

OSL MESSENGER

JULY 2026
VOLUME 1, ISSUE 5



THANK YOU to everyone who helped with the Joint Service with American Lutheran Church of Filley and luncheon after. It was a great time of fellowship!

PLEASE JOIN US FOR A LISTENING SESSION

SUNDAY, JUNE 28TH

Pastor Gary & OSL Church Council invites you to stay after service to express your wishes on traditions you would like to see occur on important events, such as confirmation, baptisms, weddings, etc. Your input will be used to compile a checklist to ensure our traditions are carried forward.

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from Pastor Gary's Desk

As we prepare to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the United States, we should take a moment to consider how important the "American experiment" has been for Christianity. America is complicated and even our founding fathers approached religion and philosophy from different angles, so it is hard to pin down exactly what the true "core" American values on religion are, but perhaps the first thing that comes to mind is the separation of church and state. Today there are people who argue that this was never meant to protect the government from the church but rather to protect the church from the government. That is to say, the church should be free to get involved in politics, but the government shouldn't be able to regulate churches. I have stumbled upon a video of one Christian pastor who thinks that the United States government should be funding the construction of churches.

I think they are wrong about this. The separation of church and state is important not just to protect the church from the government, but also to protect the church from itself by keeping its hands off the levers of state power. But what exactly does this mean?

Many people who think the church should influence the government point to some founding fathers who believed that our country had to live by "Christian values." That seems all well and good, but consider this: what are Christian values. It depends on who you ask.

Some Christians would say that all you really need to have proper Christian values is love. If you love your neighbor, care for your family, care for complete strangers, and are generally kind to other people, you are demonstrating Christian values. The problem with this is I know a lot of people who are loving and aren't Christian. It turns out, you don't need the church to be a nice person. Okay, so what else could Christian values be? Some say it has to do with proper belief. We have to hold to the doctrine of the Trinity, the historical truth of the resurrection, the miracles and teachings of Jesus. I don't have a problem with any of these things, but I also don't exactly see how society would fall apart without that. Surely, we don't think someone needs to believe in the miracles of Jesus to sit on a city council.

But here is where it gets a little thorny. Some Christians believe that true Christian values include the belief that the Bible is inerrant with no contradictions or historical mistakes. Some Christians believe you're not a real Christian if you go to a church with a woman pastor. Some Christians believe you're not a real Christian if unless you reject evolutionary theory. If they get to define Christian values, a strike out on all three! I would definitely not be a Christian! I'm really in an unfortunate career to be a non-Christian.

The with the church exerting authority on the state is that different churches have different opinions on what it means to be the church, who gets to be included, and what issues are most important. America has a history of Christians persecuting Christians when one group had majority power and didn't trust another group. Despite the fact that the Roman Catholic church is the largest denomination in the world and extends to many in America, we didn't have a Catholic president until John F. Kennedy, the 35th president. Why? Many non-Catholic Americans believed a Catholic would be more loyal to the pope than to the Constitution, a distrust that even Kennedy had to contend with. And that is without legal discrimination, before the commitments of our founders, there were actual legal barriers to certain denominations of Christians who wanted to serve in public office.

We could say that there are drawbacks to the separation of church and state. First and foremost for me, I think that our system opens the church up to market pressure. People are free to associate with one church or leave it. This leaves many churches scrambling to be people pleasers rather than challenge people or focus purely on the Gospel and caring for our neighbors. This is part of the reason why some churches seem to be more about entertainment than evangelism, leaving services and sermons shallow.

But ultimately, after 250 years, I think our system is good. Good enough that many countries around the world have adopted a sort of religious pluralism protected by a state that may be filled with religious people but behaves as a secular institution. As much as Christians may be skeptical of any diminishment of the power of the church, I think our founders gave us a great gift with the separation of church and state. The church is free from not only government interference, but also from oppression by other churches. We can practice Christianity the way our consciences and spirits compel us because no one theology gets to run the whole show, and in this great diversity we can learn to love and respect one another and see God at work in our neighbors who do things differently.

As we celebrate our 250th anniversary, we should remember that even though we have a secular government, we Christians trust that God holds all things together. In fact, God gave us the gift of the country in which we dwell. God gave us the gift of our culture, our values, the philosophy that drives our law. While we don't always get it right, I think that God has given us something really special here. In a world where some people are still trying to take power to enforce their ideas, their values, their beliefs on others, we should celebrate that God gave us a society in which these things would be limited. We actually have to listen to each other and care about each other, even if we don't agree on everything. The willingness to care for people who are different than you is, I think, what Christian love is all about, and that is a Christian value we can agree upon.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

June 28th - Listening Session - Stay after service to express wishes on traditions you would like to see occur on important events, such as confirmation, baptisms, weddings, etc. Your input will be used to compile a checklist to ensure our traditions are carried forward.

July 2nd - Bible Study @ 6:00 p.m.

July 7th - 9th - Rocky Railroad VBS - 5:30 - 7:30 p.m

July 9th - Family BBQ following Rocky Railroad VBS Program - 6:00 p.m
Hotdogs & chips will be served

July 16th - Bible Study @ 6:00 p.m.

July 16th - Church Council Meeting @ 7:00 p.m.

SAVE THE DATE!

Sundae FUN DAY!

YUM!



Sponsored by:
Our Savior's
LYF

FREE
WILL
DONATION

AUG 16TH
1-3

OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN WYMORE
420 WEST I STREET



JULY

BIRTHDAYS

01 - JONDRE SMIT

04 - CARLIZE SMIT

05 - MICHAEL CROME

09 - CAROL ERDMANN

10 - ROGER HENRICHS

14 - CALEB BEDNAR

14 - AMY SCHMIDT

27 - SHELLEY WHITWER

28 - KYNLEY ALLINGTON

30 - KYLIE ALLINGTON



JULY

ANNIVERSARIES

22 - STEVE & RHONDA EPP

31 - JAMES & DANA DORN

Our Savors

Rocky Railway

VBS

JULY 7TH-9TH

5:30-7:30pm

WHAT TO EXPECT

-  Train station opening
-  Music and sing-alongs
-  Crafts
-  Snacks
-  Games
-  Bible adventures
-  Time with friends



All kids welcome!



Our Saviors Lutheran Church
Council Meeting

June 14, 2026

Present: Chavonn Mailahn, Roger Henrichs, Jodi Wegner, Erin Saathoff, Pastor Gary, Pam Gerdes,
Josh Schmidt and Rachel Frerichs

Meeting called to order by: President Josh Schmidt and opened with a prayer.

Approve Agenda - Pastor added smoke alarms to Old Business. Motion to approve amended agenda by Roger, seconded by Jodi

Approve Previous Month's Meeting Minutes - Motion to approve minutes by Chavonn, seconded by Jodi

Financial report - Pam reviewed the financial report. Motion to approve by Erin, seconded by Jodi

Pastor's Report:

- Pastor reported the Synod Assembly in Kearney went well and will present to the congregation at a later date.
- Pastor would like to get the Associate Minister to be scheduled consistently. He requested that we have a list of at least 5 people to ask (Roger, Shirley, Jessi, Carmen, Josh, Erin, Chavonn) and to schedule a time to review the role of the Associate Minister.
- "How We Got The Bible" books were received, sign up and schedule a class time
- Bible study moved up to 6:00 pm

Old Business:

- Ushers for June/July Services were updated on the Google Calendar
- Listening Session on June 28th after church service for members to express their wishes on traditions they would like to see occur on important events, such as confirmation, baptisms, weddings, etc, and use that input to compile a checklist to ensure our traditions are carried forward.
- Newsletter Content - June 28th listening session was added and Erin will add the VBS BBQ at 6:00 to the upcoming events in the newsletter.
- North sign/South sign - Jodi completed the landscaping on the North sign and Roger will fix or contact someone to fix the light on the South sign.
- Laptop - going to hold off on purchasing due to high cost due to chip shortage
- WBSAF Grant - Jodi has submitted the application for an iPad to run the SOS program and other items, waiting to hear back on the amount received.
- Music & Worship Committee - Jodi will reach out to the Committee to schedule a June meeting.
- Seasonal Maintenance - Lauby's came to clean the AC units and replaced filters. Smoke Alarms need to be serviced/updated. Council will contact Mark Meints to ensure we are up to code on alarms and extinguisher placement throughout.
- Sound System - Chavonn has submitted the grant.

- Parish Meetings - Discussion was to maintain quarterly meetings but possibly holding the second and third quarter meetings via zoom and keep the first and fourth quarter meetings in person. Josh will contact Norm to discuss the possible change.
- Associate Ministers - list of 5 Congregation Members to participate by Listening Session, Sunday, June 28, 2026.

New Business:

- Downspouts - Josh will shop around for downspouts to match existing ones.
- Date for next council meeting will be Thursday, July 16th @ 7:00 p.m.

All business concluded, Motion to adjourn by Jodi, seconded by Chavonn

Closed meeting with the Lord's Prayer.

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