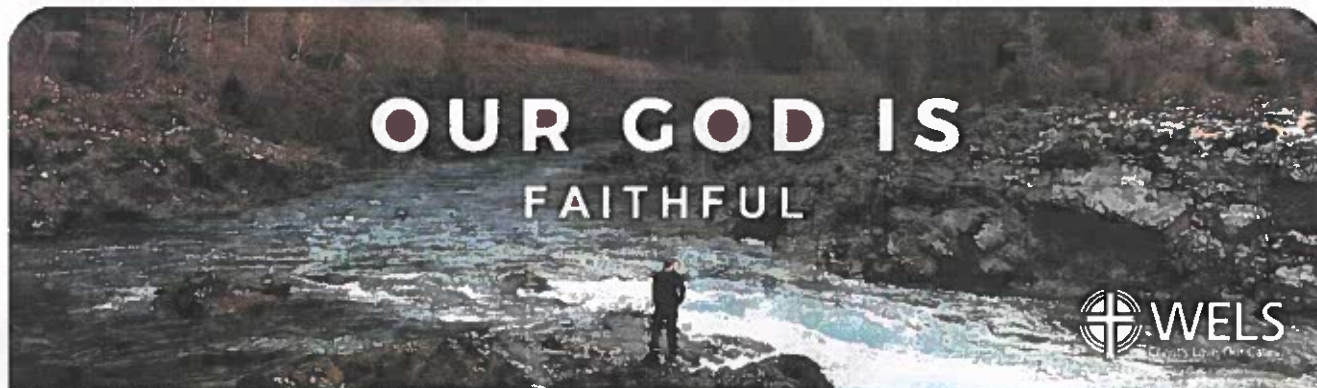


The Messenger

The Monthly Newsletter of Zion Lutheran Church, Columbus, WI



July, 2021

The headline read: "Faithful guard dog unfaithful." The story provided the details. A store owner was robbed. The wily thief tested the guard dog's faithfulness with a juicy steak, and the dog failed the test.

Faithfulness is questionable in pets and humans. "Dog bites child." "Spouse deserts partner."

"Employee accepts rival company offer." "Cat destroys owner's furniture."

Is anyone trustworthy? Is anyone ever completely faithful to his word?

The Bible says, "God is faithful, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Corinthians 1:9).

God's faithfulness can be seen in his daily preservation of the world. He makes grass grow and trees bud. He sends sunshine and rain. He provides plants and animals as food to keep us alive. He even does all this without our asking.

God is faithful to his promise: "As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease" (Genesis 8:22).



God's faithfulness is what comforts us when we are feeling guilty. He promises that he forgives us because of what Jesus did to rescue us from our sins.

God's faithfulness is what comforts us when we are afraid of death. He promises us eternal life because Jesus defeated death when he rose from the grave.

Whatever you are facing or afraid of, you can take comfort in God's promises because he is always faithful.

WORSHIP TIMES

Everyone Welcome

Thursdays	6:30 pm
Sundays	8:00 and 10:30 am
Sunday Bible Study	9:15 am
Friday Bible Study	6:00 am

Zion Lutheran Church and School

July 2021



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 7:45 am Sanctuary: Weekly Cleaning 10:00 am Teen Girls Bible Class 6:30 pm Worship, Communion	2 6:00 am Bible Breakfast	3
4 Independence Day Pentecost 6 8:00 am Online Worship Posted 8:00 am Worship, Communion 9:15 am Bible Study 10:30 am Worship: Communion	5 Independence Day observed	6 6:30 pm *Board of Ed Meeting 7:00 pm *WELS Wind Ensemble Practice	7 9:15 am Pastoral Staff Meeting	8 7:45 am Sanctuary: Weekly Cleaning 6:30 pm Worship	9 6:00 am Bible Breakfast	10
11 Pentecost 7 8:00 am Online Worship Posted 8:00 am Worship 9:15 am Bible Study 10:30 am Worship	12	13 6:30 pm Stewardship Board 7:00 pm *WELS Wind Ensemble Practice	14 9:15 am Pastoral Staff Meeting	15 7:45 am Sanctuary: Weekly Cleaning 6:30 pm Worship	16 6:00 am Bible Breakfast	17
18 Pentecost 8 8:00 am Online Worship Posted 8:00 am Worship 9:15 am Bible Study 10:30 am Worship	19	20 7:00 pm *WELS Wind Ensemble Practice	21 9:15 am Pastoral Staff Meeting 6:30 pm Council Meeting	22 7:45 am Sanctuary: Weekly Cleaning 6:30 pm Worship, Communion	23 6:00 am Bible Breakfast	24
25 Pentecost 9 8:00 am Online Worship Posted 8:00 am Worship, Communion 9:15 am Bible Study 10:30 am Worship, Communion	26 9:00 am Sanctuary: Monthly Cleaning	27 7:00 pm Faculty Inservice *WELS Wind Ensemble Practice	28 9:15 am Faculty Inservice Pastoral Staff Meeting	29 7:45 am Sanctuary: Weekly Cleaning 4:30 pm Sanctuary Reserved: Wedding Rehearsal 6:30 pm Worship, Communion	30 6:00 am Bible Breakfast 1:30 pm Wedding	31



June 1, 2021

Effective communication is essential to having a healthy relationship. Being able to express your feelings and identify your needs with clarity is important for a happy marriage. Still, knowing the best way to provide constructive feedback and discuss delicate topics can be a challenge.

These four strategies will give you and your partner the confidence and skills to speak in love and communicate with kindness, respect, and gratitude.

SPEAK IN LOVE: COMMUNICATION FOR A HEALTHY MARRIAGE

1. START WITH YOURSELF

Use "I" statements to break down barriers and facilitate a conversation. Instead of using "you" statements (i.e. you make me angry when you leave your clothes on the floor) and immediately placing your spouse in a defensive position, try using this formula to help you begin a conversation and express your feelings.

"I feel _____ (emotion) when _____, and I need or prefer _____."

2. PRACTICE REFLECTIVE LISTENING

Ensure that you are hearing your partner correctly with reflective listening. Miscommunication can be the culprit of serious conflict in relationships. Limit the opportunity for it to affect your marriage with this simple strategy, and remember to listen to your partner without trying to fix or analyze their problem.

"It sounds like you were/are _____ (emotion) when _____ (context)."

3. VERIFY & CLARIFY

Experts say that up to 90% of all human communication is nonverbal (tone of voice, body language, hand gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, etc.). These additional factors can cause misunderstandings and conflict. To help, use these three steps to verify and clarify information with your partner.

This is what I hear you say: (insert what you heard).

- When you said that, did you mean (insert your perception)?
- Okay, hear is my response to that (insert your thoughts or feelings).

4. HARSH SETUP VS. SOFT SETUP

You have probably heard the phrase, "It's not what you said; it's how you said it." When you begin a conversation with criticism, it puts your partner on the defensive and derails your opportunity for a positive, productive conversation together. When you begin with gratitude, it changes the direction of your encounter. Consider the difference of a harsh setup and a soft setup:

Harsh Setup: Why do we always have to eat the same meals every week?

Soft Setup: I really appreciate your cooking. Are there any meals I can prepare for you this week?

You also have another important tool available to you as you and your spouse seek to strengthen your relationship: God's Word. The words of Ephesians 4:15-16 provide us guidance: "Speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work."

Also remember that there is forgiveness and grace when we fail or face overwhelming relationship challenges (as we all do, since none of us is perfect). "If we confess our sins, he is

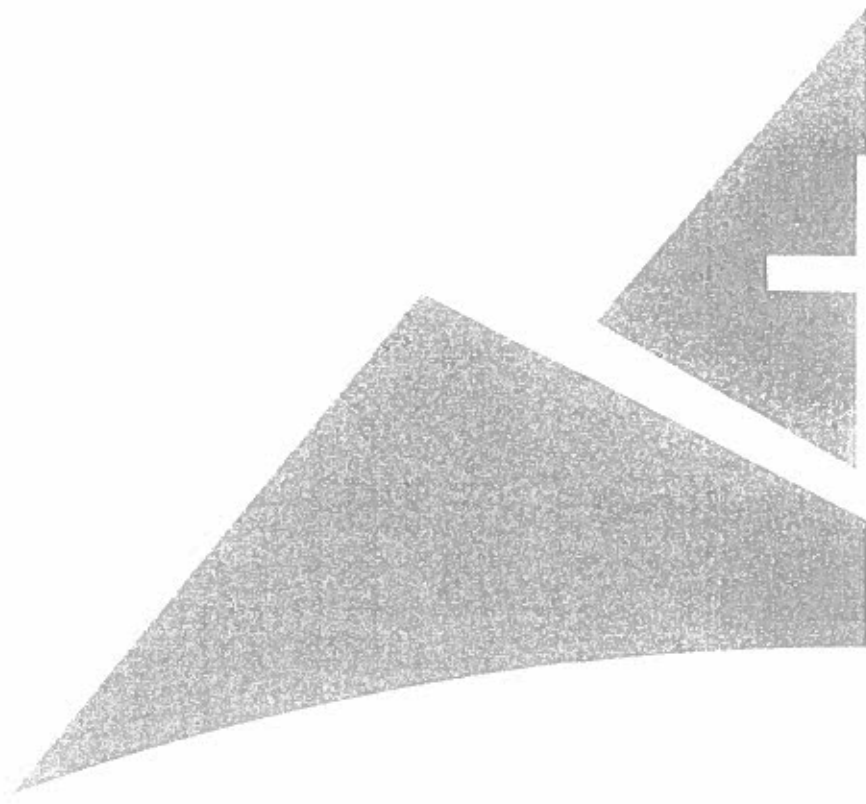
faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”-1 John 1:9

RESOURCES TO SHARE: Would you like these marriage helps in an easily sharable format? Follow us on Facebook and Instagram (@ChristianFamilySolutions) or <https://christianfamilysolutions.org/toolkits/speak-in-love-communication-for-a-healthy-marriage/>

This blog was adapted from the presentation “Healthy Communication in Marriage” by Kent Robinson, Licensed Professional Counselor with Christian Family Solutions.



Other helpful blogs on Christian mental health resources can be found at <https://christianfamilysolutions.org/>



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Council Names and Numbers

Dan Retzlaff, Chairman	920-319-0018
Matt Weidner, Vice-Chairman	920-319-6017
Nick Uebelacker, Secretary	608-225-8861
Will Penterman, Treasurer	920-750-8763
Andrew Tratar, Education	920-296-1485
Bruce Zander, Elders	920-438-4014
Nils Johansson, Outreach	608-239-5123
Jim Greiling, Property	920-948-1746
Otto Matke, Stewardship	608-516-5279
Craig Lathrop, Family Ministry	608-770-2498

Our Mission

The mission of Zion
Evangelical Lutheran Church
and School is to preach and
teach God’s saving Word in
all its truth and purity.

Get in Touch

Church/School Office
(920) 623-5180
office@zioncrusaders.com
www.zioncolumbus.org

Tim Schwartz, Pastor
(509) 480-2967
tschwartz24@gmail.com

Ben Zuberbier, Pastor
(920) 517-7940
pastorbenzuberbier@gmail.com

Alex Vandenberg, Principal
(507) 353-0719
avandenberg@zioncrusaders.com

Jim Grasby, Lakeside Principal
(920) 648-2321

Thanks
be to God
for his
incredible
gift!

2 Corinthians 9:15



July 4th

8:00am - Team E2

Dale Schilling (C)

Dale Gajdosik

Randy Vick

Kenneth Schulz

Matt Yaroch

Nick Yaroch

Nate Yaroch

10:30am - Team L5

Phil Manteufel (C)

Peter Lewke

Dave Harle

Brian Baney

Eric Musser

July 11th & July 18th

8:00am - Team E3

Randy Koehn (C)

Dan Retzlaff

Noah Litherland

Jim Stadler

Josiah Schwartz

William Penterman

10:30am - Team L6

Otto Mattke (C)

Paul Kehl (A)

Dennis Winter

Carl Wolf

William Mattke

Nils Johansson

Shaun Opsahl

July 25th & August 1st

8:00am - Team E4

Mark Lindell (C)

Remington Lindell

Roger Weiland (C)

Bryce Weiland

Brett Weiland

Norman Weiland

Eric Turnquist (C)

10:30am - Team L7

Matt Huber (C)

Carter Huber

Jeremy Maas

Peter Klokow

Jack Klokow

Brady Grambsch

Michael Vertz

If you have any questions about the usher schedule, would like to be added as an usher or won't be able to serve any longer as an usher, please call Randy Koehn at (608) 296-4333.

Greeter Schedule



July 4th

8:00am — E1

Jeff & Melody Krakow

10:30am — L12

Nils & Lara Johansson

July 11th

8:00am — E2

Dave & Kathy Harle

10:30am — L13

Aaron & Rachel Larson

July 18th

8:00am — E4

Delmar & Carol Vick

10:30am — L1

Janell Ailar &

Kay Salzwedel

July 25th

8:00am — E5

Emily Henning &

Nancy Huebner

10:30am — L2

Laurie Kirchberg &

Pat Premo

If you are interested in being added as a greeter or need to be removed from the schedule, please contact Melody Krakow at (920) 210-6323.



**Church Attendance
May**

Date	Total
2	192
6/9	269
13/16	356
20/23	314
27/30	457

Genevieve Diels	1st	89 years
Verna Maier	5th	98 years
Viola Tiedt	9th	86 years
David Howe	14th	84 years
Charles James	27th	80 years
Bernard Setz	28th	83 years

Membership Changes

Transfer In:
None

Transfer Out:
Don & Sonja Lamb and Madison Weiland to Good Shepherd in Midland, MI

Ministrations

Baptisms:

8. Emery Rose Vertz
Born 4/27/2021; Baptized 5/1/2021
Parents: Mike & Megan Vertz
9. Abigail Joleen Beal
Born 1/5/2021; Baptized 5/16/2021
Parents: Mike & Heather Beal
10. Saylor Jane Oelke
Born 4/8/2021; Baptized 5/23/2021
Parents: Dexter & Dawn Oelke

Deaths:

None

Marriage:

1. Aimee Weissmann & Jeremy Berndt
Married 5/22/2021

Confirmation:

5/20/2021 - Isabella Alvarez, Audra Kopfer, Elana Litherland, Korben Maas, Grace Retzlaff, Brent Nehmer, Avery Schlachter, Micah Schwartz, Caleb Stadler, and Jack Voelker

Messenger Deadline

Please submit your Messenger articles by July 23rd.

Contact Sue Henning at (608) 225-4853 or

suehenning25@gmail.com if you have any questions.



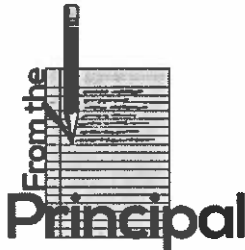
Projector Operator

Visuals in worship have become more and more important in recent years. Our use of a projector for artwork and hymn verses has become an ongoing and valuable volunteer opportunity. If you would like to learn how to operate our projector or already know how and would like to sign up to serve God's people in worship in this way, please email Pastor Schwartz for a link. Volunteers need to be at least twelve years old and can work in teams. Volunteers younger than that are welcome to serve with an accompanying parent or older friend.



LLHS FEDERATION CONNECTION

920-648-2321 • info@llhs.org • 231 Woodland Beach Rd. Lake Mills, WI 53551



CELEBRATE CHRISTIAN INDEPENDENCE

The Continental Congress unanimously adopted the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. On a single page, the 13 American colonies declared their freedom from the British Empire. Instead, they formed a new nation—the United States of America. The 56 signers risked everything so that this new country might enjoy freedom.

When celebrating our nation's independence, how many Americans truly reflect on their personal freedom? For that matter, how many Christians grasp the freedom that we, as believers, enjoy in this country? We can easily overlook our religious freedom amid the picnics, parades, and fireworks.

Christians have a unique declaration of independence. It is not a paper document. But, it is signed by the eternal Son of God with his own blood. He risked everything for our freedom. Through him and his declaration, we are free from sin, death, and Satan.

We are free from the guilt of sin that robs us of a clear conscience. We are free from death that would separate us forever from God. We are free from Satan who no longer controls those who are the Lord's. We can celebrate our Christian freedom daily as we serve God now and in eternity.

As Christians, we may often take for granted our freedom won by Jesus. Yet, he makes it ours through faith in his perfect life, innocent death, and glorious resurrection.

Enjoy your freedom on Independence Day 2021. This year, especially, it may carry more meaning for you. But, as you celebrate, recall and rejoice in the special freedom that Christ won for you and all believers.

Jim Grasby is principal of Lakeside Lutheran High. Reach him at 920.648.2321 or jgrasby@llhs.org



EVENTS TO NOTE

- July 1-4 Warrior Band Trip to St. Louis
- July 5-8 Elementary Distance Running Camp
- Elementary Co-Ed Golf Camp
- July 9..... Warrior Club Golf Outing & Dinner
- July 12-15 Elementary Football Camp
- July 19-22 Elementary Volleyball Camps
- July 26-29 Elementary STEM Camp
- July 28 & Aug 3 '21-22 Registration Nights | 5-8 PM
- August 1 Health forms due for sports participation
- August 2 1st Day for HS & Youth Football practices
- August 9 1st day of Girls Golf
- August 16..... 1st day for Cross Country, Boys Soccer, Volleyball
Board of Regents | 6:30 PM
- August 18..... Freshmen Orientation
- August 19..... 1st day of classes for all
Opening Service, Installation of new Faculty | 10 AM
- August 23..... General Board | 7 PM
- August 25..... Music Parents Meeting (all ACap & Band) | 6:30 PM

The General Board has elected and/or recognized the 2021-22

Lakeside Lutheran Board of Regents

- Dan Behl (St. Paul, Ixonia) OPC
- Rick Cody (St. John, Juneau) FPC
- Bill Hemling (St. Stephen, Beaver Dam) OPC
- Pastor Matt Krenke (St. John, Jefferson) EPC
- Glenn Lassanke (St. John, Watertown) President
- Aaron Meyer (Eastside, Madison) Treasurer
- Mike Minning (St. Luke, Watertown) FPC
- Gordy Schmidt (St. Luke, Watertown) Vice President
- Jason Schmidt (St. Paul, Lake Mills) OPC
- Alex Vandenberg (Zion, Columbus) EPC
- Pastor Matthew Vik (St. Paul, Fort) Secretary
- Pastor Dustin Yahnke (Trinity, Watertown) At Large
- Eric Ziel (St. Matthew, Oconomowoc) EPC

EPC = Educational Planning Committee | FPC = Financial Planning Committee | OPC = Operational Planning Committee



CONTACT INFO

920-648-2321 • office@llhs.org
231 Woodland Beach Rd. • Lake Mills, Wis. 53551



LAKESIDE GOOD NEWS *and* NOTES

Wrapping up the school year

- ▶ We closed the 2020-21 year on May 27 with 165 days of in-person instruction and 10 days of virtual school.
- ▶ On May 30, 104 students graduated in an outdoor service held on the competition field. In this class, 41 students reported over \$1,000,000 in scholarship offers from individuals, foundations, organizations, and the schools they applied to attend. Of the 104 grads, 91 have indicated plans to continue their education in the fall at 4-year colleges or tech schools, one plans to enter the military, four will pursue an apprenticeship, and eight plan to enter the workforce.
- ▶ We said farewell to Phyllis Huska (*St. Paul, Lake Mills*) who retired as the school librarian after 29 years, and to science teacher Hannah Uher (*Peace, Sun Prairie*), who is leaving to pursue a master's degree in school counseling.



- ▶ Pastor Helwig's senior religion class students completed end-of-year projects of their choosing—creating paintings, woods and metals projects, composing songs, writing personal reflections, even developing documentaries on mission and purpose. Steph Schafer (*St. Paul, Lake Mills*) and Devin Splinter (*St. Matthew, Oconomowoc*) organized a service project for homeless shelters that raised \$762, utilized a Thrivent Action Team, and collected items on the shelters' wish lists.
- ▶ Though Badger State canceled this summer, LLHS recognized our four representatives from the class of 2022. Boys are Samuel Knapp (*St. Matthew, Oconomowoc*) and Caleb Koester (*St. Paul, Fort Atkinson*), and nominated girls are Morgan Mlsna (*St. Paul, Lake Mills*) and Alyssa Reinke (*St. Luke, Watertown*).

Summer fun

- ▶ **Warrior Band** is on with more than 70 marchers in several local June parades and a trip to St. Louis for America's Birthday Parade on July 3 and northern Illinois parades on the 4th.
- ▶ Almost 90 teen-witnesses are going out on 15 trips across the U.S. with our **Operation Go** mission trip program.
- ▶ With spring sports extending into summer vacation, we've had a June that's still full of awesome athletic accomplishments:
- ▶ Senior Kylee Gnabasik (*St. John, Jefferson*) was selected to play in the Wisconsin Fastpitch Softball Coaches Association All-Star game benefiting Special Olympics July 12-13 at the Woodside Sports Complex in Wisconsin Dells. Senior Micah Cody (*St. John, Juneau*) will play in the Wisconsin Football Coaches Association All-Star game benefiting Children's Wisconsin Hospital at UW-Oshkosh July 17.
- ▶ Boys golf reached sectionals as a team!
- ▶ The Warrior softball team ended the season with an overall record of 9-11.
- ▶ Lady Warrior soccer players finished 6-4-2. They also won their first post-season victory since 2014.
- ▶ The boys baseball team tied for 2nd in conference at 12-5. They ended their season as regional runner up.
- ▶ In track and field, the boys team are conference champions and the girls won regionals. The unusual year meant track was still in season at print time.

Looking forward to fall

- ▶ LLHS Class of 2025 has 138 enrolled with five maybes still on the books. Total enrollment for '21-22 is currently at just under 450.
- ▶ Lakeside received 151 Wisconsin Parental Choice Program applications. Nearly 96% of them are from students who currently attend a Lutheran elementary school.
- ▶ Four new full-time teachers are slated to join us this summer. Look for introductions to John Dorn (science), Erin LaPointe (extended learning), Nick Trebesch (math) and Jacob Ziel (math/science) in upcoming editions!

As of June, Twice is Nice Resale Shop has gifted your Lakeside Lutheran over **\$6,000,000** in all-time assistance.

Since re-opening last summer from 10 AM - 4 PM Monday-Saturday, the store is handling more business than ever before, and our faithful Twice is Nice volunteers are overloaded both at the register and in the back room sorting donations.

How can we help? Anyone able to help—teens, adults, families, male, female—should stop in or call and ask for the day manager. Retirees or part-time workers, please pray about taking a weekly or bi-weekly shift so that we can bolster our daily, significant need for help. Phone: 920-674-6868
Email: info@tinresale.shop



Register to golf by July 2! Visit llhs.org/apps/pages/alumgolf for all the info.

27TH ANNUAL

LAKESIDE LUTHERAN
WARRIOR GOLF OUTING & DINNER

Friday July 9, 2021 • 11 AM shotgun start
Kestrel Ridge Golf Club • Columbus

for more info, contact the Warrior Club at warrriorclub@llhs.org
Register online! Go to fundraiser.support/warriorgolf2021

SCRAMBLE
FOURSOME

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
Profit & Loss YTD Comparison
May 2021

	May 21	Jul '20 - May 21
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
Extended Care Reimbursement	1,188.43	3,393.40
Extra Synod Missions Income	365.00	4,365.00
General Fund Offerings	59,426.51	636,889.94
Gifts to Payoff Bank Loan	168.00	168.00
LLHS Building Income	0.00	25.00
Money Borrowed from FMUB	25,000.00	38,000.00
Other Donations	2,723.00	-870.45
Other Receipts	52.23	1,458.53
Sub teaching reimburse	-195.78	-244.72
Transferred from Undesignated	0.00	7,000.00
WLM Income	0.00	1,000.00
Total Income	88,727.39	691,184.70
Gross Profit	88,727.39	691,184.70
Expense		
Called Workers Salaries & Taxes	28,134.49	311,024.68
Church Supplies	439.35	3,595.73
Convention/Cont' Education	0.00	5,515.73
Copier	0.00	1,781.26
Extended Care Expense	765.03	3,280.33
Family Ministry Board	208.81	372.97
Funds in Transit	0.00	-25.00
Guest Pastor	148.00	1,011.00
Health Insurance	8,418.39	84,115.29
HRA Savings	0.00	25,500.00
Janitors	922.36	12,720.23
LLHS Building Expense	0.00	25.00
LLHS Expense	2,850.00	30,750.00
Maintenance		
Inspection fees	0.00	1,125.04
Janitorial Supplies, Church	71.18	1,092.43
Janitorial Supplies, School	277.16	1,900.42
Pest Control	198.00	2,278.00
Property Improvements	352.29	6,371.14
Property Repair	135.00	25,258.22
Trash Removal	0.00	2,277.62
Maintenance - Other	0.00	3,385.89
Total Maintenance	1,033.63	43,688.76
Meditations	0.00	1,487.00
Mileage	500.00	5,196.24
Miscellaneous	15.00	140.35
Organists	570.99	5,536.99
Outreach Board	0.00	5,237.38
Payroll Expenses	255.75	3,518.50
Pension Insurance	0.00	21,444.00
Postage and Delivery	43.56	1,269.26
Secretaries	2,128.77	22,895.65
Stewardship Board	253.72	3,478.71
Substitute Teaching	-265.00	-239.94
Sunday School/VBS	136.87	839.22
Synod Mission Expense	5,880.00	65,680.00
Telephone & Internet Expense	279.95	3,111.48
Utilities		
Water and Light	3,128.13	37,770.30
We Energies	1,498.97	12,401.87
Utilities - Other	0.00	-10,150.00
Total Utilities	4,627.10	40,022.17
WLCFS Expense	0.00	1,075.00
Worker Comp/Liability Insurance	0.00	15,644.00
Worship	2,231.87	6,444.86
Total Expense	59,578.44	726,136.65
Net Ordinary Income	29,148.95	-34,951.95
Net Income	29,148.95	-34,951.95

TOGETHER



June 1, 2021

Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference meets


WELS is part of an organization called the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC). Founded in 1993 with 13 members, its members today include more than 30 confessional Lutheran church bodies from around the world. Some of the members are church bodies and synods that originated as WELS or Evangelical Lutheran Synod missions; others are church bodies that were established independently. All members of the CELC are in fellowship with WELS and with one another and are united in doctrine.

The CELC meets every three years in different locations, with representatives from the member church bodies attending. Last year, the meeting was scheduled to be held in Seoul, South Korea, but it had to be canceled because of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic. As a substitute for that meeting, this year a virtual conference is being held. The meeting is being held throughout six days over a three-week period. The first sessions were held last week.

The CELC plays an important role. It provides an opportunity for our sister church bodies to become familiar with each other, to provide mutual encouragement, and to grow in our understanding and appreciation for the truth of the Scriptures. Since many of these church bodies are rather small, and since some of them are very young in terms of being independent church bodies, these meetings provide an important forum for discussion and spiritual growth. We may think that WELS, as the largest church body in the CELC, would provide encouragement to smaller churches—and it does—but the CELC is also an encouragement and blessing for WELS as we witness these churches' strong faith and commitment to the Word in challenging situations we do not face.

Please keep the churches and your fellow believers of the CELC in your prayers as they faithfully carry out their mission.

The CELC plans to hold an in-person meeting in Seoul, South Korea, in 2023. Learn more about the church bodies that make up the CELC at celc.info.

Serving together with you in Christ,
WELS President Mark Schroeder 

Reflections on Our Unique Callings: Men, Women, and the Body of Christ

As members of the body of Christ, men and women are privileged to share blessings and responsibilities in partnering together to serve their Savior. But men and women also have unique callings—callings that can be misunderstood, that sometimes feel out of step with our world today. Reflections on Our Unique Callings is a series of twice-weekly devotions from WELS Women's Ministry that explores biblical principles and applications, poses thoughts and questions for further reflection, and encourages conversations on how these unique callings find their fulfillment in the home, the church, and the world. Subscribe at wels.net/unique-callings.

Taste of Missions – Register today!

Join your brothers and sisters in Christ from around the world for this online missions experience. Get to know our home and world missionaries like you never have before, and experience mission work firsthand through short video updates, live Q&A sessions, activities and recipes for the entire family, daily devotions, and a live worship service where (God-willing) we commission new missionaries on July 17. Visit tasteofmissions.com today to learn more and register for this free event!



To sign up for the e-mail version, visit wels.net/together.

TOGETHER



June 15, 2021

Synod Convention update

You're probably aware that the synod convention is scheduled to meet at Luther Preparatory School in Watertown, Wis., on July 26-28. What you may not know is that the convention business has already begun.

Last January, because of the many unknowns caused by COVID-19, the Conference of Presidents changed the location and the format of the convention. The location was changed to Watertown from Michigan Lutheran Seminary in Saginaw, Mich. (since Michigan restrictions were tighter at the time and anticipated to be tighter in July). Instead of the normal 400 delegates attending in person, the Conference of Presidents decided that about 100 delegates would attend in person, and the remaining delegates would attend virtually. A plan is in place to enable remote delegates to vote on reports and resolutions that come before the convention.

This means that floor committees, which address all of the various areas of the synod's work, would need to do their work virtually in advance of the convention. Many of those committees have already begun their work, and all committee work will be done by July 3. The committee resolutions will then be presented to the convention in July for discussion and action.

In addition to committee work, elections for various synodical positions will also be done electronically in advance of the convention. All delegates will participate in these elections, scheduled to begin on Monday, June 21, and conclude on Tuesday, July 13.

Even though the format is different, the Conference of Presidents has worked hard to make both the election process and the convention business process as normal as possible.

You are welcome to review convention information, including the *Book of Reports and Memorials*, the slate of candidates for elections, and delegate information, at wels.net/2021synodconvention.

Serving together with you in Christ,

WELS President Mark Schroeder 

Encouraging and equipping congregations and members

WELS Congregational Services' mission is to encourage and equip WELS congregations for faithful and fruitful ministry. It does this by identifying trends and needs in local ministry and offering free resources to assist congregational ministry. WELS' global mission of spreading the saving gospel message to all nations begins with healthy congregations.

In addition to the long-term trends the broader Christian church has seen in North America, congregations are also facing the collateral from the past year of pandemic upheaval. Doors are opening again, neighbors are gathering again, and WELS Congregational Services has released a suite of resources to help congregations seize the opportunity for outreach and growth. "These are the kinds of resources that in the coming year, or years, are going to be able to feed a congregational hunger, if congregational ministries have stalled, to get ministry up to speed again," says Rev. Donn Dobberstein, director of the WELS Commission on Discipleship.

God's People Gather

Already before COVID-19, some churches were utilizing video and streaming technology for worship and Bible study. The pandemic forced many more congregations to make this pivot. In much of the country, in-person worship was prohibited for months. As lockdowns lift, congregational leaders are wrestling with two key questions:

1. How can we encourage our members to return to in-person worship?

2. How should we think about virtual worship post-pandemic?

The first is a timely, virus-related question. That second question is timeless, something churches may be asking until Jesus returns.

Dobberstein says, "How do we keep that balance between realizing that while electronic/virtual/digital ministries are definitely a blessing from God, they are not meant to replace God's good intent for us to be gathered."

He continues, "God's People Gather was created to help congregations as they're coming out of COVID. If congregations are going to make a splash, to celebrate the fact that we have the ability and we can re-gather like we once did, it's flexible so that congregations can pick the right time to celebrate depending on where they're at."

God's People Gather provides resources that help churches put together a congregation-specific plan that reaches out to the various types of members who have not yet returned. Access videos, elder encouragement, Bible study, worship plan, and event ideas at welscongregationalservices.net/gods-people-gather.

A God-Lived Life

A God-Lived Life is a whole-life challenge to God's people to live the life to which he has called them. The hope is that being challenged in specific ways will urge members to put into practice a closer walk with God and a life of love toward others.

There's a double meaning in "God-lived." God lived for his people. His life is now theirs. And that produces

in Christians a life lived for God. When the Word touches people, it changes them forever. It changes how they view everything God gives them. Jesus talked a lot about money, but it was never far apart from a greater conversation about life and things that have a pull on hearts and minds.

The goal of A God-Lived Life is to encourage greater growth in four key areas:

- A life of being a disciple.
- A life of service for others.
- A life of hospitality for all.
- A life lived shrewdly.

"It's not just talking about money. As we come back post-COVID, it addresses how we demonstrate what God looks like in our lives, how he lives in our lives, and how that shows God to others. I think that's going to be huge in the coming years," says Dobberstein.

The program is designed to last four months with a variety of resources to bolster each monthly emphasis. View and download the resources at welscongregationalservices.net/a-god-lived-life.

For WELS Commission on Evangelism, the focus for its latest programs is on personal evangelism. Rev. Eric Roecker, director of the WELS Commission on Evangelism, explains why: "The number of never-churched people in our country has gone up dramatically in the last 20 years. Because they've never been churched, they have zero interest in church; it's not even on their radar. Because the way the church is portrayed in media a lot of times, it's a negative. Fewer and fewer people in our culture are churched. Some have never been churched, which means

that traditional methods of outreach like corporate outreach events and inviting people with postcards is becoming less effective. At the same time, studies are showing that people in our country don't trust the church as much as they used to, but they do trust their Christian friends. So, while they probably won't come to church because of a postcard or an advertisement, they might check it out if a friend brought them, not necessarily because they're interested in the church, but because they trust their friend."

Everyone Outreach

Everyone Outreach is designed to help congregations build a culture of outreach so that every ministry and every member is thinking about and participating in outreach. The Everyone Outreach workshops are designed to reveal the unconscious and invisible thought habits people hold and provide participants with unique insights to help begin the journey of transformation.

"Everyone Outreach is a culture-shaping program. If a congregation is not outreach minded, if it's just not part of who they are, it would be great for them to use this program to shape the way they think so they think more about outreach," says Roecker. "And then, after that, they can use some of the personal witness training Bible studies, like Let's Go, so now that members are fired up to [reach out], they can become equipped to do it."

All members of a congregation are encouraged to attend. Learn more or sign up your congregation to host a workshop at everyoneoutreach.com.

Let's Go

While Everyone Outreach is designed to develop an outreach culture congregation-wide, Let's Go is designed to encourage and equip Christians to become more comfortable and confident personal witnesses. The course is divided into seven lessons, each consisting of a video and an accompanying study guide and leader's guide. The lessons are designed to be used by either large or small group Bible study gatherings as well as by individual Christians. Let's Go dials in the conversation from "what can the congregation do for outreach," to "how can I talk to my friends and neighbors about Jesus." Get the resources at welscongregationalservices.net/lets-go.

The WELS Congregational Services website, welscongregationalservices.net, has a host of additional resources, including National Hymnal Week (Sept. 19-26, 2021) information; Marriage Moments videos; Marriage Maintenance Bible study; One By One personal witnessing Bible study; compassion ministry resources about ministry to military members, learning to be a recovery-friendly church, ministry to the deaf and hard of hearing, and training to identify and respond to child abuse; resources for different aspects of worship and worship planning; and much more.

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