

## **What's Happening This Month at Vasa**

**March 7th**—Vasa Museum Soup Luncheon—This is the 38th annual Vasa Museum Soup Fund-raiser. Proceeds will be used to restore a very rare, original 1877 map of Goodhue County. This map was likely used in school (s) at the time, which makes it a valuable primary source. All donations are greatly appreciated as we continue to preserve our history here!  
Special Musical Guest: Dave Carpenter!

**March 4th & 18th**—Women's Bible Study 9:30—11:00AM, Lutheran Center, Fellowship Room

### **Easter Play Practices**

**March 1**

**March 8**

**March 15**

**March 22**

**March 29 (Palm Sunday) — Easter Play & Final First Communion Class**

### **Wednesday Evenings in March—5:30PM**

Lenten Worship: Soup Supper, Holden Evening Prayer, and Holy Communion

**Sundays in March — Fifth Grade First Communion Instruction—10:15-11:00**

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## Worship Volunteers for March

### USHER

March 1	Bruce Tilderquist
March 8	Duane Hanson
March 15	Rick Samuelson
March 22	Marvin Fredrickson
March 29	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>

### READERS

March 1	Kathy Tilderquist
March 8	Katie Featherstone
March 15	B-J Norman
March 22	Barry Skog
March 29	<i>Volunteers Needed</i>

### HOSPITALITY

March 1	Sue Ness
March 8	Marilyn Hanson
March 15	Mo Hauck
March 22	Audrey Rosener
March 29	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>

### COMMUNION ASSISTANTS

March 15	Barry Skog
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# March

## birthdays

March 1	Bella Otto
March 3	Michael Carlson
March 4	Norlene Josephson
March 5	Marilyn Burke
March 6	Madilyn Stehr
March 7	Kevin Eckblad Johnie Parker
March 9	Theresa Josephson Brian Mandelkow Rita Pearson
March 11	Julia Pawlenty
March 13	Marilyn Hanson
March 16	John Gardiner
March 18	Melvin Trelstad
March 20	Andrew Bauch
March 21	Caleb Hovel Amy Schaffer
March 24	Barbara Weigman
March 27	Chris Finne
March 27	Dave Gardiner
March 28	Emmett Poole
March 29	Shane Clemens Sharyn Sorenson
March 30	Andrew Weigman
March 31	Sid Featherstone



## Faith Formation



First Communion instruction begins on Sunday, March 8th at 10:15.

Classes will be held at the Lutheran Center in Classroom #3 and will go through March 29th.

Typically, students' First Communion occurs on Maundy Thursday during evening worship, which is April 2nd this year.

## *Thoughts from Pastor Maureen*

Two years ago I came across a Facebook post that included the sentence: Brave birds still fly through fog. That sentence continues to resonate with me as I move toward retirement. I don't know for sure what I will do in retirement but I am convinced that God will present me with options. The same sentence applies to Vasa as it steps out into the unfamiliar territory of calling a new pastor.

In Genesis 12:1-4 it is written "Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. 2 I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." 4 So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.

Leaving Haran meant that figuratively speaking Abraham was also "flying through fog." It had to be frightening for him to leave his home and his extended family. There almost certainly were naysayers telling him that he was making a big mistake and predicting that he would return within a week. In faith, Abraham went anyway.

As Vasa begins the process of calling a new pastor it's going to feel like Vasa is "flying through fog." Over its 170+ years this congregation has called fourteen pastors. This is not the first time it has had to organize itself to find a new pastor.

Preparing to call a pastor should be a time of prayer and congregational self-examination. What is Vasa now? What is your dream for Vasa to become? What characteristics should the new pastor have to help lead the congregation into the future? The challenge is that there are going to be varied opinions about the answers to these questions.

Just as God was faithful to Abraham and all of the other matriarchs and patriarchs God has been and will remain faithful to Vasa Congregation. The task of every member of this congregation is to be diligent in prayer asking God for the needed guidance to fly through this foggy time.

*Brave birds still fly through fog,  
Pastor Maureen*



# Easter Flower Forms!

## Due March 18



Type of Flower/Plant	Cost
Lily	\$16.00
Bulb Garden	\$20.00
Azalea	\$30.00
Hydrangea multi bloom	\$30.00
Mum	\$18.00
Cyclamen	\$19.00



## 2026 Lenten Focus

### The "I Am" Saying's of Jesus

This year's pilgrimage through the season of Lent will include a soup supper at 5:30 in the Lutheran Center. At about 6:00 we will worship by singing Holden Evening Prayer. This service will include a brief meditation on the "I Am" saying of Jesus from the gospel of John.

**March 4th**— I am the **Light** of the world (John 8:12)

**March 11th**— I am the **Gate/Door** (John 10:9)

**March 18th**— I am the **Way the Truth and the Life** (John 14:6)

**March 25th**— I am the **Vine** (John 15:1-5)

**2026**

Thursday, April 23, 9 am-6 pm

Friday, April 24, 9 am-4 pm

(VASA LUTHERAN WILL HOLD ITS SALES  
THURSDAY & FRIDAY ONLY)

**SAVE THE DATES!**

**ANNUAL VASA AND WELCH AREA  
SPRING RUMMAGE (& BAKE) SALE**



**Bag sale at Vasa on Friday, \$3 a bag**

Sales to be held at Vasa Lutheran Center on HWY 19, and at various homes along County Rd 7 for over 8 miles!



## VASA LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

January 12, 2026 @ Lutheran Church

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

**Devotions:** Barbara Weigman

**Members present and absent:**

**Present:** Pastor Maureen Hagen, Pastor; Bryan Diercks, President; Randy Klein, Vice President; Kent Volz; Tim Carlson; Barbara Weigman; Missy McCann; Sue Samuelson; Mo Hauck; and Andrew Featherstone, Secretary;  
10 voting members present

**Unable to attend:** Chris Finne;

**Also Present:** Kathy Tilderquist

**Adoption of the Agenda:**

It was moved and seconded to approve the agenda for the January 12, 2026 council meeting.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**Approval of Minutes:**

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the December 8, 2025 council meeting as written.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**Reports Reviewed and Accepted:**

1. Treasurer's Report (Attached)  
Fuel bill is due this month. The bill is around \$2,000.00.  
Kathy will check with Ali Peters about changes with Insurance before budgeting.
2. Finance Report (Attached)  
Sasha Diercks will audit the Treasurer books. We need two or three people to Audit the Cemetery, Museum, Endowment, and Parsonage accounts.
3. Parish Life (Attached)  
Family Fun Night: is on Jan 14, it will be on Kindness.  
Family Fun Night: for February 11 will be on Goodness.  
Ash Wednesday :Feb 18<sup>th</sup> in Church sanctuary.  
Palm Sunday: March 29 worship will take place in the LC.  
Maundy Thursday: Worship on April 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00 in Church sanctuary. First Communion for fifth grade students.  
Good Friday: Worship on April 3 at 7:00 in Church sanctuary with draping of the worship furnishings.  
Saturday April 4: decorate the church for Easter. Starts at 9:30.  
Easter Sunday: worship at 9:00.
4. Property Team (NA)

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



- 5. Cemetery Board (NA)
- 6. Executive Board Report (NA)
- 7. Pastor's Report) Attached)

Pastors last Sunday will take place on Sunday May 24, 2026.

7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade confirmation resumed. We have eight students in attendance. They are studying the 10 Commandments.

- 8. Museum Board (NA)
- 9. Endowment Board Report (NA)

**Tabled Business:**

**New Business:**

Parsonage – Allow tenant to add roommate after background check and new lease. The new lease will be month to month with wording changes. Keep rent at \$1,350.00 and change \$100 late fee.

**MOTION CARRIED**

Point Person- Barb will be the point person with Synod to start process with new pastor. Sue Samuelson will be the assistant. Kathy Tilderquist will help with budget with new pastor.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**February meeting Dates:** (Tentative schedule)

Property: Monday February 2<sup>nd</sup> @4:00pm

Finance: Monday February 2<sup>nd</sup> @5:00pm

Parish Life: Monday February 2<sup>nd</sup> @5:30pm

Council: Monday February 2<sup>nd</sup> @6:00pm Devotions: Tim Carlson

It was moved and seconded to adjourn at 7:37 PM.

**MOTION CARRIED**

Meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer

Report submitted by: Andrew Featherstone, Secretary

**CHURCH COUNCIL**

**President:** Bryan Diercks, 507-259-3909  
bryanddiercks@protonmail.com

**Vice President:** Randy Klein 651-212-8045  
rdelmark@outlook.com

**Secretary:** TBD

Tim Carlson 651-442-5066  
Chris Finne 651-380-3690  
Maureen Hauck 651-331-8593  
Missy McCann 651-307-2274  
Sue Samuelson 907-250-4103  
Kent Volz 651-402-0942  
Barbara Weigman 507-202-7880

**WHO TO CONTACT IN CASE OF EMERGENCY**

**Indoors:**

**Kitchen:** Sue Hedeem 651-380-6270  
Faye Drewianka 651-212-3209

**Outdoors:** Duane Hanson 651-380-1763  
Steve Hyllengren 651-258-4338

VASA EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
Treasurer's Report  
January 31, 2026

For the Month of January:

Checkbook Balance, Jan 1, 2026	\$ 78,323.56
General Fund Contributions:	10,210.77
Total Funds Available	88,534.33
Budget Approved Monthly Expenses:	<u>(24,092.28)</u>
Checkbook Balance, Jan 31, 2026	\$ 64,442.05

# MARK'S MEDITATION

## FEBRUARY, 2026

### TRUST, FAITH, AND BELIEF

One of the challenges we have as English speakers is that unless you have studied Hebrew and Greek (like Pastor Maureen did in seminary), our access to Scripture is colored by the translation from those original languages to English. (As a reminder, the Old Testament was written primarily in Hebrew and the New Testament was written in Greek--which is already a translation, since Jesus most likely spoke Aramaic.) A good example of the challenges that arise when translating from one language to another is how the Bible translates the word "faith."

The Greek word that gets translated as "faith" in our English Bibles is "*pistis*" (πίστις). The equivalent Latin word is "*fides*." (We get English words like fidelity and bona fides from this root.) However, this word *pistis/fides* can also mean trust or belief. What is more, the ideas conveyed by this word have changed over time. The translators who have given us English translations have tried to convey the differing meanings by using variations of the words: *faith*, *trust*, and *belief*. (Be they the scholars who penned the King James Version in 1611, or the scholars of the Society of Biblical Literature who updated the NRSV in 2021.) This table is a breakdown of the count of these words in the NRSV.

When *pistis* is used in the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament), it often means "trust." As in: to trust in God's covenant. *Pistis* is derived from the verb *peithō* (to persuade), and signifies a firm conviction or reliance upon someone. As such, it implies the person is taking action; making a pledge of trustworthiness or an oath of allegiance.

English for <i>pistis/fides</i>	Whole Bible	Old Testament	New Testament
Trust, trustworthy	230	205	25
Faith, faithful	515	127	388
Belief, believe	405	45	360

In the Roman Empire, the phrase "Fides Exercitus or Fides Imperator (trust in the army, trust in the emperor) was often imprinted on coins. As a result, the terms *pistis/fides* took on an earthly role; replacing God with the emperor. This might have been on the mind of the author of the Gospel of John. More than the other gospel writers, the author of John puts an emphasis on belief. He uses the term over 100 times, but always as a verb "to believe" never as a noun. To John, *pistis* mean "action."

Similarly, the Apostle Paul uses the term *pistis Christou* multiple times. But we don't know for sure what he meant. Scholars debate if this refers to *faith in Christ* or the *faithfulness of Christ*. That is, are we saved by our own act of believing, or by the loyalty of Jesus Christ to the Father? In other words, are we saved by a declaration of belief, or are we saved by God's grace? This seemingly small difference: a translation as either "in" or "of" is a big deal! The separation of entire Christian denominations gets defined by this.

In early Christian sermons, faith is often described as a ladder or as a boat that takes you on a journey. Faith is that thing that supports us and gives us hope. Personified, faith is a spirit that abides with us. But faith is also a two-way street. When you put your *trust* in someone, you *believe* that they will be trustworthy--they will trust you in return. This is what God does when He offers us salvation through Christ. We receive salvation as an act of grace. In doing so, God is essentially saying "I believe you are trustworthy."

## Columbarium

With the installation of the columbarium in the Vasa Cemetery it seems opportune to talk about the Christian perspective on cremation.

If you are looking for a specific statement from the Bible about cremation, stop. There is no teaching from the Bible, either from the Old Testament, or from Jesus in the New Testament about cremation.

When considering whether cremation is a possibility for you or a loved one you have to do so theological thinking. In the creation story written in Genesis 2:7 it says "then the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being." The movement in support of cremation holds first that if God created humans "from the dust of the ground" then God certainly can resurrect humans from their cremains.

Another way to think about the topic is based on Genesis 1:26 Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness;" Opponents to cremation feel that cremating a body does not show proper respect to a human created in God's image.

The fact remains that a body must be properly disposed of after someone dies. When considering a casket burial or cremation, there are a multitude of other considerations including:

**Cost:** The cost of cremation is far less than purchasing a burial plot, casket, and vault.

**Cremation's ecological considerations:** cremation requires the energy equivalent of 28 gallons of gasoline. There are significant CO2 emissions from the cremation process. In addition bones often contain trace elements that might be released into the atmosphere if the cremator does not have appropriate emission scrubbers on the chimney.

**Casket burial's ecological considera-**

**tions:** burying a body in a casket introduces trace minerals and formaldehyde into the ground. A certain amount of CO2 emissions are released as the body degrades.

**Land use:** Some countries with limited land area recognize that they cannot accommodate the permanent burial of all citizens because they will literally run out of room. Denmark, as an example, essentially leases a burial plot to a family for 15 years after which time the site is made available to be used again.

In John 1:16 we come across the phrase "grace upon grace" What does "grace upon grace" look like? It looks like bodies raised from their tombs whether the body is decayed down to bones or an urn filled with ashes. What does grace upon grace sound like? It sounds like the voice of your good shepherd calling you when you are deader than dead. It sounds like the voice of the shepherd who knows you and loves you, and calls you, enabling you to walk out of your tomb, unbound to rest in the bosom of Jesus.

Like many other modern problems and controversies, cremation is not addressed specifically in the Bible. We are free to make a choice that seems appropriate for our situation and our family.



## **SEM N Synod Traditional Call Process Overview for Congregations and Councils**

The time between when a rostered leader announces his or her resignation and the next 'settled' roster leader begins his or her call is a special time in the life of the congregation. It is a time filled with hope and expectation, of questioning and experimentation. It can also be a time of anxiety.

The first and foremost task of the congregation and of its leaders during this time is spiritual reflection and prayer. Prayer, bible study, and regular devotions will keep the congregation spiritually centered, responsive to the movement of the Spirit, and focused on what God's hopes for this congregation and its mission are.

### **A Four Phase Process**

The congregations of the SEM N Synod participate in a Four Phase Call Process.

#### **Phase I: The Leave-taking/The Transition-time**

At the point that a rostered leader announces that they are resigning their call at the congregation, a representative from the Office of the Bishop will meet with the congregational council to orient them to the call process. It is also at this time that information about transitional pastoral support is shared with the council in order that they might make the best decision about how the congregation and ministries will be cared for upon the departure of the current rostered leader. It is during this phase that a conversation is had regarding what it means for a rostered leader to leave well and the expectation to honor boundaries set forth by the ELCA between the congregation and the leaving rostered leader. This is also the time to celebrate the ministry that the rostered leader and the congregation have shared and the council forms and appoints the call committee.

#### **Phase II: Self-Study Process and Ministry Site Profile Completion**

In this phase, the call committee participates in an orientation facilitated by the assistant to the bishop. The call committee explores vision and ministry needs of the congregation by engaging the congregation in a self-study which may be accomplished

through a variety of ways. The self-study leads to the completion of the Ministry Site Profile (MSP) which becomes an integral document shared with potential candidates as their first exposure to who your congregation is. After the MSP is completed and before it is officially submitted, a congregational town hall meeting may be held to review and comment on the MSP. This is attended by the Assistant to the Bishop in call process. After final edits are made to the MSP, it is submitted by the call committee on the ELCA website.

#### **Phase III: Interviewing Candidates/ Discerning the Candidate of Choice**

Once again, this phase begins with an orientation of the call committee. In the orientation the call committee will discuss its interview protocol, develop questions for candidates and prepare packets of information for candidates. It is also at this time that the call committee will elicit nominations of pastoral candidates from the congregation. When the call committee is ready to begin interviews, they will receive names of candidates from the Assistant to the Bishop in Call Process. The call committee engages in first interviews with each candidate that is presented to them. After the first interviews are completed, the call committee chairperson communicates with each candidate as to whether they will retain or release the candidate. The call committee engages in second interviews and gathers other information (including sermon and reference checks). The call committee discerns the candidate of choice and, with mutual consent from the candidate, presents the candidate of choice recommendation to congregation council. The congregation council sets the date for the special congregational call meeting.

#### **Phase IV: Preparing for and Welcoming the New Pastor**

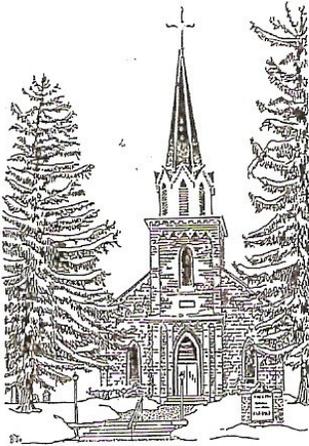
The pastor, the council president and the Assistant to the Bishop coordinate a date for the installation of the new pastor. An Assistant to the Bishop will be present to perform the rite of installation. Congregation council and call committee plan activities to welcome the new pastor (and family) to the congregation and the community.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9AM Service of Holy Communion +Sunday School at the Lutheran Center	2 <b>TEAMS MEET</b> 4 PM Property 5 PM Finance	3	4 Women's Bible Study 9:30—11:00  Lenten Worship + Holden Evening Prayer 5:30pm	5	6 Pastor's Day Off	7 VASA SOUP LUNCHeON  11:00-1:00
8 9AM Service of the Word +Sunday School at the Lutheran Center First Communion 1st Class	9 <b>TEAMS MEET</b> 5:30PM Parish Life 6PM CHURCH COUNCIL	10  9:30	11  Lenten Worship + Holden Evening Prayer 5:30pm	12	13 Pastor's Day Off	14
15 9AM Service of Holy Communion + Sunday School at the Lutheran Center First Communion 2nd Class	16	17  9:30 	18 Women's Bible Study 9:30—11:00  Lenten Worship + Holden Evening Prayer 5:30pm	19	20 Pastor's Day Off	21
22 9AM Service of the Word +Sunday School at the Lutheran Center First Communion 3rd Class	23	24  9:30	25  Lenten Worship + Holden Evening Prayer 5:30	26	27 Pastor's Day Off	28
29 9AM Service of the Word +Sunday School at the Lutheran Center First Communion 4th Class	30	31  9:30				

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)

(Fellowship Room of Lutheran Center)

### **Executive Team**

Bryan Diercks, Council President 507.259.3909

Randy Klein, Council Vice President 651.212.8045

### **Pastor Maureen Hagen**

[pastor@vasalutheran.org](mailto:pastor@vasalutheran.org)

(Cell)507.251.5270

### **Church Office**

651.258.4327

### **Church Staff**

Kathy Tilderquist, Treasurer

Preston Parks, Office Administrator

([office@vasalutheran.org](mailto:office@vasalutheran.org))

Melissa McCann, Custodian

Anne Anderson, Worship Accompanist

Gail Strusz-Klein, Wedding Coordinator

## Vasa Mission Statement

We, the Vasa Congregation,

Called by God, commit to:

Worshipping together,

Growing in Faith,

Serving Others, and

Welcoming and loving all!