

THE EPISTLE

DECEMBER 2017

AUGUSTANA LUTHERAN CHURCH

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

1025 Second Avenue P.O. Box 5

Cumberland, Wisconsin 54829

Phone: 715-822-2890 Fax: 715-822-2837

Pastor Randy Skow-Anderson

Cell Phone: 218-329-7904

E-Mail: pastor@augustanachurch.com

Brad and Jackie Novak, Custodians

Home Phone: 715-822-8668

E-Mail: custodian@augustanachurch.com

Jene Morey, Office Manager

Home Phone: 715-468-7706

E-Mail: office@augustanachurch.com

Website: www.augustanachurch.com

Like Us on FACEBOOK

Advent With A Mission



Hope
Peace
Joy
Love



Join us at Augustana as we prepare for Jesus' Birth

Sundays, December 3, and 10

9:00 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion

Sundays, December 17

9:00 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion/
Sunday School Program

Sundays, December 24

9:00 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion

Wednesdays, November 29, December 6, 13, and 20

6:00 p.m. Advent Mid-Week Worship/Joyous Light

Friday, December 8

7:00 a.m. St. Lucia Festival

Saturday, December 9

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Cookie Sale

Sunday, December 10

2:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.
Community Choir Concert at St. Paul's Lutheran

Sunday, December 24 CHRISTMAS EVE

4:30 p.m. Candlelight/Communion Worship

9:00 p.m. Candlelight/Communion Worship

Monday, December 25 CHRISTMAS DAY

9:00 a.m. Festival Worship

Sunday, December NEW YEARS' EVE

9:00 a.m. Worship

FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Friends in Christ,

“Advent with a mission” is our theme for this Advent/Christmas Season. We once again hear the story of God bursting into our world with the promise of Hope, Joy, Peace, and Love for the world. Perhaps we would do well to focus more intently on these given the many issues confronting the world today. Many of the issues strike fear in us and too often that fear dictates how we respond. Please, do not feed the fears. God is with us and calls us to remember who we are and to whom we belong. We must give ourselves over to the hope, joy, and peace that comes to greet us through Jesus being born into the world. God’s grace is enough. Our mission is to actively live in this promise. God’s blessing you as you prepare to celebrate God’s greatest gift.

In Christ,

Pastor Randy

Hope Peace Joy Love

Augustana Council Minutes
October 22, 2016
6:00 p.m.

Members present: Diane Carlson, Julie Donatelle, Leah Hullinger, Deb Johnson, Barb Landstrom, David Ficocello, Sheri Johnson, Curt Johnson, Barb Garling, Dave Evenson, and Kate Hedke. Also present: Pastor Randy Skow-Anderson and Jane Nickell.

The meeting was called to order by President Diane Carlson. A motion was made by Deb Johnson, seconded by Sheri Johnson to approve the agenda.

Pastor Randy led devotions.

A motion was made by Dave Evenson, with sadness and regret, and seconded by David Ficocello to accept the resignation of Tom Hodgson from the council.

The council accepted the appointment of Jane Nickell to the council.

A motion was made by Dave Evenson, seconded by Leah Hullinger to approve the minutes of the September meeting.

Financial Secretary Carol Wallin gave a report regarding the financials, and also reminded the council that although committees have been asked to freeze their spending, should expenses come up, memorial funds are available to use. No building funds were needed to make up for shortfalls in the General Fund as of 9/30.

Committee reports were heard and a thank you note was prepared for Jeanette Rydberg for her recent work with the Christian Ed committee and Wednesday School. Reminders from the committee reports: New Membership Sunday is December 3, St. Lucia is December 8, and members are encouraged to submit names of those who may need a meal from Cooking with Love.

The council heard an update on the Task Force's progress, and was asked to give committees a 60-day extension to submit their budgets. The extension will allow for the council to hear the results

of the survey and make decisions based off that information. The Task Force discontinued weekly meetings, and instead focused on reaching out to those who may have needed assistance filling out the survey. The survey results are expected to be available on 11/30. A motion was made by David Ficocello, seconded by Dave Evenson, to grant the 60-day budget extension.

The reporting of finances was discussed, specifically, the simplification of the form used to report the numbers, and the presence of a representative of JAK or one of Augustana's financial secretaries. It had been done in the past, but discontinued. The council agreed that having Carol Wallin present at the meeting was a significant help, and asked that it continue.

An ongoing discussion has been the cost of benefits through Portico to full-time employees. There is no other option for Pastor Randy's benefits package, but there is for the church secretary. The council agreed that options should be explored to determine if there is a more cost-effective way to provide the benefits.

Barb Landstrom and Julie Donatelle were appointed to the nominating committee.

Deb Johnson agreed to fill the vacant council spot on the Finance Committee, and Jane Nickell will take Deb's spot on the Worship and Music Committee.

The annual meeting was set for January 28.

The next council meeting was set for November 19 at 6 p.m. A motion was made by Deb Johnson, seconded by Barb Landstrom, to adjourn.

Submitted by Kate Hedke, Council Secretary

WORSHIP UPDATE

Upon the recommendation of both the Worship and Music and Education committees, Augustana experimented with having one Sunday morning and one Wednesday worship service this fall. We are coming to the end of the "experimental" time frame. Feel free to share your thoughts as committees begin discussing the best worship schedule for Augustana in 2018.

THANKS TO THE GENEROSITY OF MANY, Augustana has NOT yet needed to use ANY money from the Capital reserve fund in order to meet expenses. **THANK YOU!**
If you have not made a commitment for giving in 2018, please contact Jene in the office.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED FINANCIAL SUPPORT of Augustana's ministries. We ask that all offerings for 2017 be turned in by December 31.

ANNUAL REPORTS NEED TO BE TURNED IN TO THE CHURCH OFFICE BY DECEMBER 12th!! Each committee (and subcommittee) is asked to submit a report of their 2017 activities.

HOLIDAY CRAFT FAIR will be held at Augustana Saturday, December 2 from 9:00 – 2:00 p.m. Come and do your Christmas Shopping. Craft and Product vendors will be ready to help you with your gift shopping! Contact Jill Molls to sign up for a table (or if you have other questions).



HELP NEEDED TO DECORATE THE CHURCH

Sunday, December 3rd
after service at 10:30
a.m.

Men, women and families
needed.

Many hands will get it
done quickly.

Lunch will be served so
please sign up

On boards at church or
contact Janice Ahneman
so there is enough food.

Thanks.

**CHRISTMAS BAKING AT
AUGUSTANA ON SUNDAY,
DECEMBER 3RD.**

Baking begins right after church. We will be making krumkake, rosettes and sand bakkels. If you have a krumkake iron, please bring it. Also rosette irons and deep fat fryers. Batters and doughs and oil for frying will be provided. We need many hands to accomplish this task. It's a fun time of fellowship for men, women and children. Come for an hour or three hours. All are welcome. Lunch will be provided. The money raised from our Cookie Walk is used for Outreach projects. This past summer the Bluegrass Music Series was made possible with funds from the Cookie Walk. The Cookie Walk will be held Saturday, December 9, from 9:00 a.m. -12:00 noon. Come to take care of your holiday baking and get a variety of cookies and candies! Everyone in the congregation who is able is asked to provide Christmas cookies, candy, or other holiday treats. Please bring items to the church by Friday morning, December 8th.



Since St. Lucia is the same day, please mark your items for either St. Lucia or Cookie Walk to avoid confusion.

EDUCATION UPDATES:

Mark your calendars! The annual children's Christmas program, The ABC's of Christmas will be Sunday, December 17, 2017 at the 9:00 am Worship. Practices will be held during class time Wednesday and Sundays through December 13th. Wednesday School will NOT meet December 27
Sunday School will NOT meet December 24 and 31.



**CHRISTMAS
PROGRAM**

Thank you to all families for a great fall of fun and learning at Augustana!

ITEMS FOR PROJECT SANTA WILL BE ACCEPTED UNTIL DECEMBER 3. This effort makes sure every Cumberland child in need has gifts for Christmas. Last year the project was able to give to 216 children. The generous donations from the community have helped make this project a success.

Suggested items to donate include new unwrapped toys, art supplies, books, games, cosmetics, batteries, balls, gift certificates, etc. Check should be made to Margaret's Project Santa, % Barb Muench, US Bank. There are boxes for donations located at the top of the stairs in the church entry and at the back of the Great Hall.

Thank you for your love and compassion.



THE 2017 ST. LUCIA FESTIVAL will be held on Friday, December 8th at 7:00 a.m. in the Augustana sanctuary. A Swedish breakfast will be served after the service in the Great Hall. This event opens the Christmas season all over Sweden and has been celebrated at Augustana for over 30 years. Lucia was a Christian maiden martyred during the time of the Roman Emperor Diocletian, about 304 A.D. This observance is a celebration of light in the winter darkness and the birth of Jesus, the Light of the

World. All women and girls are invited to attend.

HELP FOR THE ST. LUCIA BREAKFAST: Volunteers are needed to bring food and help in the kitchen. Please call Sheri Johnson at 419-0705 or Katie Smith at 419-0593 if you can help or bring food. If you volunteer to bring rolls, muffins, Lucia Buns, or cookies, we'd appreciate it if you could have them to the church by Thursday afternoon so we can set up the serving plates. Rice puddings can be brought to the kitchen before the service on Friday morning.

Church In Society

Celebrate Jesus Live the Love

Church In Society
Celebrate Jesus Live the Love

Decembers Noisy Offering will be for a new project in our companion synod Malawi. Permaculture is the name of the new venture, really not new but reverting back to nature as it was in Malawi. It is very exciting for the people of Malawi. Together with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi, the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin seeks to find meaningful ways to walk with our brothers and sisters. The NW Synod of Wisconsin is encouraging congregations to also participate.

Now what is this “Permaculture ” all about? It is an agricultural movement that will help strengthen crops and alleviate hunger. It is the development of agricultural ecosystems intended to be sustainable and self-sufficient. Rather than growing maize and corn Malawians are being encouraged and instructed to grow things that are native to the area. These crops grow wonderfully and conserve moisture and are healthy for the people. Corn is not native to their diet but was brought in and encouraged by colonialism. \$1000 will support a student in permaculture education. These students return to their local villages and teach others. Many of the lay leaders of local churches are being taught so they can pass this growing movement to their congregations.

The Church in Society committee is challenging Augustana congregation to raise \$1000 during the month of December. This is a great opportunity to buy your friends and family who have everything a gift that will continue to grow and improve lives of people in Malawi. We are instructed to go and make a difference in the world. We have been encouraged to Pay It Forward. What a great way to do that by instructing one that will instruct many others.

See the bulletin board in the lower hallway. There is map of Malawi. Viewing this map will give you an idea where Malawi is located in Africa.

INTRODUCING OUR NEW YOUNG ADULT GLOBAL MISSION.

Augustana is sponsoring Lars Anderson, from Duluth, Minnesota. Lars is serving in Jerusalem this year. See the bulletin board for more information about Lars. Below is our first communication from Lars. His e-mail is: LarsYAGM@gmail.com.

MARHABA! GREETINGS FROM THE HOLY LAND!

Large ears, large eyes, and a small mouth

I have been in-country for about 8 weeks now. I have learned and experienced so much. Each day I am presented with new information about what life is like in the Holy Land. Sometimes there is so much new information that I am overwhelmed and have to take time to process what I have learned. One principle that I was already aware of, but I have really embraced during my time here, is that everyone has a story. Each person that I have encountered throughout life has their own unique experiences and ideas that have shaped them into who they are. However, when I am at home, I am easily distracted by external things that prevent me from getting to know the people around me. I have tried my best to embrace the words that Bishop Younan shared with my cohort and me when we first arrived. He said that each of us should, have large ears, large eyes, and a small mouth." These words have helped to guide me on my mission to learn as much possible during my time here.

I recently had the opportunity to harvest olives for my host family, the Lutheran World Federation, and an administrator for the Lutheran Schools. Picking olives is a labor intensive and time consuming job. Consequently, I had plenty of time to speak with the other people that were picking with me. Each place that I harvested olives had people from a variety of backgrounds. I loved listening to and sharing stories with my fellow harvesters while we worked. Learning about each other helped to make a relatively mundane task fun and exciting. Each olive harvest included a meal for all of the workers. These meals were filled with laughter, good conversation, and a sense of community. I continue to feel a sense of camaraderie with each person that I spent time with during these rich experiences.



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Lloyd Berg
Amy Brenna
Tom Hallgren
Cole Sutherland
- 2 Wesley Miller
- 3 Amanda Ahneman
Edward Chafer
Kip Wiita
- 4 Logan Boucher
Grant Sutherland
- 5 Diane Carlson
Amanda Jeffery
Tory Jeffery
- 6 Jan Schweiger
Maci Werner
- 10 Deb Johnson
- 11 Randy Skow-Anderson
Carroll Schell
- 15 Pam Baker
David Elfers
- 16 Joel Kreger
- 17 Faith Barker
Marge Bergmann
Chris Wagner
- 18 Emme Anderson
- 19 Bob Chubb
- 20 Brett Moravitz
- 21 Larry Brown
Amanda Lundquist
Ethan Mullikin
Brian Paffel
- 22 Donovan Paffel

- 27 Pete Bergmann
Chloe Mullikin
Kristin Nyhus
- 29 Jeanette Olsen
- 31 Kris Girard
Donnis Mullen



- 1 Dan and Connie Harding
- 7 Gary and Betty Nyseth
- 12 Don and Nicole Donatell
- 17 Tom and Donnis Mullen
- 28 Jim and Jan Schweiger
- 30 Jeff Hile and
Chris Hopkins-Hile



Christmas Blessings

to each of you

From the Augustana Staff

Pastor Randy

Jene

Brad and Jackie

Leah

John

Carol

Connie

Merry Christmas



Dear Friends of the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin,

The year was 1986 and it was a beautiful December morning in our new home in Minnesota. We had recently moved and I was preparing my Christmas Eve message for my new congregation. But I was having difficulty focusing on the task at hand. Each time I attempted to pen relevant and impressive thoughts, my eyes were diverted to a photo on my desk; a photo of a baby with thick dark hair and deep brown eyes. Although we had never met, she had been named and she was loved.

Her name was Laura and Lutheran Social Services had assured us that she would soon be on a plane that would fly her from Seoul, South Korea to the Minneapolis airport and then into our arms. But for now, she was in a crib in an orphanage in a faraway land. And that made me sad...

I was sad because this little one would spend her first Christmas alone... or as alone as one can be in a room filled with cribs. But she would not be held in the arms of loving parents and surrounded with gifts. And that was sad. And it made me feel alone.

But I had a sermon to write... so back to the words in my Bible and back to the story they told.

“Immanuel” - God with us. This word is first written in the book of Isaiah and then again in the Gospel of Matthew. Both times it is written as a promise that God will be with us, and God will never leave us. It is a promise that a baby will one day be born and that baby will fulfill the promise of God’s presence with God’s people.

Oh my goodness...could this be true? Could God's promise not be an ancient one, but one that was being fulfilled, even as I attempted to write a message of hope to my new people? Is God really with us?

Her first Christmas; wrapped in cloths and lying in a hard bottomed crib in the center of a faraway orphanage. And God is with her. God had knit her together in her mother's womb, and God would never leave her. And her name was Laura. And she was a child of God.

I remember this beautiful December morning often. I remember it when I am feeling alone. I remember it because I need to believe that God is with me. And that God will never leave me. And I believe it.

This will be my last Christmas message to you as your bishop. Next year at this time, you will read words from a new bishop but the promise will not change. God is with you. His name is Immanuel and the promise is real.

Have a blessed Christmas and... go to church! God will be there!

Rev. Robert A. Haynes



A SEASON
of JOY