

DATE: AUGUST 2023
Volume 222 • Issue 222

THE DEACON'S SPIRIT

The newsletter of St. Stephen Lutheran Church



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Office Hours:
Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays
from 8:00am—3:00pm

Deadlines:
Bulletin: Wednesday by 8:00 a.m.
Newsletter: 3rd Thursday of the month.

Facebook:
Join us to watch a livestream service
every Sunday at 9am at
<https://www.facebook.com/wausausslc>

Worship Telecast:
Our Worship Services are telecast on
Spectrum channel 980/TDS channel 17
on Sundays at 12pm (this is the previous
Sundays' service), Mondays at 3pm, and
Tuesdays at 10am and 10:30pm.



This is the
CONFIDENCE WE HAVE IN
APPROACHING God: that
if WE ASK ANYTHING
according to His will,
He hears us.

1 John 5:14

Pastor Karoline Schwantes/Phone: 715-370-5514/Email: prkaroline@sslwausau.com



You may have noticed that as a congregation we've been asking a lot of questions lately. There are 3 questions hanging on the wall in my office. 1: exciting thing God has done in the last year, 2: of what is our congregation afraid, and 3: what is our dream? I've been dwelling in our responses. I really appreciate that someone wrote "change" under both 2 & 3!

Recently we joined with our community to ask another question: "what would happen if 8 local congregations for together for a combined worship service?" And it was amazing! We had well over 500 people attend our combined service and even made it on the news!

And now a vitality survey. I hope you'll participate in the vitality survey. This will be very important information as we prayerfully decide where to focus our ministries for the future.

All of the questions center around the same basic question, "what is the Holy Spirit up to amongst the people of St. Stephen? This is an exciting question, maybe even scary, but one thing is certain. God is here, working with us, working through us, stirring us as God's people.

Pastor Karoline

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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St. Stephen Calendar of Events						August 2023	
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
		1 10:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 4:30 Executive Comm. Mtg. 10:30 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum	2	3 6:00 AI-Anon	4	5	
6 9:00 Worship 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 14/TDS 7:00 AA	7 10:00 Staff Mtg. 3:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum	8 10:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 10:30 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum	9	10 6:00 AI-Anon	11	12	
13 9:00 Worship 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 14/TDS 7:00 AA	14 3:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum MEMORIAL DEADLINE FOR AUGUST	15 10:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 10:30 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum	16	17 6:00 AI-Anon 6:00 Special Olympics NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	18	19	
20 SSLC Hosting Community Dinner At First Presbyterian 9:00 Worship 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 14/TDS 7:00 AA	21 3:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 6:30 Property Comm. Mtg.	22 10:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 10:30 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum	23	24 11:00 Schmidt Family Meet & Greet in the Conference Room 6:00 AI-Anon	25	26 9:00 Stephen's Angels	
27 9:00 Worship 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 14/TDS 7:00 AA	28 3:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum	29 10:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 5:30 Council Mtg. 10:30 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum	30	31 6:00 AI-Anon			

ANNIVERSARIES & BIRTHDAYS



Birthday Blessings

The following people are celebrating August/September Birthdays.

CONGRATULATIONS!!!

August 2nd

Michael Holster

August 6th

Kolton Kershaw

Bonnie Von Rueden

August 7th

Mathew Burish

John Jorgensen

August 8th

Rhonda Will

August 9th

Bill Dunker

Gene Simmerman

Gail Wolfe

August 10th

Glenda Modrzejewski

August 14th

Greg Koch

Patti Mortenson

August 15th

Delia Kole

Randy Nielson

August 16th

Joanne Lewitzke

August 17th

Harmony Gosch

August 18th

Evelyn Lenoble

Karen Prigge

Carol Seymour

August 19th

Wendy Zimmer

August 20th

Joseph Mohr

August 22nd

Kari Van Natta

August 24th

Riley Kromrei

August 25th

Hannah den Otter

August 28th

Carla Eberhardy

Betty Lou Peterson

August 30th

Larry Frick

September 1st

Lucas Kasten

September 3rd

William Grau

Marjorie Krahn

September 5th

Lori Napstad

September 8th

Kessel Deffner

September 10th

Kathy Robinson

September 12th

Jennifer Shidell

September 13th

John Erickson

September 14th

Beth Eiden

September 15th

Shauna Robinson

Peggy Roble

September 16th

Harold Dabler

Ethyn Kroeplin

Bruce Weinke

September 17th

Lisa Marcott

September 18th

Abigail Hannes

September 19th

Eleanor Schneider

John Schneider

September 21st

Hudson Haiker

September 22nd

Daryl Christian

Sarah Lonsdorf

Elroy Schalow

September 23rd

Crystal Nielson

Mary Beth Tolley

September 24th

Deb Gleason

September 25th

LuAnn Theis

September 28th

Erin Hall

Ashley Lenoble

September 29th

Holly Jorgensen

September 30th

Tonette Tilkens



Anniversaries

The following people are celebrating August/September Anniversaries.

CONGRATULATIONS!!!

August 2nd

Verlyn & Kathleen Oelke

Stephan & Candi den Otter

August 6th

Randy & Crystal Nielson

August 8th

John & Norma Bandock

Alex & Jacque Schremp

August 11th

Mark & Tammy Kromrei

Seth & Jeanette Wiskow

August 14th

Scott & Vicki Romang

August 18th

Alan & Dawn Froehlich

August 20th

Michael & Debra Zahrt

August 29th

Jim & Carol Sekaney

August 31st

Chuck & Susie Johnson

September 2nd

Mark & Laurie Heuser

Allen & Carol Seymour

September 3rd

Robert & Bonnie Pils

September 8th

Chad & Ashley Kumm

September 10th

Mathew & Jennifer Burish

September 11th

William & Penny Windorski

September 14th

Cliff & Karen Prigge

Randy & Kari Van Natta

September 16th

Jay & Patty Pippenger

September 19th

Roger & Pam Hackbart

Terry & Gloria Lyon

September 20th

Carl & Sandy Stuhr

September 24th

Chuck & Lynn Deffner

September 26th

Greg & Lisa Koch

September 27th

Jeff & Rhonda Will

September 28th

Gerald & Elaine Hoppe



*Oh, taste
and see
that the LORD
is good;
Blessed
is the man
who trusts
in Him!
Psalm 34:8*

Coats for Kids

Soon coats, jackets, hooded sweatshirts, mittens, hats, scarves, snow pants, sweatpants, socks, and underwear will be needed again for the change in weather entering our fall and winter seasons. The Good Stewards Committee is looking for these donations of these items starting September 4th to be donated to Family Resource Center. There will be a table in the lounge area where you can place clean, gently used, or new items (only new socks and underwear, please). All sizes are needed. We appreciate anything you can donate. Questions, please contact Shauna Robinson or Nancy Prigge. Thank you!

Community Dinner

It's that time again! We get to do another Community Dinner on Sunday, August 20th and we need your help! There will be a sign-up sheet on the board outside the office. We need volunteers to help prepare and serve the dinner and we are also asking for cookie donations. Unfortunately, we have had an increase in need so we will be preparing meals for 125 vs. 100 like in the past. If you have any questions, please talk to Shauna Robinson.

God's Work Our Hands

This year, as part of God's Work, Our Hands, we will be serving those less fortunate than ourselves. We will gather after worship on Sunday, September 10th to grill burgers and hot dogs, make salads, and prepare desserts. Then we will deliver and serve them in the lower parking lot of the Whitewater Music Hall. Look for sign-up sheets (coming soon) to volunteer. For those unable to stay and serve that day, we will be asking for donated baked goods!

Lutheran World Relief

It's time to watch for sales on Lutheran World Relief Kit items! A Personal Care Kit includes: a light-weight bath towel (Wal-Mart brand works), 2 bars of soap, and a nail clipper. A School Kit includes: 70-80 sheet spiral notebook (wide or college ruled), a pencil sharpener, #2 pencils UNSHARPENED, blue or black ballpoint pens (no gel), crayons (16 or 24 count), and an eraser. If you have questions, ask a quilter. Donated items can be left in the Quilting Room (Nursery). Thanks for your help!

Newsletter

Due to the increase in postage costs and the number of newsletters required to receive the bulk mailing rate, the Council has voted to go to an all electronic version of the newsletter (which will be full color) starting with the September issue. This will result in a significant savings to the church. The deadline for the newsletter will remain the same; the 3rd Thursday of the month. If you currently DO NOT have an email address on file with us at the church, please call or email (nhenke@sslcwausau.com) Nancy in the church office **by August 14th** and give it to her so that you can be added to the distribution list. If you do not have an email address, a limited number of copies of the newsletter will still be printed and will be available to pick up on the counter in the reception area. If you are homebound and do not have an email address, the newsletter will be mailed out to you.

Treasure Sale

First English Lutheran Church, 402 North 3rd Avenue, Wausau, is having a Treasure Sale on Thursday and Friday, August 24th and 25th from 9am until 6pm and again on Saturday, August 26th from 9am until 3pm. Cash only. Handicapped accessible.

Benevolence

Through your support of St. Stephen in the month of June 2023, we were able to contribute to the following ministry:

ELCA National & Synod Support \$668

This is the fourth month of our unified budget in which we now give four and one half percent (4.5%) of our current expense receipts and loose plate offerings for benevolence. The above amount is based on the income of \$14,854 for June.

St. Stephen Family Checkbook

For the month of June 2023 and the year to date, the St. Stephen family checkbook looked like this:

June 1—30, 2023

What we received.....	\$22,963.
What we spent.....	(\$19,448.)
Our balance.....	\$ 3,515.

January 1— June 30, 2023

What we received.....	\$118,298.
What we spent.....	(\$132,988.)
Our balance.....	(\$ 14,690.)

Order of Importance of Memorials and Other Special Offerings

Primary Funds: Building Improvement/Maintenance Fund, Current Expense Receipts, and Sustainability Trust Fund.

Secondary Funds: Bell Choir Fund, Brick Maintenance (tuck pointing), Choral Fund, ELCA Scholarship Fund, Good Neighbor Fund, Library Fund, Organ Fund, Quilters Memorial Fund, Parish House Alarm, Technology Fund, and WELCA Clean Water Fund.

Other Funds: Confirmation/National Youth Gathering, Faith Enrichment Fund, Major Church Improvement, Missionary Sponsorship, Rooted in Faith (Crossways Capital Improvement) Fund, Seidel/Meyer Scholarship, Seminary Scholarship, and World Hunger.

JULY 2023 MEMORIALS**Building Improvement and Maintenance Fund**

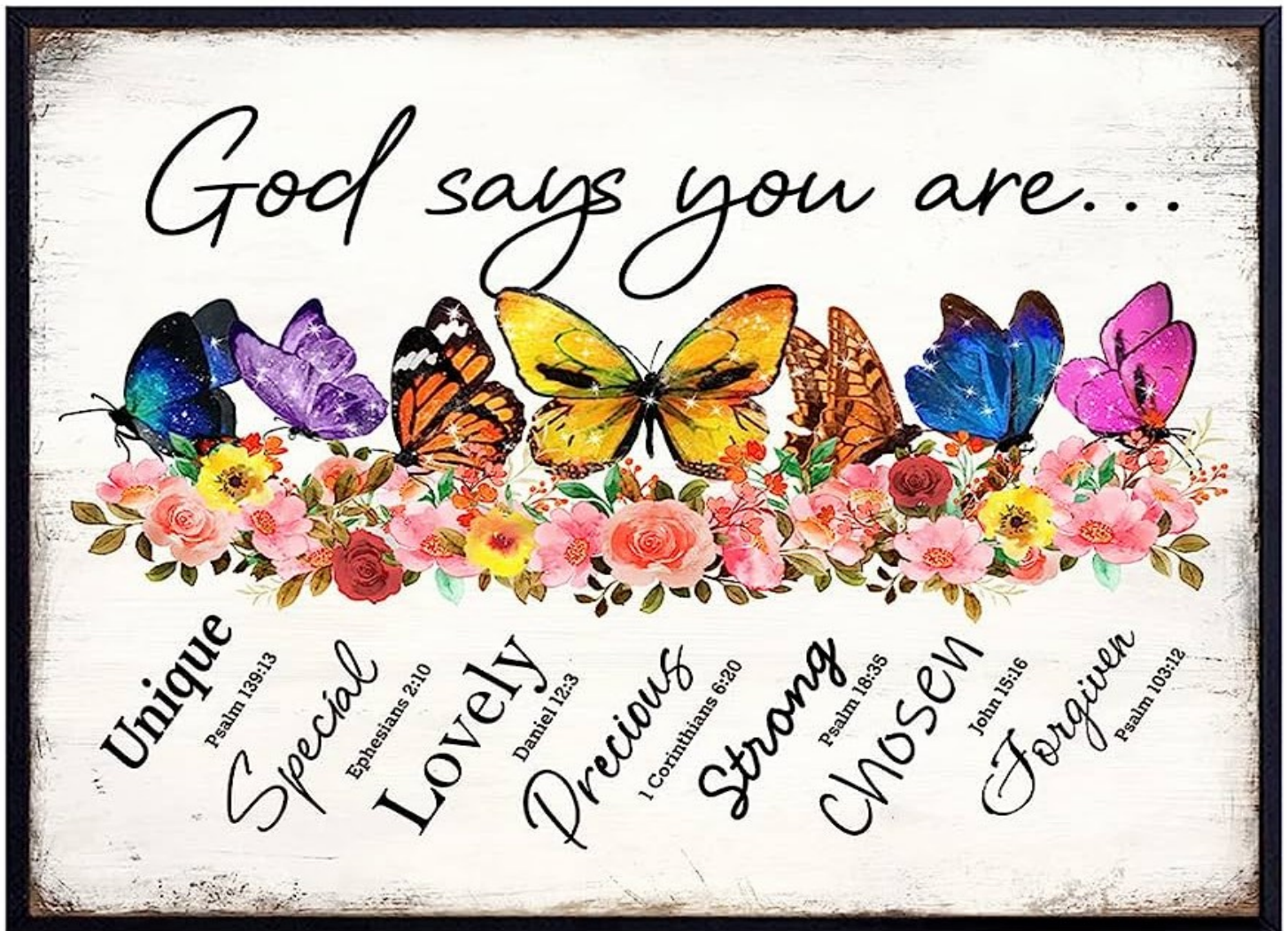
In memory of loved ones –
Charlie & Joyce Fromfeld

Library Fund

In loving memory of Angie Ninnemann –
Tim Gritzmacher

Upstairs Kitchen

In loving memory of Marcia Volkman –
Sarah Lonsdorf



COUNCIL MINUTES ~ JULY 12, 2023

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Present: Pastor Karoline, Lloyd Zimmer, Verlyn Oelke, Jim Von Rueden, Sue Holster, Shauna Robinson, Pam Hackbart, Kathy Robinson, Vicki Romang, Sarah Lonsdorf, and Lynn Deffner.

Absent: Jeff Blomquist and Jacque Schremp.

A motion was made and passed to accept the June 6, 2023, Council minutes.

A motion was made and carried to accept all written reports that were submitted, after brief discussion.

Pastor's Report: No written report was provided.

President's Report: A written report was provided.

Treasurer's Report: A written report was provided. In addition to the written report, we discussed the Balance Sheet and reviewed financial records. There is a balance of \$7,475 in the General Fund. No change in the order of the Memorial Fund at this time.

Invoices: We have seen an increase in the water bill, consistent with the recent hike in water costs by the city of Wausau.

A motion was made and carried to accept these reports.

Committee Reports:

Good Stewards: No written report was provided.

Personnel: A written report was provided.

Property: The Property Committee received an anonymous gift of money to be used towards the new kitchen cabinets in the serving kitchen. A quote was obtained for different cabinet finishes and options. A motion was made and passed to allow the sub-committee to approve the cabinets to be purchased.

Worship: A written report was provided.

Trust Fund: No written report was provided.

A motion was made and carried to accept these reports.

Vitality Survey: A brief discussion was had about the importance of the upcoming Vitality Survey that our congregation will be participating in. We want to ensure that we have the needed resources to keep our congregation healthy and to define who we are and want to be as a congregation.

Shortage of Supply Pastors: Focus then turned to the shortage of supply pastors in the Wausau area, and how we can assist other congregations to carry out their missions.

It was noted that church congregation sizes have been shrinking in the last few years; this could be due to the average size of the family being smaller, people utilizing other means of services (online/television), or generational differences.

It was also noted that many congregations in the area are small and cannot afford a full-time pastor.

We discussed possible solutions to help area congregations and will be reaching out to our Lay Ministers to see if they are able and willing to lead worship in other churches.

Resulting from the discussion, we will also be drafting a letter to send to other congregations to let them know they are welcome to join us at St. Stephen if they do not have a pastor and would like to worship with communion.

We are looking at other ways that we can share in ministry with other congregations without over-extending Pastor Karoline.

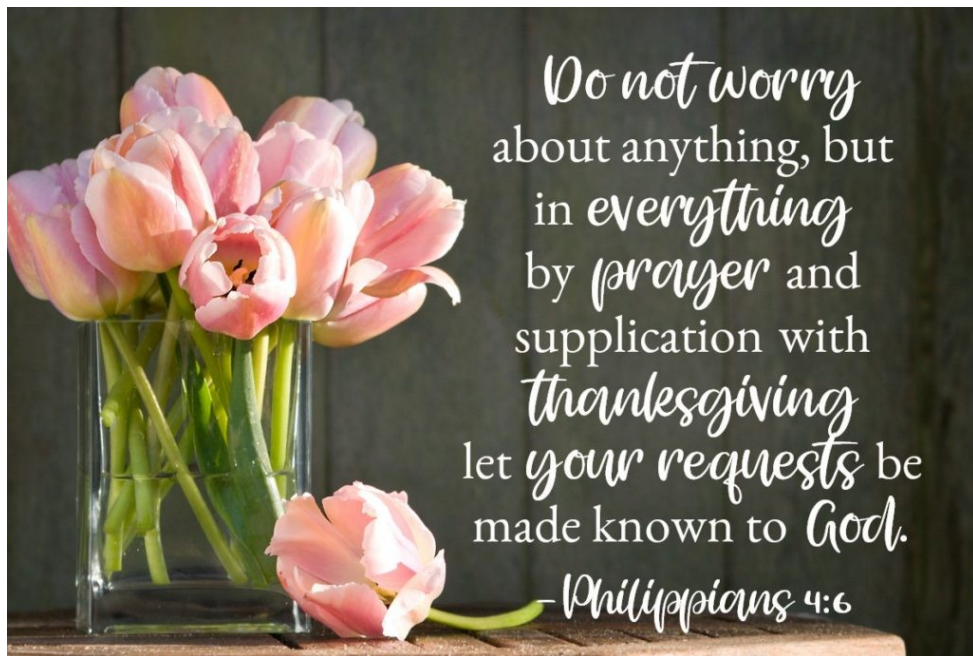
Any additional suggestions from our congregation are welcome. Please contact our Council President, Kathy Robinson, with ideas and suggestions.

The next Executive Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 1st at 4:30 pm and the next Council meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 22nd at 5:30 pm to discuss the results of our Vitality Survey with Pastor Dara from the Synod.

Respectfully submitted,
Vicki Romang, Council Secretary

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Do not worry
about anything, but
in everything
by prayer and
supplication with
thanksgiving
let your requests be
made known to God.
—Philippians 4:6

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