

JULY

2024

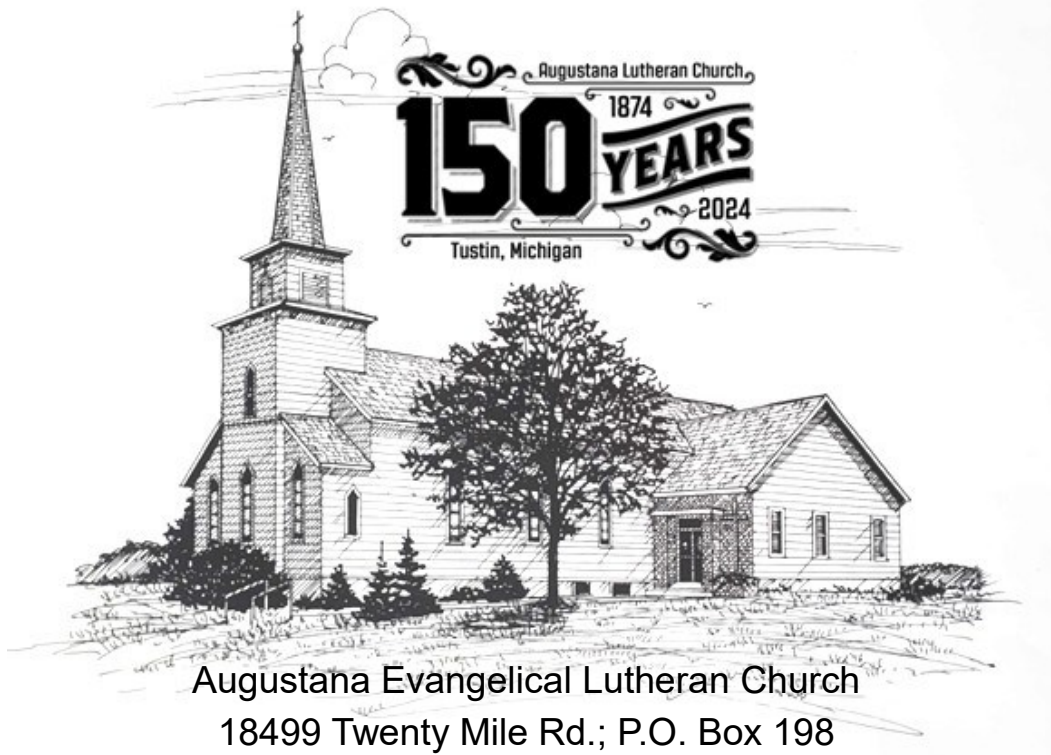
Augustana Lutheran Church Messenger

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 Pastor's Phone: 740-296-9176



*"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



“ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.” (Mark 5:44)

I think that it would be futile for us to deny that we are currently living in a society that is deeply, harmfully divided. In many ways it's not that much different than the time of Jesus' ministry on earth. His country was living under the oppressive rule of the Romans. His religion, Judaism, was being led by overly zealous leaders more concerned with making certain everyone obeyed the law, the rules listed in the Talmud, than they were in sharing the love of God. So these words of Jesus would have sounded shocking. The idea of actually loving ones enemies would have seemed almost beyond the understanding and abilities of human beings. Yet these are the very words that Jesus spoke to his followers.

And Jesus is still speaking these hard to understand words to us, right now in the year 2024 as we continue down the difficult journey through a presidential campaign. The truth is that we have been so deeply divided that it would seem that there's no “middle ground”. Those who disagree with us are the enemies and we must do everything in our power to stop them before they ruin our country. In this atmosphere of fear and distrust, political campaigns have become little more than shouting matches. Little attention is spend discussing possible plans for a better future for everyone, rather, most of what we hear are taunts about the other side, frequently in the form of rude jokes or fear evoking predictions for the future.

Unfortunately, this divisiveness filters into relationship with our friends, families, even our churches. The old adage to just not discuss politics may seem a good strategy for keeping the peace; however, it's not always possible. But remembering these words of Jesus can help all of us during this challenging time. Often times I hear people discussing the political views of others, frequently saying something like “I just can't understand how an intelligent person like her/him could possible vote for (fill in the blank). But the truth is we don't have to understand. Period. It's that simple. We just have to find a way to love them. One of the things I find most helpful, is to remember that, in spite of all my mistakes, shortcomings, etc. God still loves me, just the way I am. And I take comfort in these words of Paul. “For 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 love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:38-39) I pray that you too may find comfort in these words as together we ask God to help us love each other. And remember God loves you, just the way you are.

Peace and Blessings,

Pastor Sharon

AUGUSTANA LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING
APPROVED MINUTES

May 20, 2024



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

Devotional read by George – Sarah Young – Her Interpretation of John 16:33

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

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

Minutes: Motion by Connie to approve the minutes from the April 15, 2024 meeting, with support from Heather. Carried.

Financial Reports: Motion by Connie to approve the treasurer and financial secretary reports, supported by Jim. Carried.

Communications:

- A. Received a wedding request, but bride has since changed her mind.
- B. Building Use – Terry & Jan Marckwardt 5/23/2024-5/26/2024 to borrow 48 chairs and 4 long tables.
- C. Synod River Cruise Celebration – from David Sprang – August 1, 2024 in Lansing

Building/Grounds Report – George is going to contact Jerry the sound guy about getting the sound system to work in the back of the church. Also working on getting the door switch installed for the handicap entrance. The lawn equipment is ready to go. The lawn looks great!

Old Business:

- A. 150th Anniversary committee met on 4/26/2024. Letters have been sent to clergy – 4-5 former clergy are coming.
- B. Window washing was set up by Jan and done May 13th
- C. Painting has been completed in the fellowship hall, kitchen, and office.
- D. Workday – May 4th, how did it go? Do we need any follow up? Grounds? Mulch will be scheduled.
- E. Road clean-up was completed.
- F. Pastor Sharon is gone June 9th. Jim Carmody has agreed to lead service with a sermon provided by Pastor Sharon.
- G. Plexiglass on altar has been taken care of by Terry & Jim Markwardt. Thank you.
- H. May 19 – to honor Ava Hammar's Graduation.
- I. May 19 – Geraniums provided by members – Who will plant? Already done by Ted, Connie & Ken.

New Business:

- A. Review and update the wedding and funeral contracts. Becky distributed copies of the current wedding guidelines for council members to review. Funeral guidelines were recently updated.
- B. Annual reviews are due; completed last year: Kim 6/2023, Angela 6/2023, Patty 7/2023, getting ready for the next year's potential raises.
- C. Parsonage agreement update – last completed May 30, 2022?
- D. Custodial duties – update document.

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at with the Lord's Prayer. Next meeting will be June 17, 2024 at 6:30pm – Heather will read the devotional.

Respectfully submitted, Julie Seguin

WELCA Meeting Approved Minutes

May 21, 2024



The meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m. by President Jeanette Otberg.

Those present: Barb Hazlett, Jan Marckwardt, Joan Chave`, Sue Klingler, Mary Raven, and Mary Annette Gorden

Correspondence: None

The Minutes from the April 16, 2024 meeting prepared by Jan Marckwardt were approved with a motion by Sue Klingler and second by Joan Chave`.

The Treasurer's Report from April 2024 prepared by Jan Marckwardt was approved with a motion from Mary Raven and second by Barb Hazlett. The balance in the account as of April 30, 2024 is \$477.12.

Mary Annette Gorden read the WELCA statement.

OLD BUSINESS:

Mary Annette Gorden has spoken with the Headstart teacher Kim Johnson regarding WELCA's project to supply totes with supplies to the students. There are now three classrooms of children with an average of 15 students in each classroom. Mary Annette presented the option to Kim of WELCA providing funds to purchase each classroom with an educational gift as opposed to giving each student a tote bag with supplies. Kim liked this idea and thought it might be nice if WELCA did this one year and then totes the next year. Classroom gifts would be chosen by the teacher either from a catalogue the teacher may have or from Toy Town in Cadillac. Discussion was held for every one's input and it was agreed that this was a good plan. It was suggested that each classroom be given \$120 to use toward the purchase of a gift that would stay in the classroom. It was also suggested that WELCA be informed as to what gift had been chosen. Funds are available for WELCA to give money to Headstart in January 2025. Procuring future funds was discussed with the possibility of using Thrivent grants, noisy offerings, some WELCA funds, asking for Scrip funds, and asking for donations from the congregation.

Christmas in July is set for **Tuesday, July 23 at Burkes in Cadillac.**

NEW BUSINESS:

Another meeting at Green Acres was decided for **August 20, 2024.** Jeanette will contact Green Acres to be sure that this is acceptable to Green Acres.

Barb Hazlett reports that the WELCA Board Meeting was held recently and the Spring Gathering was a success. The Fall convention will be in Big Rapids at Emmanuel Lutheran.

DEVOTIONAL was read by Jeanette from "Portals in Prayer".

NEXT MEETING: The next scheduled meeting will be June 18, 2024. There being no further business the meeting closed at 11:08 with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully Submitted
Jan Marckwardt



WELCA NEWS

Augustana's WELCA meets on the third Tuesday of each month.

Coming up this month we will have our favorite event "Christmas in July" which will be held on **Tuesday, July 23** at Burke's in Cadillac at noon. All women of Augustana along with their moms, sisters, friends and neighbors are welcome to attend. Remember to bring a \$5 gift to exchange. Car pooling will be available.

In August we plan to hold our meeting at Green Acres. The date will be **August 20**. Car pooling is always available.

Lessons from hiking

Whether I'm hiking an easier stroll or a 20-mile trek, I've noticed parallels to my journey with Christ.

- This is my journey. Too often I waste time comparing my stride, pace or equipment to that of fellow hikers.
- I don't know what's around each bend, but God does. I can't let anxiety steal my joy.
- It's best to balance hiking in silence with sharing the trail with friends.
- I'll be sore tomorrow, and that's okay. Engaging new muscles leaves a reminder that growth is uncomfortable.
- Being prepared is good; being *too* prepared makes for a heavy backpack. I need to do my due diligence and let God handle the rest.
- It's not a race, so finishing quickly offers no reward. When I'm not in a hurry, I tend to notice more of God's blessings.
- I need to look up, enjoying God's creation as I let him determine my steps.

—Janna Firestone

The power of warmth

In one of Aesop's fables, the North Wind and the Sun debated who was stronger. When they saw a traveler approaching, the Sun sensed an opportunity. He said whoever could make the man remove his coat would win — and even let the Wind go first.

So the Sun ducked behind a cloud as the Wind began blowing mighty blasts of air at the traveler. But the harder the Wind blew, the closer the man pulled his coat around himself. Finally, the Wind gave up in despair.

Then the Sun emerged and smiled down on the traveler. Feeling the gentle rays, the man soon found it too hot to walk with his coat on. He felt so warm he removed one garment after another and bathed in a nearby stream.

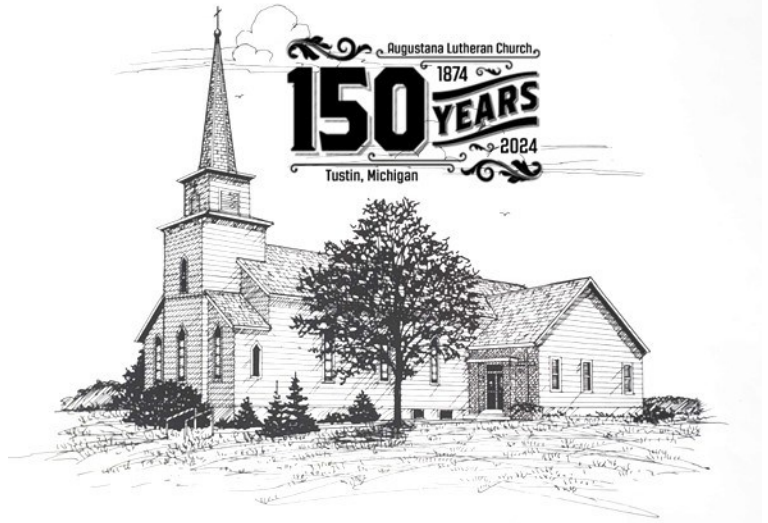
The Sun knew that warmth, friendliness and a gentle touch are always stronger than fury and force.

AUGUSTANA'S 150th CELEBRATION

It is almost here and your 150th planning committee has been hard at work. We will begin our celebration with our Sunday service at 9:00 a.m. with the bishop and special guests in attendance. Following the service which will include the resurrected bell choir, we will take a short break

and then beginning around 11:00 continue the festivities with testimonials, tree and quilt dedications and a hymn or two. The event will be topped off with a Swedish luncheon at noon.

On **Saturday, July 13 at 9:00am** we will begin preparing food for the luncheon and setting up for Sunday. On Sunday, July 14 we continue to set up, serve our lunch and then clean up. There are signup sheets available for you to indicate where you can help. We need at least two more greeters/ushers for the service and celebration. Please speak with George Klingler regarding this.



Prepared for a purpose

Timothy Dalrymple, president and CEO of *Christianity Today*, was a successful Stanford gymnast with Olympic dreams. But he broke his neck before the 1996 Olympic Trials and never reached his sport's "promised land." Although the injury led to chronic pain, Dalrymple doesn't regret his pursuit or even the fall.

Even while hospitalized, he experienced "a profound assurance" of God's loving presence. "If I could know the peace of God even when my health and hopes were stripped away from me, then what did I have to fear?" he writes. "It was a liberating revelation. Since God is with us even in the valley of the shadow of death, we need fear no evil, for no evil can take God away."

In the long run, so-called failure can matter more than victory, Dalrymple learned. "The purpose of my gymnastics career was never to purchase a few shining moments of gold-medal glory but to prepare me for the rest of my life. It was never about making me a champion. It was about [shaping me into the image of Christ and] making me an instrument [for the glory of Christ and for the good of the world]."



August 18th, after Sunday service, the annual meeting & pot luck will take place. Please submit your reports by **August 5th!**

Stewardship of civility

There used to be a wise saying about arguments that kept things civil. One party or the other would say, "I disagree with what you say, but I defend with my life your right to say it."

That sounds downright quaint in today's climate, where partisans are more likely to say, "I disagree with what you say, and you are evil and have no right to that opinion."

This month, as we celebrate Independence Day, we can relish the freedoms we take for granted, including freedom of speech, religion, and assembly.

At the same time, as Christians we remember not only Jesus' command to love our neighbors as ourselves (Mark 12:31), but also to do unto others as we would have them do to us (Matthew 7:12). The "neighbors" and "others" certainly include those who hold different ideas on issues of the day.

How can we celebrate our freedom of expression in the context of Jesus' commands?

- Listen carefully, being open to another person's ideas.
- Respond thoughtfully and calmly, citing facts to support your argument.
- Do not attack the person, only the ideas.
- Remember the wise old saying, "I disagree with what you say, but I defend with my life your right to say it."

We are stewards of our relationships with our neighbors. As followers of Jesus, we can be stewards of civility and lead our country to calmer, more amicable times.

--Rob Blezard

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PRAYER
list...

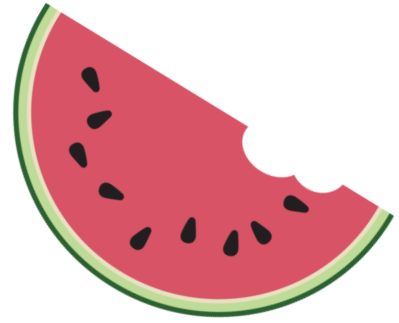
PRAYER CONCERNS: Cindy; Linda; Pat Gustad; Fay Bartrand; The Goddards, Jayne Siglin; Janice Peterson; Anissa; Carlton Plyler; Vicky Grandi; Jack Forsberg; Katy Draper; Men and women serving in the military – Ian Little.

July 2024 Assisting Ministers

Date	Projector Operator	Communion Assistant	Communion Preparer	Greeters/ Open/Close Church	Lector/ Prayer Leader	Tellers	Coffee Hour Host
July 7	Julie Seguin	Sue Carmody	Sue & George Klingler		Joan Swanson	Julie Seguin	
July 14 Anniversary	Mike Barnes	Mary Raven	Ted & Mary Raven	X	Mary Raven		X
July 21	Becky Miller					Becky Miller & Ruth Hammar	
July 28	Julie Seguin		Doug & Becky Miller	Doug & Becky Miller	Harvey Miller	Julie Seguin	

Upcoming Dates to Remember

- Food Pantry, July 1, 2024 9-12pm
- Canada Day, July 1, 2024
- U.S. Independence Day, July 4, 2024
- 150th Anniversary set up, July, 13, 2024 9am
- 150th Anniversary, July 14, 2024 9-12pm
- Council Meeting, July 15, 2024 6:30pm
- Food Pantry, July 15, 2024 9-12pm
- VBS at Covenant July 15-19, 2024 6-8:30pm
- WELCA Christmas in July, July 23 2024 12pm at Burke's
- Deadline for August Messenger, July 29, 2024
- Annual Meeting, August 18, 2024



Happy Birthday!

Sandie Leach – July 4
Harvey Miller – July 6
Heather Hammar – July 7
Shelby Plyler – July 17
Ken Forsberg – July 18
Jeanette Otberg – July 28



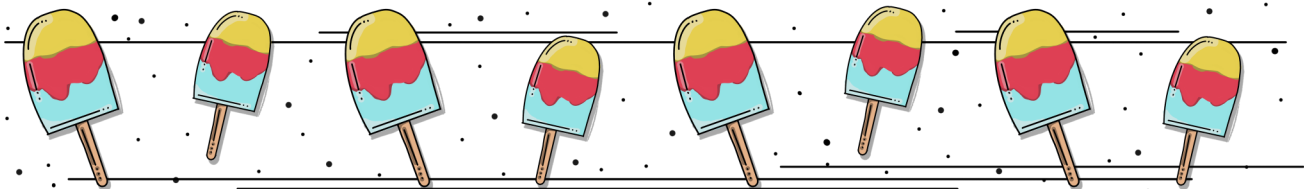
Happy Anniversary

Bernie and Mary Annette Gorden – July 22

A restful faith

A seminary professor was discussing ways — besides reading — to encounter Scripture. “The idea was to ‘experience’ it as though we were there,” recalls Stan Purdum, then a student. The professor asked students to relax in lounge chairs, close their eyes and imagine they were along the Sea of Galilee as Jesus fed the 5,000. In a soothing voice, he invited participants to smell the lake, feel the breeze on their faces, taste the bread the disciples were distributing and hear Jesus’ voice.” Somewhere in that, I got too comfortable,” says Purdum. “Suddenly the exercise was over, and the professor was asking for feedback. The classmate next to me raised his hand and said, ‘I was really getting into it until Simon Peter here [pointing at me], started snoring in my ear.’”

The class had a good chuckle, and Purdum gained a new perspective. “Spirituality isn’t just something to understand but also something to experience. If nothing else, that day I experienced my faith as very restful!”





July 2024

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

	1 Food Pantry 9-12pm 	2 Quilting Club every Tuesday 1pm 	3	4  Independence Day -Office Closed	5	6 
7 Bell Choir 7pm 	8	9	10 Bell Choir 7pm 	11	12	13 150th Anniversary Set Up 9am
14 150th Anniversary 9am-12pm	15 Food Pantry 9-12pm Council Mtg 6:30pm	16	17	18	19	20
		VBS at Covenant 6-8:30pm				
21	22	23  WELCA Christmas Party at Burke's 12pm	24	25	26	27
28	29 Newsletter Due	30	31			