

NEWS & EVENTS

at Petersburg Lutheran Church

“To Know Christ, to Grow in Christ, and to Show the Love of Christ”

 June 2022



Council Highlights

The Church Council met on Wednesday, May 18th and discussed the following:

- Discussed the budget and the fact that we are deeply “in the red,” where our monthly expenses exceed giving (income).
Income minus Expenses is currently: -\$32,807.22 for the year.
- Council members gave feedback on Pastor Zach’s performance to satisfy the requirement for an informal Quarterly Evaluation.
- Pastor Zach discussed plans for a Community Worship Service around the July 4th holiday.
- Council had a long discussion about the many maintenance needs of the parsonage – some current and some to be done before a new pastoral family arrives. We really need a liaison for all the parsonage maintenance projects – someone to keep track of the needs and to make sure things are scheduled, contractors hired, volunteers assigned, supplies ordered, etc. Costs associated with all the various parsonage needs – including exterior painting, carpet replacement, furnace repair or replacement will require a special funding request to the congregation, and congregational approval.
- Council decided to postpone plans for a “photo wall” of church members, families and staff until August.
- Chris Van Ettinger distributed the current summary of the Time and Talents survey, with a very low response rate of 25 people out of 300+ members.
- Desi Burrell has started planning for the Good Beginnings 25th Anniversary celebration in November, but she needs a lot of helping hands right now.
- A volunteer has offered to send thank you notes on behalf of PLC for memorial donations.
- Council will look at options for Sunday School in the fall, possibly changing the name to “Christian Faith Formation.”
- PLC urgently needs people to usher, and to help with worship at Mountain View Manor. In the fall we desperately need people to help teach Bible stories and songs at Good Beginnings Preschool.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

President – [Bev Siercks](#)
(907-772-4330)

Vice President – [Bill Moulton](#) (907-518-1485)

Treasurer - [Robin Roberts](#)
(907-518-0052)

Secretary – [Ginger Evens](#) (907-772-4392)

[Nancy Berg](#) (907-518-1098)

[Desi Burrell](#) (907-772-3665)

[John Small](#) (907-772-2718)

[Chris van Ettinger](#)

[Bridgett Wittstock](#)
(907-518-1413)

Newsletter Editor:
Robin Roberts

- **Next Church Council Meeting: Wednesday, June 15th at 6:00pm.**
Meetings are open to all Congregation members.

Pentecost is Sunday, June 5th - *wear red!*



May 11th Congregational Gathering: May 11th Results! What Happens When the Saints Go Marching in and say, "Here I Stand" by Pastor Zach

On Wednesday night, May 11, the Saints of Petersburg Lutheran Church did indeed march right into the Holy Cross Hall and take a stand! The congregation participated in an event called “Asset Mapping” which by all accounts was a very successful evening. The unfortunate thing about the evening is that it was more of an experience than something that can be put into words. It’s like one of those moments when you ultimately say to someone who doesn’t get your description: “Well, I guess you had to be there!”

We had our new Transition Team present (Don Bieber, Kathy Emmenegger, Jim Engell, Sue Flint, Jim Roberts, Lauren Thain) and represented amongst the group gathered, as they begin to get the pulse of the congregation for the future call process. They will be the ones gathering information and opinions as well as hopes and dreams for the future call committee to use in the search for a new permanent Pastor.

Research has shown that at an event like this one, you can count on about 50% of the number of people attending on a Sunday to show up to help jumpstart the call process. We had 33 present which is actually a little better than half of our almost 60 average-attendance in worship this past month. And we had a broad spectrum of representation—which the group agreed was representative of the congregation as a whole.

We started with a Pot Luck meal and then broke out into six tables for what really is a massive conversation about what Petersburg Lutheran has in its midst. In short, the event had a very simple structure in three parts: 1) Recognizing Our Assets, 2) Connecting the Dots, 3) Voting with our Feet. In the midst of this process was a lot of conversing, dreaming, and fun! And a great by product was people getting to know others in the congregation a little better and even meeting someone new.

First each group was to list the assets that come to mind when thinking about Petersburg Lutheran Church, its members, and the community surrounding. Those assets were of various forms but basically from five categories: Physical Assets, Individual, Assets Associations, Institutions, Economic Assets. These were put on individual sheets of paper as people randomly thought of what the church has that God has given them.

Second, each group started to connect the dots between assets to form actions or programs and the like that the congregation could do with what we already have. Each group came up with two or more ideas and then eventually decided on which one was the best to present to the whole group.

And finally, in short order, people voted with their feet. They literally walked over beside the idea they thought was the best. And just so you don't think everyone just stayed with their own ideas, two groups totally left their ideas to go to other ones because they thought the other ideas were better! In other words, they were not so tied to their ownership to forsake the betterment of the whole!

All that I described above was right down the middle according to plan, but then something amazing happened. As each group described their actions to take place using the assets of the church looking to what is God's will for this community, one common theme kept popping up: Good Beginnings and the pre-school that bears the name of this very congregation! There were some other different ideas left on the table, and the final description was a little different in details, but the obvious asset that everyone agreed stands out is the pre-school across the street. The expectation for this event was to have come up with six different ideas, but instead the representative congregation zeroed in on the same emphasis. That's amazing!

For certain, the Transition Team will take note that in the year of its 25th anniversary, renewing connections with Good Beginnings is one movement that everyone recognizes as important to doing ministry in the future. I'm pretty confident that Good Beginnings will have a prime spot when it comes to the search for a new Pastor, but I wonder if it has to wait that long to take form.

As a neutral observer, I kind of wonder, with an obvious summer break fast upon us, if it's not possible for some of that energy from Wednesday night to coalesce into an actionable plan for the fall!

As a final note, the process we used was one that was purely made up of positives. We did not lament things we don't have, but looked at what God has granted in abundance. The way the world operates is usually what is called "fixed-sum thinking" meaning, "Your gain is my loss." This process is called "Open-sum thinking" which results in "Your gain is my gain is our gain." In this way of looking at assets rather than needs, everybody wins! We start with reality (what we actually have) rather than the fantasy of what we WISH we had, only to find that God's call is right there in front of us!

In the coming months, your Transition Team will be helping you, the people of Petersburg Lutheran Church, discern more fully what God has already gifted you, how you can put all those insights, opinions, hopes, and dreams for the future into words. The true gift of all this is to find the one you wish to call as your new pastor. And ultimately, it is to describe Petersburg Lutheran Church to the one who will see this ministry for what it is and simply LOVE it! That's really what God's Grace is all about in this time of transition: trusting the Spirit to bring together the assets and gifts of Pastor and People to provide a mission outpost of the Gospel for this community of Petersburg.

Pray for our Transition Team!



Don Bieber, Kathy Emmenegger, Jim Engell, Sue Flint, Jim Roberts, and Lauren Thain have stepped up to serve as our Transition Team, to help discern the needs of our church and define the requirements for Calling a new Pastor. Please pray for our Transition Team for direction and discernment.



Pastor Zach's weekly articles "Through a Lutheran Lens" will be taking a little summer vacation, and will come out intermittently in the warm months. Stay tuned for more insights into our Transition and Call process!

Vacation

Pastor Zach and Karen will be going on an 11-day excursion to see a little more of Alaska starting June 6 through June 17. Mark Kubo will be the guest preacher on June 12th while Pastor Zach is away.



"We pray anew every day, when we open our eyes in the morning, and when we close them at night, that God will enlighten the Eyes of the Heart"

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer



Reaching Out

Bill Moulton, Council rep for the Communications Committee, has been increasing our public profile by advertising our church at the Northern Nights Theater, as well as special services in the Pilot newspaper. His recent Facebook post about our Ruth Circle Quilters reached over 1,300 people, and has been re-posted by the Alaska Synod!

Time, Talents, and Treasures

Only 25 people out of the 300+ members of our church responded to the “Time and Talents” survey so far. The purpose of the survey is to help church leadership find members who can pitch in and help with the various needs of our church – all kinds of helping hands are valuable, whether big or small, large time commitment or just a little bit. PLEASE give this request prayerful thought and send in your response. Our church cannot survive without *involvement* by our members!

Everyone has something they can contribute – skills, knowledge, energy, or experience, or ???. Even if you can only help out a little bit, or make a few phone calls, or write to shut-ins, or don’t have many skills but are willing to learn – your church needs YOU! Ask questions of your Council members... ask our Pastor... to learn more about how you can help your church.

Mom always said, “Many hands make light work,” and she was right. And the corollary is that very few hands means that a small number of people have to do an awful lot of “heavy lifting” to do the work of our church.

May we all give to God’s work as generously as God has given to us.



Our Beloved Parsonage *by Bill Moulton*



Our parsonage has long nestled in the heart of Petersburg, watching over the children in the Rebbi Hus, and in turn watched over by the bell-tower of Petersburg Lutheran Church. The home of our pastors has been well taken care of by each generation of our congregation, and now is the time for us to do it again.

It was a harsh winter. The roof over the basement entry on the back of the parsonage collapsed, and gutters had to be replaced.

The exterior is scheduled for a professional paint job, but there is insulation to install, plumbing to address, and a furnace to replace, plus new carpeting and interior painting before the next pastor arrives.

The property committee cannot do it all by themselves! **They will need all our help.** To that end, the Council is considering a “Parsonage Improvements Project,” but, you can start now by contacting [Bev Siercks](mailto:BevSiercks@petersburglutheran.org) (907-772-4330) for further information.



Financial Report

PLC continues this year “in the red,” – spending more than we receive. *Please give prayerful thought to increasing your support of the Church and its missions.*

Giving minus Expenses for the month of April were: *-\$7,265.59.*

The total for the year so far is *-\$32,807.22.*

Thank you for continuing to bring your offering to church or mailing it in. You can also contribute electronically by giving from a checking account or a credit card. **You can access the secure giving site through our web page - [PLC GIVING.](#)**



Good Beginnings Preschool *by Ginger Evens*

As the 2021-2022 Good Beginnings Preschool year comes to an end, there are so many blessings that the preschool has received this year. Under the directorship of Katie Holmlund, Good Beginnings was blessed with local and state grants to help keep the program in good financial standing, which allowed the program to offer free tuition for the spring semester. Parents/guardians were thankful for the free tuition for the semester, a true measure of God’s work in our preschool. Katie Holmlund and Becca Madsen fostered a love of learning, curiosity, and God’s love as they taught the 3-year-old and 4-year-old class this year. Good Beginnings Preschool graduated 12 students from the 4-year class on Wednesday, May 25 at the Holy Cross Hall. The program was filled with joy and happiness as parents, family members, and guardians watched their children sing “Fill Up My Cup,” and other songs, prior to receiving their diplomas. Best wishes to those students in kindergarten in the fall! Stay tuned for information on Good Beginnings Preschool’s 25th Anniversary celebration in the fall.

The Good Beginnings/Kinder Skog Art Show is available for viewing from May 28th-June 4th at the Clausen Museum.

June 3%

Every month, 3% of our General Giving goes to a different outreach ministry. As a congregation, we vote on the list of ministries for the upcoming year during our Annual Meeting each year. If you have suggestions for other ministries that we should consider, please give that information to a Council member.

The recipient of our 3% giving for June is our very own Good Beginnings Preschool!



Prayer Partner

June's Prayer Partner is [Resurrection Lutheran Church](#), Seward, AK. From their web site, "Called by God to be a witness to Jesus Christ in the world, at Resurrection Lutheran Church of Seward, Alaska, we consider it our *mission* to use whatever God has given us – time, talents, building, and other resources – to be a positive witness and influence in the Seward community. We do this by the worship and programs we offer, as well as by being a "welcoming place" for any individual that comes to us, for whatever purpose, and by providing facilities and services to the community in whatever way we are able. In this way, we bring people in contact with Jesus, who loves and cares about them, and the Holy Spirit, who alone is able to create saving faith in Jesus, and so we carry on the *mission* Jesus began to redeem the world."

Worship Bulletins

If anyone needs large print Bulletins on Sundays, please let the church office know by Thursday each week so we know how many to print.



ELCA and Synod News:

The Alaska Synod web site has some links to resources for [Spiritual Practices written by Patricia Marcia Wakeland](#):

- [The Spiritual Practice of Walking Slowly](#)

Newsletter Feedback

We would like to receive some feedback and suggestions for improving the Church Newsletter. You can share your thoughts with the office, and Joy will pass them along without attribution – so they will be anonymous. What would you like to see included? What do you like and don't like about it? How can we make it better? Would you like to submit a guest editorial or article? Please contribute!!



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