

The Messenger

Underwood Lutheran Church

January, 2021

Pastor Scott Dalen

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

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

HAPPY New Year!

- Pastor Scott will be on vacation through Monday January 4th. Worship on the 3rd will be a pre-recorded/loaded video.
- Online Confirmation Lessons are on break Sunday January 3rd. Resources will resume the week leading into Sunday the 10th.
- Council is continuing to explore how best to hold the Annual Meeting. We are 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.
- Items for the 2021 Annual Report will be much more limited than in previous years. We hope to keep the number of written reports to a minimum. Likewise, we will attempt to present the financial reports in as concise of a format as possible. This is aimed at streamlining the report itself as well as the Annual Meeting, especially if we are limited to an Online-only format.
- 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 4 Council positions to fill (1 2-year term and 3 3-year terms). Likewise, we are also searching for individual(s) interesting in the position of Financial Secretary. This is also an elected position tasked with tracking giving through the course of the year.
- 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.



Happy...New...Year?

This phrase, that I typically write (and say) emphatically every year, I write out with a bit of trepidation this time around.

Part of me thinks that with the dumpster fire that has been 2020, 2021 has nowhere to go but up. And I do look forward to this new year with a certain glimmer of hope, especially with the reality of Covid-19 vaccines starting to make the rounds. Admittedly though, I'll feel better in a few more months when they've become readily available to the public...but we ARE getting there.

Now, as we roll the calendar over, we are still in the midst of the tunnel. BUT....As I've been saying quite a bit during the last few weeks of December, we can finally see the light at the end of it. I can't speak for you, but considering this gives me the slightest feeling of defiance in the face of, well...EVERYTHING that has gone on this past year.

I'm reminded of a moment in Laura Ingalls Wilder's book "The Long Winter." In the midst of a devastatingly harsh winter, isolated in the middle of the prairies and cut off from supplies, Pa Ingalls (or Charles as he was known), emaciated from months of eating little besides bread, stands up from his chair in their home, shakes his fist at the wind howling outside and cries "You keep on howling, you won't get us! We're still here!" (admittedly paraphrased as I haven't read the book for many years now).

Hold on a moment...take a deep breath...now say it with me.

WE'RE STILL HERE!!!!

Yes, things look drastically different these days than they did a year ago. Yes, we still have months to go before we might even begin to feel "safe," and that Covid is in the rearview mirror. But we are still here. We are surviving...and I'm proud of all of us.

There are moments when the gospel itself feels defiant, and the promises which we cling to, uttered so powerfully throughout the scriptures, remind us that no matter what may happen, God WILL be faithful. And that gives me hope, even as we drag ourselves through a few more dark and difficult months. I'll close with these words from Romans 8, which I look to so often in times of struggle.

"I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:38-39.

In Christ,
Pastor Scott

Offerings....

"Our gifts to God"

	Offerings	Attendance
Nov. 22	\$ 1671.61	
Nov. 29	\$ 1072.59	
Dec. 06	\$ 2645.73	
Dec. 13	\$ 3897.76	
Dec. 20	\$ 2557.77	



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Building Closure Status

As of this writing, the Council has elected to continue worship in the Online-Only status. This is effective through Sunday January 31st.

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.

Though we are currently continuing in this cautionary action, recent stats of Covid infections and positivity rates for Pottawattamie County have been improving. That partnered with the beginning of distribution of available vaccines gives us hope that we might be able to return to in-person worship in the near future. The Council will continue to monitor the situation and plan accordingly.





HAPPY NEW YEAR

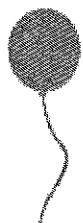
Wordsearch



Search for the words going up, down, left and right.



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CELEBRATION	COUNTDOWN	EXTRAVAGANZA
FIREWORKS	GATHERING	INVITATION
JANUARY	MIDNIGHT	NOISEMAKER
PARTY	RESOLUTION	TRADITION



January 2021

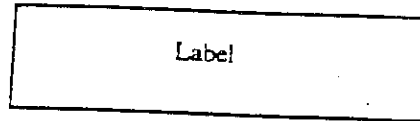
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1/1	2
3 8:00 AM Online Service	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 8:00 AM Online Service	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 8:00 AM Online Service	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 8:00 AM Online Service	25	26	27	28	29	30
31 8:00 AM Online Service						

"THE MESSENGER"
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