

August 2025 Newsletter

It is a glorious gift to look back. I know sometimes it brings memories of dark times in life. However, looking back can also grant you a grand view of the best times of life. This year marks my fourth year here at "THE Lutheran Chapel of the Cross". In that time, I have gotten to know many of you and many of the struggles that have taken place in your families, in your life. Thank you for letting be a part of your life. I have also been able to realize that while individual families sometimes suffer under the weight of temptation, sin, and chaos, God continues to care for and love His church.

I can look around at the each of you in the pew and give thanks to God. As a congregation we have not had any major problems or conflicts. You weathered the pandemic well. By July of 2021 when Pastor Liermann took a call and you graciously received me as the vacancy pastor, this congregation by and large, had no issue moving forward. Many congregations suffered under the weight of the pandemic in ways that created separation from each other years after we were able to return to life. Not here. By the time I arrived, any mass exodus of people was already done. I commend you for continuing the use of the common cup during those days and not neglecting to meet together as you should.

While it should always be the goal of a congregation to have a full time pastor, I rejoice that after my call in July of 2022 as a worker priest you were supportive and understanding that my time with you would be limited so that the congregation could have a pastor even though you were not in a good place financially. I am grateful that I could support my family as the scriptures call out. I also am grateful that during this time the congregation pulled together so that we could change the carpet in the sanctuary. God blessed this congregation with a company that did not charge us an outrageous amount for asbestos abatement. This congregation has done well taking care of the property. We have new windows and a new HVAC system installed and a new Sign on the way. Rock was installed around the outside of the church, and the parking lot will be recoated soon. For all this, we can rejoice.

Yet it is not just the big projects. But look around you. Most of you contribute by taking care of recycling, altar guild, plumbing and heating, electrical work, mowing the lawn, spraying the weeds, taking care of the "back 40", burning the pile, watering flowers, gathering food and money for the poor, making projects for gifts, sending cards, handing out fun trinkets and candy to kids, greeting people at the door, making food for Bible Studies, providing cakes for special occasions, providing flowers for the altar, installing new ribbons in the hymnals, cleaning the church, painting, giving words of encouragement to others, and helping to keep track of those not able to make it to church. We have been able to have a rummage sale here along with congregational picnics and meals together. Your work has not gone unnoticed. Thank you. I am sure that I have missed something or someone and for that I apologize.

God has blessed this congregation financially with a gift from Irene Miller in total amount of roughly 1.7 million dollars. And this congregation has been able to lend support to various organizations as we tithe God's gift to us. That tithe bought beds, picnic tables, supported a church in need, and now has provided \$5000 each for the 4 new called pastors to SWD this year. Some members have transferred over the last 4 years, and yes, we do need to look at our membership rolls again. While there were 5 funerals in the last 4 years, we have received into membership 7 people (not counting my family of 9) with 2 more in the near future. While saddened that no one attended the funerals officiated by the church from this congregation and that our numbers at Bible Study are so low, I am grateful that God continues to so graciously bless this congregation. Maybe that too, though, is a call to examine one's faith and what it means to be the body of Christ in this place.