

VOICE

*Our
Savior's
Lutheran
Church*

July 2021

809 South Commercial Street
Neenah, WI 54956

Service Times

Sunday 9:00 a.m.

Office Hours: M-Th 8:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.

Fri. 9:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.

920-725-3956

Life Together 

“Hey Pastor Jon, I know we haven’t spoken in a while, but I just wanted to thank you for everything you’ve done in my life. It was a blessing to grow up with you as my pastor, and you’ve had a significant impact on the man I am today as well as my faith. I can’t thank you enough, truly, through the years of being in Sunday school, confirmation, as well as going to Camp Lutherwood and Houston. Your compassion and love for Christ changed me for the better and transformed my relationship with God. You and your family were a blessing to me, my family, the church, and the community.” -Liam Buskerud

I received this text message from Liam, a graduating senior from the last congregation I served. He gave me permission to share it with you. I really needed to hear this. It was a God wink to me. It reminded me how important ministry to youth and young adults is in the church. It encouraged me to keep fighting the good fight of faith and find ways to connect with our youth in the congregation and community.

Liam went through confirmation with me and all the interns we had. He attended confirmation camp when we studied Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount. He came to the ELCA Youth Gathering with us in Houston back in 2018. He attended a Friday morning youth breakfast that I started because it was the only way we could get together due to their busy schedules. We met at a local greasy spoon, did a little Bible work, and ate awesome breakfasts together.

I have hopes for this same connection with youth in our congregation beyond confirmation. I want my own kids to connect with other Christian youth, go on mission trips, and serve the community through the church.

But coming out of Covid, this is a hard nut to crack. We had a whole summer of postponing things and now this is our make-up summer. People are busy with vacations and such. With Kellie Escovy, our new Vicar, on board, we have capacity to connect with youth and young adults. She comes with amazing gifts and passions for justice and making sure everyone knows they are loved by God. She has already started a budding community on social media (e.g. TikTok and Instagram).

I know she is planning several service/learning opportunities for youth, a trip to the ELCA Youth Gathering in Minneapolis in 2022, and other events. Watch for our annual calendar that is soon to come out. We want to serve you and your families, but we need your help and encouragement to make it happen.

I also want to acknowledge the grief I sense in the congregation. With Marcie and Ruthie leaving around the same time and Colleen moving on, it will take some time to rebuild trust and momentum again. They did a great job with youth and families and their fingerprints are everywhere.

If Liam’s message is any indication of how the church, in all its expressions, can impact youth, I believe through your efforts and ours, we can make things happen to help kids grow in Christ. Let’s talk.

Peace,

Pastor Jon

August 1-5 - VBS @ Gloria Dei.

We are teaming up with our ELCA Neenah neighbors to bring you VBS! Kids age 3 through grade 5 are invited to attend. Price is \$5/child or \$10 per family. More info can be found in weekly emails. A link for registration can be found on our website or here: <https://our-saviors.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/2021-VBS-Registration.pdf>

August 19-20 - Middle School Lock-In

Students entering grades 6-9 are invited to our Middle School Lock-In! Join us for games, fellowship, food, and maybe even a little sleep. The lock-in will start at 7pm Saturday, and conclude with us attending Sunday worship together, PJs and all. To RSVP (or volunteer to help!) email Vicar Kellie at kescovy@our-saviors.org.

More Summer Events

The rest of our summer family programs can be found on the website (www.our-saviors.org). Go to the 'What's Happening Now' box on our homepage and click the 'Family Summer Programming' link to print out your own copy of events. Or find it here: <https://our-saviors.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Join-us-for-our-summer-programming.jpg>

Worship Services in July

Virtually/On-line Worship Continues

Sundays – 9:00 a.m.

on Our Facebook and You Tube Channels

Or Join us for In-Person Worship

Sundays at 9:00 a.m.

Saturdays at 5:00 p.m. beginning July 10

*No need to RSVP for the in-person services.
Space is limited. Masks are no longer required if you are fully vaccinated.*

Where We Were – Where We're Going

Many of you have asked when we can go back to 'normal'. The OSLC Worship Team has decided it is time to go back – go back and pick up the Saturday worship service. The Saturday worship service will resume at **5:00 PM beginning Saturday, July 10, 2021.**

The same COVID safety precautions that are in effect for Sunday services will be applied to the Saturday service. No reservations required - Masks not required if you are fully vaccinated (on the honor system) – Safe distance. The Sunday 9:00 AM in-person and on-line services will continue. See you in church!

Synod Golf Outing

Pastor Dennis Ellisen has opened registration for the 2021 Synod Golf Outing to be held on August 10, 2021 at Glacier Wood Golf Club in Iola. Shot-gun start is at 8:30 a.m. Cost is \$60 which includes golf, cart, lunch and prizes. Registration deadline is July 25, 2021. Get a foursome together and come join the fun! For more information, or to register, please contact Sue Schultz at 751-3725 or nealsueschultz@gmail.com.

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

Vicar’s Newsletter

Hi everyone!

The month of June has been a whirlwind to say the least, but I am excited to say that I have been settling in well to my new role and environment. I am so grateful for all the hospitality and kindness that I have experienced from everyone.

Looking ahead, I have lots of projects that I am working on, and I would love to share some of them with you! First, Pastor Jon and I have been working to put together lots of programming throughout the summer for people of all ages. A few that I would like to lift up are an open gym, a trip to Noah’s Ark, and a Timber-Rattlers game. Beyond that, I am working on some activities for our youth – we are partnering with the other ELCA congregations in the area for VBS at Gloria Dei, we are putting on a middle school lock-in, and hosting a high school youth campfire.

I’ve also kickstarted a few social media initiatives for the church. I am posting daily on our Facebook and Instagram accounts, I’ve created a church TikTok account, and I have started creating podcast episodes from our sermons through Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and Anchor.fm. We are already seeing growth in online engagement from both our church family and the community at large. I recently stumbled across a great ministry called Digivangelism, which exists to help growing churches minister to people through social media, so I’m trying out lots of their suggestions right now!

Finally, I am in full ministry formation mode! Under Pastor Jon’s counsel, I have been going on visits, assisting with funerals, planning Christian education programming, and leading children’s sermons and intersessional prayers during worship. I also recently had the opportunity to do a collaborative sermon with Pastor Jon! Beyond that, I’m just trying to learn and soak up all of the things I can. I’m SO excited to be learning and growing beside y’all, and I can’t wait to see what the next three years bring!

In Peace,
Vicar Kellie Escovy

Social Media Tags:

Find us on your favorite social media and audio streaming platforms:

Facebook: @oursaviorsneenah
Instagram: @our.saviors_neenah
TikTok: @our.saviors
Spotify: OSLC - Neenah, WI

Anchor: anchor.fm/oursaviors Apple Podcasts: OSLC-Neenah, WI

Guatemala Mission Trip Meeting

Interested in our Mission Trip to Guatemala next year? Come to an informational meeting in person at church on July 22 at 7PM. See you there!

We’ll Miss You, Kasey!

“I’ve heard it said, that people come into our lives, for a reason, bringing something we must learn, and we are led...” These are lyrics from the musical *Wicked*. As I say farewell to this wonderful congregation, this song runs through my head.

My time here was short, but experiences and connections formed make it seem like much longer. I have been blessed beyond measure by your kindness, your patience, your care, your understanding, and your support. I thank you sincerely for being so wonderful, and for choosing to support me both professionally and personally. I can only hope to have made even a small impact on you, as you have surely made one on me. My best always to you.

-Kasey

(Note—Kasey’s last day is Wednesday, June 30. She will fill in occasionally, as needed, until a new Office Manager is hired.)

We Burned the Mortgage!

After our 9:00 service on May 30th we celebrated the paying off of our building fund loan by sharing some cake and burning the mortgage out in the parking lot. We picked this date as this was supposed to be the end of the 4th capital campaign, but through the efforts of all of us, we were able to pay it off in December of 2020. Each capital campaign lasted for three years, and we were not wanting to conduct a fifth campaign!

A little history on where we came from to get to this point is a good reminder of our faith in action and what we can do with God's help.

For several years, Our Savior's studied the need to upgrade the church facilities. Key needs were identified as: Make the church handicap accessible, enhance the Narthex, relocate the church offices, modernize the kitchen, update the Sanctuary and expand the church property for future expansion. The initial plan to accomplish these needs was projected to be \$1,400,000.

The Congregation approved the plan. A building committee was formed and was led by Rick Carlson. The committee initiated a capital fund campaign entitled "Faith in Action". This resulted in pledges of \$726,000 over a three-year period. With this tremendous Faith and Support from the Congregation, "Groundbreaking" took place in September 2009.

As construction proceeded, several enhancements were included. The outside of the new office structure was changed to match the church, and a basement was added. A passageway from the front of the church to the new office structure was included. Fire code required a sprinkling system for the sanctuary and a firewall for the improved kitchen. Enhancements of a new carpet, alter rail, pew removal and music alcove were additions for the sanctuary.

The final cost of the project, including the purchase of the home across the street, was \$1,818,000. The balance of the project was financed through a loan from the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA for \$1,191,000. The mortgage document that we burned called for us to make payments until December 1, 2035. There were so many people who were instrumental in getting this done, but we all should be proud of the team effort that went into getting this project completed and paid off 15 years ahead of schedule.

"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'"



Karl Wunderlich and Pastor Jon lead the attendees in the chant 'We're Debt Free!' as the mortgage burned.

- Our Mission Statement -
Gather and grow with God's spirit in order to love and serve others.

June Pastoral

Acts...

Funerals

Karen Lippert (May 29)
Bill Dull (May 30)

Memorials

Arvin Rank

Baptisms

Max Lang

Generous Congregation...

YTD Totals Through May

	<i>Budgeted</i>	<i>Actual</i>
Income	\$174,417	\$246,846
Expenses	\$183,692	\$154,463
Balance	(\$ 9,275)	\$ 92,383

Memorials & Honorariums Received

A special thank you to those who remembered

Elaine Anderson

Sue Christensen

Dorothy Dieck

Lutheran World Relief

THANK YOU for your donations for Lutheran World Relief in June; our LWR "warriors" have been so helpful! As I'm writing this, I can't believe that it's almost July. Here's the list of the new items we're featuring.

Our July goals:

- #1. 35 rulers with both inches and centimeters.
- #2. 25 small pencil sharpeners (the Dollar stores often have several in one set).
- #3. 20 sets of black or blue stick pens; typically, there are 10 or 12 pens in a package.**
- #4. 30 boxes of 24 crayons.**
- #5. 30 children's scissors (tips must be rounded blades, not pointy).**
- #6. 130 spiral notebooks, 70-80 pages each.**

**Wait for sales for those items: school supplies usually have sales in July and August.

Donations can be dropped off at church during office hours, bring them to worship, or simply put items in the gray plastic bin, located on the top of the ramp by the office door. The bin will be labeled LWR. Any questions? Please contact Ann Pokel at wapokel@gmail.com.

Council Meeting Minutes

June 8, 2021 – 7:00 p.m

Open Forum

Vicar Kellie Escovy introductions.

Pastor's Report:

Funerals/Memorials:

Karen Lippert – May 29

Bill Dull – May 30

Arvin Rank – June 13

Baptisms:

Max Lang—May 9

Felix Flores—May 23

Leo Thomas Viano—July 17

Weddings:

Danny Thomas & Molly Aird – July 3 (offsite)

Confirmation ended for summer on May 19.

Mortgage burned on Sunday, May 30.

Welcoming service for Vicar Kellie Escovy on Sunday, June 1.

High School Graduates honored on Sunday, Jun 6.

Bringing back the Annual Calendar of Events.

Wednesday 10am Bible Study will continue through the summer via ZOOM.

Saturday Worship service will restart on July 10 at 5pm.

Vicar's Report:

Increase social media by setting up Instagram and Tik Tok accounts.

Family Ministry.

Church Community.

Developed Welcoming Statement.

Treasurer's Report: May income was \$96,907 (which included Government Salary Reimbursement of \$59,600). May expenses were \$26,375. YTD in black. Regular checking account lower and money market increased due to Dave transferring between the checking account and money market. The amount transferred was \$59,600 – the amount of the PPP loan. It was required to keep the money in the checking account pending the possibility that we were required to pay back the loan. Since the loan was forgiven, funds were moved to the money market account. **Motion/Second/Carried Timm/Bradley to move PPP reimbursement into the Equity Operating Fund.** All voting aye.

Membership/Attendance Reports: As of June 7, 2021, there are 803 baptized members, and 660 confirmed members.

Ministry Team Reports:

Building and Grounds-Kevin Schabo: Relandscaping work being done. Engineering study and quote work is in progress with due date of July 1.

Evangelism, Marketing, Communication & Technology: Kevin Schabo: Working on TEC booth manual. Next meeting is June 14.

Finance – Sue Schultz: Met 5/13. PPP loan discussion. Todd Stevenson will be Interim Foundation member.

Security and Safety – Ben Lochner: Security system not working yet. Steve Kuehl is working with Kacey on it.

Worship and Music – Graham Bradley: Defining goals. COVID concerns. Adding additional services. Fall – more services TBD. Volunteer interest survey. VBS planning. July 6 next meeting.

Collaborative Learning – Sue Schultz: Met Jun 1. Dara Clifford will be Vicar Kellie's mentor. Next meeting July 7.

Old Business:

Computer Replacement: Server discussion. Submit proposal between AIT and KL. No contract set up yet. Currently using AIT for first calls, good service. Kellie's computer is ready but mic is not working.

Next Council Meeting: No meeting in July. Next Council meeting will be August 10, 2021 at 7:00 pm In-Person in the gathering area at church.

Respectfully submitted, Joan Terry, Council Secretary



Vicar Kellie Escovy will be with us for three years as she completes her studies to become a Pastor. Here she is with Pastor Jon (left) and at right with some members who attended her Welcoming Ceremony—including our Bishop.

Also shown is the cake for our Burning of the Mortgage Service, as well as the burning barrel.

FVLH Summer Music Series

Fox Valley Lutheran Homes invite you to a series of summer concerts to bring together their tenants, their families and guests, members of their supporting congregations, and friends/donors of FVLH for an afternoon of music and fellowship. The concerts will be held on the Linwood Commons lawn. Please bring your lawn chairs and join them for an afternoon of music at 2 PM on the following Sunday afternoons:

- July 11 - The Maroszek Brothers (Polka and religious),
- August 8 - The Voices of Peace (Southern Gospel)
- September 19 - Prince of Peace Spirit (Blue grass and religious)

In case of rain, concerts will move into Linwood Commons and will be closed to the general public due to space constraints.

