

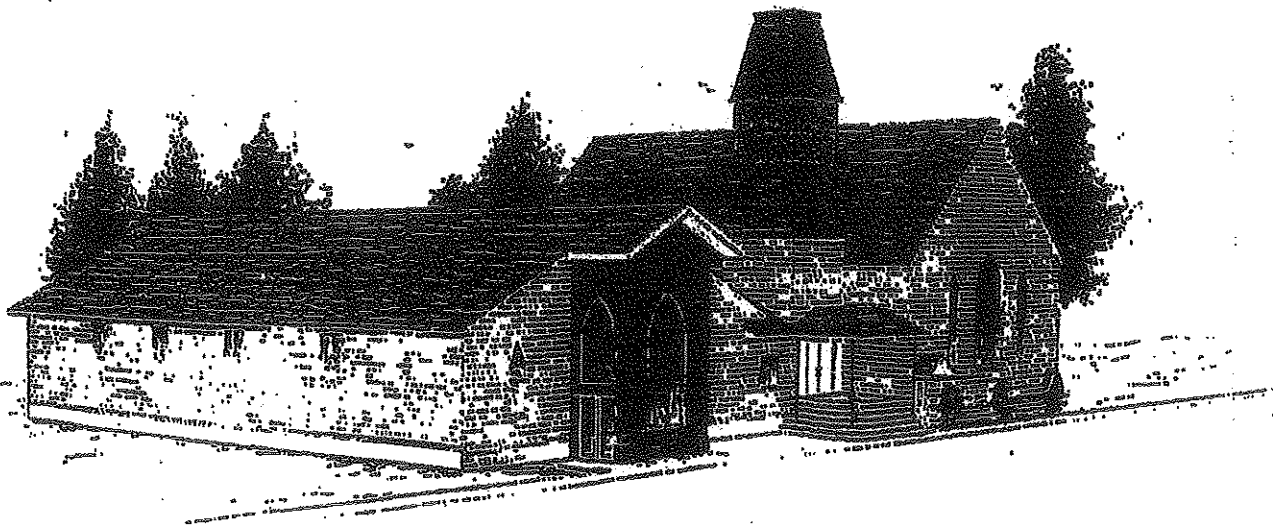
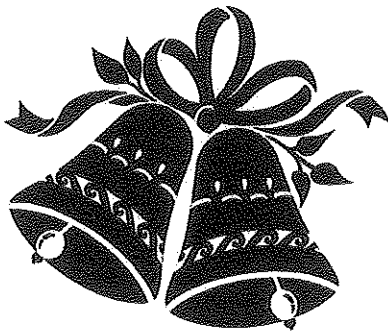
Seward Congregational Church
Box 104, 3029 S. Pecatonica Road
Seward, IL 61077-0104
(815)247-8612
<https://sewardcongregational.com>

Return Service Requested

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Seward, IL 61077

*The
Chimes*

October Church News



SEWARD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
SEWARD, ILLINOIS

The Church: What or Who Is It, and Why Do We Exist?

If we are following the Bible, then we know that the Church is a body of believers in Jesus Christ, the Messiah and Sacrificial Lamb Who died for each one of us so that we might be redeemed unto eternal life. It follows, then, that Jesus is the Head of the Church no matter what denomination we are affiliated with. It also follows that the building we call the church is a misnomer. The building is a gathering place for the Church so that we can come together and worship Jesus, the Head of the Church.

Why is the gathering of the followers of Jesus so important? Hebrews 10:24-25 exhorts us to ²⁴ . . . *let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds,* ²⁵ *not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.* This is not a command but a very strong suggestion. It seems that the Apostle Paul recognized back then that we are “better together” and that there is something about worshipping together that builds us up in the Lord.

What is the purpose of the church? 1 Corinthians 12 speaks about the Church being the body of Christ and that each part of the body is important. Can the foot decide it is not part of the body because it is not a hand? Can the ear decide it is not a part of the body because it is not an eye? It takes people of many abilities and talents to have the body of Christ, the Church, be successful. If you have not discovered your role in the church, have you talked to the Lord about what it is that you could do for Him and for the body of believers to which you belong?

Do you believe in God? There are a lot of people in this world that don't know what to believe because we have moved so far away from God in our society. For instance, there are those who claim to be atheists—those who say there is no God. There are those who claim to be agnostics—those who say there is a supreme being but that being is unknowable. I learned today of a group of people believe in *ietsism*—literally “something-ism”—that there is something beyond the material realm, but that something is undefined and unknowable. It is to those folks, who are searching, that the Church needs to reach, and every part of the body has a role in that mission. There are the people who say they are “spiritual, but not religious.” Every one of us is a spiritual being because God breathed the breath of life into Adam and Eve. We are the only beings into whom God breathed that breath of life. “Religious” is not synonymous with “Christian,” however, although we tend to use those two words interchangeably. We can be “religious” about retiring in the evening and rising in the morning, or about the times we eat meals—you get my drift. I am asking all of us to ask God to help us be the Church, and as we draw closer to Him then we can help each other and be the witness that we need to be to others around us. Jesus said, “I will build My church.” We, the body, are the workers. ---- musings from the desk of Pastor Joel

Seward Congregational Church
Board of Trustees Meeting
August 23, 2023

Present: Peggy Whitney, Effie Hoppe, Brenda Van Hauen, Dick Remer, Maury Daubs, Matt Cowman, and Pastor Joel Hicke.

Meeting called to order at 6:27 PM.

Opening prayer was led by Pastor Joel.

Minutes from the last meeting were read by Pastor Joel; Dick made a motion to accept the minutes with a couple minor corrections; Brenda seconded; motion carried.

Financial reports were given by Effie and Brenda; Matt made a motion to accept the reports; Maury seconded; motion carried.

Investments report was presented by Maury; Matt made a motion to accept the report; Effie seconded; motion carried.

Pastor's report: We will be taking Domylic to college on the 26th; there will be a seminar on prayer, given by Ray Delaurier, on the 9th of September at Zion Church in Freeport. Folks from Seward have been invited to attend; lunch will be provided.

Old Business: the lamp and the chair in Theresa's office, that we talked about last month, need to be replaced. Safety equipment inspections need to be done each month. Peggy asked if Joel and Theresa could take care of checking those out each month. Joel will talk to Theresa. Maury asked if there is a binder containing church procedure documents in the office. Joel will check with Theresa. Maury also checked into having people trained in CPR and First Aid. Red Cross charges \$128 per person with a minimum of eight people in the class. This was tabled indefinitely.

New Business: There was a discussion about the outside deck at the parsonage. Tentative bids ranged from \$2,000 to \$4,669 for the decking, \$713 for framing, \$1,443 for a new railing. This was tabled until the September meeting. We had some very positive comments about the courtesy carts at the fair. There was discussion about getting bids for fixing the sewer line at the parsonage. We need to get at least two bids. Maury made a proposal to use Scott funds for some outreach by having breakfast for the community twice during the next nine months of Sunday School, and for scholarships for church camps. Effie made a motion to approve spending \$950 total; Matt seconded; motion carried. There was discussion about having Trunk or Treat this year. General consensus was to go ahead, and Brenda will be in charge of this. According to Church Mutual insurance, if we are going to post pictures of children on Facebook (or any other media), we need to have an annual consent form signed by the parents. While we have had a form in the past, we need to make sure that it is in line with the guidelines set by the insurance company. Motion to have this done was made by Brenda, seconded by Dick; motion carried. Maury will write a policy concerning background checks.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Maury; seconded by Matt; motion carried.
Adjourned at 7:57 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Joel Hicke

Diaconate Meeting
September 24, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 8:17 by Jennifer Lloyd, chairperson.

Members present: Jennifer Lloyd, Karleen Merchant, Bev Weerda, Delores Poppen, and Jean Mennenga.

May minutes were read. One correction was made. Summer church service started June 4th at 9:00 A.M. Instead of May 28th. Motion to accept the minutes as corrected by Karleen, seconded by Bev. Motion carried.

Bev gave the treasurer's report: there is a balance of \$954.98 in the Diaconate fund. Motion to accept was made by Jean, and Jennifer seconded. Motion carried. (Noted that the bulletin should print that a Diaconate offering basket is available on Communion Sunday.)

OLD BUSINESS:

- VBS went very well. Twenty five children attended throughout the week. Next year we need to plan and set a date earlier.

NEW BUSINESS:

- On September 9th seven church members attended the Seminar: A Culture of Believing Prayer and intercession led by Rev. Ray Delaurier, our Regional Pastor. We should make more prayer time. Also when we have visitors in church, each of us should greet and make them feel welcome.
- Saturday October 21st we will be having a Community Outreach Breakfast. Pancakes and Eickman's sausage will be served. Fliers were given to each household in Seward about the breakfast. People outside of Seward should invite a neighbor or friend. If you have any questions, contact Maury Daubs.
- Sunday School children can wear friendly costumes on October 29th. After Sunday School there will be treats for the children. The congregation can bring treats for this to be in the fellowship hall.
- November 26th after church we will decorate the church. (Normal fellowship)

Next meeting will be November 7, 2023 at 9:00 A.M.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:13 A.M. Karleen made a motion and Jennifer second.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jean Mennenga

Announcements

DIACONATE: TBA.

TRUSTEE'S: Will meet on October 18, at 6:30 p.m. We will meet in the Rose Room

Women's Fellowship: Women's Fellowship will meet on Tuesday, Oct 17th at 9am in Fellowship Hall. All women are invited to join us.

THANK YOU: Thanks to all for prayers, visits, food, and uber drivers. Everything was greatly appreciated. Continued prayers for my eye sight to return to normal. The specialist said it could take as long as six months.

Jean Mennenga

WINTER HAT AND MITTEN DRIVE: We are starting a winter hat and mitten drive to provide 100 pairs of mittens and hats to the Midwest Indian Mission for members of Native American tribes near Crandon, Wisconsin by the middle of November. Items can be either new or "gently" used. Donation locations to be established. Help us warm hands and hearts for this winter season. Please give generously.

Seward Community Outreach Breakfast: On October 21, 2023 we will be serving breakfast from 7:30 to 10:00 AM in fellowship hall. Invite a guest and join us for a FREE pancake and Eickman's sausage breakfast Mickey Mouse and chocolate chip cakes available on request.

TRICK OR TREAT: Sunday school children can wear friendly costumes on October 29th. After Sunday school there will be treats for the Children. The congregation can bring treats for this to be in fellowship hall

REMINDER: All contributions for the CHIMES newsletter are due to the Office by the 3rd Friday of every month.

MONTHLY SUMMARY

January-August

| | | |
|--------------|---------|--------------|
| General Fund | Income | \$43,204.11 |
| | Expense | \$ 53,422.23 |

Monthly Budget \$7,026.50

August

| |
|----------|
| 4,250.00 |
| 6,403.30 |

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Birthdays

1—Dennis Freedlund
2—Karleen Merchant
5—Judy Beuth
6—Brody Hilton
11- Effie Hoppe
17-Barb Daubs;
23-Colin Viel
25- Peggy Whitney

Anniversaries

6-Chuck & Theresa Ackerman

October 2023

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------|--------|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 Women's Fellowship 9 a.m. | 18 Trustees 6:30 p.m. | 19 | 20 | 21 7:30-10 a.m. community youth Breakfast |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 Communion Treats after Sunday School | 30 | 31 | | | | |