



he Maxfield Messenger

St. John Lutheran Church-Maxfield
2286 250th St.
Denver, Iowa 50622-1085
Church Office 319-984-5767
Pastor Katie's Cell: 319-269-2030

Monthly Newsletter / APRIL-MAY 2021 / Volume 27



From the Desk of Pastor Katie

As we enter into the month of May, I have greatly enjoyed being able to really watch the farmers around us disc, plow and plant their fields. I grew up in the country, and while my mom and dad didn't farm, I have relatives who do. I've always loved the way the fields smell after they've been plowed. It reminds me so much of some of my cherish memories of spending time with my grandma and grandpa, helping them plant their massive gardens, learning how to plant cucumbers and peas and other plants that need support to grow properly, learning how to weed properly the **first** time, walking barefoot in the gardens and dropping seeds into their holes.

I love to garden; I'm not the best at it, but I greatly enjoy digging in the dirt, researching procedures, imagining how to lay out the plants we need, getting creative with how we plant, trying new ideas that I've seen or heard. And, for me, I cannot really think of a better way that human beings express hope. When we plant seeds, we are expressing our hope that the seeds we that were planted will grow healthy, and fruitfully. Planting seeds expressed hope for a future beyond today.

I've been pondering during the pandemic about how hope can look like different things. Hope that a patient admitted to the hospital will walk out. Hope in the vaccine keeping us and our loved ones healthy. Hope that the ones who have died from this virus are not outside of God's love, but rather that they rest in God's mercy and someday, we will see them again. Hope for the pandemic to end so we can go back to our normal lives. Hope that the ways we used to worship are slowly returning. Hope in rejoicing over the seemingly small things like singing, having fellowship, being able to be closer to people who we haven't been able to really see for over a year. Hope in how tears flowing and laughter abounding and seeing and embracing beloved friends and family.

During this last year, life for so many people has been difficult. Jokingly a friend told me that the most foolish decision she made in 2019 was buying a 2020 planner. I laughed, but as I thought about it more, I realized how much those statements express grief and sadness at losing out on an opportunity to dream for the future, to plan events with friends and family, to even have a normal routine that helps define our days and nights. I've found myself grieving over many things that weren't able to happen as they normally would this last year. I deeply missed Pentecost in a full sanctuary celebrating the sending of the Holy Spirit, I missed seeing

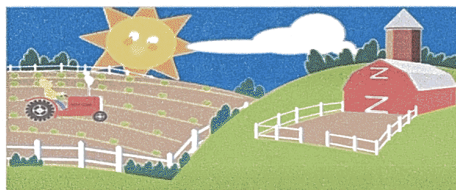
each of you at the Christmas Eve service and hearing Silent Night being sung in German. But as much as I've missed those things, there are also so very many good things too. I've seen you all come together and make hard decisions for the sake of our congregation, but also the communities in which we live and work. I've seen you have adapted to the changes. I've seen you faithfully wearing masks or shields, and I firmly believe it's because Maxfield is family; everyone is beloved and the health and well-being of all of us depends upon the individual choices we make, as well as the decisions we make together.

Perhaps the hope found in this pandemic is rooted in looking forward to when we can return to our lives and have some level of normalcy/ And in doing that, whether you know it not, you're demonstrating to your family and friends, and in the mystery of the Resurrection of Jesus. We cannot quite see the resurrection, but we certainly place hope in the searching for and finding pieces of the Resurrection. We also place hope and trust in the diligent practice of searching for and trusting in the promises of Jesus.

Go now, and love one another, because love is from God. Proclaim God's salvation to every generation. Remain in Jesus Christ, and like branches of a vine, draw your life from him. And may God the vine grower tend you and make you fruitful; May Christ Jesus abide in you and give you life; And may the Holy Spirit cast out all fear and fill you with God's love.

We go in peace to love and serve the Lord,
... In the name of Christ. Amen.

Peace and blessings,
Pastor Katie



THANK YOU!!!!

It is with much appreciation and a grateful heart to Pastor Katie and all of you for your prayers and many kindnesses to us during our time of treatment and appointments we are experiencing. Special thanks to those who have provided delicious meals and monetary donations for our family! Your kindness has humbled us and your prayers continue to encourage and uplift us. We are so blessed to live in such a caring community. God has answered prayers as we continue to go forward in this journey.

With love and appreciation,
Matt, DeeDee, Ellody, Max, & Jax Pipho

THANK YOU

Health Updates

Jeb Ebaugh's surgery went well. He will be in a cast for about 6 weeks.

DeeDee Pipho has had 2 chemo treatments with a 3rd scheduled for May 6. The plan of treatment is chemo, surgery sometime in August, followed by radiation/chemo! A meal train has been established so if anyone would like to help out by providing a meal to Matt and DeeDee and family, they can let me know and I will put them on the schedule. I would be happy to pick up and deliver if necessary. I am truly humbled by all the love, concern, prayers, and acts of kindness toward our family! God bless you all!

With love and gratitude! Deb

St John Lutheran Church, Maxfield
Church Council Minutes
April 11, 2021

The St John Lutheran Church, Maxfield Church Council held their monthly church council meeting on Sunday April 11, 2021. The meeting was called to order by President Chuck Kaiser at 11:05 am. Members of the council present were: Anita Dorn, Annette Ebaugh, Christopher Kaiser, Chuck Kaiser, Kasey Krueger, Dennis Peters, Wanda Burkholder, DuWayne Piphon and Rick Wilson. Pastor Katie was also present.

Minutes of the February meeting were presented. A motion was made by Anita Dorn to approve the minutes, as presented, Rick Wilson seconded. Motion carried.

Christopher Kaiser presented the Financial Secretary's report. A motion was made by Kasey Krueger to approve the report as presented. Second by Dennis Peters. Motion carried.

DuWayne Piphon presented the treasurer's report. A motion by Rick Wilson to accept the treasurer's report as presented, second by Christopher Corday. Motion carried.

Pastor's Report:

March was comprised of worship and Lenten worship. I developed a study that we did during Lent, with shifts from feedback received. With adding an additional service each week, more of my time was spent doing worship prep and sermon writing.

I continue to make phone calls to talk with people. I had set the goal of doing communion visits with shut-ins, one of which was able to happen before Easter and others have been scheduled as well. I continue to spend a lot of time in conversation with various people and have been spending time also getting to know people at Crane Creek.

Weekly meetings:

- Tuesday text study
- Tuesday Women's Clergy
- Wednesday Synod Clergy

Monthly meetings:

- First Call Theological Education
- Mentor conversations (may happen more often)
- Continuing education interview

Have also spent a lot of time working on some education study with kids – there are a lot of kids at Crane Creek and I'm spending a good amount of time working on teaching and faith development study/research. We continue to live stream worship

and zoom – we've not had much attendance on zoom but continue to do it just in case.

I was able to get my first vaccine shot, which I'm grateful for. I look forward to receiving my second shot in May.

Have been accepted into a Rural Ministry Consortium, beginning in August. More details to follow.

Will start looking for a new "First Call" Mentor, as my current mentor is leaving their current call.

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Katie Rodriguez

Property Care:

The PA system has been fixed – a new mixer was purchased and that seems to have solved the issues we were having. Two weeks and good!

Christopher Kaiser presented a quote for installing a camera system for continued broadcasts of our worship service on-line. We will have more discussion on this.

The wind break at the house has been removed. It was determined that some painting needs to be done. Christopher Kaiser has lined up the mother-daughter team to do this. They will do it sometime this summer. There is also some siding that needs to be repaired.

DuWayne presented at bid for dust control of \$1.16 per foot, applied twice per year. There is one other company we would like to obtain a bid from, to compare. Chuck Kaiser said he would reach out to the neighbors to see if they want to be included, as in the past – for a total of 800 feet of dust control.

Education:

No Report

Worship / Evangelism:

Wanda reported that Lenten worship went well, sharing with Crane Creek. We had great congregational participation in the Palm Sunday service. Holy Week worship on Maundy Thursday at Crane Creek with Holy Communion. Good Friday service at Maxfield was the 7 Last Words of Christ and feedback has been it was a powerful service. Pastor Katie did 5 of the meditations in first-person characters, and Wanda did the other two. We are talking about using this again, but doing a couple of different things.

Easter Sunday service was well received and Karen Platte from Crane Creek, played

the organ for us. It was very good to have the organ again. Karen will be playing for us on the first and fourth Sunday's of the month.

There is still confusion from Messiah about why we are still using the "Unity of the Cross Bremer Co." Facebook page to broadcast our worship services. The answer is that the licenses that we have – CCLI and OneLicense – are held under Unity of the Cross Bremer Co. and do not expire until June of this year. There is no way to transfer them to Maxfield, so we will continue using them until they expire at which time we will purchase new licenses under our name – or an agreed upon name with Crane Creek, so we can share the license with them.

Stewardship:

Christopher Corday discussed getting an updated membership directory and the possibility of doing a new photo directory. Wanda has a recent membership directory and there was discussion of how to do a photo directory in the most cost-effective manner. More information to come.

Old Business:

After much discussion, Anita Dorn made a motion to have Thrivent manage our funds from the Margaret Platte estate, as follows: \$100,000.00 in a conservative portfolio; \$100,000.00 in a moderate portfolio; and the remainder being available to us at a ready basis, to be kept at Denver Savings Bank. Dennis Peters seconded. Motion carried.

New Business:

Tracy Platte has made a request to rent some of the tables in June. We will put her on the calendar for that and ask for a donation for the use of the tables.

Next council meeting will be May 2, 2021, following worship.

A motion was made by Rick Wilson and seconded by Christopher Kaiser to adjourn. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 12:23 with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,

Wanda Burkholder
Recording Secretary

**St John Lutheran Church, Maxfield
Church Council Minutes
March 7, 2021**

The St John Lutheran Church, Maxfield Church Council held their monthly church council meeting on Sunday, March 7, 2021. The meeting was called to order by president Chuck Kaiser at 11:05 am. Members of the council present were: Anita Dorn,

Annette Ebaugh, Christopher Kaiser, Chuck Kaiser, Kasey Krueger, Dennis Peters, Wanda Burkholder, DuWayne Piphon and Rick Wilson. Pastor Katie was also present. We welcomed two students from Wartburg College who are interested in the ministry, Ellie Nabholz and Megan Townsend. They observed via zoom.

Minutes of the February meeting were presented. A motion was made by Annette Ebaugh to approve the minutes, as presented, Christopher Kaiser seconded. Motion carried.

Christopher Kaiser presented the Financial Secretary's report. A motion was made by Anita Dorn to approve the report as presented. Second by Dennis Peters. Motion carried.

DuWayne Piphon presented the treasurer's report. A motion by Christopher Kaiser to accept the treasurer's report as presented, second by Kasey Krueger. Motion carried.

Alex Renaud of Thrivent Financial, discussed some options for our gift from the Margaret Platte estate. Mr. Renaud discussed some options as to how to invest our money in the safest way. He provided us with information to consider and answered all our questions.

Council thanked Mr. Renaud for his time, coming out to visit on a Sunday morning.

Pastor's Report:

February saw the beginning of Lent and the resuming of Wednesday evening Lenten worship. It's hard to believe that nearly a year ago, in the middle of Lent, we suspended in person worship due to COVID-19.

For worship, we continued to have Facebook Live and Zoom, which allows those without Facebook to access our worship services. Wednesday evening Lenten services are also made available on Facebook Live and Zoom. Our zoom attendance has been small – 1-5 people attending. We do have many who watch the Facebook Live stream, and for those who aren't able to view worship while it's happening, those videos are saved and are accessible at any point after the broadcast.

February also saw very cold temperatures. We ended up suspending in person worship on February 14th due to extremely cold temperatures. I did the live stream from home for that.

My week-to-week has been similar to previous months. I spend a lot of time in zoom meetings and writing sermons. I am spending more time right now doing sermons as I

am preaching twice weekly. I have been working to find some new methods of preaching and hope to begin implementing those soon.

Initially, our Wednesday worship service was geared to be more conversational.

However, it became quickly evident that this is not really a good fit at the moment, so I revamped the focus. I am continuing to speak with various people in the congregation via phone/text/message/in person. I continue to attend meetings on a regular basis.

My goal this month is to get communion to everyone who isn't able to attend in person worship. I am planning to have this done by Holy Week, as I know the importance of that. I am still cautious about going to people's houses for visits, so will continue to do distant visits as possible. I am still taking a lot of precautions due to COVID as I am not yet eligible for the vaccine.

Beginning this coming week, I will be doing office hours again, as I've noticed that I have been struggling to separate home from work. My husband is helping me move my books and such back over. I will be available for visits at the church as needed, for those who are interested.

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Katie Rodriguez

President's Report:

None

Property Care:

Christopher Kaiser reported that he is getting an estimate on costs to set up camera system in the church.

We are having some issues with the mic system. Christopher Kaiser is having West Music come out and see if we can figure out why the mic is cutting out.

Pastor asked if the committee would take down with wind break at the front door of the house.

DuWayne reported that the Nativity has been taken down and moved in the shed at Marian Brettmann's.

Christopher Kaiser presented three quotes for lawn mowing this summer. After discussion, a motion was made by DuWayne Piphon and seconded by Annette Ebaugh to accept the quote from Weeds on Fire for \$205.00 per time, which includes mowing and trimming the church yard, house yard and cemetery.

Worship & Evangelism:

Next Sunday is a lay service, as Pastor Katie will be at Crane Creek for their annual meeting. Christopher Kaiser, Wanda Burkholder and Kerri Wilson will lead the worship.

Stewardship Report:

None

Education Report:

None

Old Business:

None

New Business:

As this is our 165th Anniversary year, Chuck Kaiser asked if we should invite past pastors to come and preach or at least visit & letting them pick when it would work for them to come. It was agreed that he should reach out. A motion by Christopher Kaiser and a second by Rick Wilson, that we offer a \$50.00 gas card to the called ministers for coming. Motion carried.

Pastor Katie asked if we would be interested in having outdoor worship this summer with Crane Creek – alternating similar to last summer. If there is rain, we can go inside. The council liked the idea and Pastor Katie will bring it up at the Crane Creek annual meeting next week.

Our next meeting is April 11 at 11:00am.

A motion by Christopher Kaiser and seconded by Rick Wilson to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 12:25 with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,

Wanda Burkholder
Secretary

**St John Lutheran Church, Maxfield
Church Council Minutes
February 7, 2021**

The St John Lutheran Church, Maxfield Church Council held their monthly church council meeting on Sunday, February 7, 2021. The meeting was called to order by president Chuck Kaiser at 11:15 am. Members of the council present were: Christopher Corday, Anita Dorn, Annette Ebaugh, Christopher Kaiser, Chuck Kaiser, Dennis Peters, Wanda Burkholder, DuWayne Piphon and Rick Wilson. Pastor Katie was also present.

Keith Hamer, Financial Advisor, of Stifel Nicholas, discussed some options for our gift from the Margaret Platte estate. He recommended that we form an Investment Committee and come up with an Investment Policy Statement (IPS), so that we can invest and be advised in the best possible way. The money is currently in a CD at the bank and will mature in April, at which time we will proceed.

Council thanked Mr. Hamer for his time, coming out to visit on a Sunday morning.

Minutes of the January meeting were presented. A motion was made by Annette Ebaugh to approve the minutes, as presented, Christopher Kaiser seconded. Motion carried.

Christopher Kaiser presented the Financial Secretary's report. A motion was made by Christopher Corday to approve the report as presented. Second by Anita Dorn. Motion carried.

DuWayne Piphon presented the treasurer's report. A motion by Rick Wilson to accept the treasurer's report as presented, second by Annette Ebaugh. Motion carried.

Pastor's Report:

Pastor's Report February 2021 Council Meeting:

January was an interesting month. We had virtual worship for the first two weeks; after that, we went back to in-person worship for two weeks; finally, the last week of January was virtual due to weather.

Additionally, January was interesting because I began contracting with St. John Crane Creek, four miles north of Maxfield. They have had virtual worship, which was filmed from inside the building. I have managed to get to know a few people there; they are returning to in-person worship February 7 and I am very much looking forward to getting to speak with people face-to-face.

I have continued to work from home majority of the time. I have been over to the church several times for various tasks but have chosen to continue working from home mostly. I am happy to change this if the consensus is that it would be better that way.

Much of my week-to-week tasks are similar to what I detailed last month. Every week, I attend text study, women's clergy group, synod clergy group, and once per month I attend a conference meeting and first-call colleague group. I also regularly talk with my mentor, Pastor Dawn Pederson.

In an effort to highlight what I've done this month, I have tallied, to the best of my knowledge, below:

Meetings:

- Text study - 4
- Women's Clergy – 4
- Synod Pastors – 4
- Pastor's Conference – 1
- First Call Colleague – 1
- Council Meetings – 2
- Special Congregational meeting – 1 - Annual Meeting 1

Phone calls:

- Estimated between 20-30 to various individuals in the congregation at Maxfield
- Several phone calls with the Synod office for various reasons

Communion visits:

- 0, due to COVID and not having in-person worship

Sermon Prep

- Between 15-20 hours per week depending on the lectionary

General Worship Prep:

- Finding music for church services and/or recording them for our setting with other individuals
- Prayer and meditation – 5-10 hours per week, depending upon the week and any major events

Continuing Education Time:

- I have begun reading/listening to a book on Stewardship and plan to begin a book on a topic of theology for self-development
- I am planning to attend virtually the Festival of Homiletics which will be in May – this is something which will help me continue to develop my preaching skills
- I am planning to attend virtually the Rural Ministry Conference which will be in March
- I have met with the Mutual Ministry Committee and gathered some feedback, as well as made them aware of goals and topics of growth for this year

*A concern has been expressed as to why Pastor is not wearing her Alb when broadcasting worship from her home. Pastor feels that the Alb is a part of the sacrament and it is not appropriate to wear it at home, but she will defer to the Council's wishes. Council agreed that it is not necessary to wear the Alb when she broadcasts worship from home.

President's Report:

Chuck has been talking with Lee Schweer, president at Crane Creek on a weekly basis – just to touch base. Mr. Schweer has reported that they are very pleased with Pastor Katie so far.

Property Care:

Dennis Peters reported that he has a wheelchair available for our church, he just has to pick it up. It is one that is going out of circulation and will be of no cost to us.

Anita Dorn reported that she has spoken with people at the Poor Farm and they are very interested in the contents of the School House. They will set up a time to come and look over the contents in March and then in April they will come and move them. The Poor House has a "room" set up for Denver and they will set up the school house in that room. We will keep any documents / items that remain historic to St. John Maxfield.

Christopher Kaiser and Pastor Katie reported that they are looking into a "Point-TiltZoom" camera for the church to be installed at the back of the church. This will assist in broadcasting live worship on Facebook and Zoom. The Synod has grant monies to help with the cost, due to increased use of streaming worship during the pandemic. Christopher will do some more research on cost of the camera. Christopher is also looking into a large screen TV set-up that

we can use for special things during worship and other times.

Worship & Evangelism:

Wanda Burkholder reported that worship planning is completed through the end of April. Pastor Katie reported on her idea for Lenten Worship. She is basing the Lenten services on the prayer of St. Francis of Assisi and will have a “hands on” project of making prayer beads, based on the petition of the week.

Pastor Katie reported that Karen Platte of Crane Creek will be willing to play the organ / piano once a month for us, on the same Sunday she plays at Crane Creek.

Ash Wednesday is February 17 and worship will be at Maxfield starting at 7pm. There will be placing of the ashes and communion at this service. We will then alternate with Crane Creek on Wednesday nights. Crane Creek will have worship on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday will be at Maxfield.

Stewardship Report: None

Old Business:

Christopher Kaiser reported that he is working with Lindgren Glass to get an estimate to replace the front doors of the church building. After that is done, we will get an estimate to put in Handicapped Access push buttons to open the doors.

New Business:

Election of Officers:

Motion was made by Anita Dorn and seconded by Rick Wilson to elect Chuck Kaiser as president. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Christopher Kaiser and seconded by Dennis Peters to elect Christopher Corday as vice president. Motion carried.

Motion by Anita Dorn and seconded by Annette Ebaugh to elect Wanda Burkholder as secretary. Motion carried.

The Contact List and Committee List were passed around for everyone to sign. We have added an Investment Committee and a Church Constitution Revision Committee to the list.

Our next meeting is March 7 at 11:00am with a representative from Thrivent coming.

A motion by Christopher Kaiser and seconded by Annette Ebaugh to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 12:33 with the Lord’s Prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,

Wanda Burkholder
Secretary



Meeting
Minutes



April Birthdays

- 6th – Mike Piph
- 6th – Brandon Rodriguez
- 8th – Mark Henry
- 9th – Jeremy Ebaugh
- 9th – Joe Ebaugh
- 10th – Adri Platte
- 10th – Brock Dancer
- 11th – Alana Platte
- 17th – Don Platte
- 18th – Debb Kaiser
- 18th – Karris Krueger
- 22nd – Katie McGlaun
- 25th – Emeri Krueger
- 26th – Addison Krueger
- 27th – Darel Kuhlmann
- 30th – Creed Krueger

May Birthdays

- 4th – Tanner Johnson
- 7th – Lydia Burkholder
- 11th – Cayanne Foust
- 14th – Al Dancer
- 15th – Reegan Platte
- 16th - Noah Richards
- 17th – Cassandra Richards
- 19th – Darrel Krueger
- 28th – Charlene Schneider
- 29th – Tracy Platte
- 30th – Deb Piph
- 31st – Ross Platte



May Anniversaries

- 13th – Rick and Kerri Wilson
- 30th – Mark and Lori Henry



April Anniversary

- 21st – Lyle and Charlene Schneider



Congratulations to Stef and Darrel Krueger on the arrival of their new great-grandson. Cainen Lee Krueger was born April 21st. He was welcomed home by his big brother Ronan and his mom and dad Creed and Ryleigh.

“Babies are bits of stardust, blown from the hand of God.”



Our Maxfield Graduates

A shout out to our high school and college graduates!



- Levi Boevers – Denver High School
- Camden Krueger – Denver High School
- Adri Platte – Wapsie Valley High School

- Addison Krueger – University of Iowa, Elementary Education
- Karter Krueger – Iowa State University, Software Engineering
- Madison Thurm – University of Iowa, Global Health Studies with a pre-physician assistant track (If I forgot anyone, my apologies. Please let Wanda know and she will put it in the bulletin. Thx)

Crack A Smile

The Sunday School teacher asked her students to draw a picture of their favorite Bible story. She was puzzled when she looked at little Charlie's picture which showed four people on an airplane. So she asked little Charlie, "What is that supposed to represent?" Charlie replied, "The flight to Egypt." The teacher said, "I see there is Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus, but who is the fourth person?" Little Charlie replied, "That is Pontius the pilot!"

And now a few notes from our President . . .

I believe there is a saying that goes "All good things must come to an end", and I'm afraid after 140 years this is true of our school house. As we'd discussed at our annual meeting, the time has come for us to part company. The floor is very weak and the front of the school house is actually starting to pull away from the building. Just recently a rather large hole has developed in the ceiling. We have been in contact with the Bremer County Farm ("poor farm") and they said they will take some items for their Denver room or the Maxfield Township room. If any of you have an interest in any of the items, please let Christopher Corday, Christopher Kaiser or myself know. We will keep you informed as to how we are coming.

Chuck



