

Balsam Lutheran Church
1115 Mains Crossing Avenue
Amery, WI 54001

Address Service Requested

Friday, June 7th! The Salvation Army Backpack Bash will be held at the Amery Fire Hall from 4:30-8:00 pm.

**The calendar contains only
Holy Worship every Sunday at 10:15 AM
And quilting at Elim Tuesdays 9-noon.**

THE BALSAM BRANCH

June 2024

Balsam Lutheran Church

1115 Mains Crossing
Amery, Wisconsin 54001

Laurie Kenyon Woods, Pastor
Pastor's phone: 269-552-8245



Church Website: www.balsamlutheranchurch.org
Church email: balsamlutheran@amerytel.net
Balsam Branch Editor: *Bonnie Corcoran*

Church Phone: 715-268-9291
Pastor's e-mail: pastorlauriekw@gmail.com

Pastor's Pen

Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, for he himself said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Acts 20:35b

A friend who regularly volunteers to serve meals to those in need illustrates the truth behind Jesus' teaching.

"It's so rewarding to help," she says, explaining that the time and hard work is worth it. "I think get more out of it than they do."

When we give generously, it is often we who are blessed. But more than just enjoying a pleasant emotion, the act of giving truly blesses us by shaping our personalities and developing our character. That's a truth affirmed by research.

Generous people tend to be the kind of good folk we want as friends and

neighbors. And they frequently are generous not only with their money but also their time, their love and their very selves. In other words, they are not merely generous, they are generous-hearted.

Anyone can develop a generous heart, or a more generous heart. We can begin by deepening our relationship with God through seeking guidance and wisdom in daily prayer. Then simply begin to pour yourself out for the sake of others, giving generously as a spiritual exercise and discipline.

One way to practice generosity is to consider what you are able to give to our church fundraiser for the Malawi Well Project. As a synod, we are trying to raise \$40,000 to help our companion synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi, drill two wells. Time and again, you all have demonstrated generosity, and our memorial committee has agreed to match up to \$5000 between the gifts of Balsam and Elim. Our siblings in Christ in Malawi

are doing great things for their communities for the sake of Jesus and the Good News. Isn't it exciting that we can be a part of that through this project?

And closer to home, here are three ideas that won't cost you a dime:

Give a smile. Smile at everyone you see. You may be surprised at how it changes your mood.

Give a nice thought. Say something nice to everyone – family and friends, coworkers, fellow church members, store clerks.

Give a courtesy. Hold a door open for the person behind you; at the grocery, let someone with just one or two items go ahead of you; stop for pedestrians.

Jesus said it is more blessed to give than receive. When we give our time, talents and possessions, God blesses us by developing in us generous hearts.

Blessings,

Pastor Laurie

Balsam Lutheran Church

*Unapproved Minutes of the Church
Council*

May 12, 2024

In Attendance: - Pastor Laurie Kenyon Woods, Steve Frederickson, Gail Peterson, Taunya Kobernik, Mike Christensen, Bob LaBathe, Bruce Hammer, Ruth Hart, Jon Karsten

The meeting was called to order. Ruth Hart led with devotions.

Secretary's Report: A motion was made and seconded to accept the April secretary's report. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report: General Fund ending balance = \$47,699.97. All Marguerite E. Hallquist Memorial Fund projects have been paid for except for the new chairs for the fellowship area. A motion was made and seconded to make a donation to Synod this year of \$500. Motion passed.

Pastor's Report: Conducted the funeral for Gordy Hansen. Making visits to Dave Kromrey. Confirmation is May 17th and Pastor Laurie had a dinner prior with all the Confirmands. While meeting for dinner the Confirmands created a poster that will be displayed during their confirmation. Attending regular Pastor meetings at Luther Point. Luther Point is in need of counselors.

Committee Reports:

Property: A push mower was purchased to be able to mow in tight areas around church. Menard rebate credits were used to pay this.

Old Business:

Malawi well project – Donations will be requested during the service on May 26th and June 2nd. Memorial Committee will match what the congregation donates up to \$5000.

Luther Point – Sunday August 4th, at 11:00, is the 75th Anniversary Service at Luther Point. There will be an 8:30 service at Elim for both Balsam Lutheran and Elim. The 10:15 Balsam Lutheran service will not be held that day so people can go to the Luther Point Anniversary Service.

UMOS- will start approximately June 17th. Inspections required are in process.

New Business:

Does the Church Matter – council continues discussion on why the Church does still matter and how to communicate that.

Tree Memorial Allan Moltzer – May 23rd is Allans birthday. On that day The Moltzer family is planting a tree on Church property in honor of Allan.

There being no other business, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn. Motion passed.

The council reviewed prayer concerns and closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Jon Karsten,
Church Council Secretary

Financially Speaking

Our general fund balance as of May 23 was \$46,613.84. The end of the month balance will drop as this number does not account for payroll and other expenses yet to be paid. We have had some additional expenses in May as we prepare for the arrival of UMOS. We will eventually be reimbursed for these expenses. We will also have some significant bills coming for the repair/maintenance of our sprinkler system.

Four memorial projects have been completed and paid for from the generous gifts from the Marge Hallquist estate as well as from undesignated memorial funds. Thanks to the memorial and property committee for all your work to obtain bids, negotiate terms, and to help with the completion of these projects. Summer is a busy time for everyone as we often go on vacation or are gone for

other events on Sundays. Please consider mailing in your weekly offering or playing catchup on your offering the next Sunday that you are back. Please prayerfully continue your generous contributions to our general fund and special projects. All is so much appreciated.

In Christ,
Gail Peterson, Treasurer

Salvation Army Backpack Bash

Mark your calendar for Friday, June 7th! The Salvation Army Backpack Bash will be held at the Amery Fire Hall from 4:30-8:00 pm. Please join us for a fun time with great food and music as well as raffles and our huge silent auction.

During the 2023-24 school year, the local Salvation Army Backpack program supported more than 350 families every week. We have many parents relying on this valuable food as resource for their families. We want to ensure that no matter the circumstance, a child begins school on Monday morning ready to learn.

Balsam Lutheran Church is a sponsor of this event thanks to the generous contributions from our membership, Social Ministry Committee and WELCA. Balsam has been a cornerstone of support for this event ever since it began. We have not only supported this event with donations but also with manpower!

The Backpack Bash is looking for donations of baked goods and gift baskets or other items for the silent auction and raffles. You can deliver these items to the Amery Fire Hall from 12-4 pm on the

event day. If you need to deliver prior to that day, please deliver them to Betty Collins at 261 Harrison Ave. in Amery. You can also connect with Gail Peterson for delivery options.

Thank you for your continued support of this valuable program that helps to feed the children of Polk County through weekly food backpacks.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Thank you so much for giving Big! Your generosity is a blessing to so many! **(\$250 to Interfaith Caregivers from the social Ministry Committee)** Your gift brings helpers and those needing help together. Thanks to each and every one of you for your kindness and generosity! Your gift makes living at home possible for so many of the seniors and adults living with disabilities in our area. A precious Gift!

June "Birth" days	
05 Kathy Smith	22 Karlee Friese
06 Peter Markee	24 Calla Wirth
16 Kay Arne	25 Trever Miller
18 Gail Peterson	27 Ruth Hart
20 Ture Duden	28 Bob LaBathe

Greetings from Tanzania

Dear faithful friends,

We are pleased to attach an update about the important work our Tanzanian colleagues are doing.

In January Bethany had surgery for a small bowel obstruction. Many of you

upheld us in prayer throughout that time. We are so thankful she received excellent care in Arusha and her recovery has been uneventful.

You may have heard about excessive rain in East Africa and the destruction it has brought. Fortunately, in our area the rain has been frequent but not as heavy as other areas. As a result there is abundant grass for the livestock and this prevents erosion and runoff.

This fall we will be in Minnesota for several months. We are greatly looking forward to seeing you again.

Thank you for being people who do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God.

With thanks,
Steve and Bethany

Friberg Update May 2024

The HIV epidemic in Uganda in the 1980s was devastating. The middle-aged and most productive generation was lost over a decade. Grandparents were left raising their grandchildren. Children had to work the family fields and gardens because there were so few adult laborers.

As you know, the HIV virus destroys the T4 lymphocyte helper cells which coordinate the entire immune system. Gradually, the inflammatory process of the body fighting the virus causes scarring of the lymphatic tissue which supports all immune cells. The immune system collapses over approximately 10 years. Opportunistic fungal, viral, bacterial, and mycobacterial infections overwhelm. Beautiful bodies

and vibrant lives of all ages are slowly destroyed. Fortunately in Tanzania, around the year 2000 the US government started providing free anti-retroviral therapy (ARVs) to people living with HIV. This program has been hugely successful in keeping the prevalence of HIV to less than 5%.

Tanzania did not lose a whole generation of its population to HIV as happened in Uganda. People using ARVs are living well for decades, can continue working their jobs, and are far less infectious to others. ARVs block the maternal transmission of HIV to infants. All pregnant women are tested for HIV in prenatal clinic and are started on ARVs immediately if positive.

Our 8 small health centers on the Serengeti, in the Rift Valley, and on the South Maasai Steppe provide this essential care.

Your regular support is increased exponentially through cooperation with large programs of the WHO, Tanzania Ministry of Health, and the Tanzania Lutheran Church. The large programs rely on motivated and competent staff on the ground. Our doctors and nurses encourage drug compliance, treat underlying infections, educate on healthy nutrition, discourage addictions, encourage faithfulness in marriage, and listen to patients' economic and emotional struggles. Every patient has unique issues. Many of our staff are gifted and comfortable going beyond medical care. They can bridge people to holistic care available through the local church.

Thank you for partnering with us in Tanzania.