

AES MINISTRIES

Augustana/East Sveadahl Lutheran Churches

May Newsletter

From the Pastor

*Wait for the Lord, be strong, and let your hearts take courage; wait for the Lord.
(Psalm 27:14)*

How are you with waiting? It seems to me we spend a lot of time just waiting for the next thing to happen. Maybe some of these phrases sound familiar... Waiting in line. Waiting to be served. Waiting to see the doctor. Waiting for the mail. I have a confession to make. Waiting is not my strong suit.

I find it convicting to read the scripture lesson above. When the Bible says “*wait for the Lord*”, those words prompt a groan inside me. The writer’s thoughts speak to my reality. I have an impatient streak. I get bored easily. And I suspect I am not alone. Could the Psalm writer be journaling with a similar mind set? We live within a “*gotta have it NOW*” culture. How long does an Amazon Prime package take to arrive? What does Mapquest say about the quickest way for traveling to a destination? When does my Covid shot have full effectiveness? How long will it take?

Patience is a virtue. Not just for people, it’s also groups, organizations, and countries. I think congregations in transition between pastors struggle with this word “wait” too. I hear lots of phrases like these. *It’ll be so much better when we get back to normal. Our problem is we need a REAL pastor. Let’s get on with it so we can move forward.* The truth is simple. Everything takes time. Calling and then waiting for a pastor to arrive takes time.

There are bold words in the verse above. We “*wait for the Lord*”. Scripture has a repeated theme – at the right time God provides. So, we wait for the Lord to provide the right person in the right time. Why? Because the right person will be a blessing. Waiting for a blessing is always a worthwhile endeavor. Plus, here is an insight. Waiting is an activity of faith. Believing that God will provide is one of our core faith perceptions.

Pastor Gene

April Pastor's Report

Appreciations & Reviews!

- Appreciations:
 - Lenten Midweek Theme → God's Promises in tough times
 - Midweek Lent – Holden Evening Prayer
 - Palm Sunday – Day of Transitions – Lyla & Palm Branches
 - Holy Week
 - Maundy Thursday – Noon Service best attended/Strip Altar
 - Brandt Ridge/Prairie View/Pleasant View Visits
 - Good Friday – Candles & Crucifixion Participants
 - Easter Sunday → attendance WOW!
 - 3 Baptisms in March... 1 @ East/2 @ Augustana



Discussion Topics

- Funerals & Deaths – Bob Miller (4/6)
- Remaining Protocols:
 - Social Distancing & Masks
 - Sign Ins
 - Open for Funerals/Weddings... w/capacity limits
 - NO meals/coffees/food
- Lyla – Wednesdays in April Bible Study “Are We There Yet?”
- April/May Outlook
 - 4th/5th Grade Communion Sunday – (April 11th) Class – April 6th ... ADD Communion
 - Augustana Annual Mtg – April 18th ... ½ Hr Service → Get Back Home
 - Church Council Installation Sunday (Augustana) May 2nd
 - Farming Sunday (East) May 2nd
 - Annual Mtg – (East) May 2nd
 - Confirmation Sunday (May 16th) - Pandora's Box
 - Pentecost Sunday (May 25th)
 - HS Baccalaureate @ 1st Lutheran (Wed June 2nd)
- May Council Mtg: 7:30 on May 12th ... final Confirmation class @ 6:30
- **April Week Off...** April 19-25th
- **Sue - Time Off...** April 27 ff

AUGUSTANA - May

RADIO BROADCASTS

Sponsor a week for \$40. AES Ministries sponsors the 2nd, 4th and 5th (when applicable) Sundays at 11:30 am on KSUM 1370 AM. Call the church office for available Sundays.

Radio sponsor for May 23rd is the Augustana Churchmen.

A sponsor from Augustana is needed for May 30th broadcast.

MAY CIRCLES

Rebecca Circle meets in the Fireside Room Tuesday, May 4th at 9:30 am. Bible Study will be Daily Discipleship studying Luke 24:36b-48. **All are welcome.** Please bring your own coffee if you like.

Sewing Circle meets in Augustana Social Hall Tuesday, May 18th at 9:00 am. **All are welcome to help with this mission to provide quilts for Baptisms, Graduations and those in need.**

Martha Circle members will be contacted when meetings can be scheduled.

DONATIONS

\$50.00 – Technology Fund in honor of Pastor Gene by Darrell & Leora Ask

MEMORIALS

\$20.00 – Stained Glass Window Fund in memory of Bob Miller

\$15.00 – Undesignated in memory of Colleen Nessler

ALTAR FLOWERS

Please call the church office if you wish to provide altar flowers for a particular Sunday and your name will be placed on the schedule.

May 9th Altar Flowers are provided by Paul, Heather and Branten Missling

AUGUSTANA - May

TRANSITIONS **FUNERALS**

Robert (Bob) Miller, Jr. passed away on April 6, 2021. A private graveside service was held at Mt. Hope Cemetery on April 10, 2021.

Please continue to keep his family and friends in your thoughts and prayers.

MISSIONARY SPONSORS

Please call the church office to sponsor our Missionary. The cost is \$20.00 for a week. **The month of May is available.**



ELECTRONIC GIVING-AUGUSTANA

4 WAYS

1. Electronically: visit church web site and click on the "Secure Contributions" tab
2. Secure Contributions: visit the church website www.augustanachurch.org
3. Give+Text: from your phone, text number is 844-686-4439 (unique to Augustana)
4. Offering envelopes: through the mail or into the drop box

Questions: Contact Financial Secretary, Deanna Hoffman 507-317-7724, ddesigns@mchsi.com

WORSHIP CREWS

If you are interested in joining the Worship Crew (reading lessons and prayers, leading hymns), please contact the Church Office – 375-4792.



EAST

RADIO BROADCASTS

May 2: First Lutheran, St. James
9: East
16: First Lutheran, St. James
23: Augustana
30: Augustana

ALTAR COMMITTEE

Tammy Stevens-Rathman, Julene Hoffman

VISITING COMMITTEE

Kris Suess, Erma Griffith

LECTORS

May 2: Evonne Moll
9: Mike Menssen
16: Sonja Coleman
23: Erma Griffith
30: Cindy Torkelson

EAST RADIO BROADCASTS

May 9: Darryl and Joann Jensen
June 13: Lisa Shellum, Lori Urevig
July 11: Wally and Phyllis Jurgens
August 8:
August 29:
September 12:
October 10:
October 31:

If you would like to sponsor one of these broad-casts, call Susan at 317-5293. Cost is \$40.00.

ANNUAL MEETINGS

The East Sveadahl Lutheran Church Annual meeting and Cemetery Association meeting will be held on **Sunday, May 2, 2021 following** the morning worship service following all protocols. A box lunch will be available after the meeting.

EAST

MAY WORSHIP

In sanctuaries following protocols

9:00 am East Sveadahl

10:30 am Augustana

Facebook: May 2, 16, 30 – Augustana

May 9 & 23 – East

TRANSITIONS:

PRAYER CONCERNS: Tom, Ray, Don, Mary Ann, Orval, Chloe, Charles

STEWARDSHIP REPORTS:

Needed through March	\$ 17,892.00
Received through March	24,102.20
Ahead or Behind through March +	\$ 6,210.20
Received in March	\$ 10,192.55

HAPPY BIRTHDAY/BAPTISMAL DAY

2 Kaden Suggs [5-13]
12 Ken Moll [6-10]
 Bev Lenning [6-19]
17 Jared Bridges [7-28]
 Chad Wolle [8-13]
22 Angela Noren [2-1]
26 Daxtyn Anderson [8-5]
29 Mercedes Lenning [8-20]

150th Anniversary

It was decided at the last council meeting to dedicate the Sunday, August 8, 2021 service to our 150th Anniversary. This will be an in-person worship service. The service will be on Facebook and the radio for all who want to participate. We hope to have a celebration in the future.

AES Vacation Bible School – Save the Date: Monday, June 7th, 2021

Camp S'more with Jesus! One day camp, June 7th at Memorial Park, 8:30-11:30 am. More information will be coming in weekly updates and June newsletter.

Noisy Offering – May 30th ~ Start saving your coins for the next noisy offering!

Baccalaureate and Senior Recognition

Community Baccalaureate Service: All St. James High School graduates are invited to participate in the Community Baccalaureate Service. It will be held at 7:00 pm on Wednesday, June 2nd at First Lutheran Church, St. James.

AES 2021 GRADUATES

East Sveadahl will celebrate the graduation of Mason Lenning and Michael Suarez in June. We hope to have nice weather in June so we can celebrate outside. More information on the exact Sunday in June will be in upcoming bulletins.

Augustana will be honoring their graduates – Emily Gronewold, Macyn Hirschman, Nikolas Knaack, Kimberly Lothert and Jack Mahoney-Berg at a June worship service, more information will be shared when it comes available.

St. James Graduation ceremony will be held June 6th at 2:00 pm at the High School Event Center.

Fireside Chat

Our first new book to be reviewed is the New York Times Bestseller, [Help Thanks Wow: The Three Essential Prayers](#) written by Anne Lamott. Colorful, occasionally somewhat adult language, reverent, poignant, thoughtful, authentic-these are some of the words I would use to describe the writings of Lamott. I am convinced that she states what 95% of us think and/or say in the privacy of our own homes when no one is listening, with maybe the exception of Fido.

[Help Thanks Wow](#) is a wonderful faith book regarding prayer and everyday life. It is written with humor, gratitude and insight into Lamott's life, struggles and all. Lamott asks in the book, "What's the difference between you and God? God never thinks he's you." It is worth the read, it is a short book and perfect with your afternoon coffee. Prayer boiled down to 3 fundamentals-Help Thanks Wow-I think we can all relate! Becky

"Once you have read a book you care about, some part of it is always with you." Louis L'Amour

Adult Education - Weekly Prayer Meeting!

Becky Cobb and Jo Howe are hosting an old-fashioned weekly prayer meeting every week on Monday morning at 10:00 am. Please join them on Monday mornings for about 20 minutes. Come as you are, you will be welcomed! Click Here to Join the Zoom Meeting

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/77502081644?pwd=NTdkeXB6TUlrazliSzVKZkhwTjg1UT09>

Website/Facebook

“Like” us on Facebook at Augustana/East Sveadahl Ministries Facebook page for pictures, updates, and inspiration. Please text information and pictures to Lisa Carlson.

The AES Ministries website is www.augustanachurch.org. Send information to the church secretaries.

Augustana Financial Facts - March 2021 Summary

	Current Month	YTD
Total Giving -	\$ 8,633.15	\$ 36,511.78
Total Expenses – Paid from	- \$14,211.64	- \$ 31,668.93
General Fund	- \$ 5,578.49	+ \$ 4,842.85

Our “Building Insurance and Workers Compensation” bills were paid in March, this is a quarterly expense and amounts to almost \$3000.00. Utility bills also are still on the high side which is typical through the winter months. In order to sustain our monthly budget, we need an average of \$3200.00 per week. We also received \$2100 in March to add to the Campership fund, \$1150 for additional technology equipment and \$273 was added to the Thrivent Choice fund. These dollars are not part of the General Fund, but are set aside for these specific programs. Your ongoing financial support of these and all programs at Augustana is so very valuable as we move even closer to a new chapter in our ministry.

Respectfully Submitted, Judy Thulien, Treasurer

Weekly Bulletins and Updates

Sunday bulletins and weekly office updates have been sent out via emails to keep congregation members in touch with schedules and activities. If you are unable to receive them by that means, they will now be posted weekly on the AES Ministries website home page. Our website address is www.augustanachurg.org

Thank You’s

Dear Members of East Sveadahl, Thank you for your gift to Green Lake Lutheran Ministries! ... As we plan for another great summer of camping ministry, your gift of \$300.00 will ensure that camp counselors are equipped to share God’s abundant love and never-ending grace with thousands of campers. ...

Sincerely, Travis Aufderheide, Executive Director

Dear Deacon Klee and the Family of East Sveadahl, Thank you for the Naming Service for our grandbabies. It helps bring closure to a difficult time. And thank you all for the many thoughts and prayers.

In Faith, Matt and Mykia Fisch and Family

Thank you to WELCA and my Augustana Church family for all the gift bags and goodies I have received.

Blessings to all, LaVonne Watson

Thank you to the members of East Sveadahl Lutheran Church from the SWM Synod of the ELCA in grateful appreciation for giving \$1800.00 for Mission Support beyond the congregation for synod and churchwide ministries of the ELCA.

Jon Anderson, Synod Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, Presiding Bishop

Thank you to everyone who remembered me on my birthday! The cards, food, best wishes, and drive-by greetings were very much appreciated. Thanks also for all the caring thoughts and well wishes while I’m taking treatments!

Tom Anderson

Regardless of age, the Easter Bunny is always welcome!! A special thanks to TLC and the Augustana WELCA for the Easter baskets filled with goodies! They fill my heart with joy!

Deacon Lyla Klee

(Thank you's-continued)

Thank you to WELCA for remembering me at Easter with the Easter basket. Viola Sandberg

Augustana WELCA-Thank you for all the gifts sent during these trying times, they always showed up when I needed an uplift! Thanks for all you do! Linda Madison

2021 Southwestern Minnesota Synod Assembly – June 6, 11 & 12, 2021

Virtual Assembly - Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, MN. For questions: Please contact: Tamara Schacher, Admin. Assistant to Bishop Jon V. Anderson tammy.schacher@swmnelca.org 507.627.9041 (Direct Line) 507.430.2367 (Cell)

Watonwan County Food Shelf

There will be another food box distribution, **Friday, May 7th at Memorial Park**. We are in need of volunteers for this. Our New Location & hours: 113 7th St. S., St James, MN 56081; Every Wednesday 10-Noon, 2nd & 4th Thursday, 10-Noon & 5-6:30 PM. Phone: 507-621-4264 Email: wcfodshelf@gmail.com Website: www.wcfoodshelf.org



AES JOINT COUNCIL - Telephone meeting on March 24, 2021

As per a telephone conference call for AES Ministries Joint Council on Wednesday, March 24, 2021 the unanimous decision was made to open our churches to funerals following the protocols for wearing masks, social distancing, and the number of people in attendance requirements.

Janet Bloomquist, AES Council Member

AES JOINT COUNCIL - Special Meeting on April 5, 2021

The AES Joint Council met on Monday, April 5, 2021 at Augustana to consider a compensation package for a pastoral candidate.

Janet Bloomquist, AES Council Member

AES JOINT COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – April 6, 2021

The AES Joint Council met on Tuesday, April 6, 2021 at East following COVID-19 protocols. Those present were Wayne Jurgens, Teresa Andrews, Leora Ask, Janet Bloomquist, Becky Cobb, Terry Engel, Mike Menssen, Greg Thulien, and Susan Anderson.

Weddings in churches, just like funerals, are now included in the opening of COVID protocols. A motion was made (Greg), seconded (Leora) to open our churches to weddings following the protocols – wearing masks, social distancing, and meeting the attendance requirements. The motion passed.

After an explanation and discussion, a motion was made (Greg), seconded (Becky) to recommend to the Augustana and East Councils to retro pay Erica Reid for her work as TLC coordinator. The motion carried. The Council thanks Erica for her work to keep TLC going during the pandemic.

The next meeting is Wednesday, May 5 at 7:00 pm at Augustana.

Respectfully submitted, Susan Anderson, Council Secretary

EAST SVEADAHL CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES – April 8, 2021

The East Sveadahl Church Council met on April 8, 2021 at 7 p.m. at church following COVID protocols. Those present were Tom Anderson, James Nasman, Janet Bloomquist, Evonne Moll, Wayne Jurgens, Lori Urevig, Erma Griffith, Sonja Coleman, Susan Anderson, and Pastor Gene.

Tom called the meeting to order, and Pastor Gene led us in prayer.

The February 2021 secretary's report was approved as read.

Sonja Coleman, Financial Secretary, and Treasurer, Evonne Moll, presented their reports. A motion by Erma, seconded by James, and passed to accept the reports as given.

The outstanding bills were presented by Tom. A motion by Janet, seconded by Lori, and passed to approve paying of bill.

Wayne presented the AES report. The complete report can be read in the newsletter.

Wayne presented the AES recommendation on a pastoral candidate for our churches along with the proposed financial package. A ballot vote took place on the calling of the recommended candidate with a unanimous vote cast. The vote on the recommended candidate will now go before both churches on Sunday, April 25 which allows for the posting of the vote three times as per the church's constitution. All votes must be a 2/3 majority to pass.

AES joint council recommended that Erica Garza, the TLC Coordinator, be retroactively reimbursed for her salary as she was working during COVID which amounts to 2880 hours and East's portion would be \$777.60. A motion by Wayne, seconded by James, and passed to approve the recommendation.

Pastor Gene presented his report. The complete report can be read in the newsletter. Pastor Gene highlighted the fact that masks are required in church.

OLD BUSINESS:

- The 150th anniversary of the East Sveadahl Church was discussed, and it was decided to set Sunday, August 8, 2021 to celebrate our 150th. A postcard will be sent out to everyone inviting them to help us celebrate on Facebook or radio on that Sunday. We will keep discussing a plan for a future celebration.
- Plans for the annual meeting were finalized.

NEW BUSINESS

- Tom presented a letter from the Synod in regard to Bishop Jon's 18 years of service and opportunities for congratulating him. It was tabled until next meeting.
- Tom read a letter regarding the St. James Fire Department Relief Association celebrating their 125th Anniversary this year. A motion was made by Wayne, seconded by Evonne, and passed to use our Lenten offering along with Noisy offering and donate \$125.00 to the St. James Fire Department Relief Association's 125th Anniversary.
- The June MN Synod Assembly will be virtual this year. We need two voting members, and it will be on the ballot at our annual meeting. Please let Tom know if you are interested in being a voting delegate.
- A discussion took place on having outdoor services this summer and everyone was in favor of the idea.

As there was no further business we closed with the Lord's Prayer.

The next church council meeting will be May 13, 2021 at 7 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Janet Bloomquist, Council Secretary

AES TLC EDUCATION MEETING – April 13, 2021 Zoom Meeting at 6:00 pm

Pastor Gene began our meeting with a prayer.

OLD BUSINESS:

-- Our committee has decided to use our **TLC curriculum "Dig In-Foundations in Faith."** Erica, as our Education Director, has signed us up for 2021-22. She told us we can download the Fall lessons anytime. She has sent us the password to get in.

(Education Committee Minutes-continued)

-- The **Adult Old Fashion Prayer Session** organized by Becky Cobb and Jo Howe has been going very well. It is such a calming time for prayer and reflection. It has been so good doing this COVID time. It has also been a wonderful way to catch up with our church friends before and after the session. Zoom has turned out to be a positive tool that we have learned to use during these challenging times.

-- **Green Lake Bible Ministries - The Camp-a-thon** has ended. On April 18th, Erica, Debbie and I will be going to the churches to say thank you for all the donations toward Green Lake Bible Ministries. Our churches have helped fund our 21 kids going to camp and help fund counselors. Our next project will be carpooling our kids to camp. Parents will be asked by Erica to help out.

-- We will revisit the TLC program in August working on more **ecumenical work** with the First Presbyterian Church of St. James. Pastor Lick, a graduate from GAC, and his teachers are very excited about working together in more ways. Our TLC committee is also very excited. We are having trouble finding teachers and space for all our students. We will continue this discussion throughout the year.

NEW BUSINESS:

-- **Confirmation** - It has been decided by the Education Committee and the AES boards that if the family and student feel that the child is ready to be confirmed they may do so. It's important that their faith statements are being reaffirmed and celebrated. This gives the student ownership in the decision. Allison Bluedorn will be confirmed this May 16th. We know her classmates will be there to help celebrate as she will be at their confirmation to celebrate also. We decided on a gift to give each confirmation student from the Education Committee.

-- **Faith Family Activity Mailings** are finished until September. We decided to not mail them in the Fall and just print and leave them out for families to take at each church.

-- Erica is calling a **Parent Pizza Information Meeting**. Parents, please watch for more emails from TLC.

-- **TLC for April 21 -- 3:30-5:00** - We're all extremely excited to have a short version of TLC outside, FINALLY! We can't wait to see everyone! We'll all wear our masks and be COVID safe in many ways while we are outside.

Here are some of the activities:

3:30 - Parents will drop off students at Augustana. Each child will get a new Thrivent t-shirt. They will be asked to sit on a carpet square that we received from Hanska Furniture. This will be on the lawn to eat their snack from East Sveadahl women, have announcements, and a lesson which is themed about God through Nature.

4:00 - We'll walk to the North Rink Park to play games. Soccer is organized by Dana and Erick Avila. Lydia Overson has volunteered also to help with games. Debbie Anderson has a craft station with plants and little pots.

4:30 - Songs by Alison Kulseth

4:50 - Walk back to Augustana to be picked up by parents at 5:00 pm.

-- **Camp VBS for June 7th 8:30- 11:30 am** - Our theme is **Camp Out-Getting S'more of Jesus :)**

We are in the process of getting teenager volunteers to lead the groups around the park to the different stations. We will need at least five teenagers. Pastor Lick and Linda Becken will be able to take care of the beginning and ending for the Welcome and lessons. Ali Kulseth is willing to take care of the music again. We have Jeanne Miest and an Augustana group of women helping with snacks and decorations. We will have surprise visitors helping us out. :) It will be held in the **South Memorial Park**, June 7, 2021; the **rain date is June 9th**.

-- We want to thank ahead of time all the East Sveadahl, Augustana, and First Presbyterian people who have and will be volunteering for our youth! We all know how important our youth is to us!

-- **Adult Summer Book Study** - It is in the works! Watch for announcements!

(Education Committee Minutes-continued)

-- **Adult Fall Book Study** - Becky Cobb is heading a book study **The Creed** by **Adam Hamilton**. It looks like an extremely interesting book discussing our Christian Creed and all the answers that are found in it.

Sincerely, Cindy Torkelson, AES Education Chairperson

AUGUSTANA LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES – APRIL 7, 2021

This meeting was held via Zoom video conferencing.

Present: Pastor Gene Alms, Dean Swenstad, Greg Thulien, Judy Thulien, Lisa Carlson, Dominique Berg, Paul Missling, Andy Freitag, Terry Engel, John Coleman, Kari Miest, Deanna Hoffman, and Lyle Anderson

Absent: Kyla Schlomann.

Meeting was called to order at 6:35p.m. and opened with a devotion and prayer from Carlson.

Pastor's Report: We had good attendance for our Holy Week services. There were 3 baptisms in March.

We had one death. We will now be open for funerals and weddings with capacity limits. No meals/coffee/food. 4th & 5th grades had First Communion. New Church Council installation will be Sunday May 2nd. Confirmation will be May 16th. May Council meeting will be at 7:30 as confirmation is at 6:30.

Motion by Coleman, second by Missling to approve last month's minutes. Motion approved.

New Business: Those who will be up for election for church council are: Mark Kulseth, Lisa Carlson (2nd term), Deanna Hoffman, Judy Berg, Jill Beckius, Lynn Watson, and Kristi Zellmann. Carlson nominated Mark Kulseth for council president. We will need to fill the council position on the AES Council. That will be done at the next meeting after the new council members are elected. Discussion was had about the proposed package for the new pastor.

Deanna Hoffman gave the Giving Report.

Treasurer's Report: Judy Thulien presented the Treasurer's Report. Motion by Carlson to approve.

Second by Swenstad. Motion approved.

Finance, Memorials, and Stewardship Committee: Three seniors applied and qualify for the Richard Larson Memorial Scholarship. They are Emily Gronewold, Kimberly Lothert and Jack Mahoney-Berg.

Motion by Anderson, second by Coleman to approve. Motion carried. Another thing to think about for the budget in the future is that we had wanted to hire a Youth Director.

AES Report: Erica Garza needs to be paid for being the TLC director. TLC had still been coordinating things for the kids during the shut down. Her reimbursement total has been figured out and will be paid to her. The Finance committee and AES have already approved the financial package for the new pastor. Our council had a vote. 8-yes, 1-no. Package approved.

Education Committee: They have not met.

Evangelism & Social Ministry/Worship & Music Committees: We have more people learning and helping with technology.

Property and Cemetery: There are some ceiling tiles to be fixed. Also, they have to get up on the roof to check for damage.

Youth Committee: Miest brought to our attention that some parents want Confirmation in the fall. The Ed. committee had sent something out saying the families could choose spring or fall.

Unfinished Business: With having our annual meeting held only virtually, some of us wanted to add a hybrid version where people could stay in their pews after church and attend in person. This way those who felt unable to figure out the technology necessary to participate could be included. Engel said he could figure out how to make it work.

Motion to adjourn at 7:44 was made by Engel, second by Coleman. Motion approved.

Lisa Carlson, Church Council Secretary