



FEBRUARY, 2019

...IN SACRED PLACES...

CELEBRATING MINISTRIES OF CALVARY AND ZION LUTHERAN CHURCHES

MESSAGE FROM PASTOR KIM

Dear Friends in Christ,

Grace, mercy, and peace be with you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. January 19-20 I had the opportunity to take most of our confirmation students to the Nebraska Middle School Gathering in Kearney. Overall, it was a great weekend. The kids were awesome and seemed to have a really good time. Thank you to Gina Schoch, Linda Fuhr, and Wayne Johnson for leading worship while I was away with these young people.

During the event, the youth had the opportunity to serve those in need in Kearney through a program called Loads of Love. This program provides laundry detergent and some household paper products (like toilet paper) to those in need. It is especially important for families who rely on food stamps for their grocery store purchases as these funds cannot be used to purchase paper products, personal hygiene items, laundry soap or other such essentials. Our group was partnered with a group from Elkhorn and we did craft projects with the kids who accompanied their parents to this event. The confirmation youth did great with this. Over the course of the two days, we also had the chance to get to know Nebraska Synod Bishop Brian Maas, hear some great music from Christian Hip Hop Artist Agape, learn from spoken word poet Joe Davis, study Scripture together, and spend some time at the YMCA in



(CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)

THANK YOU . . .

Calvary Lutheran WELCA,

Thank you all so much for your recent monetary gift to The Lutheran Center! Your generosity impacts the lives of hundreds of students who call this church and community their home away from home. You make this possible and are a huge blessing to so many. Thank you all so much.

In gratitude,

Jenna Olson Popp

Thank you for your food and clothing donation. It is greatly appreciated.

BVCA of Osceola

Dear Calvary WELCA,

Thank you for your support of UNK Campus Lutheran, a ministry of Nebraska Lutheran Campus Ministry. We are grateful for your continued prayers, partnership and support. Your gifts are extremely important as we seek to fulfill God's mission through us at Campus Lutheran.

Peace,

Jen of UNK Campus Lutheran

Dear Calvary WELCA,

Thank you for the donation of \$800. Gifts such as yours help us to continue services to survivors of domestic violence all year long. Through our new program, "Open Arms", we hope to reach out to even more women and children in our communities. Thank you for helping miracles happen!

Sincerely,

Pat Lostroh

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Kearney.

For me there was an additional treat. The pastors serving First Lutheran in Kearney which hosted the event, were a couple of my very favorite professors while I was in seminary. It was great to see them and have a few minutes to reconnect. (I also really appreciated them arriving early on Sunday morning to get the coffee started for us adults. With all that went on with the event, there wasn't much time for sleep!) On Sunday morning, we joined their congregation for worship.

One of the things that the Rev. Dr. Rick Carlson talked about during his sermon really resonated with members of our group. He told us that we are accepted by God. He informed the youth that if it hasn't already happened, they will be asked by another Christian at some point if they have accepted Christ as their personal Lord and Savior. Dr. Carlson told them that the Christian faith from a Lutheran understanding says that we do not accept Christ. Rather it is Christ who accepts us. This is an important distinction because it shows that God, through the Holy Spirit, is the one who is at work in us to save and redeem us. It is never about what we can do or must do to be accepted by God, but that faith is to be grounded firmly in what God has done for us. Yes, we are called to live out our faith and to be in relationship with God, but this call comes about only because we are accepted and loved by God. Having received radical love, acceptance, and grace we are invited to live differently in the world. Because those things are true about us, we care about our neighbors near and far and we care about anything and everything else God cares about.

The Scripture text for my very first sermon was 1st John 3:1-3. This text opens with a reminder that we, beloved, are God's children right now. We don't have to be anything special or do anything spectacular for us to be consider children of God. No, we are God's children because God loves us. Nothing we can ever do, or not do, will separate us from the love of God we experience in Christ Jesus. This is most certainly true and most definitely gospel (good news) for us.

In Christ,
Pastor Kim

W.E.L.C.A. NEWS

Please note the thank you's elsewhere in the newsletter from UNK Campus Lutheran, Genesis House and ESU 7. Your generous gifts from offerings taken at November meetings and what was dispersed at the December General Meeting have made a difference for many! You have certainly been wonderful in opening your hearts to share God's gifts with others in need.

Thank you to everyone who worked and brought food for lunch following the funeral of Linda Clauff. WELCA received a nice memorial from the family.

*Service for February is Thankoffering #1.

*Altar care for February will be Carolyn Nielsen & Bonnie Carlson. March will be Deb Cramer & Kay Jones.

*Flowers in February will be by Mary Anna Circle. March & April will be Miriam Circle. Thank you for watering any plants.

*Lent begins in March with Ash Wednesday on 3/6. Everyone appreciates the lunches & suppers provided with Lenten Services. Please join us on this Lenten journey, whether you attend at mid-day or evening.

FEBRUARY

	<i>Hostess</i>	<i>Bible Study</i>
Miriam – 2/8	Jean Waller	Jean
Ruth – 2/13	Bonnie Carlson	Bonnie
Mary Anna- 2/14	Laverne Stevens	_____?

“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.” ~ 1 Corinthians 13: 4-5

God's Blessings to You,
Cheryl

MISSION AND MINISTRY UPDATE



Community garden becomes a community mission

James Sandt knows a thing or two about growth. The third-generation produce farmer from Pen Argyl, PA., has spent his life working in the farming industry.

He started as a boy by pitching in

on his family's farm, moved into management of large corporate farms as an adult, and eventually made the dream of working for himself a reality by purchasing his own farm.

So, it's no surprise that God's Garden of Grace, a community garden Sandt began in collaboration with his congregation, St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Plainfield Township, Pa., has grown by leaps and bounds since its inception—impacting both his community and others in inspiring ways.

Sandt's motivation to begin this garden came after attending a four day educational event hosted by ELCA World Hunger in 2011, where he quickly became an advocate for the work of the ministry. "Before I left the end of the fourth day, I had made up my mind that we were going to start a garden here at St. Peter's and move forward," he said.

And move forward he did. In collaboration with his congregation and its social ministry committee, Sandt began God's Garden of Grace. Their goal was to help supply fresh food to their local food banks.

What started as a small venture by Sandt and St. Peter's quickly became a community effort, involving and inspiring other organizations and residents. A contractor supplied them with a 3,000 gallon water tank for irrigation, and the fire department fills it as often as three times a week.

Other farmers lend their coolers during the summer so the crops stay refrigerated until they're ready to be delivered. The local Rotary Club started funding the garden and provides some volunteer labor as well.

Today, the garden which has grown tomatoes, peppers, green beans, cucumbers, eggplant, onions, cabbage, radishes, watermelon, lettuce and squash—has almost doubled in size since its first harvest. In 2017, it yielded 15,000 pounds of produce an increase from 2016. The garden has expanded so far beyond its borders that Sandt now uses his own farm to grow crops for food bank distribution. Last year, his 120 fruit trees yielded an additional 5,000 pounds of produce, which was harvested by food stand owners and food bank volunteers.

The success hasn't gone unnoticed. Over the years, Sandt has received requests from other congregation and communities that, inspired by God's Garden of Grace, wanted help starting a garden. Sandt and his partners have helped start six community gardens. The most recent request came from a Seventh Day Adventist Congregation about 30 miles from Plainfield Township.

A venture that was once subsidized solely by St. Peter's and its members is now entirely subsidized and supported by the community. "We have become self sufficient in that we don't require our own social ministry to support us anymore," Sandt said. "Our community pretty much supports us."

Today, Sandt, his congregation and the volunteers and community partners are all hard at work planning the garden's 2018 season. And if someone asked Sandt what the secret is behind the success of God's Garden of Grace, he would emphasize one thing: the garden's dedicated volunteers. "This garden and this mission only exists because of the great volunteers that help it and make it happen," Sandt said. "And for that I thank them."

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.

(continued in next column)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Weather Cancellations

Weather cancellations for Swede Home will be announced on 10/11 News. Council members will also make calls.

Thank You...

Dear Friends at Swede Home,

Your gifts to Genesis House are small miracles which bring Joy—yes— like flowers in winter! The new warm winter clothes, and the beautiful new gift items, the food, the grocery and household items, all so useful and appreciated by our families at Genesis House who receive them, nine ladies and 15 children received gifts this year. Wishing you all the same measure of comfort and joy you've given us! Please come visit anytime!

Sincerely,
Pat Lostroh and folks at Genesis House

Sweethearts Banquet

The 27th annual Sweethearts Banquet will be held Tuesday, February 12th, at 5:30pm at the Evangelical Covenant Church.

Couples who have celebrated 50 years of marriage or more in the Stromsburg area are invited to attend a special evening. For reservations please call Gary and Jean Waller (402)764-7171 or Jim and Dee Anderson at (402)366-9977. The reservation deadline is Tuesday, February 5th.



Dear Calvary WELCA Members-

Thank You~Thank You~ Thank You from the bottom of our hearts for your continued generosity! We were able to provide food and gifts for 16 families! Many thanks and tears come from those families that have endured hard times and know that their little ones will have a nice Christmas!

May you all have a Blessed Holiday and a Happy New Year!

Your ESU 7 Friends



ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCA Spring Gathering-Fashion + Faith

The WELCA Central Spring Gathering will be held Saturday, March 16th at Messiah Lutheran Church in Aurora. The cost is \$18.00 registration/check in begins at 8:30am with coffee and rolls, the program will begin at 9:00am.

The program will be with Elaine James, humorous speaker, on "What If" and Pastor Omar Vila and Janet Anderson will inform us about Mission Field Nebraska outreach programs. The offering will go to 1/2 to Churchwide Women of ELCA, 1/4 to NSWO and 1/4 to Mission Field of Nebraska. We also will be collecting a Tangible offering of sport socks and dress socks for Bridges for Hope a Mission Field of Nebraska Outreach.

Let's make a faith fashion statement wear your favorite scarf, hat, jewelry, shoes, etc. Clothe yourself for Jesus!

Theme verse: "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience." Colossians 3:12

Theme song "For All the Faithful Women"

See Pastor or Cheryl for registration forms.

You're Invited

You are invited to attend a Pork Lion Meal on Sunday, February 3rd at 11:30am -1:00pm at Salem Lutheran Church. This is a free will donation with 100% of the donations will be going to Genesis House. Please join us to support Katie Frazier's confirmation project.

Calvary/Zion Lenten Services

Explore Popular Sayings that Miss the Point during Lent as we study together Half Truths: God Helps those Who Help Themselves and Other Things the Bible Doesn't Say by Rev. Adam Hamilton. The study looks at simple phrases that sound Christian (maybe even sound like they come from the Bible) and that capture some element of the truth, yet miss the point in important ways. Our study will search for the whole truth by comparing these sayings with the wisdom found in the Bible.

We will begin our worship at study on Wednesday nights at 7pm. Unless otherwise noted, a meal will be served at 6pm. Please join us for a time of fellowship and faith formation.

- Ash Wednesday, March 6 at 7pm (no meal) at Zion
- Everything Happens for a Reason, March 13 at Swede Home
- God Helps Those who Help Themselves, March 20 at Zion
- God Won't Give You More than You Can Handle, March 27 at Swede Home
- God Said It, I Believe It, That Settles It, April 3 at Zion
- Love the Sinner, Hate the Sin, April 10 at Swede Home
- Maundy Thursday, April 18 at 7pm (no meal) at Zion
- Good Friday, April 19 at 7pm (no meal) at Swede Home
- Easter Vigil, April 20 at 7:30pm (no meal) at Swede Home

Osceola Lenten Services

The Osceola Ministerial Association invites you to join us for our Wednesday Lenten Luncheon series. The theme this year is Lifted Up by the Cross. Each service begins at 11:45 with a soup and sandwich luncheon. The schedule is as follows:

- The Cross: God's Eternal Plan, Wed. March 6th at Swede Home, Pr. Dan Cloeter preaching
- The Cross: The Power of God, Wed. March 13 at Osceola Methodist, Father Val Bartek preaching.
- The Cross and Nothing Else, Wed. March 20, at St. Paul Lutheran, Pr. Teri Lucas preaching
- The Cross and Reconciliation, Wed. March 27 at St. Vincent's, Pr. Kim Belken preaching
- The Cross and our Debt, Wed. April 3 at Swede Home, Father Val Bartek preaching
- The Cross and It's Result, Wed. April 10 at Osceola Methodist, Pr. Dan Cloeter preaching



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
 LeeAnn Willhoft, Custodian

Council Members:
 Linda Fuhr, Todd Hanquist, Lynn Hoffman, Doug Jones, Kay
 Jones, Nick Nicholson,
 Chris Smith
 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

Cal Bittinger, Council President
 Diana Johnson & Craig Swedenberg, Musicians
 Chris Jarosz, Sunday School

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



Meet Renae Larson...

Renae Larson's parents, Ruth and Jerry Larson were farmers near Hordville where she grew up with her sister and two brothers. Her sister and father have passed away. Her mother and one brother live in Central City. Her other brother lives in Omaha.

Renae went to cosmetology school after high school. She had a salon in Hordville for 10 years. Then she went back to school so she could be a nurse. She is an RN at Midwest Covenant Home. She found she has a deep passion for working with the elderly and loves her job.

Renae met Todd at a mutual friend's wedding reception. They have three children. Their daughter Heidi and son-in-law, Chris have three children and are members of Calvary. Their daughter Mandy is married to Nate, they have two children. They have recently moved back from Lincoln. Their son Jonathan and his wife Chancy live in Ceresco. Renae and Todd live in Swede Home and enjoy having their children and grandchildren close by.

Renae loves to be outdoors. She spends her time gardening, taking care of the lawn and any activity that will let her be outside.

Renae became a member of Calvary a couple of years ago. She appreciates the close knit church family at Swede Home.



REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS



Dorothy Ehlers	Nick Nicholson
Melissa Forsberg	Alice Jane Oquist
Denny Johnson	Elvin Reetz
Linda Johnson	Imo Richardson
Lenore Kessler	Harvey Schlegelmilch
Shyanne Krol	Vance & Elaine Toline
June Larson	Jan Wells-Bachman

- Genesis House and Living Waters Rescue Mission, Blue Valley Action, & Denver Metro Ministries
- Houses for Health recipients.
- Table Grace Café
- 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

ZION WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

FEBRUARY

Communion Assistant: Jacob Kush

Usher: Justin Schoch

Greeter: Brianne Schoch

Reader:

3—Teresa Bittinger, 10—Dawn Kush, 17—Gary Hild, 24—

Acolyte:

3—Harley Martin, 10—Lyndsey Bolton, 17—Axton Martin, 24—
Tierney Schoch

ANNIVERSARIES

CALVARY:

Mike & Anita Haack
February 21st

BIRTHDAYS

CALVARY:

01—Claire Smith
02—Mitch Cramer
05—Lynn Hoffman
09—Kamdyn Udey
09—Stephanie Mattson
13—Carter Fjell
25—Kolton Neujahr
25—Allen Peterson
29—Peyton Hoffman
29—Rylee Hoffman

ZION:

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



CALVARY WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

February

Assistant Ministers— Nick Nicholson

Scripture Reader—Brody Ienn

Ushers— Dan & Fawn Ienn

Acolyte—Clayton Watts

Altar Care— Carolyn & Bonnie

Bell Ringer— Colby

February 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
<p>3</p> <p>8:30a Zion Holy Communion Worship 9:15a Calvary SS 9:30a Benedict SS 10:30a Calvary Holy Communion Worship</p>	4	<p>5</p> <p>7p Inspired Book Study</p>	<p>6</p> <p>9:30a Join the Conversation Bible Study 7p Calvary Council Meeting</p>	7	<p>8</p> <p>9a Miriam's WELCA Circle</p>	9
<p>10</p> <p>8:30a Zion Worship 9:15a Calvary SS 9:30a Benedict SS 10:30a Calvary Worship</p>	11	<p>12</p> <p>7p Inspired Book Study</p>	<p>13</p> <p>9:30a Join the Conversation Bible Study 6p Confirmation 7p Men's Bible Study 7p Ruth's WELCA Circle</p>	<p>14</p> <p>2p Mary Anna's WELCA Circle</p>	15	16
<p>17</p> <p>8:30a Zion Holy Communion Worship 9:15a Calvary SS 9:30a Benedict SS 10:30a Calvary Holy Communion Worship</p>	18	<p>19</p> <p>7p Inspired Book Study</p>	<p>20</p> <p>9:30a Join the Conversation Bible Study 6p Confirmation</p>	21	22	23
<p>24</p> <p>8:30a Zion Worship 9:15a Calvary SS 9:30a Benedict SS 10:30a Calvary Worship</p>	25	<p>26</p> <p>7p Inspired Book Study</p>	<p>27</p> <p>9:30a Join the Conversation 6p Confirmation</p>	28		

Know God, Love God, Share God's Love

COUNCIL NOTES

January 2, 2019 Council Notes

- There is still time to join the *Inspired* bible study, Tuesday evenings – 7 pm at Calvary
- Join the Conversation Bible Study continues on Weds mornings, 9:30 am at Calvary
- Pastor continues to work with the Synod Rural Ministry Committee
- Plans continue for the Mission trip in July with the Denver Metro Ministries
- Joint confirmation classes with Benedict continue to go well
- Programmable thermostats have been ordered for the church and the basement, they will be installed later this month
- Council worked on plans and budget to be presented at the Annual meeting, January 27. There will be a congregational meal following the meeting
- Council accepted the resignation of church secretary, Bri Schoch. We thank her for her years of service to Calvary

Treasurer's Report

December, 2018

Beginning Balance	\$36.68
<u>Offering:</u>	
General Offering	24202.02
Sunday School Offering	22.00
Lutheran Immigration & Refugee Services	5.00
ELCA Mission Share	5757.00
Zion for November Share	<u>1834.32</u>
	31820.34
<u>Expenses:</u>	
Vanco eCheck Monthly Fee	8.79
Noyd repair; Church Furnace Service	31.00
Faller Landscaping - Advent Wreath	40.00
Stromsburg Chamber Dues 2019	50.00
Office Net Quarterly Agreement	167.46
Postage Expense	200.00
Bedient Pipe Organ—Repair on Dec 5	375.00
Lutheran Immigration & Refugee Services	60.00
NE Synod Seminarian Debt Reduction	750.00
NE Synod ELCA—Mission Share	3000.00
Zion Benedict December Share	1784.88
<u>Utilities:</u>	
Church:	272.31
Parsonage:	126.23
<u>Salaries:</u>	
Pastor	2230.96
Mileage	243.24
SECA	221.84
Portico Benefits	1046.82
Professional Expense	85.61
Diana	445.41
LecAnn	236.64
Bri	<u>268.60</u>
	11644.79
 Balance as of December 31st, 2018	 <u><u>\$20212.23</u></u>

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.....