

...IN SACRED PLACES...

CELEBRATING MINISTRIES OF CALVARY AND ZION LUTHERAN CHURCHES

MESSAGE FROM PASTOR KIM



After all of the preparations, the big day has come and gone. Christmas is over and it is time to return to our normal hectic pace of life without the added holiday stress. The truth is though, Christmas really isn't over quite yet (at least if you are reading this before January 5th). It is really a season of 12 days and begins on Christmas day. While it would be festive to use red and green colors as decorations on the altar and pulpit, the paraments during this time are actually white.

The paraments remain white for two festivals that follow the Christmas season: Epiphany and Baptism of our Lord. Epiphany, a word which means a revelation or sudden appearance of something, is always celebrated on January 6. It commemorates the day that the wise men visited Jesus. Though we may not realize it from many Christmas programs and productions and carols, the Wise Men didn't actually get to the manger the night that Christ was born or even while Joseph and Mary were still in Bethlehem. In fact, it wasn't until Jesus was almost 2 years old before they arrived with their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. This is why in many nativity scenes the wise men are not put out or set up right away.

The season following January 6th in the church year is the season after Epiphany (creative name, right!). The first Sunday of this season is when we celebrate the Baptism of our Lord. Now we don't really know whether or not Jesus was baptized in January, but we remember his baptism during the time after Epiphany. Given the meaning of the word epiphany, it seems like a fitting time to have this celebration. Why? Because both the visit of the wise men and Jesus' baptism show him to be very important and different from any of the other babies born in Bethlehem on Christmas night.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)

THANK YOU . . .

Dear Calvary Lutheran Church,
Thank you for the monetary gift to ELCA World Hunger! The world is indeed about to turn! Your gifts to this signature ministry of our church support nearly 600 multi-year projects here and around the world, innovative local solutions that get at the root causes of hunger and poverty. Through long-trusted church companions and partners, together we are accompanying vulnerable communities as they strengthen themselves and their lives, for today and for generations to come. Thank you! As your hearts sing in joy and hope this holy season, know that your faithful, generous response to the gospel is making a difference around the globe, spreading joy and hope near and far, creatively and courageously working toward a world of justice where all are fed.

With thanksgiving, and in the light and love of Christ,

Rev. Daniel Rift

Director, ELCA World Hunger and Disaster Appeal

Thank you to all who contributed to the Zion food drive for Living Water Mission in York. They were very appreciative of our donations. Thank you Tierney for organizing this!

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For the season of Ordinary Time (the season after Pentecost) we looked at the gift of discipleship that comes out of that season as COMMUNITY. Then during Advent, we reflected on the ways that that season make us AWARE of God's presence in the world. I don't have a word for Epiphany and the season after, because we will be doing something a little different.

On Sunday, January 7th, you are will receive a star gift in worship. What are star gifts? They are words of encouragement and reminders of God's presence to carry you through the coming year. They are pretty simple, but they can have great meaning because they invite us into reflection and deeper relationship with God. On your star gift will be a word for you to carry with you, to watch for, and to ponder the significance of in your life. It is a chance for you to receive something tangible that can serve as a reminder of God's love for you.

My hope is that you will be able to join us in worship that Sunday (and every other Sunday that you can). As we celebrate Epiphany, the season when the importance of Jesus is revealed and God's presence breaks through the winter dark and cold to shine in our lives, we do so together. We rejoice in the goodness of the Lord and celebrate all that God has entrusted to us.

In Christ,

Pastor Kim

Little Humor...

A woman told her friend: "At Christmas, I was visited by a jolly, bearded fellow with a big bag over his shoulder."

"You mean Santa Claus came to see you in person?"

"No," she replied. "My son came home from college with his dirty laundry."

– via Rev. Bill Park
Bethany, OK
from his book *Go Ahead and Laugh!*

W.E.L.C.A. NEWS

A very BIG THANK YOU to Marj Johnson and Deb Swedenburg for their excellent jobs as Secretary and Treasurer of Calvary's WELCA! Your footsteps will be hard to fill! At the December general meeting, new officers were elected: Cheryl Jones as Secretary/President and Carolyn Nielsen as Treasurer.

The following donations given from our offerings were voted on: \$500 each to A Place at the Table; Columbus Rescue Mission; Living Water Rescue Mission; Lakota Lutheran Center; Oaks Indian Mission; UNK Lutheran Campus Center; UNL Lutheran Campus Center; \$1,000 to Genesis House; and \$250 for a local family's Christmas.

The statewide Winter Retreat is planned for Sat., Jan. 20 at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Grand Island, from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Please see Cheryl or your circle leader for registration forms. Cost is \$18.

No quilt days scheduled in January or February. Quilting will resume in March.

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!

January

Hostess/Dessert Bible Study

Mary Anna 1/11	Jan Ernst	Jan Ernst
Miriam 1/12	Diana Johnson	Diana J.
Ruth 1/10	Cheryl Jones	Cheryl J

God's Blessings on your New Year,
Cheryl



MISSION AND MINISTRY UPDATE



A Love Story Years in the Making

What’s the last thing you think of before you fall asleep?

For the last 15 years, Dawn’s last thought has been Jason. Dawn and Jason met at a Mosaic-run day center.

“He thought that I was pretty,” Dawn says with a smile.

It wasn’t long before the couple started dreaming about what a life together would look like. After a few years of dating, Dawn moved closer to Jason so they could learn more about what they wanted together. Each day their relationship got a bit stronger. Over the next ten years, they were patient and persistent with their relationship. Their love grew, and Jason asked Dawn if she would marry him.

Mosaic staff and friends helped the couple plan for their big day, sending out 150 invitations , helping with details like food, tuxes, flowers, and much more. “I wish you could have been there because it was a blast,” Dawn tells people who ask about their wedding day. The day was only possible because of an outpouring of love from the couple’s friends, family and Mosaic donors. One donor provide an engagement ring so Jason could give it to Dawn. A local florist donated flower for Dawn’s bouquet and a local grocery store supplies food for the reception.

Today, Dawn and Jason live in their own home with their cat, Marly, who will often perch on the armrest of Jason’s recliner with his head on the armrest of Dawn’s chair while the newlyweds watch TV. They love to cook together, ride their bikes and volunteer in their community. Dawn helps Jason manage his diabetes and Jason keeps Dawn warm at night. Their love serves as an inspiration to other people Mosaic supports who know that we will be there to help them achieve their wildest dreams, whether it be getting married, going to college or finding a dream job.

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 January, your donations will go to Genesis House in David City.



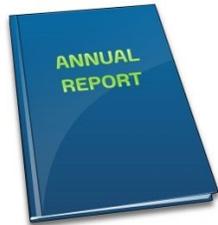
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Endowment Meeting

There will be Endowment meeting on Tuesday January 9th at 7pm.

Annual Reports

If you have information or a report for the annual meeting, please submit it to Pastor no later than January 3rd. Email kimberlyrbelken@gmail.com



Out of Office

Pastor Kim will be at First Theological Education January 15-16th. If an emergency would arrive please contact Pastor Brenda at Salem Lutheran Church in Stromsburg.

Out of the Office

Bri will be on medical leave from December 22nd—January 18th. If you are needing secretarial needs during this time please contact Pastor Kim.



Meeting Notice for Calvary

Notice of Annual meeting for Calvary Lutheran Church

Annual meeting will be on Sunday, January 21st during worship

to conduct the business of the congregation. Following the service and meeting, a congregational meal will served so please plan to attend!



Meeting Notice for Zion

Notice of Annual Meeting for Zion Lutheran Church

Annual meeting will be on Sunday January 21st during worship to conduct the business of the congregation including discussion of congregation budget.

WELCA Winter Retreat

Ready for some “renewal” to begin your new year? Then plan to attend the Nebraska WELCA Winter Retreat on January 20, 2018 at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in Grand Island, 8:30 – 3:00.

Guest speaker, Connie Stover, assistant to the Bishop, will be leading the group with soul searching and meditating, along with enjoying new and renewed friendships.

If you’d like to attend this retreat “Made Anew in Christ”, give Cheryl at call at 402-366-4797 for a registration form. Registration fee is \$18.00.

Benedict Community Sunday School

Benedict Community Sunday School will continue on January 7th at 9:30. Hope everyone has a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



Calvary Christmas Program

The kids at Calvary did a great job sharing the birth of Jesus with our congregation.



Benedict Community Sunday School

Benedict Community Sunday School did a great job presenting KING Radio the story of the birth of Jesus.



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
Brianna 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

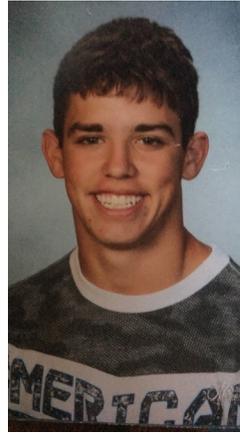
(402) 764-0481 (cell)
(402) 764-5961 (parsonage)
(402) 764-5981 (church office)
kimberlyrbelken@gmail.com

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

Gregg Bolton, Council President
Yvonne Stauber, Organist
Chris Jarosz, Sunday School

Council Members:

Gregg Bolton, Todd Schoch, Dawn Kush
All of Zion members, Ministers



Meet Brody Ienn:

Brody Ienn is the son of Daniel and Fawn Ienn of Osceola. He was born in Belleville, Kansas, then lived by Henderson for a couple years and moved to Osceola in 2006. He has one sister, Ryleigh (attending Oklahoma State University).

Brody is a Junior at Osceola High School and upon graduation, hopes to attend the Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. He loves reading, watching football, hunting and camping.

Sports are definitely Brody's favorite part of school because it gives him something to do, and if he didn't have practice everyday after school, he said "he'd go nuts from boredom". Sports are also his favorite way to stay active and in shape. Brody goes out for football, wrestling and track.

He loves our little church full of memorable and friendly faces. Brody likes that we have the bulletin to follow along and help pay attention during the service. The recent renovations made Calvary very attractive, and he likes that it's in the middle of the country. Reading scripture is a very fun part of church that's really helped him become comfortable having an audience.

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

ZION WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

JANUARY

Communion Assistant: Gina Schoch

Usher: Todd Schoch

Greeter: Michelle Blair

Reader:

7—Gina Schoch, 14—Gary Hild, 21—Gina Schoch, 28—Todd Schoch

Acolyte:

7—Isaac Reetz, 14—Harley Martin, 21—Tierney Schoch, 28—Lyndsey Bolton

ANNIVERSARIES

ZION:

Steve and Jeanie Geis
January 31st



BIRTHDAYS

CALVARY:

4—Mike Larson
4—Fran Lott
5—Bill Carlstrom
9—Deb Hanquist
9—Mary Stevens
10—Mickey Berggren
11—Brileigh Twarling
14—Taylor Jones
15—Quin Rene Anderson-Cahill
15—Carole Dickson
16—Roxanne Czarnick
17—Linda Fuhr
17—Diana Johnson
20—Dale Ienn
23—Joel Cramer
23—Ron Dickson
23—Bryce Nielsen
24—Deb Cramer
24—Margaret Norton
27—Duane Jones
27—Irene Sundberg
27—Janelle Udey
29—Ceagan Watts

ZION:

1—Craig Bolton
4—Adam Reetz
23—Russell Blair
24—Dorothy Ehlers

CALVARY WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

January

Assistant Ministers—Linda Fuhr
Scripture Reader—Wayne Johnson
Ushers—Lew & Carolyn Nielsen
Acolyte—

Altar Care—Diane Johnson
Bell Ringer—

January 2018

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

	1	2	3	4	5	6
			9:30a Join the Conversation Bible Study 6p Confirmation 7p Council			
7 8:30a Zion Worship 10:30a Calvary Holy Communion Worship	8	9 7p Endowment Meeting	10 9:30a Join the Conversation Bible Study 6p Confirmation 7p Men's Bible Study	11 2p Mary Anna's WELCA Circle	12 9a Miriam's WELCA Circle	13
14 8:30a Zion Worship 10:30a Calvary Worship	15	16	17 9:30a Join the Conversation Bible Study 6p Confirmation	18	19	20
21 8:30a Zion Worship/Annual Meeting 10:30a Calvary Holy Communion Worship/Annual Meeting	22	23	24 9:30a Join the Conversation Bible Study 6p Confirmation	25	26	27
28 8:30a Zion Worship 10:30a Calvary Worship	29	30	31 9:30a Join the Conversation Bible Study 6p Confirmation			

Know God, Love God, Share God's Love

COUNCIL NOTES

Council Meeting Newsletter updates -
December 2017

- End of the year committees have been meeting in preparation of the Annual Congregational Meeting. Meeting date has been set for January 21st. The meeting will be held at the beginning of the 10:30 a.m. church service, with a congregational dinner to follow, catered by PKs. Please plan to attend.
- Council will appoint members to complete the Memorial Committee and Audit Committee. Nominating Committee has met and will be contacting members to serve on Council, Endowment, Nominating Committee and Synod Assembly delegates. If you receive a call, please give serious consideration to share your talents with the congregation and service on those committees.
- We are extremely grateful to Tina Watts and the years of service she has provided our youth as Sunday School Director. Tina has indicated she will resign in May of 2018. She has touched the lives of many youth as she has taught and directed Sunday School. We are looking for someone willing to continue the education of our youth. Please consider this service to our congregation and contact Pastor if you are willing to help.
- Osceola Methodist Church and Calvary are planning a mission trip to Wyoming, next summer. Fundraising events will be announced in the future. Brody, Jacob and Clayton have registered to attend along with the Methodist youth. Please include this mission trip in your prayers
- Trees have been planted on the east side of the church and one by the Sunday School building. Faller Landscaping has planted these trees, and instructed that the trees will not need watering during the winter, and will only need additional watering if we go through an unusual dry spell
- Gladys and Linda will be printing the bulletin for several Sundays as Bri will be on medical leave.

Treasurer's Report

November, 2017

Beginning Balance	\$2243.39
<u>Offering:</u>	
General Offering	8432.82
Genesis House	997.00
ELCA Disaster Relief	5.00
Sunday School Offering	70.00
Facility Use Offering	350.00
ELCA Mission Share	1290.00
Transfer from Memorial Fund	1154.05
Zion for October Share	1678.38
	<u>13968.25</u>
<u>Expenses:</u>	
Vanco eCheck Monthly Fee	8.16
Advent Family Resources	50.08
Computer Expenses	96.29
Bell Ropes	99.26
Office Net Copier Paper	148.77
Living Lutheran Subscription	707.05
Mowing (July—October)	800.00
Genesis House	997.00
Faller's Landscaping (5 Trees)	1154.05
Lutheran Disaster Response	2833.00
NE Synod ELCA—Mission Share	0.00
Zion Benedict November Share	1821.60
<u>Utilities:</u>	
Church:	743.90
Parsonage:	254.51
<u>Salaries:</u>	
Pastor	2176.41
Mileage	316.72
SECA	216.41
Portico Benefits	995.83
Theological Conference Lodging	174.26
Diana	423.52
LeeAnn	230.87
Bri	561.02
	<u>14958.33</u>
Balance as of November 30th, 2017	<u><u>\$1253.31</u></u>
Designed \$\$ Transfer to Appropriate Savings Accounts:	
Improvement Fund	1000.00
Youth DDA SAV	750.00

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.....