

THE VOICE

Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 809 S. Commercial Street, Neenah, WI 54956
920-725-3956 E-mail: officemanager@our-saviors.org • www.our-saviors.org

July 2023

“Living in God’s Amazing Grace”

Worship Services

Saturday 5:00 pm
Sunday 9:00 am

Virtual Worship

Sunday 9:00 am

You Tube:

<https://www.youtube.com/@oursaviorslutheran-neenah8236>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/oursaviorsneenah/>

Office Hours

M-Th 9:00 am – 1:00 pm
Fri. 9:00 am – 12 noon

Inside this Issue...

Minister’s Message... 1

Council Meeting Minutes... 2

Financial Report... 8

Caught on Camera... 7, 9

July Calendar... 10



Minister’s Message

Dear Friends in Christ,

Can we be known in our community as a prodigal church when it comes to hospitality and welcome? This is one of the council’s goals and my goals for the coming year.

I once heard that a church has seven minutes to make a good impression on a visitor that would make them consider coming back for another visit. That is even before the sermon, or communion, or hearing our wonderful music. That is how critical a welcoming hospitality ministry is to a congregation. That means everything from our signage (inside and outside), the people who greet and usher, the ease of entering the sanctuary and receiving the worship materials, the welcome and announcements, and the opening hymn matter. Also, our online presence and the information we put out on the web must be accurate and welcoming, as well.

The scripture that comes to mind for me is in Luke 15: *The Parable of The Prodigal Son*. “Prodigal” literally means wasteful, or extravagant. The younger son in the parable is known as prodigal, or wasteful. He asked for his inheritance early and blew it right away on loose and extravagant

continued on page 3



Lutheran World Relief Kits

Is it just me, or does anyone else think that the first six months of 2023 simply flew by? We've already received many items for the kits... thank you for your generosity! For July and August we will focus on school purchases and bath towels.

Here's what we need:

Bath towels need to be thin! In humid countries, thick towels retain moisture and stay too damp. Target and Walmart both have towels for about \$3.15 (with tax). Any color is great except white. We need 25 towels.

Large, sturdy combs: We need 40.

Spiral notebooks with 70 or 80 pages, wide or narrow lines are perfect. Each schoolbag needs 4 notebooks.

Pencils (unsharpened). Each student gets 5 pencils.

Crayons: 24 crayons in a box; we need 21 boxes.

Children's blunt scissors: We need 25 scissors.

The stores are starting to add more school items on the shelves, but they're still quite expensive. At some point in July and August, they'll put the items on sale.

You can drop off your donations in the gathering area whenever the church is open. There are three black bins together, and they're labeled. You can also send an email to Ann Pokel if you'd like to have a pick up from your home, or apartment. If you have any questions, simply connect with Ann wapokel@gmail.com.

Again, thank you for your kind donations!

Pastor's Report:

- I just returned from the Faithful Innovations Leadership Cohort in Green Lake with other Wisconsin Pastors facilitated by Luther Seminary. My project will be working on connections; connecting people within our congregation and to our community. I will be forming an innovation team to work with me on making some adaptive shifts in our congregation that will improve our connections with each other and with our community. If you are interested in working on this team, let's talk.
- Baptism is scheduled for July 1 for Henry Viano, grandson of Scott Hoelzel.
- Patty Koplitz and Sue Engelbert are currently in Duluth with our youth for a mission trip.
- Scott People's from the Bletzinger House will be giving a Temple Talk the weekend of June 17-18 with Andrea Madsen regarding their bathroom project, a grant they wrote, and matching funds.
- We took a family trip in early June to New Jersey to watch Eli row for Wisconsin and to pick up Annika and her belongings from college for the summer.
- I will be helping with music at VBS July 31-August 3 from 9am to noon at St. Mark's. Sign-ups are available online.
- We will be taking another vacation in August to St. Catherine's Canada to watch Eli row with Jeranna's parents.
- We also had a council retreat where we will be doing some goal setting during the coming year.

Director of Youth, Children, and Family Ministry's Report:

- I have been reflecting on the time I have been here so far. I started at the end of August last year. And what a gift you all have been. Sometimes I feel like I haven't been here that long but when I look back, I think, WOW!
- The recent things that I am remembering most are the Sunday School Blast, Block Party, the evening of the Baccalaureate, the Sunday of Confirmation, and the dinner for the confirmands. Pastor and I also attended the Synod Assembly, so it was a busy weekend, but what joy! I love those kinds of weekends. Everything is happening at one time ~ stressful to plan and implement, but so very satisfying.
- Our lock-in and SPAM night were also among my favorites.

Continued on page 4

OSLC July Events

The 2023 Photo Directory Reprint has arrived!

OSLC members who had their photos taken last fall for the directory, please pick up your copy in the Gathering Area. Your name should be on an envelope. The limited extras we have will be put in the pews for your viewing pleasure.

Retirees and Friends Group

We are going to the musical *All Shook Up* by the Riverside Players on Friday, July 21. We received a donation from a generous member, so there is no cost to you for a ticket! If you're interested in going, call Joan Terry at 920-809-6923 by Friday, June 30.

Food Pantry and Blessing Box Donations

Items can be dropped off at the church office. We are in need of mens hygiene items (water based or essential oil-based body wash, bar soap, deodorant, shampoos, and conditioners). We are looking for food items that will keep in the summer heat.

Wanted: Worship Service Ushers and Greeters!

Please call the church office 920-725-3956 for more information, or sign up at the Welcome Center kiosk in the Gathering Area. It's a wonderful opportunity to meet others and make new friends. Give it a try ... we'd love to have you!

Feeding Ministries of OSLC

Our next cookie baking & serving meals opportunity at the Fox Valley Community Table are July 31 (cookies) & August 1 (meal) and at Pillars August 9 (cookies) and August 10 (meal). Check out the Sign-up Genius [link](#) here for July/August.

Continued on page 4

Minister's Message from page 1

living. But the true surprise in the parable is the father's response to him. He welcomed his son home with open arms. He went outside the city gates risking the gossip network to greet his son 'who once was lost but now is found;' and, 'who was dead and now is alive.' He threw a big party. He put a ring on his finger, gave him his best robe, and killed the fatted calf to celebrate.



So, in the parable, who was the wasteful and extravagant one? This parable should be renamed "the parable of the prodigal father." The father was extravagant with his grace. I imagine he sat on his front porch every day hoping his son would return home. The older brother who was out in the fields could not believe his father would welcome such a sinner home with all this wasteful extravagance! What about him, and his daily faithfulness? Jealousy abounds in this text. However, the actions of the prodigal father exhibit the extravagant grace of our heavenly Father.

Are you interested in growing our hospitality ministry? I am forming a hospitality team that will look at every nook 'n cranny of the church to ensure that it is welcoming and prodigal with grace. I hope our current greeters and ushers will join us. We will question everything we do with this new lens. I will be formally inviting a few people who have demonstrated this passion, but I am looking for a whole cadre of people who want to offer that same spirit of grace that the father showed to his son in the parable.

If this sparks an interest in you, talk to me! I hope to get our new and improved "Prodigal Welcoming Team" up and running by September. Until then, have a blessed summer!

Peace,

Pastor Jon Strasman



July Events continued

Children, Youth, and Family Ministry Vacation Bible School (VBS) is July 31 thru August 3! [St. Marks Lutheran Church](#) is hosting this year. Registration is open for children ages 3 through 5th grade. VBS will be Monday, Thursday, 9am-noon. Early drop-off will be available beginning at 7:30am. [Registration form](#). Forms are also available at the OSLC Welcome Center.

Pickleball at Washington Park! Every Sunday through summer; times vary. All are welcome. If you don't know how to play, we have paddles and we will teach you. Contact Joan Terry at 920-809-6923.

Retirees and Friends! No meeting in July, but the group is planning on going to the Riverside Players musical ~ **“All Shock Up”** on Friday, July 21. The group received a donation so the tickets are FREE! If you're interested in going, call Joan Terry at 920-809-6923 by Friday, June 30.

Teaching confirmation, as well as participating in Sunday School is such a gift. I love that kids run upstairs to dole out treats to the others. They have servant hearts.

- I am excited to start another school year, but I don't think my summer will be boring. I have plenty to do ... service trips, VBS, camping, S'more nights, and major planning for next year.
- I am truly grateful for the relationships being formed. I feel trusted and cared for and that's important to me.
- Thank you to the teachers: Jen Lochner, Amber Okray, Liz Bradley, Kristin Ely-Bluemke, Katie Ricketts; and subs, Kristin and Todd Lynwood, Kristin and Kyle Curtis, Megan Maas, and Claudia Bjornstadt. You are all such beautiful gifts and I thank God for all of you. I apologize if I left anyone's name out. Know that I appreciate all of you.
- Thank you all for a busy and wonderful first year!

Treasurer's Report:

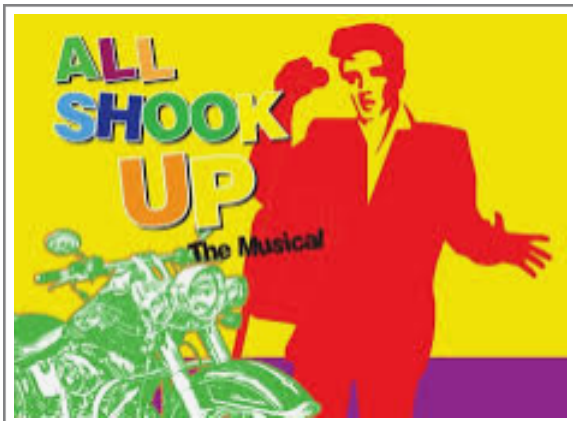
- May income = \$25,744 year-to-date income \$210,451 vs. YTD budget of \$201,973.
- May expenses = \$34,423, Year-to-date expenses = \$190,097 vs. YTD budget of \$196,563.
- Overall, May ended in the red by \$8,679 bringing year-to-date in the black by \$20,354.

Membership/Attendance Reports: Report as written.

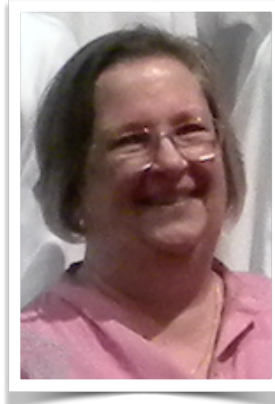
Ministry Team Reports:

a. Building & Grounds – Kevin Schabo

- *Update Sewer Pipe:* It has been decided to close the bathroom down for now and revisit it possibly in the future when the city does construction on Commercial Street. The bathroom is not used a ton and it is hard to justify the expected cost. They will devise a work around for where water is needed after the service.
- *Update Parking Lot:* 59 yards of dirt was used to complete the parking lot. With the dirt and skid steer rental it was about 1,600.00 to modify the parking lot.
- *New:* 12 year Kitchen Hood Inspection: This has to happen in 2023 and has a cost of just under \$1,500.
- *New:* Replacement of Fire Alarm Panel: NV Technologies is recommending the panel be replaced because parts are getting harder to come by and more



Continued on page 6



A Message from Patty Koplitz

Our Children, Youth and Family Director

Thank you from all of us that were able to go to Duluth and do God things. We are so grateful for your support and prayers! Our group split into two work crews. My crew planted a total of 2,000 trees! The area is being plagued by the White Elm disease and this team is replanting to head this off. We also helped paint a basement for a couple, and worked for the Salvation Army.

The other crew went to the same couple's home and helped to empty out six sheds to get ready for a yard sale. They were incredibly appreciative of all the help. This crew worked at a food pantry, youth center, and in the afternoons went to the Benedictine Health Center each day. This was probably a highlight for this crew. They

played bingo, went bowling, sang, and watched funny videos with the residents and with the day care folks.

The first evening we had a guest speaker come and tell us about the Youth Community Center. They help homeless youth and young adults with a variety of needs. The rest of the evenings we went to a variety of parks in Duluth. It sure is a beautiful area.

Each evening ended with time together as a large group and then we went off on our own. There was always enough time for games and laughs each day.

These kids surprised me in so many ways. They have servant hearts, work hard, and they love others. (See photos!) They reminded me a couple of times to pray and requested to do highs and lows on the way home.



Patty Koplitz is the Children, Youth and Family Director at OSLC. She can be reached at (920) 420-5616 or pkoplitz@our-saviors.org

V B S **FREE**

OPERATION RESTORATION
MENDING GOD'S WORLD

ELCA
Sponsored by:
Gloria Dei,
Our Savior's, St.
Mark's, and St. Paul
Lutheran Churches

Open to
age 3
thru 5th
grade

A restoration theme that inspires everyone to be menders of God's world. Daily themes kids understand: feed, heal, forgive, pray, & rest.

July 31 - August 3, 2023
9:00 am - Noon Early drop-off will be available beginning at 7:30 AM
HOST SITE: St. Mark's Lutheran

140 S. GREEN BAY RD., NEENAH * 920-725-2828 * OFFICE@STMARKSNEENAH.ORG

Snacks & drinks will be provided.

SAVE THE DATE

July Events
continued



July 22 is the “4th
Saturday S’mores”
in the OSLC Parking
Lot!

HOLY S'MORES!

We will be having a campfire on the 4th Saturday of each summer month. In July that's the 22nd ~ from 6 pm until whenever! Cornhole, campfires, camp songs and of course... S'mores! Bring a chair!



expensive. The cost is around \$30,000 and would be something to consider for next year. If our fire alarms are not operational, we technically should not use the building.

- *New:* Convector in Gym: Chris will begin to remove them from the gym.
 - *New:* A Freezer is not working in the kitchen. A \$550 part was approved to repair the fridge.
 - *Update:* An updated quote was received for replacing/ updating our sanctuary lighting for ~\$32,000. This would be converting our new existing lighting to LEDs. Discussion was held to understand what upgrades were necessary.
- b. Care & Connect – Jennifer Baldwin
- Nothing to report.
- c. Retirees & Friends – Carol Swannell
- Nothing to report.
- d. TEC – Kevin Schabo
- Server switch was found to need replacing, as well. Jim’s work to define the staff accounts allowed the switch to be covered under the approved invoice amount. Thanks, Jim! Ken also found free seats of Microsoft 365 for the staff.
 - Speakers are in the works once Jim and the team identify timing appropriate.
- e. Finance – Cheryl Timm
- Nothing to report.
- f. Learn & Grow/Youth – Marcus Shimon
- Met to discuss upcoming summer plans.
 - Continuing to assist in planning for VBS in August.
 - Holy S’mores will happen the 4th Saturday of the summer months. In the parking lot, people will bring chairs, we can play corn hole, or other games. We will provide the makings for s’mores. Maybe we can get Pastor to do some camp songs!
 - Church wide camp out August 4 through 6
- g. Personnel – Cheryl Timm
- Nothing to report.
- h. Security & Safety – Ben Lochner
- Nothing to report.
- i. Serve & Reach – Diane Wilfling
- Upcoming Events:

Continued on page 8

OSLC youth caught on camera doing good work...

Mission Quilters

If you can tie a knot, you can tie a quilt... and we need you! We have had some prodigal swers and have many quilts that are ready-to-tie!

This month we meet on Thursday, July 6 and July 20 from 1 until 4pm in the OSLC gym.

We invite you to join the fun and fellowship we enjoy! It feels so good to know that those who have nothing will at least have a quilt!



Our mission trippers seated around the table are Elliot, Teddy, Annabelle, Clara, Sam, Patty, Kendall, Keira, Sue and Kamryn.



While working at the Valley Youth Center, Sue Englebert and company took a quick camera break to show some PEACE.

*Coming in August
Sign up now!*

**OSLC Whole Church
Camping @ High Cliff
August 4-6**

We would love to have you join us! We currently have two group sites reserved, but would relinquish one if we don't need it. Please, RSVP if you are joining us. These are primitive sites, but campers and tents are allowed. I will plan devotionals for families, activities for kids and worship on Sunday. We will plan to cook and eat supper together each evening. You may participate as you like. This is a time for fun together as well as a chance to practice some Sabbath time.

Please RSVP to Patty Koplitz
pkoplitz@our-saviors.org

Council Meeting Minutes from page 6

- June 29 – Bletzinger House Cookout
Sign up at the Welcome Center
- September 10 – Barbecue Fundraiser
in conjunction with ‘*Gods Work, Our Hands*’

- j. Worship & Music – Graham Bradley
 - Nothing to report.

Old Business:

- Net Operating Reserves: \$47,500
- Open Project Updates provided in the group summaries.

New Business:

- Annual Budgeting discussion:
 - Council had minor discussions related to open budget topics from last year on annual budget timing and employer healthcare.
 - Discussion related to balancing out employee pay and making an adjustment to an individual’s pay. Motion/Second/Carried Timm/Strassman to adjust the pay accordingly.
- Council Retreat Overview: Council organized our thoughts on the top strengths of our congregation and key areas for growth. Music, Serving, Stewardship, Children, Global Mission were found as our strengths and growth areas as hospitality and local connection.
- Synod Assembly: A review of the Synod Assembly was covered.

Respectfully Submitted,



<i>thru May</i>	Budgeted	Actual
Income	201,973	210,451
Expenses	196,563	190,097
Balance	5,410	20,354
Noisy Coin		
None		
Memorials		
Mildred Stange		150.00

Caught on OSLC Camera...



Peninsula Point Park

First row: Kendall Tech, Keira Tech, Sue Engelbert, Patty Koplitz, Elliott Bluemke
Back row: Annabelle Hintz, Samantha Lochner, Clara Gross, Teddy Long, Kamryn Christensen



Peninsula Point Park

Front Row: Elliott Bluemke, Kamryn Christensen, Clara Gross, Kendal Tech, Keira Tech
Back Row: Teddy Long, Annabelle Hintz, Samantha Lochner



Annabelle Hintz is showing off her painting skills!



Ladies Serving Dinner at Pillars on June 8

From left to right: Jennifer Baldwin, Angela Huss, Joan Terry, Cindy Palm

OSLC July 2023 Calendar

Did you know? July, the original 5th month of the year and was called *Quintilis* ('fifth' in Latin). After the death of Julius Caesar in 44 BC, it was renamed *July* to honor him. **Birth flowers:** Larkspur and Water Lily. **Birthstone:** Ruby

Sat	Fri					
1 12pm - Henry Viano Baptism 5pm - Worship @ Sanctuary	30	29	28	27	26	25
8 5pm - Worship @ Sanctuary	7	6 1pm - Quilting @ Gymnasium 6pm - AA Meeting @ Youth	5 9am - Visitation/Homebound 10am - Bible Study - Virtual &	4 Church Office Closed	3 6pm - AA Hispanic @ Lounge	2 9am - Worship @ Sanctuary 11am - Pickleball (rain) 1pm - AA Hispanic @ Lounge
15 5pm - Worship @ Sanctuary	14	13 6pm - AA Meeting @ Youth	12 10am - Bible Study - Virtual &	11 9:30am - Esther Circle @ 11am - Staff Meeting @ 6pm - Serve & Reach -	10 10am - Knitting @ Library 10:15am - Rebekah Circle @ 6pm - AA Hispanic @ Lounge	9 9am - Worship @ Sanctuary 11am - Pickleball (rain) 1pm - AA Hispanic @ Lounge
22 5pm - Worship @ Sanctuary 6pm - Holy S'mores	21	20 1pm - Quilting @ Gymnasium 6pm - AA Meeting @ Youth	19 10am - Bible Study - Virtual &	18 6pm - Learn & Grow Team	17 6pm - AA Hispanic @ Lounge	16 9am - Worship @ Sanctuary 11am - Pickleball (rain) 1pm - AA Hispanic @ Lounge
29 5pm - Worship w/ Healing @	28	27 6pm - AA Meeting @ Youth	26 10am - Bible Study - Virtual &	25 11am - Staff Meeting @ 6:30pm - Women's Book Club	24 6pm - AA Hispanic @ Lounge	23 9am - Worship @ Sanctuary 11am - Pickleball (rain) 1pm - AA Hispanic @ Lounge
5	4 Family/Group Camping @ High Cliff	3 1pm - Quilting @ Gymnasium 6pm - AA Meeting @ Youth	2 9am - Visitation/Homebound 10am - Bible Study - Virtual &	1 7pm - Worship & Music Team	31 Vacation Bible School @ St. Mark's 6pm - AA Hispanic @ Lounge	30 9am - Worship w/Healing @ 11am - Pickleball (rain) 1pm - AA Hispanic @ Lounge