

## PASTOR'S PAGE

### COVID

On May 1st, 2022, at the end of our church service, I addressed the concern members had about me being sick on Easter Sunday. Many were upset that I did not wear a mask while preaching. Others felt I should not have been there at all.

I opened the meeting with Hymn 760 “What God Ordains Is Always Good” verses 1, 3, 5, and 6. The hymn was composed for a man who had a serious illness. After the hymn was composed, he miraculously recovered. Let's focus on verse 3.

What God ordains is always good: His loving thought attends me.  
No poison can be in the cup that my physician sends me.  
My God is true, each morning new  
I trust His grace unending, my life to Him commending.

“No poison can be in the cup that my physician sends me”. The hymnist is writing about the cup of blessing—The Lord's Supper. I can remember discussing the reception of the Lord's Supper with Pastor Jagow, my Confirmation pastor who had a heart condition. He died while distributing the Lord's Supper! In our Confirmation instruction, he stated that when we receive the wine (Christ's blood) with a common cup, we receive it the way Jesus instituted it.

During the AIDS scare of the 80's, there was a push for individual cups. Many pastors reluctantly capitulated. Many churches used little glass cups. Some churches bought individual sterling silver chalices. Now, to avoid having to do all of the washing, we use plastic cups. Later it was discovered that AIDS could not be transmitted via common cup. Many congregations returned to distributing Christ's blood with the chalice and kept the individual cup as well. Still other churches, like Bethany, did not compromise and stayed with the plastic individual cups.

I had a very wise Christian say to me, “If Christ is all knowing, would he not have known of all the communicable diseases before instituting the common cup?” Would the “cup of blessing” be poison to us modern Christians? Pastor Jagow pointed our Confirmation class back to the 1st Commandment. “You shall have no other gods before me.” Luther, who lived during the worst of human plagues, defines the commandment, “We should fear, love and **TRUST** in God above all things!”

We are to **TRUST** God above all things! Above the Fauci's of the world. They can give us guidance...6 feet apart...wearing a mask...but when it comes to Christians gathering...hearing God's Word...pouring water and speaking over a baby...and receiving the body and blood of Christ from the hand of God's called servant—I'll obey God over men (Act 5:29). Again, would God really harm you by receiving the sacrament? I believe He would not! Trust God above all things!

Yes, Easter I was sick with COVID. I did not know I had it. It was not until Julie tested positive on account of an upcoming minor surgery. She found out the Monday evening after Easter... I found out the Tuesday evening after Easter. I tested positive. I did not have a fever...I had cold symptoms and laryngitis—a pastor's curse. On Easter Sunday, before the service, I met with my elders and asked them to distribute the sacrament, as I was not feeling well. At the time of the Lord's Supper, I consecrated the elements with the lids on... I sat down and did not come close to the elements. After the distribution, I served myself. I did not greet parishioners before or after the service. I disobeyed and went home.

Some were irritated that I preached maskless...I followed the current CDC guidelines that allows pastors to do a service unmasked. However, when it comes to distribution they should refrain and that's exactly what I did. Many who attended and viewed the service on Good Friday knew I had no voice. Ironically, Saturday to Sunday I was feeling better. Even if I tested positive on Good Friday...I still would have done what I did... I'm called to be your Pastor in or out of a pandemic.

Before entering the ministry, we were at a congregation in White Hall, Michigan where Pastor Dorrow served. He had a condition he knew that he couldn't spread to others, but he could be infected by others (And could potentially be infected with something that could eventually incapacitate him). He went to work every week. He shook everyone's hands after every service despite his condition. The day of his retirement came, and everyone celebrated. He spent the first week of retirement with his 3 granddaughters. They were very precious to him. At the end of that week his granddaughters were diagnosed with chicken pox. A few days later he came down with shingles and by the next week he had died from complications. His daughter became distraught, fearing his grandchildren gave him the disease that killed him. In her distress, her father's doctor gave her these words of comfort, "A child having chicken pox cannot give an elderly person shingles." It was that his immunity was so weakened, that the shingles manifest itself. The following Monday, just two weeks after his retirement, I sang for his funeral. He was the pastor that prepared, encouraged, and strengthened me for the ministry.

I'll conclude with the hymnodist's final verse:

What God ordains is always good: This truth remains unshaken.  
Though sorrow, need, or death be mine, I shall not be forsaken.  
I fear no harm, for with His arm He shall embrace and shield me;  
SO TO MY GOD I YIELD ME.

I'm always here to talk. My door is always open.  
Yours in Christ,

Rev Robert Steele

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### JUNE BIRTHDAYS

6-3: Jack O'Keefe  
6-4: Rachel O'Keefe  
Winston Hasler  
6-7: Lynn Luebke  
Isaac Hasler  
6-8: Austin Madden  
6-9: Jill Mengel



6-10: Victor Hazen  
Pat Stangel  
6-16: KaoKalia Yang  
6-17: Betty Hahn  
Eli Johnson  
6-19: Barbara Kaeppler  
6-20: Nancy Froh  
6-29: Jason Mengel

### JUNE ANNIVERSARIES



6-2: David & Tamra O'Keefe  
6-15: Jim & Mary Madden  
6-17: Steve & Juanita Hazen  
Todd & Dori Matte  
6-20: Jeremy & Kelly Paltzer  
6-22: Kevin & Sharon Werner  
6-24: Lee & Barbara Gumm  
6-26: Bob & Sandy Kuehlmann  
6-30: John & Peggy Keller

God's blessings to all that are celebrating this month!

If we missed a member's birthday or anniversary, please contact the church office, and let us know.

## NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Summer is here! Our spring seemed more like winter than spring, but that just means more warm weather is coming, right? Before heading into summer, the Sunday School group had their last day of school May 22<sup>nd</sup>.



The kids started out with a breakfast and played several games including The Ten Commandments balloon game, a "Minute To Win It" cotton ball transfer, and Bible Bingo. What a great way to end the school year. Many thanks to all of the Sunday School, Confirmation, and Music teachers for their service this year. Your time, energy, and creativity really make a difference in our children's learning.

I'm thankful and happy to announce that Brian and Kristine Faucher are planning to start and lead a Youth Group for kids in 8<sup>th</sup> grade through High School. The group will meet at least once per month for activities. More info coming soon!

In late May, Ray and Shirley Ottman participated in one of Bethany's Missions – Luther Crest Bible Camp in Alexandria Minnesota. Among many construction projects, they went there to help build an eight-sided yurt that was 25-feet in diameter. What's a yurt, you ask? It's a round tent and was originally created by nomads for a portable shelter. I had to look it up. 😊 Well, as often happens, their plans were changed when they got there due to bad weather which uprooted over 70 trees in the area. They spent their time clearing trees and debris from the storm. If you have any interest in participating in the mission work, please reach out to them, and I'm sure they have many other good stories from the years they have been volunteering. Thanks for being faithful servants of God.



I would like to thank Analise and Isabella Hasler for their efforts in the past year cleaning the church. Both have found other opportunities to earn money, as they gain new experiences along their path. We welcome Clara Jordan as our new cleaning person. She is the daughter of John Jordan who oversaw the organ upgrade last year and Clara helped him with that project, as well. What a blessing!

I also wanted to note that Bethany helped Paulette Krueger and family with some medical bills from their recent car accident. Paulette, her husband, and grandchildren were fortunate to survive a head-on collision, but had many injuries. Paulette has been an organist for many years (helping out at Bethany often) and her grandson also plays the piano in church at Trinity Lutheran in Howards Grove. Paulette sent a very nice thank you letter and assures us that their family is on the mend. Please keep them in your prayers as they still have a way to go in their recovery.

Finally, we remember our veterans on Memorial Day, May 30<sup>th</sup>, and the sacrifices made for our freedom.

God Bless and to God be the Glory!

Todd Matte - Council President

## BETHANY'S 2022 GRADUATES



### High School:

**Luke Matte** – Luke is graduating from Howard's Grove High School. He plans to attend UW Whitewater to study Finance. Luke received the UW Whitewater Chancellor's Scholarship.

**Alaric Hazen** – Alaric is graduating from Sheboygan Falls High School. Alaric received a Senior award for band for participating all 4 years of High School as well as a medal for college and career readiness. Next year, Alaric plans to get involved in the Master Gardener program.

**We will recognize our High School graduates during the church service on Sunday, June 5**

### College:

**Joshua Yang** – On May 22, Josh graduated with a bachelor's degree in Information Studies from UW Milwaukee.

**Congratulations and Good Luck to our Graduates!!**

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## **MAY/JUNE CHARITY OF THE MONTH – Vernacular Video Mission International (VVMi)**

"Whether hiking hours into mountain ranges or going by boat to small islands, the Gospel is being shared in remote areas of the Philippines through video and Scriptures and hundreds of people are responding and being disciplined in places where the Lord has never before been praised." We can help by giving of our gifts to the May and June Mission of the Month. Our donations will be used to help purchase Bibles which have been translated and are printed in vernacular (heart) languages. Christian videos which have been dubbed into "heart" languages are also used to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Please be generous as you share in this important project.



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## **SHEBOYGAN COUNTY LUTHERAN CO-OP VBS – SIGN UP NOW!!**

**"Time Lab - Discovering Jesus from Eternity Past to Eternity Future!"**



**Good Shepherd Lutheran Church**  
(1614 S. 23<sup>rd</sup> St. Sheboygan)

**June 27 – 30**  
**10am – 12pm**  
**Cost = FREE!**  
**K – 6<sup>th</sup> grade**

**It's NOT  
Too Late!**

This fun, hands-on, in-person event is a cooperative Vacation Bible School with all our churches and community children welcome. All lessons, games, and activities will be done in English. Come join the fun! Register as soon as possible so materials and snacks can be planned accordingly. Walk-ins welcome.

To register: Go to [lutheranhigh.com](http://lutheranhigh.com) and click on 'Activities' under the 'Summer Camps' tab. Scroll down to find Vacation Bible School and click on 'VBS REGISTRATION' to register your child.

## BLESSINGS FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT LOVE INC

With another session of NEW WAY Classes beginning, there are some items that we could use if you are able to donate. These items are used as Weekly Blessings for our attendees to earn for faithfully attending class.

There is a display in the lower narthex explaining the classes starting and what the program is about. Please take a minute to review. If you can help with any items, it is greatly appreciated. Thanks, and of course I am always available to answer any questions you might have.

Sue Prange - Church Coordinator for Love INC



## Ministry teams seeking volunteers

**TASTING GRACE FACILITATOR** — Seeking Facilitator to teach 8-week class: 4 weeks nutrition lessons and last 4 weeks hands-on cooking demonstrations. Training provided. Contact Jenna for more information. **INTAKE**

**SPECIALIST TEAM** — Tues., Wed., or Thurs. 10am-2pm – Choose your day. Volunteers answer initial phone calls from our Neighbors, listen to their stories, collect pertinent information, and provide hope for their future. Training provided

**HOME REPAIR TEAM** – Varying days & times based on volunteer and neighbor schedule. Seeking Project Leaders to help our neighbors shop for materials and lead the project on workday(s). Gap Leader will call volunteers to fill your team.

**CHILDCARE TEAM** – Part of New Way program, takes place on Thurs. nights, 6:00-7:30pm. Volunteers provide age-appropriate care for the program participants' children. Planned activities are provided.

See our website for a full list of opportunities!

## Love Story

Several amazing stories emerged from our first 2022 session of New Way classes, which ended March 31st. One participant, Colleen, shared that she found New Way because someone stuck our program flyer in her apartment door. Colleen doesn't know who gave her the flyer, but she came check it out and participate in the Affirming Potential class. In Affirming Potential, Colleen learned to value herself and build hope for her own future. Eager to continue on in classes, Colleen re-enrolled right away (as did eight of her classmates). Recognizing the value of New Way, she went a step further and requested 40 program flyers to hand out to people she feels would benefit from New Way classes! Colleen encourages, "Everything is taken care of for you. If you have small children, childcare is taken care of. It's in the evening, for a short amount of time, dinner is provided." Colleen's excitement for the opportunities available at New Way is palpable! Her desire to share New Way with others reminds us of the far-reaching, ripple effect God's love has in our community.

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## FATHER'S DAY IS JUNE 19

### "A Tribute to Fathers"

A father is a guiding light  
Sent to us from above.  
He listens to our sorrows  
And soothes them with his love.

A father is a teacher  
whose place no one could take,  
For he's the source from which  
We learn to think and navigate.

A father is a gift from God,  
From whom we learn to be  
Patient, strong and loving,  
Filled with integrity.

God's Blessings to All the Fathers!



## FLAG DAY IS JUNE 14

Some people may not realize that Francis Scott Key, the author of "The Star-Spangled Banner," composed four stanzas for what became our national anthem. The last stanza is as follows:

*O, thus be it ever when freemen shall stand,  
Between their loved home and the war's desolation  
Blest with victory and peace,  
May the heaven-rescued land,  
Praise the Power that hath made and preserved us a  
nation.  
Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,  
And this be our motto – "In God is our trust."  
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave  
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave.*

~Great American Stories, Poems and Essay

## THOSE SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE THE MONTH OF JUNE 2022

**Sunday, June 5**  
**10:00 a.m.**  
w/Holy Communion

Elder:	Lee Gumm
Ushers:	Thompson, Rademacher, Kuehlman
Acolyte:	Katelynn Regutis
Altar Guild:	Kristine & Maggie Faucher
Scripture Reader:	Steve Hazen
Door Locker:	Ken Thompson

**Sunday, June 12**  
**10:00 a.m.**

Elder:	Jason Mengel
Ushers:	Hazens
Acolyte:	Ryan Mengel
Altar Guild:	Rachel Johnson & Julie Steele
Scripture Reader:	Lee Gumm
Door Locker:	Andy Fibiger

**Sunday, June 19**  
**10:00 a.m.**  
w/ Holy Communion

Elder:	Gerry Luebke
Ushers:	Fibigers
Acolyte:	Isaac Hasler
Altar Guild:	Shirley & Ray Ottman
Scripture Reader:	Todd Matte
Door Locker:	Dan Fibiger

**Sunday, June 26**  
**10:00 a.m.**

Elder:	Brain Faucher
Ushers:	Ray & Shirley Ottman
Acolyte:	Maggie Faucher
Altar Guild:	Gina & Madison Fibiger
Scripture Reader:	MaryAnn Fibiger
Door Locker:	Diane Marotz

