



The Vasa Voice



VOLUME 61 No. 2

FEBRUARY 2025



What's Happening This Month at Vasa

February 5th & 19th

Women of all Ages and Stages Bible study meets at the Lutheran Center, 9:30-11:00AM. All are welcome!

February 12th—Vasa Family Night

February 23rd—Annual Meeting

See page 2 for details.

VASA'S LENTEN FOCUS: *Ambassadors of Kindness*

Ash Wednesday is on March 5. We will gather for worship in the gym that night, place ashes on our foreheads as a sign of repentance, sing the Holden Evening Prayer liturgy, and receive communion. (Lenten Worship will be held in the gym during the entire season of Lent.)

Our Lenten theme is "*Ambassadors of Kindness.*" Each week we will sing the Holden Evening Prayer liturgy and hear Scripture readings emphasizing the theme for the week. There will be starting questions/thoughts to guide us in our consideration of the weekly theme. The March 5th theme is *Kind, Not Nice.*

The scripture references for March 5th are:

Micah 6:1-8—What has God Required of You?
Psalm 145:8-9, 14-21—The Lord is Good to All

Ephesians 4:25-5:2 — Rules for the New Life
Luke 10:25-37— Parable of the Good Samaritan

Here's what's on the inside...

P. 2 *Worship volunteers, February Birthdays, Annual Meeting*

P. 3 *Thoughts from Pastor Maureen*

P. 4 *Save the Date—Rummage Sale; Vasa Family Night*

P. 5 *Museum Soup Lunch Information*

P. 6-7 *December Church Council Highlights, Treasurer's Report*

P. 8 *Letter from Southeastern MN Synod*

P. 9 *Mark's Meditation*

P. 10 *Thrivent Choice Dollars, Lutheran Social Services Thank-you.*

P. 11 *February Calendar*

Worship Volunteers for FEBRUARY

USHER

February 2 Roger Guttromson
February 9 Rick Samuelson
February 16 Marv Fredrickson
February 23 Duane Hanson

READERS

February 2 Tim Carlson
February 9 Barry Skog
February 16 Tim Carlson
February 23 Barry Skog

HOSPITALITY

February 2 Dawn Lindstrom
February 9 Lora Gruber
February 16 Audrey Rosener
February 23 Marilyn Hanson

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS

February 2 B-J Norman
February 16 Barry Skog

February birthdays

Josie Finne	Feb. 3
Connor Hyllengren	Feb. 3
Chantz Nelson	Feb. 3
Parker Anderson	Feb. 5
Gloria Featherstone	Feb. 6
Cynthia Gianoli	Feb. 6
Mike Bauch	Feb. 7
Elleanor Diercks	Feb. 7
Ben Norman	Feb. 7
Lorrie Samuelson	Feb. 8
Taylor Carlson	Feb. 10
Shelley Evanson	Feb. 10
Maddisyn Safe	Feb. 10
Donna Bignell	Feb. 12
Jessica Anderson	Feb. 15
Garrett Samuelson	Feb. 15
Kathi Pearson	Feb. 18
Dora Boe	Feb. 19
Josh Erhardt	Feb. 19
Faye Drewianka	Feb. 21
Larissa Fredin	Feb. 22
Chance Rehder	Feb. 22
Michele Rehder	Feb. 22
Kyle Gillis	Feb. 23
Dawn Lindstrom	Feb. 24
Bob Sammelson	Feb. 25
Lucy Sense	Feb. 26
Oliver Erhardt	Feb. 26
Emmett Pearson	Feb. 27



Vasa's annual meeting will be held on Sunday, February 23rd right after church. We need a quorum of 40 people in order to approve the budget for the next year, so please plan to attend! **Rolls and coffee will be provided.**

faith
family
friends



Thoughts from Pastor Maureen

unaware of these things as gifts from our loving God.

On Saturday, January 25th, Vasa was the venue for a 90th birthday party for Wally Gardiner. It was a delightful event with over 120 people attending, hours of good conversation, and tasty cupcakes! Many of Wally's extended family members were able to attend; some coming from across the country. It was also a celebration of the Vasa community since, by my estimate, half of the guests were Vasa folks. Much credit goes to Michelle and Dave as the organizers!

In psalm 104 the author makes the point that God provides all good things including "wine to gladden the human heart, oil to make the face shine, and bread to strengthen the human heart." One might say that the psalmist is describing a party organized by God.

God likes parties and, because God is gracious and loving, God likes to gift us with that which gladdens our hearts. We humans need time to celebrate and enjoy. Most of the time when go to a party we come away refreshed and encouraged as we continue in some of the more mundane activities of life.

Another party that is described in the Bible is the wedding in Cana; a story in which Jesus turns water into wine. An insight that comes out of that story is the idea that most of the guests at the wedding were completely unaware of the miracle. They benefitted of course as they got to drink a really fine wine, but they didn't know how it came to be served. They didn't know that Jesus had anything to do with it.

All of this is to say that I think that we are surrounded by beautiful and wondrous things all of which are gifts from God and that we are generally

I leave you today with the thought that whether it was Wally's birthday party, a beautiful wedding, or an intimate family meal, the pleasure of these events is spending time together surrounded by people that love and care for each other. That love and support is one of the gifts that we take for granted; a gift from our loving creator God.

The full story of the wedding at Cana is found in John 2:1-11.

Psalm 104:14-15 "You cause the grass to grow for the cattle, and plants for people to use, to bring forth food from the earth, and wine to gladden the human heart, oil to make the face shine, and bread to strengthen the human heart."



April 24th-25th



Rummage Sale

Plans are underway for the next Vasa Rummage Sale! Tell your neighbors, relatives and friends! Questions? Call Faye Drewianka—651-212-3209

A red background with several white heart shapes scattered across it. In the bottom right corner, there is a black silhouette of a family consisting of a man, a woman, and four children of various ages holding hands. At the bottom center, the word "love" is written in a white, cursive font, with a white arrow pointing to the right passing through the letters.

Vasa Family Night

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12TH
VASA LUTHERAN CENTER
5:30-7:00PM

Hot Turkey Sandwiches
Fun Activities & Crafts
Short Devotional

All are Welcome!

love →



December 9, 2024 @ Lutheran Church

Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 6:05 pm by Bryan Diercks, President

Devotions: Tim Carlson

Members present and absent:

Present: Pastor Maureen Hagen, Pastor; Bryan Diercks, President; Randy Klein, Vice President; Kent Volz; Ben Norman; Barbara Weigman; Missy McCann; Tim Carlson; Mo Hauck; and Andrew Featherstone, Secretary;

10 voting members present

Unable to attend: Roger Guttromson; and Chris Finne;

Also Present: Kathy Tilderquist

Adoption of the Agenda:

It was moved and seconded to approve the agenda for the December 9, 2024 council meeting.

MOTION CARRIED

Approval of Minutes:

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the November 11, 2024 council meeting as written.

MOTION CARRIED

Reports Reviewed and Accepted:

Treasurer's Report (Attached)

Vasa received a pretty good month offering for November.

The checkbook balance is \$68,000.01. The financial position of the church remains strong.

Finance Report (Attached)

A new iron filter and water softener is being installed in the Parsonage. The bill will be paid through the parsonage account.

Goodhue County is requiring we explain why the museum is necessary for the church, or the county will start charging property taxes on the museum building. Kathy is replying that the buildings are used as a repository for church history. The county requires recertification every third year.

Parish Life (Attached)

December 15th will be the Christmas Program.

Christmas Eve worship at 2:00 and 5:00.

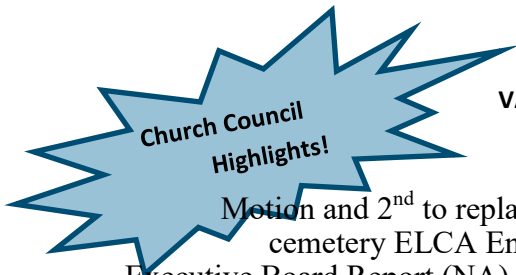
Worship will be at Lutheran Center beginning on Sunday, January 5th.

We will pack up items at the church following fellowship worship on Dec 29.

Property Team Report (NA)

Cemetery Board (Attached)

We discussed about purchasing a 24 niche columbarium similar to the one at St. Mathias Cemetery in Hampton, MN. We will see where that one was purchased and get a price so we can discuss further. There is only about a row and a half of graves remaining north of the cemetery road.



**VASA CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
(CONTINUED)**

Motion and 2nd to replace Duane Thompson with Duane Hanson as a signatory on the cemetery ELCA Endowment Fund.

Executive Board Report (NA)
Pastor's Report) Attached)

Pastor is meeting once a week with Yvonne Roesel. Pastor is serving as a off-site supervisor for Yvonne, the intern serving the Kenyan area internship site. The Kenyan Area Internship has been in existence for 45+ years and consists of 7 congregations who share their lives and experience with someone studying to become a pastor.

Museum Board (NA)
Endowment Board Report (NA)

New Business: Featherstone Painting Estimate- It was moved and seconded to accept the Featherstone Painting estimate for painting the sanctuary.

MOTION CARRIED

Parsonage water softener and iron filter- It was moved and seconded to hire Glenn Clair to replace water softener and iron filter in the parsonage.

MOTION CARRIED

More new business (without action)

Considering bartering with Ben Edwards- We will ask Ben for an estimate to move the pews and piano for sanctuary remodeling project.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:00PM

Respectfully submitted,
Andrew Featherstone

License for music for worship- The license fee is \$265.00. Parish Life will pay for the license under worship and music.

Passing offering plates- We will pass offering plates on special occasions. We will place basket up by the food for people that would like to give.

Lawn mowing and snow removal expectations- cemetery and property team will write a expectations list for lawn mowing and snow removal.

<u>CHURCH COUNCIL</u>		
President:	Bryan Diercks	507-259-3909
Vice President:	Randy Klein rdklein@mmm.com	651-212-8045
Secretary:	Andrew Featherstone rwfeatherstonepainting@gmail.com	651-470-9823
	Chris Finne	651-380-3690
	Lora Gruber	51-212-3216
	Duane Hanson	651-380-1763
	Maureen Hauck	651-331-8593
	Missy McCann	651-307-2274
	Ben Norman	651-208-7124
	Kent Volz	651-402-0942
	Barbara Weigman	507-202-7880
<u>WHO TO CONTACT IN CASE OF EMERGENCY</u>		
Indoors:	Andrew Featherstone	651-470-9823
Kitchen:	Sue Hedeem	651-380-6270
	Faye Drewianka	651-212-3209
Outdoors	Duane Hanson	651-380-1763
	Steve Hyllengren	651-258-4338

VASA EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH	
Treasurer's Report December, 2024	
Checkbook Balance, December 1, 2024	\$ 68,000.01
General Fund Contributions:	24,377.59
Mission Endowment Donation	<u>9,000.00</u>
Total Funds Available	101,377.60
Budget Approved Monthly Expenses:	<u>(26,076.62)</u>
Checkbook Balance, December 30, 2024	\$ 75,300.98

Southeastern Minnesota Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



January 28, 2025

A Pastoral Message from Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Bishops in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota

Jesus said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." Luke 10:27

As ELCA bishops in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota we serve in contexts that stretch from the badlands to the prairies, from fertile farmlands and forests to urban centers. Though the contexts are diverse, God's mandates for how we are to live are the same.

In recent days, the heightened rhetoric of violence and newly enacted Executive Orders compel us to remind people of faith of God's fundamental blessing of all human life. In the language of the Bible, we say that all people are made in the image of God. Every person - without exception - has inherent dignity and value because all people are made in God's own image. Human dignity and value come from God. People of faith throughout our region, and indeed this world, are compelled to speak and act toward others in ways that honor the image in which we all are made. All people and groups deserve to be treated with dignity and respect in our common speech and in our public and private interactions. If we wonder what such dignity and respect look like, Jesus made it simple with a teaching known as "the Golden Rule," "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." (Matthew 7:12)

The apostle Paul wrote in the book of Galatians, "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." (Galatians 5:22-23) These are the traits that guide our interactions with all our neighbors and inform our conduct in daily life. These are the characteristics that embolden us even as we work for justice and peace.

Across this region we are grateful for the many people of good will who are working to increase dialogue, seek the common good, and treat our neighbors, near and far, as those who bear the image of God. We are with you in prayer as, together, we seek to live lives worthy of this ancient admonition from God's word, "You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD." (Leviticus 19:18)

In Christ,

Bishop Constanze Hagmaier, South Dakota Synod - ELCA
Bishop Regina Hassanally, Southeastern Minnesota Synod - ELCA
Bishop Patricia Lull, Saint Paul Area Synod - ELCA
Bishop Tessa Moon Leiseth, Eastern North Dakota Synod - ELCA
Bishop Jen Nagel, Minneapolis Area Synod - ELCA
Bishop Amy Odgren, Northeastern Minnesota Synod - ELCA
Bishop Dee Pederson, Southwestern Minnesota Synod - ELCA
Bishop Craig A. Schweitzer, Western North Dakota Synod - ELCA
Bishop Bill Tesch, Northwestern Minnesota Synod - ELCA

MARK'S MEDITATION

FEBRUARY, 2025

From our place in the year 2025, the Bible and the Christian faith looks pretty cut and dried. But for the first 300 years or so, that was not the case. There was no agreement on what constituted a Christian Bible; and there was a wide range of thoughts about who Jesus truly was. For the first 50 years, there was no Gospel, just a series of letters passed around from congregation to congregation. In the next 50 years dozens of "gospels" were written and disseminated. It was not until the middle of the third century (~year 250) that a consensus about what text should be considered Scripture started to materialize. The persons who made these arguments about what text were divinely inspired, and which were not, were called the Apostolic Fathers. These people, who came after the original Apostles, were the ones who defined what was *orthodox and what was heresy*.

The names of some of these guys will be familiar because the Church venerated them as saints. (St. Anthony, St. Ignatius, St. Clement, St. Augustine, ...) Their names have been applied to churches and institutions. Others come to us only through their writings, having fallen out of favor as the Roman Church evolved. One of these persons was Origen of Alexandria.

Origen (186 - 253) was brought up in a Greek-speaking Christian family. His father, (Saint) Leonides, was a Roman citizen, a respected professor of literature--and a Christian. In 202 emperor Severus ordered Roman citizens who openly practiced Christianity to be executed--Leonides was beheaded. Origen became a Roman catechist (teacher), but after a few years gave up his teaching position and moved to Caesarea Maritime in Palestine. In this role he wrote over 2000 treatises. His systematic theology defined orthodox Christianity for centuries. In the year 250, he refused to worship the emperor Decius and the Roman gods. For this

he was tortured and died three years later from his injuries.

In his works, Origen emphasizes Paul's epistles and the Gospel of John. Origen writes that Jesus was "the firstborn of all creation who assumed a body and a human soul". He wrote against *Docetism* (*The idea that since Jesus was always divine, he was never truly human*), arguing that Jesus had a human soul. From this, Origen deduced that all human souls have existed from the beginning of time. Origen was an ardent believer in free will and rejected the Gnostic idea of "election." (So, a Calvinist he was not!) Only a person who chooses goodness (and Christ) is free; choosing evil always lead to slavery. However, Origen believed that a person's fate in the world was dependent on the actions of their pre-existing soul. Bad souls become demons; average souls become humans; and good souls become angels. This idea that our souls exist before we are born fell out of favor and in 543 (290 years after his death), Emperor Justinian condemned Origen as a heretic. So--no "Saint Origen" churches.

The take away here is that our Christian traditions and understanding have changed over time. Although this is anathema to some fundamentalist and evangelical Christians; I think they are mistaken. As Lutherans, we should embrace the idea that God is active in the world and periodically lifts up persons (like Martin Luther or Bishop Mariann) who help us better understand our relationship to Christ.

you
make a
A DIFFERENCE



**Lutheran
Social Service**
of Minnesota

Thrivent Choice Dollars



Procedure to direct your Thrivent Choice Dollars to Vasa:

1. Open your computer browser and enter: Thrivent.com
2. Log in to your personal account
3. Select: Membership Overview
4. Select: Thrivent Choice
5. Select: Direct Choice Dollars
6. Check your eligibility
7. Direct your choice dollars to: Vasa Lutheran Church
 1. If possible, print the Donated Dollars page from the Printer Friendly box
 2. Put your name at the top of the page as well as how you want your dollars directed—giving to the Gazebo fund would be much appreciated right now.
 3. Give a copy to the church treasurer or leave it in the church office.
9. Log out

Ready to give back?

The choice is yours.

Questions about Directing your Thrivent Choice Dollars?
Contact Faye Drewianka: 651-212-3209.

If you prefer to give your Choice Dollars by phone,
call: 1-800-847-4836.

Even if you have done this before, you need to re-do it
every year. Dollars must be designated for 2024 by March
31, 2025.

Dear Vasa Lutheran Church,

Together we are neighbors helping neighbors. Thank you for your generous gift to support the services of Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota.

Your contribution of \$525.00 was received
on 12/31/2024.

The work of LSS is a mosaic of amazing acts of caring and courage in communities across our state, impacting over 91,000 Minnesotans each year. I invite you learn more about our services and see how your generosity is already inspiring hope, changing lives and building community at lssmn.org.

With gratitude,

Jesse M. Stremcha

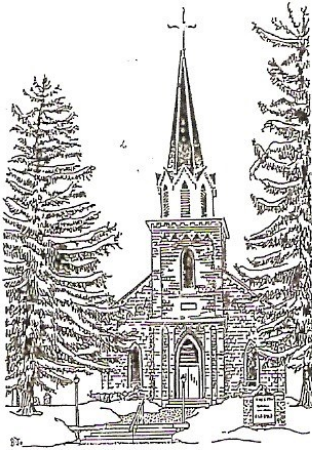
Vice President of Development

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
		 					1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
9AM Service of Holy Communion (with Sunday School at the Lutheran Center)	TEAMS MEET 4 PM Property 5 PM Finance	 9:30 Coffee and Conversation	9:30-11:00AM Women's Bible Study 5:30-6:30 Faith Formation 5:45-6:45 7/8 Confirmation 6:45pm Wednesday Eve Worship		Pastor's Day Off		
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
9AM Service of the Word (with Sunday School at the Lutheran Center)	5 PM PARISH LIFE 6PM CHURCH COUNCIL	 9:30 Coffee and Conversation	5:30-7:00pm Vasa Family Night		Pastor's Day Off		
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
9AM Service of Holy Communion (with Sunday School at the Lutheran Center)		 9:30 Coffee and Conversation	9:30-11:00AM Women's Bible Study 5:30-6:30 Faith Formation 5:45-6:45 7/8 Confirmation 7:00 pm Wednesday Evening Worship		Pastor's Day Off		
23	24	25	26	27	28	1	
9AM Service of the Word (Service + Sunday School at the LC) Annual Meeting follows the church service		 9:30 Coffee and Conversation	9:30-11:00 Quilts for Grads 5:30-6:30 Faith Formation 5:45-6:45 7/8 Confirmation 7:00 pm Wednesday Evening Worship		Pastor's Day Off		

VASA LUTHERAN CHURCH

15235 NORELIUS ROAD (in Vasa)

WELCH, MN 55089



Historic Vasa Lutheran Church Built in 1869

(Vasa Drawing by B-J Norman)

Worship Schedule

9:00AM Sundays (also live-streamed)

Wednesday Evening Worship

6:30pm Holy Communion + Everyday Bible Conversation
(Fellowship Room of Lutheran Center)

Executive Team

Bryan Diercks, Council President 507.259.3909

Randy Klein, Council Vice President 651.212.8045

Andrew Featherstone, Council Secretary 651.470.9823

Pastor Maureen Hagen

pastor@vasalutheran.org

(Cell)507.251.5270

Church Office

651.258.4327

Church Staff

Kathy Tilderquist, Treasurer

Emily Peterson, Office Administrator

Melissa McCann, Custodian

Anne Anderson, Worship Accompanist

Gail Strusz-Klein, Wedding Coordinator

Vasa Mission Statement

We, the Vasa Congregation,

Called by God, commit to:

Worshipping together,

Growing in Faith,

Serving Others, and

Welcoming and loving all!