



Highlights of Life at Vasa in February

February 3 - Confirmation

Confirmation classes will begin for 7th and 8th graders on February 3, 2021. We will meet in Classroom #3 at the Lutheran Center. Please bring your (brown) Spark Bible. See you then!

February 10 - Community Dinner Canceled

Until more people can be vaccinated, we will continue to suspend The Free Vasa Community Dinner.

February 17 - Ash Wednesday

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 17th, with a worship service at 7pm in the Sanctuary.

February 24 - Lenten Worship - Holden Evening Prayer See more about the Lenten Worship services on page 7

February 28 Vasa Annual Meeting

On this Sunday our worship will take place in the sanctuary with a brief service of Holy Communion. The meeting will immediately follow, but will only consist of elections and approval of the 2021 budget. For more details, see page 8!



Here's what's on the Inside!

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Pastor's Thoughts for February

Words matter. Your words matter.

When I was in high school (back in the dark ages) we had Sunday school classes for youth beyond confirmation age. In other words, there was a class for juniors and a separate class for the seniors. It still surprises me when I think that a bunch of sleepy 17 and 18 year olds would come to church on Sunday morning to sit in class....but we did.

Our senior class teacher was a woman named Gladys Fredrickson. She seemed old to us, although I suspect she wasn't necessarily all that old. One thing that she did in that class left a lasting impression on me. One Sunday she pulled out a piano bench and stood on it. She made two of the boys stand on the floor beside the bench with instructions to catch her if she fell. Then she proceeded to recite Romans 8:38-39.

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, 39 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 she did so she waved her arms up and down and spread them wide to emphasize the words height, depth nor anything else in all creation. (That's why she needed the guys to stand by the bench!) She did this several Sundays in a row and forced us to memorize these two verses saying that "someday we were going to need to know these words."

About a year later I was attending Concordia College in Moorhead and apparently I recreated the scene for my roommate. Recently I reconnected with my former roommate and she shared her memory of me standing on a chair and reciting those verses. To be honest, I have no memory of doing this in front of her. But she remembered.

Words matter. Mrs. Fredrickson's words mattered 45 years ago. My words mattered to my roommate. I have continued to share those Bible verses with friends and acquaintances many times over the years. We never know when our words are going to make a difference in someone's life.

Mrs. Fredrickson was absolutely right. Someday I was going to need to know these words.

Pastor Maureen

VASA EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH	
Treasurer's Report	
December, 2020	
For the Month of December:	
Checkbook Balance, December 1, 2020	\$ 49,009.85
General Fund Contributions:	17,671.80
Mission Endowment Offering for Food Shelf	1,000.00
Total Funds Available	67,681.65
Budget Approved Monthly Expenses:	<u>21,298.78</u>
Checkbook Balance, December 31, 2020	\$ 46,382.87
Mission Investment Fund, November 30, 2020	\$20,583.30
Mission Investment Fund, December 31, 2020	\$20,598.96

Readers for February

READERS

- 7 Duane Martenson
- 14 Marcia Featherstone
- 17 Kathy Tilderquist (Ash Wed)
- 21 Sid Feathersone
- 28 BJ Norman



Apologies for mistakes or omissions. If you know of any birthdays that are missing or wrong, please contact the Vasa church office.



February Birthdays!

- 2 Riley Munson
- 3 Jocelyn Finne
Connor Hyllengren
Chantz Nelson
- 6 Cynthia Gianoli
- 7 Ben Norman
Michael Bauch
Elleanor Diercks
- 8 Lorrie Samuelson
- 10 Shelley Evanson
- 13 Stella Stejar
- 14 Mason Chaska
- 15 Jessica Anderson
Garrett Samuelson
- 18 Kathi Pearson
- 19 Daniel Anderson
Dora Boe
- 21 Faye Drewianka
- 22 James Anderson
Larissa Fredin
Chance Rehder
Michele Rehder
- 23 Kyle Gillis
- 24 Dawn Lindstrom
- 25 Robert Sammelson
- 26 Lucy Sense
- 27 Emmett Pearson Jr.



Save the date for the annual meeting to be held on Sunday, February 28. We will meet in the sanctuary at 9:00 for a brief worship service with communion, and then start the annual meeting immediately after. Business will include election of new Council Members, and approval of the 2021 budget. Because of Covid, there will NOT be a meal following the meeting.

VASA LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

December 21, 2020 @ Lutheran Center

Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 6:30pm by Greg Drewianka, President

Devotions: Pastor Maureen

Members present and Absent:

Present: Pastor Maureen Hagen; Jim Hedeem, Vice President; Rick Samuelson; Dan Hedeem; Duane Hanson; Andrew Featherstone; Sid Featherstone; Lora Gruber; Ben Norman and Steve Hyllengren, Greg Drewianka

Eleven voting members present

Unable to Attend: Kevin Eckblad; Mike Carlson; Jessica Anderson

Also Present: Kathy Tilderquist

Adoption of the agenda:

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

MOTION CARRIED

Approval of Minutes:

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the November 16, 2020 council meeting as written.

MOTION CARRIED

Reports Reviewed and Accepted:

1. Treasurer and Finance Team Report (Attached)
2. Parish Life (Attached)
 - a. The Christmas Tree will be taken down January 2
3. Property Team Report. (Attached)
 - a. Seal coating of parking lots could be put off of 1-2 yrs. A cost estimate is being put together.
4. Museum Board (No Meeting)
5. Endowment Board Report (No Meeting report)
6. Cemetery Board (No Meeting)
7. Executive Board Report (Attached)
8. Pastor's Report (Report Attached)

Tabled/Old Business (Gazebo update has been tabled until April)

New Business

- 1) Live streaming Sunday Services was discussed, Mark Hagen has determined that our Wifi is too slow.
- 2) A videographer position is needed if we pursue live streaming, etc. in the long term.

It was moved and seconded to approve Mark Hagen as videographer.

MOTION CARRIED

It was moved and seconded to approve paying the videographer \$10/hr

MOTION CARRIED

It was moved and seconded to approve reimbursing Mark Hagen \$2000.00 for video services already rendered dating back to March, 2020 (approx 200hrs work).

MOTION CARRIED

- 3) Annual meeting challenges in regard of Covid-19 centered on delaying the meeting for a month or so. No decision was reached.

The budget needs to be set before the January 18, 2021 council meeting.

Discussion

- 1) There is no possibility of having an intern at this time.
- 2) The outside request for using the LC kitchen for a few months was withdrawn.
- 3) Phone and email service from Neuvera has some serious problems, especially regarding emails. It will be investigated for the possibility of using ICON or another service for email.

January Meeting Dates: (Tentative schedule)

Parish Life: Monday January 4th @ 6:30pm

Finance: Monday January 4th @ 1:00pm

Property: Monday January 4th @ 9:30am

Executive: Monday January 11th @ 1:00pm

Council: Monday January 18th @ 6:30pm Devotions: Lora Gruber

It was moved and seconded to adjourn at 8:30 pm.

MOTION CARRIED

Meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer

Report submitted by: Greg Drewianka (Acting secretary)

Red Wing Area Food Shelf

OUR MISSION:

Secure & Distribute Nutritious Food To Individuals & Households In Need.

Date: *12/29/2020*

Dear, *Vasa church-*

Thank you very much for your donation of:

333 # food

to the Red Wing Area Food Shelf. With assistance from people like you, we can continue to meet the temporary hunger needs of families in our area.

Sincerely,

Sue Kelly

For the Red Wing Area
Food Shelf

**No goods or services were received
in exchange for this donation.*



Red Wing Area Food Shelf

OUR MISSION:

Secure & Distribute Nutritious Food To Individuals & Households In Need.

Date: *1-12-21*

Dear, *Vasa Lutheran Church,*

Thank you very much for your donation of:

\$ 967.50 Ck. 21059

to the Red Wing Area Food Shelf. With assistance from people like you, we can continue to meet the temporary hunger needs of families in our area.

Sincerely,

Deb Dross

For the Red Wing Area
Food Shelf

**No goods or services were received
in exchange for this donation.*



Bob Crouse would like to thank everyone in our church community for thinking of him during his recent surgery and ongoing rehabilitation. Vasa truly is a special place.



Lenten Worship

Lent

Ash Wednesday is the beginning of Lent. This year Ash Wednesday falls on February 17. We will have in-person worship at 7:00 in the sanctuary. The service will include an opportunity for the imposition of ashes as well as Holy Communion.



Wednesday Evening Worship during Lent will be held in the Church Sanctuary, Feb. 24 - March 24. Anne Anderson and Emily Peterson will accompany us as we sing Holden Evening Prayer.



This year our Lenten Theme is Suffering and Redemption: Women in Genesis. Each week we will read a difficult story from the book of Genesis. The text will be a story of the challenges and suffering that a female character faced. From that point of distress we will consider how God acts to redeem them, and by extension, us. The themes are as follows:

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| February 24 | Eve: Tempted and Redeemed |
| March 3 | Hagar and Sarah: Cast Out and Restored |
| March 10 | Lot's Daughters: Dispossessed and Choosing Life |
| March 17 | Dinah: Loved and Used |
| March 24 | To be Announced |

The Work of Christmas

By Howard Thurman

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among others,
To make music in the heart.



Annual Meeting

Sunday, February 28, 2020

**After the 9am Worship Service
in the Sanctuary.**

Confirmation Classes

Confirmation classes will begin on Wednesday evening February 3. We will meet on Wednesday evenings from 5:30-6:30pm at the Lutheran Center in classroom #3. Classes will run through March 31. Remember to bring your Spark Bibles!



First Communion Classes

1st Communion Classes begin on Sunday, March 7 at 10:00 a.m. in the Lutheran Center, classroom #3. They will continue on each Sunday, through March 28. Each class will last about 45 minutes. The final class will include baking communion bread and tasting other kinds of communion bread, wine, and grape juice. Also, students will practice different ways to receive communion since different churches distribute communion in different ways.

Mark's Musings: Salvation

By Mark Hagen

What is "Salvation?" What should we understand about the question "Are you saved?" The popular understanding is that this person is going to heaven in the after-life. But is this what Jesus and the early Christians understood?

In the September 2020 Vasa Voice, I gave a short history of heaven and hell. For most of Israeli history, there was no after-life. When you died, that was it. The first reference to an after-life is in the book of Daniel. Daniel is set in the sixth century BCE, but it can be accurately dated to the year 165 BCE. (See the Wikipedia entry for attestation.) What was happening in Judea in the 2nd century BCE? They were under occupation, first by the Greeks, then the Seleucid kings, and lastly, by the Romans. This oppression brought misery and death to the Judeans. Many Jews thought, "Where is God's righteousness?" There must be a heavenly reward for martyrs.

The existence of an after-life was a question that divided Judea. The Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, and Zealots all had different views. The Pharisees believed in an after-life, the Sadducees did not. Paul states that he was a Pharisee. His letters confirmed a belief in an after-life, yet his writing focus was *not* on an after-life, but on a *new* life, "in Christ." Paul used the language of "dying to yourself" and entering the body of Christ. The implication was that this new life is in the here and now, not the here-after.

We know that early Christians prayed for the dead. Starting in the twelfth century, the Church taught that when you died you went to Purgatory, a sort of holding pattern for the dead. People didn't get to heaven until "the final judgment." So to get them out of purgatory faster, the Church sold "indulgences" to the family members of the deceased (documents which claimed to move your relatives to the front of the line in Purgatory.) It was, in fact, the selling of these indulgences that Martin Luther was protesting when he confronted the Roman Church in 1517.

Jesus also appears to believe in an after-life, though he spoke very little about it. When he did, like Paul, he equated "eternal life" to a condition experienced in the here and now. Consider this passage from the 4th chapter of Gospel of John. Notice that the text is in the present tense.

Then Jesus explained: "My nourishment comes from doing the will of God, who sent me, and from finishing his work. ...

³⁶ The harvesters are paid good wages, and the fruit they harvest are people brought to eternal life. What joy awaits both the planter and the harvester alike!

Marcus Borg, in his book "The Heart of Christianity" (2003) says there are two ways to understand the Gospel when it talks of "eternal life" and salvation and it is sort-of a "good news/bad news" reading. The "bad news" version is that there will be a last judgment, either at the end of our lives or at the end of history, and you better be ready or you'll be in deep trouble. This is Christianity as a religion of threat, anxiety, and self-preservation. The "good news" version is an invitation into a new life here and now, one that transforms us personally and seeks to transform life in this world. Borg states, "Salvation is about life with God, life in the presence of God, now and forever."



Thanks to Ben Norman for seeding the ball field with prairie grasses and flowers back in early December. We anxiously await the new life that will spring forth when the snows melt.



New Flag in Front of the Church



It's been a tale of two flags and two new ropes over the last couple of months for the flagpole in front of the church. Over the last few years Karen Lindblom has graciously provided the new flags needed at the church. In October she let me know that flags were on back order at the VFW in Cannon Falls. Turns out there were no flags available at any of the usual locations. We performed an abbreviated flag ceremony at the pole on Sunday, Nov. 8th in honor of Veteran's Day but couldn't replace the flag.

On Christmas Day the flag was discovered on the ground. It wasn't vandalism, but rather the newly installed rope had frayed and caused the flag to fall. Thanks to Steve Hyllengren and his bucket truck a new rope was installed in mid-January. By then flags were in stock at the VFW and Karen dropped one off at the church office. The new flag was raised on January 22 under a bright blue sky and with a stiff northwesterly breeze making it flow proudly in the wind.

Many thanks to Karen and Troy Lindblom for providing Vasa with the flag.

Many thanks to Steve Hyllengren whose bucket truck is frequently used for repairs and chores at the church.

SAVE THE DATE

COMING UP



April 23 & 24

Plans are underway for the next Vasa Rummage Sale! Help us make this our most successful Rummage Sale ever! After a spending a year at home, hopefully you have had time to clean out and find lost of hidden treasures for us to sell! Tell your neighbors, relatives and friends! Questions? Call Faye Drewianka - 651-212-3209!

thrivent

Choice Dollars® Details

Eligible clients with membership can recommend where Thrivent distributes some of its charitable grant funds. These recommendations are shared by directing Choice Dollars to enrolled nonprofit organizations, including churches.

Eligibility requirements

To be eligible to direct Choice Dollars as part of Thrivent Choice®, you must be a client with benefit membership.¹ Individual eligibility is also based on at least one of the following:

- Having \$750 or more in annual billed premiums of qualifying life and health insurance products.
- Having \$20,000 or more in contract value of qualifying life insurance and annuity products.

Eligibility is determined monthly and reevaluated on an annual basis.

Minimum and maximum Choice Dollars designations

Eligible clients will be designated a minimum of 25 Choice Dollars and a maximum of 5,000 Choice Dollars per eligibility period (Jan. 1 to Dec. 31).

Choice Dollars expiration date

Choice Dollars designated during the calendar year can be directed until March 31 of the following year.



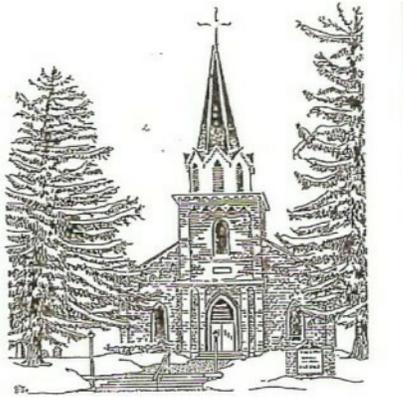
¹ A client with benefit membership is someone 16 years or older who meets membership eligibility, has been admitted for membership, and has a qualified connection to a Thrivent financial insurance or annuity product or received a settlement agreement from such insurance.

The Thrivent Choice® charitable grant program engages Thrivent members and Thrivent Member Networks in providing grants that support charitable activities, furthering Thrivent's mission and its purposes under state law. All grant decisions, including grant recipients and amounts, are made at the sole discretion of Thrivent. Directing Choice Dollars® is subject to the program's Terms and Conditions available at thrivent.com/thriventchoice.

FEBRUARY 2021

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 9:30am Property Team 1:00pm Finance Team 6:30pm Parish Life Team	2	3 7:00pm Wednesday Evening Worship – via ZOOM Confirmation 5:30-6:30	4	5	6 Pastor's Day Off
7 9am Service of Holy Communion	8 1:00pm Executive Team	9	10 7:00 pm Wednesday Evening worship – via Zoom Confirmation 5:30-6:30	11	12	13 Pastor's Day Off
14 9am Service of Holy Communion  Happy Valentine's Day!	15 7:30pm Church Council	16	17 Ash Wednesday  Remember man that you are dust and into dust you shall return. Worship 7:00pm	18	19	20 Pastor's Day Off
21 9am Service of Holy Communion	22	23	24 Confirmation 5:30-6:30	25	26	27 Pastor's Day Off
28 9am Service of Holy Communion 9:45am Annual Meeting in Sanctuary						

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

9:00 am Sundays

Christian Education

9:00-10:00 am Sunday School

7:00 pm Wednesday evenings - via Zoom (contact
Pastor Maureen for invitation login)

Faith Formation Night

5:15-7pm Wednesdays,
Vasa Lutheran Center

Confirmation

5:30-6:30 pm Wednesdays (beginning Feb 3)
Vasa Lutheran Center

Pastor Maureen Hagen

pastormaureen@sleepyeyetel.net

(Cell) 507-251-5270

Church Office 651-258-4327

Office Email: vasalutheran@sleepyeyetel.net

Website: vasalutheran.org

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 LaPaz, Bolivia

pmikaelson@gmail.com

web site: 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!

Scatter seeds
of kindness
wherever you go