

THE BALSAM BRANCH

January 2018

Balsam Lutheran Church
1115 Mains Crossing
Amery, Wisconsin 54001



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Balsam Branch Editor: *Bonnie Corcoran*

Happy New Year

It is going to be a happy New Year as we do have a new permanent Pastor who will start On January 1, 2018. Pastor Daniel Watland has accepted our offer and will serve us on a part time basis, but this is a permanent position. Pastor Dan will be working 24 hours a week. He will live in Amery on a part time basis and continue as a nurse part time in the Twin cities. He will be in his office at Balsam Lutheran on Tuesdays and Wednesdays each week and will conduct Sunday services the second, third and fourth Sundays of the month. It will be a change for Elim and Balsam as well as Pastor Dan. Change is hard for everyone but this change will be good for all. This position of serving a parish part time is what Pastor Dan was looking for and that is the position we were offering. I believe it is a good match. We will all need to support and help Pastor Dan as he starts his transition to Balsam and Elim.

On the sad side, our long-time organist has stepped down, Juliane will be missed and hard to replace. Maybe someone could tell me how to go about replacing someone who has been on the job for some 40 plus years. Balsam Lutheran wishes Julaine and Dave a long and healthy retirement Now Julaine you can sit back and enjoy the music. If there are, any questions please feel free to ask one of the council members our myself. Peace, Bob LaBathe

A Message from Pastor Dan Watland

People keep asking me this question: "So, are you ready for the New Year?" What does this mean exactly? It could mean; "So, have you returned unwanted presents and then exchanged them for something different? Have you put away the Christmas decorations and taken down the tree? And

have you also decided on some resolutions to work on in 2018?”

Or does the question “So, are you ready for the New Year?” mean “So, are you fully prepared to receive the one who brings God to humans and humans to God by being both human and God?” The answer to the first is “No. I haven’t had time” the answer to the second is “I’m not sure I really can be”

Am I prepared for the coming of the Christ into the world? No. Am I ready? Absolutely. Some things we are never prepared for. They happen anyway.

Am I ready to pastor this worshipping community? YES! Am I prepared? Not at all. Oh yes, I’ve read all the books and have completed my seminary training and have spent endless hours in other churches collecting ideas, I have an amazing group of people here who are committed to doing ministry in this parish together etc, but I’m not prepared because I think prepared implies that I am aware of what will happen and know how to deal with it all. Seriously, I have no idea what will happen, which is as exciting as it is daunting.

I’m ready for the New Year because during this season of Christmas (yes we are still in the season of Christmas on the church calendar) I really need to hear the story of Christ’s birth again. I need to hear about how God enters fully into the messiness of our existence and brings new life. I’m ready for that because I know that I need it.

Balsam Lutheran Church

*Unapproved Minutes of the Church Council
December 12, 2017*

In attendance: Bob LaBathe, Sue Fougner, Betty Collins, Michelle Stone, Gail Peterson, Dawn Costello, and Vicki Hammer.

ABSENT: Marlyn Bottolfson and Sue Albright.

Bob called the meeting to order, determining a quorum.

Secretary’s Report: Accepted as submitted.

Treasurer’s Report: Accepted as submitted.

Committee Reports:

Worship & Music: Working on the service for Christmas Eve.

Stewardship: Nothing to report

Finance: Would like to pay down the principal on the mortgage by \$10,000.00. They would like to use money from the Olga Wenberg Estate, and the remaining money from the mortgage payment that was budgeted for the year 2017. They would like to move money from the General Fund to the repair and maintenance savings account to purchase/lease a lawn mower for the church.

Staff Support: Did not meet.

Property: Charlie Cran put a new valve in the dishwasher, and discovered that is not the only problem. The tank needs to be welded also, this will be taken care of after the holidays.

Prayer Ministry/Adult Education: The caroling with the Payer Partners and youth went very well on Sunday December 3rd. They visited 3 places, then returned to the church and had a Christmas-Get-Together with the Prayer Partners. The committee’s next project is to hold an adult education class starting in January. It is called “The Lutheran Course”. There are 7 sessions with a 15-minute video in each session. Some of the titles of these sessions are: The three most rebellious things Jesus did—Anatomy of Baptism—How to receive communion—Five things about Reformation every Lutheran should know, etc. They are

planning a start date of January 14th at 9am before church and coffee fellowship.

Witness & Outreach: Did not meet.

Social Ministry: Nothing to report.

Youth Education: Nothing to report.

Memorial Fund: Did not meet.

Pastor's report: No report at this time.

OLD BUSINESS:

The Installation of Pastor Dan will be February 11 with potluck to follow the 10:15 service. Elim will join us in worship.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1) Pastor Dan would like to change Communion Sundays from the first and third Sundays to the second and fourth Sundays. Gail Peterson made a motion to change the communion Sundays, and Betty Collins seconded it. Motion passed.
- 2) Elim has requested we host a Malawi Presentation by Laura Ramlow who is our Synod Communicator. Karalyn Littlefield and Laura will conduct the entire service. This will be followed with a potluck. This service will be February 17th at 10:15. Sue Fougner made a motion to have this presentation at Balsam, and Betty Collins seconded it. Motion passed
- 3) The Life Line Screening has requested the use of Balsam Church. After some investigating by Pastor Dan, he did not recommend this as they are a for profit organization and they do not pay the church for the use of the building
- 4) The vote on Sunday December 17th for the Calling of Pastor Dan will be by ballot, by all eligible members.
- 5) As recommended by the Finance Committee, Gail Peterson made a motion to pay down the mortgage by

10,000.00 and move money to the maintenance and repair savings account for the purchase/lease of a lawn mower. Also to increase the Organist pay to prevailing wage in the 2018 budget. Sue Fougner second it. Motion Passed.

We reviewed area prayer concerns and closed with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Fougner. Church Council Secretary.

January "Birth" days	
01 Connie Fredrickson	22 Gloria Fougner
02 Howard Stream	22 Jeff Johnson
14 Nancy Ashley	23 Merle Bergren
16 Bernice Fox	29 Brad Fougner



The Amery Secret Santa Committee would like to thank the following churches; Amery Free, Balsam Lutheran, Congregational, Deronda, East Immanuel, First Lutheran, Grace Community, Little Falls, Our Saviors, Redeemer, St Joseph's and Trinity Lutheran for sponsoring families this Christmas. We are also appreciative of Dicks Fresh Market for donating hams and Ulrich Farms for donating milk coupons to the families. As a result of your generosity and compassion, 105 families including 267 children were assisted during this Holiday Season!

Thank you to **all who helped with the various Christmas decorations**, our new outside decorations, the tree, and the fellowship hall decorations. They remind us

of the light, joy and angels of Christmas, and most of all of our precious Jesus' birth.

THANK YOU to **everyone who participated in the various fundraising events** throughout December. Your support of the youth is greatly appreciated!
Youth Education Committee

Thank you for your **monetary contributions and purchased gifts for the 3 families** we adopted for Christmas. I am sure that 9 children had a very Merry Christmas. Thanks so much for your support! Gail

As the cold and flu season is immediately upon us, there is no better time to show how grateful we are for your **large donation of Kleenex**. Thank ou so much for helping us through this season.
Bless you, your friends at Lien Elementary

Thank you (WELCA) for your **generous gift** at the end of the year! Your gift will cover the cost of a seminary class that I'll be taking in January (Christian Worldview and Ethics), which will help me – and students we work with – biblically navigate the “cultural and moral landscape” on today’s universities. Sarah and I sincerely appreciate your continued prayers, encouragement, and support! Thank you!

With deep appreciation,
Aaron & Sarah Emerson

Your **generous donation (WELCA) of \$150** to the Annual Fund is accepted with sincere appreciation. Your support makes it possible for the ministry of Luther Point Bible Camp to continue to be a place where youth and families are nurtured and empowered for “Forming Faith, Pointing to Christ.”
Sam Campeau, Luther Point Bible Camp

Thank you for your **gift of \$50** to Lutheran Disaster Response. With this gift you are providing emotional and spiritual care, supplying emergency relief, and addressing

long-term recovery.

ELCA World Hunger and Disaster Appeal

Annual Meeting

Balsam’s Annual Meeting will be held after worship at 11:30 AM on February 4, 2018. All confirmed members who have communed and made a contribution of record to the church during 2016 and 2017 are welcome to attend.

Annual Reports Needed

It's time to put together your Annual Report information. All committees and church organizations should submit a report to Bonnie Corcoran no later than January 17. If you are able, please submit your reports via e-mail (balsamlutheran@amerytel.net). Thank you for your attention to this.

SUNDAY YOUTH SCHEDULE

- 07** 8:30 – 9:45 am SLAM & GYM sessions
- 14** 8:30 – 9:45 am SLAM & GYM sessions
- 21** 8:30 – 9:30 am SLAM & GYM sessions
- 28** 8:30 – 9:45 am SLAM & GYM sessions
(GYM youth host fellowship)

CONFIRMATION SCHEDULE

- 03** 6:00 – 7:30 Class Session
- 10** 6:00 – 7:30 No Class
- 17** 6:00 – 7:30 Class Session
- 24** 6:00 – 7:30 Class Session
- 31** 6:00 – 7:30 Class Session

Collection items for back-packs:

January: shampoo
February: bar soap
March: toothpaste
April: deodorant

“You pray in your distress and in your need; would that you might pray

also in the fullness of your joy and in your days of abundance.”

Information for Auditors

Treasurers of the following: **WELCA, Cemetery Board, Social Ministry, Youth Ministry, Scrip: Please get all this information to Nancy Ashley by January 10.** Please keep in mind that your books will need to be audited before annual reports are printed. As you assemble your materials for audit, please remember to include:
Your 2065 Financial Report
Your check register
2017 Bank Statements & Reconciliations
2017 Savings Account Statements
2065 Investment Account Statements
Receipts for all expenses

Friberg Update

If a Maasai woman can keep her family size small, she and her kids will be healthier and better nourished. Her kids will attain a higher level of education. The family will be less stressed during the 5-month dry season. Healthy and better educated girls generally choose to have smaller families themselves. For 20 years our clinics have been providing free contraception

Tanzania's population has quadrupled in the last 40 years. Forests, farm land, grazing areas, and water sources have dangerously diminished. A vicious cycle of over-grazing and deforestation causes desertification. When it rains the soil is hard and dry and the water runs off instead of soaking in so the vegetation does not recover. Areas that were rich grassland become bare and eroded. Contraception is as important to environmental preservation as it is to family health.

The African church has been growing strongly for 100 years by a holistic approach of evangelism, health care, education, and

development. May God help you and your church make healthy choices in lifestyle, exercise, diet, building community, Bible study/prayer, and responsible use of environmental resources. Jesus' message is still, "Follow me."

Steve and Bethany Friberg,
Ketumbeine, Tanzania



Prayer Ministry

Prayer Shawls -- Please let Bonnie Corcoran at 268-9881 or Nancy Bottolfson at 268-8244 know if there is someone in need of personal prayer, a visit and a prayer shawl.

Prayer Requests – Prayer Chain, please contact: Julaine Berglund at 268-8246 or email her at jdberglund@amerytel.net or call Esther Nelson at 268-8223.



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Greetings from Luther Point! December 2017

Luther Point is glad to welcome Quinn Stone, our new Program Director. Quinn comes to us with many years of experience in ministry and a passion for camps. He is a wonderful addition to our staff and will continue to bring this important ministry to many people. Luther Point is also very excited for summer camp registration to open on January 1.

God's Peace,
Sam Campeau, Executive Director