

...IN SACRED PLACES...

CELEBRATING MINISTRIES OF CALVARY AND ZION LUTHERAN CHURCHES

MESSAGE FROM PASTOR KIM



On Sunday, January 7 in worship, we each received a star word for the year. The star word we received is simply a word for us to focus on during the year or a word that can be a source of inspiration for us. The tradition of receiving star words is one that challenges and invites us to be open to God's presence and God's guidance. As such, it is helpful to put your star word somewhere where you will see it on a daily basis.

My star word is on my desk propped up against the container of pens, pencils, and highlighters that sits in the corner. The word I received this year was responsibility. I am eager and excited to see how this word continues to speak to me and challenge me in the coming year. So far, it has already lead to some good reflection and interesting thoughts.

My first reflection came when I looked up the definition of the word. Even though I knew what responsibility meant, I looked it up to better engage with the word. At that time, I thought, well this will be something to remind me to be responsible this year, making sure I stick to my commitments and don't forget to put things on my calendar which causes me to miss them. Pretty straight forward and simple, right?

But as this word has sat on my desk longer, I have started to see it speaking to me in other ways. It has challenged me to think about what I am responsible for and to make sure that I am living up to those commitments. It also showed up in one of the books that I have been reading when it reminded me that "that which is not my possibility, is therefore not my responsibility." That was good to hear because I often struggle with feeling like I should do it all and sometimes that just isn't possible.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)

THANK YOU . . .

Dear Calvary Lutheran WELCA,
Thank you for your wonderful monetary donation of \$152. Your donation will help us provide shelter, food, and maybe transportation for someone to a safer location. Your donation will truly benefit those who are in need at this particular time of their life. We appreciate your support and generosity.
Thanks again,
Center for Survivors

Dear Calvary and Zion members,
Thank you for your cards and Christmas gifts. I am touched by your generosity and I thank you for making my Christmas brighter. I am so blessed to be called to serve as your pastor.
Grace and peace,
Pastor Kim

Dear friends at Calvary Lutheran,
What a wonderful Christmas miracle in the mailbox it was to receive your generous donation of \$997 from your special offering. These funds will help us so much to continue the services and programs for our clients who are struggling to build a new life, free from violence and abuse. Truly a miracle to celebrate! Thank you for your consistent support throughout the years, all your gifts, and prayers.
Sincerely,
Pat Lostroh and folks at Genesis House

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(CONTINUED FROM PASTOR KIM'S MESSAGE ON PAGE 1)

It has been interesting to see where and how my star word has already come up this year. I can't wait to see what other insights or reflections it prompts as the year goes on.

Now some questions for you:

What was your star word? Have you looked it up? Put it somewhere that you can see it?

Have you included your star word in your prayers? Asked God to show you what this word means for your life or those that you encounter?

Have you looked up your word? Did any of the meanings surprise or challenge you?

If you have any stories of how your star word is showing up in your life, I would love to hear them. It is always great to hear how the Holy Spirit is working in our congregation and through one another.

If you weren't in church on January 7 and didn't get a star word, I still have plenty left so just let me know you would like one. Also, if you lost yours or didn't like yours, I would be more than happy to supply you with another. In the coming months, there will be more questions in the newsletter to help you reflect on your word.

As the Epiphany star guided the wise men, I hope and pray that your star word may be a guide to you as well! God is on the move in our lives and in our congregation. Let us follow where God is leading us!

Peace,
Pr. Kim



W.E.L.C.A. NEWS

As winter continues it's hold on us, we warm at the thought of times with each other in fun, fellowship, and study. The 2018 yearbooks are available. If you don't have yours yet, please talk to your circle leader.

As we near Valentine's Day, please remember that is also Ash Wednesday this year. Look for other information in this newsletter for Wednesday worship times as we observe this time of reflection.

Due to Wednesday Lenten services, Ruth Circle will be meeting on Thursdays during Lent.

Service for month of February is Thank Offering #1. No quilt days scheduled in January or February. Quilting will resume in March.

February Altar Care is Carolyn & Bonnie.

Flowers this month by Mary Anna.

Our Central District WELCA Spring Gathering will be Saturday, March 24 in Grand Island. More info next month on registration.

WELCA is requesting help from members of the congregation for altar care. It is becoming increasingly more difficult for many members to carry the altar cloths up and down the stairs. Please consider prayerfully how you might be able to help. Thank you!

February

Hostess/Dessert Bible Study

RUTH - 2/8 Bonnie Carlson Bonnie C.

MARY ANNA-2/8 LaVerne Stevens LaVerne S.

MIRIAM - 2/9 Marj Johnson Diana J.

*"Dear Friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God"
1 John 4:7a*

Cheryl



MISSION AND MINISTRY UPDATE



New land, new life

Between 1975 and 1979, the Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia killed an estimated 3 million people—about 25 percent

of the population. Unfortunately, civil strife continued even after Khmer Rouge had been ousted from power, leaving landmines throughout much of the country’s rural areas.

Touteint survived the Khmer Rouge years, but without land or steady income, life was far from easy. “I lived in the same house as my son,” she says, “ and I had to go to the streams and catch crabs and other small animals to try to sell at the market. Life was so unpredictable then.”

After most of the landmines had been cleared, the Cambodian government began distributing land to those without any. To help them prepare their soil for agriculture, the organization Life with Dignity, with help from ELCA World Hunger, provided training and resources to new landowners.

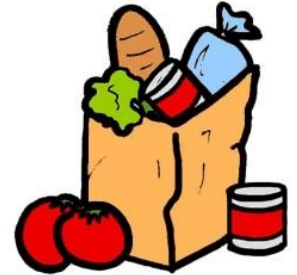
Most farmers wait for the rains to start planting crops, but Touteint started during the dry season. She chose to grow cassava, a plant resistant to drought. Cassava is simple to plant and grow, but unlike large commercial farms, Touteint has chosen not to use fertilizer. She hoped that this would make for an appealing product in the market.

Now, in addition to cassava, Touteint also has mango, jack-fruit, onions, and chickens in the garden around her own home.

ELCA World Hunger partners with Life with Dignity to support Touteint and others like her as they build homes and livelihoods. Your gifts are making an impact as our Cambodian neighbors create sustainable livelihoods for themselves and their families.

SWEDE HOME FOOD PANTRY

The Evangelism and Outreach Team oversees a nonperishable food and personal care item collection. You are welcome to bring donations at any time.



Please place items you wish to donate in the basket located in the entry way of the church.

Items are usually delivered the last week of the month. In February, your donations will go to Blue Valley Community Action in Osceola.

Most recipients of Blue Valley Food Bank are families of 4 headed with working parents with little extra time. Canned meats are especially needed, Boxed Dinners, Canned Fruits, and Vegetables, and Breakfast Cereal are always needed as well. Dessert mixes are a special treat. All items we donate are greatly appreciated by the recipients as they meet their critical needs.



This is My Church

It is composed of people like me; It will be friendly, if I am. Its pews will be filled, if I help fill them. It will make generous gifts to many causes, if I am a generous giver. It will bring other people into its worship and fellowship, if I bring them. It will be a church of loyalty and love, of fearlessness and faith, and a church with a noble spirit if I, who make it what it is, am filled with these. Therefore, with the help of God, I shall dedicate myself to the task of being all the things that I want my church to be.

...Anonymous

THANK YOU CONTINUED

Dear Friends,

There's a 70's song that suggests life is more about the journey than the destination: "... it's the going, not the getting there, that's good," the lyric has it.

While, indeed, there's some truth in that, the Christian life is, in a wondrous way, the best of both, from departure to arrival. Though the road may be rocky in places, we remain in gracious company.

This is a special time at the Oaks Indian Mission. Your gift means a lot to this ministry with children. Thank you for helping to make the season a little brighter here.

Blessed be to God!

Don Marshall, Executive Director

Calvary Lutheran Church of Swede Home WELCA,
Grace and peace to you from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!
We give thanks to God for your generosity. Your gifts and stewardship make our work on the University of Nebraska Lincoln possible. Thank you for your donation of \$500.

Peace,

Adam White, Campus Pastor the Lutheran Center

Dear Friends of Swede Home Women of the ELCA,
Thank you for the generous donation of \$1,000— gifts such as your are vital to our continuation and plans to sustain the work of Genesis House in coming years. These funds will be carefully used to bring HOPE, comfort, and JOY to our clients who struggle as they build a new life, free from violence— a miracle to celebrate. Your support and consistent donations help those miracles happen. Please come visit. I love to tell the stories about the families at Genesis House!

Sincerely,

Pat Lostroh and the folks at Genesis House

Dear Calvary WELCA ,

Thank you for your gift to help the hurting and homeless. We believe that Together, we can make a difference. We are amazed how God changes lives at the Columbus Rescue Mission. Some of the struggles our guests come to us with are additions to illegal and prescription drugs, and alcohol. They come from broken homes, are divorced, estranged from their families, unemployed, in debt, have legal problems, physical problems and have lost some of their belongings. When they leave the Mission it may include furnishing them with groceries, clothing, household items, furniture, and Bibles. God also provides new faith in Jesus to many. Praise the Lord. Thank you for your support! Please remember to pray for our guests.

Wishing you a blessed Christmas,
Chaplain Nathan Joslin

To the congregation of Zion Lutheran Church,
Thank you so much for your prayers. My leg is still swollen but appears to be some better everyday. Thanks also for the Christmas gift. I'm sure I will use I for more music.

In Christ,

Yvonne

Dear Calvary Lutheran Church Friends,
Hello—again, I'm thanking you for remembering us with grocery items for our food pantry. You are truly our benefactors for this program & we do thank you! God's blessings to you and our thanks.

Lola Reetz

Dear Calvary Lutheran Church Congregation,
Thank you for the wonderful basket with so many delicious things in it. We have enjoyed them! Also thank you for the gift certificate to the 4th St Coffee House! Thank you for all the thoughts and prayer during my surgery recovery I really appreciate them.

God's Blessings,
Brienne Schoch

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Congratulations!

Congratulations to Brody Ienn for being selected to be part of the National Honor Society at his school. National Honor Society members are recognized for their scholarship, leadership, character and service qualities.

CJHC Middle School Lock-In

Come Join in the fun of all night camp activities, fellowship, and learning more about God at this year's Middle School Lock-In at Carol Joy Holling Camp on March 9-10th. Visit cjhcenter.org/lock-in to register and learn more.

Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance

Polk County Health Department is hosting Tai Chi classed every Tuesday—Thursday starting February 6th—April 26th at 10:00am at St. Vincent Church Hall, Osceola.

What potential health benefits would you expect from practicing Tai Chi? Tai Chi has shown to reduce risk of falling and fall related injuries, better balance and daily physical functioning, social and mental well being, self-confidence in performing daily activities, personal independence and quality of life, and improvements in overall health.



Joint Evening Lenten Services

Is there anyone beyond the grace of God? Does anyone deserve eternal punishment for the mistakes they've made? Join us this Lent as we wrestle with these questions through a drama series "The People vs. Judas Iscariot: The Punishment Phase". Worship is at 7pm with meal at 6pm unless otherwise noted. You won't want to miss a night!

- 2/14: 7pm Ash Wednesday at Calvary (no meal)
- 2/21: Nothing is Hidden From God @ Zion
- 2/28: All Have Sinned and Need Forgiveness @ Calvary
- 3/7: When Others Tried to Save Themselves @ Zion
- 3/14: In Bondage to Sin: We Cannot Free Ourselves @ Calvary
- 3/21: Who Will Save Us? @ Zion
- 3/29: Maundy Thursday Worship @ Calvary (no meal)
- 3/30: Good Friday Worship @ Zion (no meal)
- 3/31: Easter Vigil @ Calvary 7:30pm (no meal)

The Osceola Ministerial Association would like to invite you to our Wednesday Lenten Luncheon Series. This year's theme is Giving Up. Lunch and worship begins at 11:45am.

- 2/14: Giving Up Control, Fr. Val Bartek preaching, Calvary Hosting
- 2/21: Giving Up Expectations, Pr. Teri Lucas preaching, St. Vincent's Hosting
- 2/28: Giving Up Superiority, Pr. Kim Belken preaching, St. Paul's Hosting
- 3/7: Giving Up Enemies, Pr. Dan Cloeter preaching, Osceola UMC Hosting
- 3/14: Giving Up our Lives, Pr. Kim Belken preaching, St. Vincent's Hosting
- 3/21: Giving Up Popularity, Pr. Teri Lucas preaching, St. Paul's Hosting

MEET A MEMBER

Calvary Lutheran Church
Nebraska Synod, ELCA
950 129th Road
Stromsburg, NE 68666
Church Phone: (402)764-5981

Doug Jones, Council President
Diana Johnson, Organist
Brienne Schoch, Secretary
Tina Watts, Sunday School
LeeAnn Willhoft, Custodian

Council Members:
Linda Fuhr, Doug Jones, Bill Carlstrom, Nick Nicholson,
Carolyn Nielsen, Chris Smith,
Deb Swedenburg
All Calvary members, Ministers

Rev. Kimberly Belken
Pastor
(402) 764-0481 (cell)
(402) 764-5961 (parsonage)
(402) 764-5981 (church office)
kimberlyrbelken@gmail.com

Zion Lutheran Church
Nebraska Synod, ELCA
202 Sherman
Benedict NE 68316

Council President
Yvonne Stauber, Organist
Chris Jarosz, Sunday School

Council Members:
LuAnn Bolton, Cal Bittinger, Dawn Kush
All of Zion members, Ministers



Meet Brienne Schoch

Brienne Schoch was born in Scottsbluff, NE. She lived in Scottsbluff until she was 3 years old. Her family then moved to Sidney, NE for her Dad's job. Brienne grew up with her parents Lance and Bonnie Koenig and one sister Erin. She graduated from Sidney High School in 2001. After graduation she attended Western Nebras-

ka Community College where she received her Cosmetology Certificate. Also while attending college she worked at Cabela's Corporate Office's as an Administration Assistant .

She then moved to Lincoln in 2003. She started working at Cost Cutters in Lincoln, while being at Cost Cutters she was an Assistant Manager and then promoted to Manager. She then met the love of her life Justin. They got married on April 30th, 2005. Then in 2007 they were blessed with their first child Tierney and in 2010 they were blessed with a baby boy, Krayton.

In March of 2008 they moved to Stromsburg. She started working at York General Hospital. Brienne and her husband opened their own business Schoch Concrete Construction, Inc. She started staying home with her kids in 2012 and busy doing book work for their business. In 2014 they moved to a farm by Benedict.

After Krayton started school she started working at Calvary as the Church Secretary and she also returned to working behind the chair doing what she loves. Some of Bri's hobbies are camping in the summer and watching her kids participate in activities.

She grew up going to Church every Sunday at St. Paul's Missouri Synod Church in Sidney. When they moved to Stromsburg they became members at Salem Lutheran Church, Bri was co-superintendent of Sunday School and also assisted with the Christmas Program. Then when they moved to Benedict they joined Justin's home church Zion Lutheran Church, she was the co-superintendent there too.

The things that she loves about Zion is the closeness and everyone treats you like family. She enjoys the small church feel.

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS



Lyndsey Bolton
Dorothy Ehlers
Melissa Forsberg
Denny Johnson
Lenore Kessler
June Larson
Elvin Reetz

Imo Richardson
Harvey Schlegelmilch
Vance & Elaine Toline
Jan Wells-Bachman

- Genesis House and Living Waters Rescue Mission, Blue Valley Action
- Houses for Health recipients.
- Table Grace Café & Denver Metro Ministries
- Bishop Brian Maas and the Nebraska Synod staff
- Bishop Elizabeth Eaton and all ELCA congregations and members
- Pastor Bob Bryan and the Nebraska Synod Prison Ministry
- Our ELCA Partner Synod—Pacifica Synod
- Our companion synods in Tanzania and Argentina

To request prayers call
Calvary: Jan Ernst 402-747-8041
Zion: LuAnn Bolton 402-710-8708

ANNIVERSARIES

CALVARY:

Roger & Marlene Hanquist
February 14th

Mike & Anita Haack
February 21st

BIRTHDAYS

CALVARY:

01—Claire Smith
02—Mitch Cramer
05—Lynn Hofman
09—Kamdyn Udey
25—Kolton Neujahr
25—Allen Peterson
29—Peyton Hofman
29—Rylee Hofman

ZION:

05—Brienne Schoch
13—Aaron Reetz
15—Tommie Rediger
27—Todd Schoch



ZION WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

FEBRUARY

Communion Assistant: Jacob Kush

Usher: Justin Schoch

Greeter: Brienne Schoch

Reader:

4—Teresa Bittinger, 11—Dawn Kush, 18—Gary Hild, 26—
Melanie Meister

Acolyte:

4—Harley Martin, 11—Lyndsey Bolton, 18—Isaac Reetz,
25—Tierney Schoch

CALVARY WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

February

Assistant Ministers— Sandy Johnston

Scripture Reader— Brody Ienn

Ushers— Dan & Fawn Ienn

Acolyte— Megan Johnson

Altar Care— Carolyn Nielsen & Bonnie Carlson
Bell Ringer— Mark Jones

February 2018

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

				1	2	3
4 8:30a Zion Worship 9:15a Calvary Sunday School 9:30a Zion Sunday School 10:30a Calvary Holy Communion Worship	5	6	7 9:30a Join the Conversation Bible Study 6p Confirmation 7p Calvary Council	8 2p Mary Anna's WELCA Circle 7p Ruth's WELCA Circle	9 9a Miriam's WELCA Circle	10
11 8:30a Zion Worship 9:15a Calvary Sunday School 9:30a Zion Sunday School 10:30a Calvary Worship	12	13	14 9:30a Join the Conversation Bible Study 7p Ash Wednesday Worship at Calvary	15	16	17
18 8:30a Zion Worship 9:15a Calvary Sunday School 9:30a Zion Sunday School 10:30a Calvary Holy Communion Worship	19	20	21 9:30a Join the Conversation Bible Study 6p Lenten Meal @ Zion 7p Lenten Worship @ Zion	22	23	24
25 8:30a Zion Worship 9:15a Calvary Sunday School 9:30a Zion Sunday School 10:30a Calvary Worship	26	27	28 9:30a Join the Conversation Bible Study 6p Lenten Meal @ Calvary 7p Lenten Worship @ Calvary			

Know God, Love God, Share God's Love

COUNCIL NOTES

January 2018 Council Notes

Council met on Wednesday, January 3, 2018. Pastor led the council on a devotion of faith.

- Pastor reported on the various committees that have recently met, prior to the annual congregational meeting on January 21. Nominating committee has filled a full slate except for delegates to Synod Convention. Nominations will be taken from the floor
- Pastor is preparing a Bible Study on the book of Numbers that will be presented to both Zion and Calvary later this spring
- "Join the conversation" study continues every Wednesday morning at 9:30. If you have not joined this conversation, please consider doing so. There is plenty of room around the table (s). This study reviews and discusses the lessons, Psalm and Gospel that will be used the coming Sunday. It is a good way to prepare our hearts and minds for the Word of God
- Lenten services will be based on a drama series called "The People vs. Judas Iscariot". This series requires participation from the congregation, but there is no preparation ahead of time for the dramas
- Plans continue for the 2018 mission trip to Wyoming. Jacob, Clayton and Brody will be attending along with two adults from Calvary. They will be joined by several students and Pastor Terri from Osceola Methodist church
- Council finalized plans for the annual meeting to be held on January 21, 2018. PKs will again cater.
- Council recognized the outgoing council members, Deb Swedenburg and Carolyn Nielsen and thanked them for their years of dedication and service to Swede home

Treasurer's Report

December, 2017

Beginning Balance	\$1253.31
<u>Offering:</u>	
General Offering	11949.00
ELCA Disaster Relief	5.00
Sunday School Offering	65.25
ELCA Mission Share	3827.00
Lighting Rebate from Polk Co. RPPD	60.00
NE Brass Band Ticket Sales	72.00
Zion for November Share	1821.60
	<u>17799.85</u>
<u>Transfer:</u>	
To Youth DDA (Miles \$\$ from Jun & July)	980.00
<u>Expenses:</u>	
Bank Charges	7.79
Advent Worship Resource	10.53
Advent Wreath	27.82
NE Brass Band Ad & Marquee Rental	49.00
Taking Home Faith	49.95
Altar Accessories, candles, etc	70.63
Office Supplies, Ink cartridges, etc	79.55
Houses for Health Tanzania	100.00
Office Net, copier paper, tape	114.36
Christ in our Home	116.90
Office Net-quarterly service	240.00
UNL Lutheran Center Capital Campaign	2000.00
NE Synod ELCA—Mission Share	2900.00
Zion Benedict December Share	1700.55
<u>Utilities:</u>	
Church:	1054.03
Parsonage:	270.58
<u>Salaries:</u>	
Pastor	2176.41
Mileage	298.25
SECA	216.41
Portico Benefits	995.83
Theological Conference Expense	10.50
Diana	423.52
LeeAnn	230.87
Bri	411.42
Substitute Organist	50.00
	<u>13604.90</u>
Balance as of December 31st, 2017	<u><u>\$4468.26</u></u>
Transfers to:	
Youth Account; 2018 Mission Trip Deposit	100.00

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

**Mission Statement: Know God, Love God,
Share God's Love**



Guiding Principles:

1. **Jesus is Lord and Savior**
2. **All are welcome in this place.**
3. **Serving in love with generosity and hospitality**
4. **Provide an atmosphere for spiritual growth and reflection.**
5. **Teaching and sharing God's Word with joy**
6. **Mutual respect in relationships**

Return Service Requested

Stromsburg, NE 68666
950 Road 129th

**CALVARY LUTHERAN CHURCH
NEBRASKA SYNOD, ELCA**

.....IN SACRED PLACES.....