



# The Vasa Voice

Volume 57 No.1

January 2021

## *Vasa Happenings in January*

### **January 13 - Community Dinner**

Once again we must cancel January's Community Dinner which was scheduled to take place on Wednesday, January 13<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm. It's not the drive through that poses the challenge; rather it is out of concern for all the volunteers who work in the kitchen and how very difficult it is to keep safe social distancing in place as they prepare the meals.

### **January 21-22 - Blood Drive**

Vasa will host another American Cross Blood Drive at the Lutheran Center on Thursday, January 21, from 1pm until 7pm, and on Friday, January 22, from 9am-3pm. Stop in, give blood, and save lives!! Refreshments will be available for donors.

### **Annual Report Deadline!!**

All committees, teams and boards should have their reports turned in to the Church Office for the 2020 Annual Report by **Thursday, January 28th**. Auditors will need all Financial Books at this time as well in order to complete their audits. Thank you for your cooperation with these deadlines!

**Wednesday Evening Worship** will be via Zoom beginning on January 6, at 7pm. As has been our practice when we gather in person, our time together will include reading the scripture lesson for the upcoming Sunday, followed by a conversation about questions that arises from that reading. In order to participate you must contact Pastor Maureen so she can send you the invitation link via email. A computer or cell phone with a camera and microphone are needed to participate. This past year has challenged us more than ever to be deliberate in our spiritual growth and development. We anxiously and prayerfully await the time when we are able to gather again as one community, "worshipping together, growing faith, serving others , and welcoming and loving all."

### *Here's what's on the Inside!*

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## Pastor's Thoughts for January

Just before the blizzard blasted into our area on Dec. 23rd, Rick Samuelson came to put up barriers across the cemetery driveway. Almost at the same time Duane Hanson was working on the metal rods sticking out of the ground at the site of the historical marker. That's when Rick saw a slow drip coming out of a water faucet along the driveway. Upon investigation the men discovered that a water valve was not completely shut off. The discovery came just ahead of the storm and subsequent bitter cold. With certainty those pipes would have frozen and there would have been extensive repairs necessary in the spring. *"For just such a time as this..."*

Perhaps the most famous verse in the book of Esther is spoken by Esther's uncle Mordecai in chapter 4. Esther is now a queen in the royal palace. The Jewish people are about to be massacred and Mordecai has sought her out in a desperate attempt to save her people. He says, "Who knows? Perhaps you have come to royal dignity for just such a time as this."

Who knows? Rick and Duane were in the right place at the right time to solve a problem. *"For just such a time as this..."*

In our baptisms each of us becomes a member of God's family; an heir of the kingdom. When we confess that Jesus sits at the right hand of God the Father we are using royal imagery. No, we don't sit at the right hand of God, but we do have a place in the royal throne room as members of God's family.

Is it possible that you have been placed in a particular position in your life *"For just such a time as this...?"* Is it possible that God has an especially important work for you to do or an especially important word for you to speak? *"for just such a time as this..."*

As we entered 2020, we had no idea what was in our future. We are once again at the beginning of a new year and have little idea what lies ahead. But we can trust God to utilize our hearts, our hands, and our voices to bring about a taste of the kingdom here on earth. We can trust that we are here *for just such a time as this.*

Happy New Year!

*Pastor Maureen*



The good news of the birth of Jesus was read in the church sanctuary on Christmas eve just after sundown. Photo credit: Mark Hagen



### VASA EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH Treasurer's Report November, 2020

Checkbook Balance, November 1, 2019	\$ 44,794.34
General Fund Contributions	10,562.23
Mission Endowment Offering	9,175.00
Total Funds Available	64,531.57
Budget Approved Monthly Expenses:	15,521.72
Checkbook Balance, November 30, 2020	\$ 49,009.85
Mission Investment Fund, Oct 29, 2020	\$20,568.09
Mission Investment Fund, Nov 30, 2020	\$20,583.30

## Mark's Musings - A TV Christmas

By Mark Hagen

For decades now, two staples of broadcast TV at Christmas time are the movies "It's a Wonderful Life" and "A Charlie Brown Christmas." Back in December of 2017, I showed clips from It's A Wonderful Life to the Wednesday evening gathering at Vasa. We talked about how, although he never mentioned Jesus by name, the character of George Bailey is an ideal Christian. Over and over George shares what he has, even to the point of despair. But in the end, his faith is rewarded. The whole movie, all two hours and 10 minutes, is a set-up for the final scene. George is toasted, "To my brother George, the richest man in town!"

We watched *It's a Wonderful Life* again this Christmas Eve. Two things stood out for me. 1) When things look the darkest, George prays. "God, show me the way." He doesn't ask for divine intervention. His prayer is internal and mirrors the actions of the earliest Christians who called their movement "The Way." 2) No effort is made to extract vengeance on those responsible for his misfortune. Mr. Potter keeps the money!

Frank Capra, the writer and director of the 1946 movie, is making two points. First, we find God, not in the heavens, but in those who have known us; and second, God is uninterested in keeping score.

On December 9, 1965 49% of the televisions in America tuned into a new Christmas program created by Bill Melendez and Lee Mendelson, and written by Charles Schulz. *A Charlie Brown Christmas* was not expected to be successful. It used jazz instead of popular music, it used child actors instead of adults, it had no laugh track, and it was unabashedly religious.

Damian Costello recently wrote a piece for the website U.S. Catholic which stated that *A Charlie Brown Christmas* is more than a Christmas story. It deals with the whole sweep of Christianity—in under 30 minutes. Costello says that Schulz' script is written around Isaiah 53, the famous suffering servant passage. The story begins in chaos and rebellion. "All have gone away like sheep, each following his own way." (Isa. 53:6) In the midst of this rebellion a tree appears; "a sapling" with "no stately bearing to make us look." (Isa. 53:2) The abuse directed at the tree causes Charlie Brown to voice our desperation "Isn't there anyone who knows what Christmas is all about?"

Linus then recites the story of Jesus's birth from the Gospel of Luke, which dispels the chaos. Charlie Brown leaves the auditorium with the tree, but is confronted with commercialism "our infirmities." (Isa. 53:4) He places an ornament on the tree, representing the weight of the world, but believes he is defeated. "I killed it." Then, like the apostles after Jesus' crucifixion, he flees. But resurrection follows and the force of that resurrection is love. Swaddled in Linus's blanket, the tree emerges transfigured. As the program ends the children sing in harmony. It is at this point that the message in Schulz' story is clear. Jesus is the balm that makes us right with the world.

"That's what Christmas is all about Charlie Brown."

## January Birthdays

- 9 LaVonne Carlson  
Jordan Fredin  
Kennedy McCann  
Kaelie Nelsen
- 11 Max Evanson
- 12 Ellie Gardiner
- 14 Marissa Mandelkow  
Tegan Nelsen
- 15 Dennis Hovde
- 16 Dillon Anderson  
Sherri Broin  
Breanna Soine  
Andy Nelson
- 17 Amber Gesme  
Terri Mandelkow
- 18 Vicki Weckerling  
Gary Samuelson
- 19 Greg Drewianka  
Nathan Lindholm
- 21 Sara Parker  
Gail Strusz-Klein
- 23 Wallace Gardiner
- 24 Bob Crouse  
Ava Stehr
- 25 David Broin  
Hettie Carlson
- 26 Melissa Rehder
- 28 John Featherstone  
Randy Lindholm
- 29 Sue Hedeem  
Hailey Mann  
Jason Pagel
- 31 Courtney Hovel





THANK YOU



THANK YOU



Thank you to the church and the people who made this activity possible! Our whole family had a good time assembling them and talking about the other items in the bag. Thanks Again!

Courtney Hovel

Dear Vasa Lutheran Church,

The Cannon Falls food shelf thanks you for the 150 lbs. Of food that has been donated to us this fall. It is so much appreciated by our clients and helps meet the needs of our community.

The Cannon Falls Food Shelf Board



Many thanks to the Mandelkow sisters (l. to r. Malena, Marissa, and Miranda) for decorating the Christmas tree in the Lutheran Center. It brightened the spirits of everyone who entered the building.

Dear Pastor Hagen!

[We are] Enjoying the online service. My wife and I are members at Mt. Zion Lutheran Church in Glasgow, PA., a small rural congregation in Central Pennsylvania trying to get through this pandemic. Your service really helps. Keep up God's good work.

Mike and Sue Wagner

THANK YOU



# VASA LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

November 16, 2020 @ Lutheran Center

Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 6:30pm by Jim Hedeem, Vice President

Devotions: Andrew Featherstone

Members present and Absent:

**Present:** Pastor Maureen Hagen; Jim Hedeem, Vice President; Rick Samuelson; Dan Hedeem; Duane Hanson; Andrew Featherstone; Sid Featherstone; Jessie Anderson; Ben Norman and Steve Hyllengren

Ten voting members present

**Unable to Attend:** Kevin Eckblad; Mike Carlson; Lora Gruber and Greg Drewianka, President

Also Present: Kathy Tilderquist and Mark Hagen

## **Adoption of the agenda:**

The agenda was revised to add a presentation by Mark Hagen about what is needed to do facebook live for sunday worship at church under new business.

It was moved and seconded to approve the revised agenda.

**MOTION CARRIED**

## **Approval of Minutes:**

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the October 19, 2020 council meeting as written.

**MOTION CARRIED**

## **Reports Reviewed and Accepted:**

1. Treasurer and Finance Team Report (Attached)
  - a. The organ has been tuned
  - b. The Community Dinner is doing good financially
2. Parish Life (Attached)
  - a. The Christmas Tree will be put up November 27<sup>th</sup> at 1pm
3. Property Team Report. (Attached)
  - a. The insurance company continues to delay our hail damage claim
4. Museum Board (Attached)
5. Endowment Board Report (No Meeting)
6. Cemetery Board (No Meeting)
7. Executive Board Report (No Meeting)
8. Pastor's Report (No Report Attached)
  - a. The clips for the Thanksgiving Service have been recorded
  - b. Work is under way on the virtual Christmas Program

## November Church Council Minutes (continued)

**Tabled/Old Business** (Gazebo update tabled until Dec.)

### New Business

1) Facebook Live presentation by Mark Hagen

Mark talked about live streaming the Sunday church service and the equipment that would be needed to do this. Equipment needed includes: Audio Interface, Camera, Laptop computer and control software.

It was moved and seconded to approve the purchase of Audio Interface, Control Software and 2 microphones for a cost not to exceed \$2000.

**MOTION CARRIED**

2) Covid issues/rules

The council talked about whether we should suspend in person church services due to the increase of Covid.

It was moved and seconded to suspend in person church services immediately.

**MOTION CARRIED**

### Discussion (None)

December Meeting Dates: (Tentative schedule)

Parish Life: Monday December 7th @ 6:30pm

Finance: Monday December 7th @ 1:00pm

Property: Monday December 7th @ 9:30am

Executive: Monday December 14th @ TBD

Council: Monday December 21st @ 6:30pm Devotions: Kevin Eckblad

It was moved and seconded to adjourn at 8:20 pm.

**MOTION CARRIED**

Meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer

Report submitted by:

Rick Samuelson, Secretary



## End of Year Annual Report

All committees, teams and boards should have turned in their reports to the Church Office for the 2020 Annual Report by **Thursday, January 28th**. Auditors will need all Financial Books by this time as well in order to complete their audits.

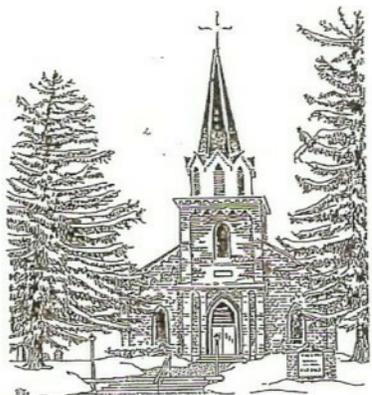
Thank you for your cooperation with these.

**The Annual Meeting will held on February 28th.**

# JANUARY 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
						
<p>Pastor Maureen Out of the Office</p>						
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<p><b>9am</b> Service of Holy Communion (Vasa YouTube Channel)</p> <p><b>9am</b> Sunday School (online)</p>	<p><b>9:30am</b> Property Team</p> <p><b>1:00pm</b> Finance Team</p> <p><b>6:30pm</b> Parish Life Team</p> <p><b>Pastor Maureen back in the office</b></p>		<p><b>7:00pm</b> Wed Eve Worship + Everyday Bible Conversation Via Zoom (Contact Pastor Maureen for details)</p>		<p>Pastor's Day Off</p>	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
<p><b>9am</b> Service of Holy Communion (Vasa YouTube Channel)</p> <p><b>9am</b> Sunday School (online)</p> <p><b>New Member Sunday</b></p>			<p><b>7:00pm</b> Wed Eve Worship + Everyday Bible Conversation Via Zoom (Contact Pastor Maureen for details)</p>		<p>Pastor's Day Off</p>	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
<p><b>9am</b> Service of Holy Communion (Vasa YouTube Channel)</p> <p><b>9am</b> Sunday School (online)</p>	<p><b>7pm</b> Endowment Team</p>		<p><b>7:00pm</b> Wed Eve Worship + Everyday Bible Conversation Via Zoom (Contact Pastor Maureen for details)</p>	<p><b>Annual Reports Due</b></p>	<p>Pastor's Day Off</p>	
31	February 1	2	3	4	5	6
<p><b>9am</b> Service of Holy Communion (Vasa YouTube Channel)</p> <p><b>9am</b> Sunday School (online)</p>					<p>Pastor's Day Off</p>	

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 via Vasa YouTube Channel

6:30 pm Wednesdays via Zoom (contact Pastor Maureen for details)

### **Christian Education & Faith Formation**

9:00am Online on Vasa Lutheran YouTube channel

### **Executive Team**

Greg Drewianka 651-301-2472

Jim Hedeem 651-380-6054

Rick Samuelson 651-380-9150

### **Pastor Maureen Hagen**

[pastormaureen@sleepyeyetel.net](mailto:pastormaureen@sleepyeyetel.net)

(Cell) 507-251-5270

Church Office 651-258-4327

Office Email: [vasalutheran@sleepyeyetel.net](mailto:vasalutheran@sleepyeyetel.net)

Website: [vasalutheran.org](http://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](mailto:pmikaelson@gmail.com)

web site: [www.caranavi.net/rtc.htm](http://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