Notes from the ECSW Synod Assembly: 5/15/21

The Synod Assembly was held virtually (on Zoom) on Saturday May 15th, 2021 with approximately 230 delegates attending. **Kurt Rowe, Jayne Rowe and Pastor Dan Sire represented St. John at this event.**

The theme of the Assembly was “God in Empty Spaces” based on Job 38:26. The theme reflects the “empty spaces” experienced in this pandemic time. But the theme also reminds us of the promise that God is with us in these times.

The Assembly event was a blend of **conducting business**, **voting on resolutions**, and **listening to speakers and worship**.

**Business**

The following business matters were addressed at the Assembly:

* **Conducting Elections for Synod Council and other elected positions**. The Synod Council consists of elected representations from across the churches in our synod. The Synod Council supports the bishop and associate bishop in their work.

Other elected positions included representatives for the Synod Discipline Committee and representatives for the church-wide gathering in 2022.

* **Approving the Budget**.
  + The synod had $1.5 million dollars in income and expenses for the 2021 year. The income received represented a $76,000 decrease from the prior year.
  + The Assembly passed the 2022 budget with projected revenue of $1.4 million dollars, anticipating a surplus of $6700.
  + 50% of all income received by the Synod is shared with the ELCA church-wide general fund.
* **Approving Compensation Guidelines for Pastors**
  + The Assembly approved a recommended 2% increase in the base salary for all Pastors.
* **VP of Synod Council Report** – Kerry Fehrman - (St. Andrew’s Wausau)
* Anne Edison-Albright was elected to be the new Bishop and started her term on 12/1/20.
* Asher O’Callaghan was hired as the new Associate to the Bishop.
* A new Director of Communications and Community was hired (Pastor Jenn Collins from St. Andrew’s church in Wausau).
* It is recommended that congregations review and update their constitutions every three years
* **Bishop’s Report:** Bishop Anne Edison-Albright
* Bishop Anne began her term on 12/1/20, in the middle of the pandemic.
* She is focused on staffing her team and emerging from the pandemic.
* She reminded us that in this time, “even in places we consider to be empty, there’s a whole lot of holy stuff going on.”

**Resolutions**

Resolutions are statement of policy and guidance for churches in the synod. The following resolutions were adopted by the Synod Assembly:

**Resolution 1**: Opening the way for Women, People of Color, and LGBTQIA+ Candidates for Rostered Ministry

* Encourages congregations in the synod to make action plans for making our church safe for all people

**Resolution 2:** Support ELCA World Hunger Efforts

* Encourages congregation to participate in ELCA efforts to raise funds for world hunger efforts

**Resolution 3**: Participation in WELCA (Women of the ELCA)

* Encourages congregations to form a Women’s group and to connect to the Synodical Women’s Organization (SWO)

**Resolution 4**: On Becoming Anti-Racist

* Foster diversity and connection

**Speakers and Worship**

Several worship services were held including a Morning Prayer Service, a Healing Service and an Installation Service for the new Associate Bishop Asher O’Callaghan.

Rev. Dr. Anna Madsen was the keynote speaker. She focused her remarks on the book of Job. She reminded us of God’s enduring presence in our lives. She also encouraged us to consider that our security is not in our things, but in our community together, our compassion, and in the sure and certain knowledge that God is with us always.

Thank you for the opportunity to be your representatives at the 2021 Synod Assembly.

**“Council Corner”**

**Sue Cooley, President**

Good morning one and all, I have some important news to share. First of all we have received the bid for the bell tower louvers. Sara Stubbe has gotten us a fantastic bid. The list price is $15,488 and Sara has gotten us a price of $3949.44. We owe a big thank you to Sara and Greenheck. This is just the cost of the louvers. Curt has called the shingle company and they have agreed to help us place these when they come to do the roof. So together with the cost of the roof shingles ($2900) this is a very good deal indeed. The project should occur sometime in July/early August.

Secondly, we are in contact with the Associate Bishop Asher. He is working with the council to help us find someone (interim pastor) who is a good fit for the time between pastors. The interim will work with the profile committee to get our profile complete and we can then look for a pastor to call. This process can take between a year/year and a half. We will try to do everything we can to move this process along.

Lastly, we are entering a new phase of covid practices. The number of cases in Marathon County are going down, a good sign indeed. Mask wearing will not be required but is recommended. Those who are not vaccinated are still at risk and I personally will still wear a mask because I have had no typical winter illnesses. That is up to you, but please try to be accepting no matter what you choose. Beginning in June we will go to one service at 9. I am hoping we can still have a few outdoor services this summer. Pastor Asher will be here for an outdoor service on July 18th, this will be your chance to personally ask any questions you may have of him. Unfortunately we have to formally say goodbye to Pastor Dan. This will occur with two celebrations. His last sermon as our official Pastor May 30th will be one you will want to try to attend to thank him for his time here. We will also have a formal celebration August 15. Please keep these dates open and plan to attend and celebrate together.

**Council Members.** Here is a list of Council Members. Please contact them with any concerns or issues you may have. Council meets once a month and welcomes input from the congregation.

President: Sue Cooley – 715-675-8566; [cooley1512@outlook.com](mailto:cooley1512@outlook.com)

Vice President: Barb Paulsen – 715-845-9884; [ericbarbp@aol.com](mailto:ericbarbp@aol.com)

Treasurer: Perry Kufahl – 715-675-1383; pnskufahl@outlook.com

Secretary: Shelley Kufahl – 715-675-1383; [pnskufahl@outlook.com](mailto:pnskufahl@outlook.com)

Trustees: Curt Cooley – 715-571-4057; [usfcool@gmail.com](mailto:usfcool@gmail.com)

Scott Oestreich – 715-675-4360; [scottsmachinellc@gmail.com](mailto:scottsmachinellc@gmail.com)

Evangelism: Lane Bahr – 715-297-0017; [lucylane35@hotmail.com](mailto:lucylane35@hotmail.com)

Fellowship: Madeline Grueneberg – 715-574-9095; [MadelineSchwede@aol.com](mailto:MadelineSchwede@aol.com)

Education: Jan Mueller – 715-675-9558; [dmjm5455.wau@gmail.com](mailto:dmjm5455.wau@gmail.com)

Worship: Sue Harris – 715-551-6282; smae53@gmail.com

**Council Meeting Minutes.** Copies of the minutes from the most recently held Council meeting are by the mailboxes. Please feel free to pick up a copy. If more are needed, please contact the church office.

**Worship Committee.** Are you interested in being on a committee that would be involved in planning worship services? This would include outdoor, special services etc. Please bring new ideas and suggestions as we move forward in 2021. Please contact Sue Harris, worship chair, at 715-551-6282 or email [smae53@gmail.com](mailto:smae53@gmail.com).

Thank you

**VISION FOR ST JOHN**

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, Village of Maine, Wausau, WI is a country church with an average Sunday worship attendance of about 100 folks. We are affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Yet, more than numbers or affiliations, we are a congregation which welcomes all who seek meaning and hope in their lives through all the possibilities of a connection to the love of God in Jesus Christ. At our core, we value and nurture relationships.

**We Value and Nurture Relationships With our God**

* “He (Jesus) said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’” (Matthew 22:37 NRSV)

**We Value and Nurture Relationships with Each Other**

* “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.” (John 10:10 NRSV)

**We Value and Nurture Relationships with our Community**

* “I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.” (John 13:34 NRSV)

**We Value and Nurture Relationships with Ourselves**

* “For this reason…we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God’s will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding…” (Colossians 1:9 NRSV)

**Eye on Local Art - Pat Plunkett.** Action is slowly ramping up with the local art galleries. The Center for the Visual Arts, right here in Wausau, is featuring a “Hard and Soft” exhibit from May 14 through July 10. On display will be examples of fine art created in both fiber and ceramic, displaying a stark contrast regarding the mediums employed. At the Riverfront Gallery in Stevens Point, the annual featured exhibit called “Visions XXII” will be happening again from June 25 through August 15. This signature show displays fine art from artists located far and wide. All the above-mentioned shows are juried and will assuredly display a high quality of fine art. As always, these galleries are in strict accordance with rules regarding public health safety.

**Homebound Parishioners.** The following parishioners are no longer able to consistently attend worship services. I visit them to remind them that they are loved by God and loved by their community of faith, St. John. Sometimes it is helpful to hear those reminders from someone in addition to me.

Harriet Wanner Carol Fitzke Harley Goetsch

3107 Westhill Drive 237227 N. 120th Ave. Rennes Health/Rehab Ctr.

Wausau, WI 54401 Wausau, WI 54401 4810 Barbican Avenue Weston, WI 54476

Florian Kolbe

540 E. Thomas St.

Apt. 108

Wausau, WI 54403

**Financial Report for April, 2021**

**April Year-to-Date**

**Income Received $15,276 $48,890**

**Expenses Paid $12,709 $52,276**

**Difference $2,567 ($3,386)**

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**Attendance Report**

2021 2020

Average Weekly/April 103 172

Average Weekly/Year-to-Date 107 132

**It’s full steam ahead with**

**Rocky Railway VBS 2021**

***Jesus’ Power will Pull Us Through!!***

**Kids track through field-tested rotations that reinforce relevant**

**Bible points and immerse kids in new adventures.**

**Kids will climb aboard and join together as we chug into a week**

**full of fun and adventures!!!**

**Our train will make stops at Sing and Play Express, Bible Adventures,**

**Imagination Station, Loco Motion Games, Chew Chew Snacks,**

**KidVid Cinema, and Rocky Wrap-Up!**

**June 20th – 24th**

**6p – 8p**

**3 easy ways to register!**

**Email:** [**lucylane35@hotmail.com**](mailto:lucylane35@hotmail.com)

**Online: stjohnwausau.org or, Registration forms available at church**

**(return to Lane Bahr’s mailbox)**

**If you have questions or would like to volunteer, please call Lane @ 715.297.0017**

**June Birthdays** **June Anniversaries**

6-2 Dylan Landrath 6-1 Tom & Pam Le Duc

6-2 Elijah Linzmeyer 6-3 Ken & Karen Matushak

6-2 Brendan Ohrmundt 6-4 Dan & Robin Hein

6-2 Lee Sillars 6-6 Laverne & Marilyn Grunenwald

6-3 Nicole Kudronowicz 6-9 Charles & Joanne Zahn

6-3 Brayden Melander 6-11 Paul & Stacey Linzmeyer

6-3 Rita Radant 6-12 Del & Brenda Tesch

6-4 Cody Haroldson 6-14 Todd & Deb Maley

6-5 Chuck Eno 6-17 Chuck & Beth Eno

6-5 Billie Jo Grueneberg 6-19 Scott & Lynn Buchberger

6-5 Jason Tabaka 6-21 Brian & Nicole Anderson

6-6 Karen Matushak 6-21 Stuart & Jody Gehrke

6-6 Shonda Woodmansee 6-23 Pete & Phyllis Seubert

6-7 Brandon Clausen 6-24 Scott & Cherish Oestreich

6-7 Connie Hoffman 6-29 John & Louise Harter

6-7 Zayla Howe 6-29 Brian & Amy Marquardt

6-7 Joshua Tesch

6-8 Rachel Ohrmundt

6-8 Violet Teske

6-10 Jason Mueller

6-13 Leslie Ugoretz

6-17 Randy Kopp

6-17 Sarah Severson

6-20 Randy Knudsen

6-21 Judy Floistad

6-21 Clarissa Knapp

6-22 Brian Marquardt

6-22 Kohin Pasholk

6-22 Kurt Rowe

6-23 Duane Mueller

6-24 Barb Paulsen

6-25 Spencer Hoeft

6-26 James J. Borelli

6-27 Kylee Sala

6-29 Jan Spangler