

VOICE

Our Savior's Lutheran Church

February 2022

809 South Commercial Street
Neenah, WI 54956

Service Times

Saturday 5:00 pm. & Sunday 9:00 a.m.
Office Hours: M-Th 9:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.
Wed 4—8:00 p.m.
& Fri. 9:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.
920-725-3956

Life Together 

I recently signed up for a clergy renewal retreat in Carefree Arizona at the end of April. I will be gathering with other clergy, mostly from the West Coast for some post-Easter reflection and renewal. We will eat meals together, worship, take time for hiking and playing, and have a formal time of education each evening. And for those who know me, I will be bringing my golf clubs as part of this spiritual retreat. That reminds me, in 2018, I took my golf clubs to Scotland for a sabbatical and was blessed to play St. Andrews Old Course two days in a row. My lowest score of the two days was 80. You're darn right I am bragging. (See picture on next page.) This year, the Open Championship (British Open) will be played at St. Andrews in July. I can't wait to watch on TV... my ticket request did not come through in the ticket lottery.

But in the meantime, I have rediscovered the joy of reading as a way to prepare for the retreat. One of my colleagues and best friends, Pastor Andrew Wendle, is our retreat leader. He has given us four books to read about the post-quarantine church and a biography. He had the honor of being Eugene Peterson's pastor at the end of his life near Flathead Lake in Montana. Eugene Peterson is the person who translated the scriptures into "The Message". It is translated into accessible language for the everyday person. We often use it as a comparison point in many of the Bible studies I do. One of the books Andy is having us read is Eugene Peterson's authorized biography. I am fascinated with all the twists and turns so far... decision points in life... and how the Holy Spirit guided Eugene and his wife Jan throughout the years.

Eugene spent much of his professional life as a Presbyterian pastor in Maryland. He grew up Pentecostal and encountered many heavy hitters in theology and Christianity in America through his studies in New York and Baltimore. But for Eugene, ministry has always been relational. He was the son of a butcher and Pentecostal woman preacher.

For Peterson, ministry meant visiting homes and businesses of members to see what they were dealing with that week as he prepared for his sermons. Over a cup of coffee and listening, his sermons were always contextual and hit home. As an intern supervisor for several years, I can relate. I always told my students, "When in doubt, get out." The means, get out and visit one of the saints of the congregation. Or go out and volunteer somewhere. Get out. Find people on the margins of life and spend time with them. There you will meet God face to face in God's beautiful creation.

I long to be with all of you without a mask on... to see your smiling and/or tear-soaked faces. I have always tried to practice relational ministry. But the pandemic has really slowed that down. However, I am enjoying playing pickle ball in our gym on Sundays. I have enjoyed golfing with some members and friends on Thursday mornings in the good weather. I love visiting your businesses, schools, concerts, sporting events. I enjoy a good cup of coffee. In my first call. I loved learning how to drive a tractor for the wheat harvest. The Erickson family trained me and trusted me to drive a big John Deere tractor with a grain cart behind it as I drove alongside the combine as they unloaded on the fly. I would then empty the grain cart into the semi-trailer. One week-end the community harvested a field for a family that suffered a tragedy. This was real ministry to me.

I hope for many good years of relational ministry among all of you. I am already feeling renewed by reading books even before my retreat begins.

Have a blessed Epiphany season (I should have had a V-8 season in the church). May God reveal Godself to you in the most earthy and ordinary ways.

Peace,
Pastor Jon Strasman

Family Sunday School

Andrea Long and Pastor Jon are doing an online family Sunday School every 2nd and 4th week, and one low commitment activity on the opposite weeks for families to plug into. The completed videos are now live on our website and You Tube channel. Check them out!

Our goal is to stay connected to our families during this time and ramp up once the pandemic allows us to bring back more programming.

Confirmation

Confirmation continues in February on Wednesdays at 5:30.

Beginning in March when mid-week Lenten services begin, we will not have Confirmation on Wednesdays. However, students are still required to attend services as part of their confirmation requirement.

We are currently setting up the **Remind app** for confirmation communication. If you get an invite, please respond. We hope to coordinate acolytes this way. Speaking of acolytes, we currently have a number of openings for help during worship. Please sign up in the lobby on the sheets by the nursery, or contact officemanager@our-saviors.org, or respond to the Remind app.

Students are required to complete 10 Sermon Notes by May. In January we will have a spreadsheet available for students to see their progress.

Worship Services in February

Join us for In-Person Worship

Saturdays at 5:00 p.m.

Sundays at 9:00 a.m.

Interactive Family Worship is on hold for now.

No need to RSVP for regular in-person services.

Masks are required. Social distancing applies.

Or Join Us For Virtual/On-line Worship

Sundays – 9:00 a.m.

on Our Facebook and You Tube Channels

Want to Attend Worship But Nervous About Coming Inside?

Tune into 88.5FM from any OSLC parking lot to listen to Saturday or Sunday worship from the comfort of your car!

Ash Wednesday is March 2

Mark your calendars for our annual Ashes to Go event on Wednesday, March 2. From 6AM until 7PM, you can drive through our parking lot and receive your ashes as well as a treat. Then join us for worship in person (and online) that evening at 6:30PM. No need to RSVP.

Our midweek Lenten worship services begin the following week at 6:30PM in person. Services will be held March 9, 16, 23 and 30th, and April 6.

Altar Flowers

The 2022 Altar Flower sign-up sheet is up in the gathering area. Please note there has been a slight price increase this year to add body and variety to our arrangements. Keep in mind that *flower* is just a suggestion; plants and succulents are also available. That being said, there is a check box on the bottom of the envelopes which you can choose to donate your arrangement. Our homebound ministry has members and friends who have enjoyed receiving these in the past.

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

New Mission Outreach Team

Our synod bishop, Anne, has nominated our congregation to form a “Good Neighbor Team” to walk alongside a newly arrived Afghanistan refugee family to the Fox Valley. After discussion with our church council and the Serve and Reach team, Our Savior’s will be taking on this project.

We need to form a Good Neighbor Team of 6-8 people from the congregation to work with World Relief Fox Valley to gather household items and furniture, help facilitate transportation for needed appointments, walk with the family as they learn the culture (groceries, public transportation, basic English), invest in long-term friendships, and potential financial support. This is a six-month commitment for the church. It will involve weekly visits to the refugee family.

Rich and Pam Garman have already stepped forward to lead the team. Contact Rich or Pam directly or Pastor Jon to be vetted as we begin to form this team. Let us know if you are interested in being on the team or are willing to support from behind the scenes.

Items Needed for Good Neighbor Apartment

We have already begun collecting items for our new refugee family who will soon be coming to our community. All items can be gently used/excellent condition EXCEPT bedding, which must be new. Bed sizes are double or twin. Please contact Andrea in the office at church if you have items to donate. She will be keeping a master list of donations and can let you know what is still needed. Here is a partial list of requested items:

- Kitchen table and chairs
- Dressers
- Silverware/silverware tray
- Plates & bowls
- Cups & mugs
- Pots & fry pans
- Knives & cutting boards
- Baking dishes & Mixing bowls
- Tupperware
- Kitchen utensils (spatula, ladle, wooden spoons, can opener, etc.)
- Kitchen hand towels
- Bath towels, wash clothes, hand towels
- Pillows & comforters
- Kitchen & bathroom cleaners
- Hand soap & dish soap
- Cleaning supplies (mop, bucket, broom sponges, etc.)

Meat Raffle

Mark your calendar for the first ever Meat Raffle to support the Guatemala Mission Trip. It will be held on **February 6 from 2:00 to 4:00PM at the DOME** in Neenah. The event will also include a silent auction.

Food on the Fourth (Tuesday-Thursday)

This year we are initiating **Food on the Fourth** (Tuesdays & Thursdays that is!) Our congregation will be providing and serving meals on the fourth Tuesdays and Thursdays of every even month to 120+ persons from both the Fox Valley Community Table (FVCT) and the Pillars Adult Shelter. Watch for a link to Sign- Up- Genius to sign up to volunteer in February. If you would rather call Andrea, the office manager at church, you may do so. The first **Food on the Fourth** will be February 22 for FVCT and February 24 for Pillars.

Food on the Fourth Matching Funds Challenge Update

Through your generosity, we are 55% of the way to the \$3600 match! The FVCT/Pillars envelopes are available in the Gathering area and the office. If you would like to donate by mail, with a check, make it out to OSLC-Pillars. If you are donating online, please write a note online.

A Huge Thank You to our Musicians

Over the past two years, the appearance and ever-changing Covid-19, has caused us to change service times and set up on-line services which requires song leaders. With that, Joyful Noise evolved into a very dedicated group of song leaders.

In the beginning, on-line services were pre-recorded. When in-person services resumed, the services were live-streamed. For all the services, plexiglass panels (made by Chris Swender) were set up to keep musicians physically distanced, masks were worn, and rehearsals were limited to about 15 minutes, immediately prior to the service. Services had one or two song leaders, a keyboardist and when possible, guitar, violin, or percussion. Our song leaders for Thanksgiving and Mid-week Advent services were challenged to learn new liturgies and spent many hours in separate rehearsals.

Our Savior's is also blessed with individuals that prepared and recorded special musical selections for use in our services. If you see any of these people, please take time to thank them for their dedication and continued efforts to bring music to Our Savior's:

Instrumentalists: Emily Pockat - violin, Bryan Gilbertson – guitar, Ardy Kreuter – percussion, LuAnn Stensberg - keyboard.

Song Leaders/Vocalists: Claudia Bjornstad, Sarah Bjornstad, Kristin Curtis, Sue Englebert, Pam Garman, Kim Jannusch, Sue Kueck, Vicki Meinke, and Izzy Ricketts.

Special Music: Annika Strasman; Ben, Jacob, Samantha, Jerry and Lynda Lockner; Graham, Owen, Norah and Brooke Bradley; Martin Haanstad; Andrew Schaller; Joyous Ringers; Chancel Choir; Andy Pokel; Elise Pokel; Chris Dieck-Hilgas; Jon Strasman; Sam Hartman (the late); Patrick Hartman; Tom Berven and the MacDowell Male Chorus.

Thank you all so much! We could not do this without all of you!

Roberta Golden
Music Team Leader

Looking for Lay Worship Assistants

In order to include more people in worship leadership, we are still looking for lay worship assistants to help at each service. This could include people who have gone to the Lay School of Theology in our Synod or anyone who has an interest in worship leadership.

Let Andrea Long in our office know if you are interested. Pastor Jon will continue training in February and set up a schedule for helpers.

Lay worship assistants will help with worship set-up, leading liturgy, the prayers of the people, and helping with the logistics of worship. Please consider this if you want to grow in your serving.

Thank You!

A big thank you to Chris Swender, Cheryl Timm, Diane Wilfling, Martin Haanstad, and Ardy Kreuter for un-decorating the church. It went pretty fast! We appreciate your help!!
~Worship Team



Pastor Jon golfing at St. Andrew's in Scotland.

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

January Pastoral Acts...

Baptisms

Brylee Morris Gardebrecht

Funerals

Beverly McClellen

Generous Congregation...

YTD Totals Through December

	<i>Budgeted</i>	<i>Actual</i>
Income	\$418,600	\$445,568
Expenses	\$440,860	\$362,614
Balance	(\$ 22,260)	\$ 82,954

Memorials & Honorariums Received

A special thank you to those
who remembered

Jackie Hartmann
Sam Hartmann

Follow Us Online

Facebook: @oursaviorsneenah

Instagram: @oursaviorsneenah

TikTok: @our.saviors

Spotify, Apple, and Google (podcasts): OSLC - Neenah, WI

Website: our-saviors.org

OSLC Phone App: In the App Store, search 'Church App' and 'Tithe.ly'. Download the app and then search for Our Savior's – Neenah

Lutheran World Relief Kits

In 2021, Our Savior's members and friends donated so generously for this mission. Because of your kindness, we were able to send 56 health kits, 36 baby care kits, and 75 school kits! For the months of February through September in 2022, we'll highlight several items that we need; there's a bin in the gathering area for donations. Email Ann Pokel with questions: wapokel@gmail.com Thanks again for your help!

Here are our goals for February:

50 new, lightweight bath towels (any color except white). Target, Walmart, and other stores have towels for about \$3.00.

40 new, lightweight hand towels (any color except white).

40 rulers with inches and centimeters.

40 simple pencil sharpeners (the "dollar" stores often have several for \$1.00)

Council Minutes...

January 11th, 2022 – 7:00 p.m.

Pastor's Report:

- Gospel of John Bible Study on Sundays at 10 AM after worship. We are currently on chapter 5 of 20. People can come and go as their schedule allows.
- I participated in Pickleball in our Gym organized by Joan Terry on Sunday, January 9. It is a riot. Check it out.
- I am planning to go on a clergy renewal retreat at "Spirit in the Desert" retreat center April 25-30. This will be a post-Easter retreat with colleagues that will involve devotions, worship, food, golf, and hiking. This is part of my 2 weeks of continuing education I receive each year.
- I need to form a Mutual Ministry Committee that works with me as a sounding board, to keep me healthy, and to help guide decision making as a pastor.
- I am helping Andrea with the online version of Family Sunday School.

We have been asked through the Bishop's office to form a team to accompany one Afghan family who will be relocating to the Fox Valley. Pam and Rich Garman are already interested. It is through an organization called World Relief Fox Valley.

Discussion: Fox Valley World Relief - Good Neighbor Teams

Rich and Pam Garman are taking a lead from our congregation on this opportunity.

Discussion: Continue in Person Services or switch to Virtual Only Services?

- Concerns over limited participants in worship over the January 8th/9th Weekend.
- Discussed potential request of congregation wear N95 mask if you are attending service.

Pastor still feels very comfortable and safe while leading service.

Treasurer's Report: December actual income was \$63,728. Funds from the PPP loan (\$59,600) were moved to Capital Repairs resulting in December reported income of \$4,444 (including \$316 released from restricted funds). That brings YTD income to \$445,568. December expenses were \$26,950 bringing YTD expenses to \$362,614. Surplus for 2021 of \$82,954.

Membership/Attendance Reports: Report as written.

Ministry Team Reports:

- Building & Grounds – Kevin Schabo:** One of the heating units failed in the gym wall, another one was adjusted to get us by until new heating is installed. Pressure switch failed on a furnace (installed 2009), was able to use a spare to fix it.
- Care & Connect – New: Jennifer Baldwin:** Pastor John discussed the purpose of this team.
- Retirees & Friends – New: Carol Swannell:** Hopes to restart once COVID status is green in Neenah.
- TEC – Kevin Schabo:** Kevin - Nothing to report. Ben - A couple different people are in training for working tech services for services. Currently, have a total of five (5) people on the team that rotate weekends.
- Finance – Cheryl Timm:** PPP loan was moved from Income to Capital Repairs.
- Learn & Grow/Youth – Vacant**
- Personnel – Cheryl Timm:** Nothing to report.
- Security & Safety – Ben Lochner:** Nothing to report.
- Serve & Reach – Diane Wilfling:** Meat Raffle at the Dome on Feb 6th from 2-4PM. Meals at Pillars and St. Paul's church have a donor that will **match donations** in order to get a fund started to help pay for the meals.
- Worship & Music – Graham Bradley:** Children's Christmas service was a success. Christmas Eve worship services with the reservations worked well.
- Worship Volunteers – Graham Bradley:** This will be removed and be reported through Worship & Music.

Next Council Meeting: Feb 8, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

Minutes 1/11/21 OSLC Serve and Reach Committee via ZOOM 6 p.m.

Attendees – Christa Sanders, Rick/Barb Klamm, Kristi Armstrong, Tammy Rabe, Pam/Rich Garman, Ann Pokel, Ardy Kreuter, Sue Engelbert, Diane Wilfling as the Council Rep.

Food on the Fourth Week (even months)

FVCT – Carol Swannell – 4th Tuesday lunch served to 60 persons

Pillars – Pam Garman – 4th Thursday, dinner served to 60 persons

Member matching donations campaign – members are giving a matching gift of \$3600 to fund. Will make an announcement weekend of 1/15-16

Bletzinger House – Carol Swannell

Update – Cindy Boehm and Carol attended the Christmas party. We are initiating a hygiene supply donation effort for them this month. Carol will put it in the Voice

Lutheran World Relief – Ann Pokel

Update – Ann will continue to collect 3-5 items per month, letting the congregation know each month via the Voice/Informer

Guatemala Mission Trip –Rich

Christmas Cookie exchange and Guatemala Bag sale in December – Approximately \$1400 was raised with \$525 going back to the women who make the bags in Guatemala. The cookie sale was a lot of fun and earned about \$400 with no expenses.

Meat Raffle at The Dome Feb 6 – Pudlowskis donated a \$250 Thrivent card to purchase meat. Christine and Royal Rondeau are organizing. Announcements in Voice/FB

Christmas Giving – Brigade report – Sue Engelbert

OSLC collected 3 carloads of goods and gift cards and delivered to the Brigade on Dec 6th

Christa Sanders donated a \$250 Thrivent card used by Ann Pokel to purchase hygiene products

Encouragement Ministry – Ardy Kreuter

Next meeting January 25

Afghan Family Resettlement

Not discussed at the meeting as we did not have info yet. Serve and Reach will have a role.

Next Meeting – February 8

February Calendar

The OSLC calendar can also be found on our website by going to our-saviors.org and clicking the 'News & Events' button in the navigation bar, and then clicking 'Monthly Calendar'.

Today	February 2022							Print	Week	Month	Agenda
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat					
30 9am Worship 10am Adult Bible Study 1pm AA Hispanic	31 6pm AA Hispanic	Feb 1 6pm Worship & Music Team	2 9am Visitation/Homebound I 10am Bible Study - Virtual & 6pm AA Meeting 5:30pm Joyous Ringers Prad 5:30pm Confirmation 7pm Chancel Choir - Reheal	3 1pm Quilting 6pm AA Meeting	4 6pm Valley Squares	5 9am Appleton Conference A 5pm Worship					
6 9am Worship 10am Adult Bible Study 1pm AA Hispanic 2pm Meat Raffle - Fundraise	7 1pm Retirees & Friends 6pm AA Hispanic	8 9:30am Esther Circle 6pm Serve & Reach - VIRTU 7pm Council Meeting	9 10am Bible Study - Virtual & 12pm Finance Meeting 5:30pm Joyous Ringers Prad 5:30pm Confirmation 7pm Chancel Choir - Reheal	10 10am Bible Study - Virtual & 12pm Finance Meeting 6pm AA Meeting	11 5pm Worship	12					
13 9am Worship 10am Adult Bible Study 1pm AA Hispanic	14 6pm AA Hispanic	15 10am Bible Study - Virtual & 1pm Quilting 5:30pm Joyous Ringers Prad 5:30pm Confirmation 7pm Chancel Choir - Reheal	16 10am Bible Study - Virtual & 1pm Quilting 5:30pm Joyous Ringers Prad 5:30pm Confirmation 7pm Chancel Choir - Reheal	17 6pm Valley Squares	18 8am Council Retreat 5pm Worship	19					
20 9am Worship 10am Adult Bible Study 1pm AA Hispanic	21 6pm AA Hispanic	22 10am Rebekah Circle 6:30pm Women's Book Club	23 10am Bible Study - Virtual & 6pm AA Meeting 5:30pm Joyous Ringers Prad 5:30pm Confirmation 7pm Chancel Choir - Reheal	24	25 5pm Worship	26					
27 9am Worship 10am Adult Bible Study 1pm AA Hispanic	28 6pm AA Hispanic	Mar 1 Shrove Tuesday/Mardi Gras St. David's Day	2 Ash Wednesday 7am Ashes To Go	3 1pm Quilting 6pm AA Meeting	4 6pm Valley Squares	5 5pm Worship					