

THE BALSAM BRANCH

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April 2018

Balsam Lutheran Church
1115 Mains Crossing
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Pastor's Pen

If you have been to any of the tourist destinations you have likely seen the "photo stand ins". You know the place where your face sticks through a hole in a picture so it appears you are part of the picture. So this got me wondering....

In John's Gospel, John the Baptist introduces two of his own disciples to Jesus.

The next day John was standing again with two of his disciples. When he saw Jesus walking along he said, "Look! The Lamb of God!" The two disciples heard what he said, and they followed Jesus. When Jesus turned and saw them following, he asked, "What are you looking for?" They said, "Rabbi (which is translated Teacher), where are you staying?" He replied,

"Come and see." So they went and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon. One of the two disciples who heard what John said and followed Jesus was Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter. He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated Christ). He led him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon, son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which is translated Peter). (John 1:35-42 CEB)

Notice in this story that one of John's disciples was named Andrew. But the other disciple of John with Andrew remains unnamed.

Right after this story, Philip meets Jesus and then he finds his friend Nathaniel and brings him to Jesus. At the end of chapter one of John there are five disciples with Jesus: Andrew,

Peter, Philip, Nathaniel, and the “unnamed disciple.”

We can all venture a guess about who that disciple WAS. But today I would invite you to think about who that disciple IS. I invite you to consider that the unnamed disciple is YOU, the reader of the Gospel. Like Andrew, Jesus invites us to “come and see” throughout the Gospel of John. We are invited into a relationship with Jesus through reading the Gospel of John.

By the end of the John’s Gospel, the author is addressing us directly.

Then Jesus did many other miraculous signs in his disciples' presence, signs that aren't recorded in this scroll. But these things are written so that you will believe that Jesus is the Christ, God's Son, and that believing, you will have life in his name. (John 20:30-31 CEB)

As you read the Gospels, I invite you to place yourself in the story. See yourself in the picture as the unnamed disciple. And participate in the life Jesus has to offer.

Pastor Dan

Balsam Lutheran Church

Unapproved Minutes of the Church Council
March 13, 2018

In Attendance: Bob LaBathe, Sue Fougner, Betty Collins, Michelle Stone, Gail Peterson, Marlyn Bottolfson, Sue Albright, Vicki Hammer, Dawn Costello and Pastor Dan

Bob LaBathe called the meeting to order, determining a quorum. Michelle led in devotions.

Secretary’s Report: Accepted as submitted.

Treasurer’s Report: Accepted as Submitted.

Committee Reports:

Adult Education/Prayer Ministry: A Confirmation outing will be held on March 18th. The Lutheran Course was not as well attended as was hoped it would be. Nothing is planned for the near future.

Finance: Reported that there was a shortfall in the giving, and we need to be work on that. Suggested that we put some money aside for major expenses that may come up in the future.

Memorial Fund: Did not meet.

Property: The piano has been tuned, and there is still a hinge that needs to be repaired. A Reminder that we are to use distilled water in the piano.

Social Ministry: Discussed the upcoming Rummage Sale that will be held on May 3rd and 4th. They would like to have a move a chair Sunday on April 29th. They are need of volunteers to help pack up item after the sale, for pick up by the thrift store on May 5th.

Staff Support: Will meet on March 25th at 11:30 This will include Elim.

Stewardship: Did not officially meet but was reported that the intergenerational outing on March 25th yielded few interested participants. The next meeting will be March 18th at 9:45 in the back room.

Witness & Outreach: Schedules for the directory have been finalized and submitted to the Church office.

Youth Education: No formal meeting, just ongoing discussion. The Youth will lead Palm Sunday/Kindermass service at Balsam on March 25th. 4 youth have registered, with 4 more yet to register for LPBC. GYM youth continue to host coffee fellowship 1 Sunday a month for their Compassion sponsorship. Confirmation classes will resume on April 4th. Next meeting time not yet scheduled.

Worship & Music: Did not meet but reminded everyone that the organist cannot always hear

what is being said, so if we could make sure that they know about any changes in the order of service that would be appreciated.

Pastor Report: Reviewed as submitted.

Old Business:

Raffle ticket for the Youth Fundraiser Meat Raffle have been distributed, if you are in need of more please contact Bob or Dawn. Still in need of some food item donations and adult and youth to help with set-up, serving and clean-up for the Easter Breakfast.

New Business:

1) In the process of creating a Call list of members who have not attended church lately or regularly, this would be used to contact them and invite them to come join us for a all member attendance Sunday.

2) The Balsam Property Committee is requesting approval to make the decision on when to prepay for Propane as they see fit. Motion was made by Betty and seconded by Vicki to allow the Property Committee to make the decision to prepay for propane. Motion passed.

3) The renewal for WPCA is coming due. Motion by Sue Fougner. Seconded by Michelle to renew contract. Motion passed.

We reviewed area prayer concerns and Pastor closed with prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Sue Fougner,
Church Council Secretary

APRIL YOUTH SCHEDULE

- APRIL 01 NO SESSIONS
- APRIL 08 8:30 – 9:45 YOUTH SESSIONS
- APRIL 15 8:30 – 9:45 YOUTH SESSIONS
- APRIL 22 8:30 – 9:45 YOUTH SESSIONS

APRIL 29 8:30 – 9:45 YOUTH SESSIONS

APRIL CONFIRMATION SCHEDULE

APRIL 04 NO CLASS

APRIL 11 CLASS: 6:00 – 7:30

APRIL 18 CLASS: 6:00 – 7:30

APRIL 25 CLASS: 6:00 – 7:30

April "Birth" days	
01 Gayle Knutson	15 Michelle Stone
01 Marlys Kromrey	16 Amie Costello
02 Caressa Fougner	21 Logan Sigsworth
03 Ashton Duden	24 Bonnie Corcoran
07 Mark Siefert	24 Tammy Olson
08 Lisa Markee	25 Sue Albright
11 Janet Cran	27 Eileen Markee
15 Arlen Peterson	28 Nancy Bottolfson

Rummage Sale

Social Ministry will sponsor a Rummage Sale on May 3 and 4. You can start bringing your donated items to the church library after Easter. What a great opportunity to clean the excess stuff out of your homes and garages! All funds raised go to help the needy in Polk County. Please also mark your calendars to help on May 2, afternoon, and May 5.

ROADSIDE CLEAN-UP

Sunday, April 22nd is Earth Day. Let's join together to clean up the ditches and roadsides along our assigned stretch of County Road H. A light soup and sandwich lunch will be served after worship for those participating. Please wear appropriate clothing (long pants, socks and sturdy shoes) and bring a water bottle. Bad weather date will be April 29th.

If I could hear Christ praying for me in the next room, I would not fear a million enemies. Yet distance makes no difference. He is praying for me.

~Robert M. McCheyne



April Concert: The Menomonie Singers, April 14, 7:00 PM

The Menomonie Singers are an open group from the Menomonie and surrounding area consisting of some adults and some associated with the University of Wisconsin Stout. The group has been performing since 1989. Under the direction of Dr Jerry Hui the choir performs a wide variety of music and will be singing a mix of sacred, classical and other numbers for us on April 14. Invite your friends and family to this special concert on April 14 at 7:00, followed as always with good bars.



Balsam's Spring Salad Luncheon will be on Saturday, April 7. The program will be a talk by Eleanor Ostman, who was the St Paul Pioneer Press Sunday recipe specialist for many years. Bev Getschel donated a beautiful quilt for the raffle. Sign-up sheets will be going up for volunteering and bringing food. Please be thinking of items to donate for the raffle and door prizes. Please invite your friends and family.

**Tomb, thou shalt not hold Him longer;
Death is strong, but Life is stronger;
Stronger than the dark, the light;
Stronger than the wrong, the right...**

~Phillips Brooks, "An Easter Carol"

THANK YOU!
THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

We want to thank our church family for all their support – for the trip to New York and all the many activities our family does, both in and out of church. THANK YOU!

Amie & Cady Costello

Thank you for your recent gift of \$365.00 in support of the ministries of the ELCA through ELCA Good Gifts. You have made a gift that will change a life. Through the programs supported by your "Good Gifts", you are reaching out with a tangible symbol of Christ's love, chicks and rooster, a water filter, farming tools, a blanket and 10 cinder blocks.

Thank you for equipping others to live lives of abundance and witnessing to the healing and hope we share in Christ Jesus. Your generosity is making a difference!

C Jackson-Skelton, Executive Director, Mission Advancement

Friberg Update – Tanzania

March 2018

Colossians says God created all things through Christ. It is our responsibility and privilege to care for creation.

Cooking on open fires is the norm in rural Tanzania. A daily task for young and old is finding firewood. With the exploding population this is resulting in rapid deforestation and obvious land

degradation. Women bemoan increasing amounts of time needed to collect firewood.

Naapok Bead Project is partnering with the International Collaborative for Science, Education, and the Environment (ICSEE) to install efficient chimney stoves. 50 families are already using their new stoves. The benefits are immediate and obvious:

- Reduces firewood use by 60%.
- Reduces rates of deforestation in the area.
- Saves women time in gathering fuel.
- Reduces smoke and particulates in the home by 90%.
- Carbon monoxide is reduced to safe levels.
- Far less eye irritation.
- Food cooks much faster.
- Eliminates toddlers falling into fires.
- Locally sourced stove manufacture and installation keeps economic benefit in the community.
- Empowers team of Naapok women by training and paying them to install the stoves.

We are excited that so many people are coming forward asking for chimney stoves and are willing to pay the \$60 to get one. Subsidies are available for needy families.

Thank you for joining us in the urgent task of caring for creation.

Bethany & Steve Friberg

