



The

Parish Visitor

A Publication of Bethlehem Lutheran Church • Askov, Minnesota

August 2022						
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A Message From Our SAM

What would it be like if...?

Council members, Circle of Faith members, Music & Worship team, Family Ministry, Property team, Cemetery team - fill-in-the blank role - had more in-depth biblical & theological training?

IMPACTFUL!

Lay Leader Ministry announces 2022-23 Lay Leader Network Intensive Series

We all have a role within the church – Yes – all of us. God has given each of us a gift and he wants us to use it. We each come to use our gifts when it is needed. Lay Leader Network helps develop the gifts we have been given. The Series has changed throughout the years and is now 4 sessions offered at two locations with in-between sessions on zoom. It also has a wonderful bonus Annual Gathering in February. I have been through this program years ago and helped with developing the new session format when I was on the board. The distinguished faculty has served on the board several years and is amazing in helping each of us grow in our gifts.

Please consider signing up - you will be enriched with spiritual growth in your faith journey.



-Clara

See additional information on the next page!

August Worship Schedule

WORSHIP
with us

August 7 th <i>Sunday Worship</i>	Eleanor Eskuri	Worship 10 am
August 14 th Worship with Holy Communion	Ron Becklund	Worship 10 am
August 21 st <i>Sunday Worship</i>	Rick Martens	Worship 10 am
August 28 th Worship with Holy Communion	Clara Edin, SAM	Worship 10 am

IN OUR Thoughts and Prayers

Please include the following people in your daily prayers:

Jan Ecklund, Lois Sahlen, Don & Mike Petersen, the family Sally Mortensen, Naevia, Iver, Meghan, Kerri, Tracy Jensen, Joni, Bob Katon, Chardae, Gavin, Jessica, and their families.

If you would like to add someone to the weekly list, please email the church office at blcaskov@gmail.com or let Clara know

Northeastern Minnesota Synod ELCA Lay Leader Ministry **announces** Lay Leader Network Intensive Series

Sept 2022 – April 2023 **4 sessions + Annual Gathering in February**
(Sept/Apr in person in Duluth and Brainerd. Nov/Feb via Zoom)

Cost: \$220 + books To Register go to the Synod website/Ministries Distinguished Faculty: Rev. Dr. Mark Skinner and Rev. Dr. David Mesner.

Lay Leader Network is designed to educate and train lay people for leadership in the congregation, the community and in the Synod. It is intended to refine theological knowledge and leadership skills in addition to stressing personal enrichment, spiritual growth and the development of ministry skills.

The 2022-23 LLN Intensive Series curriculum consists of:

- a deep dive into the Word and follows the ELCA lectionary studying Matthew including the practices of discipleship and the Beatitudes
- Lutheran theology and reading/study of Henry J.M. Nouwen's *Life of the Beloved – Living Spiritually in a Secular World, a classic and Nouwen's greatest legacy to Christians around the world*
- Contextualizing ministry with a study of Dwight Zscheile's *The Agile Church: Spirit-Led Innovation in an Uncertain Age* including theological insights and discussion to help churches flourish in a time of profound uncertainty and spiritual opportunity
- A bonus read and discussion for those interested will be offered too – Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *The Cost of Discipleship*

Put together and in community with our esteemed and faithful faculty and colleagues across the Synod, the Yearly Intensive Series promises to be impactful and life changing. 2022-2023 Yearly Intensive Series Dates:

Session 1 - October 1 – Duluth, Oct 8 - Brainerd

In-between session on Zoom – October 25

Session 2 - zoom - Nov. 12

In-between session on Zoom - Jan 10, 2023

Session 3 - zoom - Feb. 4

Annual Gathering – Feb 25 in person

In-between session on Zoom – March 14

Session 4 - April 15 - Brainerd, April 22 – Duluth

Join us and spread the word! Register at the Synod website under Ministries.

2020-22 Northeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA Lay Leader Network Personal Testaments

Monica Bruning

I've been an informal lay leader all my life – as a Sunday School teacher or confirmation mentor, Church Council, small group leader, women's retreat host, et al – so when I read about the Lay Leader Network Intensive Series, I asked my pastor if my church would sponsor me and they did! What a gift and blessing! I feel like I'm in seminary classes because the curriculum, faculty, and dialogue with my classmates is rich, sometimes profound, and feeds my need for faith and spiritual development. I appreciate understanding the history and sociological influences that have affected the/ our church today as well as how together we must press on as the church, because the Bible tells us

so! The biblical instruction of the curriculum provides methods to better understand what the wise book advises. What I am learning is put into action to advance the church and faithful!

Ryan Jagim

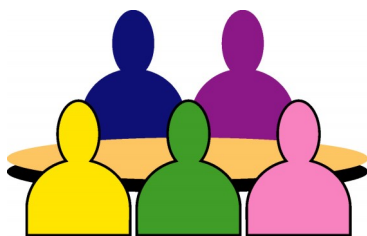
When my wife Julie excitedly shared her interest in the LLN and the books they were planning to read, I responded that I was not interested in another activity, especially one that took away Saturday time. She shared some of the books that she had ordered for the upcoming sessions, and they caught my interest especially Speaking Christian by Marcus Borg. So, with a slight "twist of arm", I agreed to sign up and start this LLN journey. Now after 3 years, I look forward to next year's

journey. I have been blessed by the amazing biblical scholarship of Pastor David Mesner and how he brings the bible passages alive for me. Pastor Mark Skinner helps me understand the history of my Lutheran tradition and the challenges of faith in this secular age. This journey is a place where I could learn and share with others my faith journey and questions. The ability to connect, whether remotely or in person, with other LLN members across the synod has been so a great experience, that I look forward to next year's LLN series.

Paula Tsufis

A few years ago, our congregation offered a program based on the book, *Living Your Strengths: Discover Your God-given Talents and*

Inspire Your Community. My strengths included learning, ideation, intellection, strategic and achievement. My take on this is I tend to spend a lot of time in my head but eventually I get a lot of stuff done. The Lay Leader Network has been a Godsend for me to hone my God-given gifts for the future ministry of our congregation. The curriculum is appropriately challenging, the pastoral leaders Pastor Dave Mesner and Pastor Mark Skinner are awesome, and the conversation with other participants vital to working through the current challenges facing the church today. I would encourage church leaders struggling with "what to do" to join in our Spirit-led learning and practical discussion.



COUNCIL MEETING

June 8, 2022

Unapproved Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bill Jansen, Sandra Pavelka, Denny Birkholm, Clara Edin, and Carolyn Steele. **Absent:** Yvette Maloney (with advanced notice).

Devotions were led by Clara.

ACCEPT MINUTES FROM THE MAY COUNCIL MEET-

ING: Motion by Sandra, second by Carolyn, motion passed.

MAY 2022 TREASURER’S REPORT: Was reviewed. Giving was up for May but down for the year. We will monitor closely.

PASTORS REPORT: Clara provided a verbal summary of her activities from the last month, as well as anticipated activities in the future.

MINISTRY TEAMS:

- Property—Denny discussed the situation with the paving of the parking area with the city. Arrow Lift com-

pleted the quarterly elevator inspection.

- Family Ministry—Still checking on summer Bible school at Emmanuel.
- Music and Worship—Committee continues to meet.
- Circle of Faith—Preparing for the Food Stand this weekend June 11th and 12th.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Church usage request for wedding on July 9th. Motion by Denny, second by Bill, motion passed.
- Signage recommendations—Smoke free

building signs posted on all three doors. Elevator sign by restroom is pending.

- Congregational meeting June 12, 2022—To be held following Sunday service.

NEW BUSINESS:

- The AED machine needs a new battery and contact pads. Heidi will order.

Motion to adjourn by Sandra, second by Carolyn, motion passed.

Next meeting Wednesday, July 13, 2022 at 6:00 pm.

*Respectfully submitted,
-Bill Jansen
President*

AUGUST Birthdays

- Brenda Zinter—3rd
- Bruce Storrar—7th
- Hope Loew—6th
- Scott Peterson—6th
- Simon Ecklund—8th
- Sandra Pavelka—11th
- Lois Sahlen—18th
- Adalyn Fogt—19th
- Marion Clausen—21st
- Rosalie Nelson—21st
- Nick Ecklund—23rd
- Mark Maloney—23rd
- JoEllen Jensen—29th
- Kelly Leach—29th

AUGUST Anniversaries

- Tim & Joyce Tabor—14th
- Tim & Nadine Loew—16th
- Tony & Connie Ecklund—20th

NE MN Synod Lay Leader Network

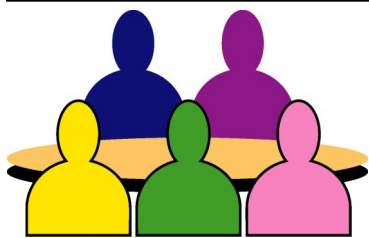


The Lay Leader Network seeks to provide educational and resource/skill

building opportunities that embody the belief in the “priesthood of all believers.” As members of the body of Christ, we have been given gifts to share for the edification of the church as it engages God’s mission for the sake of the world.

The LLN offers a Yearly Intensive Series, annual gatherings and various networking opportunities for lay persons throughout the NE MN Synod ELCA. Participation in the cyclical Yearly Intensive Series is highly encouraged but is not required in order to be part of the “network” itself.

Thinking of participating? Good news - the base cost (\$220 this year) will be paid by BLC for those who wish to join in the LLN Intensive Series. Are you interested...talk to Clara for more information.



COUNCIL MEETING

**July 20, 2022
Unapproved Minutes**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Bill Jansen, Sandra Pavelka, Clara Edin SAM, Yvette Maloney, and Carolyn Steele; absent Denny Birkholm; guest Rod Erickson.

Clara Edin led with a devotion.

ACCEPT MINUTES FROM JUNE COUNCIL MEETING:

Motion by Sandra, 2nd by Bill, motion passed.

JUNE TREASURER’S REPORT:

Discussion on running behind in income vs. expenses. The majority of the overage is due to higher-than-normal utilities in the early part of the year.

PASTOR’S REPORT: Clara provided a summary for her pastoral care from last month.

MINISTRY TEAMS:

- Property—No report.
- Family Ministry—VBS update provided.
- Music and Worship—Team continues to meet monthly to plan.
- Circle of Faith—National Night Out is on 8/2, they will be present serving root beer floats.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Visioning Committee with GEL Sandstone—Amy Frazer was elected

President, Greta Detzler was elected secretary.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Haley Loew wedding church usage request for 10/7/2023, rehearsal 10/6/2023. Yvette moved to approve the request, Carolyn second, motion passed.
- Church representative for weddings—Bill moved that we modify the church representative fee for weddings to be \$150 for the day of the wedding and \$50 for a rehearsal held on a different day as opposed to a flat \$200 fee, second by Yvette, motion passed.
- Sally Mortenson funeral church usage request for 8/6/2022—Bill Jansen moved to approve the request, Sandra second, motion passed.
- Email from Heidi regarding fundraising deposits and protocols—Receipts from Shawn were turned in. Discussion on drafting a protocol on how fundraising monies are handled in the future.
- Church brochures—Discussion about updating. Sandra moved that we update the brochures, Bill second, motion passed.
- Heidi’s performance evaluation—This is due to be completed in August.
- Lay Leader Network scholarships—Clara requested that council consider offering scholarships for members wishing to receive Lay

Leader Network training and education. Yvette moved that the church pay the base cost for members wishing to attend, and that the funds come from the community outreach dedicated account, Sandra second, motion passed.

- Pulpit Supply—Clara brought up additional options to supplement pulpit supply, including ministry teams and confirmands leading services. There are services available for use. It was decided that Clara will introduce the idea during a Sunday service.
- Microphone base unit—Clara requested we purchase another base unit. Bill moved that we purchase another Shur Mic unit to come out of the non-designated memorials account at a cost of up to \$200, Carolyn second, motion passed.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Bill to ask Heidi to draw up protocol for handling fundraising monies.
- Clara and Yvette to work on updating the church brochures.
- Bill to send link to Heidi with the microphone model to order.
- Bill to talk to Jean Hendrickson about remembering to include certain music.
- Bill to send invite to vision’s group.
- Bill to call pulpit supply.

Motion to adjourn by Bill, 2nd by Sandra, motion passed. Meeting adjourned with The Lord’s Prayer.

Next meeting Wednesday, August 10, 2022 at 6:00 pm.

*Respectfully submitted,
-Yvette Maloney
Secretary*

In Loving Memory...



Sally Ann Mortensen

July 2, 1934—
July 19, 2022

Funeral Services will be held at Bethlehem Lutheran Church on Saturday, August 6, 2022

Visitation from 10 to 11 am

Service at 11 am

Luncheon to follow in the church basement

Proposed Three-Point Parish Committee Minutes

1. Opening Devotions and Prayer – Pastor Cindy – Parable of brothers with grain bins ----1 Corinthians 12:4 Each is given a manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.
2. “Getting to Know You”
Time for introductions and sharing about ourselves, our congregations, our thoughts
 - Pastor Cindy Gray – Pastor at Grace & Emmanuel – Relative newcomer to the area (2016)
 - Greta Detzler – Member of Grace, previously member of BLC
 - Laura McCauhaun – Relatively new back to the area (2016), member of Emmanuel
 - Marvin Rostberg – Born & Raised in the area, member of Dell Grove nearly 62 years. Last number of years we’ve all been seeing membership dwindling, and that’s I think why we’re all here.
 - Clara Edin SAM – Transplant from the cities in 1971, in Askov. BLC was confirmed there, Sunday school teacher there and married there. Moved away, then back. Member of Oak Lake LC (Kerrick), Appointed as SAM at BLC, less than ½ time, 2 Sundays a month.
 - Amy Frazer – Lived in area generally whole life. Member at Grace since 2012.
3. What does your congregation have to bring to a three-point parish?
 - Bethlehem (Minister Clara) – They house the community meal and very involved in that every month. Used to do a Labor Day dinner, unfortunately the volunteers have dwindled. Besides that, there are many gifts, welcoming baskets (from Circle) for new neighbors in the community. Quilters give lap quilts to members who are confirmed, hospitalized, or reach a set age. Community Library inside the building, in the conference room, wonderful pavilion outside for usage, prayer garden. Very friendly congregation and open to go forward with conversation of the three-point parish. Due to COVID, so many things have been put on the back burner, but baby steps are being made. Enjoy getting together, partake and share doing things with others. 4 musicians
 - Emmanuel (Marvin & Laura) – The congregation is very friendly. Just recently there are young families that have joined the congregation who started the live nativity, Easter celebration, doing an all community VBS, Trunk Or Treat, and Sunday School program revamp. Music between the two congregations, musicians (three). Exciting things happening.
 - Grace (Amy & Greta) – Service – Our strength is community and world outreach, newborn kits, refugee kits, school kits, backpack program through the school, school supplies for local school. W/ELCA is very involved, friendly and welcoming congregation. Parsonage, musicians (with Emmanuel)
4. Let us choose a name for our Committee. – Visioning Committee – voted and approved.
5. Elect a chairperson and secretary. Pastor Cindy and Clara are to be here along side and guide the committee, not to take charge in any capacity.
 - a) Chairperson will be in contact with Deacon Colleen Bernu from Synod office.
 - b) Set times and agendas for meetings – always open to the input of other committee members.Amy has volunteered and been voted and approved as Committee Chairperson. Secretary will keep minutes of the meeting to be reported in each congregation’s newsletter. Minutes do not have to be verbatim, but record the decisions reached by the group. Greta has agreed to secretary and will send minutes to the committee and both congregation’s secretaries to publish – Committee voted and approved.
6. FYI SAM Nathan Anderson has announced his retirement from Trinity, Bruno, and Oak Lake Parish. Their congregation council is meeting with Deacon Brenda Tibbetts from the Synod Office on July 12th. They may wish to be a part of this conversation. Minister Clara reports that Nathan’s last day is 7/31. Members of the congregations have expressed interest in potentially joining in a multi-point parish. However, they were told no, and to have their meeting with Deacon Tibbetts first and go from there. We should consider bringing them into our conversation eventually. Potentially Markville too, but Markville may be looking towards Wisconsin. Cloverdale has a seminary student right now. These parishes may be molding and shaping through the years. So, with Nathan retiring, it does open some more possibilities.

Minutes continued on page 6...

7. Deacon Colleen and Pastor Josh Blair met with Grace, Emmanuel, and Bethlehem councils in September. This meeting was recorded. Clara, could you send this "video" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ndUXVP4lguE> to each committee member to view? Could those who were present share their impressions of this meeting? Minister Clara handed out the link to this meeting. One thing Pastor Cindy commented was that you can go to any church in the many point parish, and if the offering is in an envelope for a specific church the offering within that envelope goes to that church, but loose cash and check in the plate go to the hosting church. There was discussion about how Pastor Josh Blair and the process went. Transparency was key to helping keep the congregations aware of what's going on. Lots of discussion, lots of rehashing, etc. As far as transparency goes, it is alright to invite congregation to attend and listen, but not participate or interrupt. More encouraging would be to bring issues or questions to the committee members, to be put on the agenda for the next meeting.
8. The SAM (Dave Erdmann) from the SALT Parish in the Lake Superior Conference is excited to visit with our committee about how their parish was formed and functions. – Five congregations were working, trying to survive. It is believed that Brookston has closed. Meadowlands, Saginaw, Cotton, not sure who all, but came together and worked out a plan, lead by a SAM, who is excited to share how that works for them. They're currently doing a process where there is worship at two congregations every Sunday, then live streaming to the other two congregations in their buildings, then it switches. – We serve those around us in our local communities it is important that we keep our doors open.
9. Homework: Attain an accurate count of active members in your congregation. Our two (Grace/Emmanuel) don't have an accurate active count. Heidi (BLC) reported 81 houses and 164 active members. Learn what your congregation could realistically give to support Pastoral Ministry. Pastor Salary and Benefits more specifically.
10. Next meeting. Should we invite Deacon Colleen Bernu? Meeting time would need to fit her schedule as well as ours. There was a lapse in time because each congregation needed to vote to proceed, and it wasn't until June 2022 where BLC had a quorum to vote to move forward. Amy will contact Colleen and find out her availability. In the mean time the six committee members will meet again to discuss with Bethlehem members. Potentially August 3rd for our next meeting.
11. Any other ideas from members at this time? A question was asked, inquiring what brought Dell Grove Emmanuel to make the decision to have a vote on whether or not to part from Grace and leave the synod. Laura and Marvin answered that their church had seen quite a decline in attendance (prior to COVID) and a survey was sent out to all members of the congregation. As a result of this survey it was discovered that some members had been unhappy with the synod and the discussion took place, and eventually a vote. The congregation voted to stay partnered with Grace and with the Synod. A new covenant was created and signed between the congregations of Grace and Dell Grove Emmanuel. A copy of the new covenant is available in the July Newsletter for Grace and Dell Grove Emmanuel.



Circle of Faith met July 9, 2022 at church. The members in attendance were Tracy Zinter, Jo Foss, Carolyn Steel, Jan Parker, Cookie Nielsen, and Mary Johnson.

Tracy called the meeting to order.

Devotions: Jo led us in devotions. In Philippians 4:11 Paul wrote "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content".

Reports: Secretary minutes from June's meeting were reviewed. Motion to accept the minutes made by Jo, 2nd by Carolyn, motion carried. Treasurer's report checking \$103.24, savings \$2,529.79.

Old business: Carolyn stated that the can opener on eBay was missing the charger, so the search continues. Community meal will be July 27th, menu to be determined.

Card mailing: Jo in July and Cookie in August.

New Business: National Night Out is August 2nd. Discussion on Circle's contribution to go toward supplying root beer floats. Jo made the motion that

\$50 be the top donation limit, 2nd by Cookie, motion carried. A phone vote will be taken for the final approval. Jo stated she had some children's books we could hand out. Motion to adjourn the meeting by Jan, 2nd by Carolyn, motion carried. Ended meeting with The Lord's Prayer

Next meeting August 13, 2022 at 10:00.

Respectfully submitted,
-Mary Johnson
Secretary