

If you're like me, this year has felt more like 10 years, rather than just 1.

We have been through a whirlwind of changes since I last sat to write a January newsletter article and was thinking about the year to come.

Here are just a few of the changes:

1. We started the New Year off well, a new council started and hit the ground running in terms of thinking about the future of our congregation and its ongoing vitality here among us and how we reach out into the world.
2. We finished our project of sending letters to our neighbors. Every single household that lives within a 3 mile radius of our church received a letter and was prayed for. All-in-all, we got good feedback that this was appreciated.
3. In February we started hearing about cases of a new virus that had emerged in China and had found its way to the US.
4. By March 15, in the middle of Lent, we would make the difficult decision to suspend in-person worship and activities. Lent, Easter, the Easter season, Pentecost, and most of the post-Pentecost season were virtual services.
5. We had great success with drive-in worship services. These were really well attended and appreciated by those who came. It wasn't the same, but we were able to once again worship together in the same place.
6. With the setting in of the winter cold, we have shifted back to virtual services, where we will be until spring, with the exception of a few drive-in services, as we are able.
7. Our country elected a new President. The election cycle was filled with divisiveness and division and we saw a country torn between two choices.
8. Our national response to the virus has been overshadowed by the usual politics and division, to the point where it can be difficult to know who and what to believe.
9. Vaccinations have been approved and are now being given across the US. At the same time

that they offer a light-at-the-end-of-the-tunnel, we also have reservations.

10. Holidays are not the same. Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas are all overshadowed by COVID-19 and many of us choose to celebrate differently this year to help keep us and our families healthy.

And, of course, this has been on top of the "regular" things that mark our time and our lives; jobs, families, illness, and death.

For many of us, it may feel like the movement into the New Year is not as hopeful nor as celebratory as we have felt in previous years.

It is in these times that we lean, even more, into the love and faithfulness of God.

No matter what we face in this life, no matter what challenges come our way, God promises to always care for God's people. As followers of Jesus, we are inheritors of God's love and faithfulness. We know that nothing in this world can separate us from God's love in Jesus. And we joyfully share that message with the world in our words and actions.

The world can feel like a chaotic place right now. And we feel like we struggle to understand what is happening and why.

So we remember. We remember an infant boy born into a world of chaos and death. We remember scared parents who trusted the angel's words. We remember shepherds and wise men who came to see the baby laid in manger.

And we trust that God does not abandon this world. Instead, God chooses to live more deeply into our lives through Jesus.

As 2020 draws to a close and we look to the possibilities and challenges of 2021, we hold fast to God's promise of love and faithfulness and trust that no matter what happens, Jesus will travel through it with us.

And we, the people of Pleasant Valley, will continue to be a light shining for all the world to see.

Peace, Pr. JonPaul

Pleasant Valley Lutheran Church Council Minutes, December 2, 2020

The meeting was called to order by President Poore at 6:03 p.m.

Non-agenda - None

Reports

The secretary's report was read by members. Rather than what is stated with the motion on the Annual Meeting, some of us will need to meet on January 31, 2021 and call the lack of a quorum, then reset the meeting for April 25, 2021.

The treasurer's report was read by members. The mission offering of \$290 was collected for Feed My People, in Eau Claire. \$260 was collected in October for the family of Rick Bahr, who was killed in a car crash. We are \$324.27 in the black for November.

The Pastor's report was not available.

The reports were accepted with a motion from Randy. Second from Dave. Motion carried.

Unfinished business

Education – As far as we know, there have been no conversations with parents on the Zoom classes. The Zoom classes on-line that we used from March through July were well accepted and engaged the children.

Property – The Olson Park access and shelter are done. We will put the cement floor down in 2021. We plan to run power up to the park then, also.

The storm window covering the small window that says, "Pleasant Valley Lutheran Church" is badly cracked. The crack, however, is on the inside pane of a double storm window, so it will be left until warmer weather.

One security light is out. Dwight has a bulb to replace it. We will try to get that done before the Christmas Eve service.

The furnace that heats the sanctuary has been working for 3 or so weeks. We decided not to replace it at this time, since we are not using the sanctuary, there is nothing in the sanctuary that will freeze, and we don't want the warranty to be in effect when we are not in the building using the furnace. Ruth will e-mail Frank Best, Jr., and let him know.

Worship – We will be having on-line services in December, except for the drive-up Christmas Eve service at 5:00 p.m. If that changes, we will use the prayer/communication chain to let people know.

It was mentioned that at one time we talked about trying to have at least one drive-up service a month.

New Business

The Christmas Eve service, at 5 p.m. on December 24, will be a drive-up service, with communion. We have purchased battery operated votive candles. We will also have some kind of lighting for the workers safety. We will begin the service with the lighting of the Christmas tree(s), placed outside. We will not be handing out the traditional apples and chocolate bars.

The assignment of positions will be put off until the February meeting. This is when we usually make assignments. Courtney has begun to serve on Council, but as an at-large member.

Mission offering –

January – Chippewa Valley Free Clinic

February – Sojourner House – Eau Claire

The hats, mittens, etc. that are put on the mitten tree will go to the Eleva/Strum School District.

Other

Our gifts to the Hill family, in the past, have gone to the MRC, a Christian organization in France. We will now be sending our gifts directly to Shelby. Roxie will see if she can get the address from Nola.

Roxie will also contact Jerry Larson to see about plowing snow for the church. Since we probably won't be having drive-up services, it will not need to be plowed on a schedule.

Next meeting – Wednesday, January 6, at 6 p.m. Ruth moved to adjourn at 6:54. Second by Steph. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted:
Ruth Poore

Members present: Roxie Ulness, Randy Sands, John Poore, Stephanie Kuehl, Cortney Sands, Dave Vlcek, Ruth Poore

Addendum: The 2021 annual budget was approved at the November 29, 2020 drive-up service with a quorum of 19 members. Cortney Sands was also voted to be on the Council-at-large.

Sunday School

Sunday school for the winter season is being worked on. Pastor and parents will be making a plan. More information will follow.

Treasurer's Report

Summary of Offering and Expenses

	Offering	Misc. Income	Expenses
Y-T-D	\$44,110.60	\$1,775.00	\$45,991.51
Oct	\$4,050.83	\$1,614.00	\$3,870.55
Nov	\$4,605.99	\$0.00	\$4,281.72
Dec	\$1,270.00	\$0.00	\$2,854.00

Year to date the offering is less than expenses by \$105.91. Once Christmas offering is recorded YTD offering should be more than expenses.

Thank you everyone for your continued offerings.

Mission Offerings:

October – Rick Bahr family - \$260.00

November – Feed My People Food Bank in Eau Claire - \$290.00

December – Mondovi Food Pantry

Memorials:

Building Fund/Furnace Fund:

In memory of James Teigen:

From: Randy & Kay Sands, Dave & Kim Vlcek, Bill & Marilyn Wendt

Individual offering statements will be mailed in early January.

Respectfully submitted:

Roxie Ulness, Treasurer

Happy Birthday!

To everyone who has a
“January Birthday”,
Blessings on your special day!



A Devotion:

The stories we tell

Our lives are made up of stories. We tell stories because they illuminate our life stages: childhood mistakes and joys, falling in love, raising children, taking risks, making important decisions, all of these events form a narrative that tells us who we are. There are few stories in my family that have been passed down for generations. Some of them are probably not even close to the truth anymore, but people who are a part of my family know the stories.

Evangelism is storytelling. Our story is God's story, beginning when creation was brought to birth, unfolding in miraculous and mysterious ways, following a desert people, all the way to a baby born in a stable in Bethlehem—a baby that would change everything. These stories are the story of our family—a people bound to one another and all of God's people through time. Evangelism is nothing more than telling that story and letting God's story speak for itself.

This message is adapted from "Go and Tell" written by Brooke Petersen in the May 2012 issue of Gather magazine.



TEXTS FOR JANUARY

Epiphany of Our Lord – 3rd

Online service

Isaiah 60:1-6
Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14
Ephesians 3:1-12
Matthew 2:1-12

Baptism of Our Lord – 10th

Online service

Genesis 1:1-5
Psalm 29
Acts 19:1-7
Mark 1:4-11

Second Sunday after Epiphany – 17th

Online service

1 Samuel 3:1-10[11-20]
Psalm 139:1-6, 13-16
1 Corinthians 6:12-20
John 1:43-51

Third Sunday after Epiphany – 24th

Online service

Jonah 3:1-5, 10
Psalm 62:5-12
1 Corinthians 7:29-31
Mark 1:14-20

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany – 31st

Online service

Deuteronomy 18:15-20
Psalms 111
1 Corinthians 8:1-13
Mark 1:21-28



IN NEED OF PRAYER

Here is our Prayer Concern list:

Kari Karnatz - healing

Kara Trainor – healing from Covid, niece of Kim Vlcek's

Doreen Trainor – healing from COVID, Kara's mother.

Loris Anderson – Sharon's Mom, healing

Gwen Chubb - Monica's cousin, doing another round of chemo treatments, is doing very well

Maureen Kuhn — Kay's sister-in-law, receiving cancer treatments

Catherine Erickson – pancreatic cancer

Gerri Sessions – strengthening & healing

Emily - Cathy Winger's mom- living with dementia
Martha McCourt – Marianna's mother, living with dementia

Henry Karnatz – Kari's dad, living with dementia

Holly Poore –teaching English and Spanish in Thailand

Shelby Hill and family - missionaries living in France, also Dan Hill

Keyla Lisbeth - the Sharing the Dream recipient, student in Guatemala

Our service men and women;

Alex Bauer stationed in England

Brendan Poore - deployed to Somalia

The inmates at CVCTF and their Chaplin

All those on our visiting list

Bob Dutter

Janice Teigen

Gary and Sharon Hazen

Thank you:

Feed My People

Thank you for your gift of \$290.00 from your Church collection to get food to those struggling with hunger right now in west central Wisconsin. Facing an empty cupboard at any time of year is hard but as the temperature falls it makes it even more difficult. That is why every dollar of your donation not only helps provide meals, but it also sparks hope for families in need of help from neighbors just like you, In gratitude, Suzanne Becker Assistance Director

Thank you for all you do for the hungry people! Nancy Renke

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"That all May come, Serving all the People of God"

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PLEASANT VALLEY NEWSLETTER

