

# The Petra Press

Newsletter of the Williamstown Lutheran Church  
Graniteville, Vermont \* \* \* 207-370-0355

Vacancy Pastor  
Rev. Robert Fischer

www.wlcvermont.org

January 2021

## (Vacancy) Pastor's Corner

### *The Year of the Lord's Favor*

Many will try to make predictions as to what this year holds for us. The pandemic, the economy, and the new presidential administration are just a *few* of the things that will get a lot of attention. Here at WLC, of course, a focus will be on when will the congregation get a new pastor and what will he be like? On an even more personal level, are our health concerns or relationship problems.

Jesus boldly announced, "*the year of the Lord's favor*" (Luke 4:19) one Sabbath day long ago. After he said this, the Scriptures tell us that the eyes of everyone were fastened on him. That's a good posture to take as we begin any New Year. As we fix our eyes on Jesus, we can face the New Year with confidence. We may not know the details, but we can be confident of God's presence as we submit our lives to his will and participate as citizens of his Kingdom.

St. James gave a warning to people who thought that they were in control of the future. He said, "*Now listen, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money'*" (James 4:13). "Now listen!" he says. James, under the power of the Holy Spirit, tries to get our attention on a very important matter. What the future holds isn't under *our* direct control. James puts our planning into perspective and under God's authority where it rightly belongs. Under God's watchful eye, and with the guidelines he gives us in Scripture, we move forward and say, "*if it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that*" (James 4:15).

As we well know, some people couldn't care less if what they do is "the Lord's will." They're going to do it anyway! This, of course, is dangerous and delusional.

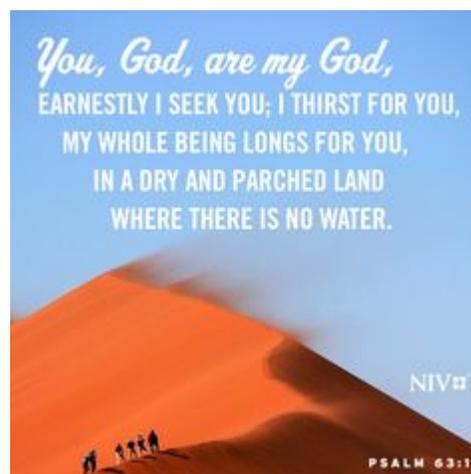
"*The Lord's will*" affects all of our lives. To approach everything we do and every decision we make with

the perspective, "*if it is the Lord's will,*" makes us examine

our actions in light of God's Holy Word. God makes it clear that we're to love him and serve him in everything we do. That *is* His will!

We're still living in the time that Jesus boldly announced as "*the year of the Lord's favor.*" We're still repentant sinners living in the favor God's forgiveness made possible through Jesus' perfect life, sacrificial death, and glorious resurrection. In 2021 we may still have a mask over our nose and mouth, but we can still live the year with our eyes fixed on Jesus.

In Christ,  
Pastor Fischer



## Sunday Mornings:

Sunday Bible Study @ 9:00 a.m.  
Studying Book of Job

Worship Service @ 10:15 a.m.

Sunday School lessons are in Jessica Moen's mailbox in the Narthex for anyone who attends and would like something for the kids.



### Operation Christmas Child

Let's keep Operation Christmas Child in our prayers and continue to gather items for 2021.

Ideas for January:

### Update for Call Committee

Here is an update from this past Sunday's Call Committee meeting.

We had started with 11 pastoral candidates and by Sunday we unanimously agreed on one candidate. His name is Pastor Jeremy Yeadon from Brownstown, Indiana.

There will be a congregational meeting after the service on January 24 to vote up or down to extend a call to Pastor Yeadon.

Pastor Yeadon is 49 years old and has been in the ministry for 10 years.

I've had two very pleasant conversations with Pastor Yeadon. He is very laid back and prides himself on being a consensus builder. His sermons can be viewed at St. Peters Lutheran Church in Brownstown, Indiana.

If there are any questions, please contact me or any member of the Call Committee.

Tom Stuwe

*Let the wise listen to these proverbs and become even wiser, let those with understanding receive guidance.*

*Proverbs 1:5 NLT*

### Reminder for 2020 WLC Giving Statement

If you would like to receive your 2020 WLC Giving's statement via email, please send me an email at [BLaugh38@gmail.com](mailto:BLaugh38@gmail.com) with **subject line WLC**.

If you would prefer a paper copy sent to you via US postal service, let me know.

Thank you,  
Bob Laughlin

### Newsletter Distribution

I am sending the monthly newsletter out via email. If you hear that someone is not receiving the newsletter, please let me know their email address and I will add them to the distribution list. Also, if you know of someone that would like the newsletter sent out via US postal service, let me know and I will be happy to mail copies.

There will also be copies available on the table in Narthex.

Kathy L



### December 2020 TREASURER'S UPDATE

A brief summary of the financial position of the congregation at the end of 2020 shows that income exceeded expenses for the year. Despite the difficulties of this year, our congregation met 90% of the budget for the year. Thank you for continuing to support our church family through your tithes and offerings.

	December 2020	Year to Date 2020	2020 Budget
INCOME	\$10,597.48	\$83,642.99	\$94,424.00
EXPENSES	\$ 3,561.86	\$73,382.84	\$89,623.25

"Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need." Malachi 3:10

To God be the glory!

Respectfully submitted,  
Barbara Currier

### ***Staying Connected Corner***

This new section is meant to be a way for us to stay connected during this strange time .

Here are a few words from some of our church family, many of whom you have asked specifically that I check in with.

From Arlene M:

Arlene and Diana are doing very well. Diana has been working her regular hours at TJ Maxx since June and is very happy to be doing so.

Hazel has been experiencing some difficulties and I would ask for prayers for her. The three of us are blessed with good health. It is nice to know we are on the minds of our church family, and I do appreciate that, but I do not wish to request cards at this time.

Arlene

From Gail A:

Greetings from Kingsland, Ga. We are doing good, Paul's been busy doing physical therapy three days a week. Our Christmas Eve service at Holy Trinity Lutheran church was a candlelight service of the whole hour we lost power just as service was starting due to a thunderstorm! It was actually nice! I helped this year preparing food baskets for shut ins (see photo). See you the spring!

Gail and Paul

From Hannah S:

We miss being at church so much. We are trying so hard to keep our business going (it's busy, but until we get the vaccine, we are really trying to keep a low profile to keep our patients as safe as possible; also trying to keep our kids in school!)

Spending a lot of weekend time in the woods, sledding, skiing, etc.

Hannah

From Carolyn B:

At this time, Rick is in the hospital in Burlington. Tomorrow, (January 7) he will have a tracheotomy and the trache will remain

in for the remainder of his life. He is in good spirits, excellent care, and we communicate throughout the day. I cannot visit him.

As for me, I am recovering from left shoulder surgery. I am alone, but have family support, medical counseling, and friends who support. We get meals on wheels and others have cooked or shopped for us. We have it better than most. I am grateful for all we have.

If there is anything I would ask for, it would be cards or notes sent to Rick at our home. As long as Covid-19 is around, we will not be attending church.

Love and blessings to everyone,  
Carolyn

From Kim P:

Right now, we are doing ok. Being at home is great for me... I love to get letters/mail/emails/texts from people who say 'just thinking of you' or just praying for you.

Zac would like to share that he was very happy to get a new video game for Christmas called Minecraft and he has been playing the game a lot during the holidays.

From Kathy L.

Elizabeth is returning to the Clarkson University campus on Sunday January 17. Once on campus she must stay in the 'Clarkson Bubble' and cannot return home until the semester ends in May. Liz is returning as a senior studying Civil and Environmental Engineering. She is also doing research on the pile structures for wind turbines. She will be graduating in December 2021.

From Jessica M.

We are doing well. Elaina is almost fully walking, and Joseph is doing well with homeschooling – his favorite subject is Social Studies. He is learning about the colonist right now.

From Sarah P.

We are doing well – pretty much just going to work (me to Skalecke’s clinic and Rich from home) and school and staying home. We built an ice rink in our yard and have a rope tow across the road, so fortunately the kids are well entertained this winter.

### From the desk of Mike Schumacher

I love manger scenes and Beverly and I have about a dozen set up all around the house during Christmas season. Being cooped up because of Covid this year, they took on a greater importance somehow. Now thinking of putting them away for another year, I have been musing on the various aspects of the scenes and had a couple of realizations that I’d like to share.

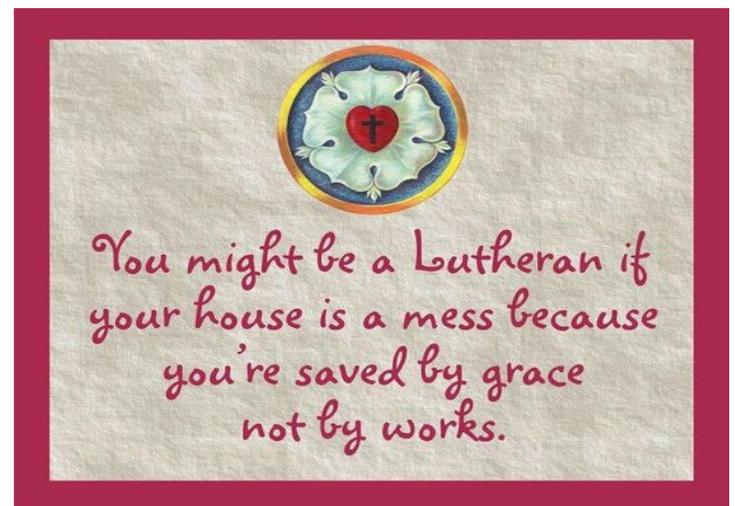
One of the creches shows the shepherds coming in with some sheep and two sheep dogs. This would have never happened at the time of our Savior’s birth, I realized, because dogs were unclean animals according to the law and if you touched one you would become unclean. We so readily call dogs ‘man’s best friend’ today that it never occurred to me that at that time they were considered unclean. In fact, more than that, they really were unclean. Because almighty God said they were unclean. Then I realized that the only reason dogs are no longer unclean, and we can have them as companions in our home is that Jesus died on the cross and fulfilled the Law by his suffering and death and resurrection. So, the next time you pet your dog it is because of Jesus’ sacrifice that it’s okay to do that.

Next, I had the realization that I’ve always underestimated the heaviness of the Law in the Old Testament times... and even for Jesus’ disciples. These Laws were actually given by Almighty God and were real factual things. It really was important to pay heed to not mixing types of cloth and the life, and the consequences of doing so were equally real and true. I’ve slipped into thinking of these Laws as inconsequential and even silly in some cases. But God spoke and all of creation came into being and the same God spoke these laws into being.

If Jesus hadn’t died and rose again, we’d still be under these laws, and I had a deeper appreciation of what happened on Calvary so long ago. The Gospel is such a radical thing! After the Ascension, the world flipped, and all creation knew it.... And waits with us for His second coming. Roses don’t want to have thorns anymore because the curse upon the earth will finally become a thing of the past. Lions will eat straw like (and with) the ox. Bats won’t be ugly anymore because there won’t be any need to remind us of evil and the entire consequence of sin will be finally removed. Even so..... Come Lord Jesus... Come!



The deadline for THE February newsletter is Tuesday February 10. Let’s continue to the Stay Connected Corner. My email address is [klaughlin64@gmail.com](mailto:klaughlin64@gmail.com).



**YOU KNOW YOU'RE  
LUTHERAN WHEN**

**YOU HEAR  
"MAY THE FORCE BE WITH YOU"  
AND RESPOND  
"AND ALSO WITH YOU!"**

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