

Balsam Lutheran Church
1115 Mains Crossing Avenue
Amery, WI 54001

Address Service Requested

ADD TO YOUR CALENDARS:

**August 4: Worship at Luther Camp as part of their 75th
anniversary**

THE BALSAM BRANCH

July and August 2024

Balsam Lutheran Church

1115 Mains Crossing
Amery, Wisconsin 54001

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Balsam Branch Editor: *Bonnie Corcoran*

Pastor's Pen

Dear church family,

Politics have always been a source of friction in the United States, and we're gearing up for another election season this fall. Perhaps you think I shouldn't be writing about politics at all – maybe even seeing the word itself makes you uneasy. But we have to care about it. Civility, good discourse for the sake of the common good, assuming the best in others, and just plain kindness can seem to be in short supply.

We Christians can help, we who are commanded to love our neighbor as ourselves (Leviticus 19:8, Matthew 22:39) and commended to work for the common good (Isaiah 58:8-14, 1 Corinthians 12:7). In the month of July, when we remember the founding of our nation and all it stands for, we can recommit to good stewardship of our civic virtues, our political process, and common purpose.

Here are some ideas:

Seek and Cling to truth: There are enough malicious "fake news" stories and wild conspiracy theories going around to make your head spin. Endeavor to find out what is true. Don't listen to lies and liars, and always speak truth, especially in face of lies.

Love and pray for those with whom you disagree: Jesus taught us to pray for our enemies (Matthew 5:44). Now those who disagree with our politics aren't our enemies, but the principle remains. Love and pray for them.

Don't insult: Jesus taught that when we say "you fool" to our neighbor we have committed murder in our hearts (Matthew 5:21-22). Engage on issues and policies, not personalities.

Settle for what's fair: Politics works best when both sides compromise. Everyone loses when it's played "all or nothing."

Finally, be a peacemaker: Jesus taught, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."

Prayer: Sovereign God, your Son Jesus lived within the structures of society even as he spoke truth to those in power and challenged systems of oppression. Empower us to be courageous disciples and responsible citizens. Grant that our life in the public realm be grounded in love for our neighbors, care for the most vulnerable in our midst, and respect for the common life we share, following the example of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Blessings,

Pastor Laurie

Balsam Lutheran Church

*Unapproved Minutes of the Church Council
June 9, 2024*

In Attendance: Steve Frederickson, Taunya Kobernick, Mike Christensen, Bob LaBathe, Gail Peterson, Ruth Hart
The meeting was called to order. Steve Fredrickson led with devotions.

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

Treasurer's Report General fund ending balance = \$41,562.92. We are still on track with the budget.

Some undesignated memorials have been added to that area. There is money left in the propane prepay for the summer fill. A motion was made and seconded to accept the budget as presented. Motion passed

Pastor's Report:

• Bible Study is on hold for the summer and will start back in the fall.

• Pastor Laurie will be gone once in each of July and August. We need pulpit supply for those days.

Committee Reports:

1. Social Ministry – money was given to back pack fund and the bake sale in Balsam Lake raised money for the Malawi well project.

2. Property -- picnic tables need paint.

- The southwest front door entry should be repainted a bright red. This is an Emergency Door.
- The sprinkler system has had the yearly inspection. The jockey pump for the water system needs to be looked at by an electrician. The problem in the pump could have been caused by high water in the pit area. When we have a large amount of rain it runs into the pit. A temporary fix has been set up, but something needs to be done so someone doesn't need to run to church every time it rains to start a sump pump. Without the sump pump the water builds up.
- The entry way tile needs to be repaired.

3. Witness and Outreach: a picnic service in the park is being planned.

Old Business:

- UMOS will be arriving June 16.
- We are invited to the Luther Point Anniversary service which is August 4 at 11am. Elim will host a local service at their regular worship time for those who are unable to make it to Luther Point.
- Chairs - The new chairs have arrived. The old chairs still need to be given away or otherwise disposed of.

New Business:

- The council will not meet in July.
- There is a vacancy on the council due to the Karston’s transferring to Joy Lutheran. We are looking for volunteers.
- The kitchen floor needs some noncustodial upkeep work, stripping and rewaxing. We need to find someone to do it.
- The generator needs checking for the June 30 outdoor service.

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,
Ruth Hart, Church Council Secretary

Financially Speaking

Our general fund balance as of June 30 was \$41,745.54. We had some additional expenses in June as we continue to make repairs to and maintain our wonderful facility. We will see an increase in our electricity billing and some other expenses with the arrival of UMOs. However, we will be reimbursed for this increase in electricity based on the kilowatts used above the average use prior to our current UMOs contract as well as other expenses.

Our synod assembly representatives presented a check for \$10,000 to the Synod for the Malawi well project. This was a result of your very generous gifts,

fundraising and donations from Elim. These funds were matched with funds from the Marge Hallquist memorial.

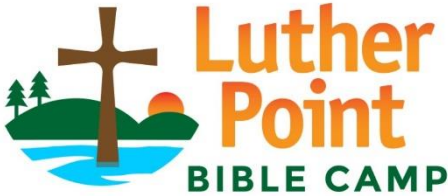
Summer is a busy time for everyone as we often go on vacation or are away for other events on Sundays. Please consider mailing in your weekly offering or playing catchup on your offering the next Sunday that you are back. Please prayerfully continue your generous contributions to our general fund and special projects. All is so much appreciated.

In Christ,
Gail Peterson, Treasurer

July “Birth” days	
13 Vicki Hammer 15 Caleb LaBathe 19 Cady Costello	19 Michael Smith 22 Zoey Duden 25 Lila Christensen
August “Birth” days	
02 Herb Johnson 05 Betty Collins	07 Sue Fougner 18 Erin Wirth 29 Krista Markee

Fall Dinner

I know it is hard to think of fall when it is so hot and dry, but our Annual Fall Dinner will be upon us before you know it! **Mark your calendar for Sunday, October 6.**



This year, Luther Point is celebrating their 75th anniversary and they are inviting all of their local area churches to worship with them Sunday, August 4th at 11 am. This includes us!

For Elim and Balsam, there will be two worship opportunities that day:

1. One 8:30 am joint worship service at Elim for anyone unable to attend worship at Camp.
2. 11 am worship service at Luther Point (Pastor Laurie and other area pastors will be part of the worship leadership that day). **We will be meeting at Balsam to carpool at 9:45.**

For all of the weekend's events, visit <https://lutherpoint.org/75-2> to find out more!

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Miscellaneous

Please remember that anytime there is a meal served from the kitchen the floor should be mopped following the usage. We just had the floor stripped and rewaxed, so help keep it clean.

Just a reminder....while UMOs is here, we are to leave NOTHING (except the coffee pots) out in the kitchen and can't use the refrigerator in the kitchen.

During July, August and September communion will be on the second and fourth Sundays, not the first and third.

School Bags

When school supplies go on sale, start buying the items needed for the school kits we complete every year to go to Lutheran World Relief; Each kit needs the following items:

- 4 70 sheet notebooks of wide or college-ruled paper
- 1 30 centimeter ruler, or a ruler with inches on one side and centimeters on the other.
- 1 pencil sharpener
- 1 pair of blunt scissors (safety scissors with embedded steel blades work well)
- 5 unsharpened # 2 pencils with erasers (secure together with a rubber band)
- 5 black or blue ballpoint pens (no gel ink) (secure together with a rubber band.
- 1 box of 16 or 24 crayons
- 1 2 ½ inch eraser

Help Wanted

Pastor Laurie is looking for volunteers to help her organize our church's upcoming day of service. GWOH Sunday will be this fall and it is an opportunity to celebrate who we are as the ELCA – one church, freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor.

From the ELCA: "Service activities offer an opportunity for us to explore one of our most basic convictions as Lutherans: that all of life in Jesus Christ – every act of service, in every daily calling, in every corner of life – flows freely from a living, daring confidence in God's grace."