

What's Past is Prologue

Dear Friends in Christ,

Another Annual Report letter from the Pastor. "Does anybody even read these?" I used to ask, usually while sitting at my computer writing the next one. Surprisingly, I have discovered, some people do. We kind of expect our leaders, be they in politics, academia, business, or the church, to help us see more clearly the path we are on together and to set the tone for the coming years ahead.

Since 1790, every U.S President has delivered a "State of the Union" address to Congress. In 1913 President Woodrow Wilson, a former college professor and New Jersey Governor, brought back the tradition of giving the "State of the Union" verbally instead of in written form. Since then, they have been oral addresses. The purpose of these messages is to inspire or encourage the nation, cast a vision, set a legislative agenda, and promote national unity, especially in difficult times.

For many years, I was a clergy cluster representative for the Pacific Lutheran University Corporation, a legal voting body for the Tacoma school that met every fall to do business. As a part of that, I would attend the annual PLU Convocation that kicked off each school year in September. School President Lorin Anderson (1992-2012) was a master at setting the tone for the coming year with his address to the students, faculty, and friends of PLU gathered in Olson Auditorium. In his thirty minutes at the podium, President Anderson would touch on the state of the world, the nation, the school, and address major cultural shifts that caught his notice and demonstrate how PLU was helping prepare leaders to be ready for the times. For a robed academic, who looked every bit the midwestern, bespectacled professor, he was remarkably perceptive about trends in art, music, and popular culture. I remember one address in the fall of 2007 based on the John Mayer pop song, "Waiting on the World to Change". Part of the presentation was a montage of pictures of people from all over the world struggling against poverty, war, loneliness, and despair. A better world was needed. These were the aspirations of his students too. (Anytime I hear that song, I remember his address. He would have made an excellent preacher!)

That same year, at Mac World 2007 in San Francisco, a fashionably bespectacled Steve Jobs, co-founder of Apple Computers, in a turtleneck sweater and Levi's jeans, introduced something called an "I-Phone", the next generation of mobile communication and handheld computing. This was transformative technology. The world would change because of this new

“smart phone”. Just not exactly the way we might have thought it would.

“Does anybody even read these?” This year (2025), not wanting to repeat myself too much, I went back and read the last 10 annual reports to the congregation that I had written. (2015-2024). I was surprised by how much I remembered both the content and intent behind each of them. Some letters were better than others. A surprising amount of what was discussed came to fruition or became pertinent going forward.

Here's an overly distilled rehash of what I wrote about.

2015: If you expect to see Jesus in your ministry, you will.

2016: Be persistent. Have Grit. Keep heading in the right direction.

2017: Everything in the world of “church” has changed and the future is not what we expected. We need to adapt. We have a good foundation on which to do that.

2018: Our parish is our neighborhood (North Marion School District), and those who live there are the neighbors we are called to love and serve. Look to Mr. Rogers! Look for the helpers!

2019: We can't know what the future holds. If we step out in faith, God will go with us.

2020: We didn't ask to be the ones living in unprecedented times. Yet here we are. We can help create hope.

2021: Wild webs of relationships. Through the pandemic, we stayed connected with each other and with other “helpers” in our community. Weaving together these relationships in the community will make us stronger and give us mission.

2022: What if? It can be a statement of regret or a vision for a better future. God's love has been poured into our hearts. Instead of wishing we could go back and create an alternative timeline, God has given us what we need now to move forward.

2023: Times are bumpy. We have been through bumpy times before as a congregation these last 124 years. Hold on tight. Remember that God is with us. Take time for gratitude. God still has work for us to do.

2024: In our 125th year, we celebrate our accomplishments. We affirm the good we are doing. We pause to acknowledge it. Good job! Now let's keep walking a path of hope.

All in all, not bad stuff, if I do say so myself!. Many of these things, we have taken to heart or nurtured as a congregation. We are better for it.

So...keeping all of that in mind, what is our vision ***going forward as a congregation?***

As Shakespeare wrote in The Tempest, “What's past is prologue.” In other words, we build on our strengths without resting on our laurels, using those strengths to do a few new things.

In September 2024 and March 2025, the council gathered for two visioning sessions, focusing on what we wanted for our congregation three years into the future. The purpose was to look at our congregational values, gifts, and aspirations and build from there.

In summary, from our two sessions, we wanted to accomplish two things these next three years.

One, we wanted to develop and train more **new leaders** that would allow us to **keep doing the things that we do well** and were part of our vitality and purpose.

These included ministries like the Transitional Shelter, Backpack Buddies, Giving Tree, North Marion Services Team/Deacon's Fund collaborations, Hosting Recovery Groups, Endowment Team, Worship Support (ushers, coffee hour support, lectors), Worship Music, Worship in the Park, and Evelyn's Garden. Those who have been leading these efforts can't do them forever. How do we invite and train a new generation of leaders to keep these ministries that we value strong and effective?

Secondly, we acknowledged that we were at an **opportune time in our congregation's life, to intentionally develop our ministry to youth and families**. *There are children in church again and baptisms! We needed to take this moment when things were going relatively well and support those who were here now. We needed to **listen to these new families** and find out how best to love and support them. We also needed to **listen to the wider community** to find out where youth and families were hurting or in need of resources. How could we minister and support the wider community too?*

In the coming months, council and others will be mapping out a strategy to focus on these two areas of focus and will share them with the congregation, asking for your support and input.

Well, if you've gotten this far, you have answered my question. Some people do actually read these things! Thank you for your persistence!

July marks the beginning of our 25th year together as pastor and congregation. We continue this journey together. Paul's words to the church at Philippi come to mind.

³ I thank my God for every remembrance of you, ⁴ always in every one of my prayers for all of you, praying with joy ⁵ for your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. ⁶ I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete ⁷ it until the day of Jesus Christ. (Philippians 1:3-6)

Peace! Pastor Craig

July Readings

Tuesday, July 01

Psalm 140; Jeremiah 3:15-18;
Ephesians 5:6-20;

Wednesday, July 02

Psalm 140; Jeremiah 23:16-22; Matthew 10:16-25;

Thursday, July 03

Psalm 66:1-9; 2 Kings 21:1-15;
Romans 7:14-25;

Friday, July 04

Psalm 66:1-9;
Jeremiah 51:47-58;
2 Corinthians 8:1-7;

Saturday, July 05

Psalm 66:1-9;
Zechariah 14:10-21;
Luke 9:1-6;

Sunday, July 06

Isaiah 66:10-14 Psalm 66:1-9
(4) Galatians 6:[1-6] 7-16
Luke 10:1-11, 16-20

Monday, July 07

Psalm 119:73-80;
Jeremiah 6:10-19; Acts 19:21-27;

Tuesday, July 08

Psalm 119:73-80;
Jeremiah 8:4-13; Acts 19:28-41;

Wednesday, July 09

Psalm 119:73-80; Joshua 23:1-16; Luke 10:13-16;

Thursday, July 10

Psalm 25:1-10; Genesis 41:14-36; James 2:14-26;

Friday, July 11

Psalm 25:1-10; Genesis 41:37-49;
Acts 7:9-16;

Saturday, July 12

Psalm 25:1-10; Leviticus 19:1-4, 32-37; John 3:16-21;

Sunday, July 13

Isaiah 66:10-14 Psalm 66:1-9 (4)
Galatians 6:[1-6] 7-16
Luke 10:1-11, 16-20

Monday, July 14

Psalm 25:11-20; Job 24:1-8;
James 2:1-7;

Tuesday, July 15

Psalm 25:11-20; Proverbs 19:1-17;
1 John 3:11-17;

Wednesday, July 16

Psalm 25:11-20; Ecclesiastes 9:13-18; Matthew 25:31-46;

Thursday, July 17

Psalm 15; Genesis 12:10-20;
Hebrews 5:1-6;

Friday, July 18

Psalm 15; Genesis 13:1-18;
Ephesians 3:14-21;

Saturday, July 19

Psalm 15; Genesis 14:1-16;
Luke 8:4-10;

Sunday, July 20

Genesis 18:1-10a Psalm 15 (1)
Colossians 1:15-28 Luke 10:38-42

Monday, July 21

Psalm 119:97-104; Exodus 18:1-12;
Colossians 1:27-2:7;

Tuesday, July 22

Psalm 119:97-104;
Proverbs 9:1-18; 1John 2:1-6;

Wednesday, July 23

Psalm 119:97-104;
Deuteronomy 12:1-12;
John 6:41-51;

Thursday, July 24

Psalm 138; Esther 2:19-3:6;
Acts 1:15-20;

Friday, July 25

Psalm 138; Esther 3:7-15;
Acts 2:22-36;

Saturday, July 26

Psalm 138; Esther 4:1-17;
Luke 8:22-25;

Sunday, July 27

Genesis 18:1-10a Psalm 15 (1)
Colossians 1:15-28
Luke 10:38-42

Monday, July 28

Psalm 55:16-23; Esther 5:1-14;
Colossians 2:16-3:1;

Tuesday, July 29

Psalm 55:16-23; Esther 6:1-7:6;
Romans 9:30-10:4;

Wednesday, July 30

Psalm 55:16-23; Esther 7:7-8:17;
Matthew 5:43-48;

Thursday, July 31

Psalm 49:1-12; Proverbs 23:1-11;
Romans 11:33-36;

Annual Meeting Recap

Thanks to all who participated in our annual meeting of the congregation on June 22nd. We passed a budget, re-elected three council members (Conrad Pearson, Heather Wechter, and Dan Harms) for a second term, and also formally elected John Ries and Mike Boonstra to the Endowment Team. John and Mike had been appointed by the council for temporary terms until our Annual Meeting where we could make their membership official.

July 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3 6 – 8 pm Wellbriety Recovery Support Group	4 Independence Day	5
6 10 am Worship 11:15 am Council 7 pm AA	7 6:30-8:30 pm Aurora Emergency Preparedness	8 6 pm AA Meeting	9	10 6 – 8 pm Wellbriety Recovery Support Group	11	12 5:15-6:15 pm AA Speaker Night
13 10 am Worship 7 pm AA	14 6 pm AA Meeting	15 3 - 5:30 pm Food Share, Pythian Hall	16 6 pm AA Meeting	17 6 – 8 pm Wellbriety Recovery Support Group	18	19 Pastor Vacation
Pastor Craig on Vacation						
20 10 am Worship 7 pm AA	21 6 pm AA Meeting	22 6 pm AA Meeting	23	24 6 – 8 pm Wellbriety Recovery Support Group	25	26
27 10 am Worship 7 pm AA	28 6 pm AA Meeting	29 6 pm AA Meeting	30			



JULY ANNIVERSARIES

Chris & Meghann Fisher	4
Bob & Barb Bannister	7
Sasha & Andy Shepherd	7
George & Kiera Will	7
Greg & Amy Elliott	9
Brenda & Charlie Eggert	10
Mary & Lance Lyon	15
Lance & Mary Lyon	15
Kimberly & Conrad Pearson	18
Evie & Ron Berg	29
Norman & Joyce Colvin	31



JULY BIRTHDAYS

Mike Boonstra	3
Jeanne Brown	4
Denise McPherson	6
Victor Roberts	8
Sophie Will	8
Lynn Bloomfield	9
Colin Brown	16
Marlene Gooding	22
Marie Gunther	26
Lorrie Dyr Dahl	27
Randy Beyers	30
Joyce Colvin	30
Larry Marnella	30
Andy Shepherd	31

July Service Helpers



July 6

Reader: Marie Gunther
 Ushers: Lynn Bloomfield &
 Ilene Marnella
 Donuts: Joy Schulz

July 13

Reader Mike Boonstra
 Usher: George Will
 Coffee Host: Marie Gunther

July 20

Reader: Kenton Wolfe
 Usher: Kenton Wolfe
 Coffee Host: Sonya Johnson

July 27

Reader: Dale Williamson
 Ushers: Dale & Susan
 Williamson
 Coffee Host:

In Our Hearts & Prayers

Abraham	Barb B.
Amy Elliot	Barb B
Anna (Grider) Westcott	Jim & Doris Grider
Bankhead Family	Wyatt Akin
Barb Bannister	PC
Belinda Kjensrud	Kim Mackiln
Beth Brandt	Mary W.
Betty Gerhardt	Kenton and Mary Wolfe
Bob and Sally Boonstra	Doris Grider
Brooke	Heather W
Bruce Baker	Kevin Baker
Bud Richard and Family	Kimberly Macklin
Burt Aus	Judi Aus
Carol Smith	Helen D
Chad Roberson	PC
Charles G.	PC
Colin Brown	Heather W
Cindy Caufield	Susan W
Dana St. Clair	Diane Schaber
Dennis Ormseth	Mary W.
Dixie Scheehear	PC
Dyrdahl Family	PC
Ellen Paulson	Lorrie Dyrdahl
Eleanor Zawada	Barb Bannister
Eric Wechter	PC
Ernie Peter	PC
Evie and Ron Berg	PC
Gary Erb	Barb B.
Heide Hendrick	PC
Heidi Daniel Family	PC
Hollinger Family, Ellie	Kimberly Macklin
Howard & Kathy Brandt	Mary W.
Jan G	PC
Jean Ruter	Mary W.
Jeannine Brumley	PC
Jerry McKenzie	Sharon G.
Jo Miller	Kimberly Macklin
JoAnn Caufield Family	Cindy C
Joanna Painter	Dixie
Judi Aus	PC
Judy Kretzmann, Family	PC
Kate	PC
Keven Christiansen Family	PC
Kim	Lisa
Kimberly Kyser	Cindy C

Prayers for	Requested by
Larry Marnella	Ilene Marnella
Laurie Boyce	PC
Linda Bradley	Lonnie Harms
Linda Fender	Dan and Lonnie Harms
Lorrie D	PC
Lynn Bloomfield	Lonnie and Dan Harms
Mark Kynsi	Wyatt Akin
Marlene McDonald	Amy Elliott
Marvis Gilnett	PC
Mary Wolfe	PC
Matthew Brown	Heather W
Matt H	PC
Melody Sledz	Mary W.
Micah Akin	Wyatt Akin
Mike Harms, Family of	Dan and Lonnie Harms
Misty Mann	Lorrie Dyrdahl
Molly Fowler	Barb B.
Oscar D	Sam D
Patti Busse Family	PC
Phyllis Murray, family of	Marie G.
Piper	Heather W
Richard Dyrdahl	Lorrie Dyrdahl
Robert	Jordain
Roy Steven	Joyce
Shirley Ann Andreason	Ilene Marnella
Sylvia Peter	PC
Tammara Davidson	PC
Tom Haskins	Kim M.
Traci	Barb B.
Vi Anderson	Judi
WilloDene Wilson Family	Lance Lyon

- Those with memory care issues and those who care for them.
- Those receiving radiation or chemotherapy.
- Those who are in hospice care.
- Our loved ones serving in the armed forces especially those serving overseas.

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COURIER



July 2025

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH OF AURORA

