

News & EVENTS

at Petersburg Lutheran Church

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



August 2022



Council Highlights

The Church Council met on Wednesday, July 20th and discussed the following:

- The Transition Team submitted a letter to the Council formally requesting a Congregational meeting to vote on removing By-Law 3.07*. The meeting will be held on Sunday, September 25 immediately after worship. More information will be provided in a letter to each congregation member by mid-August.
- Good Beginnings 25th Anniversary: Special quilt is being quilted at this time, and ticket sales will begin after August 9th. Plans continue for the Anniversary celebration, including former teachers, students, and church members.
- Food voucher assistance for the Trading Union will be increased from \$30 to \$50 via the Pastor’s Discretionary Fund.
- Council approved several requests for use of the Holy Cross Hall and Fellowship Hall for outside users.
- There are a number of questions and issues regarding existing Kinder Skog funds, and what needs to be done to insure a smooth transition of finances between PLC and the Petersburg Medical Center.
- Susan Holmes will be sending out birthday cards to congregation members.
- Good Beginnings Preschool is currently looking for a Lead Teacher.
- Bill Moulton (Communications) has started adding biographical information and a video interview “Why PLC?” of Council members to the church’s FaceBook page, beginning with our President, Bev Siercks. Bill has been sending out Press Releases and using advertising to increase awareness about Petersburg Lutheran, our activities, and what we have to offer.

***NOTE:** Congregation members can download an electronic copy of the current PLC Constitution and By-Laws [HERE](#) (or call the office for a copy), and you can get more information about the ELCA’s statement on Human Sexuality [HERE](#).

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, August 17th at 6:30pm.
Meetings are open to all Congregation members.

New Member Classes and Baptism Opportunities Coming!



At the July Council Meeting, the Council certified the revised Roster of Membership for Petersburg Lutheran Church, grateful for the team's hard work updating it. Through that process, several people let the leadership know that they had never formally joined the church, but would like to do so. Pastor Zach will be offering **Membership classes in September for those wishing to join.** Classes will be offered following worship for **two Sundays, starting September 11th.** There is also the opportunity for baptisms at the same time or later this fall. ***Please let the church office know if you are interested!***

Transition Team Report



Sue Flint reported that the Transition Team has finished a rough draft of the Site Profile, which will be sent to the Council. 44 out of 70 recent surveys were returned to the Transition Team, with the top 5 responses describing the most important characteristics of a new Pastor: active visitation, youth, relationships, children, and spiritual life. There was also discussion about the role of the Transition Team, the Site Profile, and the Call Committee. Two members of the Transition Team will provide continuity by joining the Call Committee, and those individuals are Jim Engell and Jim Roberts.

Call Committee

A letter is going out to the congregation asking for prayerful consideration in nominating church members for the Call Committee. That letter includes much more detail; however, this is a reminder of how important this part of the transition process is in moving forward in ministry and calling the next Pastor for Petersburg Lutheran Church. While the Transition Team has done much of the legwork collecting information to build the congregational site profile that will represent the congregation on paper, the Call

Committee will not only help shape that document's final form, but will act as the face of the congregation when interviewing candidates to serve as the future Pastor, as well as representing each of you when being interviewed by those same candidates as they learn more about this community of faith.

So, as you pray about these representatives of the whole congregation, consider that these will need to be folks who can get along with each other over an extended period of time, have strong evidence of faith, are active in the congregation, positive and enthusiastic, faithful stewards, and who will follow through with their commitments, recognizing there will be a need to meet frequently, and be faithful to the time commitment involved. Your prayers are needed as the congregation considers this most important of Spirit-led callings.

**“Kindness is Free... Spread that stuff
EVERYWHERE!”**

- Anonymous



Financial Health

PLC continues this year “in the red,” – spending more than we receive in donations. Our expenses continue every month for salaries, utilities, and building maintenance, but giving to support the church has not been keeping up.

Please give prayerful thought to increasing your support of the Church and its missions.

Giving minus Expenses for the month of June were: ~~-\$4,722.48.~~

Giving minus Expenses for the year so far: ~~-\$39,443.75.~~

Thank you for continuing to bring your offering to church or mailing it in. Electronic donations can be made using the [Online Giving button on the PLC web site](#), or on your mobile device by installing the [Vanco Mobile app](#) – just choose “Petersburg Lutheran Church” and make your donation.



Pastoral Turnover and Church Finances

As we prepare to assemble a Call Committee to continue the process of finding a new long-term Pastor for our congregation, we also must consider the realities of our current financial health – with about a \$40,000 deficit through the end of June – only half-way through the year. The Council is very concerned, especially since this time of Transition carries a lot of *additional* costs.



We will have to bring prospective Pastor candidates and their families to Petersburg so we can meet them, and they can meet us. Those travel costs are unavoidable if we hope to find a successful match between our needs and a Pastor's and their family's needs. We hope that the rain and long hours of winter darkness won't discourage anyone in the family. We hope a Pastor and their family will feel the vibrance and warmth of our community, see our excellent schools, our caring health care facilities, and the beauty of God's creation all around us - and find them to be a compelling reason to come here and to stay for a long time.

When we Call a new Pastor, we are responsible for paying moving costs to get them here. We have limits on what we will pay for, but we all know how expensive it is to ship household goods and a vehicle to Petersburg. Costs could be as high as \$20,000 at current rates, and our present savings for Pastoral Turnover currently sits at about \$6,000.

We pay the Pastor a salary, but given the high cost of food, supplies, shipping and travel, it's not easy to live on just one income. If a new Pastor has a spouse and that person was working in their last posting, the family might rely on the double-income to live. Will a new Pastor's spouse be able to find similar work here, at a commensurate salary? Job opportunities may be limited in Petersburg for some career fields. Does a new Pastor have children? The price of groceries and clothing will add pressure to the economic challenge of living here. It's fair for a new Pastor and their family to want to travel now and then, to take a vacation or to visit family, and we all know that it's expensive to leave the island.

Here in Petersburg, the parsonage is part of a Pastor's compensation. If we didn't have it, or the incoming Pastor didn't want to live there, the Pastor's salary would be higher. The parsonage is the haven for the Pastor and their family – the place where they rest and

re-charge their batteries. It's their *home*, and we (their landlord) need to be sure it's comfortable, and well-maintained for them in a timely manner.

Toilets that don't flush well, windows that don't open to get some summer breeze, or windows that don't close tightly to keep out the winter draft are things that will discourage a pastor and their family from staying around for very long. The church needs a way to respond quickly to repair and maintenance needs. The old inefficient furnace has proven to be very expensive to operate. As Bill Moulton has written about recently, the parsonage needs some major updates – new heating system, carpeting, exterior painting or siding, as well as window repairs and other items. The parsonage is an important asset for PLC, but we need to take care of it - make needed improvements to preserve its value, and reduce its operating costs, which will save us money in the long term. Having a parsonage available in our town is a big “plus,” but we need to be sure that the condition of the house doesn't become a “minus.” We have to keep our Pastor and their family happy, or they won't stay as long as we would like them to.

These are just some of the economic realities we must consider as we search for a new Pastor, and as we take a hard look at our financial health and individual giving.

August 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 August is [Kuwaa Mission Project](#) in Liberia. The purpose of the Kuwaa Mission is to help the Kuwaa people to rebuild and live dignified lives under God. We will accomplish this goal by working together with the people of each village to provide safe drinking water and improved sanitary conditions; by rebuilding medical clinics, schools, and churches and meeting other community needs. Self-reliance will be insured through training and mentoring and is a vital aspect of the mission.



Pastor Eric Olsen's brother, Stan is the Acting CEO of the Mission.



Prayer Partner

August's Prayer Partner is [Our Savior's Lutheran Church](#) in Nome. Led by part-time Interim Pastor Amanda Snyder, Our Savior's Lutheran Church (OSLC) is located in the community of

Nome on the Seward Peninsula on the western coast of Alaska. Nome is home to many different cultures but predominantly the Inupiaq Native Americans. Our Savior's Lutheran is a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) and part of the Alaska Synod. Our Savior's Lutheran Church was incorporated in 1954 and is the only Lutheran church in Nome.

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.

In The News...

Council President Bev Siercks was recently featured in an [interview on KFSK](#) and in an article in the July 21st edition of the [Petersburg Pilot!](#) Thanks to Bill Moulton for sharing PLC's people and events with our community!



ELCA on Social Media

If you haven't checked out [Instagram](#) lately, you might not know that the ELCA has an account where they post inspirational messages and Bible quotes, along with beautiful photographs and artwork as well as news and announcements. Click on "Follow" to enjoy their moving messages.



ELCA News

The 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, the primary decision-making body of the church, convenes Aug. 8-12 in Columbus, Ohio. This year's theme is "Embody the Word," based on Luke 24:45. Voting members will participate in plenaries, discussions and worship while acting on key legislative business and hearing reports and updates on the work of the church. *Living Lutheran* provides an [overview](#) of the agenda and upcoming elections. In advance of the Churchwide Assembly, ELCA members are encouraged to participate in a series of [online Bible studies](#) on Sundays in July. To follow along with the assembly from home, livestream the proceedings at [ELCA.org/cwa](https://www.elca.org/cwa). You can learn more about the ELCA and the annual Assembly at [ELCA.org](https://www.elca.org).



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

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 anonymously. What would you like to see included? How can we make it better? Would you like to submit a guest editorial or article or devotion? Please contribute!!



Petersburg Lutheran Church

406 Excel Street, PO Box 709, Petersburg, AK 99833

Pastor Zachariah Harris III, 540-288-4337 plcakpastor@gmail.com

www.petersburglutheran.com

Office: 907-772-3114 plcakoffice@gmail.com
