

## *Pastor Greg Ofsdahl*



### **Dear Family of God at Our Saviour's,**

The first week of August, my son and I took our annual road-trip. This year we went east and did a "Civil War Battle Sites Tour." While on one of our monument walking tours, we heard this story:

A man named Samuel had these (the monuments we were walking by) erected. Samuel had started out as a hired hand on a farm and by sheer determination and frugality, he managed to amass a large fortune over his lifetime. In the process, however, he did not make many friends. He was not close to his wife's family due to the feeling that they thought she had married beneath her status. Bitter about this, and other negative feelings about his own family, he vowed never to leave any of them a dime. When his wife died, (she being the only person he really had any relationship with) he put up an elaborate statue in her memory. Samuel had hired a sculptor to design a monument which showed both her and him at opposite ends of a love seat. He was so happy with the result that he commissioned another statue, this time of himself, kneeling at her grave and placing a wreath on it. This also impressed him greatly, so he planned a third monument. This one was of his wife kneeling at his future gravesite, placing a wreath. He instructed the sculptor to add a pair of wings on her back, giving her the appearance of an angel. Well, as you can already see, one idea led to another until he had spent no less than \$250,000 on these monuments to himself and his wife. The story continued that whenever someone from the town would suggest that he might be interested in a community project such as the hospital, a park, the church... the old guy would frown and shout back, "What has this town ever done for me. I don't owe this town anything!" After using up all his resources on stone statues and selfish pursuits, Samuel died at 92, a grim-faced resident of the poorhouse. The monuments are now sinking into the ground, quickly becoming victims of time and neglect... sad reminders of a self-centered, unsympathetic life. Only one person showed up at Samuel's funeral; the tombstone salesman! My prayer for all of us is that we all remember that the monuments worth building in our lives are those of kindness, love and mercy. Nothing else is needed.

**Peace,  
Pastor Greg Ofsdahl**



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**Hello all,**

A brief introduction, I am Scott Walker Brown. I have been a Lay Minister for many years, providing Supply Pastoral help in 14 different churches. I have been a learner in the Lay School of Ministry, now in my seventh year. I was recently voted onto the Board of Directors of Lay School. As of the writing of this article, a contract has been signed for me to be the Synodically Authorized Minister for United in Faith Parish, pending a “clean” background check. We hope my position will begin December 1 and the contract is for one year. I would like to share some Frequently Asked Questions about the SAM position so you have a better understanding of the need for one.



**What is a SAM?** A SAM is a Synodically Authorized Minister, a lay person authorized by the bishop to preach and preside at Holy Communion under special circumstances and specific location.

**What are those special circumstances?** When word and sacrament ministry is needed and in the prolonged absence of an ordained pastor, the synod bishop may authorize a person who is a member of a congregation of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church of America) to offer this ministry,

**What can a SAM do?** In the prolonged absence of an ordained pastor, a SAM can preside over communion, lead worship and preach. They may also provide pastoral care, baptize and preside at weddings.

**How can our congregation get a SAM?** Your council/parish president or officer may contact the synod office to request a SAM to preside at Communion when you are unable to find a pastor to serve for an extended period of time. (This has already been done)

**Do we need to contact the synod office if a lay person preaches but we don't have communion?** No, the congregation's called pastor may authorize someone who is not an ordained minister to preach and lead a Service of the Word.

**Does a SAM need special training?** Yes, a two year course through the North West Synod of WI Lay School of Ministry, additional classes in preaching and pastoral care, continuing education at our Lay School or other approved education, background check, boundaries training and meet with supervising pastor.

**May we call a SAM a pastor?** NO

**May a SAM wear a robe/alb?** Yes

**May a SAM wear a clergy collar or stole?** NO

**Do we pay a SAM?** Yes, the same as a supply pastor including mileage. Follow synod guidelines.

This is new to all of us. We will be learning together so I pray we will be able to communicate and navigate any challenge before us. The Synod will not stop looking for ordained clergy for us, but at this time no one is available to come to our community. My hopes and plans are to be more present in the lives of some of our Parish members by making home visits when requested, visit and provide communion for homebound individuals, visit members who are in hospitals, nursing homes, supported apartments, potentially jail or prison, and maybe sometimes just for fun. I hope to begin Bible Study and Confirmation very soon and continue WELCA Bible Study monthly. I will attend Church Council and Parish Board meetings and any other appropriate meetings that will help the committees.

If you need to get ahold of me, call at 715-538-3048 or email at [swbrown003@gmail.com](mailto:swbrown003@gmail.com). Please continue to greet me as Scott. SAM Scott just does not present as appropriate to me.

Matthew 25:40; And the king will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me”.

Let us minister to “the least of these” as we enter into Advent, the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Please help others in our community as you are able.

**God's Blessings to you all.**

**Scott W. Brown**

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# More Church News



## Our Saviour's Lutheran Church Council Minutes November 7, 2023

Board Members Present: Dave Anderson, Marnie Anderson, Kris Dubiel, Clarice Laehn, Kay Nelson, Barb Mathson and Lori Paulson.

Dave Anderson, council president, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Preparation:

1. **Opening Devotions:** Meeting opened with devotions by Clarice Laehn
2. **Prayer Requests/Homebound:** Family & friends of Drew Earll; Victims of violence/conflict in Middle East

### Communication/Action:

1. **Secretary's Report:** Barb Mathson made a motion to approve minutes of October 3, 2023, with a second by Kay Nelson. Motion carried.
2. **Treasurer's Report:** Barb Mathson presented the following fund balances per October 2023 financial reports: General Fund: \$65,016.85; On Going: \$12,097.45; Improvement: \$35,112.33. Barb Mathson made a motion to approve the treasurer's report with a second by Marnie Anderson. Motion carried.

### 3. Ministry Teams Updates:

#### a) Life & Growth:

1. There will be a Good Gifts tree again this year.
2. Motion made by Kay Nelson and seconded by Lori Paulson to approve a quilting retreat to be held in church basement February 14, 15 and 16 of 2024. Motion carried.

#### b) Music & Worship: No report

c) WELCA: December meeting will be held at Our Saviour's with Scott Brown leading bible study.

d) Lutheran Brotherhood: No report.

e) Finance & Property: Church office secretary may contact Barb Mathson with any questions.

### Celebration/Affirmation:

- a) The next council meeting is scheduled for December 5, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.
- b) A letter asking for donations in lieu of Harvest Dinner, along with raffle tickets will be distributed this Sunday to those in attendance. Remaining letters and tickets will be mailed out. The raffle will be held on December 2 nd .
- c) Christmas decorating is scheduled for 4 p.m. on Monday November 27th . All congregation members are welcome to help.
- d) The Parish Board has approved Scott Brown to serve at Our Saviour's as a Synodically Authorized Minister (SAM) which would allow him to preside at Holy Communion. He still needs Synod approval before he can do so.
- e) Christmas Eve is on a Sunday so there would probably be a 4 p.m. service on that day rather than a Sunday morning service.
- f) The undecorating of the church after Christmas is scheduled for January 7, 2024. All are welcome to help.

### Business Items:

- a) The annual meeting is scheduled for February 4, 2024 after Sunday service.
- b) Need to think about congregation members that may be willing to serve on a nominating committee for recruiting people to serve on ministry teams. The committee should be appointed at the December 6 th council meeting.
- c) Marnie Anderson is looking into options for an affordable sign for the church.

### Adjournment and Lord's Prayer:

Kay Nelson made a motion to adjourn with a second by Barb Mathson. Motion carried.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by Lori Paulson, Council Secretary

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# Our Saviour's Members in Nursing Homes



Pigeon Falls Nursing Care Center-P.O. Box 310-Pigeon Falls, WI 54760  
**Jeanette Gilbertson, & Marian Miller**

Assisted Living- Pigeon Falls - P.O. Box 310-Pigeon Falls, WI 54760  
**Richard Eide**

Sunrise Manor - 36024 Park Street - Whitehall - 54773  
**Clinton Larson & Ann Torrason**

Trempealeau County Health Care Center-W20410 WI #121--Whitehall - 54773  
**James Windjue**

Grandview Nursing Home - 620 Grandview Avenue - Blair - 54616  
**Marilyn Speestra, Mavis Mitskogen & Donna Oates**

Meadowbrook Care Center-1311 Tyler Street-Black River Falls - 54615  
The Classic - Eau Claire  
**Joanne (Selkurt) Martin**

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*Please keep the following in your thoughts and prayers:*

**\*Mary Harnisch-Johnson      \*Arline Stuve      \*Mavis Olson**  
**\*Dawn Coburn      \*Mary Lou Beck      \*Lisa James**

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### Holiday Raffle

We would like to thank all of you who donated prizes and bought tickets for the Holiday Raffle held on December 3rd, 2023.

This year we again held a cash and gift card raffle. Prizes totaled \$905.00 with 30 lucky winners!

Funds raised for the mission of the church totaled \$1,635.00.

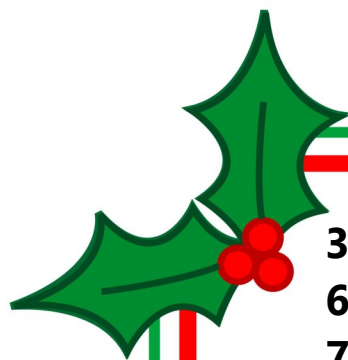
Thank you so much for your support!

*Barb Mathson and Karen Witte*

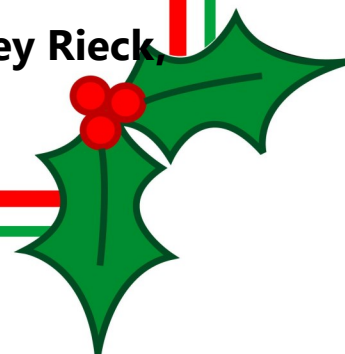
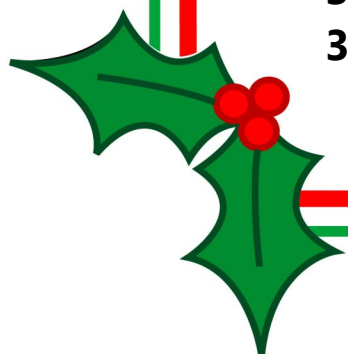




# December Birthdays



- 3 - Judy Haralson
- 6 - Gavin Gaulke, Janice Johnson,
- 7 - Eric Gaulke
- 9 - Olivia Moats
- 10 - Chris Foss
- 11 - Clarice Henrickson
- 12 - Kaylin Metzler
- 14 - Sandra Erickson, Barbara Johnson,  
Dennis Lyngen, Bryanna Schneider
- 15 - Mary Lou Beck, Adam Berg
- 16 - Clayton Densmore
- 17 - Andrew Johnson, Pastor Peter Jonas
- 18 - Mary Jane Herness, Matthew Gilbertson
- 21 - James Hughes Jr.
- 22 - Marnalee Anderson, Celina Kopp
- 24 - Randall Lindberg
- 27 - Constance Kastad
- 28 - Carol Byington, Clinton Larson,  
Caitlin Toraason
- 29 - LeAnn Ring
- 30 - Lisa Schmitt
- 31 - Sawyer Kurth, Debra Olson, Jeffrey Rieck,  
Mackenzie Standish





# More Church News



Our Noisy Offering for December will be designated to the Star & Cross Fund. Many of us are thrilled to see the Star and Cross back on Boy Scout Hill after a few years of its absence! It adds much beauty and meaning during the Christmas and Easter seasons. Along with our enjoyment comes the responsibility of the electric bill. Please help Our Saviour's do its part to keep the Star and Cross lit!

Noisy Offering for November: During the month of November, \$294.55 was collected and designated to Our Saviour's Improvement Fund. There are many areas of our church that will need improvement in the months and years to come, such as: the boiler, roof, tunnel and windows to name a few. Thank You to all who donated.



## GOD'S GOOD GIFTS for CHRISTMAS

Once again the Life and Growth Committee is sponsoring the Christmas Good Gifts Mission.

How does it work ?

Decide what gifts you want to give, mark the form and enclose it with the money in an envelope and bring to service or mail it to the OSLC office by the end of December.

As members of Our Saviour's Lutheran Church we believe that God's love is shared with us and we can follow our purpose statement by " SHARING GOD'S LOVE WITH ALL " .



## Christmas Decorations

We will take down the church Christmas decoration after the service on Sunday, January 7, 2024. Please plan to stay after the church service for un-decorating the tree & putting away the decorations. Thanks for any help you can give.



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# More Church News



## Poinsettia plants for the church at Christmas

*The everlasting beauty of the poinsettia is an age-old Christmas tradition. Its petals form the shape of a brilliant star, symbolizing the rise of the Star of Bethlehem on Christmas night. May it always remind you of the miracles of peace, love and joy that Christmas brings us, each and every year.*

Members of Our Saviour's may purchase and bring poinsettia plants to the basement prior to the Christmas Eve services with a tag stating who donated the plant and for whom the plant is in honor or memory of.

Poinsettia plants can also be ordered for \$10.00 each.

Orders need to be placed by December 10th for delivery by Christmas Eve. We are hoping that selling poinsettia plants will make it easier for members to participate in decorating the church and make funds available for music for the Praise Team. Orders can be taken to the church office or collected in the Narthex.

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### Christmas Poinsettia Order Form

From: \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

Cost \$10

Color preference (if available)

\_\_\_\_\_



Will you be taking your poinsettia home? \_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_no

# More Church News

## Church Finances



DISBURSEMENT & GIVING RECEIPTS -November 1st-30th				
Disbursements:				
Administration	\$486.11			
Physical Plant	\$3,623.79			
Salaries & Benefits	\$2382.80			
Benevolence	\$0.00			
Parish Expense	\$0.00			
Dues and Fees	\$0.00			
Harvest Dinner	\$0.00			
Total Disbursements =		\$6492.70		
Giving Receipts				
Simply Giving Total =	\$3302.30		General Fund Total =	\$8497.00
On-Going Total =	\$294.55		Improvement Fund - Total =	\$165.00
October 2023 Giving Grand Total =			\$12,258.85	

## Members In Service

- \* Altar Guild = Kris Dubiel, Karen Witte
- \* Altar Flowers = Kris Dubiel, Karen Witte
- \* Usher = David and Marnie Anderson





# December 2023



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						
<b>3</b> Sunday Worship- 9:30am –with Mr. Scott Brown  Sunday School - 10:30	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> Church office open 8am-12pm  Quilters - 8:30 - Noon  Council Meeting – 6:30 pm	<b>6</b> Church Office open 1-5pm	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>10</b> Sunday Worship- 9:30am –with Mr. Scott Brown  Sunday School - 10:30am	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> Church office open 8am-12pm	<b>13</b> Church Office open 1-5pm  WELCA—1:30 pm Hosted by OSL	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>17</b> Sunday Worship- 9:30am –with Mr. Scott Borwn  Sunday School Christmas Program	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> Church office open 8am-12pm  Quilters - 8:30 - Noon	<b>20</b> Church Office open 1-5pm	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b> No Morning Worship  4pm Christmas Eve Worship  No Sunday School	<b>25</b> <b>No Worship</b>  	<b>26</b> Church office open 8am-12pm	<b>27</b> Church Office open 1-5pm  Food Pantry 11: - 1:00 pm	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>31</b> Sunday Worship- 9:30am –with Mr. Scott Brown  No Sunday School	<b>Happy New Years!!!!</b>					

***"Sharing God's Love With All"***

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church  
36197 Main Street  
P.O. Box 455  
Whitehall, WI 54773

Contact Us

**Office Hours:**  
Tuesday 8am-12pm  
Wednesday 1-5pm

**Church Secretary:** Cheryl Daffinson

**Church Office:** 715-538-4334

**Church E-mail:** [osluthwh@gmail.com](mailto:osluthwh@gmail.com)

**Church Website:** [oslwhitehall.org](http://oslwhitehall.org)

Check us out on Facebook at: [Our Saviour's Lutheran Church of Whitehall, WI](#) and [United in Faith Parish](#) and [OS Sunday-School](#) and [OSLC Youth](#).



**URGENTLY NEEDED!**

## City of Whitehall Home Delivered Meal Volunteers

Can you donate just 30 minutes of your time 1 to 4 days  
a week delivering meals?

The ADRC is looking for volunteers to deliver meals at  
NOON on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

The choice to deliver more than one day a week is up to  
you!



**FOR MORE INFO  
CALL THE ADRC AT:  
715-538-2001 option 1**

