

The Messenger

Underwood Lutheran Church

September, 2021

Pastor Scott Dalen

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

Congregational President – Kathy Darrington – 402-639-8543
Editor, Secretary – Tonya Mayer – 712-309-1512
Church Phone # - 566-2257
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On Line Worship @ 8:30 – Education 9:00 am – Worship Service 10:15 am



- Holy Communion will be celebrated Sept 5th and 19th.
 - September 5th, which is Labor Day Weekend, will feature our last Sunday on the Summer Schedule with Online at 8:30am and In-Person at 9:30am. Beginning on September 12th, we will resume our Program Year Schedule with Online at 8:30am, Education at 9:00am, and In-Person at 10:15am.
 - 7th and 8th grade families. Pastor Scott will host Confirmation Orientation on Wednesday September 1st at 7:00pm. Please plan to join us if possible. We will discuss the calendar and expectations for the program. Please let Pastor Scott know if you are unable to attend.
 - Council will meet for their regular monthly meeting on September 15th at 6:30pm.
 - Pastor Scott will be out of town for Continuing Education on Monday Sept 20th-Tuesday 21st. He will be available by phone or email.
 - Anyone interested in joining the ranks of worship volunteers in the roles of Usher, Reader, or Altar Guild? These important roles help the weekend worship services operate smoothly. Please contact Pastor Scott for me information or to volunteer.
 - 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.



Over the course of the past 15 years my family has traveled to southern Colorado and attended Family Camp #2 at Rainbow Trail Lutheran Bible Camp. Every year there is a TON of stuff that you can do, and over the years I've participated in a lot of it. But I've also gotten to the point where one of my favorite activities is simply sitting on the deck of the main building, which faces east. I sit there and look out across the valley at the next range. Under normal conditions you can see for MILES. The view, which is incredible by the way, typically includes a pretty nice view of Pikes Peak, Colorado's highest point.

But this year was a little different. Atmospheric conditions this year resulted in massive amounts of smoke from wildfires in California (not to mention the possibly of additional smoke from Canadian fires). That left everything REALLY hazy. You couldn't see it right in front of you, but to look out at a distance, you couldn't see much of anything. Now the smoke was gradually dissipating. Finally, during the last 36 hours of the week, we could just barely make out the hazy outline of Pikes, but that was it.

As I've sat and thought about it, this seems like an applicable metaphor these days. I don't know about you, but I'm really tired of bad news. I'm tired of hearing it. I'm tired of reading it. And I'm tired of sharing it. As I've looked back over the last 18 odd month's-worth of newsletter articles, not to mention weekly announcements, I can't help but notice the trend of what feels like disappointing updates.

But the reality of life here at the church, activities and plans and all that, it all reminds me of the view in Colorado this year. If we look immediately in front of us, we can see okay and react to what's there. But if we try to look too far out, things get really hazy really quickly.

But...isn't that life? Sure, we try to plan and map things out. We create schedules and anticipate the normal swing of things. And often times those things come to fruition in one form or another. But the truth of the matter, even if we forget or ignore it, is that life will always throw us curveballs.

As we are looking ahead at what we all hope will be a more "normal" program year, we are also seeing the haziness starting to creep back in again. Perhaps even acknowledging that feels frustrating or daunting. More than once I expressed annoyance at the lack of view in Colorado this year too. But you know what...Pikes Peak was still out there, even if I couldn't see it most of the time. That little glimpse I got at the end of the week was a reminder.

Maybe we just need to look for those little glimpses that remind us that God's still out there in the midst of everything going on these days. There are times when they can be really hard to see...but sooner or later they always show up. And sometimes, WE are that little glimpse of God's presence in the life of another. May we all be encouraged, and may we all be an encouragement in the midst of the haze.

In Christ

Pastor Scott

Underwood Lutheran Church Council

Secretary's Report - July 21, 2021

Members Present: Pastor Scott Dalen, Kathy Darrington, Gary Leaders, JoAnna Mitchell, Chris Privia, Sandy Redshaw, Tracy Shreeves, Diane Stein, and Joyce Tiarks

Also Present: Brett Michael and Jeff Privia, **Not Present:** Jan Ehrens and Amanda Henderson

Meeting Called to Order: President, Kathy Darrington called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM

Financial Report: Treasurer, Brett Michael presented the Financial Report, including the following notes:

- Working with US Bank to get Amber Chase added as a signer on the Memorial accounts
- Budget tracking close through 6/30/21 on an expense basis
- June 2021 Income Statement showed a net loss of (\$3,811.53)
- Overall cash balance severely affected by down giving in June 2021
- Current update for July - Offering for July 4 and 11 were both low, remaining bills \$2,425.81, current cash position as of July 21, 2021 is \$659.12.
- This information led to a lengthy discussion about budget, expenses, offering, and how to maintain a balance when giving will never match expenses.
- Jeff Privia, representing the Endowment Committee, joined in our discussion.
- **Motion to ask Endowment Committee to move \$20,000 to the general fund to cover current and future monthly expenses:** Kathy Darrington; Seconded: Joyce Tiarks; Motion Carried
- A request was made to invite the Endowment Committee to meet with the Church Council at the next council meeting on August 18th. Council members will prepare questions, that will be provided in advance, for the Endowment Committee.

Motion to approve Financial Report: Tracy Shreeves; Seconded: Chris Privia; Motion Carried

Secretary's Report: After one spelling correction, **Motion to approve Secretary's Report:** Pastor Dalen; Seconded: Diane Stein; Motion Carried

Old Business:

1 - Remodeling Parsonage: The information is with the Endowment Committee.

2 - Sunday School and Report from Education Committee:

- There is a need for a Sunday School Coordinator/Superintendent, a Sunday School Music Leader, and Sunday School teachers. We will be asking for volunteers through the newsletter, website, and Facebook pages.
- Rally Sunday will be September 12th, with reminders going out in July and August
- We are also looking for high school volunteers to help with Sunday School
- When confirmation begins, Education Committee members will help parents facilitate activities and projects for this age group.

3 - Update on the windows in the east storage room: Council received more information about this project and found out that the stained-glass vendor is currently designing the windows and they will be installed at a later date.

4 - Thank you for Kim Madsen as she completes her time as our Faith Formation Coordinator: Kathy purchased gift cards and brought thank you cards to be signed. The celebration date for Kim is yet to be decided.

New Business:

1 - There is some concern about the church flower beds needing to be weeded. Property Committee members will coordinate a cleanup time.

2 - There was a request by the Leaders family asking the church to consider helping with a fundraiser to offset expenses of LaVern staying in Lincoln during Janet's rehab. Since Brian Leaders is currently setting up a Go Fund Me Page, the council would like to help by promoting the Go Fund Me Page and by providing a collection box for cash donations at the church.

3 - Council approved a scrapbooking group to use the church again on a monthly basis.

4 - Council approved use of the church for Carol Yeaton's wedding rehearsal dinner July 30th.

Pastor's Report:

Facility Issues:

- 4-H Club to resume using facility for monthly meetings, approved via email June 30th
- CenturyLink old line for the parsonage bill received, contacted customer service to remove the account July 15th

Parish Education:

- Beginning to plan 21-22 Confirmation calendar/Orientation for families, Reformation History/Small Catechism year
- Rally Sunday Sept. 12th, anticipating moving back to program year Sunday School
- Anticipate that Adult Class and Adult Choir will resume

Calendar Matters:

- Kim's last day July 15th
- Pulpit Supply August 15th provided by Pastor, Lisa Johnson
- September 20 - 21st Iowa Tri-Synod Convocation in Des Moines
- October 31st, Confirmation of Pastor's Godson in Okoboji - Pastor requested a Comp Sunday (non-vacation). **Motion to approve:** Gary Leaders; **Seconded:** JoAnna Mitchell; **Motion Carried**

Congregational Life:

- 2022 Council Elections (Going off Council: Kathy, Gary, and Diane)
- 2022 Annual Meeting - recommending Jan. 30th (5th Sunday in January) which meets Constitutional Requirements while also allowing maximum prep-time

Pastoral Acts:

- Baptism Jazlyn Renee McKee - June 20th
- Funeral Wilhelm "Bill" Koenig - July 13th
- Holy Communion July 11th (43) and 18th (45), Bethany Heights June 24th (resuming monthly schedule)

Synodical Work:

- Synod Council July 10th
- Ordination for Pastor Lisa Johnson (St. Johns in Council Bluffs) July 11th

Next Meeting: Wednesday, August 18th at 6:30 pm

Adjourn Meeting:

- **Motion to Adjourn:** Pastor Dalen; **Seconded:** Kathy Darrington; **Motion Carried**

Notes Submitted: Joyce Tiarks, Secretary

Hello fellow congregation members of Underwood Lutheran Church. As ULC's Treasurer, I would like to give everyone a summary of our current financial position through the first half of 2021. I'm happy to say that the church was successful in weathering the storm of 2020. This was greatly assisted through an SBA PPP loan of \$18,700. The loan was fully forgiven in early 2021, and these funds, along with your financial support, helped us overcome a difficult year without enduring severe financial hardships. Thank you to everyone for your previous and future generosity.

With that, here is a summary of the Underwood Lutheran Church's financials through June 30, 2021:

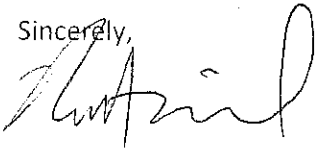
Actual revenue for ULC through 6/30/2021 is \$59,901. This primarily consists of traditional giving (through envelopes) of \$35,579 and Vanco (Online) of \$23,829. Year to date expenses total \$67,050. This yields a year-to-date operating loss of \$7,140. This loss for the year has been able to be absorbed through our cash position through the first half of the year. However, the cash available in the General Operating Fund for ULC is down from \$12,791 as of 12/31/2020 to \$4,961 as of 6/30/2021. Essentially, the cushion offered by the PPP Loan in 2020 has been eliminated.

Underwood Lutheran Church is a staple of the Underwood Community, and we should continue to be that for many years to come. We are blessed to have a sizeable endowment for a church and community of our size. However, we cannot always count on the endowment to "fill holes" as needed. The endowment committee is tasked with being good stewards of this money to allow it to support the church and our benevolence needs for generations to come. Our current "Operating Budget" is just shy of \$155,000/annually in expenses. This does not include our annual budgeted benevolence items and is purely the expenses to continue to operate the church on an annual basis. Based upon our historical giving, the expected giving to the church is projected to be about \$123,000 for 2021. This leaves a deficit of \$32,000 for the year. Our Council has done a tremendous job of managing the budget from an expense side. Historically we often see actual expenses coming in under budget. But the "giving verses expenses" reality is still difficult.

I am asking each of you fellow members to consider any possible increases to your weekly donations or to consider any options to help the church during these times. It won't take much from each of us and a little bit goes a long way. If 50 families give an extra \$10/week for an entire year, this would total \$26,000.

Thank you again and God Bless.

Sincerely,

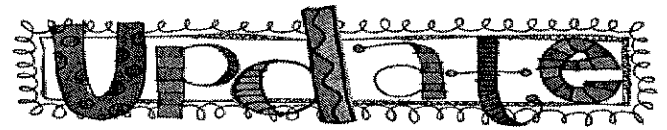


Brett Michael
Underwood Lutheran Church Treasurer

Offerings....

"Our gifts to God"

	Offerings	Attendance
July 25	\$ 1714.00	60
Aug. 01	\$ 2294.02	40
Aug. 08	\$ 1394.35	28
Aug. 15	\$ 2899.04	42



Precautionary Building Status

Worship Assistant Schedule

Usher Schedule:

Sep 5th: Neil Darrington and Gary Leaders
Sep 12th: Bob Dose and Dick Miller
Sep 19th: Adam Darrington and Erik Pederson
Sep 26th: Bill and Libby Shelton
Oct 3rd: Alex and Sonya Schiphoff
Oct 10th: Jeff and Tracy Shreeves
Oct 17th: JW and Joyce Tiarks
Oct 24th: Brett Michaels and Mike Shelton
Oct 31st: Neil Darrington and Gary Leaders

Piano/Organist Schedule:

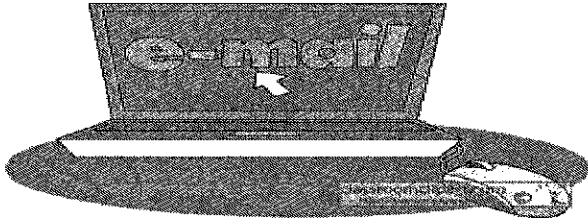
Sept 5th: Judy Pingel
Sept 12th: Nancy Dose
Sept 19th: Arla Claussen
Sept 26th: Sonya Schiphoff

August Deacon: Diane Stein

In their August meeting, Council reviewed the current status of Covid in our local area. Stats are concerning, and are indicating an upswing in activity (something common through most of the country these days). However, numbers have not yet reached the level where the re-institution of mandatory precautionary measures is needed. Council will continue to monitor the situation, particular as the school year begins and we see the general mixing of our younger population.

However, masks are still available at the church, and hand sanitizer is still located at each entrance. We continue to recommend sanitizing. It will also continue to be available during the distribution of Holy Communion. We also strongly recommend the usage of masks if you are not vaccinated, and want to encourage people to wear a mask if that helps your general comfort level at in-person activities.

Likewise, if you are not masking and see someone who is, LET IT BE. There have been instances of jokes or comments at the expense of individuals who have masked, and that is unacceptable. Let's remember that we are a community that cares for one another.



Please note the following email address changes for both Tonya and Pastor Scott. Tonya's old address will stop being functional in mid-June. Pastor Scott's old address is still functional, but he is changing work correspondence to the new account.

ulcsecretary@metc.net for Tonya
ulcpastor@metc.net for Pastor Scott



-In mid-July, we resumed the schedule of volunteer ushers assisting with Sunday morning Worship. Likewise, we continue to seek volunteer scripture readers on a weekly basis. Finally, the Altar Guild has also resumed activity, centered mainly around the preparation/cleanup of Holy Communion. If you are interested in serving in any of these capacities, please contact the church and we will put you in touch with the proper individual.

Remember, we can't do this without out you.

Sanctuary Audio-Visual Improvement Project

We continue to explore the possibility of a drastic improvement on the audio-visual capabilities within the sanctuary. The main purpose of this project will be to install equipment which will allow digital projection throughout the sanctuary. This will create the opportunity to enhance our worship experience, and help us move away from dependance on printed materials. While this project and possibility is exciting, it is also not cheap. The leadership ultimate hopes to fundraise this project. We have received several bids towards the project, ranging in cost up to \$8500 depending on current resource costs and including contingency funds.

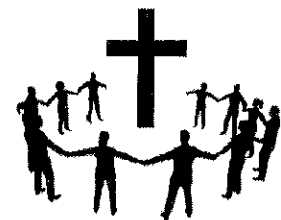
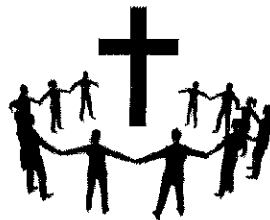
We are also exploring a slightly different option, more directly aimed at realizing the goal of recording/livestreaming our In-Person Worship. This will lead to a more cohesive connection between In-Person and Online worship opportunities. This option, still in the early stages of exploration, will likely prove cheaper than the potential projection project. The leadership of the congregation will continue to explore how best to move forward with these different possibilities.

Through the generosity of several families through existing memorial funds, we already have \$4,500 dedicated to this project. But we will need your help to bring these dreams into reality. Please consider investing in the future of Underwood Lutheran, and contact Pastor Scott with your willingness to pledge towards this project.



UNDERWOOD
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Together...is where we want to be!
Team ULC!



Welcome Back to Sunday School

Rally Sunday: September 12th at 9:00 am

- **Grades PK - 6th grade**
- **Pass the word to neighbors and friends**
- **Let us know if you plan to attend by texting name/grade to: Joyce Tiarks (402-250-5677)**

September 2021

Calendar

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

Aug 29 30 31 Sep 1 2 3 4

8:30 AM Online Service
9:30 AM Worship Service

7 PM Confirmation Qnta

5 6 7 8 9 10 11

8:30 AM On Line Worship
9:30 AM Worship Service

12 13 14 15 16 17 18

8:30 AM On Line Worship
9 AM Education/Rally Sign
10:15 AM Worship Service

6:30 PM Council Meeting

19 20 21 22 23 24 25

8:30 AM On Line Worship
9 AM Education
10:15 AM Worship Service

26 27 28 29 30 Oct 1 2

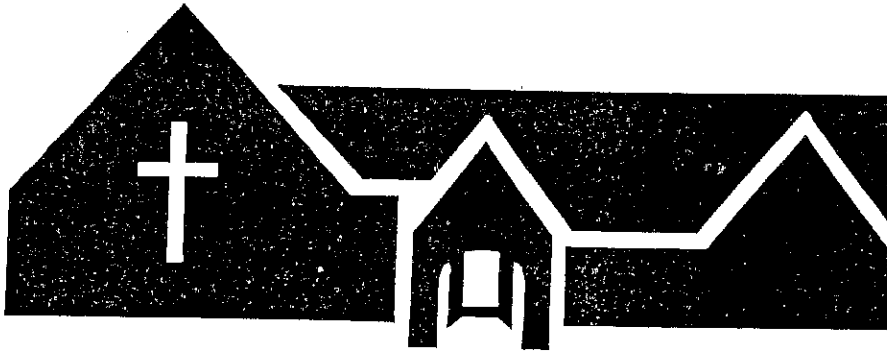
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