

THE GOOD NEWS

THE NORTHWOOD-WASHINGTON LUTHERAN PARISH September 2025

Washington Church Worship Ministers:

Ushers: Tom Mikelson

NELC Worship Ministers:

Ushers: Tom Engen
Wade Bilden

First night of **Confirmation and Youth Group**
Wednesday, September 17 for 6th-8th Grade
student/parent orientation meeting at 7 pm
followed by youth group for grades 6-12 at
8 pm.

The **10 am Bible Study at Washington Church**
starts on Thursday, September 18 and meets
the 1st and 3rd Thursdays each month.

NELC has a 6:30 pm Bible Study which starts
on September 25 and meets the 2nd and 4th
Thursdays each month.

NELC will start a bible study at 6:30 pm on
Thursday, September 25 and will meet every
other week.

Castaway Camp is Friday-Sunday,
September 26-28. Contact Pastor Steve if you
are interested in attending. This camp is for
grades 6-10. Deadline for registration is
Sunday, September 14.

NELC WELCA is having a fall planning
meeting and Thankoffering at 10 am on
Monday, September 8.

Washington WELCA business meeting and
quilting 9 am, Thursday, September 11.

Big THANKS to Jen Mutchler, Jenny Metz ,
Angela Lyste, Chris Moore and Diane Strom
for organizing VBS this summer. Many
thanks to the volunteers who helped every
night. Also thanks Tim, Jen & Evelyn
Mutchler for decorating. It was a great week!

Rally Sunday is September 14. We will be
having a **joint worship service** at 10 am at
the Campbell Park Shelter followed by a
potluck dinner (side dishes). Hamburgers,
brats and hot dogs provided. Bring a lawn
chair.



Sunday School at NELC and
Washington starts at 10 am on
Sunday, September 21 for Pre-K to
5th grade.

God's Work, Our Hands hosted by the
Grand Forks conference of churches is
Wednesday, September 24 at 5:30 pm in the
Town Square downtown Grand Forks.

NELC will be collecting items for CVIC
(Community Violence Intervention Center) in
Grand Forks in September & October. Items
needed: nail care products, bath towels, hand
towels, wash cloths, storage totes. Pull ups,
adult coloring books, colored pencils/pens,
craft kits. There is a shopping cart in the
entry at NELC for your donations. Thank you
for your support.

NELC Council meets following worship and
potluck on Sunday, September 14.

Noisy offering Sunday, September 7 will go
to the backpack program.

From Pastor Steve

My birthday is September 1st, so if you are reading this, I have very recently celebrated turning 44 years old. I always get a kick out of people who tell me how young I am, relatively to many of you, I suppose I am. When I was a kid though, 40 seemed very old. We used to throw people “over the hill” parties with black balloons and jokes about how they were starting to lose it physically and mentally. It was all in good fun. Now that I am in my 40s, I will say that I don’t feel very old, but I know I am aging because the aches and pains are a bit more frequent, I have to work a little harder to learn new things and remember other things.

As I age, one of the things that I have expressed regret about is that I did not begin a vocation in ministry when I was younger. I always wonder what if I had connected with a church and gone to seminary when I was in my mid 20s and become a pastor before the age of 30. I feel like I could have done so much more and gained valuable experience. I likely would have served at several different churches by now in different places. Who knows what types of service I could have done by now and the strong relationships I would have. That’s kind of the funny thing about life and about God. It all happens in its own time.

I was unchurched for about 15 years. I left Steele, North Dakota when I graduated, and moved to Moorhead for college. When I left home, my connections at my small Methodist church were not strong by any means. We had to go, and our parents and grandparents made us, it wasn’t an option, so of course most of kids really didn’t want to be there. I was actually glad when I could leave that part of my life behind. I didn’t like our pastor very much, and when you’re about 18 or 19 years old you really start to question some of the things you hear at church. I was raised in a very literalist congregation so asking questions was not looked upon very favorably. The people in charge didn’t like it when you had trouble believing some of the things they were telling you, and we mostly got shut down or told we didn’t have a strong faith. You can see how this might drive a young person away from the church.

I never set foot back in that Methodist church except for one or two Christmas services, and my grandmother’s funeral. Church hurt lasts a long time, and it does not heal easily. I never wanted anything to do with church again because I felt like everyone who went to church was a hypocrite. I had seen too many people talk about how much God loves us and then turn into the nastiest people when they weren’t at church. I had seen and heard too many stories about missionary work where the point wasn’t to walk alongside people and serve with them, but to “convert” them to Christianity so their souls could be saved as if God kept some running tally. The message I got from church was that it was a Christian’s job to judge and shame everyone they thought was not doing things the way God would want. There’s many other things that completely turned me off of the idea of church, but the point is that our church has tremendous power to shape young people, and we need to be careful with that power and influence.

I had a friend remind me once that had I not walked away from the church for as long as I did, I wouldn’t be the pastor I am now. He said that all the experiences I had questioning and coming to terms with the hurt I carried from the church was what prepared me to be a person who lives with people in their questions and doubts, who serves and teaches with a posture of curiosity and companionship. As I get older, I appreciate more and more that period of my life despite how hard it was at times. I am not the person I am without the struggles of my youth, and I thank God for walking with me and making sure I ended up where I was supposed to be.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 begins by saying “For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven.” We all have our seasons, times for joy and struggle. We don’t always know it when we are in the middle of it, but God walks with us through it all and makes sure we come out on the other side wiser, more experienced, and more understanding of ourselves. I walked away from the church. God never walked away from me and led me to the church that I had always been looking for.

-Pastor Steve DeKrey

Church Councils

NELC Council Minutes Sunday, July 13, 2025

Council Members Present: President Pete Antonson, Wade Bilden, Karl Jodock, Pastor Steve DeKrey, Tim Mutchler, Ed Bina, Amy Sheggerud, Angela Lyste, Nikki Korsmo

President Pete Antonson called the meeting to order at 11:55 a.m.

Pastor Steve opened with a devotion.

Secretary's report: Minutes from the meeting on June 15, 2025 were reviewed. Karl made a motion to approve the minutes; Tim second; Minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer's report from June 2025 was reviewed. Nikki shared that the expenses were high this month as they included insurance, which is taken out quarterly, as well as the costs for the Synod Assembly. The CD was renewed for 11 months at 4.00%. Ed made a motion to approve the June report; Tim second; June financial report was approved.

Committee Reports:

Property & Management: No report.

Music & Worship: No Report.

Education: No report.

Finance: No report.

Pastor's Report: Steve would like to put a small table in the open area in the sanctuary that is designated to be wheelchair accessible. This table would be able to be moved at any given time if it would need to become wheelchair accessible again. This table would include coloring books, books, and some quiet toys for young children to use during church to keep them a part of church service, but allow them to have quiet things to do as well. Steve is looking for around \$150 to purchase these books, coloring books, toys, etc. for the table. This money could be taken from the miscellaneous account.

Old Business: Tim had checked on blinds for the window in the youth room and the cheapest option would be to go with the guy from Hatton who had previously given Deb a quote. Tim would let Deb

know to go ahead and let him know that we would like to proceed with the blinds.

-Nikki was able to get Deb's new computer up and running.

New Business: Amy Sheggerud and her family will be moving out of town next month and she will need to resign from the council. Wade made a motion to accept Amy's resignation as of July 14th, 2025. Tim second; Motion approved. Steve will get an announcement in the bulletin to fill the remainder of her 3-year position.

For the Good of the Parish:

Next NELC Council meeting will be August 10 following Church.

President Pete declared the meeting adjourned at 12:10 pm.
Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Angela Lyste, Secretary

Washington Church Council July 13, 2025

Present: David Mullet, Cecil Tinderholt, Craig Hanson, Mary Gravdahl, Chris Moore, Annette Aird

Secretary's Report: 1st Chris, 2nd Annette

Treasurers Report: 1st Mary 2nd Chris to accept.
Motion passed

Old Business: Stairs from back door was discussed. Craig said he would contact the contractor next week and get a timeline for construction.

New Business: The janitor position is open. We need to find one starting August, If we can't find a volunteer we will need to advertise the position.

Meeting adjourned

Craig Hanson
Secretary

Joint Church Council

Northwood-Washington Lutheran Parish Joint Council Meeting Minutes- July 13, 2025

Members Present: NELC President Pete Antonson, Wade Bilden, Karl Jodock, Nikki Korsmo, Ed Bina, Mary Gravdahl, Cecil Tinderholt, Chris Moore, Angela Lyste, David Mullet, Karl Jodock, Craig Hanson, Tim Mutchler, Annette Aird, and Pastor Steve DeKrey

NELC President Pete Antonson called the meeting to order at 12:21 pm.

Secretary's Report- Minutes from the last Joint Council Meeting from April 6, 2025 were reviewed; Wade motioned to approve minutes; Chris second; motion carried.

Treasurer's Report- Nikki presented the Treasurer's report. Craig motioned to approve the report; Karl second the motion; motion carried.

Old Business- -Karl shared that he had checked on the insurance policy regarding the parsonage as a rental. The church and parsonage are under Guide 1 and under Guide 1, it could not be rented out. They are waiting on a quote to see what it would cost to switch the policy, however it was estimated to be 20-30% higher than our current \$10,000/year policy. Craig talked to the school and hospital regarding a need for rental for employees and the hospital didn't think that they would need anything until the fall. He also checked into doing a VRBO or AirBNB and you would need an insurance policy before becoming a rental. Other possible ideas were opening the parsonage to other local pastors within the area or other area churches. Steve mentioned talking with the Synod and checking on grants available to cover various costs and the need for the parsonage within the area. This topic will continue to be left under old business while we wait on more information on insurance and other information.

-Nikki was also able to get Deb's new computer up and running.

New Business Steve applied for the Holy Innovations Grant again this year. This year it would be used for books and materials for a storytelling group to share their stories of faith within the church. This could also cover the cost for snacks when the group meets. If he is not approved for the grant he would need around \$200-300. Mary made a motion to fund the project if the grant is not approved; Tim second; Motion passed.

-The Fall Youth Retreat will be September 26-28 at Castaway Club for grades 6-9. Last year 12 kids went and they used the LYO account to cover the entire cost for each kid. It ended up costing \$2,437. Chris made a motion to fully fund camp for all kids who are wanting to go again this year; Amy second; Motion was approved.

-Steve was wondering if it was possible to get a credit card that he was able to carry. It can be an inconvenience to always have to get it from Deb and then it leaves her without one. Wade made a motion to get Steve a credit card; Chris second; Motion approved.

-Pastor Aaron Bye from Christus Rex will be asked to come out in August to help with a church service. We will also be donating our August noisy offering to Christus Rex.

For the Good of the Parish- -VBS will be happening this week so if you are around and able to help, come and join us!

-Steve will also be looking to set up an outdoor joint worship service in September similar to last year.

The next Joint Council meeting will be October 12.

NELC President Pete adjourned the meeting at 1:01 pm.

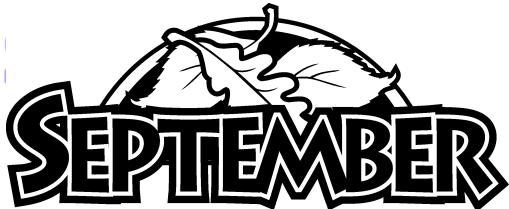
The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Angela Lyste, Secretary

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STAFF OF NORTHWOOD-WASHINGTON LUTHERAN PARISH

Minister Parish Assistant	Steve DeKrey Deb Aaland Office number 701-587-5381	Custodians	Austin & Tera Brucker- Washington Deb Aaland-NELC
Organists	Joan Huso-NELC Diane Nelson-Washington	Church E-mail Pastor's E-mail	nelc@polarcomm.com

Pastor's office hours: 8 am - 2:30 pm, Monday & Tuesday; 8 am - 5 pm Wednesday;
8 am - 3 pm Thursday

Parish Assistant's office hours: 8:30 am to 3 pm Monday thru Friday

Sunday Worship services at Washington Church start at 9 am

Sunday Worship services at Northwood Evangelical Lutheran Church start at 11 am

The worship service is livestreamed on our website: www.northwoodwashingtonparish.org

NELC Council Members: Pete Antonson, Bob Bilden, Wade Bilden, Ed Bina, Nancy Hall, Karl Jodock, Nicole Korsmo, Angela Lyste, Tim Mutchler Jr., Amy Sheggerud

Washington Council Members: Annette Aird, Mary Gravdahl, Craig Hanson, Chris Moore, David Mullet, Cecil Tinderholt