

# GRAPEVINE NEWSLETTER

July 2022

Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, ELCA

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## Pastor's Ponderings

In a society of such a divided perspective, clear, respectful, intentional communication is increasingly important—especially in the church, where we seek to provide a different type of example. Nevertheless, communication and open sharing can be difficult. Even when we have the best intentions to respect each other, offense can be given. To help set the stage for healthy communication practices, BSLC's council adopted a *Communication Covenant* which active council members, committee/team chairs, and staff are asked to sign and implement. All who make up this community of faith are encouraged to also begin to practice the communication patterns it describes, as a way of fostering a healthy community.

What does this mean? In support of open and respectful conversation, when someone goes to a leader in the congregation with a concern or complaint, they will likely hear, "What would you like me to do with this information?" Some people just need to vent, and being listened to is what is needed. People who want communications made on their behalf will be encouraged to speak directly to the person or group they hope will make a change, or to submit a signed note for discussion by the parties being addressed. In this way communication can be more productive and effective.

Blessings as we continue our faith journey together. *Pastor Jean*

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## COVENANT OF COMMUNICATION CONDUCT

*Preventing the negative impact of Anonymous Criticism, Concerns, or Opinions*

To express commitment for use of strong and healthy communication practices in support of overall congregational wellbeing, the leaders and staff of this congregation are adopting the following disciplines of response when information and opinions are shared privately with them:

1. We affirm that all members have a right to *respectfully* and appropriately express their ideas, criticism, concerns or opinions about life and ministry in the congregation directly\*
  - with the pastor and/or congregation council
  - with relevant staff, committee, or task force representatives
  - at congregational meetings
2. When members of the congregation express ideas, criticism, concerns, or opinions to a designated representative of the congregation, that representative—without other comment—will ask, "What would you like me to do with this information?"
  - If the person desires to have information transmitted to a particular person or group, they shall share their thoughts directly with the relevant person or group.
  - In lieu of presenting information in person, a signed note or letter may be submitted for review by the appropriate party/ies.
  - If a member expresses hesitation or concern about directly sharing their perspectives, the congregational representative may offer to accompany them to meet and discuss the concern or issue with the relevant party/ies.
  - If the above options are all rejected, then the congregational representative shall respond, "I'm sorry, but I will not be able to report your concern, because we do not deal with anonymous letters, opinions, or comments."
3. When the criticism, concern or opinion is shared formally with the mutual ministry committee, task force, and/or congregation council, the issue will officially be placed on that group's agenda and written into the minutes, with indication of its status:
  - received as information
  - referred to the appropriate person or group for action
  - requiring further input, obtained through a visit by Pastor and/or Council President

*All members of the congregation are encouraged to also adopt these practices for the wellbeing of the congregation as a whole.*

*\*When offering critique with potential to cause significant upset or which might be misconstrued, those making the critique are asked to have a neutral party accompany them.*

## Special Congregational Meeting: Take 2 Vote – July 10 after worship



A repeat of the previously called June 5 special congregational meeting is required because on that date we did not quite reach the quorum necessary to legally vote on these two important items:

- 1) a change to our bylaws about when newly elected council members become active, and after discussion about the state of our church building and necessary repairs and/or replacements,
- 2) a vote for funding reallocation and possible need for an appeal.

*The purpose of this specially called meeting is to establish a quorum and revote on these matters. Thank you in advance for your participation!*

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## Help Pastor Jean Celebrate her 20th Ordi-versary!

June 7th is Pastor Jean's 20th anniversary of ordination, and she hopes you will help her to celebrate by participating in a "potluck strawberry feast"—it's time for some fun!

After worship and the quick special meeting to revote on two motions, it'll be time to celebrate with strawberries and shortbread/cake, angel food cake, icecream, biscuits, ... or whatever else you like to have matchup with strawberries—sweetened or not, sliced or whole, chocolate covered or in their essential best. Sign up in sign up genius or bring what you have to add!

(p.s., the planned activity PJ has mentioned will be postponed until the fall when more people might participate.)



## Youth Program Update:

At this point, it appears that our youth program is going to have to move into a phase of engaging congregational adults in the congregation to participate in oversight and care for our beloved youth. We have not identified a way forward with someone for this position, and need to plan forward.

Please start thinking now how you might contribute in support of our high school and confirmation age youth. For the youth group, know that our youth have gifts and ideas to plan their own conversations and activities, but adult accompaniment (and sometimes guidance) is important, too. Confirmation is done in partnership with Pastor Jean.

*Please note: Anyone working with youth (or children) must go through a background check, so if you experience a Holy Spirit nudge to become part of their support team, please ask Mariellen for the form and we'll move the process forward.*

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**Campfire Wednesday Worship**—*an informal worship experience around our fire pit 7:00 PM on the labyrinth or under the tent* Bring your lawn chairs and flexibility and we'll discover together what works for those who gather.



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### **Saturday in the Park Pride**

On **July 9** BSLC and five other ELCA congregations are hosting a double booth site to share with the community the message that all people are beloved by God and are welcome in our congregations. Please stop in and add your witness by sticking around a while! The event is at **Esther Short Park, 10-5PM**.

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### **Tales of Generosity Shared & Possible**

Somehow when I was still an elementary aged child, I developed an understanding that participating financially is part of what it means to be a part of a congregation, just what one does as part of living out faith. A couple of years before she passed, I asked my mother about this—about how I developed such a strong sense of stewardship, but she couldn't recall intentionally teaching me about tithing in particular. My parents asked us kids to give at least 25 cents a week to Sunday school (when our allowance was 50 cents even!), and I remember seeing my dad write, then put in the plate our offering check so by their actions they did teach me about generosity. And I learned that I had something to contribute, even as a child. That's why it is so important even in a bill pay or online giving world, for children to hear stories or see their parents participating in generous living.

There are a number of stories of people living generously. Two examples from last year are about people who appreciated the space and support this congregation provided them when they were houseless. One man was given \$50 by a friend or family member, which he then gave to us because we provide shelter and food to people like him—it would do more good if we had it, he said. Last summer when John and Dana were still living on the property, another man came to our door with a gift of \$100. He couldn't afford rent so was sleeping in his truck. Seeing the trailer and van he felt it was safe to stay on our property for a short stretch; he wanted to express his deep gratitude for a church that would provide such support to people in such challenging circumstances.

And two times of late people from outside the congregation have instigated conversations imagining other ways BSLC might step into further opportunities of sharing resources with houseless or house vulnerable people. One has offered to contribute \$4,000 if we come across a portable shower (or shower and restroom) unit as Immanuel has acquired and connected, to help us get it workable on site. And another, wants to explore possibilities that might actually move forward a possibility of having affordable housing provided on the property.

I don't know about you, but people reaching out and suggesting possibilities out of the blue, usually strikes me as the Holy Spirit trying to capture attention. Is God trying to get us to envision our future ministry deepening or widening in new ways? Whether either of these ideas is our right path forward, remains to be seen. If the prompting is of God, then our next step is to respond by entering into intentional discernment. To me, the sharing of others seeing possibilities here based on our past involvements sounds affirming of our established role in the community and there is strong potential for us to grow in our mission in this post quarantine world. So—how open are you feeling to a journey of continuing discovery that might just show us how our gratitude, joy, and generosity can be multiplied? If nothing else, it'll be an adventure!

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### **TREES TREES TREES TREES TREES TREES**

Thank you to all who are sponsoring trees to fulfill the requirement for 14 trees to replace those cut down for the sewer project! Their beauty will remind us of your generosity in memorializing loved ones and contributing to the wellbeing of creation.

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### **Regular WEEKLY ACTIVITIES over the Summer**

Sundays-- 10:00 **Worship** 3:00 **Antiracism Study Group**  
Thursdays--10:00 **Bible study** in person; 10:00-2:00 **LWR** quilting

### **Monthly Meetings:**

3rd Sundays **Council Meeting** 12:30 PM  
3rd Thursdays **Peace & Justice Meetings** 6:00 PM

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### **BIBLE & BOOK STUDY OPPORTUNITIES**

**Wednesday Morning Bible Study** *taking a break in July*

**Thursday Gather Bible Study** meets in person at BSLC, **10:00 AM**. For more information contact Nancy K. (contact information available through the church office).

**Sundays: The Anti Racism Zoom Study Group:** 3 - 4pm. For the link, contact Pastor Jean:  
[pastorjean@beautifulsaviorlutheran.com](mailto:pastorjean@beautifulsaviorlutheran.com)

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### **Lutheran World Relief -- Gifts of Hope!**

We invite you to be part of this Hope and Love by supporting your LWR teamwork as you have done in the past. LWR faces demand for Personal Care kits that far exceeds the supply created by congregations such as ours. The developing world continues to be burdened by many needs created by Covid 19 and LWR shelves are nearly bare!

Our fall Personal Care Kit goal is typically 100 kits. To help meet the increased demand faced by LWR, we would like to increase our kit numbers. This is only possible with your support. For 100 kits we need 100 bath towels (27" x 54"), preferably in darker colors, 300 four ounce bars of soap. AND One toothbrush, one sturdy comb and one nail clipper per kit, often purchase the last 3 items in bulk. We try to purchase towels for about \$3 each. Good quality towels are available on special at JC Penney's, Kohl's for about this price and at Target.

**School kits, Baby Care Kits and quilts remain in our fall shipping plans!**

**School kit needed items Per Kit:**

- Four 70 page spiral notebooks
- 16 – 24 box Crayons
- 5 Unsharpened pencils
- 5 ballpoint pens/ blue or black
- LWR Backpack bag
- Student Scissors
- Handheld pencil sharpener
- Baby Care Kits – Goal 15: New or gently used items can be used for kit items. Sizes 6 to 24 months may be used.

**Please wash and mend used items**

- Need lots of T-shirts
- 2 or 3 bath size bar of gentle soap per kit
- Jacket (with hood preferred)
- Pull-on pajamas – no snap crotches, please (2 per kit)

**Lutheran World Relief work days continue Thursdays, 10 – 2**

*Thank you for your continued support. You are important partners to the work we do.  
Many hands (and hearts) make light the work!*

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**MEXICO MISSION 2022 GRACIAS!! Heading south at the end of July**

**Gracias Amigos!** Members of the 2022 team give gratitude for your prayers, support and donations that have made this ministry possible. Thank you from: *Ray Smith, Jim Mansfield, Chad Hertle, Xan Hertle, Jim Montgomery, Rebecca Bafus, Brent Bafus, Asya Valentine, Austin Esparza, Laurie Langieum, Kathleen Murphy, Heidi Maize, Bev Questad & Kathy Esparza*

**Where do your donations go?** All donations go to the Mexico Mission to build houses for those with no shelter. Nails, paint, wood, windows, doors, and roofing plus small cash disbursements go to each family. There are no administrative costs.

*Image: 2021: Single mom with 2 children gets a house and BSLC quilt*



**Looking forward: will 2023 be your year to join the build team?**

All team members are expected to participate in fundraising activities over the year, including shred days.

**What do the Mexican Mission Volunteers pay out-of-pocket?**

Each person pays \$200 + plane fare out of pocket toward:

1. Plane fare, food, and all personal expenses
2. Housing fee in a safe compound associated with the Lutheran Church across the street.

Please consider joining the team in 2023! Youth 15 & over are welcome with an accompanying parent or mentor. The date of the next trip will be decided soon.

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**Next Community Shred Day** - Saturday, Oct. 1, 10:00 - 1:00

Two banker-size boxes are the limit, \$5 donation suggested/box.

*Proceeds support the Mexico Mission house building project.*

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**God's Work Our Hands Sunday** (Sept. 11)

**It's time to create an organizing team! Let's get a team formed and try out a day of impact (and fun!) together! Contact Pastor Jean or a council member to step up.**

As part of the ELCA, we are invited to participate with other congregations across the nation, in a Lutheran Day of Service. The idea is to be visible in the community en masse, fulfilling some need (or needs) within our "neighborhood". Some congregations organize "outdoor" (i.e. trash clean up, community trail maintenance, ...) and "indoor" opportunities (packing meals or making sleep mats and delivering them, or whatever need a community partner suggests). This initiative provides a fun way to build community among our members, to make connections with people outside our faith community, and provide some visibility for our congregation.

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**Membership is Optional!** However, if you want to find out more about faith matters as seen through a "Lutheran Lens" or have general faith questions, don't hesitate to let Pastor Jean know so she can arrange conversation—either as a group or one to one in a coffee (?) shop.

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**Baptism Preparation:** If you want to explore being baptized, or you wish to have a child baptized, let Pastor Jean know so a date can be arranged!