

The Messenger

Underwood Lutheran Church

August, 2018

Pastor Scott Dalen

Underwood Lutheran Church
P.O. Box 9 – 10 3rd. Ave.
Underwood, IA 51576

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SUNDY SCHOOL-CONFIRMATION-ADULT BIBLE STUDY on Summer Break
WORSHIP SERVICE @9:30 AM

-Pastor Scott will be on vacation beginning Monday July 30th through Monday August 13th. He will return to the office on Tuesday the 14th. Pastor Jon Benson from St John's in Council Bluffs will be on call in his absence.

-High School will only meet on the 15th. We will not meet on the 1st due to Pastor Scott's vacation.

-Wednesday evening Bible Study on the book of Revelation will meet on the 15th, 22nd, and 29th.

Conversation begins at 6:00pm. Our study is expected to conclude in mid-late September. If you are interested in a specific topic and/or portion of scripture for future study, please let Pastor Scott know. Suggestions for content are welcome.

-August's free Friday movie night will be held on August 17th, with an expected start time of approximately 9:00pm.

-Our Faith Formation Coordinator Kim Madsen is beginning to hold Jr High Youth Group events starting in August. There are plans for a service project on Wednesday the 1st, and a fun event on Wednesday the 15th. The tentative plan for Jr High Youth Group is to continue meeting on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday each month, which will coincide with the regularly planned schedule for High School meetings with Pastor Scott, though the times of the meetings will vary. Email Kim at faithformation.ulc@gmail.com for more information regarding these/future events.

-Incoming 7th and 8th grade students and parents, be aware that Confirmation Orientation will be held on Wednesday August 29th at 7:00pm. This brief meeting will highlight the subject matter for the year, as well as the planned Confirmation schedule and attendance expectations. Please plan for at least one parent to attend with your child. The Confirmation year will start coinciding with Rally Sunday in early September.

-We are online. Visit our webpage at <http://www.underwoodlutheran.org/> Find information on current ministry opportunities and worship times.

Look for us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/UnderwoodLutheranChurch> Be sure to "Like" the page for updates about what's happening at ULC.

Pastor Scott's weekly sermons are available on his blog at <http://thecollarandorangehat.wordpress.com/>

Pastor Scott posts his sermons in both text and audio format each week. Look for his posts to be highlighted on Facebook as well as the church website.

Pastor Scott also posts a weekly gospel discussion video, called Sermon Braindump at

<http://www.youtube.com/user/sanchodaleone>



As I sit down to write this article, I have the feeding of the 5,000 in mind, as it is the assigned Gospel text for the week. Now this story is important, one of the rare stories to be featured in all 4 Gospels. In this particular instance, the Lectionary has us looking at John's account (John chapter 6).

I find myself wondering what we can glean from it. A great crowd follows Jesus, and after a long day, his compassion for them manifests as he tells the disciples "we need to feed them." The disciples seemingly switch into the logistical needs of Jesus' instruction. Philip comments on the financial cost. Andrew seems to take stock of the actual resources available at the moment, as he spots the boy offering up the 5 loaves and 2 fish. I'm guessing there were other points raised by the remaining disciples as well, though we don't hear about them.

Jesus on the other hand, doesn't seem to be concerned with limitations. He has the people sit down. He gives thanks for what they have (as opposed to what they might be wishing or hoping for), and he distributes the food to everyone...as much as they wanted. You know the aftermath. After everyone had eaten, there are 12 baskets of leftovers.

Now there are two schools of thought here. One is to take it at face value, that somehow Jesus multiplied the available food. The other is that the boy's generosity, recognized and commended by Jesus, inspires everyone else to pull out whatever small amount of food they have with them. We could call this the "stone soup" explanation (if you are unfamiliar with this modern day parable, just google it).

In the end, maybe it doesn't matter how it happened. Divine multiplication, or divinely inspired generosity...who's to say that either one is any more or less miraculous than the other. But what is, perhaps, more important is the attitude that we see within the story. We hear a mentality of scarcity on the part of the disciples...who only see the lack...or the idea that what was available was insufficient.

Perhaps it is a result of our culture and the power of the almighty dollar, but as I ponder on this story I think of issues of finances...of stewardship...of the ways that we look at what we've been entrusted with financially speaking. Do we tend to see what's lacking, or do we see the opportunity for something miraculous?

Perhaps this is fitting for us, as our congregation is sitting in an odd financial situation. On one hand, we have our annual budget along with our general giving. These figures show up weekly in our bulletin. We have, admittedly, an aggressive budget for the year. And our weekly giving is coming up far short of that budget. However, when we compare the giving with our actual expenses (through the end of June), we find the gap less alarming. While still in shortfall, our weekly giving is currently at approximately 77% of our expenses YTD. Likewise, we've had unexpected expenditures occur in recent weeks, as regular wear and tear have resulted in the need to replace the HVAC system in the offices.

Moments like this are not new. When I began my call at ULC in mid-2013, our general fund held a balance of approximately \$59,000, thanks in great part to the influx of funds from the early years of the farm inheritance. Our annual budget, reflecting the increase in pastoral expenses from part-time to full-time, was approximately \$110,000, and our giving for the year was approximately \$109,000.

In the past 5 years, we have watched our giving grow, reaching nearly \$134,000 in 2017. This is a wonderful trend. However, our budget also has grown yearly, and we have experienced a great deal of expense due to

various church maintenance projects over the years, some planned and some unexpected. And as this trend has continued, the balance of the general fund has steadily dwindled.

At the same time, we have also seen explosive growth within our Endowment Fund, based mostly on the decisions of the congregation to move large portions of income from the farm inheritance in that direction, culminating last year when the remaining balance of the farm inheritance was paid. The Endowment Committee, in combination with the Council, has been working towards investment solutions for the fund with the intention of utilizing yearly gains to benefit the ministry of the congregation, and better fulfilling the intention of the Endowment Fund's establishment.

While the influx of funds over the years as a result of the farm inheritance have been a great blessing to our congregation, I fear that they may have also become something of a crutch. It has never been the intention of the leadership to rely on these funds to supplement our giving in terms of the day to day operation of the congregation. With only a few exceptions, leadership has been successful in this endeavor.

But this is our reality. Coming back around to the Feeding of the 5,000. On one hand we have our general giving/operation which is coming up short and perhaps feels like the attitude of the disciples. And on the other hand we have the Endowment Fund that appears to be the 12 baskets of leftovers after everyone has had their fill. An odd tension to feel as if we are lacking on one hand with far more than we need on the other.

Now as I say this, please do not take my words as negative towards the congregation or the council or the financial decisions that have been made at every level. I'm simply being open about the reality we are currently facing. And in doing so I am simply wondering aloud as to what insight we might gain from the scripture in this moment. How do we view the contributions that we as individuals and/or families make to the congregation? Likewise, how do we view the funds which have been set aside for investment purposes?

These are important questions to consider. As you do, I encourage you to be praying for our congregation and our leadership. We covet your prayers and your support in the work that we do. Likewise, prayerfully consider your own giving. As members of this congregation and organization, we all have a vested interest in the ministry of this place. I hope that you consider the work that our congregation does, as well as the benevolence that we pass along in a variety of directions, as worthy of your support.

If you are not a giver, perhaps this is the time to begin, either through the offering plate or our online giving option on our website. If you give occasionally, perhaps this is the time to consider a regular giving schedule. If you are a regular giver, perhaps this is the time to consider an incremental increase. And as you consider this, please know this above all else. We have a God who is able to take what was offered, 5 loaves and 2 fish, and somehow make it enough to feed thousands. This same God can use what we offer to bless multitudes around the world as well. This is what the church is called to do, we give of ourselves in many different ways, including financially, to benefit the world in which we are a part.

In Christ,
Pastor Scott

Underwood Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes

June 13, 2018

Members present: Jessica Hultquist, Michael Johnson, Bob Pingel, Erik Pedersen, Rhonda Johnson, Roger Hemmingsen, Jeff Poggensee, Lynn Leaders, Bill Shelton, Carol Yeaton, Lynn Leaders

Others Present: Amber Lange, Linda Merdinger

Absent:

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 by council president, Jessica Hultquist.

Amber Lange from Edward Jones presented financial options for investment. Our current investments are not balanced and we could be doing better. Investment suggestions included more growth funds and an annual CD ladder scheme.

Motioned by Pastor and seconded by Michael Johnson to move current cash investments into 30 day CDs. Motion carried.

A joint meeting between the council and the Endowment Fund committee will be held June 24th to consider other options.

Financial Reports: Linda Merdinger presented the financial reports electronically. Moved by Bob Pingel and seconded by Lynn Leaders to approve the financial report. Motion carried.

Moved by Jessica to remove Cathy Darrington and Beth Torneton from Youth and Sunday School accounts and add Kim Madsen to both. Seconded by Jeff. Motion approved.

Secretary's Report:

Moved by Pastor and seconded by Bill Shelton to approve the 5/9/18 council meeting minutes. Motion carried.

Motioned by Lynn Leaders, seconded Bill Shelton to donate \$200 to Genna Clemen for ELCA Young Adult in Global Mission trip to Israel from the Other Benevolence account. Motion carried.

Pastor's Report:

Facility Issues

- Rearranged main office to create space for Kim.
- Old copier/stand moved into conference room.

Calendar Matters

- Church website domain ownership extended to August 2023.
- Activity ticket for '18-'19 school year.
- Ingham-Okoboji representative would like to visit in the fall as a thank you for their Beyond Campaign.
- Lakeside Lutheran Camp Director interested in visiting/aiding in worship.
- Shifting Communion in July from 1st Sunday to 2nd.
- Bethany worship services in July.
- Marietta Nelson-Bittle confirmed for Pulpit supply July 1st.

Congregational Life

- Set up access with Shepherd's Watch, Division of Group Ministries
 - Specialize in CYF Ministry Safety.
 - Access allows for performing background checks in the future. (\$12/person)
 - 1 time cost of \$32.09
- Hasting inheritance update
 - Letter from executor June 1st.
 - Updating beneficiaries of the estate valuation.

-Does not indicate any action at this time.

Pastoral Acts

- Pastor elected to serve 3-year term of Western Iowa Synod Council.
- Regular visitation schedule
- 176 Communed (2 communion weeks, green slips)
 - May 20th 95 of 110
 - June 3rd 81 of 95
- Installation of Kim Madsen June 3rd.
- Funeral service Kimberly Grosvenor, June 7th (non-member)
- Wedding service for Brady Flemming/Lynsey Rohatsch June 2nd.

Committee Reports:

Property

Education

Life

Operations

Old Business:

Motion by Michael Johnson and seconded by Lynn Leaders to direct matured CD to Endowment Fund committee for investment. After discussion it was moved by Jeff Poggensee and seconded by Bob Pingel to lay on the table the motion. Motion to lay the main motion was carried.

Motion by Bob Pingel and seconded by Roger Hemmingsen to waive church fee to Hannah Sealock on July 17th for a fundraising concert. Motion carried.

New Business:

The next council meeting will be held July 11, 2018.

Moved by Pastor and seconded by Rhonda Johnson to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Johnson

Underwood Lutheran Church Council Secretary

We did it!!!

*Thank
You!*

Hello all. I just wanted to give you a summary of our VBS program this year. We had five amazing day camp leaders from Ingham-Okoboji Lutheran Bible Camp this year. They lead the students in worship, fellowship, art, games, and education about seeking God first, seeking others and how God seeks us. We had a potluck and short program on Thursday evening to wrap up the week! Two of the counselors also got "pied" as an incentive the students reached by raising money to donate to Project Water. This organization helps build and refurbish wells in Africa so that people there may have clean water. We had a total of 43 Kindergarten through 6th grade students and 14 junior and senior high helpers. Thank you to all who volunteered and donated time, snacks, and meals. Your help made this VBS a huge success. Hope to see you all next year!

From Bethany...

Summer Party August 7th at 9:45am-11am!!!

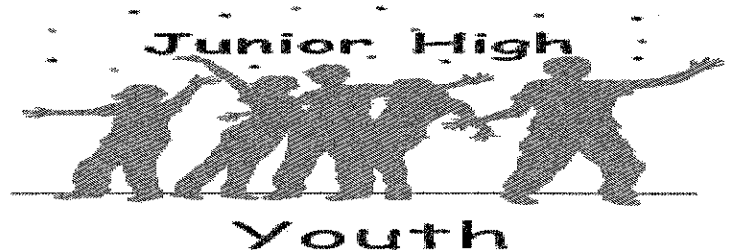
Children!!! Please join the Bethany Lutheran Home Residents for their Summer Party!

You will need to wear an outfit that you would feel comfortable getting wet and bring a towel. The residents will be throwing water balloons and using squirt guns. There will be various games for you to play as well. Please RSVP to Kaily Stanley at [712-328-9500](tel:712-328-9500). See you there!!



Women of the Church

We will be having a Women's meeting on Wednesday, August 29th at 6:30 at the church. We will be going over details for the Roast Beef Dinner and other important items. All women are welcome to attend, we welcome any new ideas! Hope to see everyone there.



We are going to volunteer at Midlands Humane Society on the 1st and will be going to the Hub trampoline park on the 15th.

Scrapbooking

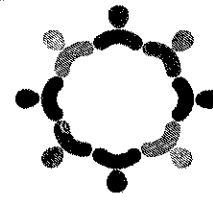
August 18th from 10:00 am – 5:00 pm.
Come work on your scrapbooking, crafts or projects. Call Linda Merdinger at 712-566-2025 or 402-350-3619 with questions.

\$10 per person (tax deductible donation)



Thanks to those who greeted in the month of July.

Rhonda Johnson and Megan Spencer



WOMEN'S CIRCLE

Telescope Circle will not meet in August.

Martha Circle will meet for lunch, no details at this time.

Council Meeting

The council meeting will be August 8th at 7:00 pm.



Underwood Lutheran Church

Family Movie Night

Dates & Movie

Friday, August 17 – *I Can Only Imagine*

Underwood Lutheran Church

10 3rd Avenue, Underwood, IA 51576

Come out this summer and enjoy FREE movies

on the lawn at Underwood Lutheran Church.

Movies will begin at dusk (approximately 9:00pm). Complimentary refreshments will be

available for all moviegoers.

Blankets and lawn chairs are encouraged.

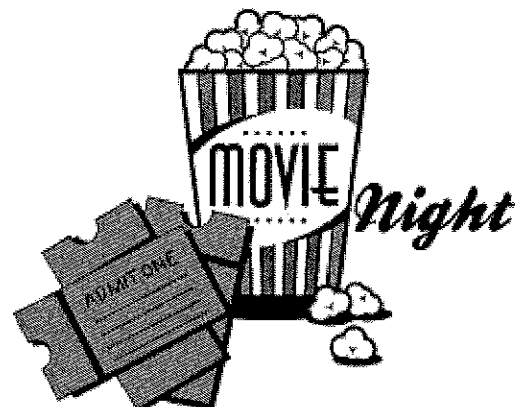
Questions:

Contact Sandy Redshaw at 712-566-9574

Offerings....

"Our gifts to God"

	Offerings	Attendance
June 24	\$ 1231.80	93
July 01	\$ 2577.65	60
July 07	\$ 1685.00	90
July 15	\$ 2446.00	76
July 22	\$ 933.00	32



August 2018

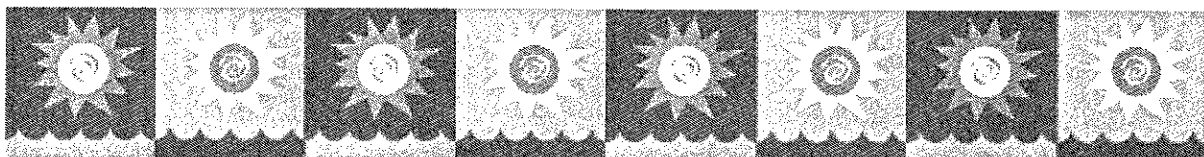
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			8/1 2	3	4	
			Pastor Scott/Vacation 9:45 AM Jr. High Group	Pastor Scott/Vacation	Pastor Scott/Vacation	Pastor Scott/Vacation
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Pastor Scott/Vacation 9:30 AM Worship Service/Holy Communion	Pastor Scott/Vacation	Pastor Scott/Vacation	Pastor Scott/Vacation 7:00 PM Council Meeting	Pastor Scott/Vacation	Pastor Scott/Vacation 2:00 PM Martha Circle	Pastor Scott/Vacation
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
9:30 AM Worship Service 11:30 AM Pastor Scott/Vacation	Pastor Scott/Vacation		5:30 PM Jr. High group 6:00 PM Bible Study 7:00 PM High School Group		9:00 PM Movie night	10:00 AM Scrapbooking
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
9:30 AM Worship Service/Holy Communion			6:00 PM Bible Study			
26	27	28	29	30	31	
9:30 AM Worship Service			6:00 PM Bible Study 7:00 PM Confirmation Orientation			

Worship Participants for August, 2018

If you are unable to participate as scheduled, please call the office-566-2257

ORGANISTS	Aug. 05	Judy Pingel	COMMUNION
	Aug. 12	Nancy Dose	
	Aug. 19	Judy Pingel	COMMUNION
	Aug.26	Nancy Dose	
ACOLYTES	Aug. 05	Jadynn McDonald	COMMUNION
	Aug.12	Quentin Wollan	
	Aug. 19	Hannah Wulff	COMMUNION
	Aug. 26	Jack Dalen	
LECTORS	Aug. 05	Jeremy Hultquist	COMMUNION
	Aug. 12	Emma Wulff	
	Aug. 19	Weta Butterfield	COMMUNION
	Aug. 26	Nancy Dose	
USHERS	Aug. 05	Dick Miller and Phil Feller	COMMUNION
	Aug. 12	Jeff Poggensee and Mike Shelton	
	Aug. 19	Bill and Libby Shelton	COMMUNION
	Aug. 26	Phil Feller and Bob Pingel	
GREETERS	Aug. 05		COMMUNION
	Aug. 12		
	Aug. 19		COMMUNION
	Aug. 26		
SPECIAL MUSIC	Aug. 05		COMMUNION
	Aug. 12		
	Aug. 19		COMMUNION
	Aug. 26		

ALTAR GUILD: Carol Bertelsen and Becky Pedersen
CARRYING ELEMENTS: Arlon and Carol Bertelsen
DEACON: Bob Pingel



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