

PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

Discipleship seems to be a “churchy word” that is associated with the 12 men who followed Jesus over 2,000 years ago. It is a word that is often used in the past tense involving others.

The reality is that being a disciple is what we signed up for in our baptism, confirmation, and involvement in our faith community. Discipleship is not something for others it is descriptive of our faith. When we view disciples at just the people in the Bible we diminish our relationship with Jesus.

In fact the last thing that Jesus said to his disciples (US) in the gospel of Matthew goes something like this *“Get going and encourage everyone you meet, far and near, in this way of life, marking them by baptism in the threefold name: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Then equip, teach, support them in the practice of all I have commanded you. I’ll be with you as you do this, growing and creating my disciple, day after day after day, right up to the end of the age.”*

Join me in worship this fall as we engage in a 6-part series on Discipleship. Each week we will explore different dynamics of being a follower of Jesus in the 21st century!

In addition to worship we will also be offering opportunities for adults to gather on Sunday mornings during the education time, 9:15 beginning Sunday October 4th.

Of course there will be refreshments!!!!!!!



Discipleship

In God’s Surprising Grace!

John.



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OSLC/Skogdalen
Parish Paper
September 2015



*Our Savior's/Skogdalen
Parish Paper August 2015*



Our Savior’s/Skogdalen Parish
306 S. Main St.
Westby, WI 54667

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“Thank You” to Corey & Barb Christenson for providing fresh flowers for the altar at Our Savior’s this summer. These flowers have brightened our sanctuary and many homes during the week as Barb has been very thoughtful in sending bouquets home with someone after the service.

TO GIVE or NOT?

Read Deuteronomy 15:7-11

If there is a poor man...in any of the towns
Of the land that the Lord your God is giving you,
Do not be hardhearted or tightfisted
Deuteronomy 15:7 (NIV)

In the scripture above, I cannot find any test the poor have to pass before I am commanded to “give generously.” There is no requirement that they be honest, hard-working, worthy or even thankful. Could it be that God’s admonition to give is sometimes more about my maintaining a compassionate heart than about what the recipient will do with the money?

Prayer: Dear God, help us be good stewards of all you have provided. Give us discernment to know how and when to give, and keep our hearts open to our brothers and sisters. Amen

If someone uses my help when they don’t need it, that’s their problem. If I don’t give my help to someone who needs it, that’s my problem.

FALL CLEAN-UP DAY AT OS’s

On Sunday, September 27th,
we will be having a fall clean-up day
following church.

This is for anyone wanting to spruce up the church.
Please come and help that day.

Any questions, contact Jordan Christenson - 632-4958



SKOGDALEN COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS
(Complete minutes are available at the church office)

OLD BUSINESS: After the last meeting, the shed was looked at and deemed to be in good shape; a new one is not needed. The restroom areas have been torn out. An overhead door is still needed, which hopefully can get done this fall. The trees will be trimmed after the leaves have fallen off. Krause has looked at needed tuckpointing and will send cost info to Nancy. Membership update letters were reviewed and a few revisions made. Council members will make note of who has been absent from church during the previous month and give them a call to let them know they’ve been missed.

NEW BUSINESS: We will have seminary student Josh Knutsen, from Arcadia once a month. Pastor John will be gone on September 6th; the service will be done entirely by lay people, with someone doing the sermon given by Bishop Arends at the Synod Assembly.

Meatball dinner will be Sunday, October 4. We will meet after church on August 30 to go over the list for supplies and workers.

OUR SAVIOR’S COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS
(Complete minutes are available at the church office)

Building Update: We will be having a congregational meeting next Sunday to vote on an official name change. When the constitution was translated into English during the 1930’s it was never recorded with the State.

WAY will begin later in September – Wednesday evenings at OSLC, Friday mornings at school and some Sundays at WCP.

Confirmation – orientation will be this Thursday and/or Sunday.

Sunday School – looks like another great year. Pastor John will be meeting with Joel Jepson to discuss providing leadership for adults on Sunday mornings.

Stewardship – focusing on a number of ministries – “Come For Supper”, monthly ministry focus and fall estimate of giving program.

Property – suggestion to have a fall “work day” to deep clean the church before building renovation. A large plastic pig on a trailer will be used at parades for hunger awareness.

Worship themes – Need to get 4-5 persons to handle visuals for worship themes. Would like to get new banners – theme for Baptism and also Funerals was mentioned.

The LWR School Kits need the following:



Lutheran World Relief
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. LASTING PROMISE.

- 4 – 70 sheet notebooks of wide or college-ruled paper
- 1 – 30 cm. ruler, or a ruler with centimeters on one side and inches on the other side
- 1 – Pencil Sharpener
- 1 – Blunt Tip Scissors
- 5 - #2 Unsharpened Pencils with Erasers
- 5 – Black or Blue Ballpoint Pens (no gel ink)
- 1 – Box of 16 or 24 Crayons
- 1 – 2 ½” Eraser
- 1 – Sturdy Drawstring Backpack-Style Bag (Bags will be provided by Skogdalen Quilters and OS Council)

OTHER SUPPORT TO LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

In addition to School Kits, we can support the efforts of LWR by providing items for the kits below. More detailed information available at church and there will also be collection containers in the back of the sanctuary for these kits, or drop off at the church office. This would be a great way for families, small groups, 4-H, boy and girl scouts, teams, classes, etc to do something great together!!!! Check out www.lwr.org for more information on LWR School Kits.



Baby Care Kits

Personal Care Kits

Fabric Kits

This September is a time of new beginnings for the
Westby Area Youth!

Recognizing how busy our youth are today, we are offering a variety of different experiences and times for youth to meet. This includes Sunday evening, Wednesday night and Friday mornings. A youth council will provide leadership and ideas for these events and for ministry experiences locally.



All WAY activities will begin the week of September 21 with the following schedule:

- **Wednesday, September 23 @ 5:45PM at Our Saviors - Food provided**
 - **Friday, September 25th @ 7:30 AM (high school)**
 - **Sunday, September 27th @ 7PM at WCP**

All High School students are encouraged to attend any one of the events that fits in with their schedules!

The WAY will travel to the Twin Cities the weekend of November 14th for an Urban Immersion Retreat. We will experience first-hand the complexities of poverty, meet and serve those affected and most importantly, ways that we can address the issues of poverty in our own area. We have 20 spaces reserved.

And planning continues for next summer's mission trips. We will be heading to the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota July 15-24 and will offer a River Boat Trip facilitated by Sugar Creek for those looking to a faith experience in Nature.

An informational meeting about all 3 trips will be held on September 27th 5:30PM at Westby Coon Prairie.

WAY is the joint ministry of WCP/Vang -OSLC/Skogdalen



“COME FOR SUPPER”

**Our Savior’s Lutheran Church
Every Tuesday
Begins October 6, 2015**

***Social Hour 4:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.
Meal Served 5:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.***

NO CHARGE “EVER”

EVERYONE WELCOME



“Come for Supper”, that will hopefully be the newest catch phrase you will hear often, in and around Our Savior’s, Skogdalen and our communities.

Starting Tuesday October 6th and every Tuesday thereafter, Our Savior’s will open its doors to the community, for a free meal. Yes, I did say F, R, E, E! This will be provided by the generosity and willingness of many helping hands, to provide, prepare and serve the meals. This is opened to anyone and everyone wanting good conversation and a hearty meal. Tuesday just may become the new “No Cook Tuesday” in your household.

Doors will open at 4pm for an hour of visiting and the meal will be served at 5pm until 6pm. If you feel God calling you to donate, volunteer your time or simply connect with people in community, please contact Marilyn Leum #(608) 634-4839 or Jayne Anderson #(608) 634-4851

The next Stewardship Committee meeting is on September 10, 2015 at 5:30pm in the church basement. All are invited to attend.

“Come for Supper” is our response to Jesus asking Peter three times, “Do you love me?” (John 21. 15-17) And we say, as Peter did also, “Yes Lord, I love you.” Jesus then tells us to, “Feed my Sheep”. As disciples, we are called to love our neighbors, to uplift one another and help improve our community through addressing the needs and economic struggles all around us, one meal at a time.

If God is enough -

from the latest addition of the Lutheran from our ELCA Bishop

There is the sound of lament in many parts of our church. Populations have shifted and people have drifted away. Attitudes about religion have changed and the status of the church in our culture has diminished. This makes us anxious and, in some cases, desperate. How do we stop the decline? Where is the next generation? What happened? What does this all mean?



I have a theory. We are experiencing God’s judgment. Oh, not in a fire-and-brimstone-plague-of-locusts kind of way, but in the tenacious, fearsome, loving claim that God has on all of us. *The church does not belong to us. The church is not a vehicle for our convenience, status, success or even comfort.* The church is the living body of Christ, breathed by the Spirit and called into deep communion with God. Everything else is at best supplementary and at worst a distraction.

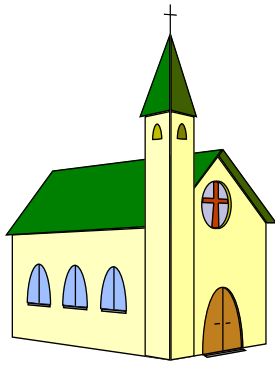
God might be calling God’s people to examine what has a claim on our attention. Where is our energy being drawn?

If the answer to our desperate questions is anything else than to the intimate and complete love of God shown in the crucified and risen Christ, then we are being drawn away from the source of our life as a people and as a church.

There was a provocative article in the December 2012 Christian Century that suggests that the church is relearning that its essence lies not in its programs and accomplishments, its activities and accolades, but in the truth that ‘she on earth hath union with God the Three in One’ and that God is enough. Coming to this knowledge means being weaned from the glamorous results-oriented American culture of production, measurement and unlimited growth.”

So, dear church, is God enough? If not, then we are consigned to an endless, exhausting and empty quest for meaning, relevance and purpose. If God is enough, then we have everything we need. If God is enough we are free to love in return and give our lives away for the sake of the gospel and in service to the neighbor. If God is enough we can unclench our hands and our lives. *If God is enough we can even let go of the church knowing that it is Christ’s church and not ours.*

And, if it is God’s will that there be an [ELCA](#) witness to the gospel, there is no force on earth, not even our own, that can stop it.



**SKOGDALEN
LUTHERAN CHURCH
FALL MEATBALL DINNER**

**County P & Oakdale Avenue, Rural
Westby**

(6.5 Miles Northeast of Coon Valley on County P)

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4th

11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.



**MEATBALLS,
MASHED POTATOES & GRAVY,
CARROTS, COLE SLAW,
APPLE SAUCE, LEFSE, & PIE**

SERVED FAMILY STYLE

\$10/ADULTS \$5/AGES 6-12

CARRYOUTS AVAILABLE

Greetings from the Sunday School!

We are excited to be starting another new year together! Our first day of Sunday School is Sunday, September 13th. Kids age 3 through 6th grade are welcome and encouraged to attend. Informational letters have been mailed to children who were registered last year and also to those who are three years old according to our baptism records. If you did not get a letter or would like more information, please contact Lori Johnson (cljohnson@mwt.net), Janessa Anderson (anderson.janessa@gmail.com), or the church office. Also remember, new friends are always welcome at Sunday School.



Our Savior's/Skogdalen

confirmation

Purpose of Confirmation:

Explore what it means to be a Christ-follower and actively grow in relationship with Jesus.

7 & 8 graders and their families

- Worship - connecting with Christian community
- Wednesdays - learning about being a Christ-follower
- Service - being the hands and feet of Jesus
- Retreats/Camps - an intensive Christian experience.

Wednesdays 3:30—5:00

September 23 Wednesday confirmation begins

Friday—Sunday October 2-4 Sugar Creek Retreat

Adult

Why should the kids have all the fun?!?!

This fall we will offer opportunities for adults to gather on Sunday mornings during the education time, 9:15 beginning Sunday October 4th.

Topics will vary from week to week. Of course there will be refreshments!!!!





These are collaborative ministries of Westby Area Lutheran Churches and the South Conference of the LaCrosse Area Synod!

Birthday Cakes for Kids - many of our grade school kids don't have the privilege of enjoying a birthday cake due to a variety of reasons. The ministry plan is to provide all the makings of a birthday cake to every grade school kid in the Westby area grade school. All the churches in the Westby school will be invited to collect birthday cake kits. The birthday kits will include a cake mix, topping, apple sauce (instead of oil/eggs), aluminum cake pan, directions and a birthday banner all in a solid colored gift bag. There would also be gluten free kits. A sample of the kit is in the back of our churches along with an instruction sheet. Each birthday bags cost approximately five dollars. You can also bring an individual item or make a monetary contribution.



at the



ELCA Congregations of the South Conference are working together to provide a "Prayer at the Fair" booth at the Vernon County Fair September 16-20. A variety of ways to pray will be offered. If you would be willing to pray confidentially aloud or in silence with fair-goers who stop by the booth. For further information and sign up please contact:

Lynette Johnson, Our Savior's and Skogdalen Lutheran Parish: jenta@mwt.net. Volunteers will be asked to sign-up for a two hour time slot. Written prayers will be available for use.



Great Practices Series

"Let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action." 1 John 3:18

Join Pastor John and other Disciples of Jesus in our parish by exploring how to "Be the Church" in the 21st century by attending any of this year's GPS events.

GPS is a series of educational events sponsored by our synod that address congregational ministry challenges and opportunities. This series is for anyone who is interested in growing in their own understanding, skills & practice of ministry. These are usually held the 4th Saturday of each month at the Synod office in La Crosse.

Talk with Pastor John, Ernie Peterson OSLC president, John Opsahl Skogdalen President

Sept. 26 Can This Church Live?

Many congregations are facing questions about their future, due to declining participation, membership and dollars. Do we make budget cuts? Do we merge with another church? Is it time to close? How do we make this decision, remain faithful and use our resources as wisely as possible?

Oct. 24 Keeping Our Children Safe

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me." We must take care to create environments that are safe for children in every way, from any kind of harm. What policies and practices must be in place in order to provide safety? What is legally necessary, but more importantly, what is morally imperative?

Nov. 7 !BONUS! Gracious Conversations About Difficult Issues

Led by Rev. Scott Anderson, Executive Director, Wisconsin Council of Churches This workshop we will draw upon the work of Parker Palmer and the WCC's Season of Civility. Participants will learn about and practice the tools of civil dialogue. This is important as we head into this presidential election year.

Nov. 21 We're a Friendly Church! (Aren't we?)

All churches do hospitality, some just do it better than others. Church insiders are not the best judges of good hospitality. Unless hospitality is intentional, it is forgotten. How do we improve our welcome and create a community of belonging?