

## ***A New Journey Together***

You will notice a new title for this article in the newsletter. By the time you read this “epistle”, Pastor Cath Mode will have retired and I will have assumed the role as your Interim Pastor. Indeed, we begin a “new journey together”! As a congregation in the East Central Synod of Wisconsin, you have been blessed with excellent pastoral leadership. For 21 years, your congregation, along with its ministry and worship opportunities, have flourished under Pastor Cath’s guidance. It will be exciting as we begin this new journey together!

A little about me - I was born and raised in Brooklyn, NY and received my Master of Divinity degree from The Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago. After my ordination in 1970, I served congregations in Rochester and Albany, NY. In 1976, I accepted a call to Our Saviour’s Lutheran Church in Appleton and served as Senior Pastor for 34 years. After “retirement” I became an Interim Pastor and served Our Savior’s in Lessor, St. Mark’s in Neenah, and Peace Lutheran in Oshkosh.

My wife’s name is Cathy and we are blessed with four children (two are local) and eight grandchildren (five are local). We enjoy golfing together and cheering on our grandkids at their many sporting events. I am excited to begin this ministry, and to work with the excellent staff and church council, so that the high level of worship and mission at your church continues.

While we will have a “new journey together”, two events occur in February which are vital for our ongoing journey.

—On Sunday February 11<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 a.m., we will hold our Annual Meeting. Church members approve minutes, read and receive reports, vote on the proposed budget, elect new council members and give thanks for Our Savior’s. It is very important that you attend this meeting. You also may have questions for me as I begin as your Interim Pastor

—Lent begins in February. For Lutherans, it is a season that we are only beginning to appreciate. Lent is a powerful part of our spiritual formation. For us it is a season of reflection, of discernment, and of taking steps to be closer to God. Lent is a season where we focus not on “what we give up” (although some habits might be healthy to give up), but instead on what new habits we can take on. Join with me as we begin this 40 day journey on Ash Wednesday, February 14, at either 10AM or 6:30 PM worship services.

See you in church as we *Journey Together*

**Interim Pastor Dennis E. Ellisen**

## Confirmation News

**Confirmation Camp** is June 10-15, 2018. All grade 7 students will receive a registration packet by Feb. 22. Completed registration forms need to be turned in to the church office by March 1. Please contact Marcie Kimmes or Karen Whitmer if you have questions.

**Confirmation Class During Lent**—There is no confirmation class during Lent, *HOWEVER*, confirmation students are expected to attend all mid-week Lenten services. Attendance will be taken and points given.

**Youth Lock-in Coming Soon**—March 3 is the date for the much-anticipated Confirmation Youth Lock-in. Mark your calendars now! We'll be distributing a line-up of the activities planned for the evening, as well as a sign-up for parent volunteers very soon. If we don't have enough parents to help during the overnight hours, we will end the event at 1 a.m. Parents, if you are interested in helping, please contact Karen Whitmer at [kwhitmer@our-saviors.org](mailto:kwhitmer@our-saviors.org).

**JYG to be held in Manitowoc**—The annual Junior Youth Gathering is coming soon. The JYG is an annual synod-wide gathering for all middle school Confirmation students. More than 500 kids from Northeast Wisconsin gather for hands-on activities, powerful speakers, prayer, bible study, music, fellowship and FUN! This year's event is Feb. 17 and 18 at the Holiday Inn in Manitowoc. The cost to attend is \$55. Please contact Karen Whitmer for more information.

## Sunday School News

**The children will sing in church on Sunday February 11 at 10:30 a.m.** — On February 11 beginning at 9:30 a.m. we are having Shrove Sunday for Mardi Gras. Parents and children are welcome to make a mask for the occasion. We have plenty of feathers, masks, and bling. We will be tasting a few of the various sweets to put us in the mood for the Mardi Gras (LENTEN) discipline to be Giving, Forgiving, or Giving Up. The challenge is for you to personally design your own journey through Lent to the Cross. The children will then sing at the 10:30 service. I hope to see you all on February 11.

### Vacation Bible School

In past years, we adjusted the format for vacation bible school (VBS) to be whatever our families wanted it to be. With that in mind, I am looking for a couple of people to run the program. I am willing to help with the planning and finding volunteers, but I really need people to take over the program. It can be a weeklong VBS in the morning or at night, once a month for June, July, August, or it could be three or four days a week and it could be intergenerational. VBS is what you want it to be. Please prayerfully consider this wonderful opportunity to bring God's word to the children. If you are interested let Ruthie Melzer know at [rmelzer@our-saviors.org](mailto:rmelzer@our-saviors.org) or give me a call. -Ruthie

## Summer Youth Trips

### National Youth Gathering - "THIS CHANGES EVERYTHING"

Our group is set! Ten students and three adults are going to attend this summer's National Youth Gathering in Houston, TX! The dates are June 27 - July 1, 2018. The Gathering is a five-day event that bring 30,000 teens together from across the United States to learn about God in new ways and grow in their faith.

**Middle School Mission Trip** — We're heading to Milwaukee for a 2 night/3 day mission trip! Students currently in grades 5-8 are encouraged to participate as we feed the homeless, work at a food pantry, read to preschoolers and visit with the elderly. Interested in taking a road trip and making a difference? Contact Marcie Kimmes at [mkimmes@our-saviors.org](mailto:mkimmes@our-saviors.org) or Karen Whitmer at [kwhitmer@our-saviors.org](mailto:kwhitmer@our-saviors.org) for more info.

## February Youth Event

Our next Youth Event is February 7, where we will visit the Valley VNA to play BINGO with the residents. Parent drivers and volunteers to cook and serve dinner are needed. Please contact Karen Whitmer at [kwhitmer@our-saviors.org](mailto:kwhitmer@our-saviors.org) if you can help.

**“God’s Work. Our Hands” - Yes, YOU can make a difference! Here are some opportunities to share God’s love in our community.**

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## Supporting Our Missions

Each year, we send groups out to help those in need – locally, nationally and internationally. These trips are possible because of YOU – our supportive, compassionate congregation. Please consider participating in these upcoming fundraisers to support the National Youth Gathering this summer in Houston, as well as our Summer Mission Trip:

**Annual Super Bowl Saturday Pizza Build** –The pizza build is on Saturday, February 3 with new ingredients for a better tasting pizza. Choose from 4 varieties – cheese, sausage, pepperoni, or combo (saug./pep.) Pizzas are \$7 each or bundle and save (3 for \$18 or 10 for \$60). This year’s build is sponsored by the National Youth Gathering group. All proceeds will be used to cover costs for the National Youth Gathering in June.

**Forget Cooking Tonight!** A night at a local restaurant where a certain portion of the revenues are donated to OSLC youth.

**THINK SPRING! Living Color Flower Sale** - We’re selling landscape flats, hanging baskets, color bowls, wave petunias, and vegetable and herb plants. More details will be available soon for placing your order. Plants are delivered around Mother’s Day.

**Palm Sunday Breakfast** on March 25 from 8:30-11:00 AM.

**Theme Basket Silent Auction** takes place during the pancake breakfast. Baskets will go to the highest bidder – winners will be announced at the end of the 10:30 worship service.

All proceeds from these fundraisers will go toward our 2018 summer youth trips. Thank you for supporting OSLC Missions!

## Souper Bowl of Caring

As part of the Souper Bowl of Caring, our youth will be collecting food and money to help end world hunger during Super Bowl weekend.

The Souper Bowl of Caring is a nationwide initiative to fight hunger and poverty. In 2017, nearly 7,000 youth organizations participated. Please consider partnering with our youth to tackle hunger by dropping a few dollars into the youth soup pots and/or by bringing in canned or paper goods to Worship on **February 3 and 4**. All of the money collected will go to ELCA World Hunger. The non-perishable items will go into our own food pantry. Thank you for supporting our youth as they help others in need.

## Ushers Needed

We have a few open spots to fill and we need your help!

**SATURDAYS** at 5:00 = The **3rd Saturday of the month**, we need one or two people to join an existing Usher team. As Bill Mode steps away, Pam Vorland needs a teammate.

**SUNDAYS** at 10:30 = The months of **April** and **December** need ushers. Craig Keach is on his own and **NEEDS** help during those months at the 10:30 service. Please consider joining a team and helping your fellow members at OSLC.

Ushering is a vital part of our church service. Ushers are key members who aide members during the service, keep an eye on the church during the service and are there to serve. We *cannot* do it without them, and the more we have, the stronger and safer is our church. Thank you for considering joining our service to OSLC.

*-Christine Rondeau, Usher Coordinator. Email me at [christiner@investmentplanners.com](mailto:christiner@investmentplanners.com), or call me at 920-358-4566*

## Ash Wednesday Services

Please join us for Ash Wednesday Worship Services on February 14 at 10:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.

## Men's Breakfasts

The men's Bible study meets on the second and fourth Saturday of every month. We meet at 8:00 a.m. in the meeting room of Perkins Restaurant across from Wal-Mart. This month we meet on February 10 and 24. Come and join us. All men welcome.

## OSLC Mission Quilters

Come see how much fun we have! This month we meet in the church gym on:

February 1 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

February 15 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

## Women's Book Club

The book club at OSLC welcomes you to join our friendly group of 10 to 12 women. We generally meet at 6:30 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of each month in the church library. This month we meet on February 27. Come join us!

## Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting will be held on February 11 immediately following the 10:30 worship service. A lunch will be served.

## LOVE >... Listening Deeply Series

Join Marcie Kimmes, Ministry Associate, and Pastor Ellisen on Sunday mornings, from 9:15 to 10:15 a.m., as we continue our LOVE > Listening Deeply series. We'll listen, learn & explore through Bible study, videos, Q & A and guest speakers.

### Upcoming Sessions

February 4 – *Love > Fear*

February 11 – Human Trafficking in the Fox Valley: Guest Speaker – Sister Carol Haanen, 5 Stones Ministry

February 18 – *Love > Grief*

February 25 – Guest Speaker TBD

### Additional topics for 2018 include:

March – *Love > Hopelessness*; Mental Health

April – *Love > Hunger*

## February “Noisy” Offerings for LWR

During the weekends of February 10-11 and 17-18, our congregation will collect noisy coins (and quiet, paper money, too) to support our ministries for Lutheran World Relief. Your generosity will enable us to buy needed supplies for people around the globe. Want to learn more? Go to [lwr.org](http://lwr.org) and read about the Kits of Promise. You can also find shopping lists in the wooden wall rack of the office wing. Thank you!

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.” -Margaret Mead

## Info from the ELCA

Make the following your New Year's resolutions:

--Sign up to receive ELCA Hunger information at <http://www.elca.org/hunger>

--Sign up to receive ELCA Advocacy alerts at <http://www.elca.org/advocacy>

--Sign up for LOPPW - Lutheran Office of Public Policy in Wisconsin at <http://www.loppw.org/about-us/current-priorities/>

--Attend Synod “Following Christ in this World” on January 27 or February 3. See it at <http://ecsw.org/event/following-christ-in-this-world/>

## Building Code

The Building access code will change on February 1, 2018. If you need access to the building after office hours, please call the church office at 725-3956.

## Thanks From FVWS

On behalf of the Fox Valley Warming Shelter, I want to personally thank your pastor and the congregation members for your support throughout 2017! The staff, the board, and especially our clients are very grateful for those who prepared, delivered and served the meals every month.

A special thank you to Alan Dordel for all his work in coordinating this effort. Also thanks to Marcie Kimmes and the youth group for their donations. It is only through the generous gift of talent and time by such dedicated volunteers that our mission of sheltering those who are homeless is possible. Thank you all! -*Connie Raether, Volunteer Coordinator, FVWS*

### LUTHER TIDBIT

**"TO BE A CHRISTIAN WITHOUT PRAYER IS NO MORE POSSIBLE THAN TO BE ALIVE WITHOUT BREATHING."**

**-MARTIN LUTHER**

## Care and Grief Note Ministry

Knowing that we are not alone can make all of the difference. OSLC staff have a wide variety of care and prayer notes and other support literature that are written to bring comfort, strength, healing and hope to those facing life challenges. Many titles are always available in the hallway of the ministry wing. These are free for you to keep. *February's Notes* featured at the prayer table in the back of the sanctuary are:

Grandparents Grieve Twice by Gail Toerpe

Understanding the Healing Power of Prayer by Anna Mitchell

Turning to God When You Hurt by Karen Berry, O.S.F

For Teens: Drugs and Alcohol, Resisting Pressure

## Why Do We Sing The Songs We Sing?

Have you ever wondered "why we sing the songs we sing" during our worship services? There is a method to the madness for selection of music. Each worship service has a theme or topic. The prayers, readings, sermon and hymns follow and support this theme.

The first worship resource that is used when hymns are selected is "Sundays and Seasons", a book printed by Augsburg Fortress. It provides the theme, scripture readings, sermon ideas, hymns, and other special music recommendations for each worship service of the church year. Two or three hymn suggestions are given for the Gathering, Hymn of the Day, Offering, Communion, and Sending hymns. The suggested hymns are compared to a color coded hymn list to see if they are known by our congregation. What is a "color coded hymn list"? A committee of choir members created this list, at the request of Pastor Cath. They reviewed the entire ELW worship book and rated each hymn based on the familiarity of the hymn to our congregation, new hymns to be learned, and hymns which need to be led by a song leader or choir. The recommended hymns are then played to make sure they are "singable", before the final selection is made.

On occasion, the suggested hymns may be ones that are unknown by our congregation or on the "unsingable list". When that happens, other resources that offer hymn suggestions based on the scripture readings for that Sunday are viewed. Even with multiple resources, there are times when thematic hymns, that our congregation knows, cannot be found. It is at those times that we go to the Our Saviors' "Top 40" hymn list.

The "Top 40" hymn list was originally compiled in the spring of 2000, which was before the ELW cranberry worship book was available. Hymns for a new "Top 40" list were requested in 2016 and 2017. The list was updated this past summer (2017).

Witnesses of your obedience, faith and your generosity in sharing, will be led to praise God. (paraphrase)  
~ 2 Corinthians 9:13

## Generous People...

### **Desperately seeking singers for the adult Chancel**

**Choir**, especially sopranos and altos. We meet every Wednesday evening from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. We sing on the second Saturday of the month at 5:00 p.m. and the fourth Sunday of the month at 8:00 a.m. If there is a fifth Sunday of the month we sing at 10:30 a.m.

If you are in 9th grade through 90+ we want you. You don't have to be a super singer - just carry a tune, read music, and love to sing praises to the Lord.

We will be practicing for the Palm Sunday/Passion Sunday worship and Easter soon and welcome a short term commitment. We have some members leaving on vacation so that leaves us pretty slim on singers. Please consider joining us! Contact Ardy Kreuter at 470-4701 or [akreuter@new.rr.com](mailto:akreuter@new.rr.com).

## Generosity is...

**...a tradition  
worth keeping!**

## From the Pews

### **Why I volunteer...**

I volunteer because it makes my heart feel good! Keeps the blood pressure low! - *Anon*

I volunteer because it gives me an opportunity to share my talents and meet members of the church I wouldn't necessarily meet otherwise. My dad always helped at church, so it gives me a chance to extend his legacy.

—Steve

Because it feels great to help others! It's also very rewarding to be able to give back to the church. —*Anon*

## Opportunities For Giving...

### **Benevolence**

We send a portion of our General Fund directly to the East Central Synod of WI. They send 55% of their receipts to the ELCA, where these contributions are used to accomplish what we cannot do on our own. This includes missions here and abroad, among other things.

## Generous Congregation...

**Unified Budget YTD**

**Through December**

**Income \$433,766.05**

**Expenses \$413,483.17**

**\$ 20,282.88**

**Check out our  
online donation  
feature on our  
website at  
[www.our-  
saviors.org](http://www.our-saviors.org)**

## Building Fund...

**Through December**

**Remaining on Loan:  
\$491,582.38**

**Principal Paid on Loan  
\$117,592.13**

**Total Contributions:  
\$111,373.24**