: Mother's Day Tea, Father's Day BBQ, our Little Free Library, numerous pot lucks, Trunk or Treat, and the congregation's Christmas party. Lastly, we participated in the Crestview Christmas Parade with only five days notice and it turned out great! Together with Emily, Clare managed the herculean task of quickly working the numerous details



while organizing support from the congregation for the parade.

The Board of Youth. Emily took over the chairmanship of this board and quickly set in motion several youth-centered events, such as making ribbon tabs for the TLH hymnals and creating an Instagram group for the children's group (under 11 years old). Additionally, she & Jennifer organized a collection of needed supplies for the Baker Elementary School in Baker at a time of year when supplies typically run low. She also orchestrated the Fall Ball for the youth which was a success and well-attended. Lastly, in conjunction with the Board of Social Ministry, she created a fantastic gingerbread church model for the Christmas parade truck.



The Board of Trustees. The Trustees reorganized the freezer room in the Fellowship Hall: covering an abandoned window bay (which was cited by the Fire Department's inspection of our building), disposing of folding chairs and much miscellaneous materials stored there, and sold the chest freezer. They also removed more trees from the south property lots, and removed one of the two concrete slabs remaining from old homes that were on the lots when OSELC purchased them. An initiative to upgrade the audio visual system in the Fellowship Hall is ongoing, with a new motorized screen, ceiling-mounted projector, and sound-system amplifier installed so far. A 12-foot step ladder was purchased from an estate sale, which makes it much easier and safer to work on the crucifix, lights, and security camera in the Sanctuary. Following a significant storm very late in the year, all electrical power to the church building was lost due to a strong lightning strike that took out several components, including the power transformer on the street. After the board's diligent work replacing and re-connecting the church's components, power was restored after 10 days and Mass was temporarily held in the Parish/Fellowship Hall for two Sundays while waiting for the replacement supplies.

The Board of Security. Because of the rise in media attention of violence directed at churches during 2024, the congregation purchased a Byrna self-defense product (similar to an air pistol, but with less-than-lethal ball projectiles) to temporarily disable an active assailant. A loaded Byrna (though safed) was taken into the Nave in a concealed fashion for several

Masses in 2024. Whistles and air horns were also positioned across the nave to act as potential distractions to an active assailant. Lastly, two routine spot checks of security camera live video captured individuals loitering at the church, possibly harming themselves; the Crestview police was called and both were situations were successfully resolved.

The Board of Christian Life. This office was vacant in 2024 because no one ran for its chairmanship in the Nov 2023 elections. Nonetheless, beautification & maintenance for the campus grounds continued throughout the year by several volunteers. One result from the nominating committee's stalwart work preceding the Nov 2024 elections was Linda's selection as the Chairman of this board, to be installed in Jan 2025.

Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML). Led by Linda, the congregation collected monthly mites to support district and national mission grants; total mites collected for 2024 were \$403.46. They also collected for Gifts of the Heart including donations of diapers, wipes, pull-ups and cash for Village Hands of Pensacola and baby items for Autaqua Interfaith Center for the Gulf States District Convention.

Office of the President. The council approved two new policies for the congregation in 2024 concerning interacting with minors while on campus and asking specific questions during our church worker hiring process. The former affected how we planned campus events opened to the public, such as the Fall Ball and Trunk or Treat. It's a very sad commentary on these times that this was a requirement for our property insurance policy.

The voters approved a two-fold increase in a donation to the Lehman Mission in Puerto Rico and support for the local Lutheran Hope House. We also collected donations via door-offerings to help the FL/GA Southeast District perform relief operations for two very damaging hurricanes.

This was also Brad's last consecutive year on the council after 25 years of holding various positions, but he'll be back! Alan was voted in to replace Brad as Vice President, starting in Jan 2025.

In closing, my gratitude goes out to the council members as they continued to make my job as the president a very easy one while getting things done on the business end of the congregation. If you're interested in joining this team and making a difference, please let Alan, Jennifer, or me know.

Pax Christi!

FROM THE BOARD OF CHRISTIAN LIFE

“Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord, though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be white as snow. (Isaiah 1:18a)

Where has sin stained your life? Take comfort and rejoice that in the washing of your Baptism and his sacrificial love for you, you are covered with Christ’s robe of righteousness...white as snow.

Even when we have the best of inten-

tions of keeping our lives free from sin we’re completely unable to. And then the guilt starts to set in. Our lives are continually filled with the failures of our sin and disappointment in ourselves. Our Lord graciously reminds us our sins are covered in Isaiah. He does so by washing us in the waters of our Holy Baptism. Only He can make our sinful lives whiter than snow.

“So when the devil throws your sins in your face and declares that you deserve death and hell, tell him this: "I admit that I deserve death and hell, what of it? For I know One who suffered and made satisfaction on my behalf. His name is Jesus Christ, Son of God, and where He is there I shall be also!"

- Martin Luther

Private Confession and

Absolution

Available on

Thursdays, 8:00-8:30 a.m. and

Sundays, 8:00-8:45 a.m.

Or by appointment, See Pastor
Parent

COFFEE WITH PASTOR



Coffee with Pastor

begins with

Matins at 9:00 a.m.

Women’s Bible Study

Thursdays at 10:00 a.m.

Join us in the study of Proverbs

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE AT OSEL C

Serve on a Board - See Alex Franco, Pres.

Sign up for Flowers—See sign up list in the Parish Hall

Sign up for Refreshments—See sign up list in Parish Hall

Serve on the Altar Guild—See Dcs. Heather Bien

Ongoing Project on Campus—See Brian Hull, Trustee

Serve as an Usher—See Julie Blaylock

Sunday School—9:00 a.m. Sunday, Parish Hall

Reminder!

If you are the last to leave the premises, please check all doors to assure they are closed securely and locked.

Thank you!



Fish Fry!

Friday, March 28th

6 p.m.

Fish, chicken fingers, French fries, and coleslaw will be provided. If you desire, bring additional sides and dessert.



Sale for the Sem

Our annual yard sale to benefit our seminarians at CTSFW is coming soon!

Saturday, May 24th

All donations welcome (no clothing items, please)

FROM LWML

Serve the Lord with Gladness! Psalm 100:2

The Lutheran Women in Mission (LWML) places a major emphasis on the support of mission and ministry throughout the world by means of Mite Box offerings. These mite offerings funded over 100 million dollars in mission grants since the organization's inception in 1942.



OSELC Mites donations 2025

Jan: \$38.01

Feb: \$38.49

YTD TOTAL: \$76.50

Mite box Sunday is the first Sunday of each month. You may bring the mite box any Sunday. If you prefer to donate by check, please make it payable to Our Savior LWML. Mite donations are sent monthly to the Gulf States District LWML to fund mission grants and district expenses and national mission grants.

25 of 31 national mission grants are fully funded and 4 are partially funded.

The Lutheran Woman's Quarterly Spring 2025 issue is available from the magazine rack in the Narthex.

Emerald Coast Zone LWML Board meeting was held at OSELC on Satur-

day, February 22, 2025

A Daily Mustard Seed devotion is available on the LWML website.

Websites:

<http://www.lwml.org>

<http://www.lwmlgulfstates.org>

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- OSELC LWML Meeting Date TBD in March and/ or April
- Emerald Coast Zone LWML Christian Growth Workshop, Saturday, May 17, 2025, 9:00am- 2:00pm, Trinity Lutheran Church, Panama City, FL, "Turning the Sailboat", Ecclesiastes 3:1-8
- 41st Biennial LWML Convention, June 26-29, 2025, Omaha, NE, "Growing in God's Grace" 2 Peter 3:18
- Emerald Coast Zone LWML Fall Rally, Hood Shepherd Lutheran Church, Gulf Breeze, FL, Date TBD
- Gulf States District LWML Convention, April 24-26, 2026, Gulfport, MS, "Jesus our Hope, Anchor of our Soul" Hebrews 6:19
- 42d Biennial LWML Convention, July 8-11, 2027, Oklahoma City, OK

Linda Urda

LWML President



Easter Lilies

For sale \$15.00

See Linda Urda



Lutheran Women
in Mission
www.lwml.org

Men's Group

7:00 pm

Tuesday, March 18th

Pastor Parent's house.



Birthdays:

Eliana Stapp	3/8
Rich Urda	3/9
Isaiah Stapp	3/11
Dianne Shaheen	3/22
Gideon Stapp	3/26
Emily Bien	3/31
Ethan Grimes	4/5
Grace Parent	4/5
Jennifer Franco	4/5

Craft Day

March 22nd

In the afternoon

A knot tying tutorial will be given

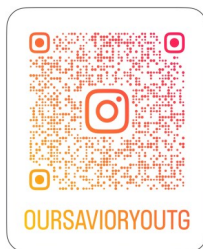


Bring a craft and enjoy the fellow-



Spring forward
set your clocks one hour ahead

Daylight savings time begins on March 9th! So, remember to set your clocks ahead Saturday, March 8th before you go to bed!



Follow the Youth Group on Instagram!

Book Club Meets on March 20
(after Bible Study)

Turns out that our Book Club members are art and literary critics. We traversed through Brughel's Landscape with the Fall of Icarus and three poems based on this art work to discover the Biblical themes of the destructiveness of hubris and the lack of love for our neighbor. Living in today's world, we can sometimes be so caught up in our own lives that

we do not notice that our neighbors are suffering. As Christians, as Lutherans, we read in God's Word, that loving our neighbor proceeds from loving God.

In the next Book Club session, we will be examining van Gogh's The Starry Night along with two poems based on that art work. I am looking forward to seeing what we learn about these artistic expressions. What Biblical truths will be revealed to us?

Our Savior Evangelical Lutheran Church
Council Meeting Agenda (In-Person)

February 12, 2025

Change 1

President – Alex Franco

Vice-President- Alan Widener



1. Attendance: Pastor Parent, Alex Franco, Alan Widner, Brian Hull, Mahlon Haunschuld, Julie Blaylock, Clare Jones, Cindy Parent, Melania Ruef, Jennifer Currid, Alicia Herman (guest)
2. Alan called the meeting to order at 6:30, and Pastor Parent open the meeting with prayer.
3. The previous council minutes were approved with amendments (Linda/Julie). See corrected copy of minutes in church office.
4. Reports:
 - a) Pastor's Report (Fr Parent)- Pastor Parent, Cindy Parent, Brad Bien, and Deaconess Bien will be attending the Southern District Convention March 24 and 25, 2025. Bible study is cruising along. We are on Revelation 5. The men's group is half way through The Book of Concord. A Winkle is scheduled to be held at OSELG on Tuesday, Feb 18. Two new members are scheduled to join the church on Sunday, Jeff and Brenda Simpson. Pastor visited Richard Urda after his surgery and is still attempting to visit Linda Combs.
 - b) Special presentation – Alicia Herman informed us concerning the Hope for the

Destitute, a non-profit organization for the children in Kisumu, Kenya (hftdestitute.org).

She will give the same presentation at the February 23rd Voters' Assembly.

- c) Deaconess Report (Dcs Bien)- The spring yard sale for the Concordia Seminary, Fort Wayne, IN, will be held on Saturday, May 24, starting at 8:00 a.m.
 - d) Financial Report (Mahlon)- See attached. Clarified that the social ministry has a budget but not a designated fund.
 - e) Treasurer (Brian) – See attached. Brian decided to not file a claim on our church insurance for the recent electrical damage due to our deductible limit.
 - f) Board of Security (Julie) – No security issues to report. Alex is now co-administrator on the Schlagel cypher lock system. We need to make a list of administrators and co-administrators for our website, Facebook, Instagram, Signal and cyber lock system. This list could be housed in our newly created policy binder. Pastor requested that during private confession the video in the nave be left on, but the audio should be turned off.
 - g) LWML (Linda) - See attached.
 - h) Board of Christian Life (Linda)- No report, but she has written articles for the newsletter.
 - i) Board of Education (Cindy)- No report due to no changes to our educational programs.
 - j) Board of Youth (Emily) – No report.
 - k) Board of Elders (Alan) – No report.
 - l) Board of Trustees (Brian)- No activity this month. Brian plans to replace the filter box in the Fellowship/Parish Hall.
 - m) Board of Social Ministry (Clare) – See attached.
 - n) Board of Evangelism (Melania) - Cindy reported to Melania that she noted two links on our Google presence. Melania took ownership of one, Shepherds' Stream and reported the other link which is fraudulent to Google. Any photos the congregation wants to post on our FB or Instagram need to be submitted via our church email. Submitting photos through our email automatically gives the church permission to publish. Melanie will devise a "photo permission" form for other situations. Melania asks that the congregation post a review of our church on Google and respond to postings on FB and Instagram.
5. Unfinished Business:
- a) Church building electrical grounding- Brian and Mahlon are moving forward on this project. Funds are available through the trustee budget.
 - b) Parish/Fellowship Hall Audio/Video- Mahlon reported that he needs to select and purchase speakers for the ceiling. Funds are available through the AV designated fund.
 - c) Church Policies Review – Jennifer reported that she, Julie and Clare reviewed all the church minutes that were available from 1958 through 2024. They found several policies which will be reviewed in future council meetings. Jennifer noted that it would be helpful if we would be more consistent in putting the date on policies. A notebook to house these and future policies will be housed with minutes on file.
6. New Business:
- a) Review of existing key policy – Julie read the 2020 Key Policy. She stated the within the five years that we have had the cypher locks we have not had any problems with them with the exception of the electrical outage that occurred recently. A motion was made to make an exception to the key policy to add individuals (Alex/Mahlon). Current metal key holders include Julie, Jeannie, Brian, and Pastor.

- b) Reception of new members: Alicia Herman, Benjamin Adkisson, Dennis Barnett, Ashley Barnett
- c) Voters' assembly meeting agenda- Alex reviewed items for the February 23rd Voters' Meeting to include two additional new members Jeff and Brenda Simpson.
- 7. Closing prayer- Pastor closed the meeting with Compline. A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 8:39 (Clare/Melania).

Our Savior Evangelical Lutheran Church



Voters' Assembly

February 23, 2025



President – Alex Franco

Vice-President- Alan Widner

- 1. Attendance- See sign-in sheet.
- 2. Alex call ed the meeting to order at 12:06 with Pastor Parent opening the meeting with prayer.
- 3. The previous council minutes were approved as written (Brad/Clare).
- 4. Reports:
 - a) Pastor's Report (Fr Parent) – Sunday morning Bible study of Revelation is moving into the prophecy section. The third Tuesday night men's group is doing well. The District Conference on March 23 and 24 will be attended by Pastor Parent, Cindy Parent, Brad Bien, and Deaconess Bien. Brad is the voting lay person, Heather is an advisor and Cindy will be attending pastors' wives activity. Pastor reported that he baptized 10 members of the Stapp family on Dec. 1, 2024, and six new members have joined the church since the last voters' assembly. Pastor is in search of additional acolytes.
 - b) Deaconess Report (Dcs Bien) – Our annual Sale for the Sem will be held on Saturday, May 27, beginning at 8:00 a.m. Heather pointed to thank you notes posted in the Fellowship Hall from several of the seminar students who benefited from our donation.
 - c) Financial Report (Mahlon) - See attached.
 - d) Treasurer (Brian) - See attached.
 - e) Board of Security (Julie) – No security incidents to report. See Julie if you need an access code for the cypher locks to the Fellowship Hall or church building. Note that the nave camera is on during private confession, but the audio is not. This is for the safety of all.
 - f) LWML (Linda) - Easter lilies will go on sale for \$15. Excess funds from the sale of lilies goes into the LWML local fund. Linda brought the missions list and website information for new members. Clare Jones was selected as the Gulf States District Young Woman Representative (YWR).

g) Board of Christian Life (Linda) – No report.

h) Board of Education (Cindy) – The children’s Sunday School is studying the joy of piety with Will Weedon’s book Thank, Praise, Serve and Obey. The adult Bible study class is beginning Chapter 6 in Revelation. The Thursday morning Bible study group is in Proverbs with a side visit to 1John. The Book Club has ventured off into the connection between art and poetry from a Christian perspective.

i) Board of Youth (Emily) - Emily is formulating plans for future activities that would include all the children of the church. She noted the thank you note the church received for the school supply donations to Baker School.

j) Board of Elders (Alan) - No report.

k) Board of Trustees (Brian) - No report, but Brian wished to publicly thank Brad, Deb and Mahlon, and the Stapp brothers (Isaac, Gabriel, and Elijah) for their great work on Monday's impromptu work day. Also thanks to Emily Bien for bringing lunch to us.

l) Board of Social Ministry (Clare) – Clare reviewed the past few months activities and announced that in March there will be a craft day to learn knot tying, in April Trivia Day, in May Mothers’ Day Tea, and in June Fathers’ Day cook-out. She is planning one main event a month with several smaller events scattered throughout the year which includes Pi Day.

m) Board of Evangelism (Melania) – Melania asks that we submit a review of our church on Google. Pastor commended Melania for enhancing our social media presence (with no offense to Alex!).

5. Unfinished Business: None

6. New Business:

a) A motion was made to welcomed new members Alicia Herman, Benjamin Adkisson, Dennis & Ashley Barnett and Jeff & Brenda Simpson. (Clare/Brad).

b) Alicia Herman informed us about Hope for the Destitute, a non-profit organization for orphaned children in Kisumu, Kenya. A motion was made and passed to donate \$600 to sponsor one child for a year (Clare/Mahlon). If individual congregants wish to donate, they should write checks out to the church with “Hope for the Destitute” in the memo line. These funds will flow through our existing temporary fund to the Hope for the Destitute organization. Donations can also be made on line at “hfd.org.”

7. A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 12:54 (Brad/Sally). Pastor led us in the common Doxology.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Currid

**OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN
EVANGELICAL CHURCH**

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Council Vice-President: Alan Widener

Secretary: Jennifer Currid

Treasurer: Brian Hull

Financial Secretary: Mahlon Haunschild

Board of Elders: Alan Widener

Board of Christian Life: Linda Urda

Board of Trustees: Brian Hull

Board of Education: Cindy Parent

Board of Youth: Emily Bien

Board of Evangelism: Melania Ruef

Board of Social Ministry: Clare Jones

Board of Security: Julie Blaylock

LWML: Linda Urda

Library: Jennifer Currid

Usher Director: Julie Blaylock

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Office Administrator: Trish Hull

Newsletter Editor: Dcs. Bien

Pastor Raymond Parent · Deaconess Heather Bien