



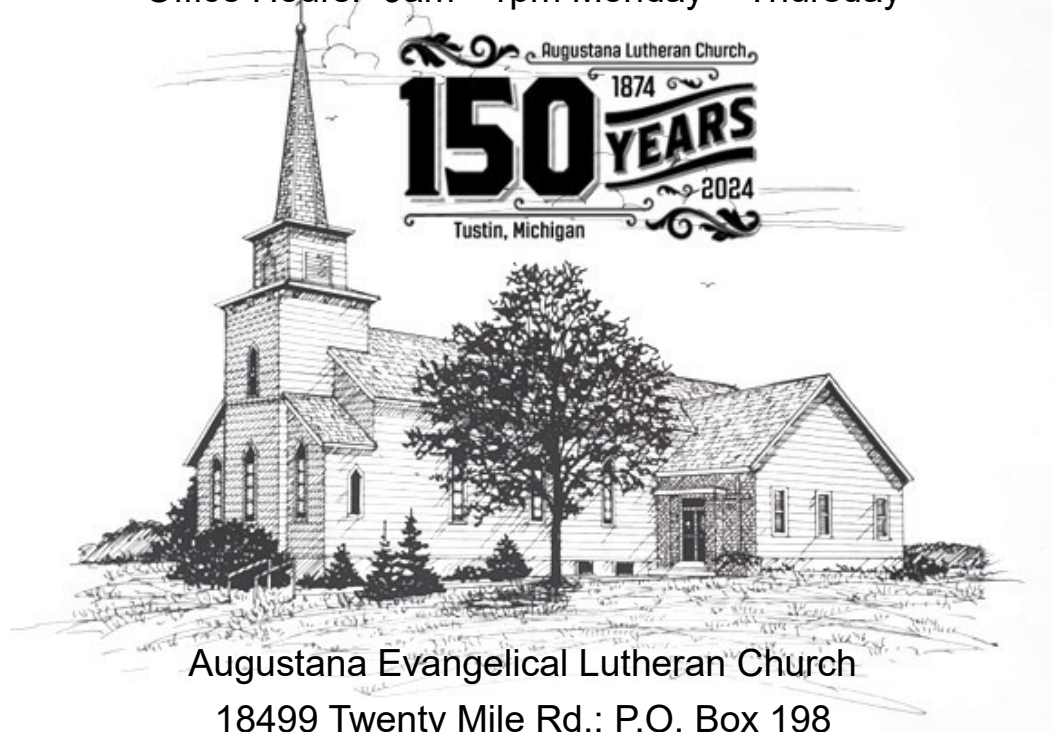
Augustana Lutheran Church

Pastor - Sharon Van Dam

Secretary - Angela Christie

Pianist - Patty Surguy

Office Hours: 9am - 1pm Monday – Thursday



Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church

18499 Twenty Mile Rd.; P.O. Box 198

Tustin, MI 49688

Sunday Worship: 9am

Phone: 231-829-3837



*"We are called through Jesus the Christ to nurture spiritual growth,
welcome all into worship and serve the needs of others."*

Church Mission Statement

Pastor's Message



"... be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another." (Ephesians:32)

As we enter into the busy time of the year that we call the Holiday Season, it's important to remember the advice that Paul gave to the Christians in Ephesus. Maybe this year we can make a commitment to **remember to be kind.**

Remember be kind to the often overworked store clerks and restaurant servers. All too often they work long hours, for minimal pay, dealing with a public that is often rude, sometimes demeaning.

Remember to be kind to family and friends. For those mourning the loss of a loved one, or coping with other life crisis, this time of year can be especially painful. Not everyone wants or needs "to be jolly".

Remember to be kind to yourselves. Most of us fall victim to the ideal of creating that perfect holiday memory. Sometimes we exhaust ourselves in our efforts to obtain what we falsely believe is perfect. After all none of us live in a Hallmark movie. So take extra special care of yourselves during this demanding time of year and try to eliminate overly extravagant expectations

Remember to be kind to our brothers and sisters in Christ. At this time of year the term C and E Christians pops up in too many conversations. It used to refer to church members who seem to only "show up for worship" on Christmas and Easter. It's almost always used as a negative judgment; perhaps coupled with the thought that real Christians are regular church attenders. As a pastor I wish more people could be kind enough to rejoice in the fact that the special C and E Christians have chosen to join us for worship. After all, Christmas and Easter are the two most important holidays in the church year. Neither one could exist without the other. No Easter without the birth of Jesus. And the birth of a baby boy in Bethlehem would have no significance without the sorrow of Good Friday and the Easter joy of the Resurrection.

And so with a spirit of thanksgiving and praise let us remember to thank God for all the many blessings that have been showered upon. And help us to remember to be kind.

Peace & Blessings,

Pastor Sharon



We cannot begin to plan for a child's future, until his/her needs of today are met.

Dear Friend of Uplift Pine River Area Kids,

Since the fall of 2017, Uplift Pine River Area Kids has been providing supplemental weekend food for Pine River students in need. Over 30,000 bags of food have been delivered over the six years of operation! We are graciously asking for your support to ensure that Uplift Pine River Kids continues to make a difference in our children's future.

The number of children receiving extra weekend food from Uplift, has increased from an average of 112 last year to 164 this year! The need is great.

Uplift Pine River Area Kids has transitioned to a completely community supported program. Uplift needs the continued annual support of the community for the program to continue for years to come.

Many members of the community have supported Uplift with their time and/or donations of money. Each week during the school year (approximately 35 weeks), volunteers purchase, pack, and deliver food to participating students. It costs approximately \$225.00 per child per year to receive the weekly food bags from Uplift. In the past, several area churches have also held canned chicken or tuna drives, cracker or cookie drives, or peanut butter jar drives.

The program is not funded by the Pine River Area School District. Uplift relies solely on volunteers and community supporters to make this program possible.

If you have any questions or would like more information about Uplift Pine River Kids, please contact Ellen Anderson, Program Director, via text/cell at 231-920-3064 or email at upliftpineriver@gmail.com.

Many thanks!

You may choose to follow this link to donate via Paypal:



Uplift Pine River Area Kids, PO Box 312, Tustin, MI 49688
Phone or Text: 231-920-3064 -- Email: upliftpineriver@gmail.com
Or visit us on Facebook



AUGUSTANA LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING
APPROVED MINUTES

October 16, 2023

The meeting was called to order by Becky at 6:30.

Devotional read by George.

Members: Jim Carmody, George Klingler, Becky Miller, Heather Hammar, Ken Forsberg, Connie Burgess, Julie Seguin. Guest: Terry Marckwardt, Treasurer.

Agenda: Motion by Heather to approve amended agenda as presented, with support from Jim. Carried.

Minutes: Motion by George to approve the meetings from September 18, 2023, with support from Ken . Carried.

Financial Reports: Terry wondered if there is a budget set for the 150th Anniversary of the Church. We will discuss this.

Mileage has been paid to Patty since January 1 at an incorrect (too little) amount. Terry will make the correction and pay her the difference.

Motion by Connie to approve the treasurer and financial secretary reports, supported by Julie. Carried.

No communications.

Building/Grounds Report – George: Boilers have been inspected.

Old Business:

- A. Jim has looked into the weed whipper/lawn mower. Connie is going to donate an electric lawn mower. Jim will continue to look at the string trimmer options, he thinks it'll be around \$200.00.
- B. Peggy Burns will cover Pastor Sharon being gone on 10/29
- C. Renucci House 10/18. Doug, Becky, and Julie, (maybe Tim).
- D. Noisy offering for the first 2 Sundays in November for the Renucci gift cards for winter.
- E. 150th Anniversary. Committee will set a date to meet, and a date for the celebration. Connie suggested that a short meeting happen after coffee soon, and make a plan.
- F. Communion – X marks the spot. The X's have been placed for communion assistants to stand.
- G. Bells – we need to decide if we're going to keep them or form a bell choir and use them. Julie will set up at sign-up sheet to see if there is any interest in forming a bell choir.

Old Business:

- A. Decorate for Christmas the Sunday after Thanksgiving.
- B. Heather will take care of Poinsettia orders. \$6.00 each. Ask Ted & Mary to coordinate the setup/watering.
- C. Christmas Eve Service – Sunday, December 24 at 7:00 pm. There be only one service.
- D. A Binder for assisting minister job descriptions is being compiled.
- E. Media Shout. Updates have been done. Ken has a monitor that might work. He'll bring it in, and see if it will work for Angela. The tellers will be doing the counting in the office after church.
- F. The Lutheran Magazine. The last printing will be Nov/Dec 2023. A refund will be issued. Going forward the magazine will be available free online – www.livinglutheran.org . Becky will have Angela put info in the bulletin.
- G. Sherwin Williams Account. Becky checked, and we can set up an account for future painting job.
- H. Organist/pianist sub plan: Eli worked out great. Looking at other possibilities.

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Seguin



Ponderings at the end of a day — or year

Dutch Catholic priest and theologian Henri Nouwen found it useful to reflect on several questions at the end of the day: "Did I offer peace today? Did I bring a smile to someone's face? Did I say words of healing?" Pondering such questions may prove valuable at the end of a year as well: "How did I contribute to peace in the world this past year? Did I bring smiles to others' faces? Did I offer words of healing?" Nouwen continued, and we can too: "Did I let go of my anger and resentment? Did I forgive? Did I love?"

Many of us set New Year's resolutions for self-improvement, asking, "What are my goals? How can I better myself, my weight, my work-life balance, my habits?" But Nouwen said of his self-inquiry: "These are the real questions. I must trust that the little bit of love that I sow now will bear many fruits, here in this world and [in] the life to come." His resolution was to share God's love with others. With God's help, it can be ours as well, for each new day and each new year.

WELCA Meeting

Approved Minutes
September 19, 2023

The meeting held at Green Acres in Cadillac was called to order at 10:38 a.m. by President Jeanette Otberg. The WELCA ladies thanked Shelby Plyler for hosting the meeting and providing water, cookies, and coffee.

Those present: Barb Hazlett, Jan Marckwardt, Sandy Goddard, Joan Chave`, Sue Klingler, Mary Annette Gorden, Myrna Griep, Shelby Plyler, Sandra Bottorff.

Shelby Plyler offered an opening prayer.
Jeanette Otberg read a devotional "Christ in Our Home".

Correspondence: None

The Minutes from the August 15, 2023 meeting prepared by Jan Marckwardt were presented with a motion to accept by Barb Hazlett and second by Sue Klingler. The Minutes were approved.

The Treasurer's Report for August 2023 prepared by Jan Marckwardt was presented. The balance in the account as of August 31, 2023 is \$493.87. A motion to accept by Sue Klingler with support from Sandy Goddard was approved.

Shelby Plyler read the **WELCA purpose statement**.

OLD BUSINESS: Barb Hazlett informed the ladies that the retreat scheduled for September has been cancelled. She also mentioned that "Harm Reduction" was a success. She reminded us that Human Trafficking is in our area which includes Cadillac.

NEW BUSINESS: Mary Annette Gorden brought a sample of what WELCA will be providing to the Pine River Head Start program. WELCA will be packing bags for 35 children to be given to them in January. The average cost of each bag is \$10. Mary Annette thanked Doreen Barnes and Sue Klingler for shopping for the supplies. We will pack the bags at our next meeting.

Barb Hazlett has T-shirts available in SMLXL for a cost of \$15 to \$18. She will be attending Human Trafficking Task Force training October 17 and 18 in Marshall, Michigan. She asked for and was given \$60 to cover the cost of her lodging for this training. The motion was presented by Sue Klingler with a second by Joan Chave` and was carried.

NEXT MEETING: The next WELCA meeting will be on Tuesday, October 17, 2023 at 10:30 a.m. at Augustana and the Headstart bags will be packed.

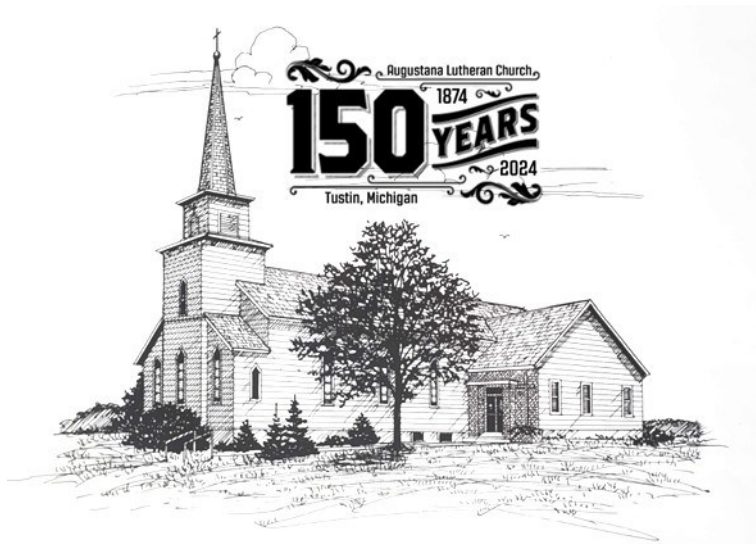
There being no further business the meeting closed at 11:12 with the Lord's Prayer.



Respectfully Submitted
Jan Marckwardt

SAVE THE DATE

July 14th 2024 We celebrate 150 years!



WELCA
NEWS

There will be NO
December WELCA
meeting.

19 quilts were blessed during service on
October 29th



Celebrate the Light

Bursting through December nights
that could be long and cold,
our Christmas lights bring warmth and joy
with colors soft or bold.

Cascading from the rooftops,
and from trees both small and tall,
the lights cry out, "We have good news!
We want to shout to all.

"You've seen the darkness earth can hold,
the sorrow, war and fear;
but God has sent his Son for all,
to show his Love is here.

"The darkness can't put out God's Light.
Christ's with us day by day,
illuminating paths so we
can follow in his way."

Light homes and streets and candles.
Make your world shine clear and bright.
God's love surrounds and blesses us.
Come, celebrate God's Light!

—Peggy Ferrell

'It's the thought that counts'

Jesus said, "Give, and it will be given to you." -Luke 6:38

Why is it so hard to find that all-too-elusive "perfect gift" for the loved ones in your life? For many of us, it's because they already have everything they need and most of what they want.

It sometimes feels impossible to find a gift that won't be banished to that closet for unwanted, unneeded, and unused presents -- alongside the loud ties, the strong perfumes, the unread books, and the garish sweaters.

When it comes to gift-giving, it's often said, "It's the thought that counts." If that's true, why do we still put so much emphasis on the gift?

This year focus on the thoughts behind your Christmas gifts. Thoughts in keeping with the season. Thoughts of meeting real needs and giving where it will be much appreciated. With so many disadvantaged people in the world, at least some of our Christmas budget would be well spent helping our needy neighbors.

If you are buying for a loved one who has everything, consider instead giving a monetary donation in their honor to a worthy charity that helps the poor. Some charities, such as Heifer International and ELCA Good Gifts, let you buy a specific item -- such as a goat or pig for a family, or a water well for a village -- to help people in the developing world.

Make the gift in your loved one's name or honor, and then describe it in a card attached to a low-cost "token" gift, such as a small box of chocolates or a bottle of wine. The better part of your gift will go to someone who truly needs it, and your loved one will share the joy of loving and helping your neighbors in need.

Just remember, 'It's the thought that counts!'

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Advent meanings

During Advent, which begins this year on December 3, many churches and families use wreaths to symbolize watchfulness and increasing joy as Christmas approaches. Colors for the candles vary, with some traditions using blue (for hope or creation) and others preferring purple (for royalty, humility or penitence).

The four candles that each represent a week in Advent also signify hope, peace, joy and love. (The third candle is often pink.) In the center is the white Christ candle, representing Jesus as the light of the world. That candle is lit on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

The round, green Advent wreath has special meaning of its own. It symbolizes eternal life and the unending love of God, who sent his only Son to earth to die in our place.



Center Lake Bible Camp presents Follow the Star – a live nativity, on **December 1-3, 2023**, 6:00-8:00 PM, 15204 20 Mile Road in Tustin, 231-829-3441.

Program includes: Outdoor walking presentation of the Christmas story. (Guests unable to walk through the presentation will have the option to ride a wagon, available at 6:00 PM each night.)

FREE meal including Christmas cookies and hot chocolate.

Rehoboth Reformed Christmas Marketplace

On **SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2ND** from 10 AM – 2 PM! There will be many vendors and talented crafters selling beautiful items for Christmas gifts! Also, we will be having our famous cookie walk and bake sale! We will also be serving lunch and cinnamon rolls. Please join us as we work to raise money for local charities. We are located at 8372 S. Lucas Rd., McBain.



DEWING CENTER • 202 S. Albert St • LeRoy, MI

A LeRoy Christmas tradition; nativities from around the globe will be on exhibit with the lights of Christmas to start the season! While enjoying the displays, visitors will be treated to hot chocolate, coffee and cookies, and a Children's Ornament Craft table.

- Multi-Day Event Schedule -

• MONDAY, Dec 4

2-4pm: Nativity Exhibit & Coffee/Treats, Downstairs

• SATURDAY, Dec 9

2-4pm: Nativity Exhibit & Coffee/Treats, Downstairs

• FRIDAY Dec 8

3pm: Northern Lights Dance Academy performance (ballet), Upstairs

6pm: Pine River High School Choir performance, Upstairs

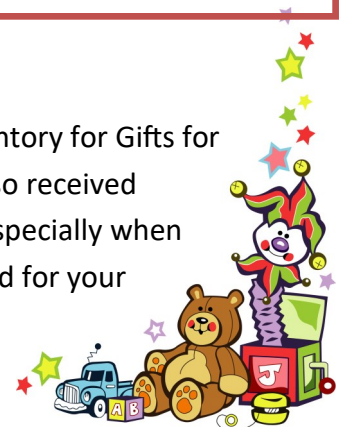
3pm-7pm: Nativity Exhibit & Coffee/Treats, Downstairs

PRICE: Donation at the door

Gifts for Kids

Due to the generosity of the Augustana congregation in years past, the game inventory for Gifts for Kids is high. There will be no need for a collection of games this year. Money is also received throughout the year from individuals and that money is used to purchase games especially when they are on sale. Thanks to all of you for realizing the importance of this project and for your unselfish giving.

The event will be held this year on **Saturday, December 9.**



PRAYER CONCERNS Janice Peterson; Jeff N.; Anissa; Mary Annette Gorden; Musk Family; Dave Dickinson; Vicky Grandi; Jack Forsberg; Men and women serving in the military – Ian Little.

December 2023 Assisting Ministers

Date	Projector Operator	Communion Assistant	Communion Preparer	Greeters/ Open/Close Church	Lector/ Prayer Leader	Tellers	Coffee Hour Host
Dec 3	George Klingler	Sue Carmody	Sue Klingler	Jan Marckwardt	Jim Carmody	George Klingler & Michael Barnes	Jeanette Otberg
Dec 10	Mike Barnes	Becky Miller	Becky Miller	Michael & Doreen Barnes	Harvey Miller	Doreen Barns & George Klingler	Sue Klingler
Dec 17	Mike Barnes	Mary Raven	Arv & Jeanette Otberg	Michael & Doreen Barnes	Mary Raven	Becky Miller & Doreen Barnes	
Dec 24 PM						X	X
Dec 31	Julie Seguin					Julie Seguin	

Upcoming Dates to Remember

- Mon., Dec 4th –Food Pantry 9-12pm
- Sat., Dec 9th – Gifts for Kids-Evart
- Mon., Dec 18th –Food Pantry 9-12pm
- Mon., Dec. 18^h at 6:30 PM – Council Meeting
- Sun., Dec. 24th at 7:00 PM – Christmas Eve Worship Service
- Mon., Dec. 25th – Merry Christmas! (No worship service)
- Thurs., Dec. 28th - Deadline for January MESSENGER
- Sat., Dec. 31st – New Year's Eve



Happy Birthday!

Mary Raven – Dec. 11
Jim Carmody – Dec. 11
Holly Miller – Dec. 13
Henry Christie-Dec .18
Carlton Plyler – Dec. 20



Happy Anniversary

Tim and Julie Seguin – Dec. 29

St. Lucia (also called Lucy) was a fourth-century Italian martyr. Her name is derived from the Latin *lux*, meaning “light,” and thus she is associated with festivals of light. Before the Gregorian calendar reform in 1582 (adopted in Great Britain and the American colonies in 1752), her feast day occurred on the shortest day of the year (hence the saying “Lucy light, Lucy light; Shortest day and longest night”). St. Lucia’s Day is celebrated especially in Italy and in Sweden, where the oldest (or sometimes youngest) daughter dons a crown of burning candles and wakes the family with coffee and St. Lucia buns (sweet rolls seasoned with saffron).

Prep Time: 30 mins
Cook Time: 20 mins
Additional Time: 1 hr 20 mins
Total Time: 2 hrs 10 mins

Ingredients:

1 cup milk
¾ cup white sugar
½ cup butter, softened
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon crumbled saffron threads
2 (.25 ounce) packages active dry yeast
¾ cup warm water (110° F/43°C)
6 ½ cups all-purpose flour, divided
2 eggs 1 egg yolk
1 tablespoon water
1 tablespoon raisins, or as needed

Directions:

Step 1 Heat milk in a small saucepan over medium heat just until bubbles form around the edge of the pan, about 3 minutes. Remove from heat. Add sugar, butter, salt, and saffron, stirring until butter is melted. Let cool to lukewarm temperature, about 2 minutes.

Step 2 Sprinkle yeast over warm water in large bowl, stirring until dissolved. Stir in milk mixture and 3 1/2 cups flour until smooth, about 2 minutes. Stir in eggs. Add remaining flour gradually, mixing in the last by hand until dough leaves the sides of the bowl and is very soft.

Step 3 Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface. Cover with a bowl and let rest for 10 minutes.

Step 4 Knead dough with additional flour as needed, about 5 minutes. Place dough in a lightly greased large bowl; flip dough to grease both sides. Cover with a towel and let rise in a warm place until doubled in size, 60 to 90 minutes.

Step 5 Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Grease a baking sheet.

Step 6 Punch down dough. Take golf ball-sized bits of dough and roll out into snakes. Roll each end in opposite directions to create 'S' forms. Place buns on the prepared baking sheets.

Step 7 Combine egg yolk and water in a bowl with a whisk. Brush over buns.

Step 8 Bake in the preheated oven for 6 minutes. Remove from the oven, leaving oven on. Quickly place 1 raisin in the center of each 'S' curve.

Step 9 Return to the oven and continue to bake until golden and cooked through, about 6 minutes more. Let cool on a wire rack before serving.



December 2023

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

		Quilting Club every Tuesday 1pm 			1	2 Recycling 9-11am 
3	4 Food Pantry 9-12pm 	5	6	7	8	9 Gifts for Kids
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18 Food Pantry 9-12pm Council Mtg 6:30pm	19	20	21 First Day of Winter	22	23
24  Christmas Eve 7pm Service	25 Christmas Day No service	26	27 January Newsletter Due	28	29	30
31 New Year's Eve						