

Vasa Happenings in May

May 3 Vasa Museum Opens for The Summer

Regular Hours will be Sundays, 11:30-4:00, or by appointment. Just call or email the church office and Preston will contact a member of the museum board to accommodate your request. 651-258-4327 or office@vasalutheran.org.

May 13 Pastor Maureen's Retirement Celebration

May 17 Graduation Sunday

A day where we recognize Vasa's graduating High School Seniors.

Here's what's on the Inside!

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Worship Volunteers for May

USHERS

May 3

May 10 Rick Samuelson

May 17 Marvin Fredrickson

May 24 Marvin Fredrickson

May 31 Bruce Tilderquist

READERS

May 3 Jeannette Anderson

May 10 Sid Featherstone

May 17 Mo Hauck

May 24 Stuart Samuelson

May 31 Kathy Tilderquist

HOSPITALITY

May 3 Ben Norman

May 10 Kent Volz

May 17 Dawn Lindstrom

May 24 Mo Hauck

May 31 Lora Gruber

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS

May 3 Teresa Schmidt

May 17 Barbara Weigman

May 24 Sue Samuelson



BIRTHDAYS

May 2	Gabe Bauch
May 3	Tanner Carlson
May 5	Owyne Gillis
May 7	Bentley Endres Chris Mann
May 10	Indie Marie Lindholm
May 12	Merle Pearson
May 13	Samuel Lindstrom
May 16	Ross Fredin Bruce Tilderquist
May 18	Nora Featherstone Ezekiel Pearson
May 20	Katie Lindahl
May 26	Gabriel Rehder
May 27	Theresa Fredin Julia Stahnke
May 28	Parker Nelson
May 29	Anthony Mann Brian Schmidt Kathy Tilderquist
May 31	Audrey Rosener



Pastor Maureen's Final Pastor Column

For this my last column for the Vasa Voice, I leave you with two stories of encouragement.

My home congregation held Sunday School for youth even after confirmation. Our teacher during my senior year was a woman named Gladys Fredrikson. One day during class she pulled a piano bench into the circle of students and asked two of the boys to stand beside the bench. She told them to catch her if she fell. (That got our attention!) She proceeded to recite Romans 8:38-39 by heart using hand motions when appropriate. She made us recite the verse several times, saying "Someday you are going to need these words."

I have always remembered that verse and her words because she was absolutely right. I have used these verses many times in my work as a pastor. Romans 8:38-39 "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." As a parting statement I share these words with you: Nothing can separate you from the love of God, my friends; absolutely nothing.

My second story comes from my chaplaincy training. My supervisor, a former Catholic nun, told us the following story. She served in a parish on the Burlington Northern railway in northern Montana. One of her numerous responsibilities was to serve as the parish musician. One day a hobo died in the community and the local funeral director was in charge of the burial. The agreement was that churches in the community would take turns "saying a few words" before the burial of an indigent person. It was the Catholic parish's turn and the priest said a full mass with my supervisor playing music. The only people present at the funeral were the priest, the musician, and the funeral director.

Later my supervisor asked the priest why he did a full mass for someone that they didn't know. They barely knew his name and had no idea if he was Catholic, much less a believer in Jesus. The priest replied, "The distance from the saddle to the ground is an eternity to God." This story reminds me of the power of God to be present in moments that humans cannot comprehend. I believe that God caught that hobo as he died and wrapped him in God's eternal arms.

My second parting statement is that we often place human limitations on God. We need to open our minds to God's possibilities; possibilities that are far beyond our human imaginations. This applies especially in times of great distress and fear. Our only task is to keep our eyes on God and do so faithfully trusting that our God is a God of love and deliverance.

Nothing can separate any of us from God's love.

The God we worship is a God of love and deliverance.

Hold on to these truths, always.

With great love and affection for you, the faithful people of Vasa Congregation,

Pastor Maureen



VASA LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

February 2, 2026 @ Lutheran Church

Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 6:12 pm by Bryan Diercks, President

Devotions: Tim Carlson

Members present and absent:

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

Unable to attend: Chris Finne; and Kent Volz;

Also Present: Kathy Tilderquist and Rev. Barb Streed

Adoption of the Agenda:

It was moved and seconded to approve the agenda for the February 2, 2026 council meeting.

MOTION CARRIED

Approval of Minutes:

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2026 council meeting as written.

MOTION CARRIED

Reports Reviewed and Accepted:

Treasurer's Report (Attached)

Stamps were bought and take up quite a bit of the office expense budget.

Offerings are down to start the year around 2 ½ %.

Finance Report (Attached)

Discussion of the 2026 budget took place.

Worked on updating wedding contracts.

Parish Life (Attached)

Family Fun Night: for February 11 will be on Goodness.

Ash Wednesday :Feb 18th in Church sanctuary.

Palm Sunday: March 29 worship will take place in the LC.

Maundy Thursday: Worship on April 2nd 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.

Property Team (Attached)

Will do an inspection for the parsonage. Will take notes and give to Kathy for insurance info. Tanner

Carlson is also working on getting insurance for the parsonage.

The third fan has gone out in Sanctuary. Ringside Electric will come and replace fan.

A lawn mowing and snow removal expectations list was created and will be given to Kyle Gillis and

Bob Josephs.

Cemetery Board (NA)

Executive Board Report (NA)

Pastor's Report (Attached)

Pastor is organizing to teach the first communion class to this years fifth grade. There are two students, possibly three. In 2027 there will be a larger class with 6 students. Courtney Hovel has agreed to observe me teach and take over the 2027 class.

Vasa will host the Cannon River Conference meeting on Sunday, Feb. 15th at 2:00 in the gym.

Museum Board (NA)

Endowment Board Report (NA)

Tabled Business:

New Business:

Wedding Contract- It was moved and seconded to Approve the updated Wedding Contract with the Approved changes.

MOTION CARRIED

2026 Budget- It was moved and seconded to Approve the 2026 Budget.

MOTION CARRIED

March meeting Dates: (Tentative schedule)

Property: Monday March 2nd @4:00pm

Finance: Monday March 2nd @5:00pm

Parish Life: Monday March 2nd @5:30pm

Council: Monday March 9th @6:00pm Devotions:

It was moved and seconded to adjourn at 7:47 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: Barbara Weigman 507-202-7880
barbara.weigman@gmail.com

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: Tim Carlson 651-442-5066

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

March 31, 2026

For the Month of March:

Checkbook Balance, Mar 1, 2026 \$ 59,566.57

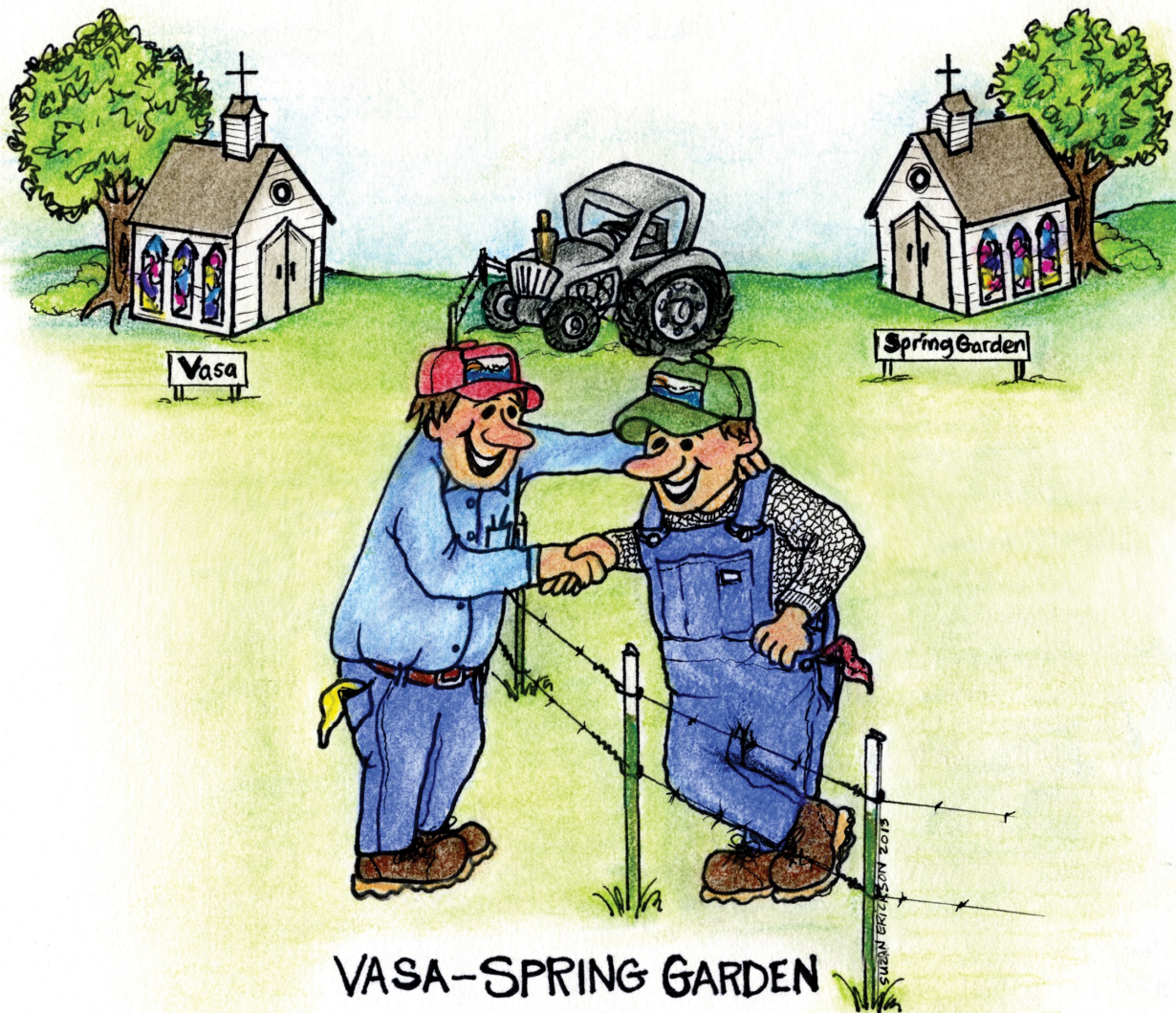
General Fund Contributions: 30,156.99

Total Funds Available 89,723.56

Budget Approved Monthly Expenses: (23,099.61)

Checkbook Balance, March 31, 2026 \$ 66,623.95

Income behind budget by: \$11,699.61 for 3 months of 2026



VASA-SPRING GARDEN
Annual Tractor Parade
and
Midsommar Festival

Stay on the lookout for more information regarding the Vasa-Spring Garden Annual Tractor Parade and Midsomer Festival. Preston will send out more info once a date is set

THE ANNUAL VASA RUMMAGE SALE ONCE AGAIN IS A HUGE SUCCESS!

Thanks to everyone who donated items to sell and baked goods, helped set up, worked at the sale, and helped to clean up!

Where do some of the unsold items from the Rummage Sale go?

Suitcases and pack 'n play cribs go to the Women's Shelter in Red Wing. Women who flee their situations of abuse often leave with only the clothes on their backs. A suitcase is a sign that they are starting to rebuild their life.

Sleeping bags go to Hope and Harbor—the homeless shelter in Red Wing.

Flower vases go to Riverbend Floral

All other clothing and soft goods go to the Epilepsy Foundation

The rummage sale netted approximately \$8,300 which included income from online sales of higher ticket items from last year. The sale itself brought in about \$6,800 this year. The proceeds will be used to help pay for the stained glass restoration in the church.

We are still collecting clothing, bedding, towels, and accessories like shoes, belts, and purses for the Epilepsy fund-raiser. Please drop any donations you may have in the confirmation room at the Lutheran Center (4th door on the right in the back). The deadline for these donations is June 7th. Donations should be in garbage bags as much as possible. And please spread the word to your families and friends. The Epilepsy Foundation pays us by the cubic-foot so every bag helps.



UPDATE!

THANK
YOU
VERY
MUCH!

CLOTHING DONATIONS TO BE PURCHASED BY EPILEPSY FOUNDATION

Vasa will continue to accept clothing, shoes, purses, belts and bedding donations until June 7th. Bag these items in large garbage bags, bring them to the Lutheran Center and put them on the stage. They will be sold to the Epilepsy Foundation fundraiser which is later in June.

MARK'S MEDITATION

FAREWELL

Most likely, this will be my last Vasa Voice article. I will be forever grateful for the opportunity to share what I've learned with my friends at Vasa. Most of the articles I've written involve my desire to reconcile our modern, physical world to the traditions of the Christian faith. If you want to know what books I've been reading, look back at my articles.

As Maureen's tenure at Vasa winds down, both of us have been trying hard to put things in a good state. For months, Maureen has been working to position the church council so that they are ready and capable to move on to the next chapter in Vasa history. I am happy to report that the A/V systems in the church and in the gym are complete and well documented. As for the articles I've written for the Vasa Voice, you can still read many of them on the Vasa church [website](#). I've also created a personal website where I've collected all 103 articles I've written in one place. That website is at <https://sites.google.com/view/markhagenblog>.

What come next for M&M Hagen? That requires a little history. Maureen and I met in 1976 at Concordia College in Moorhead, MN. At that time, freshmen students were required to wear a yellow beanie, with their name and hometown printed on the back (until the first football game). One evening I happened to be standing in line behind Maureen at the cafeteria. Her beanie said "Maureen Eckhoff, Ada, MN." I said "I bet I know people you know." This was a sure bet because I had a connection to Ada. Both of my grandfathers were Lutheran pastors. Rev. Melvin Gerhart (MG) Hagen served Marsh River Lutheran church in Shelly, MN from 1929-61 and Rev. Elmer Gerhart (EG) Larson served Grace Lutheran Church in Ada, MN from 1942-69. Although Maureen attended a country church, everyone in Norman County knew Rev. EG Larson.

In 1963 EG purchased property on Bad Medicine Lake. The property was a peninsula where we could swim on the east side in the morning and on the west side in the afternoon. Growing up, I spent every summer there, including the entire summer of 1964 when we lived in the "bunk house"; a simple wood-framed structure with kerosine lamps for light and a wood stove for heat. So, in 1976, after a few of weeks of dating, I said to Maureen "I'd like to take you someplace special." We drove out to the Larson cabin and also walked around a

plot of land my father had just purchased further down the lake. This sealed the deal. We got married in 1980.

My father built on the land he purchased in 1977. In 1995 he retired, handed over the business to my brother, and moved to the lake with my mother. Along the way, he got enamored with eschatology (end of the world stuff). He attended seminars and read everything he could. The world was going to end in 1988, then 1991, then 2000. Because of this short-sighted view, he used up his savings. Needing cash, he asked me if I would be willing to purchase a portion of his property. I said yes. In this way, I became my father's reverse mortgage banker. We paid for my parent's expenses with several fractional purchases of the property. Then, shortly before he passed, we wrote a contract for deed for the remainder of the property. Those payments pay for my mother's care.

In 2022 the roof at the cabin was leaking and in bad shape. We had a fateful decision to make. Either sell the lake property as is, or pour time, effort and money into it. We chose the latter and remodeled the house in 2023. This included an addition, a new roof, new windows, new siding, new kitchen, and many repairs. Last year we contracted to build a new garage. This has been a lot of work. But when Maureen retires, the lake property will be ready to welcome her.

When a pastor steps down, they need to step away. This is so that the new person can successfully assume a leadership role. Therefore, we will be stepping away from Vasa by spending much of our time at the lake. We are not going away for good. We have made many friends in the almost 10 years we have lived here. We plan to keep our Red Wing house for now. Maybe we will downsize.

When Jesus was asked "What are the greatest commandments?" He answered "All of the Torah is contained in these two: Love God, and love (share with) your neighbor." The greatest value of our place on Bad Medicine Lake is that it can be shared. The address is [37512 Sunset Drive](#), Ponsford, MN 56575. You will be welcomed if you choose to visit.

Join us for a
Retirement Celebration
In honor of
Pastor Maureen
Wednesday, May 13, 2026
5:30-7 pm

Potluck—please bring a salad, fruit, or a dessert

You might want a chair to sit outside after dinner

A basket for cards will be provided. If you still want to donate to the congregation gift, put your donation into an envelope and label it “Pastor Gift”. It can be put in the church offering plate or mailed to the church office.

We will recognize our graduating seniors on Sunday, May 17th during worship! This year’s class includes:

Josie Finne

Daughter of Chris & Kerry Finne

Danny Mann

Stepson of Jedd Otto

Madi Stehr

Daughter of Jenna Montey



TO OUR GRADUATING SENIORS



**FELLOWSHIP OF
CHRISTIAN
ATHLETES**

summer kickoff

JOIN YOUR CANNON FALLS FCA HUDDLE


BONFIRE
Night

S'MORES • FAITH • GAMES

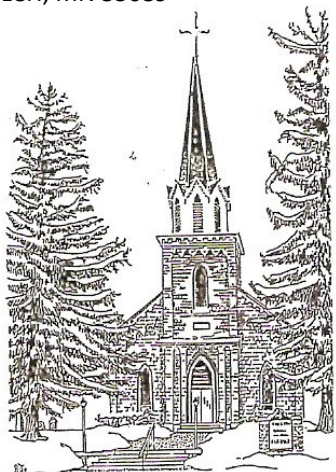
EVERYONE GRADES 6-12 ARE WELCOME

17 MAY, 2026 | 7:00 – 8:30 PM

@ FIRST ENGLISH CHURCH

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 9AM Service of Holy Communion Last day of Sunday School (& PARTY!)	4 <u>TEAMS MEET</u> 4 PM Property 6:30 PM Museum (at Vasa House)	5 9:30 Coffee	6 Women's Bible Study 9:30-11:00 Wed Eve Worship 6:30pm	7	8 Pastor's Day Off	9
10 9AM Service of The Word	11 5 PM Finance 5:30 PM Parish Life 6PM CHURCH COUNCIL	12 9:30 Coffee	13 Pastor Maureen's Retirement Celebration 5:30-7PM	14	15 Pastor's Day Off	16
17 9AM Service of Holy Communion & Graduation Sunday 10AM Memorial Day Remembrance at the Flagpole	18	19 9:30 Coffee	20 Final Women's Bible Study 9:30-11:00 Wed Eve Worship 6:30pm	21	22 Pastor's Day Off	23
24 9AM Service of Holy Communion	25	26 9:30 Coffee	27	28	29	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 (in Fellowship Room of Lutheran Center)

Executive Team

Bryan Diercks, Council President	507.259.3909
Randy Klein, Council Vice President	651.212.8045
Barbara Weigman, Council Secretary	507.202.7880

Pastor Maureen Hagen

pastor@vasalutheran.org
(Cell)507.251.5270

Church Office

651.258.4327
office@vasalutheran.org

Website: vasalutheran.org

Church Staff

Kathy Tilderquist, Treasurer
Preston Parks, Office Administrator
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!