



VOLUME 62 No. 4



APRIL 2026

What's Happening This Month at Vasa

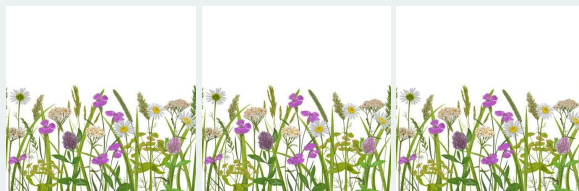
- April 1 9:30AM Ages and Stages Women's Bible Study (meets 1st & 3rd Wednesdays through May)
- April 15 1:00PM-7:00PM AMERICAN RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE
- April 15 9:30AM Ages and Stages Women's Bible Study
- April 18 8—NOON RUMMAGE SALE SET UP (volunteers needed!)
- April 19 10:00AM-2:00PM RUMMAGE SALE SET UP (volunteers needed!)
- April 20 NOON—7:00PM RUMMAGE SALE SET UP (volunteers needed!)
- April 21 NOON—7:00PM RUMMAGE SALE SET UP (volunteers needed!)
- April 22 NOON—6:00PM DROP OFF BAKE SALE ITEMS (ONLY) & FINAL TOUCHES ON SET UP!
- April 23 9:00AM—6:00PM VASA RUMMAGE SALE!
- April 24 9:00AM—3:00PM VASA RUMMAGE SALE!

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

- P. 2 Worship volunteers, April Birthdays***
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- P. 4 Vasa Blood Drive***
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P. 11 April Calendar



Worship Volunteers for April

USHER

April 5 Rick Samuelson
April 12 Duane Hanson
April 19 **VOLUNTEER NEEDED**
April 26 Rick Samuelson

READERS

April 5 B-J Norman
April 12 Bryan Diercks
April 19 Katie Lindahl
April 26 Sasha Diercks

HOSPITALITY

April 5 Kent Volz
April 12 Marilyn Hanson
April 19 B-J Norman
April 26 Audrey Rosener

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS

April 5 Megan & Tim Carlson
April 19 B-J Norman



April 1 Michele Gardiner
Chris Pearson
Jack Stehr
Megan Carlson
April 4 Liz Pearson
April 5 Megan Anderson
April 5 Adeline Lindholm
April 9 Anders Lindstrom
April 10 Troy Lindblom
April 11 Becca Erhart
April 12 Brian Lexvold
April 13 Katelyn Pearson
April 15 Geri Lindholm
Daniel Mann
April 16 Ellie Clemens
Claire Samuelson
April 20 Lincoln Poole
April 22 Bonnie Pagel
April 24 Max Fredin
April 25 Cashton Hovel
April 26 Eileen Anderson
April 28 Bodin Smith
April 29 Vicky Bauch



Thoughts from Pastor Maureen

Calling a new pastor is a time of transition. When a pastor resigns or retires it introduces anxiety and potentially discord into the system. People start to fret; sometimes even allowing themselves to imagine that “we will never find another pastor.” As Vasa begins the work of calling a new pastor I want to remind you that God has plans for Vasa Congregation. Here are two examples that support my premise:

First, When Emily Peterson resigned as office administrator, we all knew it was going to be challenging to find a replacement. Along comes Preston Parks who has exceeded our expectations! Not only did God bring Vasa a new office administrator, God also provided the same for St. Ansgar’s because now Preston works for both congregations. It reminds me of the Bible verse from Isaiah 55:8 “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD.” God is working in our world for the well-being of both of these congregations and it is evidenced in Preston’s presence.

Secondly, for most of my time at Vasa I organized the Vacation Bible School (VBS) program. It was a skill developed in my previous career as a coordinator of children’s ministry. My retirement meant that one immediate need was planning and organizing VBS for the summer of 2026. To my surprise and delight Vasa received an invitation to join First English Lutheran’s program in July. When I shared this option with the Parish Life team, they eagerly accepted the invitation. Once again I see God’s hand at work. God recognizes the need to continue the Christian education of Vasa’s children and provided an opportunity. The program at First English will be led by an outreach team from Good Earth Village and the energy and enthusiasm of those young adults will have a positive impact on the lives of any children that participate.

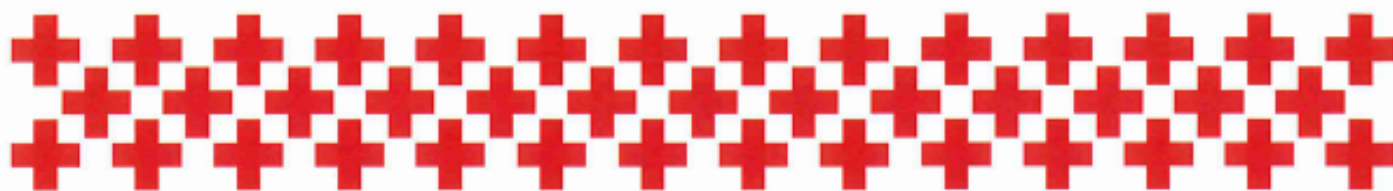
When God freed the Israelites from slavery in Egypt God promised to be with them. God provided manna and quails for them every day as they wandered in the wilderness. When lack of water frightened them God provided water from a rock to quench their thirst. God went before them with a pillar of fire by night. Those many years of wandering accomplished an important thing among God’s people: they developed a deep and abiding trust in a God who provided for their every need.

Vasa is about to enter a new chapter of ministry. It will be important to faithfully trust that God will provide. God is faithful and God will not abandon this congregation.

Pastor Maureen



American Red Cross



Every 2 seconds, someone in the U.S. needs blood.
Help save lives.

Give blood.

Vasa Lutheran Center Blood Drive

15235 Norelius Rd
Welch, MN 55089

Wednesday, April 15, 2026
1:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Please call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or visit RedCrossBlood.org and enter: vasa lutheran to schedule an appointment.



Scan to be directed to
RapidPass®



**Help hope bloom! Give blood 4/13-30 for \$15 e-gift card
to merchant of choice. See rcblood.org/hope**



Scan to schedule
an appointment

1-800-RED CROSS | 1-800-733-2767 | RedCrossBlood.org | Download the Blood Donor App

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[125] - Order ID: 1033744 - Item ID: 660736 - Qty: 1 of 8 - 342203 - 2826-APL-0970 - AR17 - 264494

Phase One: The Leave-taking

Resignation of the Current Pastor

When the current rostered leader resigns or retires, most congregations want to find a new pastor quickly. No one can determine how long a particular call process will take. Congregations are encouraged to be diligent in their process of calling a new rostered leader. Laying a strong foundation for the next chapter in a congregation's life and calling a rostered leader who can most appropriately lead the congregation are more important than the length of time the process takes.

Usually when accepting a new call, the rostered leader notifies the congregational leadership first and then sends a letter to all members. Normally, the final day of the rostered leader's service is at least thirty days from the time of the announcement and may include accrued vacation time.

During the time between the rostered leader's notification and that person's last day of service, several steps need to be taken:

1. Members of the congregation council meet with a representative from the Office of the Bishop to review the call process and determine the kind of transition-time pastoral support that will be needed.
2. The rostered leader and a representative from the Office of the Bishop conduct an exit interview.
3. The rostered leader and the congregational leadership insure that the congregational records are complete and that all financial obligations on the part of the congregation and the rostered leader are completed.
4. A celebration of the ministry that the rostered leader and the congregation have shared is planned and on the final Sunday of the rostered leader's service to the congregation, the *Litany of Closure at the Completion of Ministry and Litany of Farewell and God's Speed* (found in the resources at the end of this packet) are included as part of the service.

It is also helpful for the rostered leader to share with the congregation the ethical boundaries regarding pastoral acts by former pastors and deacons. In the ELCA, there is a very clear understanding of these pastoral boundaries. These applies both to rostered leaders who accept another call and to those who retire.

Once a rostered leader has left a call, that person *may not*:

- Do funerals for persons from the former congregation.
- Do weddings for persons from the former congregation.
- Interfere in the life, pastoral care or mission of that former congregation.
- Return to or engage in the life of the congregation.
- Retain membership with the congregation.

Women of the ELCA

Cannon River Conference Spring Event & Salad Luncheon

Saturday, April 25, 2026

8:00-noon

Cross of Christ Lutheran Church

Welch, MN

Village Partnership for Education

Speakers Bruce and Brenda Blair will share their experiences working with the Village of Mondema in Sierra Leone West Africa and helping them convert a vacant church building to this new Center for Education.

2026 Women of the ELCA Triennial Convention and Gathering Information

Triennial Convention (Business Meeting)
via Zoom July 13-14, 2026

Triennial Gathering—Des Moines, Iowa
July 16-19, 2026

Theme: "I am Worthy"

Bible Verse: "I am fearfully and wonderfully made."

Psalm 139:14



**Church Council
Highlights!**

VASA LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

March 9, 2026 at Lutheran Center

Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 6:00 pm by Bryan Diercks, President

Devotions: Randy Klein

Members present:

Pastor Maureen Hagen, Bryan Diercks-President, Randy Klein-Vice President; Kent Volz, Barbara Weigman, Tim Carlson, Susan Samuelson

Six voting members present

Unable to attend: Mo Hauck, Chris Finne, Missy McCann

Also Present: Kathy Tilderquist

Election of Officers:

It was moved and seconded to approve Bryan Diercks as President, Randy Klein as Vice President, Barbara Weigman as Secretary

MOTION CARRIED

Devotion sign-up was distributed for members to select a month.

Adoption of the Agenda:

It was moved and seconded to approve the agenda as written.

MOTION CARRIED

Approval of Minutes:

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the February 2, 2026 council meeting as written.

MOTION CARRIED

Reports Reviewed and Accepted:

Treasurer's Report (Attached)

Income behind budget by \$18,756.99.

\$1700 left in fuel fund, to be used up by end of the month.

Bathroom windows/install paid under building improvements.

Thrivent Choice dollars need to be designated by end of this month.

Finance Report (Attached)

Deficit of budget will be communicated to congregation monthly.

Offering plates will be passed Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday.

Copy Machine in office currently in working order, however new parts will not be able to be sourced if it breaks down. Altern

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

tives are being researched and trialed.

Parish Life (attached)

Calendar Work

Lent worship attendance remains strong.

First Communion class has begun with C.H. assisting to learn for future teaching.

VBS: we were invited to combine with First English Church in CF. There is a cost/camper, but sponsorships are available thru Youth Ministry fund.

Curriculum closets need to be organized/purged.

Blood Drive April 15th 1p-7p.

Property Team Report (NA)

Church doors need repair, researching options

Easter Cross will be up at front of church soon.

Church toilet has been fixed.

Conduit & wiring in LC gym installed.

Lawn care and Snow removal contracts have been reviewed.

Parsonage - renter making payments, walk-thru shows building is in good shape, carpet is older but okay, painting is needed.

CD renews.

Endowment Board Report (attached)

Granted 3 Education Awards totaling \$3000.

Paid remaining MidSommar invoices of \$1243.68.

Paid \$8300 to Church expenses for the quarter.

Paid Surety Comp for bonding of the officers \$359.

Cemetery Board (attached)

Columbarium installed in Northwest corner of Church. Pricing for each niche was determined.

Spring 2027 flowers and potted plants will be required to be placed in plant stands. In-ground flowers/bushes required to be removed.

Website needs updating of Cemetery info, including columbarium pricing.

Executive Board Report (NA)

Pastor's Report (Attached)

An especially busy time in the church.

Administrative work done by Pastor M is not typical, congregation needs to think ahead about how to support a new Pastor in this area.

In the future, consider offering Sabbatical to Pastors after 7 years of serving. This will require Pulpit Supply, Bridge Pastors, etc. and is often used in the summer months.

Museum Board (N/A)

New Business:

VSGMI quote has been received for Parsonage Insurance: Dwelling Basic: personal property, water backup/sewer, FD service, Subversive Pumps. Includes Equipment breakdown, liability and medical.

Ally from Peters Insurance / AutoOwners Insurance will be contacted for a quote as well.

TABLED DISCUSSION AT THIS TIME

April Meeting Dates: (Tentative schedule)

Property: Monday April 6th @4pm

Finance: Monday April 13th @4:45pm

Parish Life: Monday April 13th @5:30pm

Executive:

Council: Monday April 13th @ 6pm (Devotions: Barbara Weigman)

It was moved and seconded to adjourn at 7:10pm.

MOTION CARRIED

Meeting closed with the Lord’s Prayer

Report submitted by: Barbara Weigman, Secretary

VASA EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
Treasurer’s Report
February 28, 2026

For the Month of February:

Checkbook Balance, February 1, 2026	\$ 64,442.05
General Fund Contributions:	8,360.87
Total Funds Available	72,802.92
Budget Approved Monthly Expenses:	(13,236.35)
Checkbook Balance, February 28, 2026	\$ 59,566.57

Income behind budget by: \$18,756
for 2 months of 2026

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**



MARK'S MEDITATION

A CHANGING FAITH

Last month I wrote about how the biblical ideas of trust, faith and belief have changed over time. The ancient Hebrews emphasized *trust* in God, while the Christian church evolved to emphasize *belief* in Christ. These changes in faith can also occur at a personal level. That is certainly true for me. Writing these essays for the Vasa Voice has been one of the catalysts for that change.

If there is a theme to my Vasa Voice articles, it is that I endeavor to reconcile our Christian traditions to the modern world. This is a tactical necessity when you are an engineer by profession and temperament, but married to a pastor. To reconcile and connect Scripture to daily life, I find it helpful to understand the history and background of the societies that each biblical author was speaking to. There is always a subtext when humans communicate. Knowing the history helps uncover this. This is why I have grown to have contempt for those who argue that the Bible must be accepted as literal history. Those who insist on this are lazy, willfully ignorant, and sure to miss the forest for the trees.

So, how has my faith changed? Let me offer a personal confession. First, I no longer believe in *supernatural* miracles. I don't fault the Biblical authors. I'm sure they *perceived* events to be miraculous. But I believe that God is consistent in upholding His laws of physics. Because of this faithfulness, we get to have nice things like cell phones, airplanes and vaccines. Now, I *do* believe there are miracles; the kind that occur in the hearts of the people around me; the kind of miracles that God makes happen through the hands of His people.

So, no supernatural miracles. What about the Virgin Birth? Nope. Not a thing. Mary might have perceived she was a virgin, but Jesus got those Y-chromosomes from somewhere. If you stand near me at church while we recite the creeds, you will hear me simply say "born of ... Mary." This aligns me with the Apostle Paul who repeatedly emphasized Christ's humanity; often using the phrase "born of a woman."

My understanding of Jesus Christ as a sacrificial lamb has changed. What is it about his execution, or his resurrection, that atones for our sins? This is complicated stuff. It took the Church Fathers centuries to work out an orthodox meaning. Here I follow the gospel of Luke. (See my March-25 article.)

Luke sees God's actions through Jesus Christ as 100% grace. Salvation is offered freely, no transaction necessary. This reverses the concept of faith. It is God's faith in us that is at the highest level. God is saying "I find you trustworthy." What stupendous courage God has!

So, if our salvation is entirely a gift from God, that implies there was never an Original Sin to be atoned for. Right. Augustine was a great theologian, but on this point, he got it wrong. Original Sin is a disgusting concept. The idea that a people are condemned because of the actions of their ancestors is the very definition of racism. I reject this completely. (Besides, Original Sin is entirely unnecessary by Luke's logic.)

Finally, my beliefs about apocalyptic prophesy and the Second Coming have changed. Paul said that he expected to meet Christ "in the air" at his return. Meanwhile, the Gospels have Jesus saying "This generation will not pass away until all things have taken place." (1 Thessalonians 4:17, Matthew 24:34, Mark 13:30, Luke 21:32.) Yet, this didn't happen. Was Jesus lying? Here I follow the Rev. John Shelby Spong. He argues that the Second Coming has already occurred! It is the event we call Pentecost. Prophecy has been fulfilled. (So, yes. I skip over the part about waiting for Jesus to come in the creed too.)

What about pre-millennial dispensationalism, Tim LeHaye and the "Left Behind" books, and the thousands and thousands of websites trumpeting a coming Armageddon? Rubbish. It's all rubbish. The Kingdom of God is here and now; we dwell in the New Jerusalem. There is no verdant paradise greater than planet Earth. It is when we acknowledge this that we get to experience the grace of God.

You might be thinking "But Mark, if you reject parts of the creed, that means you are not an orthodox Christian." Yes. I do not deny it. I consider myself a "practicing Christian," not an orthodox one. (Rest assured, Pastor Maureen strives to be an orthodox Lutheran.) I'm confessing these beliefs because I want you to know that it is okay to doubt; it is okay for faith to change and evolve. You might also ask "If you disagree with the creeds, why attend church?" I attend because that is where I find God; not up on the altar, but with in the people sitting next to me in the pews.

2026

ANNUAL VASA AND WELCH AREA

SPRING RUMMAGE (& BAKE) SALE

Donation Drop-off

Saturday, April 18th 8-Noon
(no furniture drop off on Sat.)

Sunday, April 19th 10-2
Monday, April 20th Noon-7
Tuesday, April 21st Noon-7

Bake Sale Items ONLY

Wednesday, April 22nd Noon-6

Vasa Church only open:

Thursday, April 23, 9 am-6 pm

Friday, April 24, 9 am-3 pm

Other sales may be open:

Saturday, April 25, 8am-Noon

Items Needed:

- Gently used clothing, sorted by gender and size.
- Books/Toys
- Small furniture items and tools
- Baby clothing and other baby items.
- Kinck-Knacks, linens, jewelry
- Small appliances
- Seasonal Holiday items
- Home decorations



BAKE SALE

All types of baked items are welcome: Pies. Cakes. Coffee Cakes. Rolls. Bars. Cookies. Breads. Buns.

**DROP OFF on Wednesday
April 23rd ONLY by 6 pm!**

Sales to be held at Vasa Lutheran Center on HWY 19 and at various homes along County Rd 7 for over 8 miles! Lunch served Thurs/Fri at Vasa Lutheran Church.

Vasa is also running a fund-raiser through the Epilepsy Foundation. They will pay us according to the amount of donations we have. clothing, linens, shoes, purses, belts and bedding will be accepted through June 8th at the Lutheran Center.

If you are interested in volunteering, contact Faye Drewianka at 651-212-3209 or Dawn Lindstrom at 651-764-3112

PLEASE—NO Exercise Equipment, mattresses, TVs or large electronics

2026

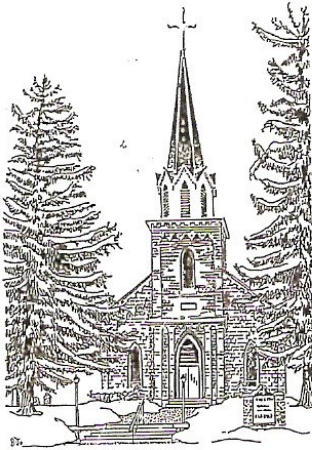
APRIL

			1 Women's Bible Study 9:30—11:00	2 Pastor's Day Off	3 Pastor's Day Off	4 Pastor's Day Off
5 9AM 	6 TEAMS MEET 4 PM Property	7  9:30	8 NO VASA FAMILY FUN NIGHT WATCH FOR MAY VOICE FOR A SPECIAL CELEBRATION	9 Pastor's Day Off	10 Pastor's Day Off	11 Pastor's Day Off
12 9AM Service of the Word (+ SS)	13 TEAMS MEET 4:45 PM Finance 5:30 PM Parish Life 6PM CHURCH COUNCIL	14  9:30	15 Women's Bible Study 9:30—11:00  1pm—7pm	16	17	18 8AM—NOON Rummage Sale Set Up
19 9AM Service of Holy Communion 10AM-2PM Rummage Sale Set Up	20 Noon-7PM Rummage Sale Set Up	21  9:30 Noon-7PM Rummage Sale Set Up	22 9AM— 6PM Bake Sale Item Drop-Off & Final Set Up	23 9AM-6PM 	24 9AM—3PM	25 8AM—NOON
26 9AM Service of the Word (+ SS)	27	28  9:30	29 Endowment Team 4:30PM	30 Pastor's Day Off		

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

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

Vasa Mission Statement

We, the Vasa Congregation,

Called by God, commit to:

Worshipping together,

Growing in Faith,

Serving Others, and

Welcoming and loving all!