

Seward Congregational Church  
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*The  
Chimes*

*March Church News*



SEWARD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
SEWARD, ILLINOIS

## **Easter**

***How would you explain why we celebrate Easter to someone that doesn't know the story of Jesus resurrection? How important is it to tell others about our Lord and His trial, death, and returning to life?***

***I believe that without the Easter story, Christmas—the story of Jesus' birth—would be just an ordinary birth. Some even say that the whole Bible is a book of myths, that none of the things recorded in the Bible are factual.***

***Easter is not only about eggs, chocolates, Easter bunnies. The story of the origin of the Easter bunny is a mystery. Some say that it is a symbol of Oestre, who was a goddess of fertility. And some say that eggs are a symbol of new life. However, neither is mentioned in Scripture, that is why how this came to be is a little confusing. According to Time magazine, this is a possible explanation of the origin of the egg—laying bunny:***

***According to some sources, the Easter bunny first arrived in America in the 1700s with German immigrants who settled in Pennsylvania and transported their tradition of an egg-laying hare called "Osterhase" or "Oschter Haws." Their children made nests in which this creature could lay its colored eggs. Eventually, the custom spread across the U.S. and the fabled rabbit's Easter morning deliveries expanded to include chocolate and other types of candy and gifts, while decorated baskets replaced nests. Additionally, children often left out carrots for the bunny in case he got hungry from all his hopping.***

***In any case, lest we get too caught up in all of the fun things that surround the tradition of the Easter bunny, coloring eggs, giving chocolates to the ones we love, we need to always remember that Jesus is the "Reason for the Season." Without Him taking the sins of the world on Himself, we would never have the opportunity to be reconciled to God and have salvation. I pray that as we continue in the Lenten season leading up to the trial, the cruelty of the flogging and the cross, and His resurrection, we never forget what Jesus did for each one of us out of His love for the very people He created. Have a Blessed Easter!!***

***--musings from the desk of Pastor Joel***

**Board of Trustees Meeting  
January 17, 2024  
Seward Congregational Church**

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 pm.

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

Opening Prayer was offered by Pastor Joel.

The minutes from the last meeting were read; Matt made a motion to accept; Effie seconded; motion was approved..

Finance reports were given by Effie; Matt made a motion to accept; Dick seconded; motion was approved.

**Old Business**

The washer at the parsonage has been fixed.

The church sign still needs to be fixed.

Dick made a motion to use \$4,000 from the Aurand Fund to pay for the sewer repairs; Matt seconded; the motion was approved.

**New Business**

Purchasing a new cell phone for Pastor Joel was discussed. Effie made a motion to buy a new phone with a purchase price up to \$500; Matt seconded; motion was approved.

Peggy asked about ideas for who might serve on the Trustees for the next term. The people mentioned were Char Remer, Nancy Kirby, Rosie Rust, and Tari Woods.

There was a discussion about hiring a new janitor. This was tabled until the February meeting. Dick made a motion to pay Jessica Cowman \$20/hour to clean the church until a permanent janitor could be hired; Effie seconded; the motion was approved.

There was a discussion about buying a new vacuum cleaner for the church—possibly a Shark which would be approximately \$180 to \$200. Dick made a motion to buy a new vacuum cleaner for the church; Effie seconded; the motion was approved.

We discussed getting an exterminator for the bees that have been getting into the church.

Matt made a motion to adjourn; Effie seconded; the motion was approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Joel Hicke

# Special Meeting of Seward Congregational Church

## Sunday, February 25, 2024

Moderator Scott Whitney called to order a special meeting of Seward Congregational Church at 10:29 a.m. for the purpose of discussing extensive repairs to the church organ. He then turned the meeting over to Head Trustee, Peggy Whitney who presented the following information:

*Aaron Bogue of the pipe organ tuning and repair service has made recommendations for needed repairs to our organ. He has recommended 2 major repairs, that if we were to do both the bill would be \$15, 443.00. Our organ is close to 80 years old.*

### *Repair I*

- *Fixing air leaks in the organ's reservoirs and pneumatics (air pressure) and fixing leathers. As leather deteriorates over time, the reservoirs will become less effective eventually stopping all together. If the leather completely fails, the organ will not get the air it needs give the pipes their sound, and will become unplayable. This could happen at any time. Aaron recommend this be done if only one repair can be afforded at this time. Repairs would entail removing the reservoirs (3) and taking to shop, for re-leathering and refurbishing. This cost would be \$8995.00*

### *Repair II*

- *Cleaning and revoicing, (tuning) the pipes, which entails removing and transporting all pipes to Bogue Service shop, cleaning, repacking, and cleaning organ chamber at church. Currently there is a rag stuffed into one pipe "fix" a former problem.*

*Both of these together cost \$15, 443.00.*

*These repairs would keep the organ running for up to another 10 years, but at that time there are problems with the chest leather and mechanical switching that would need to be addressed.*

*Our pipe organ is considered a small organ having only 4 ranks. A medium organ is 20-30 ranks. It is currently valued at \$120,000 – 150,000. Bogue Services looks for other churches that may want a used organ. They would need at least a year to find such a church if we ever wanted to sell this organ. In the past 80 years, we have had only tune-ups done to the organ. Aaron Bogue will be looking over the project again this coming week to see if we need to take the front paneling down to access the organ pipes, which would be our obligation.*

Peggy then asked for comments or questions. These were:

1. How long is Karleen (our current organist) planning to play? Her answer was "as long as she is capable."
2. What would a refurbished organ cost?
3. We need a second opinion of needed repairs and costs and the itemization of labor and parts. Call Bea Poppen at Silver Creek Church to find name of their organ repair service.
4. Ways to pay this bill would be:
  - a. Getting a loan
  - b. Asking for contributions
  - c. Using memorial funds
  - d. Using Menden funds

After receiving a second opinion, another church meeting will be scheduled.

Karleen Merchant made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Tari Woods. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Tari Woods

## Announcements

**EASTER SUNDAY:** We will be having a breakfast potluck at 8 a.m. followed by the Worship service at 9 a.m.

**WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP:** Women's fellowship will meet on March 12 at 9 a.m. Jean Mennenga will have devotions and Brenda VanHauen will be the hostess

**SUNDAY SCHOOL:** There will not be any Sunday school on Easter Sunday.

**TRUSTEE'S:** Will meet on March 21, at 6:30 p.m. We will meet in the Rose Room

**DIACONTE:** TBA.

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

### MONTHLY SUMMARY

**Monthly Budget \$6,731.92**

#### January

General Fund	Income	\$4,945.00
	Expense	\$ 13,724.33

### MARCH BIRTHDAY & ANNIVERSARIES

#### Birthdays

#### Anniversaries

1—Matt Cowman  
12-Cathy Hicke  
16- Aurora Joanne Hilton  
26- Maury Daubs

7-Bryan & Bev Allen

## March 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6 Lenten service Seward Church Gary Brown preaching 6:30 p.m	7	8	9
10	11	12 Women's Fellowship 9 a.m.	13 Lenten service Middle Creek 6:30 p.m.	14	15	16
17	18	19	20 Lenten service Winnebago UMC 6:30 p.m	21 Trustees 6:30 p.m.	22	23
24	25	26	27	28 Maundy Thursday 6:30 p.m	29	30
<b>31 No Sunday school</b> <b>Easter breakfast potluck 8 a.m.</b> <b>Worship 9 a.m.</b>						

Love ❤️ Grows 🌱 In Warm Hearts ❤️

When: Saturday, April 20, 2024

Time: 11:00-1:00

Where: Seward Congregational Church

Why: Love ❤️ Grows 🌱 In Warm Hearts ❤️

Presentation: Sharing Garden and Flower tips.

There is no charge for attending this event, however, if you would like to make a donation, we will have a basket available.

How to reserve your seat or an entire table for friends/and family: Just text or call Nancy Kirby @ [815-988-6441](tel:815-988-6441) or Tari Woods [815-222-3037](tel:815-222-3037)

RSVP by: Saturday, April 13, 2024

Invite your friends and family to come join us for heartwarming conversations for Coffee or tea and appetizers. You will be able to ask questions to help grow more ❤️ love in your 🌱 garden ❤️