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THE DEACON'S SPIRIT

The newsletter of St. Stephen Lutheran Church



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

Deadlines:
Bulletin: Wednesday by 8:00 a.m.
Newsletter: 2nd 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.



*In
God's Grace
each dawn is a gift
and every day a miracle...*

*To every thing
there is a season,
and a time to every purpose
under the heaven.*

ECCLESIASTES 3:1

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

"I've been meaning to ask..."

This is the theme of our shared Round Robin worship series, designed to create community and to deepen our relationship with God and one another.



Over the last 2 years, I've truly enjoyed getting to know you and listening to your stories. It has been an honor to walk alongside families through joy and through grief. And I look forward to getting to know you better as we go forth in ministry together. So I begin my third year of ordained ministry with you with a question and an invitation...

First, a question: What makes you feel welcome? Truly welcome. As in "welcome home" kind of welcome. The come in, help yourself to a drink from the fridge, put your feet up kind of welcome. And how do we help you find that here? Because you are not just welcome here, but you belong. You are a vital part of our community. You are created in the Image of God and God claims you as God's own.

Next, the invitation: to a new conversation. My experience of St. Stephen is that we are warm, welcoming, and that our connections run deep. But sometimes deep, long term connections can make it harder for newcomers to feel at home. Let's look together at the ways in which we can invite others to experience our faith community and help them feel connected. I've often heard the phrase amongst young folk wishing to increase inclusivity, "Be a croissant, not a donut." A donut is a closed circle and a croissant leaves an opening. The idea is that by intentionally creating space and observing our body language, we can be more invitational for others to join our conversation and community.

We love because God first loved us.

I love hearing stories of meaningful moments and dreaming together for the future of our church. Let's ask each other some questions and deeply listen to one another's response.

Pastor Karoline

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

3

St. Stephen Calendar of Events						August 2024	
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
				1 6:00 AI-Anon	2	3	
4 9:00 Worship at Immanuel 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 14/TDS 7:00 AA	5 11:00 Staff Mtg. 3:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum	6 10:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 10:30 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum	7	8 6:00 AI-Anon	9	10	
11 9:00 Combined Worship at SSLC 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 14/TDS 7:00 AA	12 3:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum MEMORIAL DEADLINE FOR AUGUST	13 10:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 10:30 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum COUNCIL MTG. AT WAYPOST	14	15 6:00 AI-Anon 6:00 Special Olympics NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	16	17	
18 9:00 Worship 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 14/TDS 7:00 AA	19 3:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 6:30 Property Comm. Mtg.	20 10:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 10:30 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum	21	22 6:00 AI-Anon	23	24 9:00 Stephen's Angels	
25 9:00 Worship 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 14/TDS 7:00 AA	26 3:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum	27 10:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 10:30 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum	28	29 6:00 AI-Anon	30	31	



Anniversaries

The following couples are celebrating their August Wedding Anniversaries.

CONGRATULATIONS!!!

August 2nd

Verlyn & Kathleen Oelke
Stephan & Candi den Otter

August 3rd

Dennis & Sharon Lohrey

August 6th

Randy & Crystal Nielson

August 8th

John & Norma Bandoek

Alex & Jacque Schremp

August 11th

Mark & Tammy Kromrei

Seth & Jeanette Wiskow

August 14th

Scott & Vicki Romang

August 18th

Alan & Dawn Froehlich

August 20th

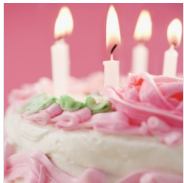
Michael & Debra Zahrt

August 29th

James & Carol Sekaney

August 31st

Chuck & Susie Johnson



Birthday Blessings

The following people are celebrating August 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

Gene Simmerman
Gail Wolfe

August 10th

Glenda Modrzejewski
Ashton Sekaney

August 14th

Patti Mortenson
Greg Koch

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 Zimmel

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

"BE
TRANSFORMED
BY THE
RENEWING
OF YOUR
MIND."

-ROMANS 12:2



Community Baby Shower

St. Stephen Lutheran Church is hosting a Community Baby Shower on August 11th. We are looking for donations of the following items: hygiene items (diaper cream, body wash, lotion, shampoo, etc.), diapers or Pull-Ups (larger sizes are greatly needed), sippy cups, bottles, pacifiers, bibs, food (baby formula Blue Similac is most requested, baby foods, teething snacks). All items need to be new/unused condition. All donations will be going to The Babies Place the week of August 12th. They have requested no clothing items. An interesting fact for The Babies Place is they have no budget for hygiene items so they rely solely on donations.

Lutheran World Relief

It's time to start thinking about Lutheran World Relief Kits! Our goal is to assemble 75 Personal Care Kits and 70 School Kits. You can help by donating the following items: bath towels (dark colors), bar soap (4oz. bars), 70-80 page spiral notebooks wide or college ruled (no loose-leaf paper), black or blue ballpoint pens (no gel ink), nail clippers, pencil sharpeners, unsharpened pencils, and crayons (24 count). We will be assembling the kits on Thursday, September 26th beginning at 8:30am. Anyone in the congregation is welcome to come and help us assemble the kits, pack them, and get them ready for shipping. Donated items can be placed in the Quilting Room/Nursery or under the coat rack across from the elevator on the first floor. If you have any questions, please talk to any of the quilters.

Personal Hygiene Drive

A Personal Hygiene Drive will be held July 1st through August 25th. We are asking for feminine hygiene items such as deodorant, pads, tampons, etc. to donate to the local schools to provide kids with needed items who may not otherwise have access to these items. Donations will be going to DC Everest School District as well as the Wausau School District.

Summer Round Robin

What does this mean? Each church will host worship for a Sunday at 9am. The other 3 churches will **NOT** have worship in their individual buildings.

July 21st ~ GOOD SHEPHERD (off of 6th Street heading north)

July 28th ~ PILGRIM (Weston Avenue)

August 4th ~ IMMANUEL (across from the old East High School)

August 11th, we will host at ST. STEPHEN

You can offer your church envelope at any of the services. The hosting church will make sure it gets back to St. Stephen. There will be a free will offering at each service with that designation to be announced at the service.

Vacation

Pastor Karoline will be on vacation Thursday, August 22nd thru Sunday, August 26th. If you have a pastoral emergency, contact Pastor Will Ostrem, from Trinity Town of Stettin at 715-571-2750.

Benevolence

Through your support of St. Stephen in the month of June 2024, we were able to contribute to the following ministry:

ELCA National & Synod Support \$627

This is the sixth 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 \$13,944 for June.

St. Stephen Family Checkbook

For the month of June 2024 and the year to date, the St. Stephen family checkbook looked like this:

June 1—30, 2024

What we received.....	\$14,999.
What we spent.....	(\$17,053.)
Our balance.....	(\$ 2,054.)

January 1—June 30, 2024

What we received.....	\$123,051.
What we spent.....	(\$128,041.)
Our balance.....	(\$ 4,989.)

Order of Importance of Memorials and Other Special Offerings

Primary Funds: Building Improvement/Maintenance Fund, Current Expense Receipts, Sustainability Trust Fund, and Technology 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, 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 2024 MEMORIALS**Capital Campaign**

In loving memory of departed family and friends –
Kelly Brown

In loving memory of Elaine E. Hoppe –
Kelly Brown

In memory of loved ones –
Charles & Joyce Fromfeld

In honor of my friend Kathy's mom who recently died –
Sarah Lonsdorf

In loving memory of Ali Will –
Jeff & Rhonda Will

Library Fund

In loving memory of Lillian Gritzmacher –
Tim Gritzmacher

Quilting Fund

In loving memory of Phyliss Ament –
Kelly Brown

Seidel Meyer Pastoral Ministry Fund

In loving memory of Sue Kratwell and Sadie Borth –
Sandy & Ron Borth and Family

COUNCIL MINUTES ~ JULY 9, 2024

7

Present: Pastor Karoline, Sue Holster, Dick Holster, Verlyn Oelke, Vicki Romang, Jeff Blomquist, Sarah Lonsdorf, Darrin Koehler, Jacque Schremp, Nancy Prigge, and Shauna Robinson.

Absent: Kathy Robinson and Lynn Deffner.

The meeting opened at 5:30 p.m. with Sue Holster reading to the Council a story from a Portals of Prayer book her father-in-law received from St. Stephen Sunday School in 1957.

Council Minutes from May 14, 2024: The minutes were updated by removing a sentence concerning the summer worship services indicating there is a service one Sunday of each month. The services are to be held each Sunday starting July 21st and ending on August 11th. The minutes were approved with this correction.

Pastor's Report: A verbal report was given by Pastor Karoline. She discussed revisions in the process of being made to the current wedding policy. Flowers used during the ceremony can be real or artificial, versus only real as in the past. Shauna Robinson is currently training to be a wedding coordinator for weddings at St. Stephen.

President's Report: A verbal report was given by Sue Holster. Sue discussed points she took away from the Presidents' meetings. The items were how church congregations in the area are working together, and how we can improve situations by improving communication skills between church congregations. We also discussed the need to have volunteers to work the First English food stand at the Valley Fair in Wausau next month.

Treasurer's Report: The Council did not meet in June, therefore Verlyn Oelke discussed the reports for the months of May and June. The Total Capital as of June 30, 2024 is \$4,571.

A motion was made and passed to accept these reports.

Committee Reports:

Good Stewards: The committee is busy with many different projects: the Little Free Pantry, a Community Baby Shower, replenishing the shelves at The Neighbors' Place, and working to support the Marty Bus to name a few. The Marty Bus provides hygiene items, clothing, and food to people in need in the central Wisconsin area. Due to the overwhelming need in our area, it is difficult for the committee to keep our Little Free Pantry filled every day. If you would like to contribute, contact a committee member or feel free to add items to the pantry.

Property: The committee continues to work hard. Krause Konstruktion will begin the work on the church roof on Monday, July 15th. A new lawn mower and battery was purchased for greater efficiency, maintaining the lawn in a shorter amount of time. The carpets in the church have been cleaned. The committee is also investigating issues with the elevator stopping on the wrong floor. The energy monitor in the basement indicated areas that may be utilizing too much energy. One of the things utilizing more energy than is warranted is the soda machine. The committee is looking into solutions to this and other high energy absorption.

Worship: Volunteers are needed for our coffee hour. If you are interested, there is a sign-up sheet in the chapel.

The dates of the summer services and locations are listed below. Each service will have a different theme.

July 21st: Good Shepherd will host. The theme will be, Where are you from?

July 28th: Pilgrim Lutheran will host. The theme will be, Where does it hurt?

August 4th: Immanuel Lutheran will host. The theme will be, What do you need?

August 11th: St. Stephen will host. The theme will be, Where do we go from here?

Trust Fund: The committee approved distributions to Waypost, Special Olympics of Wisconsin, Community Campus, and Good Stewards for stocking the Little Pantry this summer.

A motion was made and passed to accept these reports.

Old Business:

- Memorial Fund Order – No changes this month. Building Improvement and Maintenance Fund is number one, Current Expense Fund in number two, Sustainability Trust Fund is number three, and Technology Fund in number four. Upgrades have been made to the projection/video area.

New Business:

- The total amount of invoices paid in June was \$15,698.41 and \$28,439 for May.
- Capital Campaign – The progress to obtain a loan to repair the roof to the church is moving forward. The group is seeking an adjustable rate (7.125%) for 10 years that we hope to repay in 5 years. Pledges are still being collected. A total of \$27,206 in one-time pledges and \$38,290 in annual pledges have been received from 52% of St. Stephen members.
- Taskforce Update – The SSLC taskforce met with the taskforce from Good Shepherd and looks forward to meeting with the taskforce at Pilgrim Lutheran Church in the near future.

The next Council meeting will be on Tuesday, August 13th at Waypost.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Vicki Romang, Council Secretary