



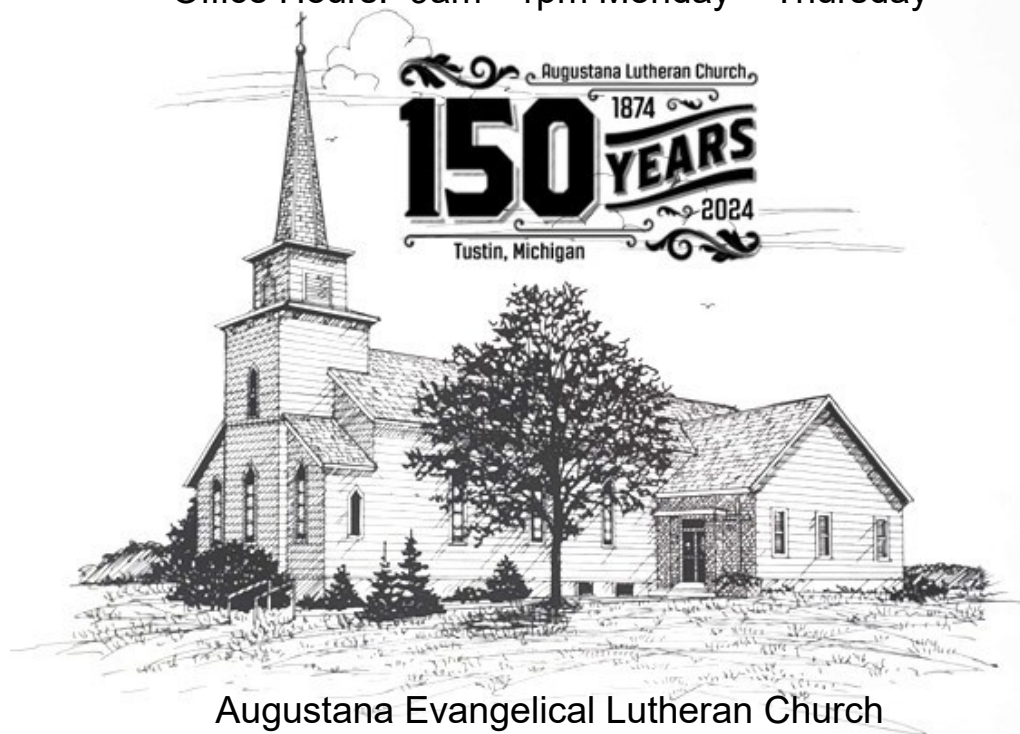
Augustana Lutheran Church Messenger

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 strong and of good courage" (1 Chronicles 22:13)

Now that we've journeyed through the season of Lent, the passion of Christ and his triumph rise from the dead, we can celebrate the joy of the empty tomb. In the same way we rejoice as snow begins to melt and flowers begin to bloom, we can also

enjoy the fulfillment of the Easter promise. In our journey through the Easter Season, we might consider our thoughts about this Jesus, Our Lord and Savior who willingly suffered death on the cross for our sake; so that we have the promise of eternal life.

Recently I've been thinking a lot about Jesus, specifically the words we use to describe him, which affect the ways in which we think about him. Some of the words that we hear to describe Jesus include: loving, kind, compassionate, rebellious, wise, etc., but the one that's come to recently resound in my mind is "brave". I'm not certain that I've ever encountered a sermon or Sunday school lesson describing Jesus as brave. It seems a bit odd that in a world filled with so called superheroes who supposedly exemplify the quality of bravery, we forget that the greatest of them all, the one who actually died for us is Jesus!

Perhaps we concentrate so much on the divine God part of Jesus, that we forget his human side. As Lutherans we believe that Jesus was both fully divine and fully human. I find it hard to believe that the very human part of Jesus didn't need bravery to face all of the dangers he knew would be in store for him. In the garden of Gethsemane when he could foresee his painful death, he asked God to spare him. However, his human bravery gave him the courage to follow God's will and not his own.

I think it's important for us to not only recognize the bravery of Jesus, but to acknowledge our own. Because each of us in our way, are as brave as any superhero. Normally we don't really realize just how much bravery it takes to navigate our complex, sometimes dangerous lives here on earth. All of us have been, or will be, called to be brave. Illness, death, broken relationships, disappointments, etc. are an integral part of human lives. The shocking collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge is a tragedy that calls for bravery on the part of the entire city of Baltimore. And we need to keep them in our prayers. But most of all, I encourage each one of you to remind yourselves that **you are a brave, superhero and with God's help you can face anything that life may hand you.**

Peace and Blessings,

Pastor Sharon

AUGUSTANA LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

APPROVED MINUTES

February 19, 2024



The meeting was called to order by Becky at 6:00.

Devotional written Good Habits by Max Lucado read by Becky.

Members: George Klingler, Becky Hammar, Heather Hammar, Julie Seguin. Guest: Terry Marckwardt, Treasurer.

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

Minutes: Motion by Heather to approve the amended minutes from December 18, 2023, with support from Heather. Carried.

Financial Reports: The treasurer and financial secretary balanced for both December 2023 and January 2024. Motion by Heather to approve the treasurer and financial secretary reports, supported by George. Carried.

No communications.

Building/Grounds Report – George reported he moved the dryer vent in the parsonage. He also removed the door from the closet where the bells are stored. Becky approved Mike & Doreen Barnes' request for use of the building.

Old Business:

150th Anniversary Committee is working on the invitation list, program for the day, and menu. Save the date cards going out.

Xerox machine was delivered February 15.

Pastor Sharon, Jim Carmody, Angela, and Becky met on January 7 and discussed communication, plans for future changes for the bulletin, service, resources, etc. We will discontinue using "Sundays and Seasons" and begin using "Celebrate Sundays" for readings and liturgy.

New Business:

Easter Season: Ash Wednesday service was held February 14. Palm Sunday, March 24, palms are ordered.

Maundy Thursday, March 28 at 6pm – washing of feet. No Good Friday Service. Easter Sunday, March 31 - no breakfast plans at this time.

A time sheet was created for Pastor Sharon. She'll use this while she's needing extra prep time.

Church Directory publication in Cadillac News was discussed. \$9.75/week. No support for this.

Renucci House dinner was served in March & October of 2023 and \$362.50 was collected during a noisy offering for a winter dinner. A notice in the bulletin will be done asking for volunteers for an April or May time to take dinner.

Supply pastor needed for May 5 and June 9. It was decided to ask Peggy.

Spring workday(s): May 4 with June 1 as a backup day. Julie will get a bid for painting the fellowship hall and entrances. Window washing will be scheduled using Jan's contact.

WELCA HeadStart Program: George made a motion, Julie supported, to give \$250.00 from the Scrip Fund. Passed.

Shoe Ministry. Becky was contacted to see if Augustana might be interested in participating in a shoe ministry for local children. Sizes 11-6 are requested. There will be a noisy offering April 14 for this.

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 with the Lord's Prayer.

Julie will read the devotional next month.

Respectfully submitted,
Julie Seguin

WELCA Meeting

Approved Minutes

February 20, 2024



The meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m. by Secretary/Treasurer Jan Marckwardt.

Those present: Barb Hazlett, Jan Marckwardt and Joan Chave`.

Jan Marckwardt read a **devotional** from “A Woman After God’s Own Heart”.

Correspondence: Thank you letter from New Hope Center for our \$75 donation in December.

The Minutes from the November 21, 2023 meeting prepared by Jan Marckwardt were approved.

The Treasurer’s Reports from November and December 2023 and January 2024 prepared by Jan Marckwardt were approved. The balance in the account as of January 31, 2024 is \$336.34.

Barb Hazlett read the **WELCA purpose statement**.

OLD BUSINESS: Due to accidents and illness the packing and delivery of the Headstart bags was delayed until February. The completion of this project was possible thanks to Doreen and Mike Barnes. Headstart currently has 35 students and it was necessary to purchase additional supplies so all students received a bag filled with educational supplies. Those present at this meeting agreed that we should continue this project for the next school year. WELCA has asked if RaiseRight (formerly Scrip) money can be used for this project and Becky Miller said she would bring this up at the council meeting. (It was later noted that council agreed to allow WELCA to receive RaiseRight funds)

NEW BUSINESS:

Barb Hazlett reported she is working with a Cadillac group interested in helping to stop Human Trafficking. She noted that two Human Trafficking leaders were apprehended during the recent hunting season.

NEXT MEETING: The next scheduled meeting will be March 19, 2024.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 11:00 with the Lord’s Prayer.

Respectfully Submitted
Jan Marckwardt

Augustana Members-

The quilt group needs your help!

A quilt is being planned for the 150th Anniversary. We are asking members to decorate a 6X6" square for the quilt. We need you to get your creative juices flowing. Starting in late February, we will have samples out so you can decide what your square will look like. We'll provide fabric markers. All artistic endeavors are **DUE April 24th**, no exceptions, so our project can be completed on time.



Thanks, The Quilters



The dates for VBS are **July 15-19, 2024**. "I wanted to extend an invitation for 2 volunteers to help. We are in need of one volunteer for Snack Preparation and one volunteer to be a floater each night to help wherever needed. We are asking for volunteers early so we can start having regular VBS meetings beginning in April and, of course, wanted to get the dates out for summer planning purposes. If this is something that two of your members would like to volunteer for, please let Kelly Fox of Tustin Covenant Church know by April 1st."

Blessed are you

The Beatitudes receive little attention, lamented novelist Kurt Vonnegut. "But, often with tears in their eyes, [Christians] demand that the Ten Commandments be posted in public buildings. And, of course, that's Moses, not Jesus. I haven't heard [anyone] demand that the Sermon on the Mount, the Beatitudes, be posted anywhere."

Jesus' Beatitudes have much to teach about selflessness, mourning, peacemaking and more. Jim Berger, author of Being Sermon on the Mount Christians, explains that those teachings were once "viewed as a mandate for the faithful." Post-Reformation, they became less law-like and more of a "liberating directive." Berger writes, "For Jesus, being and doing are inseparable. The Sermon is at once theory and praxis. It is not enough to read it or hear it. Jesus intends it to be how we live."

PRAYER
list...

PRAYER CONCERNS: Jayne Siglin; Harvey Miller; Janice Peterson; Anissa; Mary Annette Gordon; Carlton Plyler; Vicky Grandi; Jack Forsberg; Mary R; Kathy Draper; Men and women serving in the military – Ian Little.

WELCA News



WELCA's next meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, April 16**. Weather permitting (you never know about April), we will hold our meeting at Green Acres in Cadillac. Please join us there at 10:30. Our friends Shelby and Myrna will once again attend our meeting. Car pooling can be arranged.

Living discipleship

Christian theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who was hanged by the Nazis in April 1945, taught that Christianity and discipleship are intertwined. "Discipleship means adherence to Christ," he wrote in *The Cost of Discipleship*. "An abstract Christology, a doctrinal system, a general religious knowledge ... render discipleship superfluous"

Bonhoeffer continued, "With an abstract idea, it is possible to enter into a relation of formal knowledge, to become enthusiastic about it, and perhaps even to put it into practice; but it can never be followed in personal obedience. Christianity without the living Christ is inevitably Christianity without discipleship, and Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ."

Superimposed love

Maybe you've heard how salvation is like a total solar eclipse: God doesn't see our sins because Jesus' holiness covers them completely. Or maybe you've heard how trials can cause an "eclipse of faith."

At WorldChallenge.org, Pastor Gary Wilkerson explains that in Greek, *eclipse* means "I am absent" or "I cease to exist," because people once thought the gods temporarily extinguished the sun. "For Christians, a 'spiritual eclipse' is a dark hour when God seems to be absent from our lives," Wilkerson writes.

Wilkerson points to Peter being sifted like wheat, Elijah and Jeremiah facing extreme discouragement, and David collapsing morally. Amid Satan's attacks, "God seems completely absent," writes the pastor. "In that dark moment of eclipse, the devil has created such chaos we can't possibly see a way out." During times of testing, Christians must cry out to God and trust his faithfulness.

Completing the eclipse analogy, Wilkerson shares Titus 3:4, the "love of God our Savior appeared" (NIV). The Greek meaning of *appeared* here is *superimposed*, he writes. God looks on our



Osceola County recycling in LeRoy resumes March 2nd, and is open the first Saturday of the month 9:00 AM-11:00 AM, at the Village Garage, 220 Kent Street in LeRoy. They accept:

Cardboard (not waxed), newspaper, glossy magazines, all paper, books with covers removed, most #1 plastic (clear only, no clear produce containers), most #2 plastic (separate milk jugs, please), aluminum cans, tin cans, Styrofoam (not packing peanuts), clear glass (but not window pane glass). Please remove lids/caps. If you have any questions, call Brian Cool at 231-768-4624.

Steward our one and only home: Earth

“The good leave an inheritance to their children’s children.” –Proverbs 13:22a

Look at the babies in your congregation and your circle of friends and family. You want them to grow up in the same kind of beautiful, safe, abundant world you did, right? But that’s increasingly in doubt.

Over the next 50 years, climate change and environmental crises will disrupt patterns of nature and civilization that have developed over millennia. Some scientists even wonder whether the planet will be habitable in 2120.

Australia’s horrific wildfires may be just a sample of things to come, along with worsening hurricanes, more-frequent tornadoes, rising sea levels, rapid desertification, and melting glaciers and icebergs. It’s not that our world did not already have serious problems with such issues as war, refugees, hunger, species extinction, pollution and extreme weather, but climate change is making them all much worse and much more complicated.

Christians trust in the Almighty, while we also recognize that God calls us to love one another and care for the only home God has given us.

“If we truly believe we’ve been given responsibility for every living thing on this planet (including each other) as it says in Genesis 1, then it isn’t only a matter of caring about climate change,” writes evangelical Christian and climate scientist Katherine Hayhoe. “We should be at the front of the line demanding action.”

This month we have much to celebrate in the new life we have through our resurrected Lord. We also celebrate spring, seedtime, and Earth Day on April 22. Let us commit ourselves to renewing and protecting the only home we have, the only home we will leave for our children.

--Rob Blezard

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When it rains

The skeleton flower, a perennial native to Japan, has delicate petals that change from opaque white to almost transparent when wet. After it rains, only the flower’s intricate, skeleton-like veins are visible.

When the rains come (and they will!) in our lives, the same can be said. Amid difficulty and struggle, our true selves often become more transparent. During a parenting challenge, criticism might emerge. Or while we tackle a tough work project, impatience might rear its ugly head.

Hosea 6:3 (NLT) proclaims: “Oh, that we might know the Lord! Let us press on to know him. He will respond to us as surely as the arrival of dawn or the coming of rains in early spring.” The rains will come. Whether you’re experiencing light rain or a downpour, ponder what the water reveals. Then ask God how you can be more open to his work in that area.

—Janna Firestone

April 2024 Assisting Ministers

Date	Projector Operator	Communion Assistant	Communion Preparer	Greeters/ Open/Close Church	Lector/ Prayer Leader	Tellers	Coffee Hour Host
April 7				Ted & Mary Raven			
April 14		Sue Carmody			Jim Carmody		
April 21							
April 28					Mary Raven		

Upcoming Dates to Remember

- Food Pantry, April 1, 2024 9-12pm
- 150th Anniversary Meeting, April 7, 2024
- Noisy Offering, April 14, 2024
- Council Meeting, April 15, 2024 6:30pm
- Food Pantry, April 15, 2024 9-12pm
- WELCA Meeting, April 16, 2024 10:30am
- Earth Day, April 22, 2024
- Administrative Professionals Day, April 24, 2024
- Deadline for April Messenger, March 26



Happy Birthday!

Arvid Otberg – April 6
Carolyn Sadler – April 19

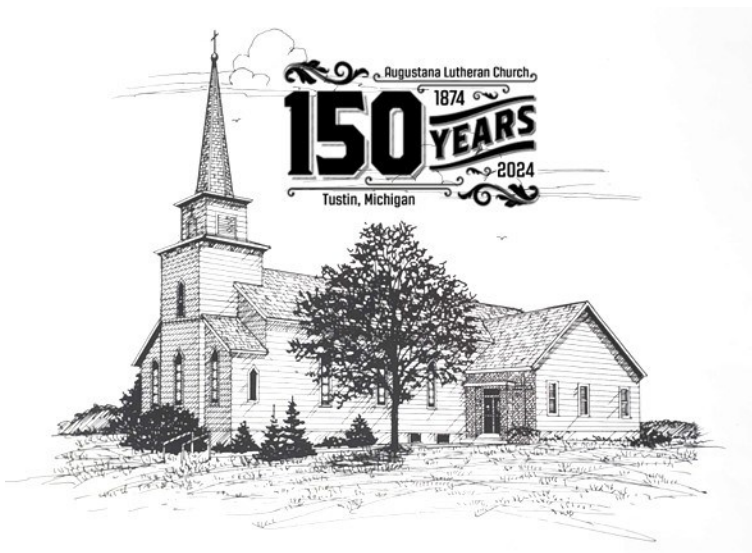


Happy Anniversary

Ted and Mary Raven – April 13

SAVE THE DATE

July 14th 2024 We celebrate 150 years!



A wakeup call

God — let me be aware.
Let me not stumble blindly down the ways,
Just getting somehow safely through the days,
Not even groping for another hand,
Not even wondering why it all was planned,
Eyes to the ground unseeking for the light,
Soul never aching for a wild-winged flight,
Please, keep me eager just to do my share.
God — let me be aware.

God — let me be aware.
Stab my soul fiercely with others' pain,
Let me walk seeing horror and stain.
Let my hands, groping, find other hands.
Give me the heart that divines, understands.
Give me the courage, wounded, to fight.
Flood me with knowledge, drench me in light.
Please — keep me eager just to do my share.
God — let me be aware.

—Miriam Teichner



April 2024

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

	1 Food Pantry 9-12pm 	2 Quilting Club every Tuesday 1pm 	3 Bell Choir every Wednesday 6pm 	4	5	6 
7 150th Anniversary Meeting	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 Noisy Offering Cereal Due	15 Food Pantry 9-12pm Council Mtg 6:30pm	16 WELCA 10:30am at Green Acres	17	18	19	20
21	22 Earth Day 	23	24 Quilt due Administrative Professionals Day	25 March Newsletter Due	26	27
28	29	30				