



The Vasa Voice



VOLUME 59 No. 2

FEBRUARY 2023



What's Happening This Month at Vasa

February 8th—Community Dinner (Beef stew, coleslaw, cornbread, and a brownie.) Take-out orders will be available at 5:00; In-person dining will begin at 5:30.

February 19th—Intergenerational Worship at the Lutheran Center

Worship will be held at the Lutheran Center on February 19th which will include the sacrament of Holy Communion. There will be a children's sermon and then there will be Sunday School for the children of the congregation for the remainder of the service in their usual Sunday School rooms.

February 22nd—Ash Wednesday

No Faith Formation for the students will take place on Ash Wednesday. The Ash Wednesday service will take place at 7 PM at the church. Confirmation students should plan to attend this service. Holden Evening Prayer will be used in our worship.

February 26—Annual Meeting

Stay tuned for the location of the annual meeting, which will be held on February 26 after the worship service is over (10-10:15 AM). The meeting will be available on Zoom this year so that members can attend the meeting virtually. The link for the Zoom meeting will be available closer to the date of the meeting.

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

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Worship Volunteers for FEBRUARY

USHER

February 5 volunteer needed
February 12 Barry Skog
February 19 Marv Fredrickson
February 26 Barry Skog

READERS

February 5 Jim Hedeem
February 12 Sid Featherstone
February 19 Mo Hauck
February 26 Katie Featherstone

HOSPITALITY

February 5 Marilyn Hanson
February 12 *volunteer needed*
February 19 *volunteer needed*
February 26 *volunteer needed*

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS

February 5 Kevin Eckblad
February 19 Andrew Featherstone

February birthdays

Josie Finne	Feb. 3
Connor Hyllengren	Feb. 3
Chantz Nelson	Feb. 3
Parker Anderson	Feb. 5
Gloria Featherstone	Feb. 6
Cynthia Gianoli	Feb. 6
Mike Bauch	Feb. 7
Elleanor Diercks	Feb. 7
Ben Norman	Feb. 7
Lorrie Samuelson	Feb. 8
Taylor Carlson	Feb. 10
Shelley Evanson	Feb. 10
Stella Stejar	Feb. 13
Mason Chaska	Feb. 14
Jessica Anderson	Feb. 15
Garrett Samuelson	Feb. 15
Kathi Pearson	Feb. 18
Dora Boe	Feb. 19
Josh Erhardt	Feb. 19
Faye Drewianka	Feb. 21
Jim Anderson	Feb. 22
Larissa Fredin	Feb. 22
Chance Rehder	Feb. 22
Michele Rehder	Feb. 22
Kyle Gillis	Feb. 23
Dawn Lindstrom	Feb. 24
Bob Sammelson	Feb. 25
Lucy Sense	Feb. 26
Oliver Erhardt	Feb. 26
Emmett Pearson	Feb. 27



In the spirit of keeping the children involved in the worship experience, we will worship with Holy Communion at the Lutheran Center on February 19. Children will be released from the service to go to Sunday School after the children's sermon.



Thoughts from Pastor Maureen

Over the next few months Vasa Congregation will be reading the story of Jesus' life as it is recorded in the Gospel of Matthew.

Jesus's first major teaching in the gospel of Matthew begins in chapter 5 and is called the Sermon on the Mount. The opening verses of the sermon are often called the Beatitudes and each one begins with the word *blessed*. *Makarios* is the Greek word. The dictionary says that this word means happy, fortunate, or blessed. Sometimes finding a word that accurately captures the meaning when translating is difficult. Using the word *blessed* can feel confusing because many of the blessings that Jesus talks about are character traits or characteristics that people view negatively. No one wants to be poor in spirit, or in mourning or meek or yearning for righteousness. One might argue that some of the later character traits might be viewed more positively: namely being merciful, or pure in heart or a peacemaker. But even those characteristics are looked down on by the powerful and ruthless of our world.

Perhaps the New Living Translation and the Contemporary English Version have it right when they say it this way: *God blesses those...* God blesses those who are poor in spirit, or in mourning or meek or yearning for

righteousness. God blesses those who maintain the characteristics of mercy, purity, or peacemaking in spite of the pressures of powerful and ruthless people. These translations give the reader something to look forward to while encouraging them to anticipate blessings from God.

Walter Brueggeman wrote: "The scandal of the gospel is that God gives a future to people who are in despair." He is echoing the prophet Jeremiah who said, "For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope." (29:11)

Any of us who have experienced a devastating loss in our lives know what it's like to be on the edge of despair. The beatitudes of Jesus give us hope. They are not rules for behavior. They are a description of a future under God's jurisdiction. They describe life in God's kingdom to come while challenging us to encourage the in-breaking of God's kingdom through our behaviors; behaviors that reflect God's kingdom to come.

Looking toward the future,

Pastor Maureen

Jesus' Radical Vision of the Kingdom of God.

"A Lenten Study of the Beatitudes."

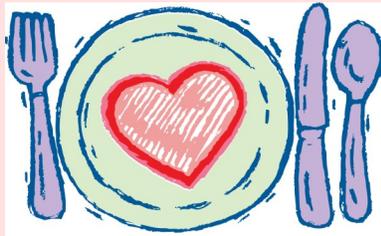
Bishop N.T. Wright says of the Beatitudes: "They are a summons to live in the present in the way that will make sense in God's promised future; because that future has arrived in the present in Jesus of Nazareth."

During the season of Lent we will look closely at the Beatitudes from Matthew 5. The Beatitudes should not be thought of as a prescription but rather as a description. There is no requirement that we live them to the fullest in order to attain heaven. Rather these words are a description of a way of life that we are summoned to practice living into; a way of life that "will make sense in God's prom-

ised future." Each week we will consider two of the Beatitudes and open our hearts to the possibilities of life in the Kingdom of God.

As has long been Vasa's Lenten practice Holden Evening Prayer will be the worship liturgy. We will also solicit gifts of money for the local food shelves in Cannon Falls and Red Wing.

Lenten worship will begin on Ash Wednesday, February 22 and go through March 29 at the church at 7 pm.



COMMUNITY DINNER

The February Community Dinner is on February 8th. Be sure and get your reservations in by February 1, at noon, either by email, phone or online (If you have trouble with the online one, please let the office know!)

Just a note that there are plenty of DINE-IN spots available—with plenty of space to spread out!

Also, remember to bring your food shelf donations with you! Vasa is collecting all year. Here are some suggested items:

- *Cereal
- *Canned Chicken
- *Canned Fruit
- *Chili
- *Diced Tomatoes
- *Sloppy joe sauce
- *Hamburger Helper
- *Snack crackers
- *Cookies
- *Pasta



Faith Formation



First Communion classes for current 5th graders begin March 12th at 10:15am at the Lutheran Center. Mark your calendars!!



The annual meeting will be held on Sunday, February 26 right after church. We need a quorum of 40 people in order to approve the budget for the next year, so please plan to attend either in person or on Zoom. The link will be available closer to the time of the meeting.

April 20th-21st



Rummage Sale

Plans are underway for the next Vasa Rummage Sale! Tell your neighbors, relatives and friends! Questions? Call Faye Drewianka—651-212-3209



VASA LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING
December 19, 2022 @Lutheran Church

Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 6:10 pm by Randy Klein, Vice President

Devotions: Andrew Featherstone

Members present and absent:

Present: Pastor Maureen Hagen; Randy Klein, Vice President; Mo Hauck; Brian Diercks; Duane Hanson; Missy McCann; Ben Norman; Kent Volz; and Andrew Featherstone, Secretary;
Nine voting members present

Unable to attend: Barb Weigman, President; Lora Gruber; Chris Finne; and Jason Stahnke.

Also Present: Kathy Tilderquist

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 November 21, 2022 council meeting as written.

MOTION CARRIED

Reports Reviewed and Accepted:

Treasurer's Report (Attached)

Committees will work on 2023 budget at team meetings on January 2.
Garbage bill went up \$13.95 per month for surcharge.

Finance Report (Attached)

It was moved and seconded to increase Mission Support from \$600.00 each month to \$625 each month.

MOTION CARRIED

It was moved and seconded to purchase 16 plastic tables from Sam's Club to replace current round tables.

MOTION CARRIED

Parish Life (Attached)

Children Christmas program in the gym was a success.

It was moved and seconded to have January and February Intergenerational service at Lutheran Center on the third Sunday of the month. Also, film with camera to put the service on YouTube Channel.

MOTION CARRIED

Annual meeting will take place Sunday February 26th. We will discuss at January council meeting about having a zoom and live stream for meeting.

Property Team Report (NA)

We are getting bids soon for storm windows for church.

Ben the renter hasn't given us renters insurance agreement yet.

Cemetery Board (NA)

Executive Board Report (NA)

Pastor's Report) Attached)

We met for a meeting with Church Mutual. We will be starting an incidents log, to keep in office

We will be doing background checks for VBS and basic first aid. Background checks will be \$5.00 a person coming from Parish Life fund.

Museum Board (N/A)

Endowment Board Report (N/A)

New Business:

Insurance policy- It was moved and seconded to keep 100% replacement cost on Parsonage, delete blanket property coverage, delete employment- related practice liability, and add computer/finds transfer fraud protection for \$6.00 a year.

MOTION CARRIED



VASA CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
(CONTINUED)

It was a very busy month for Pastor Maureen. From Sunday November 13 to Sunday November 20 she led worship eight times and presided communion at seven of those services. All together 400 people received the sacrament.

Museum Board (NA)

Pancake Breakfast went well this year.

Museum is putting together a short video on how Vasa got started and will be displayed starting in February.

Endowment Board Report (N/A)

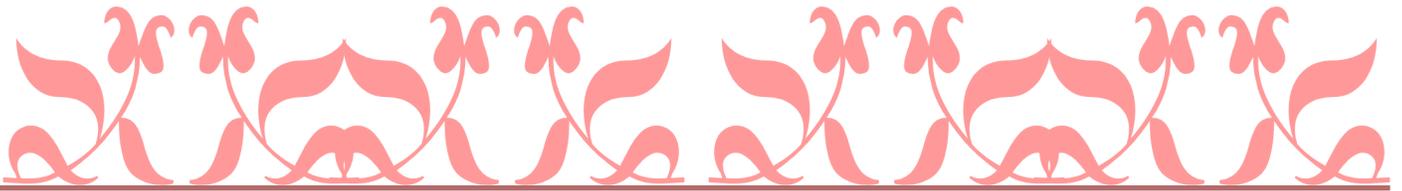
It was moved and seconded to adjourn at 7:15 PM.

MOTION CARRIED

Meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer

Report submitted by: Andrew Featherstone, Secretary

VASA EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH		<u>CHURCH COUNCIL</u>	
Treasurer's Report December, 2022		President: Barbara Weigman, Barbara.weigman@gmail.com	507-202-7880
For the Month of December:		Vice President: Randy Klein rdklein@mmm.com	651-212-8045
Checkbook Balance, December, 1, 2022 \$ 56,326.08		Secretary: Andrew Featherstone rwfeatherstonepainting@gmail.com	651-470-9823
General Fund Contributions:	16,990.28	Bryan Diercks	507-259-3909
Mission Endowment Offering	8,240.00	Chris Finne	651-380-3690
Total Funds Available	81,556.36	Lora Gruber	51-212-3216
Budget Approved Monthly Expenses:	15,715.27	Duane Hanson	651-380-1763
Checkbook Balance, December 31, 2022	\$ 65,841.09	Maureen Hauck	651-331-8593
		Missy McCann	651-307-2274
		Ben Norman	651-208-7124
Mission Investment Fund, December 1, 2022	\$8,781.75	Jason Stahnke	651-764-2458
Mission Investment Fund, December 31, 2022	\$8,784.72	Kent Volz	651-402-0942
<u>WHO TO CONTACT IN CASE OF EMERGENCY</u>			
Indoors:	Jim Hedeem	651-380-6054	
Kitchen:	Sue Hedeem	651-380-6270	
	Faye Drewianka	651-212-3209	
Outdoors	Greg Drewianka	651-301-2472	
	Duane Hanson	651-380-1763	
	Steve Hyllengren	651-258-4338	



MARK'S MEDITATION

AN EPIPHANY

Have you ever had an epiphany? An epiphany (from the ancient Greek epiphaneia, "manifestation or striking appearance") is an experience of a sudden and striking realization. If you live long enough, you might have a religious epiphany. Let me tell you about mine.

I was camping with the Boy Scouts. It was a winter campout. We reserved a heated cabin, but the Scouts can earn a "Zero Hero" badge if they eat and sleep outside for the entire weekend. So, to encourage the Scouts, I slept outside—in the snow.

Because in the winter, there is little chance of rain and zero chance of mosquitos, we encourage the Scouts to sleep out under the stars. We make a depression in the snow, piling up a small berm around the depression. Then we lay out a sheet of plastic, a closed-cell sleeping pad, an air mattress, an outer sleeping bag, and inner sleeping bag, a fleece liner, long underwear and a fresh pair of socks, and finally our 98.6° bodies. This technique works remarkably well.

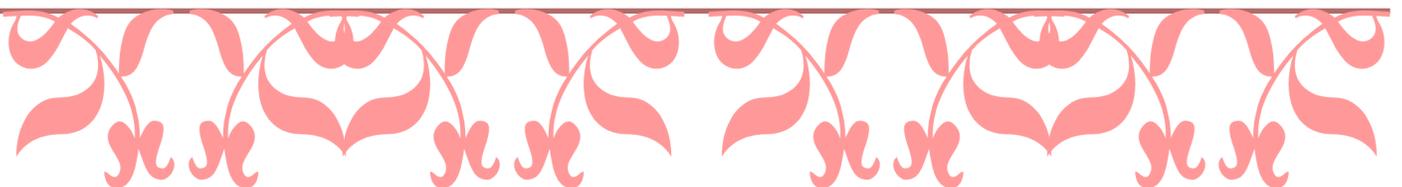
On this particular night we were camped in in a Girl Scout camp way down by Houston, MN. It was a gorgeous setting. A deep valley surrounded by forested limestone bluffs. The sky was clear and the stars shone brightly as they slowly turned overhead. It was beautiful. But it was cold—really cold.

As I lay there looking at the hills and the stars, it hit me. The rocks and trees, the stars overhead, as beautiful as they are—if I froze to death—they didn't care! That was the moment I stopped looking for God in in the earth or the sky. Nature is not God.

But if I cannot find God in a forest, or a grotto, or a beautiful sunset, where should I look? That was my epiphany. I have come to believe that we *always* experience God through the people around us. I think Scripture supports this view. Each miracle attributed to Jesus is a one-on-one interaction with people. Usually, a person experiencing loss.

This understanding of where to look for God has made me value Sunday worship. While I don't expect to find God in the liturgy. (Maybe in the sermon. After all, I see how hard Maureen works on this every week.) I do feel that I get to experience God in the interactions I have with the people around me. I value these relationships. They are a spiritual wealth. A wealth we all will have to spend some day.

faith
family
friends



Another Version of the Beatitudes

Early missionaries to North America learned the languages of the indigenous peoples and when the time was ripe guided the translation of the New Testament into their languages. Missionaries who did this well managed the translation process but encouraged converted indigenous people to participate and asked them to use concepts that made sense to them. Here is a version of the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-11) from the *First Nations Version of the New Testament*. You can hear the voices of the native Americans.

“Creator’s blessing rests on the poor, the ones with broken spirits. The good road from above is theirs to walk.

“Creator’s blessing rests on the ones who walk a trail of tears, for he will wipe the tears from their eyes and comfort them.

“Creator’s blessing rests on the ones who walk softly and in a humble manner. The earth, land, and sky will welcome them and always be their home.

“Creator’s blessing rests on the ones who hunger and thirst for wrongs to be made right again. They will eat and drink until they are full.

“Creator’s blessing rests on the ones who are merciful and kind to others. Their kindness will find its way back to them—full circle.

“Creator’s blessing rests on the pure of heart. They are the ones who will see the Great Spirit.

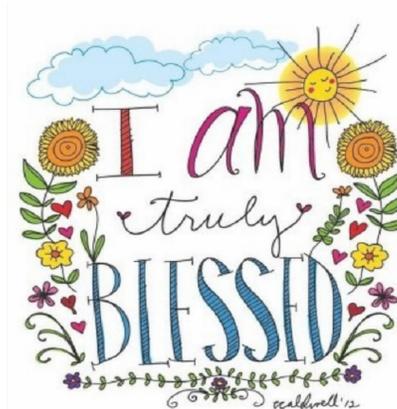
“Creator’s blessing rests on the ones who make peace. It will be said of them, ‘They are the children of the Great Spirit!’

“Creator’s blessing rests on the ones who are hunted down and mistreated for doing what is right, for they are walking the good road from above.

Others will lie about you, speak against you, and look down on you with scorn and contempt, all because you walk the road with me. This is a sign that Creator’s blessing is resting on you. So let your hearts be glad and jump for joy, for you will be honored in the spirit-world above. You are like the prophets of old, who were treated in the same way by your ancestors.

May “the Creator’s blessing” rest upon you this day,

Pastor Maureen



ReligionQuotes.info

Amazon Smile Donations Program

The Amazon Smile program is ending on February 20, 2023. Amazon has decided that they are going to do their philanthropic donations in another manner so you will not be able to credit Vasa with your donations through this program any more. In 2022, Vasa received \$29.10 from people who chose Vasa as their charity to donate to through their purchases. The program will be running until February 20, so if you order from Amazon before then, log into smile.amazon.com. Choose Vasa from the list of possible charities which are registered for this rebate and shop as you normally would. Vasa will get a check once the program ends which will include your donation made in February (from Amazon's pocket, not yours), and a also a final donation which will be double what we received last year. Thanks for your consideration!!



Thrivent Choice Dollars



Procedure to direct your Thrivent Choice Dollars to Vasa:

1. Open your computer browser and enter: Thrivent.com
2. Log in to your personal account
3. Select: Membership Overview
4. Select: Thrivent Choice
5. Select: Direct Choice Dollars
6. Check your eligibility
7. Direct your choice dollars to: Vasa Lutheran Church
 1. If possible, print the Donated Dollars page from the Printer Friendly box
 2. Put your name at the top of the page as well as how you want your dollars directed—giving to the Gazebo fund would be much appreciated right now.
 3. Give a copy to the church treasurer or leave it in the church office.
9. Log out

Ready to give back?

The choice is yours.

Questions about Directing your Thrivent Choice Dollars? Contact Faye Drewianka: 651-212-3209.

If you prefer to give your Choice Dollars by phone, call: 1-800-847-4836.

Even if you have done this before, you need to re-do it every year. Dollars must be designated for 2022 by March 31, 2023.

Offering Envelopes

Church Budget still has not given Vasa any idea as to when the 2023 offering envelopes will be at Vasa for our use. Thanks for your patience with this issue. If you need more unnumbered envelopes, please contact Kathy. The counters would appreciate it if you could put your offering number (if you know what it is) on your check or on your envelope. It makes their work much easier!

Thanks!!



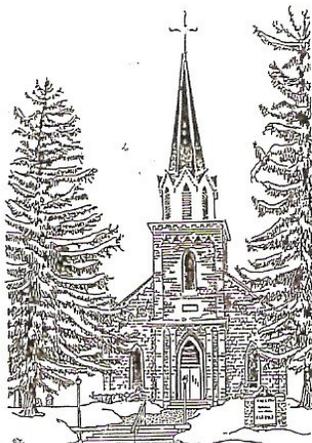
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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Community Dinner Reservations DUE! 5:30p Faith Formation 6:30p Wed Eve Worship	2	3	4 
5 9AM Service of Holy Communion	6 TEAMS MEET 5 PM Finance 6 PM Parish Life 6:30 PM Museum 7:00 PM Property	7  Conversation	8 Community Dinner 5pm—Pick Up 5:30p Dine In 5:30-6:30 Faith Formation 6:30pm Wednesday Eve Worship	9	10 Pastor's Day Off	11
12 9AM Service of the Word (with Sun- day School at the Lutheran Center)	13	14  Coffee and Conversation	15 Faith Formation 5:30-6:30 6:30pm Wednesday Eve Worship	16	17 Pastor's Day Off	18
19 9AM Service of Holy Communion (to be held at the Lutheran Center) Children attend Sunday School after Children's Sermon	20 6PM CHURCH COUNCIL	21  Coffee and Conversation	22 Ash Wednesday Service at the Church 7:00 pm	23	24 Pastor's Day Off	25
26 9AM Service of the Word (with Sun- day School at the Lutheran Center) Annual Meeting follows the church service	27	28  Coffee and Conversation			28 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
(Fellowship Room of Lutheran Center)

Executive Team

Barbara Weigman, Council President 507.202.7880

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

office@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 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!