



The

Parish Visitor

A Publication of Bethlehem Lutheran Church • Askov, Minnesota

October 2020						
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Hello, Church!

As I am writing this, our worship plans have once again been hampered. As I look at the map of the five-state area of Wisconsin, Minnesota, North and South Dakota, and Iowa, our state is looking good compared to our neighbors. I suspect that will change for the worse. However, I am thankful. I am thankful for all of you who are acting wisely by wearing masks and keeping physically distant. Yes, we are frustrated. We would all like to be able to gather inside a building for worship. We would also love to be able to enjoy fellowship activities. I was hoping to start an in-person Bible study. Our children and teens should be in Sunday school and confirmation by now. Some of our siblings in Christ haven't enjoyed in-person visits for over six months now. All those things and more are ample reason for each and every one of us to remain vigilant. Let's continue to stay apart so that we can get back together soon.

In the midst of all the anxiety and frustration, I am also hopeful and confident. Our God has promised us that we would never walk alone in our struggles. Jesus capped all of those promises in his last words from the gospel according to Matthew. "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matthew 20:19-20, NRSV)

Where do we go from here? That is a valid question. First, let me assure you that we will continue to offer online worship when conditions prevent us from gathering in person. As soon as the COVID numbers improve, we will think about gathering outside again. With a little luck, we will have some pleasant fall weather to enjoy. As I told our church council, this crisis has taught us some important lessons. First, being church does not require a building. We have continued to be church even during total shutdowns. Second, across the ELCA and other denominations, through all of the electronic wonders at our disposal, the church is reaching many people we would not otherwise be reaching. Praise the Lord! We should seriously consider continuing those means of outreach. We can and will live into Christ's commission as we do.



In October, I hope to offer a weekly Bible study for adults and also to help get things cooking again for Sunday school and confirmation. We'll see what that can look like. Stay tuned. Meanwhile, continue to pray for this world, our congregation, and our community. God hears our prayers and answers our prayers. "Remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Peace be with you.

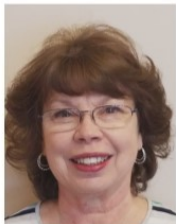
Larry A. Anderson, SAM

If you would be willing to serve on the church council beginning in 2021, please let nominating committee members Denny Birkholm or Bill Steele know

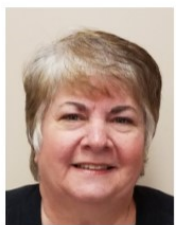
2020 Church Council Members



Bill Jansen



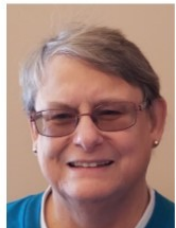
Marilyn Krogh



Cheryl Kohner



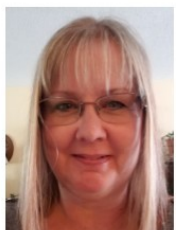
Chuck Moon



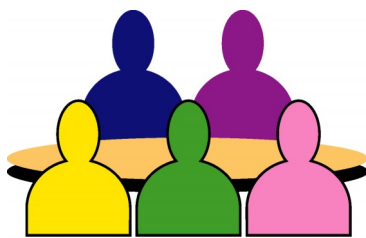
JoEllyn Foss



Andy May



Heidi Moon



COUNCIL MEETING

**September 9, 2020
Unapproved Minutes**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Bill Jansen, Marilyn Krogh, Jo Foss, Cheryl Kohner, Chuck Moon, Heidi Moon, and Larry Anderson; Andy May was absent.

CALL TO ORDER, CHECK IN, DEVOTION AND OPENING PRAYER.

ACCEPT MINUTES OF THE AUGUST COUNCIL MEETINGS: Motion to accept August 12th minutes by Chuck, 2nd by Marilyn, motion carried.

AUGUST TREASURER’S REPORT: Reviewed.

MINISTRY TEAMS:

- Property—Chuck reported there have been some issues with the new carpet in the basement that are being addressed.
- Family Ministry—No report.
- Music and Worship—Bill met with Larry and they have picked out music for September.
- Circle of Faith—Jo reporting they have a tentative meeting set for Saturday, September 12th. The community meal served 174 meals in August, gave out 200 bags of groceries, had 14 volunteers, and was given a monetary

donation to the community meals. The next community meal will be on September 23rd.

OLD BUSINESS

- Parsonage congregational meeting—meeting is Sunday, September 13th following the outdoor service, under the pavilion. The meeting is solely to discuss selling the parsonage. 20 members are required for a quorum. Members must be present to vote. Cheryl and Jo will count the ballots.
- Worship planning—Discussed worship options. There will be communion on both Sunday, September 13th and Sunday, September 27th. A motion by Bill was made to coordinate an indoor service on September 27th with the SMART Team, Larry Anderson, and the Music and Worship Team, 2nd by Cheryl, motion carried.
- 2019 Audit—Heidi stated that she has asked Abitz Tax Accounting to do the audit, and she is waiting to hear back.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Quarterly congregational meeting—scheduled for Sunday, October 18, 2020 following worship.
- Proposed 2021 Budget—The Finance Team, consisting of Heidi Moon, Marilyn Krogh, and Larry Anderson will meet on Thursday, September 24th at 1:00 pm to come up with a proposed budget for next year.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Jo will get phone list of shut-ins to Larry

Motion to adjourn by Jo, 2nd by Marilyn, motion carried. Adjourned with the Lord’s Prayer.

Our next meeting will be Wednesday, October 14, 2020 at 6:00 pm.

*Respectfully submitted,
-Cheryl Kohner
Council secretary*

**The BLC
Quarterly
Congregational
meeting
is scheduled
for
Sunday,
October 18, 2020
following the
worship
service.**

***Changes to this
scheduled
meeting date
due to
COVID-19
will be posted
on the
church website
at
blcaskov.com***

**Masks will be
required to
attend this
meeting, indoors
or outside.**

***Thank you for your
cooperation!***

October Birthdays

- Chloe Maloney—1st
- Deb Jensen—2nd
- Donna Sahlen—3rd
- Herman Velsvaag—3rd
- Heidi Moon—5th
- Sue Kozlowski—8th
- Margie Dubois—9th
- Pat Krogh—10th
- Molly Balut—13th
- Sonja Overholser—15th
- Lynette Storrar—17th
- Wendy Ecklund—21st
- Doug Ecklund—26th
- Joyce Schaumburg—27th
- Brenda Zinter—30th
- Brayden Willie—31st

October Anniversaries

Ovid & Linda Jensen—
October 13th

IN OUR Thoughts and Prayers

Please include the following people in your daily prayers:

- Millie Sorensen, Roy Larsen, Jan Ecklund, Lois Sahlen, Dorla Clark, Donna Norgaard, Ann Olson, Ardis Jensen, Jo Jessen, Tony Ecklund, Shirley Lund, Joyce Schaumburg, Chase & Elizabeth Moon (in the Philippines) and their families.

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

Special MEETING

Special Called Congregational Meeting September 13, 2020 Unapproved Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

OPENING PRAYER: Larry Anderson.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A QUORUM: A quorum was established with 29 voting members present.

CONSIDERATION OF THE MOTION:

- A. To list the parsonage and property for sale with United Country Real Estate (Tom Jensen, agent);
- B. Assign Denny Birkholm (Property Committee Chair) as the BLC liaison;
- C. Grant the church council the authority to accept, reject or counter any offers, on behalf of the congregation.

Motion was made by Bill Jansen to accept the Consideration of the Motion, 2nd by Ovid Jensen, motion carried.



During this time of COVID-19, we still need your help to make certain we continue to fulfill our mission and meet our budgetary needs!

We have a process for making safe and secure one-time or recurring online contributions through our website:
www.blcaskov.com/online-giving

Your checks are greatly appreciated too, for those who aren't online

Thank you for your continued support!

DISCUSSION ON THE PROPOSED MOTION: Questions and concerns from the congregation were costs; who might buy the parsonage, and if they would keep up the property; where might a new pastor live; could the parsonage be rented out; among other questions. Larry Anderson explained Synod guidelines of 30 percent housing allowance for a pastor if there is no parsonage available. He also explained that most beginning pastors receive at least \$34,000 a year plus 30 percent for housing. He went on to tell the congregation about the IRS requirements for renting out the parsonage. It was brought up that if the parsonage sold, where would the money from the sale go? (Bill stated where the money might go has not been discussed yet among the council). A list with the costs for the year for upkeep of the parsonage was given out for review. There was also a letter from Chad Rickman with Church Mutual, about the parsonage roof. Also, included were two letters

from Tom Jensen with United Country Realty, with listing price suggestions.

VOTE: Voting was conducted by paper ballots.

REPORT OF VOTE TALLY: Council members Cheryl Kohner and Jo Foss counted the ballots. There were **23 YES** votes to sell, and **6 NO** votes not to sell. Motion to list the parsonage for sale carried.

Closing prayer by Larry Anderson.

Motion to adjourn by Bill Jansen, 2nd by Chuck Moon, motion carried. Meeting adjourned with The Lord's Prayer.

*Respectfully submitted,
-Cheryl Kohner
Council secretary*



TO GO!

Free Community Meal

October 28, 2020
4:30 to 6:30 pm

All meals served to-go, pickup under the pavilion

What is God up to at BLC?

Blessing our community through our monthly meal distribution! Blessing #1--We received a \$3,150 grant from the city of Askov for Covid-19 related expenses for our monthly meal, so we wanted to increase the number of people we serve and add a bag of groceries for each household. Blessing #2--Family Pathways and Pine County Health and Human Services helped spread the word. We had no idea how many people were going to come, but I was praising God for the opportunity while driving back from Chris' Food midday Wednesday with the 150 burger buns I had ordered and 400 cans of tuna in the back of our pickup. I don't usually drive our truck and didn't realize the tailgate latch was finicky, plus I'm short and can't see the tailgate through the rearview mirror. I was south of town, praising God for his blessings and bopping to "Walking on Sunshine" blasting on the radio, when I bounced up high enough to see the tailgate was down (yes, there is one advantage to dancing in your seat!). I found a driveway, parked and checked on the groceries. To my dismay, the three boxes of buns were gone. As soon as I noticed them missing -- and before I could panic -- my phone rang.

"Are you Shawn Jansen?" asked a man who introduced himself as Steve Rose. "We haven't met yet, but I have three boxes of buns, undamaged. I'm at Grant and First Streets," he said.

"Thank you so much! Those are for tonight's community meal!" I said.

"So it's spiritual then," he said. "That's even better!"

I headed back to Sandstone, thanking God for blessings 3 and 4--undamaged buns and not having to try to find them somewhere on the way back to the grocery store, or having to try and find 150 more. I found Steve, who wore a T-shirt with a smiley face and "Jesus loves you" on it. He smiled and asked me, "Do you know when the power of positive thinking got started? When David saw Goliath, he thought, 'He's so big, how can I miss!' He laughed at his joke and helped me load the buns in the truck cab, handed me his business card (he works for the company doing the road work there in Sandstone) and got out a little notebook. He asked about the type of meal we do. "What's the name of your church?" and appeared to be writing it down. I thought perhaps the crew would stop for a bite. But no, he handed me blessing 5, a check for \$500 for our meals! I laughed and cried on the way back to Askov. I couldn't wait to tell everyone.

We received the fruits of a wonderful growing season, blessing 6, and generosity, blessing 7, to use fresh fruit and vegetables in this month's meal. We are privileged to work with generous businesses to help provide the meal and groceries--this month, blessings 8, 9, and 10, Laurie Loew of Main Street Grocery made the pork, Kettle River Pizza ordered the treats and chips and bagged them for us, and Chris' Food Center helped keep our costs down so we could provide 200 bags of groceries. In fact, we had our own loaves and fishes miracle because we managed to distribute over 170 meals when we had planned for 150, practically doubling the number of people served last month, blessing 11!

All of this was accomplished through numerous volunteers, from distributing flyers, to making the food, to bagging and distributing the meals and groceries, to delivery--an army of 19 this month, including a gentleman who had come a couple of hours early to the distribution! Yep, we're up to 30 blessings, and counting, because many of the people picking up meals and groceries were also picking up for other households. That's the kind of God we serve--when we're thanking him for his blessings, he keeps pouring on more! Indeed, we are blessed to be a blessing. We can always use more hands to do this work--call or text me at 320.245.5339.

May our God's blessings be obvious to you this week!

-Shawn



We need your help finding disinfecting wipes!

We have been busy working toward making our church building safer during the pandemic. One of the items we have been unable to locate are sanitizing wipes. There is currently a nationwide shortage of them, so, we're asking if anyone has a "stock pile" of wipes, and would be willing to donation one or two unopened cans, to please let the office know (320-838-3191) Thank you for your help keeping our building safe!