

The Messenger

Underwood Lutheran Church

December, 2020

Pastor Scott Dalen

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

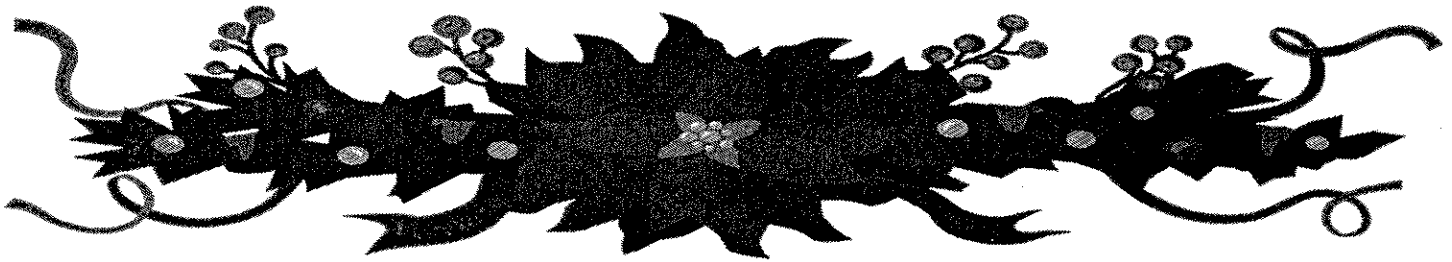
Underwood, IA 51576

Congregational President – Diane Stein - 402-290-3090
Editor, Secretary – Tonya Mayer – 712-309-1512

Church Phone # - 566-2257

e-mail address: underwoodlutheran@q.com

No Education - Worship Service @ 8:00 am on line – 9:30 am Indoor Worship



-Our Sunday morning schedule continues to reflect the status of the ongoing pandemic. Online worship videos go live at 8:00am. If/when In-person worship resumes (tentatively Dec 20th as of this publication), it will remain at the 9:30am time slot which we began in early November. Likewise, if/when In-person education resumes, it is likely that we will return to the “normal” program year schedule for Sunday mornings. When in doubt, please check the Website or call the Church Office for the latest schedule updates.

-A continued reminder that Council members are filling the various worship helper roles when in-person worship is held. If you are slated to serve in one of these roles (Usher, Reader, Greeter, etc) on the schedules in place pre-Covid, you DO NOT need to fill this role.

-Christmas Eve is Thursday December 24th. As of this publication, we are still tentatively planning on In-Person worship at the normal Christmas Eve times of 5:00pm and 10:00pm. This will all depend on the ongoing effect of the pandemic. Please watch for ongoing updates on Worship status. Online Worship will be available on Christmas Eve as well.

-The Office will be closed the week between Christmas and New Years. Pastor Scott will also be on vacation beginning Monday Dec 28 through Monday January 4th. Worship will be Online Only on Sunday January 3rd. There WILL NOT be in-person worship.

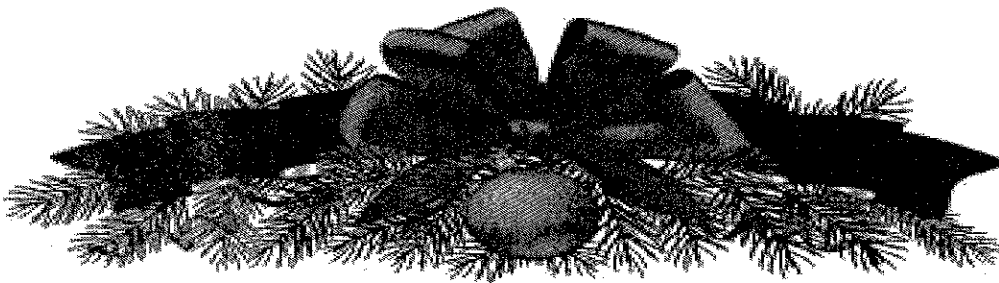
-Council is continuing to explore how best to hold the Annual Meeting. We are tentatively planning on Sunday January 31st. Depending on the current state of the pandemic and building closure, the meeting may be in-person, online in a live/digital format, or a mixture of the two. It is the hope of Council to limit the duration of the meeting to action/voting on essential items only (2021 Budget, Elections, Constitutional Matters). Please watch for updates on this process.

-If you are interested in serving on the Church Council, or other elected positions, please reach out to Pastor Scott or one of the existing circumstances. We anticipate having 5 Council positions to fill (1 2-year term and 4 3-year terms)

-Local individuals are invited to connect with us on Facebook in our group page "Underwood Lutheran Church Community." Facebook groups are designed to encourage interaction in a more accessible way than a regular page. You can find the group and join the group by visiting the church Facebook page and clicking on the blue button marked "Visit Group" found right under the main picture. Note that this Facebook group is private, and is intended only for individuals in and directly around the Underwood community. Individuals from outside our community are free to follow the public ULC Facebook page.

-Online Communication continues to be our best option for sharing important information. 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.





"The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." Mark 1:1

"So [the women] went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid." Mark 16:8

Over the years I've been asked many times which Gospel is my favorite. For a long time, my answer was John, because its so radically different than the others...and it includes that whole water into wine thing (as a home brewer/wine maker...that one resonates).

But in the last few years my answer has changed to Mark. I love how direct and to the point everything is presented...right down to the opening and closing verses. Many of you have heard me talk about the connection between these two verses, especially when its Mark's turn to cover Easter. The magnitude of the resurrection and the empty tomb overcomes the women and they run away without telling anyone. Its abrupt and jarring to have the Gospel simply end right here (yes, there are additions to the end of Mark chapter 16 but they were added way later to try and tidy things up).

I think this abrupt ending stems from the opening verse, and "the beginning of the Good News." We'll have that particular verse the first Sunday of December, as we get into Advent and the year of Mark. And I appreciate this whole connection between the beginning and the ending...because it reminds us that this whole story is only the beginning, and that there is more to come, based on the utterly earth-shattering reality of the empty tomb.

Though we are beginning a new church year, its obvious by the calendar that 2020 isn't quite done with us yet...and to be honest I sit here with a fair amount of trepidation wondering what else we might experience before we can finally close the 2020 calendar and open up a new one. I looked back my articles for December of 19 and January of 20, before Covid was even a blip on our radar, and the mood was drastically different than it is now.

The vast majority of this year, beginning in Early-March, has been a DISRUPTION. Not just an interruption. Often, I hear talk of "getting back to normal" or "returning to the ways things used to be." But folks, I fear that's not going to happen. This ongoing pandemic, WHENEVER it finally gets in the rear-view mirror, has changed the world that we live in.

I don't know what to expect. I don't know what to anticipate. If I'm honest, here at the end of the year, as I sit in meeting after meeting trying to plan out the year to come, it feels almost futile...because we are trying to plan an unknown future based on a past that probably doesn't apply anymore.

And since I'm being honest, this UTTERLY unknown future scares the hell out of me. Because we will be blazing new trails. The church (like the WHOLE church, and the ELCA, and the Western Iowa Synod, and ULC...all of it) is not going to just go back to normal...no matter how much we all want to return to that comfort zone. And no-one has any idea what to expect (regardless of how confident they might appear to be).

But here's the thing, when the women ran away from the empty tomb, they were terrified as well. They didn't know what to expect. Neither did the disciples when they eventually heard the news. The resurrection was a disruption and the world was never the same again. 2020 is another disruption...and scary as that might be for all of us...let us cling to the hope that we find clear back in Mark 1:1...as we remember that this is the beginning of the good news...but God's story is ongoing, and we have a place within it.

In Christ
Pastor Scott

Constitutional Items

In advance of the Annual Meeting, which we hope will still be able to happen in a yet-to be determined format in late January, two Constitutionally-related items need to be reported.

The first item is a Continuing Resolution, approved by the Council on November 18th. This resolution allows congregational meetings, including the Annual Meeting, to occur in a digital format, should that be required given the ongoing pandemic. The Council enacted this Resolution at the guidance of Western Iowa Synod Staff. According to ULC's Constitution, Continuing Resolutions are approved by the Council, and no further action is required on this item.

The second item is a resolution to amend the existing Bylaws which govern the work of the Endowment Committee. The changes enacted by the Amendment, should it be approved by the Congregation, are outlined/bulleted at the end of the resolution itself. Please review this resolution/amendment in advance of the Annual Meeting. According to ULC's Constitution, Bylaws are amended through the following process:

- The resolution/amendment is presented to the Council in writing at least 60 days in advance of the Congregational Meeting (Council received/reviewed/and passed their support of the amendment as-written on November 18th)
- The resolution/amendment is presented to the Congregation in writing at least 30 days in advance of the Congregational Meeting (This step is fulfilled by including this in the December Newsletter)
- The resolution/amendment is discussed/voted on at a legally called Congregational Meeting (including the Annual Meeting) in which a quorum is present. The change/amendment is adopted by a simple majority vote of those present.

The following Continuing Resolution is proposed and adopted by the Congregational Council at their regular monthly meeting in November 2020.

This Continuing Resolution allows the Congregation to hold meetings of the Congregation, including the Annual Meeting, in a digital/remote format, provided guidelines of the State of Iowa are met, which includes a live meeting in which all participants have the capability of interaction/voice.

Whereas, the reality of distance and isolation in the midst of an ongoing pandemic creates safety concerns with large scale gatherings; and

Whereas, current Constitutional guidelines, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions indicate that Congregational Meetings, including the Annual Meeting, are slated to occur in January of each year; and

Whereas, Constitutional guidelines indicate that voting in Annual Meetings cannot occur by proxy or absentee ballot; and

Whereas, Iowa Code section 504.7 states "The articles of incorporation or bylaws may provide that an annual or regular meeting of members is not required to be held at a geographic location if the meeting is held by means of the internet or other electronic communications technology in a manner pursuant to which the members have the opportunity to read or hear the proceedings substantially concurrent with the occurrence of the proceedings, vote on matters submitted to the members, pose questions, and make comments.";

Therefore, be it resolved that the following Continuing Resolution be inserted into the existing list of previously established Resolutions.

"C10.02.A20. Congregational meetings, including the Annual Meeting, may be held electronically pursuant to Iowa Code 504.7."

THE FOLLOWING ENDOWMENT FUND AMENDMENT TO THE BYLAWS OF UNDERWOOD LUTHERAN CHURCH IS PRESENTED BY THE ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE TO THE CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL FOR APPROVAL ON NOVEMBER 18, 2020, AND WILL BE PRESENTED TO THE MEMBERS AT THE ANNUAL MEETING IN JANUARY 2021. THE COUNCIL VOTED IN SUPPORT OF THE AMENDMENT AS PRESENTED.

This amendment to C13.08.01 and C13.08.02 adjusts the duration of term for elected members of the Endowment Committee from 2 years to 4 years. Through staggered initial terms and elections in subsequent years, it also changes the number of members elected/re-elected in a given year from 2 members to 1 member. Specific Committee members are designated as signatories for the Endowment, and voting status of Pastor and Treasurer are changed. It also designates that the Committee will determine the amount of annual distributions based on the performance of the fund through the year. The resolution and amendment are as follows:

Whereas, the Endowment Fund balance of Underwood Lutheran Church has grown to a size which allows investment gains to be utilized for both continued fund-balance growth and distributions beyond the congregation's operating budget as indicated in C13.08.02 section a; and

Whereas, the existing Endowment Committee has entrusted fund-managers of different investment firms to manage a designated allocation of a portion of the total Endowment fund; and

Whereas, the goal of long-range growth and distributions favor a small number of meetings throughout the course of the year, including (but not limited to) 1-2 meetings with each fund-manger and planning for the year's distribution; and

Whereas, existing bylaws have not designated what members of the committee shall be authorized as signatories for official documents; and

Whereas, voting status of individuals either in control of congregational finances (Treasurer), or who benefit financially from the congregation (Pastor), creates a potential conflict of interest; and

Whereas, a 2-year term in this scope limits the exposure of a newly elected individual to the history and current activity of the Fund, an extended term duration is advised for elected members;

Therefore, be it resolved, that pursuant to C17.02. and C17.03 of our Constitution, the existing Bylaws C13.08.01 and C13.08.02, which were adopted January 21, 2007 shall be amended to the following:

"C13.08.01 An Underwood Lutheran Church Committee of four voting members of this congregation shall be elected at the Congregation's annual meeting. The term of office will be 4 years with initial elections following the adoption of this amendment being staggered, with elected members, be they newly elected or re-elected, serving staggered terms. Each year following these staggered terms, 1 member will be elected. There shall be no term limits. In addition to the elected members, the called-pastor of the congregation shall be ex-officio, with voice, member of the committee. The Treasurer of the congregation shall maintain the account of the Endowment Fund and serve as an ex-officio member, with voice, of the committee. At all times at least one member of the committee shall serve on the Congregational Council; therefore, the Congregational Council, by their second meeting after the Annual Congregational Meeting, shall elect one of their council members to serve on the committee as an ex-officio member with voice and vote. The committee shall elect their own Chairman and Secretary each year at their first meeting. There is no limit on terms of officers. The elected Chairman and Treasurer

shall be designated as signatories for the Endowment. The purpose of the committee shall be to implement the guidelines of the endowment fund.”

”C13.08.02. The duties of the Endowment Fund Committee shall include the following:

a. To fulfill the purpose of the Underwood Lutheran Endowment Fund, that is to provide annual distributions as determined by the committee based on the year’s fund performance, beyond the operating budget of this congregation to ministries as stated below:

1. Outreach to our youth and community youth
2. Outreach to adults and seniors
3. Support for social ministries
4. Enhancements to music and education
5. Capital improvements, debt reduction, and/or building programs of Underwood Lutheran Church
6. Other ministries deemed to be appropriate”

(The amended portion ends here)

C13.08.02, sections b through g, remain unchanged from the original language adopted January 21, 2007.

Highlighted Changes

In C13.08.01

- Term Duration extended from 2 years to 4 years
- Election/Re-election for a seat occurs at a rate of 1 seat per year
- Initial terms will be staggered to achieve this in the 4 elected committee positions
- Committee Chair and Treasurer are designated as the official signatories
- Pastor and Treasurer are changed from voting to non-voting, ex-officio members of the committee, while maintaining voice within the committee

In C13.08.02

- In section a. the language is adjusted to include the committee’s discretion about annual disbursements being based on the fund’s overall performance through the year. The old language simply indicated yearly disbursements, regardless of fund performance.
- Subsections 1-6 are unchanged, but are included as part of section a., which itself is being changed

In Attendance: Pastor Scott Dalen, Bill Shelton (Council Secretary), Tracy Shreeves, Brett Michael (Treasurer), Joyce Tiarks, Gary Leaders, Lynn Leaders, Erik Pedersen, Kathy Darrington, Diane Stein (Council President), and Christine Privia

Call to Order: 6:00pm

Pastor's Report:

Education Procedures As of September 23rd, 2020

- Adult Choir and Adult Sunday School Class Remain On-Hold By Recommendation of Respective Leaders
- At-Home Resources Will Continue to be Made Available by Kim Through Christmas, and option will be re-evaluated at that time.
- Sunday School and Confirmation Classes Will Resume
Tentatively Scheduled for 9:45am on Sundays
- MASKS ARE MANDATORY
- Parents escort your Sunday School aged children to the fellowship hall for opening, and assist them in using hand sanitizer
- Classes will remain distanced during opening
 - We will not be singing for the time being
- Following Opening, students/teachers will move into various basement rooms for class
 - Classrooms will be assigned by overall class size, utilizing the largest available spaces for the larger classes whenever possible, to allow individuals to remain as spaced out as possible.
- Individuals/Families are welcome to join weekly for Education, we will not institute measures to schedule separation. (***Unless unexpected numbers require re-assessment***)
- Confirmation will meet in the Conference room with Pastor Scott
- Utilize hand sanitizer at conclusion of Education as the child/individual is exiting the building

Motion to Accept by Pastor and seconded by Joyce Tiarks - **Approved**

In-Person/Indoor Worship Procedures As of September 23rd, 2020

- Online Worship Option Will Continue As-Is
- Outdoor Worship Will Continue As Weather Allows
(Pastor/President and/or Council will make the call on when to stop)
- Sunday Schedule
 - 8:00am-Online Worship Video Goes Live
 - 8:30am-Indoor Worship
 - 9:45am-Education (Sunday School and Confirmation Classes)
 - 11:00am-Outdoor Worship

AS YOU ARRIVE

PLEASE LIMIT ARRIVAL TIME TO 15 MINUTES PRIOR TO THE START OF WORSHIP

MASKS ARE MANDATORY (Please refer to CDC guidelines on masks)
KEEP COATS/JACKETS WITH YOU IN THE PEW

- Individuals enter and immediately use hand sanitizer (large bottle at each door)
- While remaining socially distanced from other individual/groups, move through Narthex to the Sanctuary doors and check in with Usher
Info Gathered will include: Names of Family/Individuals, 1 Contact Phone Number for the group, and number of individuals communing (if applicable). Usher will also record running total of attendees
- Individuals/Groups will be seated by the next usher. Every other pew, front to back. Bulletins will be printed and distributed by usher
- Order of Worship will be the same as we have established with spoken liturgy and audio of music, no singing

IF THERE IS COMMUNION:

- Usher will dismiss you from pew, every individual gets a shot of hand sanitizer
- Maintain 2-3 pews distance between groups/individuals
- 2 servers will both be gloved/masked.
Pastor will distribute wafers, 2nd Server will fill individual plastic cup with wine/juice, and set it on the table to be picked up by the individual. Used cup will be dropped into a waiting garbage can
- Return by side aisle
- Order of Communion will be in the normal established order: Piano side front to back followed by Organ side back to front
- Pastor will offer the blessing to those not communing if desired...without touching the individual

Following the Conclusion of Worship:

- Ushers will dismiss back to front, individuals/groups exit promptly
- Sanitizer on hands as individuals exit the building
- Conversation can occur outside, but do not block doors/sidewalks

Holy Communion Services

- Connect with Pastor Scott via Email (sdalen001@luthersem.edu), or by phone to register for a specific service.
- Masks are mandatory
- Limit arrival to 10 minutes before the scheduled service time
- Use hand sanitizer as you enter the building
- Communion Server (Pastor) will be gloved and masked for the distribution
 - Server will distribute wafer
 - Individually filled wine glasses will be placed on small table
 - Deposit used glass in garbage can
- Order of Service:
 - Brief Order of Confession and Forgiveness
 - Prayer of the Day
 - Words of Institution

- Lord's Prayer
- Distribution
- Post Communal Blessing and Benediction

-Potential Service Times (Tentative)
Tuesday: 9:30am or 6:30pm
Thursday: 9:30am or 5:00pm

Motion to Accept by Pastor and seconded by Kathy Darrington - **Approved**.

Motion by Pastor and seconded by Tracy Shreeves to accept the schedule below - **Approved**
Begin indoor worship and sunday school on the following dates:
Sunday 4th - indoor worship
Sunday the 18th - study school start

Motion reinstate Merry Maids cleaning schedule back to every week by Kathy Darrington seconded by Erik Pedersen - **Approved**

Adjourn 6:50pm

Next council meeting on the 7th 6:00

2020/10/07 - Meeting Format: Zoom

In Attendance: Pastor Scott Dalen, Bill Shelton (Council Secretary), Diane Stein (Council President), Joyce Tiarks, Christine Privia, Gary Leaders, and Erik Pedersen

Call to Order: 6:01pm

Pastor presented a recap on the indoor service from sunday.
Potential changes for next indoor servie: Ushering people in not required. People will seat themselves.
Indoor one extra Council person helping for non communion sundays, two on communion Sundays.

Laverne Leaders needs \$1500 for supplies for baseboards for basement. **Motion** by Joyce Tiarks seconded by Diane Stein. - **Approved**

Motion to instruct Brett Michael to enroll for Portico Health Insurance at gold level for 2021 (this is the same level as the previous year) by Diane Stein seconded Christine Privia. **Approved**. Pastor abstained from vote.

Motion to Adjourn by Dianne, seconded by Pastor 6:25pm

2020/10/14 - Meeting Format: Zoom

In Attendance: Pastor Scott Dalen, Bill Shelton (Council Secretary), Diane Stein (Council President), Joyce Tiarks, Christine Privia, Tracy Shreeves, Kathy Darrington, and Erik Pedersen

Call to Order: 6:14pm by Dianne

Motion to delay the start of Education (Sunday School) to January 2021, by Bill Shelton, seconded by Tracy Shreeves - **Approved**

Motion to Adjourn by Diane Stein, seconded by Tracy Shreeves 6:59pm

Offerings....

"Our gifts to God"

	Offerings	Attendance
Oct. 25	\$ 1575.35	22
Nov. 01	\$ 2336.28	20
Nov. 08	\$ 1576.61	39
Nov. 15	\$ 4295.39	



W42310504 www.fotosearch.com

Building Closure Status

As of this writing, the Council has elected to suspend In-Person worship and return to Online Worship. This is effective through Sunday December 13th. Council will be meeting again on Wednesday Dec 9th to reassess the current status.

We are still hoping to keep activity in the building to a minimum, though Pastor Scott continues to keep normal office hours. Please plan on wearing masks if you are not alone in the building, and utilize the bottles of hand-sanitizer available in the narthex. Meetings normally held within the church should be held digitally if at-all possible. Please contact the church office before holding meetings or activities.

Don't Call it a Come Back... Call it a We Never Left!

BETHANY
Lutheran Health Services

7 Elliott St.
Council Bluffs, IA
712-328-9500
www.blhs.care

Accepting new admissions!

Christmas
Begins with
Christ

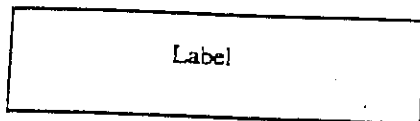
December 2020						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		12/1	2	3	4	5
6 8:00 AM Online Service	7	8	9	10	11	12
13 8:00 AM Online Service	14	15	16	17	18	19
20 8:00 AM Online Service	21	22	23	24	25	26
27 8:00 AM Online Service	28	29	30	31		

"THE MESSENGER"
UNDERWOOD LUTHERAN CHURCH
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