

Balsam Lutheran Church
1115 Mains Crossing Avenue
Amery, WI 54001

Address Service Requested

Coming Up:

May 9 and 10 Rummage Sale

May 12 Mother's Day The youth will sing during worship

May 19 Confirmation

THE BALSAM BRANCH

May 2024

Balsam Lutheran Church

1115 Mains Crossing
Amery, Wisconsin 54001

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



Church Phone: 715-268-9291

Church Website:

www.balsamlutheranchurch.org

Church email:

balsamlutheran@amerytel.net

Balsam Branch Editor: *Bonnie Corcoran*

Pastor's e-mail: pastorlauriekw@gmail.com

Pastor's Pen

As we embrace the blooming of May flowers and the warmth of spring, I invite each of us to pause and reflect on a topic close to my heart: mental health.

May is recognized globally as Mental Health Awareness Month, providing us with an opportunity into conversation, support, and understanding around mental well-being.

Life can be a rollercoaster, right? And sometimes, our mental health takes a hit. Whether it's stress from work, relationship stuff, or just feeling a bit down, it's something many of us deal with.

Mental health challenges affect individuals of all ages, backgrounds, and walks of life. They do not

discriminate, and they certainly do not define us. Instead, they present opportunities for growth, resilience, and healing.

It is totally okay to not have it all together all the time. We're human, after all. What's important is that we're there for each other, lending an ear, offering support, and checking in.

In our journey of faith, we recognize that mental health is an important part of our overall well-being. Just as we tend to our physical health through exercise and nutrition, nurturing our mental health is essential for living a fulfilling and purposeful life. Yet, the stigma surrounding mental illness often prevents many of us from seeking the support and care we all deserve.

So this May, let's make a conscious effort to talk about mental health a bit more.

As a community, it is our responsibility to create a safe and inclusive space where individuals feel empowered to share their struggles without fear of judgment or shame. Let's share our stories, offer kindness, and break down any lingering stigma. We can each extend a compassionate hand to those who are facing challenges with their mental health, offering our support, understanding, and resources.

And if you're struggling, please know there are resources and people who care, ready to help.

May this be a month of openness, understanding, and looking after ourselves and each other.

O God, our Compassionate Companion, you walk beside us through life's joys and sorrows. When we suffer, you are with us. We ask that you heal all who are living with a mental illness. Help us, your hands and feet in this world, to turn our prayers into action. We recognize that our biblical ancestors also faced mental health struggles. Today, as our society continues to discover more about mental illness, may we and our faith communities become beacons of light and hope to our brothers and sisters who struggle. Help us to be loving companions on one another's journeys. Amen

With love and blessings,
Pastor Laurie

Balsam Lutheran Church

Unapproved Minutes of the Church Council

April 14, 2024

In Attendance: Pastor Laurie Kenyon Woods, Steve Frederickson, Gail Peterson, Taunya Kobernik, Mike Christensen, Bob LaBathe, Bruce Hammer.

The meeting was called to order. Steve Frederickson led with devotions.

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

Treasurers Report: General Fund ending balance = \$51,297.64. March offering was up due to Elim April payment arriving in March. Marguerite E. Hallquist Memorial Funds are just under \$100,000. The glass and doors between the sanctuary and fellowship area have been installed but not paid for as of yet. This is \$21,000. Parking lot security light bulbs had to be purchased for \$885.00. A motion was made and seconded to approve the treasurer's report as presented. Motion passed.

Pastor's report:

Busy with Easter and Holy week. Maundy Thursday attendance was low but Good Friday (two services) and Easter attendance was very good. Parishioner testimonies of what the Lord and Church has meant in their lives has begun. Looking for people to give testimonies on May 5th and May 12th.

Participating in Synod Book Club. This is an online Book Club and is open to all. Contact Pastor Laurie for details if you're interested in participating. Also participating in Continuing Education called Transforming Listeners. Church has two new members – Matt and Sue Saarem.

Committee Reports:

Memorial- Marguerite E. Hallquist Memorial Funds update.

- Windows and doors between the sanctuary and fellowship area are installed
- Kitchen sink is installed
- Bathrooms are done
- Student scholarships were previously approved by council to be paid from Marguerite E. Hallquist Memorial Funds. It was recommended to form a committee to determine the recipients. It was recommended to have Pastor Laurie, Taunya Kobernik as a teacher representing council, and a member of the congregation on this committee.

Property

- Would like to purchase a self-propeller push lawn mower to get into the tight spaces where the zero-turn mower cannot get to. Also, would like to purchase a battery power blower to blow off the front walk when done with mowing. We have a Menards credit from returns from the bathroom project and a Menards rebate that could be used

towards this. Prices will be researched and presented to council.

- Shrubs in front of church are dying. It is recommended to replace with smaller flowering shrubs. Ruth and Bonnie have volunteered to work on this. Marlyn will remove the shrubs.
- To hire out to build a shelter in the park would be approximately \$16,000. If we did it ourselves it would be under \$6000 but we would need some young help to do the high work. Discussion will continue.

Social Ministry – Working on rummage sale. First Sunday in May they are looking for volunteers to move tables and chairs for the sale.

Youth - Roadside cleanup was April 21st. May 12th Sunday School ends.

Old Business:

Malawi well project – Memorial Committee will match what the congregation donates up to \$5000.

Church use charges – the new prices are in the directory.

UMOS- in need of a new refrigerator. UMOS said they have some in storage and will use one of those. UMOS students will start approximately June 17th. UMOS has asked for the Church to get the equipment ready, water tests, alarm tests, and fire department inspections. Discussions are continuing on a new contract with UMOS to begin in 2025. The church currently receives \$925.83 per month all year from UMOS.

Council considers this needed income for church operations so the contract may stay the same or we could receive an increase.

Luther Point Sunday Service is August 4th – Elim will have their usual 8:30 service and Balsam Lutheran would worship at Luther Point.

New Business:

Discussion – Does the Church Matter? Council has been tasked to review and come up with suggestions and direction on why the Church Does Matter and how to pass this on to the congregation and the community.

Memorial Projects – Next

- We are having connection troubles with the remote microphones in the sanctuary. It is recommended to purchase three new microphones at a cost of \$1128.00. Funds for this will come from Worship and Music Memorial Funds and Undesignated Memorial Funds. A motion was made and seconded to purchase the microphones. Motion passed.

- Instead of replacing the old chairs in the fellowship area with the other old chairs that the Church has, it's been proposed to just purchase new chairs (125). This is estimated to cost \$6000 and will be paid for from Marguerite E. Hallquist Memorial Funds. A motion was made and seconded to purchase new chairs for the fellowship area. Motion passed. The old chairs will be listed for sale at the rummage sale and/or given away. Some will be kept for events that would require more chairs.

Change – Emphasis on change is ok and good. We should focus on Church revival verses survival.

Clean Out – need to clean up and organize sitting area in fellowship area. Also, the credenza in the church office needs to be cleaned out.

Other – recommendation to put the Church calendar back into the newsletter. This will be passed on the Bonnie.

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 has dipped to \$47,699.97 as of April 30, 2024. We incurred a few new expenses this past month including repair and replacement of bulbs in our parking lot lights and synod convention registrations.

The glass wall and doors project for the back of the sanctuary has been completed. This project was funded by the generous Marge Hallquist estate gift. Thanks to Bruce Hammer and Mike Morel for their work on preparing the knee wall for our new glass.

We have set aside funds from the Hallquist estate gift for a scholarship. This would be given to anyone from our

church pursuing a career in education. In addition, we will soon have new chairs for our fellowship hall thanks to this generous gift.

Our propane tanks have been filled and we have funds left on account with Synergy Co-op. Thanks to everyone who gave to the Turn-Up-the-Heat program and to those who were diligent in turning down thermostats when leaving!

As always, we ask that you please prayerfully continue your generous contributions to our general fund and special projects. All is so much appreciated.

In Christ,

Gail Peterson, Treasurer

Confirmation

On May 19 we will be joining in our youth to celebrate their confirmation of baptism. Kinsley and Brady Kobernick, Krista Markee, Kaleigh Wilson, and Bryce and Brayden Miller will be confirming their baptism.

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

On behalf of the Amery Area Food Pantry, I wish once again to thank you for your generous donation of \$1150.00 and 1211 pounds of groceries during 2023. Because of the continued generosity of church groups like yours, we are able to provide food assistance for over 150 households each month. It

is with the 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.

Thank you WELCA! You are all incredible! You continually share your love and generosity with our neighbors around the world to change lives. Grace and Peace,
Tim Krick, Lutheran World Relief

The Northwoods Homeless Shelters would like to thank you for your support of our shelter program through your generous financial gift of \$250 (Social Ministry) given during the Give Big SCV event. Our non-profit depends on donations for a large part of the funding of the services we provide to the area's homeless population. We appreciate your support as we continue our effort to stabilize the homeless families with whom we work and move them into permanent housing.

May "Birth" days	
08 Kinsley Kobernick	23 Jane Karsten
11 Sue Bird	27 Dewey Peterson
12 Tyler Wirth	27 Sarah Moltzer
13 Karen Ford	29 Taunya Kobernick
17 Steve Frederickson	30 Susan McElfresh