

The fourth of July is an iconic American holiday. All across the US families and friends will gather for grilling, picnics, and fireworks. Each Fourth of July, my mind always wanders back to my childhood where we lit sparklers, made s'mores, and ended the night watching fireworks together as a family.

The Fourth of July is about American independence, pride, and exceptionalism. We celebrate together the casting off of our status as colonies and laying claim to our own future. We celebrate all those times we have risen up against aggressors and fought for the safety and freedom of other people around the world. The Fourth of July is certainly about our freedoms as a nation, but also about freedom for people still under oppression around the world.

For people of faith, this holiday also provides us an opportunity to reflect on what it means to be citizens in this world and where our allegiance lies. Sociologists have identified what is called American Civil Religion. This theory argues that the symbols and meaning and importance we give to being an American looks similar to the symbols, meaning, and importance people give to other faith traditions. They point out that our heightened sense of American exceptionalism border on religious adherence.

When Jesus was asked if it was lawful to pay taxes, Jesus, sensing their trickery, asked to see a coin. He asked them, "Whose face is on it?" The answer, of course, was Caesar. "Then give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God," Jesus says. In talking about wealth in Matthew 6, Jesus also says, "You cannot serve two masters; either you will hate the one and love the other or you will be devoted to one and despise the other."

So, can Christians serve two masters—both God and country? When we participate in the rituals of celebration and symbolism that surround national holidays, are we somehow acting contrary to our faith?

I don't think so. We can love and celebrate the things about this country that are great—freedoms that are enjoyed in few other places on this planet. We can celebrate that men and women have fought, and died, to secure and defend the freedoms we enjoy.

At the same time, we should also acknowledge that freedoms and rights are not equal across the globe, or even here within our own country. We are not perfect, and this is not yet the world God is actively creating through Jesus and the Holy Spirit. There is a long way to go, and God's Kingdom cannot be brought by human means. As people of faith, we continue to pray God's Kingdom come and actively participate with the Holy Spirit in making the Kingdom known in this world.

So, by all means, enjoy this holiday with your family. Remember the sacrifices made to secure our freedoms in the US. And offer prayers to God. Pray that God's Kingdom come, and come quickly, that all people, in all places, know the forgiveness, mercy, and love of God in Christ Jesus.

Happy 4th of July!

Peace,

Pr. JonPaul



Pleasant Valley Lutheran Church Council Minutes, June 2, 2021

The meeting was called to order by President Kuehl at 6:14 pm.

Non-Agenda - none

Reports -

The secretary's report was read by the Council Members for both the Annual Meeting and Council Minutes. No updates were made by either.

The treasurer's report was read by the Council members. It is once again discussed that the Olson Park project did not go over budget. The bills for concrete and dirt are pending but will come out to ~\$3600 and donations will be used to fund this. \$260 in mission offering went to Luther Park this month. To date the non-park ministry budget is \$2500 in the red for the end of May.

Pastor's report was not presented as Pastor was unable to attend.

The reports were accepted with a motion from Roxie and a second from Randy. Motion carried.

Unfinished Business –

Education: The Sands children will be attending 2 day camps at Luther Bible Park this summer. No further plans have been made for how Sunday school will look in the fall.

Property: The cement pad and skirt under the pavilion was poured. We will still be looking to run power up to the park. It remains undecided exactly what will be run and who we will hire to do the work given current shortages in supplies and prices of supplies and labor. We will revisit when we have a full committee at the meeting.

Worship: Senior graduation is here, and we have several people checking on if the church will be having a celebration for them. Date, if there is a need, will be decided in the near future. 2 quilts have been made for Teagan Erickson and Brennan VanLandingham.

Land line discussions in the cemetery and Olson park have begun to wrap up. The compromise that was agreed upon was that the contested land inside the cemetery would be titled over to the church. In return the church will pay for 1/2 the land surveying

fee which is \$900. A donation that was made to the cemetery association of \$1000 will cover that cost. This still leaves land between the road and the cemetery as well as a strip of land in Olson park that will stay with the neighbor according to the land lines surveyed. There may be a fence put up in Olson Park by the neighbor in the fall to designate the land line, as the current ball park fence is not accurate.

There was discussion on whether contact tracing forms were necessary any longer for services. This process was rooted in recommendations from either the county health department or the ELCA. We will need to check with Pastor and determine if this process is still a part of the recommendations for continuing services.

Cleghorn Fest is being planned for September 11th this year. The two booths that we will plan on having will be reserved by Kim, Dave, John and Ruth. It is unknown if Pastor was able to inquire if they want Pleasant Valley Lutheran Church to lead the Sunday worship.

New Business -

Baptism for Riley Hoverson June 6th will in the park. Pastor JonPaul has requested a few items be brought up from the sanctuary for this occasion. A baptismal quilt is at the church for her.

There are currently no discussions about praise team restarting practices. This will likely occur after we have determined it is safe to return to the church for services.

Water testing was repeated by a separate company after finding it was high in nitrates when the pump was replaced. It was again high, even after water was sufficiently run for plant watering recently. Recommendations made by the testing company included: water should not be consumed by pregnant women, children less than 6 months of age and should not be boiled to reduce the content, as it will only concentrate the content. There is a filter system that could be installed, of which the price is unknown, but likely a little pricey. The other option would be to outsource all drinking water with an option like refillable bottles, buying gallon jugs from the store or having a service like Culligan come in. Overall no decision was made, but top influencing concerns included waste productions of

single use plastics, cost, and convenience. Some discussion centered around having water brought in from a church member, however this was dismissed given liability if contaminants were found in the outsourced water.

\$5000 donation was made on behalf of the church. Remaining needs in Olson Park were discussed as well as other opportunities for enhancing the worships in the park. Benches, picnic tables, fire ring and other ideas were tossed around. We could use the money to buy finished products or use the money to buy project materials. This could create an opportunity for the children and members of the church to be involved in projects to help form ties with the new space. No final decisions were made.

Mission Offering –

June - King’s Closet (free clothing for those in need, on Barstow in Eau Claire.

July - Meal/Backpack program; Eleva

August - Meal/Backpack program; Mondovi

Next Meeting –

Wednesday June 30 @ 6:00 p.m.

Roxie moved to adjourn at 7:05pm. Second by Randy. Motion carried.

Members present: Cortney Sands, Roxie Ulness, Randy Sands, Stephanie Kuehl

Treasurer's Report

Summary of Offering and Expenses

	Offering	Misc. Income	Expenses
Y-T-D	\$21,466.92	\$92.12	\$24,494.88
Apr	\$4,291.58	0.00	\$3,574.12
May	\$3,598.49	\$0.00	\$4,660.90
June	\$2,624.00	\$0.00	\$2,969.06

(through 6/20)

Year to date the offering is less than expenses by \$2,935.84.

Mission Offerings:

April – Justin Fredrickson/Cornell Firefighter - \$222.00

May – Luther Park Bible Camp - \$260.00

Memorials:

Olson Park Pavilion:

In memory of Geri Sessions

From: Gary & Irene Isaacson

Building/Furnace Fund:

In memory of Loris Anderson

From: John & Ruth Poore, Greg & Roxie Ulness, Gary & Rhonda Hoverson, Randy & Kay Sands, Gary & Irene Isaacson, Dave & Kim Vlcek, Dale & Sharon Anderson, Jeff & Michelle Freezy & family

In memory of Janice Teigen

From: Dale & Sharon Anderson, Dave & Kim Vlcek, Randy & Kay Sands, John & Ruth Poore

Cemetery Association:

In memory of Loris Anderson

From: Bob & Joan Timm, Richard and Monica Bahr

In memory of Janice Teigen

From: Bob & Joan Timm, Mike & Bonnie Isaacson, Gary & Irene Isaacson, Richard & Monica Bahr

In memory of Ran Goodenough

From: Richard & Monica Bahr

In memory of Geri Sessions, Philip & Grace Sessions (for lot line correction)

From: Ben Sessions

Respectfully submitted:

Roxie Ulness, Treasurer

Luther Park Bible Camp

Thank you so much for your partnership in this project of growth and ministry. We pray you have a wonderful summer and we hope to see you at camp!

In Christ Service Keith Newman
Executive Ministry /director

Praise Team News

Members of the praise team have completed their orientation training and updated forms required for volunteering at Chippewa Valley Correctional Treatment Facility. After a year and a half absence, the group is looking forward to leading worship there again beginning on July 25. Practices have begun and are being held on Wednesdays at 7 pm.

August Women's Retreat

For 2021, the Women of the ELCA Chippewa Valley (CV) Conference has invited the Dairyland and Lake Superior Conferences to attend the CV retreat at Luther Park in Chetek on August 18-19. The CV Conference has a great program planned for the two-day event. A flyer/registration form is included in this newsletter. The Dairyland/Lake Superior Conferences decided to postpone their joint retreat until August 2022 due to continuing health concerns. Contact Kim Vlcek at vlcekkr@yahoo.com for more information.

Cleghorn Harvest Fest

Pleasant Valley will have a booth at the Cleghorn Harvest Fest on September 11. We will have free games and prizes for kids, and information about our church and our fall bazaar. Contact Ruth Poore (poorerm@gmail.com) or Kim Vlcek (vlcekkr@yahoo.com) to volunteer to help with the booth.

Congratulations!

Welcome to the Family of God
Baptism for Ellery Lee Kuehl



The basics are covered

We're all children of God, my son learned throughout his religious education. Then senior year arrived, and Alex discovered that while God loved him, the colleges of his choice felt differently. Rejected or placed on a waitlist by five selective colleges, Alex found it hard to hang on to his sense of self. In my wildest dreams, I never imagined we'd find ourselves among the excluded, or that we'd feel so really, truly terrible.

Yes, I pushed a lot less than my friend whose son was just named a National Merit Scholar, and so college may be uncertain, but it's not "all over" for Alex. His life is really just beginning. But the basics were covered when Alex was baptized. And while God's voice may be faint, the whisper assures me God is here. My son and I may have questions about our value in the eyes of the world, but not our worth to God.

This message is adapted from "God 101: Covering the Basics" written by Anne Basye in the September 2005 issue of Lutheran Woman Today (now Gather) magazine.

From the Northwest Synod

Daylily Dig For Malawi

**July 23-24, 2021
9:00 - 5:30
Greg & Diane Kaufmann's Farm
5207 70th Ave.
Chippewa Falls, WI 54729**

Come see all the beautiful and different Day Lilies. Dig some to take home.

TEXTS FOR JULY

All services will be up in Olson Park, unless you are notified,
Drive-in style, you can bring a lawn chair if you wish.

Sixth Sunday after Pentecost – 4th

Ezekiel 2:1-5
Psalm 123
2 Corinthians 12:2-10
Mark 6:1-13

Seventh Sunday after Pentecost - 11th

Amos 7:7-15
Psalm 85:8-13
Ephesians 1:3-14
Mark 6:14-29

Eighth Sunday after Pentecost- 18th

Jeremiah 23:1-6
Psalm 23
Ephesians 2:11-22
Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost – 25th

2 Kings 4:42-44
Psalm 145:10-19
Ephesians 3:14-21
John 6:1-21



“For thou art my hope.” Psalms 17:5

“In other words, what I hope
In can never disappoint me”

By the light of the Psalms by Chris Shea



IN NEED OF PRAYER

Here is our Prayer Concern list:

The Family of Vern Mertinke passed away at the age of 97. Buried at Pleasant Valley

The Family of Loris Anderson – Sharon’s mother has passed away

Nate Kuehl – healing after an injury from a tubing accident

Larry – Kim Vlcek’s brother-in-law; healing from Covid 19

Missy – friend of Kari’s; has pancreatic cancer

Troy Gilbertson – continued good health

Kari Karnatz - good test results

Teresa Edison- is doing the second round of chemo

Maureen Kuhn - Kay’s sister-in-law – strength and healing. She is home and is back to work.

Things are going well, just gets tired easily

Catherine Erickson – pancreatic cancer

Emily Horban - Cathy Winger’s mom- living with dementia, healing after her hip surgery

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

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

The 2021 Graduates

All our service men and women:

Alex Bauer stationed in England

Brendan Poore - deployed to Somalia

Inmates at CVCTF – and their Chaplin

All those who are missing a loved one

Those on our visiting list: Bob Dutter & Gary and Sharon Hazen

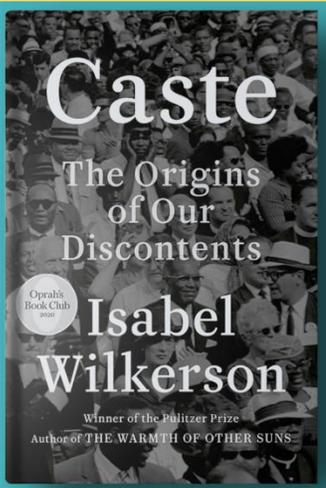
Summer Book Reads

Hello friends,

During the summer months we hope you'll join us for some great reading and thoughtful conversation as we dive into three good books.

We will gather each month to discuss what we read. Each conversation will be facilitated by someone new. Details can be found below and on the synod website.

Happy reading!



Caste
By Isabel Wilkerson

July 8, 2021
10:00 a.m.
Lead by Rev. Erin Nelson

Join via Zoom [HERE](#)
Meeting ID: 924 8150 0732
Password: 987490

ELCA Women's Chippewa Valley Conference

2021 RETREAT at Luther Park Bible Camp

944 24 1/4 Street, Chetek, WI 54728 www.LutherPark.org

August 18-19, 2021

Presenters: Wednesday – Cathy Jenson, Reverse side for more info

Worship service will be held on Wednesday



Thursday – Deb Gilbertson, Reverse side for more info



Music with Dottie Hayden

Early Bird Registration \$65 by 7/31/21. \$70 after 8/1/21.

Make Check payable to WELCA

Registration: Wed. 11:30 A.M. – 12:30 P.M. in the new Ministry Center (lunch will be on your own) OR Thurs. 7:30 A.M. New member orientation will be at 12:15 Wed in the Ministry Center.

Each person must fill out a form and prepay. All rooms are handicapped accessible.

A free will offering will be taken. Please return this form with your check by 8/01/2021. Retreat begins at 12:30 P.M. on Wed. 8/18/21 & concludes at 3 P.M. on Thurs. 8/19/21. One day is \$35.

Please bring: personal items, towels, pillows, bedding or sleeping bag, flashlight, Bible, pens, swimsuit, snacks, spending money.

-----PLEASE DUPLICATE THIS FORM AS NEEDED-----

Make Check Payable to WELCA

Any questions call: Phyllis Grohn at 715-836-7055

Send to following address with registration

Jacki Johnson at 715-864-1489

Eileen Christopherson
E9941 630th Ave
Elk Mound, WI 54739

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, and ZIP _____

E-mail _____

Phone _____ Church and City _____

Cost Wed Only (Program and Dinner) \$35 _____ Thur Only (Lunch) \$35 _____

Both days (3 meals and lodging) \$65 _____ \$70 after 8/1 _____

Total enclosed _____ Special Diet _____ Check if 1st time retreat _____



Deb is a retired nurse. She is a twin, a cancer survivor and has been a speaker on various topics for many years. In her forties, she also received a BA degree in Psychology. Deb tends to look at life and aging in a humorous manner. She loves the Lord and is grateful for renewal with forgiveness.



Cathy's joy in life is infectious. She views life experiences as God's teaching ground, and uses them as a testimony of His faithfulness. She lives in Elk Mound, Wi with her husband of over 20 years. They have four daughters – two who are in college, and two that live at home. Cathy is passionate about teaching, mission work, and helping others both personally and professionally.



They will have an assortment of Bibles, gifts, apparel, boxed cards, pens, and fun stuff for both days of our retreat. It's always a great selection! 😊

Free will offering will be taken and will be going to:

½ WELCA

¼ Luther Park

¼ Feed My People Food Bank

*Pleasant Valley Lutheran Church
W2450 Cty, Rd. WW
Eleva WI 54738*

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

Pastor JonPaul Dragseth: Cell: 715-271-2253

Church office: 715-287-4473

Church Secretary: Monica Bahr – Home: 715-287-4742

Church E-mail: pleasantvalley@tcc.coop

Website: www.pleasantvalleylutheran.com



**Daylily Dig
For Malawi
July 23-24, 2021
9:00 - 5:30
Greg & Diane Kaufmann's
Farm**