



FEBRUARY 2025

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



“And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:20b)

I have to admit that I'm deeply concerned over many of the recent executive orders that are being issued. I believe that many of them will prove exceedingly harmful to some of the most vulnerable of us. I am

equally disturbed by the amount of mean spirited and just plain nasty rhetoric that's being voiced right now. And so I find great comfort in these words of Jesus. He promises to be with us always. However, the “you” in this promise doesn't just apply to those people who hold the same beliefs that we do. Jesus taught us of God's love for all people and he meant all people. I believe that God's love is unconditional. I believe in a God who loves each one of us not for the things we do or don't do, but because we're all God's children.

With the amount of animosity prevalent in our society it's become increasingly difficult for us to comprehend a God who not only loves us, but those “other” people. You know the ones who don't agree with us. As the mother of 4 children it's helpful for me to think of God as a loving parent. From the moment my children were born I've loved them, just for who they are; even when they've caused me hurt or disappointment, I continue love them. Even my son, who has completely cut me out of his life. I still love him. So if a broken human being like myself is capable of that kind of love, how great the love of an all-powerful, all-knowing, God must be!

It's not easy for us humans to answer hate with love, but I believe this is exactly what Jesus came to earth to teach us. A Jesus who loved even those who would deny, betray, and crucify him. A Jesus who has promised to be with us always.

I want to be perfectly clear, I believe that people should hold fast to the things they truly believe in and have the courage to speak that truth to power. However, I believe that angry shouting doesn't really lead to any kind of lasting healing and reconciliation.

Because I know that Jesus is right here with us now, I think it would be wise for us, instead of hateful arguing, to try actually listening to what Jesus has to tell us. As I continue to pray for the people of Augustana Lutheran Church and for the future of our country, I invite you to remember to listen to the voice of Jesus.

Peace and Blessings,

Pastor Sharon

AUGUSTANA LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

Approved Minutes

November 18, 2024



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

Devotional read by Becky – Worry less Pray more.

Members: Mike Barnes, Connie Burgess (via phone), Jim Carmody, Ken Forsberg, Heather Hammar, Becky Miller, Julie Seguin. Guest: Terry Marckwardt, Treasurer, Denna Light.

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

Denna Light has offered to donate a case of communion wine. The Council accepted her offer with thanks.

Minutes: Motion by Heather to approve the minutes from the October 21, 2024 meeting, with support from Jim. Carried.

Financial Reports: Motion by Mike to approve the amended treasurer and financial secretary reports, supported by Julie. Carried.

No communications.

Building/Grounds Report – Mike will be working on the latch for the east door and looking into why the outside light over that door isn't coming on at night. Advanced Mechanical did some repairs to the heating system in the Parsonage.

Old Business:

Media Shout computer is okay for now per Angela. We will update the computer when needed.

The teller sheet is now on the desktop in the secretary's office. Training will be scheduled for those who would like to volunteer for duties.

Angela will be posting on Facebook during the Advent Season.

Christmas Eve Service will be at 6:30.

Debit Card Process is working will with Angela and Terry.

After discussion, Connie made a motion to donate \$2,000.00 to Uplift, Jim seconded the motion. Future donations will be presented for consideration at the annual meeting.

New Business:

The Assisting Ministers Book will be updated as needed.

Grape juice will be prepared and placed on the altar for communion.

After discussion, it was decided to stay with the traditional candles instead of purchasing battery operated candles for Christmas Eve Services.

Synod Assembly will be May 18-20 in Mount Pleasant.

December Council Meeting will be after services on December 15.

Renucci House noisy offering will be done in February.

On December 1, the church will be decorated for Christmas, after cinnamon rolls and coffee.

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 with the Lord's Prayer.

The next meeting will be held after church on December 15 with Mike reading the devotional.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Seguin

WELCA Meeting
Unapproved Minutes
November 19, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m. by Joan Chave`.

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

A **devotional** was read by Joan Chave` titled "Whose Mess?".

The Minutes from September 17, 2024 prepared by Jan Marckwardt were approved with a motion by Barb Hazlett and second by Joan Chave`.

The Treasurer's Reports from September and October 2024 prepared by Jan Marckwardt were approved with a motion from Joan Chave` and second by Barb Hazlett. The balance in the account as of October 31, 2024 was \$784.12. Of this amount \$200 was a donation for our HeadStart project and will be held in the account until needed.

OLD BUSINESS:

Visa cards have been purchased through Augustana's Raise Right (Scrip) program for HeadStart. These cards will be given to the HeadStart teacher to be used for items she feels the three classrooms need. The cards will be given to her at Christmas time. We will ask the teacher to report back to us what items have been purchased for HeadStart and if this was a good option for the program.

NEW BUSINESS:

The Gifts for Kids event is coming up on December 14. Jan Marckwardt reported that due to Augustana's generously many games are in the inventory and funds are available to purchase more games if needed.

Barb Hazlett thanked the quilters for the donation of two quilts for the AARP event to be held in December.

Barb reported that the Human Trafficking retreat was very successful with 22 people volunteering to join the Human Trafficking group.

The Spring Gathering will take place in Grand Rapids at Trinity Lutheran.

NEXT MEETING: The next scheduled meeting will be December 17, 2024. There being no further business the meeting closed at 11:10 with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully Submitted
Jan Marckwardt



Canned Chicken Drive

Now through April 20th, we're hosting a drive for Uplift featuring 12.5oz cans of chunk chicken breast. Drop off here at church or with any Uplift volunteer. Can't shop? Monetary donations are always welcome and Sue Carmody or Jan Marckwardt will happily shop for you. Thank you for your continued support of our kids.



April 13th Bible study to begin



Shut-ins & homebound-

If you have anyone in mind that needs a visit, please let a council member know.

Celebrating Pastor Sharon's Birthday
Wishing her another year filled with blessings!



Thrivent Choice Charitable Grant Program

Many of Augustana's members are clients of Thrivent. Some are aware of the grant program offered by Thrivent but maybe some of you don't realize how easy it is to apply for a grant that can be used either for a church project or for a community non-profit organization. In the past grants have been used for WELCA's Easter basket project, WELCA's Headstart project, school supplies, and quilting supplies. Uplift Pine River Area Kids recently benefited from Thrivent grants which Uplift used to purchase food that otherwise may not have been affordable. Grants are usually given for \$250 in the form of a debit card making it easy to use.

Grants can be applied for on-line and are normally approved in just a couple of days. Thrivent members can apply for two grants per year and there is no fee for applying. If you are unsure how to apply, Julie Seguin and Jan Marckwardt are available to help.

February 2025 Assisting Ministers

Date	Projector Operator	Communion Assistant	Communion Preparer	Greeters/ Open/Close Church	Lector/ Prayer Leader	Tellers	Coffee Hour Host
February 2	Julie Seguin	Becky Miller	Becky Miller	Ted & Mary Raven	Mary Raven	Becky Miller	Sue Klingler
February 9	Becky Miller	Mike Barnes	Becky Miller	Mike & Doreen Barnes	Mike Barnes	Doreen Barnes	Ted & Mary Raven
February 16	Mike Barnes	Mike Barnes	Sue & George Klingler	Doug & Becky Miller	Harvey Miller	Doreen Barnes	Becky Miller
February 23 Council Mtg 10:15am	Julie Seguin	Becky Miller		Ted & Mary Raven	Becky Miller		

Upcoming Dates to Remember

- Groundhog Day, February 2, 2025
- Food Pantry, February 3, 2025 9-12pm
- Noisy Offering, February 9, 2025
- Valentine's Day, February 14, 2025
- Presidents Day, February 17, 2025
- Food Pantry, February 17, 2025 9-12pm
- WELCA Meeting, February 18, 2025 10:30am
- Council Meeting, February 23, 2025 10:15am
- Deadline for March Messenger, February 25, 2025



PRAYER list

PRAYER CONCERNS: Ritter Family; Anna; Jim McMurray; Mark Krell; Hanna; Jasmine; Pat Dougherty; Dave Hougland; Heather M.; Candy Karr, DeVere & Marian Byers; Linda; Pat Gustad; Sandy Goddard, Janice Peterson; Anissa; Carlton Plyler; Jack Forsberg; Katy Draper; Men and women serving in the military – Ian Little.

Happy Birthday!

Yvonne Peterson—Feb. 2

Neil Christie—Feb. 3

Kurt Hammar-Feb. 12

Pastor Phil Van Dam—Feb. 20



Happy Anniversary

Mark and Heather Allen – Jan. 29

Kindness kickbacks

Random Acts of Kindness Day, observed each year on February 17, is a reminder of the power of altruism. Followers of Jesus express kindness selflessly, out of love for God and our neighbors. Yet in return, we reap emotional — and even physical — benefits.

Researchers have identified a “helper’s high” that can ease anxiety and depression. Spontaneous or planned acts of “pro-social spending” have been shown to reduce blood pressure, improve heart health, reduce pain and even extend longevity.

For maximum impact, experts recommend getting creative with random acts of kindness and mixing them up. But no matter how you spread kindness, you’re bound to experience blessings in return!

Your Council Members

President - Becky Miller (Cell) 231-920-7883 email beckymiller81@live.com

Vice President – Heather Hammar (H) 231-629-2359 email: heather.hammar@gmail.com

Secretary – Julie Seguin (Cell) 231-878-3119 email jkseguin@gmail.com

Members: Michael Barnes (Cell) 231-884-7128 email birdhunterup@gmail.com

Jim Carmody (Cell) 231-288-0731 email sjcarmody85@yahoo.com

Ken Forsberg (Cell) 517-525-6336 email kenforsberg@outlook.com

Connie Burgess (Cell) 517-256-4923 email dancingdep12@yahoo.com



February 2025

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

						1
2	3 Food Pantry 9-12pm	4	5	6	7	8
9 Noisy Offering	10	11	12	13	14 <i>Valentine's Day</i>	15
16	17 President's Day	18 WELCA Meeting 10:30am	19	20	21	22
23 Council Meeting 10:15pm	24	25	26 Newsletter Due	27	28	