

The Vasa Voice

VOLUME 59 No. 12



DECEMBER 2023

What's Happening This Month at Vasa

December 13 — Vasa Family Fun Night 5:30 PM

See page 5 for details!

December 17—Children's Christmas Program

The 2023 Children's Christmas program will be held at the Lutheran Center at 10:30am. Dress Rehearsal will be that same morning at 9:00am. Practices are on Sunday Dec 3 and Dec 10 during Sunday School.

Following the program there will be a meal. Vasa will supply the Main Dish. Families are encouraged to bring a pot luck side or salad. Sweets are always welcome too!

December 24—Christmas Eve Worship

Christmas Eve Worship services will be held at 2:00pm and 5:00pm on December 24, with coffee and Christmas treats between services.



Here's what's on the inside...

P. 2 Worship volunteers, December Birthdays

P. 3 Thoughts from Pastor Maureen

P. 4 Thank Yous, November Family Night photos

P. 5 December Vasa Family Night

P. 6-7 Church Council Highlights, Treasurer's Report

P. 8 Mark's Meditation

P. 9 Advent Meditation, Snowman's Life Lessons

P. 10 Goodhue County Christmas Tree Project; Confirmation and All Saints Photos

P. 11 December Calendar



Worship Volunteers for DECEMBER

USHER

December 3	Randy Klein
December 10	Roger Guttromson
December 17	Marv Fredrickson
December 24	Ben Norman (2:00pm)
December 24	volunteer needed (5:00pm)
December 31	Bruce Tilderquist

READERS

December 3	Jim Hedeem
December 10	Mark Hagen
December 17	CHRISTMAS PROGRAM
December 24	Mo Hauck (2:00pm)
December 24	volunteer needed (5:00pm)
December 31	Kathy Tilderquist

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS

December 3	Katie Featherstone
December 17	Confirmation Students
December 24	B-J Norman (2:00pm)
December 24	Barry Skog (5:00pm)

HOSPITALITY

December 3	Lora Gruber
December 10	Kent Volz
December 17	CHRISTMAS PROGRAM
December 24	Kent Volz
December 31	Kent Volz



8	Andrea Gillis
9	Dahmon Romness
	Chris Weigman
	Iris Volz
12	Oliver Endres
	Piper Endres
	Samantha Wetzstein
	Ashton Anderson
	Weston Anderson
13	Boedy Sense
14	Deb Donath
	Dustin Lindstrom
15	Melanie Carlson
16	Randy Klein
	Shirley Hedeem
19	Sandy Wollschlager
20	Sharon Olson
21	Andrea Mandelkow
22	Mark Hagen
	Hailie Lindblom
23	Duane Lindstrom
27	Katie Featherstone
28	Joe Wollschlager
	Audrey Hyllengren
	Samuel Gesme
31	James Josephson
	Bruce Olson
	Jerry Rietmann
	Stuart Samuelson

Thoughts from Pastor Maureen

You may have noticed at the Confirmation Service on November 12 that I gathered with the confirmands around the baptismal font at the close of the service. Each student placed a watery cross on the forehead of their neighbor in remembrance of their baptism. Over the last three years we have performed this little rite at the end of every Confirmation class.

You may ask where did this rite come from? When the ELW was introduced in 2006 we discovered that a new option had been inserted into the opening liturgy for worship: *a remembrance of baptism*. Liturgists (people who write and shape worship) felt that it would be very helpful for worship participants to be reminded of their baptisms in part because it is an event that often happens when the worshipper is so young that they have no memory of it.

That's the where. What about the why? Why should we remember our baptisms? There are many images for baptism. One is that it is through our baptism that we are adopted into God's family. Another image is that through our baptism our sins are washed away. A third is that through our baptism we are given the gift of the Holy Spirit. I believe that each of us needs to be reminded of these basics of belief. This is especially true with teenagers who are striving to figure out their identity in the world.

That watery cross reminds them of who they are and whose they are.

The apostle Paul wrote in Galatians 3:27-29 *As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise.*

As we approach the Christmas holiday and the birth of our Savior, I would encourage you to put a watery cross on your forehead at some point during your day to remind you of who you are and whose you are.

Grace and peace to you,

Pastor Maureen



VASA'S GENEROSITY IS GREATLY APPRECIATED...

Dear Vasa Members,

Thank you sincerely for sharing our sorrow, and
for the memorial gift of \$145.00.

The family of Jim Anderson

Dear Vasa Lutheran,

*Our church was so surprised and
delighted to receive your gift to
our new building campaign! Be-
cause of you, we are closer to
meeting the holy challenge God
has placed before us. Thanks You!
It's an honor and a pleasure to
be united in one Body of Christ
with you all. God bless you all
very much.*

Pr. Eric Hanson
St. Luke Lutheran
Goodhue

Dear Friends of Vasa
Lutheran,

Thank you for supporting
the life-changing minis-
try of Good Earth Vil-
lage summer camp. Your
gift was matched by an
anonymous donor.

Vannessa Tesch



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Vasa Family Night



Wednesday, December 13th

5:30–7:00pm

Vasa Lutheran Center

Hot Dogs & Hot Cocoa

Singing at Gazebo

Short Devotional

All Are Welcomed

Dress Warm!





VASA LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

October 16, 2023 @Lutheran Church

Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 6:05 pm by Bryan Diercks, President

Devotions: Andrew Featherstone

Members present and absent:

Present: Pastor Maureen Hagen; Bryan Diercks, President; Randy Klein, Vice President; Ben Norman; Mo Hauck; Duane Hanson; Roger Guttromson; Barbara Weigman; Kent Volz; Kevin Eckbald; and Andrew Featherstone, Secretary;
Eleven voting members present

Unable to attend: Missy McCann; and Chris Finne;

Also Present: Kathy Tilderquist

Adoption of the Agenda:

It was moved and seconded to approve the agenda for October 16, 2023 council meeting.

MOTION CARRIED

Approval of Minutes:

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the September 18, 2023 council meeting as written.

MOTION CARRIED

Reports Reviewed and Accepted:

Treasurer's Report (Attached)

Money for lawn mowing was paid out.

2023 budget is right on track.

We will need more money to cover the fuel fund to heat church.

Finance Report (Attached)

The church now has QR codes to facilitate payments, especially for weddings and facilities use.

The organ stop repair and tuning is scheduled for November 17.

Parish Life (Attached)

Bazaar will have 15-19 vendors and will take place November 4th.

John and Roger will set up music in gazebo for December 13, Caroling in the Village.

Food shelf will take place October 29- November 19.

Four quilts have been donated so far. Quilts will be used to help with improving sound quality.

Property Team Report (NA)

Cemetery Board (NA)

Executive Board Report (NA)

Pastor's Report) Attached)



**VASA CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
(CONTINUED)**

Vasa will receive new members on October 29th.

A question was asked about the frequency that communion has been offered in the last few weeks. We have a small congregation which gives Maureen the ability to pay attention to who is at worship and receiving communion. When we have a baptism, or an affirmation of faith, or a farewell and godspeed, knowing full well that there will be guests, it is appropriate to serve communion. We have no idea when these guests have last received communion, and is an act of hospitality to offer the Lord's Supper.

Museum Board (N/A)

Endowment Board Report (N/A)

Tabled Business:

New Business:

Expenses and Funds- Pastor Maureen went over explaining what certain designated funds were used for.

It was moved and seconded to adjourn at 7:15 PM.

MOTION CARRIED

Meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer

Report submitted by: Andrew Featherstone, Secretary

VASA EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

For the Month of October 2023

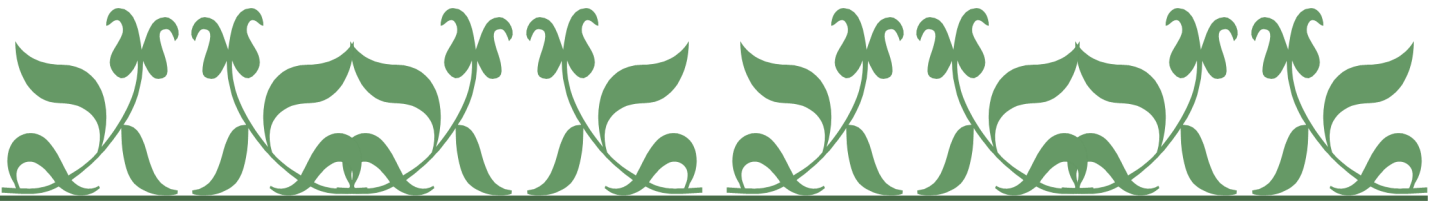
Checkbook Balance, October 1, 2023	\$ 55,879.88
General Fund Contributions:	18,098.21
Mission Endowment Offering	8,000.00
Total Funds Available	81,978.09
Budget Approved Monthly Expenses:	12,846.21
Checkbook Balance, October 31, 2023	\$ 69,131.88
Mission Investment Fund, Oct 1, 2023	\$2,896.58
Mission Investment Fund, Oct 31, 2023	\$ 0.57

CHURCH COUNCIL

President: Bryan Diercks	507-259-3909
Vice President: Randy Klein rdklein@mmm.com	651-212-8045
Secretary: Andrew Featherstone rwfeatherstonepainting@gmail.com	651-470-9823
Kevin Eckblad	651-380-7849
Chris Finne	651-380-3690
Lora Gruber	51-212-3216
Roger Guttromson	651-308-6349
Duane Hanson	651-380-1763
Maureen Hauck	651-331-8593
Missy McCann	651-307-2274
Ben Norman	651-208-7124
Kent Volz	651-402-0942
Barbara Weigman	507-202-7880

WHO TO CONTACT IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

Indoors:	Jim Hedeem	651-380-6054
Kitchen:	Sue Hedeem	651-380-6270
	Faye Drewianka	651-212-3209
Outdoors	Duane Hanson	651-380-1763
	Steve Hyllengren	651-258-4338



MARK'S MEDITATION

BY MARK HAGEN

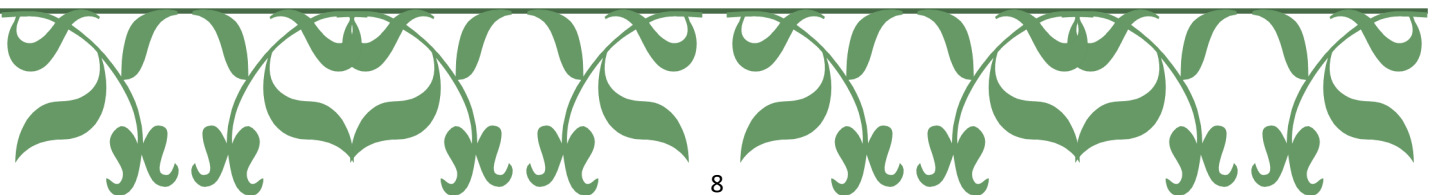
As we enter the Christmas season, Vasa church will be sharing the stories of Jesus' nativity. The gospels of Matthew and Luke give us two traditions of Jesus' birth. The first chapter of Matthew's gospel gives us Jesus's genealogy, Mary's impregnation by the Holy Spirit, and tells of a dream that Joseph has that convinces him not to reject Mary. The second chapter of Matthew jumps ahead to the story of King Herod and the magi (astrologers) "from the east." Who were the magi? We don't know. But we know much about kings of Judea.

To get to the Herod of Matthew's text, let's back up a bit. In 539 BCE the king of Persia, Cyrus the Great, allowed the exiled Jewish elite to return to Jerusalem. Although the Jews were allowed to rebuild the Temple, Judea was administered by the Persians; which continued until Alexander the Great conquered Persia in 332 BCE. Upon Alexander's death, his Greek empire was split between four of his generals; one of which was Seleucus Nicator who controlled Syria, and another was Ptolemy Soter who took control of Egypt. For the next 145 years, Judea was alternately controlled by either the Seleucids or the Ptolemies. In 175 BCE Seleucid king Antiochus IV Epiphanes came to power and pushed the Ptolemies out of Judea. Wanting to "modernize" the Jews, he installed a statue of Zeus in the Hebrew Temple. This so enraged the population that Judas Maccabeus staged a rebellion and in 167 Antiochus was driven from Judea. Thus began the relatively independent Hasmonean dynasty in Judea. (It is during the Hasmonean dynasty that the Sadducees and Pharisees became political/religious parties.)

In 63 BCE Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus (Pompey the Great), besieged Jerusalem and took possession of the city for Rome. Pompey eventually came into conflict with Julius Caesar, and in the ensuing civil war, Judea became a pawn between the two Romans. At this time Judea was administered by two Hasmonean brothers: Aristobulus and Hyrcanus. Aristobulus was the stronger, more militant brother. Hyrcanus was "weak" and under the influence of his advisor: Antipater the Idumaean. In 47 BCE the Romans (Julius Caesar), seeing this distinction, banished Aristobulus, installed Hyrcanus as Chief Priest, and made Antipater the Roman Procurator to oversee trade and taxes.

Antipater appointed his sons Phasael and Herod to be governors of Jerusalem and Galilee respectively. Antipater was murdered in 43 BCE. In 40 BCE the Parthians (Persians) invaded Judea and Herod escaped to Rome where he convinced the Roman Senate to declare him *King of the Jews*. *He returned to Judea and in 37 BCE, as Herod the Great, he forced out the Parthians, initiated numerous building projects and ruled until 4 BCE. At his death his kingdom was divided among his three sons: Herod Archelaus, Philip and Herod Antipas. Herod Archelaus was made "Ethnarch" of Judea and ruled until 6 CE. Philip ruled a small area in the NE of the province. Herod Archelaus was made ruler of Galilee and ruled until 39 CE.*

So, which Herod was Matthew describing? Matthew says that the magi came to Jerusalem to see the king. This implies that Matthew is referring to Herod the Great. Later, during the trial and crucifixion of Jesus, the Herod referred to would have to be Herod Archelaus. By the way, the murder of first born male children that Matthew says Herod ordered after the magi failed to return is not documented anywhere else. Not in other books of the Bible, not in any Roman or Greek histories, and not in any archeological artifacts. Matthew probably includes this story because he is making a point that Jesus is the "new Moses."



AN ADVENT MEDITATION

PEACE

PEACE has come to mean the time when there aren't any wars or even when there aren't any major wars. Beggars can't be choosers; we'd most of us settle for that. But in Hebrew peace, *shalom*, means fullness, means having everything you need to be wholly and happily yourself.

One of the titles by which Jesus is known is Prince of Peace, and he used the word himself in what seems at first glance to be two radically contradictory utterances. On one occasion he said to the disciples, *"Do not think that I have come to bring peace on earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword"* (Matthew 10:34). And later on, the last time they ate together, he said to them, *"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you"* (John 14:27).

The contradiction is resolved when you realize that, for Jesus, peace seems to have meant not the absence of struggle but the presence of love.

Frederick Buechner, *Listening To Your Life*
P. 239-240



I LEARNED ABOUT LIFE FROM A SNOWMAN

- ◆ It's ok if you're a little bottom heavy.
- ◆ Hold your ground, even when the heat is on.
- ◆ Wearing white is always appropriate.
- ◆ The key to life is to be a jolly, happy soul.
- ◆ We're all made up mostly of water.
- ◆ Don't get too much sun.
- ◆ Accessorize! Accessorize! Accessorize!
- ◆ It's fun to hang out in your front yard.
- ◆ There's no stopping once you're on a roll.





All Saints
NOV. 2023



CONGRATULATIONS TO :
Miley Clemens, Miranda
Mandelkow, Lucy Sense,
Malena Mandelkow, and
Jack Stehr, who affirmed
their faith on Noevem-
ber 12!



**THE GOODHUE COUNTY
CHRISTMAS PROJECT** Christmas
tags have all been taken. Please
return your gifts and cards to
the marked basket in the Lu-
theran Center or up at church
by no later than Wed., Dec.
13th.

VERY IMPORTANT: Please tape
the original gift tag back onto
gift or card so that we can
match it easily with the family.
Many, many thanks!

Parish Life Committee

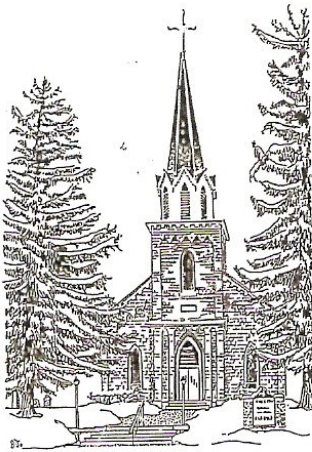


Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 9AM Second Sunday of Advent worship with Holy Communion (Sunday School @ Lutheran Center –Christmas Program rehearsal)	4 <u>TEAM MEETINGS</u> 4PM Property 5PM Finance 6PM Parish Life	5  9:30 Coffee and Conversation	6 6:30pm Wednesday Eve Worship	7	8 Pastor's Day Off	9
10 9AM Third Sunday of Advent Worship (Sunday School @ Lutheran Center – Christmas Program rehearsal)	11	12  9:30 Coffee/Conversation  7pm Endowment Team	13 VASA FAMILY NIGHT! 5:30PM Christmas Carols and Hot Chocolate at the Gazebo	14	15 Pastor's Day Off	16
17 10:30AM Fourth Sunday of Advent worship—Children's Christmas Program at LC	18 6PM CHURCH COUNCIL	19  9:30 Coffee and Conversation	20 Faith Formation 5:30-6:30 6:30pm Wednesday Eve Worship	21	22 Pastor's Day Off	23
 24 Christmas Eve Worship 2:00 & 5:00 PM	25 	26  9:30 Coffee and Conversation	27 NO SCHEDULED EVENTS AT THE LC	28 NO SCHEDULED EVENTS AT THE LC	29 Pastor's Day Off	30
31 9AM Service of the Word						

VASA LUTHERAN CHURCH

15235 NORELIUS ROAD (in Vasa)

WELCH, MN 55089



Historic Vasa Lutheran Church Built in 1869

(Vasa Drawing by B-J Norman)

Worship Schedule

9:00AM Sundays (also live-streamed)

Wednesday Evening Worship

6:30pm Holy Communion + Everyday Bible Conversation
(Fellowship Room of Lutheran Center)

Executive Team

Bryan Diercks, Council President 507.259.3909

Randy Klein, Council Vice President 651.212.8045

Andrew Featherstone, Council Secretary 651.470.9823

Pastor Maureen Hagen

pastor@vasalutheran.org

(Cell) 507.251.5270

Church Office

651.258.4327

Church Staff

Kathy Tilderquist, Treasurer

Emily Peterson, Office Administrator

Melissa McCann, Custodian

Anne Anderson, Worship Accompanist

Gail Strusz-Klein, Wedding Coordinator

Paul & Jay Mikaelson, Missionaries in La Paz Bo-
livia Contact: pmikaelsen@gmail.com

Website: www.caranavi.net/rtc.htm



Vasa Mission Statement

We, the Vasa Congregation,

Called by God, commit to:

Worshipping together,

Growing in Faith,

Serving Others, and

Welcoming and loving all!