

THE BALSAM BRANCH

June 2021

Balsam Lutheran Church

1115 Mains Crossing
Amery, Wisconsin 54001

Laurie Kenyon Woods, Pastor

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Pastor's Pen

I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

- Ephesians 3:15-19

Ordinary time is upon us, and summer has begun!

School is out, or nearly so. Pentecost is past and all of the planning, fasting and celebrating that happens between Advent and the end of Easter is through.

A long stretch of seemingly unordered time lies before us.

The season after Pentecost is both the longest and last season in the liturgical year and is the second of the two seasons known as Ordinary Time.

The liturgical color for Ordinary Time is green. This is to represent the time of growth and expansion of the Church following the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Green is a very natural color and is often a symbol for growth and new life.

The word ordinary here has two meanings. First, it connects to the word ordinal, which has to do with re-marking out the weeks between the high seasons of the church year, such as Easter and Advent. The Sunday lectionary texts throughout Ordinary Time serve as a more prominent guides

for our week-by-week devotional growth than the Lectionary does in the focused seasons of Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent and Easter.

The second meaning of ordinary relates to the contrast between the ordinary flavor of this season with the extraordinary life of the other seasons in the church year—seasons that are pinned to the lived experience of Jesus coming into and living through his time on earth before his return to heaven. Here in Ordinary Time, the life of Christ is lived through us, the church, as we give faithful attention to our formation, devotion, ministry, and mission on a daily basis.

This is a season for learning about our faith as we try our best to follow Jesus with the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the ways of justice, peace, and loving service. It is a season of self-reflection and examination:

- How can I keep focused on God in the ordinary times of my life?
- What opportunities present themselves to me where I can attend to my spiritual growth?
- How is Christ being formed in me? How might others see the life of Christ living in and through me?

As with all seasons in the liturgical year, Ordinary Time is an opportunity to deepen our relationship with Jesus, grow spiritually, and participate in the life of the Church. Here are a few suggestions for ways we might make the most of this liturgical season.

- Start each day by thanking God for five ordinary things or go around the table at dinner and invite your family members to share things they are grateful for.
- Spend time praying and worshipping God in nature.
- Take a look at your daily routines and determine if there are old habits you need to break or new habits you want to start.
- Write a letter of encouragement to someone else in the faith.
- Volunteer to serve at church or in our community.

I'm excited to enter this second half of the church year and see the green Sundays stretching out before us. Remember, my first Sunday as your pastor was the first Sunday in Advent. For the first six months of my time as your pastor we've been celebrating and focusing on the high and holy days of the Christian liturgical year. I'm eager to enter into a new season in the life of Elim and Balsam as we journey together through this upcoming season of ordering our individual and church lives around the promise of growth in Christ. Don't let this be just another "Ordinary" Time—do something intentional to make it extraordinary.

Blessings,
Pastor Laurie

Balsam Lutheran Church

Approved Minutes of the Church Council

April 18, 2021

In Attendance: Betty Collins, Marlyn Bottolfson, Sue Fougner, Mike Judge, Steve Frederickson, Dawn Costello, Pastor Laurie and Michelle Stone.

Absent: Barb Friese and Bruce Hammer
Steve Fredrickson called the meeting to order, determining a quorum. Steve led in devotions.

Secretary's Report: Accepted as submitted.

Treasurer's Report: Accepted as submitted

Committee Reports:

YEC: Three youth received 1st Communion on Maundy Thursday. There will be three youth who be confirmed. Date to be determined. Sunday School with resume in the fall. Camp registration is now open.

Pastors Report: Accepted as presented

Old Business:

- 1) There is one candidate that is willing to run for council, still in need of one more.
- 2) UMOS will be starting soon, they should be here to get everything set up for the kids to arrive possibly in June.
- 3) We discussed the indoor service; it was decided to not take temps when entering the building. At this time the offering will still be collected in the Narthex and communion will continue with the individual cup and wafer. A discussion was had about serving

coffee after the worship service, it was decided that we would have some to go cup that people could take outside and enjoy as they visit in the great outdoors. Singing during the service is still on hold.

New Business:

- 1) We tabled the discussion for the Congregational picture by New Life Photography till a later date.
- 2) The rummage sale sponsored by Social Ministry is being held on Thursday May 6th from 3:30 to 5:30pm and Friday May 7th from 8:00 to 3:00pm. The leftover items will need to be transported to the thrift store in Milltown this year as they will not be able to come and pick it up.
- 3) Our Country Gals from Barron would like to perform at Balsam Church sometime in May; they will be performing at Elim. Motion made and seconded to have them perform at Balsam. Motion passed. Date to be set later.
- 4) The Ad in the summer publication of the Balsam Lake Homeowners, was tabled for now. Gordy Hanson usually pays for this, will check with him to see if he is still willing to do this.
- 5) The graduation acknowledgement for the Seniors of Balsam Lutheran will be on May 16th during worship. They will coffee and treats after the service outside.
- 6) Per the Polk County Health Department, we now have a policy and procedure for vomiting and diarrheal mishaps. These will be posted in the bathrooms, kitchen, and the classrooms. There are kits made

up for this and will be kept in the above areas as well.

Motion made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. Passed.

We reviewed prayer concerns and closed with prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Sue Fougner

Balsam Lutheran Church

*Unapproved Minutes of the Church
Council*

May 16, 2021

In Attendance: Betty Collins, Marlyn Bottolfson, Mike Judge, Steve Fredrickson, Dawn Costello, Pastor Laurie, Michelle Stone, Barb Friese, Bruce Hammer and Sue Albright.

Steve called the meeting to order, determining a quorum. Barb led in devotions.

Secretary's Report: Accepted as submitted.

Treasurer's Report: Accepted as submitted

Pastor's Report: Reviewed as submitted.

Election of Officers: Steve will continue as Council President, Mike Judge as Vice President; Michelle Stone will replace Sue Fougner as Council Secretary.

Committee Reports:

Property: There are ongoing issues with the siding and facing. Two bids were received from Summit siding, one for the repairs and a second bid including some preventative work that would prevent further damage along with repairing the damage. The decision made to get a bid from another company.

Worship & Music: Met last week following worship. The only member present at the meeting from Balsam was Pastor Laurie. Council would like more members from Balsam to participate on the Worship and Music Committee.

Old Business:

- 1) No recent updates from UMOS; they should be here sometime this month or early June to set up.
- 2) There remains an open vacancy on Council. Council can function with 8 members. If interested in filling the remaining council vacancy contact Steve.
- 3) Discussed a possible kick off next May for our anniversary celebration with Paul Oman doing another painting for the congregation.

New Business:

- 1) Discussed worship protocol with the new CDC guidelines regarding Covid restrictions. Decision made to allow fully vaccinated congregants to worship without a mask. Also made the decision to allow the congregation to sing the closing hymn for the next 2 Sundays. There will be further discussion regarding Covid restrictions during worship at the next Council meeting as the synod recommends moving slowly with lifting restrictions.
- 2) Regarding funerals, the decision was made to increase maximum attendance to 100 people. Masks are to be worn at all times at funerals other than while seated and eating. All doors and windows in the fellowship hall and kitchen will remain open during the entire meal and fellowship following funerals.

- 3) Fellowship outdoors with coffee and treats went well following the service to honor our high school graduates. We will continue this style of fellowship with coffee and treats handed out following worship as people leave the church. A sign-up sheet will be posted on the bulletin board for providing coffee and treats following worship.
- 4) Discussed setting up a meeting with Elim's Council.

There being no further business, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned. Reviewed area prayer concerns and closed with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Michelle Stone, Council Secretary.

Financially Speaking

Thank you again for your continued financial support of Balsam Lutheran and our ministry. We remain financially healthy despite the challenges of this past year. As of May 25, our General Fund balance is \$74,849.06 and our In/Out Account balance is \$10,918.67. Monthly expenses have been paid except for payroll and there is one more Sunday offering to be entered. Remember, that the in/out accounts hold money given for a specific project or program until it is needed or remitted. We do not access those accounts for our monthly expenses. Unfortunately, our offerings usually drop off in the summer months as many of us are traveling and/or spending time with family and friends. However, our expenses do not drop off at the same rate. I encourage you to mail in your usual offering if you will be gone. You can also drop off your offering during church office hours on Wednesday

afternoons. Your ongoing support of our church and our work is essential.

In Christ, Gail Peterson, Treasurer



On behalf of the **Amery Area Food Pantry**, we wish to thank you for your generous **donation of \$300 and 75 pounds of food**. Because of your generosity we are able to continue to provide food assistance to the many families in need in the Amery area. We are serving approximately 150 households at the present time. It is with deepest appreciation that we acknowledge your donation. We are blessed to have your support. Please know that we are very appreciative of your kindness and generosity.

Cheryl Bowman, Amery Area Food Pantry

The Northwoods Homeless Shelters would like to thank you for your support of our shelter program through your generous gift during the Give Big SCV event. Because of a generous matching grant, **your donation of \$100 has doubled!** We thank you for partnering with our agency to serve the homeless in our county. It is through your generosity and others like you that we can continue to provide shelter and guidance that promotes independent living skills to our clients.

Virginia Ormsby,
Northwoods Homeless Shelter

June "Birth" days	
06 Peter Markee	22 Karlee Friese
16 Kay Arne	27 Ruth Hart
18 Gail Peterson	28 Bob LaBathe
20 Ture Duden	