



NOVEMBER

2025

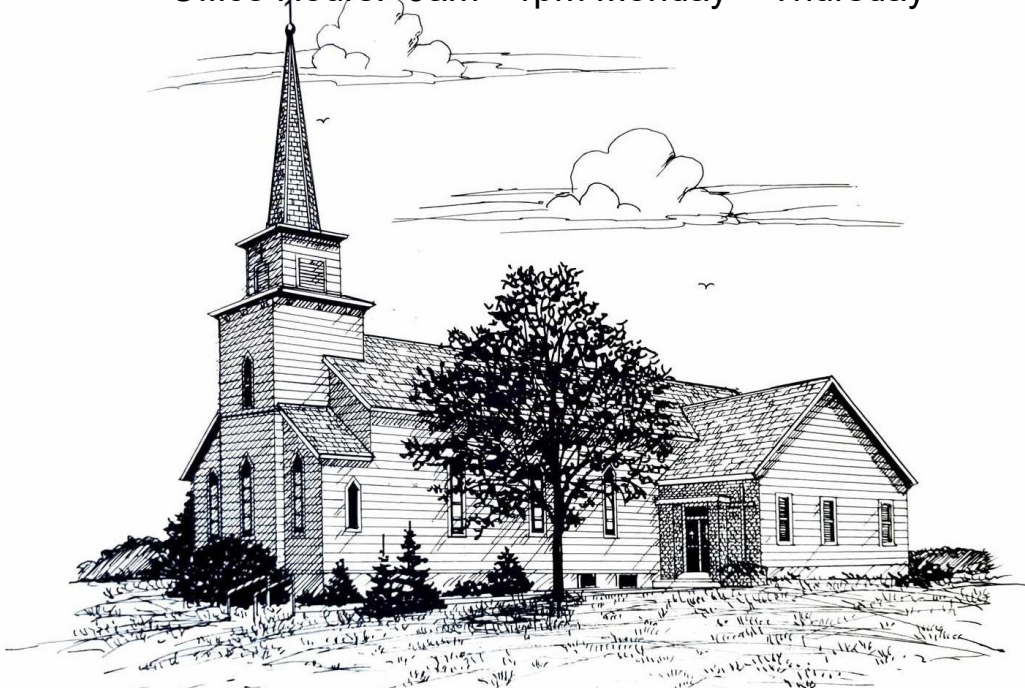
Augustana Lutheran Church Messenger

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

"O give thanks to the Lord for he is good..." Psalm 107:1)



I want to begin this article with a grateful word of thank for your beautiful Pastors Appreciation Sunday. I am truly touched by the outpouring of cards, words of thanks, gift card, and the awesome, delicious cake. I also really appreciate that you included Pastor Phil in this celebration. It's truly an honor to be blessed by such an outpouring of gratitude. How-

ever, in all honesty I wish that I could in some way express my thanksgiving to all the members of Augustana Lutheran Church because serving you brings so many blessings and so much joy to my life.

Before moving to Michigan, I was serving an Episcopal Church as a Sunday Supply Pastor. Every Sunday I drove about 45 minutes to reach the church. I can't help wondering if God might have been preparing me for my commute to Tustin. Most of my ministry has consisted of part-time calls to a number of small, but appreciative congregations. In retrospect, it seems to me to be a minor miracle that we survived moving in January during the pandemic. We were blessed to find a tiny, very crowded apartment where we somehow managed to cope for several months. I'm forever grateful to my husband who took on the task of going to the laundromat for us. Surprisingly, we were able to move into our house by March.

While I was still working finally get settled, I received a call from the Synod asking if I would consider leading a Palm Sunday Service at Augustana Lutheran Church. When I asked where it was located and more importantly how long it would take me to get there, I was told it was about an hour away. When I agreed, I really thought it was going to be for that Sunday; maybe Easter as well. However, I found Augustana to be such a loving and welcoming congregation, that I've never left. Just to make things clear to everyone, I love being your pastor!

Truthfully, the difficulties and divisions we're experiencing as a country, make it hard to be a pastor right now. There's so much hate being shouted, so much distrust that reminding people that Jesus tells us to "pray for our enemies" isn't easy. However, your support and encouragement, is a great gift, a great blessing to me. And in response I want everyone to know that my Congregation Appreciation Sunday happens every Sunday. Thank you for being such a blessing to me.

Peace and Blessings,

Pastor Sharon

AUGUSTANA LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

APPROVED MINUTES

August 19, 2025



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

Devotional read by Heather – Best Friends Forever

Members: Mike Barnes, Jim Carmody, Brian Hammar, Heather Hammar, Kurt Hammar (via phone), Becky Miller, and Julie Seguin. Guests: Terry Marckwardt, Treasurer.

Agenda: Motion by Mike, to approve the agenda, with support from Jim. Carried.

Election of Officers/Committee Chairs:

- Motion by Mike, supported by Brian to nominate the current positions as Becky as President, Heather as Vice President, and Julie as Secretary. Unanimously carried.
- Terry Marckwardt and Doreen Barnes were elected at the 8/17/25 Annual Meeting to serve as Treasurer and Financial Secretary respectively.
- Motion by Julie with support from Becky to have Mike, Brian, and Kurt serve on the Building Committee. Carried.
- Motion by Becky, with support from Brian to have Jim and Heather serve on the Personnel Committee. Carried.

Minutes: Motion by Becky to approve the July 2025 minutes, with support from Julie. Carried.

Treasurer/Financial Secretary Reports: Heather made a motion to approve the Treasurer and Secretary reports, with Julie supporting the motion. Approved.

Building/Grounds Report – Nothing new to report since 8/18/25 annual meeting.

Old Business:

- Offering plates will be passed again during offering beginning September 7.
- It was confirmed that the last audit was completed 2022/2023 by Berner Gordon and Mark Allen. The next audit will be done in 2028 (5 years).

New Business:

- Discussed possible Renucci House meal dates with noisy offerings to be done.
- Discussed having quarterly parishioner donation envelopes for Uplift and/or Pantry.
- Future church projects to include painting the back door frame and outdoor clean up.
- Uplift shoveling and salting of sidewalk was discussed. Volunteers from Uplift will take care of this.
- Decorating for Christmas will be done after church on November 23.

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 pm with the Lord's Prayer.

The next meeting will be held Sunday, October 19, 2025 at 10:15 after church, with Jim reading the devotional.

Respectfully submitted,
Julie Seguin

WELCA Meeting

Approved Minutes

September 16, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m. by President Joan Chavé.

Those present: Joan Chavé, Jan Marckwardt, Sue Carmody, Barb Hazlett, Connie Burgess, Jeanette Otberg, Joan Swanson, Mary Raven and Sue Klingler.

The Devotion was presented by Joan Chavé titled “Batter and the Bull”.

The WELCA Purpose Statement was read by Sue Klingler.

The Minutes from August 19, 2025 prepared by Jan Marckwardt were approved by a motion from Mary Raven and second by Barb Hazlett.

Treasurer’s Report: The Treasurer’s report for August 31, 2025 prepared by Jan Marckwardt was approved by a motion from Sue Klingler with support by Sue Carmody. The balance as of August 31, 2025 is \$1,047.66. Of this amount \$200 was a donation for our HeadStart project and \$250 from Augustana’s Raise Right fund for a total of \$450. (This amount has been dispersed and will be reflected in the September 30 bank statement.)

President’s Report: Joan reports that all of the school supplies and additional money has been given to her granddaughter for her classroom. October 12 has been designated as Pastor Appreciation Sunday and WELCA has been asked to organize the coffee hour. Fruit, veggies and a cake will be served. It will be encouraged to bring cards for both Pastor Sharon and Pastor Phil.

OLD BUSINESS:

Barb Hazlett reported that the Fall Gathering at St. Peter’s in Battle Creek is attracting many women from ELCA churches. The date for the gathering is September 26, and September 27, 2025.

Our October 21 meeting is set for Green Acres. Carpooling will be available.

Gift card requests for Raise Right are due to Becky Miller by the end of September.

Another kitchen clean-up date is set for October 8 beginning at 3:30 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS:

It was decided that WELCA should organize a Sunday to honor Sandy Leach’s retirement from the Tustin library. The Sunday chosen is October 26 with cake, fruits and cards.

Barb Hazlett presented a summary of her activities regarding human trafficking. She attended a successful event for the Michigan Commission on Human Trafficking in Lansing. All should be aware of human trafficking as it is not going to go away.

NEXT MEETING: The next scheduled meeting will be at Green Acres on October 21 at 10:30 a.m. Carpooling will be available. There being no further business the meeting closed at 11:00 with the Lord’s Prayer.



Respectfully Submitted
Jan Marckwardt



Holiday Hours

November 26th & 27th

Office Closed

Happy Thanksgiving

December 24 & 25th

Office Closed

Merry Christmas

December 24th

Open 6:30pm

Christmas Eve Service

December 31 & January 1

Office Closed

Happy New Year

Gifts for Kids

Gifts for Kids is an annual event in Osceola County that gives qualifying parents an opportunity to choose gifts for their children, hats and mittens for the kids, and receive household items right before Christmas. Families are also given food vouchers to local stores. Again this year Augustana will participate in this event by providing games to the families. Our game inventory is very good as funds have allowed for the purchase of games throughout the year when they are on sale. Augustana has always been very generous with donations of games and funds for this project. It will not be necessary to collect games prior to the event this year. The event will be on **Saturday, December 13** for registered Osceola families.

TIME TO **Decorate** Please join us!

November 23 after service to decorate for the holiday season.





Poinsettias

Sign-up to honor loved ones with poinsettias is now available! Cost is the same as last year. Money is due to Heather by **Sunday, November 23**.



Fall back, not behind!
CHANGE YOUR CLOCKS and
join us on time for worship.

WELCA News



WELCA once again was pleased to hold our monthly meeting at Green Acres. We love seeing Shelby and Carlton but certainly miss Myrna's presence at the meeting.

WELCA continues to meet at 10:30 on the third Tuesday of the month. All women of Augustana are welcome to attend our meetings. Come as often as your schedule allows. Just a note, however. We will meet on **November 18** but will not meet in December.



What your heart clamors to do

We often speak of pastors as having a divine "calling." God gives them a strong sense of purpose for a specific holy role, like how Old Testament prophets were called to bring messages to God's people. But what about the rest of us? Is teaching, practicing medicine, being a plumber, writing or another non-church job also a "call"?

Martin Luther and others have said we should seek work that benefits others and for which God has given us talent. We should also treat any good work we do as a calling — be it cleaning a house or school, mending a broken leg or torn garment, or (as Luther mentioned a *father* doing — in the 1500s!) changing a baby's diaper.

Dorothy Sayers wrote that "work is not primarily a thing one does to live, but the thing one lives to do," and that "we should clamor to be engaged in work that [is] worth doing, and in which we [can] take pride." What work does your heart clamor to do? In other words, what is *your* divine call?

Giving Thanks for All Things

It's easy to list the blessings in life: good health, family, a satisfying career, a comfortable home. We might even be thankful for things others take for granted such as freedom and clean drinking water, reliable transportation and food enough to eat. Then there are the little things, such as gardens, sunrises, pets and coffee.

But what about life's storms or unanswered prayers? Should we be thankful for these? Loss and hardship remind us of our dependence on God. He uses trials to draw us closer to him, to show us that He is our rock and refuge. In misfortune and grief, we discover God's comfort and strength. Should we not, then, be thankful for the storms, too?



A Thanksgiving Hymn That Sees God's Hand Everywhere

For a hymn that captures the beauty and gratitude of Thanksgiving, All Things "Bright and Beautiful" is a perfect choice. Its lyrics paint vivid pictures — flowers opening in the morning sun, birds singing, golden sunsets, purple-topped mountains and rivers rushing by. It all leads to this joyful reminder: *"He gave us eyes to see them, and lips that we might tell: How great is God Almighty, who has made all things well."*

The hymn was written by Cecil Frances Alexander (1818–1895), an Irishwoman with a passion for teaching children about God. She wrote many hymns for her Sunday school class, later collected in *Verses for Holy Seasons*.

But her ministry went beyond music — she spent her life serving the poor, comforting the sick, and caring for the grieving. When she passed away, "a great throng" gathered to remember her, honoring both her faith and the beauty she shared with the world.

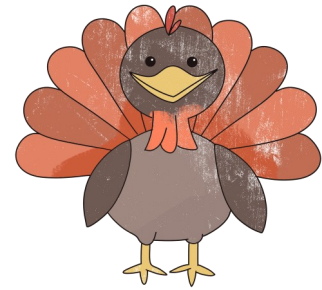


November 2025 Assisting Ministers

Date	Projector Operator	Communion Assistant	Communion Preparer	Greeters/ Open/Close Church	Lector/ Prayer Leader	Tellers	Coffee Hour Host
Nov 2	Julie Seguin	Sue Carmody	George & Sue Klingler	Michael & Doreen Barnes	Jim Carmody	Julie Seguin	Sue Carmody
Nov 9	Becky Miller			Arv & Jeanette Otberg	Ken Forsberg		Julie Seguin
Nov 16		Becky Miller	Ruth Hammar	Doug & Becky Miller	Harvey Miller	Becky Miller Ruth Hammar	
Nov 23	Julie Seguin	Sue Carmody			Jim Carmody	Julie Seguin	COUNCIL
Nov 30							

Upcoming Dates to Remember

- *All Saints' Day, November 1, 2025*
- *Daylight saving time ends, November 2, 2025*
- *Food Pantry, November 3, 2025 9-12pm*
- *Veterans Day, November 11, 2025*
- *Council Meeting, November 16, 2025 10:15am*
- *Food Pantry, November 17, 2025 9-12pm*
- *WELCA, November 18, 2025 10:30am*
- *Christ the King Sunday, November 23, 2025*
- *Deadline for December Messenger, November 24, 2025*
- *Closed November 26 & 27, 2025*
- *Thanksgiving Day, November 27, 2025*
- *First Sunday of Advent, November 30, 2025*



A Thanksgiving Prayer

Gracious God,
thank you for every good gift—
for the food before us,
the people around us,
and the love that surrounds us.
Help us to pause, reflect, and
rejoice
in Your constant goodness and
grace.
May our hearts overflow with
gratitude,
not just today, but every day.

Amen



Pastor Phil & Sharon (left) were honored October 12th during Pastor Appreciation Day.



Happy Birthday!

Robert Light – Nov. 1
Leslie Christie– Nov. 3
Denna Light – Nov. 7



Happy Anniversary

George and Sue Klingler – Nov. 23

PRAYER

list...

PRAYER CONCERNS: Diane Westfall; Steve Sadler; Jeff; Annie; Joan Swanson; Marie & Son; Anonymous; Cory; Nico Weems; Carlton; Scott M; Jill G; Mary B; Family of Don Peterson; Hanna; Amy Brown; Pat O; Sally Mac; Sally Norman; Family of Jim Byers; Ron & Candy Karr; Beth B; Leta H; Stephanie G; Anissa; Men and women serving in the military – Ian Little.

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

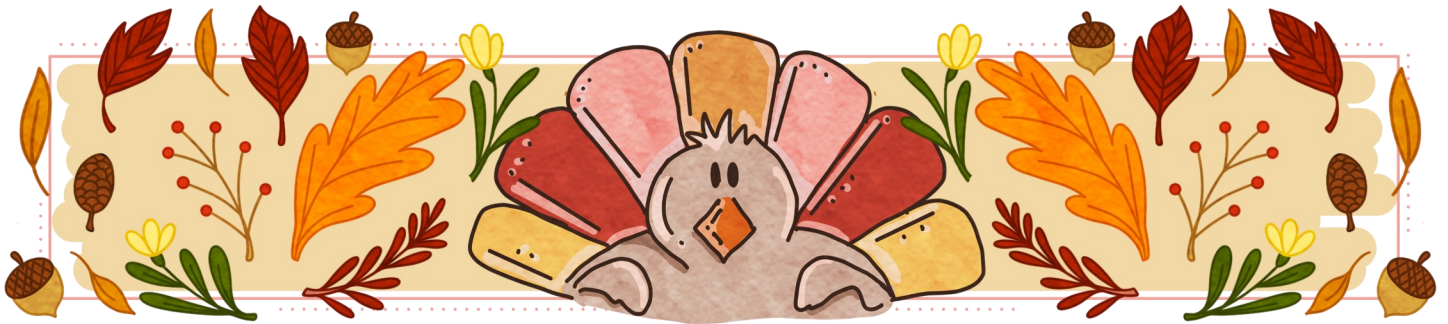
Secretary – Julie Seguin (Cell) 231-878-3119 email: jkseguin@gmail.com

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

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





Brian Hammar (Cell) 231-920-4087 email: bhammar@att.net

Kurt Hammar (Cell) 231-578-1153 email:heatherhamar1@gmail.com



November 2025

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

						1
2 All Saints Sunday Clocks Fall Back	3 Food Pantry 9-11am	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16 Council Meeting 10:15am	17 Food Pantry 9-11am	18 WELCA 10:30am	19	20	21	22
23  CHRIST the King SUNDAY Poinsettias Due	24 Newsletter Due	25	26 Office Closed	27 Office Closed Thanksgiving	28	29
30  Advent						