

THE BALSAM BRANCH

December 2017

Balsam Lutheran Church
1115 Mains Crossing
Amery, Wisconsin 54001



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Balsam Lutheran Church

*Unapproved Minutes of the regular monthly
Church Council
November 14, 2017*

In Attendance:

Bob LaBathe, Marilyn Bottolfson, Betty Collins, Sue Fougner, Gail Peterson, Michelle Stone, Sue Albright, Vicki Hammer.

Absent: Dawn Costello

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

Secretary's Report: Accepted as submitted.

Treasurer's Report: Accepted as submitted.

Absent: Dawn Costello

Committee Reports:

Worship & Music: Met with members from Elim to plan for services thru December. Gail Peterson will lead the morning service on Sunday December 24th at 9:00 AM at Balsam, Barb Friese will lead the Christmas Eve service at 5:00 PM at Balsam and Elim

will do a 10:00 PM service on Christmas Eve. The Stable service has not yet been planned.

Stewardship: Because the original October meeting was postponed, the committee has met twice in the past month. On October 15th they met and followed it with a trip to the Franconia Sculpture Garden. No stewardship project was completed in October, beyond the participation in the October 22nd worship services. A few brave members of the group attended the Dead End Hayride in Shafer, MN on October 22nd. A book Fair will be held for the next three weeks (November 19- December 10) with orders being submitted and received in time for Christmas gift giving. Proceeds will benefit the Stewardship projects. The second meeting was held on November 5th and included lunch and Dr. Who Monopoly. It was the decision of the committee to keep the next meeting on December 3rd following worship, as scheduled and then accompany the Prayer Partners and Confirmands in their caroling outing. A lock-in is being

planned for Christmas vacation where stewardship planning for 2018 can occur.

Finance: Did not meet.

Staff Support: Did not meet.

Property: Did not meet, but will meet on November 19th.

Prayer Ministry: The Prayer Partner Christmas party and caroling will be on December 3rd following the WELCA Brunch.

Witness & Outreach: Did not meet.

Social Ministry: No report.

Youth Education: The committee met on October 22nd. A HUGE thank you goes out to all youth who assisted in leading the worship on October 22nd. We appreciate and are proud of their willingness to serve.

Sunday morning sessions continue each week from 8:30-9:45am. Confirmation youth are engaged in a collection of money and household items for the Northwoods homeless Shelter. They are also signed up, along with their instructor, to ring the bells on November 22nd and then attend the community Thanksgiving worship together.

Due to scheduling conflicts, first communion for our two recipients will be held during worship service on December 3rd. The education and bread making will on

November 26th from 4:00-6:00pm at Barb Friese's home. The committee members will be hosting an Egg Bake Breakfast on December 31st preceding worship. Proceeds will benefit the camp fund. The GYM youth continue to host morning coffee fellowship one time each month to benefit Yolanda, the young lady they sponsor through Compassion. The next meeting will be on November 19th following worship.

Adult Ed: Will be offering DVD and discussion time prior to Sunday morning fellowship, starting after the New Year.

Memorial Fund: Did not meet.

Pastor's report: No report submitted.

Old Business: Nothing to discuss

New Business:

- 1) We will change the time of the council meeting to 6:30PM
- 2) Betty Collins and Vicki Hammer brought the recommendation to the council from the call committee to recommend Pastor Dan Watland as our new Pastor. The council voted to accept the recommendation of the call committee, to call Pastor Dan Watland as our new Pastor. Bob presented the proposal for his pay. The proposal had a starting point of 11 years of service, and explained the reasoning behind that. Bob also stated there may be a change in that instead of paying his health insurance, we would put those funds into a pension, flexible spending account or housing equity retirement contribution. This would be up to Pastor Dan to decide which of them he would prefer. Betty Collins made the motion and Sue Fougner seconded it that we accept the compensation package that was presented. Gail Peterson made a motion and Vicki Hammer seconded it that the amount of the insurance premium be moved to an account, of Pastor Watland's preference. All the guidelines of the synod were followed as close as possible.
- 3) A congregational meeting will be December 17th following worship to call Pastor Dan Watland as our new Pastor.
- 4) Installation of the new Pastor will be February 11th 2018. John Sutherland will be here to deliver the sermon and do the installation of the new Pastor.
- 5) With great sadness Bob read the resignation letter of Julaine Berglund as our organist effective December 31st 2017. Gail Peterson made a motion to accept Julaine's resignation and Betty Collins seconded it. She will be missed dearly and hard to

replace. We will begin to look for a replacement, if anyone has any suggestions please feel free to let any member of the council know.

There being no other business Betty Collins made a motion to adjourn and Gail Peterson seconded it, motion passed meeting adjourned.

We reviewed area prayer concerns and closed with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Fougner, Church Council Secretary

YOUTH CHRISTMAS SERVICE

It will be held on Sunday, December 17th at 10:15 am. Loose offering will be used to support the ELCA Good Gifts program. Refreshments and treats will be served following the service.

DECEMBER YOUTH SCHEDULE

03 Youth sessions from 8:30 to 9:45 am

10 Youth sessions from 8:30 to 9:45 am

17 Youth sessions from 8:30 to 9:45 am
(program practice)

Youth Christmas Service 10:15 am

24 No youth sessions – Christmas Break

31 No youth sessions – Christmas Break
Egg Bake Fundraiser Breakfast 9:00 am

CONFIRMATION SCHEDULE – DECEMBER

12/06 Class 6:00 – 7:30 pm

12/13 Class 6:00 – 7:30 pm

12/20 Class 6:00 – 7:30 pm

12/27 (To Be Determined)

CONGRATULATIONS to Peter Markee and Marley Cran who will be receiving First Communion during worship on December 3rd.

A presentation of Bibles was made to Krista Markee and Marley Cran during worship on October 22nd. May each of you find joy and comfort in God's Word as you continue your faith journey.

Christmas Eve Day Schedule:

9:00 AM Holy Worship

2:00 PM Barn Service at Kopp's farm

5:00 PM Candlelight Service

10:00 PM Elim's Candlelight Service

Mark and Debra Kopp's Farm,
1364 105th Avenue—County Road C

Dress warmly as the service is held in a barn and it can be cold. You can bring your pet(s) to join the barn kittens, mice, Kopp's horses and their dogs. Create a memory for your children, grandchildren, nieces, and nephews—the children love this service. Bonnie Corcoran will be leading the service this year.

Worship Leaders

Dec 3 Rev Paul Baardseth

Dec 10 Rev Terry Stratton

Dec 17 Youth Christmas Program

Dec 24 Gail Peterson

Dec 24 barn service Bonnie Corcoran

Dec 24 candlelight Barb Fougner

Dec 31 Rev Paul Baardseth

Collection items for back-packs:

December: deodorant

January: shampoo

February: toothpaste

March: bar soap

The Stewardship Committee is hosting a **HOLIDAY BOOK FAIR**, now until December 10th. Proceeds will benefit stewardship projects and charitable giving in 2018. Look for the display in the fellowship area. Thank you!

December "Birth" days

01 Barb Friese	16 Conrad Lawrence
02 Owen Sabel	20 Carsyn Wilson
03 Caleb Wilson	20 Michael Markee
07 John Costello	25 Jesus our Lord
08 Thomas McElfresh	26 Ryan Wilson
13 Dawn Costello	27 Dave Kromrey
	31 Kellie Johnson

Information from Auditors

Treasurers of the following: WELCA, Cemetery Board, Social Ministry, Youth Ministry, Scrip

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 2017 Financial Report

Your check register

2017 Bank Statements & Reconciliations

2017 Savings Account Statements

2017 Investment Account Statements

Receipts for all expenses

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

Thank you for all the Kleenex donated for the Elementary school classrooms. We totaled 89 boxes!

We would like to thank the congregation members from both Elim and Balsam for supporting our collection for the Northwoods Homeless Shelter. We raised \$110.00 and the collection bin was filled to the top! John and Zoey

SAVE THE DATE:

The Youth Education Committee will be hosting an Egg Bake Fundraiser Breakfast on Sunday, December 31st starting at 9:00 am. Your free-will donation will benefit the

youth campership fund. Thank you, in advance, for your support!

Operation Christmas

The Operation Christmas tree can be found by the Shephard's window and is decorated with ornaments denoting gift ideas for those in need this Christmas. Please select an ornament, purchase that item, and place it – unwrapped – in the collection box. Your donated items must be received on, or before, Sunday, December 3rd. Thank you for your charitable giving!

Christmas Families

Balsam Lutheran is sponsoring families from the Amery School District in an effort to make this an enjoyable Christmas for children. This program is supported by Salvation Army. These families have agreed to exclusively participate in this Christmas gift program so we need to come through for them.

I have placed a Christmas tree with gift ideas/desires in the Northeast corner of the fellowship hall by the coffee station seating area. Please take one, two, or more of these tags, purchase the gift(s) and make Christmas such a happy time for these families. The gifts need to be brought to the church by December 10. I will have boxes by the tree. If you are not a shopper but still want to help, please feel free to give me a monetary donation and I will shop for you.

Thank you for your support of this program.

Gail Peterson

“Prayer is not overcoming God's reluctance. It is laying hold of His willingness.”

— Martin Luther

Organist

It is with sadness that council has accepted the resignation of our long time organist Julaine. She will be missed dearly and hard to replace. Thank you Julaine for all the years of providing music for our worship services and many other occasions. You have contributed so much to our worship and music committee that we are thankful for. We wish you only the best as you enter into full retirement.

We are in need of someone to play the organ at Balsam. Anyone that may have an interest in this position Please Contact Bob LaBathe for a job description and schedule an interview.

Christmas Message from Bishop Rick Hoyme

The year was 1986 and it was a beautiful December morning in our new home in Minnesota. We had recently moved and I was preparing my Christmas Eve message for my new congregation. But I was having difficulty focusing on the task at hand. Each time I attempted to pen relevant and impressive thoughts, my eyes were diverted to a photo on my desk; a photo of a baby with thick dark hair and deep brown eyes. Although we had never met, she had been named and she was loved.

Her name was Laura and Lutheran Social Services had assured us that she would soon be on a plane that would fly her from Seoul, South Korea to the Minneapolis airport and then into our arms. But for now, she was in a crib in an orphanage in a faraway land. And that made me sad...

I was sad because this little one would spend her first Christmas alone... or as alone as one can be in a room filled with cribs. But she would not be held in the arms

of loving parents and surrounded with gifts. And that was sad. And it made me feel alone.

But I had a sermon to write... so back to the words in my Bible and back to the story they told.

"Immanuel" - God with us. This word is first written in the book of Isaiah and then again in the Gospel of Matthew. Both times it is written as a promise that God will be with us, and God will never leave us. It is a promise that a baby will one day be born and that baby will fulfill the promise of God's presence with God's people.

Oh my goodness...could this be true? Could God's promise not be an ancient one, but one that was being fulfilled, even as I attempted to write a message of hope to my new people? Is God really with us?

Her first Christmas; wrapped in cloths and lying in a hard bottomed crib in the center of a faraway orphanage. And God is with her. God had knit her together in her mother's womb, and God would never leave her. And her name was Laura. And she was a child of God.

I remember this beautiful December morning often. I remember it when I am feeling alone. I remember it because I need to believe that God is with me. And that God will never leave me. And I believe it.

This will be my last Christmas message to you as your bishop. Next year at this time, you will read words from a new bishop but the promise will not change. God is with you. His name is Immanuel and the promise is real.

Have a blessed Christmas and... go to church! God will be there!