

THE WINDOW

Windsor Heights Lutheran Church ~ 1240 66th St. Windsor Heights, IA 50324

WHLC Staff:

Rev. Chris Olkiewicz

Lead Pastor

Rev. Robin Coughenower

Associate Pastor

Zach Meyer

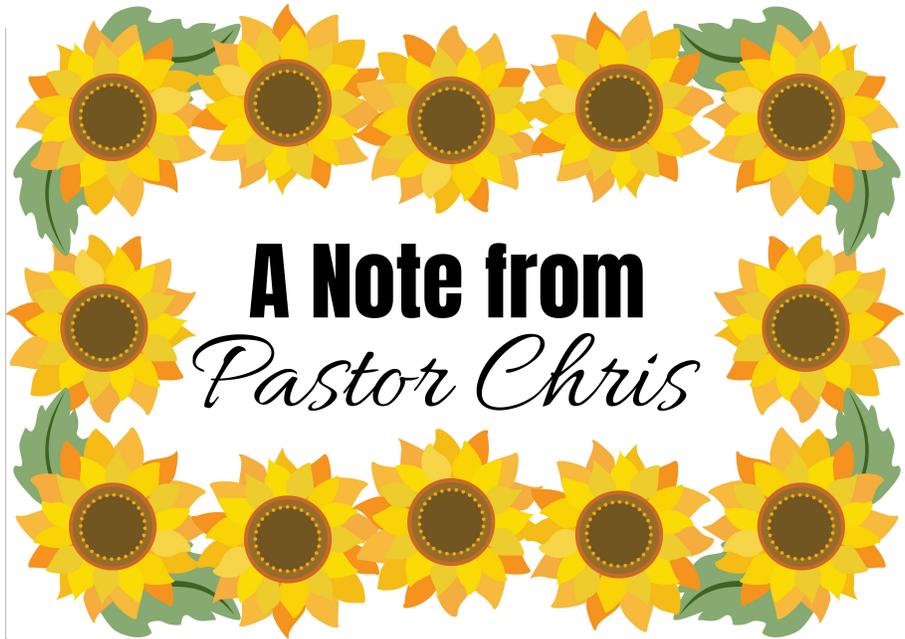
Director of Youth and Family
Ministry/Congregational
Life Coordinator

Heidi Hennig

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As you read this, I will have just begun my sabbatical, which runs from August 1 - October 31. I am deeply grateful for this opportunity to rest, renew, and re-energize for the work of ministry. After 27 years of work that occupies many evenings and most weekends and holidays, and is emotionally and mentally demanding in many ways, I can assure you that I am ready for this extended break.

As you may recall from my previous communications, a pastor's sabbatical typically has three components: a time for rest and renewal, a time for study in an area of interest, and a time to focus on a topic related to congregational ministry. The rest and renewal period for me will include taking Bennett to move into his dorm at Augustana University in late-August. I'm not sure this counts as "restful," but it is good to have time to focus on this transition. These are bittersweet days of anticipating an empty nest.

The study component will involve adding to my knowledge base in the area of faith and science dialogue. A book that I have dipped into time and again over the years, but never had time to read cover

to cover, is *The Human Factor: Evolution, Culture, and Religion* by the Lutheran theologian Philip Hefner. It is really the only work of systematic theology that tries in a comprehensive way to make sense of traditional Christian theology within the context of the natural sciences (and written from a Lutheran perspective to boot!). First published in 1993, it's not new, but still relevant. It is a hard book, and serious amounts of coffee will be necessary to fuel the reading.

Recently arrived on my doorstep are two newer offerings from Catholic theologian Ilia Delio: *The Emergent Christ* and *The Hours of the Universe: Reflections on God, Science, and the Human Journey*. Both of these books are available from Amazon, so you could read along with me! Delio is a bold thinker, who, as a disciple of Teilhard de Chardin, is reenvisioning Christian theology in the light of evolution and cosmology.

You may think that this doesn't sound particularly relevant to parish ministry, but I would argue that it is, particularly in helping youth and young adults cultivate a spiritual sensibility that sees faith and science as complementary rather than contradictory ways of reflecting on human experience. The question, *What does it mean to be human?* involves answers that are both theological and scientific. I hope to develop some materials for use in confirmation class that get at these ideas.

I do not expect that the three months I am away will be a time of treading water for the congregation. If the pandemic has taught us anything, it is that things keep on changing, usually in ways that we did not expect. Perhaps like many of you, I feel sort of shell shocked by the events of the last two+ years. Where do we go from here? What does post-pandemic church look like? What does post-pandemic *anything* look like?

As council has tried to negotiate this emerging, ambiguous reality in recent months, I have encouraged us to think in terms of renewal, especially renewal in the basics of Christian faith in community. What does it mean for us to be renewed in worship, scripture, prayer, and service? Council has been using these categories as a way of evaluating priorities and opportunities: how does Idea X, Y, or Z support worship, scripture (learning/growth in knowledge and understanding), prayer, and service? As Pope Francis says, "As a Church, we need to return to what is essential instead of losing ourselves in so many secondary things, running the risk of losing sight of the simple purity of the Gospel."

If the pandemic has taught me anything as a pastor, it is the importance of renewing our focus on the essential, rather than the secondary, aspects of the Gospel. These are the things that have the power to sustain us in difficult times. I invite YOU to ask yourself how you might renew your commitment to worship, scripture (reading, study, reflection), prayer (setting aside quiet time, times of inactivity, listening time), and service. These are the Christian practices that give us life, no matter what the days may bring.

I will miss you during these weeks of Sabbath rest and look forward to my return in November. I promise to pray for you and ask for your prayers for me, especially that we may all be renewed, day by day, in the life-giving Gospel of Jesus Christ.

In peace,

Pastor Chris

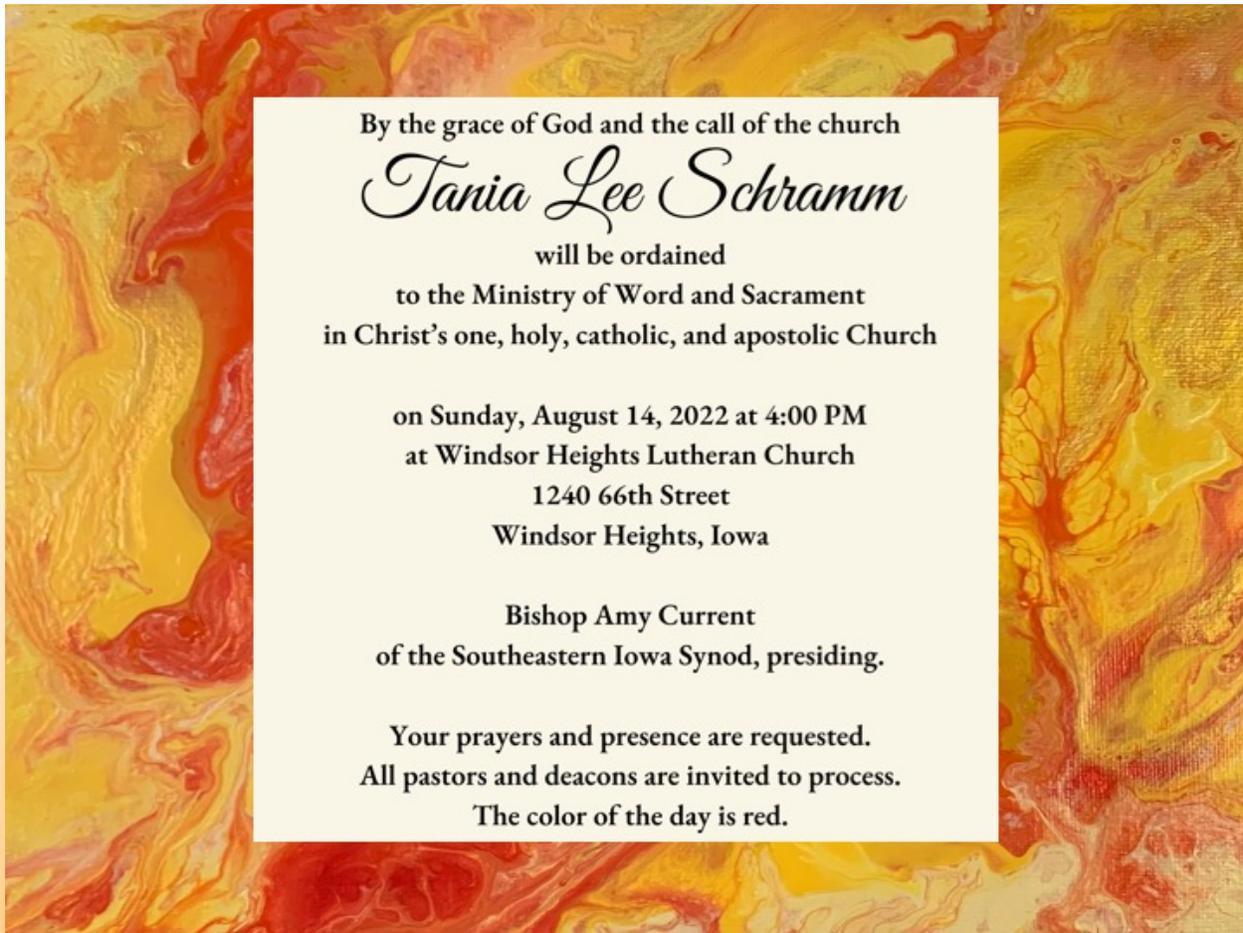


Worship Hosts Needed

With Pastor Chris' sabbatical from August through October, we are in special need of worship hosts for the weeks that Pastor Robin will not be at WHLC and a supply pastor will be preaching. The worship host will help open the church/ welcome the supply pastor and prepare the sanctuary for each worship service that weekend. This will be very easy, especially with other worship volunteers helping perform regular tasks. A quick checklist for the host has been created to help you during the weekend. We are currently looking for hosts the weekend of August 20-21 and the following

Sundays: September 11, September 25, October 23 and October 30. If you have interest or any questions in serving as a worship host, please reach out to Sabbatical Task Force members Julie Borseth, Jessica Chance, Jill Hyda or Heidi in the church office. We really appreciate your willingness to serve!





Over the past 8 years, our family has been deeply blessed to be a part of this community of faith. We have experienced so much together -- in worship, Alleluia choir, children's ministry, confirmation, VBS, CHAOS, and more! We have shared in joys and challenges, tears and hugs, and have been Christ for each other. You have been Christ for us too. We are so incredibly grateful for the ways in which you have welcomed, loved, and supported our family, and for the all the ways you have supported Tania in her call to ministry.

God calls us forward, however, into a new thing. It is with great joy that Tania has been called to serve with and among the people of God at Grace Lutheran Church in Adel, Iowa as their next pastor. Grace is where Tania served on internship in 2017 & 2018. God is always creating, transforming, renewing, making all things new making us new.

For the days that we have shared, and all the days to come, we are so grateful for the community and the ministry here and for your love and friendship. Windsor Heights Lutheran Church is a wonderful, special place -- because of all of you!! It's not good-bye. It's "see ya later!" May Christ's peace, joy, and love be with you this day and always.

Dave, Tania, Joey, and Ben Schramm

"This Day We Say Grateful: A Sending Blessing" by Jan Richardson

<https://paintedprayerbook.com/2016/06/24/this-day-we-say-grateful-a-sending-blessing/>

TREASURER'S REPORT

Below is a summary of the results for the General Fund followed by Special Offerings:

	June 2022		Year-to-Date		2021 YTD
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
General Offering	28,648	41,666	246,682	249,996	253,218
Other General Fund Income	474	407	4,774	2,442	3,859
General Fund Income	29,240	42,073	251,456	252,438	257,077
General Fund Expense	44,276	42,037	267,439	252,222	241,269
General Fund Net Income	(15,036)	36	(15,983)	216	15,808
Special Offering Income	111		7,864		4,056
Special Offering Expense	361		1,146		1,965
Special Offering Net Income	(250)		6,718		2,091
Total Net Income	(15,286)	36	(9,265)	216	19,981

Mortgage Balance 740,836.99*
Capital Appeal Permanent Fund Balance 158,401.61

General Offerings for June were \$13,018 under budget, and General Offerings are now also under budget, by \$3,314 year-to-date. Year-to-date General Offerings are \$6,536 below General Offerings year-to-date in 2021.

Year-to-date expenses are above budget and are also higher than 2021. We continue to have expenses such as insurance that are higher than budget due to timing differences. We also have expenses that are running higher than budgeted unrelated to timing differences, including snow removal, yard work / landscaping, cleaning, supplies and repairs & maintenance. Research is being done to find alternative vendors for services causing some of the larger variances to find a more economical providers while not sacrificing quality of service. Overall we are doing a good job of managing programming and activity expenses to be fiscally responsible while providing the programs and activities that advance our mission.

Following recommendation from the Finance Committee and approval of Council a \$50,000 mortgage principal payment was made to Mission Investment Fund in late June. This will bring our mortgage balance down to just over \$740,000.

The Finance Committee is working to invest CD funds with financial institutions at a more competitive rate than is currently being offered by Bankers Trust.

WHLC remains on solid financial footing with respect to working capital.

As the summer continues, we know that many families will be traveling and may not be at church in person as much as otherwise. I remind you that offerings can be mailed to the church or made securely online through the church website www.whlc.org if you would like to do so.

Please contact me if you have any questions. Barb Waymire



WHLC NEWS & REMINDERS



Beginning on Sunday, September 11, we will return to our fall worship times. On Sunday, there will be services at 8:30 and 10:45 a.m. with a fellowship time at 9:30 a.m. Saturday evening services will conclude on September 3, and will resume during our summer schedule.

We welcome back all of our musical ensembles, Alleluia Choir, Windsor Bells, Windsor Brass, Cherub Chimes, Joyful Noise and Grace Notes, who will be providing special music throughout the program year.

As we have done in previous years, the style of worship will alternate between the two services, with Amanda and the praise team at one service and Jan at the other service. There is somewhat of a pattern to this as we strive to alternate each weekend, but the scheduling of our ensembles for each weekend may cause the pattern to change at times.



We begin our Wednesday evening programming on September 7, with a meal, confirmation classes, classes/music for the younger children and rehearsal for most of our musical ensembles.

Pastor Robin will lead the Women's Joint Bible Study on Wednesday, August 17, 2022, at 20, 9:30 a.m. in Crabtree Parish Hall. (This is a change in time and replaces the traditional August evening potluck). Light refreshments will be



Women's Bible Study

served. August will be the 3rd session of the summer Bible study, "Crafted in Christ: Ties that bind" by the Rev. Katie Hines-Shah.

Worship Volunteer Sign-Up

Please consider helping with any of these roles and sign up on the church website or right here: [Online worship volunteer signup.](#)

As always, we are in need of worship volunteers to help with items such as communion prep/assistance, lector and other positions. This is especially true with Pastor Chris' upcoming sabbatical. The Sabbatical Task Force members will be monitoring the

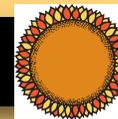
volunteer list

during this time and contacting individuals to ensure there is adequate help on the weekends for the pastors and worship host.





YOUTH & FAMILY NEWS!



Liftoff



The next Liftoff is right around the corner! All students in pre-K thru 3rd grade, and their families, are invited to join us on **Friday, August 5**, from 6:00-7:30 p.m.!

A reminder that we'll have adult volunteers on standby the entire evening, so parents are welcome to join us throughout the night or drop their kids off and pick them up when we wrap up! Hope to see you there!

VBS WAS A BLAST!

We had SO much fun at VBS this month! Over 70 kids joined us for a week at Adventure Island, to learn all about God's Great Light. Along the way we made new friends, enjoyed wonderful food, found ways to serve our community and worshiped as a group. We've attached some of the photos of our favorite moments from VBS in this newsletter. Thank you to everyone who helped make this special week happen!

Mark Your Calendars! Wednesday Activities Return September 7!

Crazy as it is to believe, we're not too far away from the return of our regular Wednesday activities. This includes our music ensembles, kids activities (including faith formation and confirmation), community meals and more! We'll release our official schedule for each night later this month and

heading into September, so keep a lookout in the E-Weeklies, Facebook & the September Window!



TONS OF FUN AT VBS!





AUGUST BIRTHDAYS



- 3 Finley Cox, Marvin Kister, Grace Swanson
- 5 Noelle Erickson, David Schramm, Tania Schramm
- 6 Scott Steensen
- 7 Jack Capps, Karla Koudelka, Linda Russell
- 8 Suzanne Nelson, Kahlan Rowland,
Valarie Rowland
- 9 Benjamin Ryherd, Roger Severson
- 11 Angela Eakins
- 12 Robin Coughenower
- 13 Cole Barrett
- 14 Grant Jansen, Jon Newsom, James Petersen
- 15 Tammie Amsbaugh
- 16 Kareem Franklin
- 18 Pam Barber
- 19 Duane Danielson
- 20 Marilyn Cornelius, Marilyn Penberthy
- 22 Alex Brooks
- 24 Cheryl Newsom, Melvin Nielsen
- 26 Elaine Johnson
- 30 John Swanson
- 31 Mark Opsal, Delores Toft

The family of George and Janet Hanusa is hosting a party in late August to celebrate their upcoming 90th birthdays and 66th wedding anniversary.

As long-time church members, they would appreciate hearing from you.

Please send cards and greetings **no later than Aug. 15** to:

Ellen Wonderlin Wilke
719 W Main St.
Decorah, IA 52101





A big heartfelt "Thank You" to everyone sending me prayers, cards, texts, food and well wishes, as I'm recovering from hip replacement surgery on June 15. I have a ways to go, but am feeling pretty good! I could feel the prayers helping me on the tougher days! Mark and I are truly blessed with our caring church family of Windsor Heights Lutheran Church!

With a thankful heart,
Linda Fasse

My 70th birthday was extra special with your presence at the wonderful celebration Heidi planned and implemented. Gratefulness is extended to Mike and Blair Blake, Matt Hennig, Linda Anderson, and Cheryl Rigler for their



decorating and kitchen assistance. I have reread the beautiful cards and sentiments several times. Thank you for making me feel so loved. I am so blessed to have you all in my church family. ~Sharman Blake



A big shoutout to Zach Meyer for all of his creative homemade decorations, thoughtful planning and vibrant and contagious energy for VBS!

Have you noticed how wonderful the landscaping at WHLC looks!?! A shoutout to Matt & Michael McNamara for helping to make the lawn at WHLC look so beautiful and inviting!

