July 2024

150 YEARS—1873–2023

CELEBRATING MINISTRY OF CALVARY LUTHERAN CHURCH

I love wordplay: those examples of puns (Q: When does a joke become a dad joke? A: When it becomes apparent); spoonerisms (flutterby instead of butterfly); portmanteaus (breakfast + lunch = brunch) and more. These twists-of-phrase and creative applications of language usually serve as a form of amusement. Yet in our amusement, the meaning tends to stick, and we remember it. That is the case for the Cultivating Love theme for July: We are Cultivating Re-Creation.

In that oh-so-Lutheran way, Re-creation carries with it multiple meanings at once, a both/and rather than either/or. We are speaking all-at-once of Creation, Recreation, and Re-creation. *Merriam-Webster* offers the following definitions for us to consider:

> Creation: the act of creating; *especially*: the act of bringing the world into existence
>
> Recreation: refreshment of strength and spirits after work
>
> Re-creation: the act of creating again; *especially*: the act of forming anew in the imagination

This July, we focus on God's model of cultivating love. One example of this can be found in the first passage of scripture we encounter when opening our Bibles. In Genesis 1, we see this (re)creation at work. God creates, and at the conclusion of creation is recreation. And our scriptures conclude with a vision of Re-creation, when a new heaven and a new earth come into being through that same cultivating power of God's love.

Our Christian duty in response to God's cultivating love in us is to join in God's re-creation. When asked about the greatest commandment, Jesus says "'you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these" (Mark 12:30-31, NRSV). For us to faithfully love God and love our neighbors in the ways which God calls us, we must be grounded and rooted in the love of God. And what better time than summer to be reminded of God's love in re-creation. This season invites us to be present before the Lord our God and bear witness to the new, ongoing work of God who is cultivating love with, through, and for all of God's beloved creation.

Questions for Reflection:

- What does summertime mean for you? How can this season be one of re-creation for you?
- When on the road or experiencing the wonders of creation, how might you meaningful breathe deeply this month and to listen for God's invitation and promise of love?

> What will you do to find some time of re-creation and/or vacation this summer so that you will take the time you need to recharge to then be able to share love with others most fully?

Prayer:

Merciful God, by giving us time and space to be apart, you also provide us with what we need to avoid exhaustion and apathy. Help us to take the time to recenter our lives with you and live ever more fully into the people you created us to be. Let it be our re-created selves that then bring the message of your love with renewed fervor, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

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Announcements

The Evangelism and Outreach Team oversees a non-perishable food and personal care item collection.

Please place items you wish to donate in the basket . June donations go to:

Blue Valley Community Action—Osceola

Meals from the Heart:

Thanks to all who donated and made food for the Meals from the Heart program. We had a work morning at the church Saturday, June 8. Those helping were Carolyn Nielsen, Kay Jones, Missy and Jarrett Althouse, Ben Carlson, Linda Fuhr Bonnie Carlson and Cheryl Jones.

We have a nice variety of meals and other items. Please contact Cheryl if you know of anyone in need.

THANK YOU

The familiar words "Thank you" don't seem like enough to recognize all the prayers, cards, food, hugs and calls that we received when Monty has had hip and knee replacement surgeries. He's doing much better now. Praise the Lord!

Monty & Cheryl Jones

W.E.L.C.A. News

*At the Swede Home Ice Cream Social, we're all looking forward to enjoying some yummy homemade ice cream in the shade of the trees on **Sunday, July 21 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.** Invite your friends and neighbors to join in the fun and fellowship! This year we will again have face painting and a bouncy house for the young at heart. If you'd enjoy helping or furnishing food and haven't been contacted yet, please let Deb Hanquist or Cheryl Jones know. Thanks to everyone who makes this a memorable event for all who attend!

* Ice cream will be served at Midwest Covenant Home Assisted Living on Monday, July 22 at 2:30 p.m. If you would like to help, please let Mary Stevens know, as more friendly faces to visit with residents and/or serve food are always welcome.

*July Altar Care will be by Diana Johnson, and August will be Kathi Jones.

*Flowers and Cheer in July, August & September by Ruth Circle.

*Thank you to all those serving coffee after church this summer! We're really enjoying the fellowship.

July Circle Meetings

Hostess

Ruth – 7/10 Bonnie @ 4th St. Coffee in Stromsburg

Miriam – 7/11 Sandy Johnston

"And what does the Lord require of you?

To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." ~ Micah 6:8

Have a memorable summer!

Cheryl

Church happenings

- Pastor Hillary and Pastor Evan will keep the youth group updated regarding meeting dates. They use either text or email notification.

It is July, and you know what that means! It is time for the annual Ice Cream Social—AND the Polk County Fair.

This year the last day of the Fair is Sunday, July 21. This means that there will be some Fair events on Sunday, the same day as the Social. This will affect some of the workers that we rely on for the social—i.e. 4-H members, Fair Board members etc.

If you are able to work your usual shifts and are willing to work extra—please let Deb Hanquist or Cheryl Jones know.

We have included the Ice Cream Social poster in the newsletter.

See you at the Fair—and at the Social!

Recipes

This month we have two summer recipes to share. We have not had this feature the last 2 newsletters, as there have been lots of articles to include in each past newsletter. Thank you to those who noticed the recipes had been missing and asked when they would return.

We thank Jennifer Fjell for her Spaghetti Salad recipe that she has shared with us.

Spaghetti Salad

1 lb. Angel Hair Pasta Cooked
1 ½ Tablespoon Accent
2 Tablespoons Season Salt
1/3 cup oil
½ cup lemon juice

Mix all together and refrigerate overnight

ADD
¾ cup Green Pepper, Chopped
¾ cup Red Onion Chopped
1 ½ cup cucumber Chopped
1 small can chopped black olives
1 cup Mayo (Not Miracle Whip)

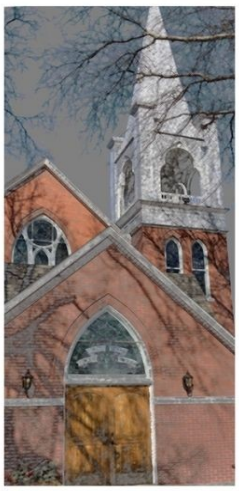
Mix all together, refrigerate until ready to serve

We thank our good friend, Ben Carlson for this watermelon Cucumber Salsa recipe that his mom made: It is light and tasty and delicious, so he recommends doubling the recipe to make 6 cups. Keep it refrigerated to eat as it is best when chilled. Serve with your favorite chips.

Watermelon Cucumber Salsa

1 ½ cup chopped seedless watermelon
¾ cup finely chopped cucumber
½ cup finely chopped sweet onion
¼ cup minced fresh cilantro
1 seeded and minced jalapeno pepper (optional)
2 Tablespoons lime juice
¼ teaspoon salt
Makes 3 cups

Calvary Lutheran Church
Swede Home
Ice Cream Social



On the lawn at 950 129th Rd, Stromsburg

Sunday July 21st, 6:00p-8:00p

Come join us for some food, fun, and lots of fellowship

Homemade Ice Cream, toppings, & bars/cookies

Face Painting

weather permitting

Free will donations accepted.

Synod Assembly 2024

Calvary Lutheran—Swede Home, was well represented at the Nebraska ELCA Synod Assembly on June 1 and 2. This is the first time that the Assembly met for 2 days instead of 3—and included sessions on Sunday, including a worship service.

Since clergy throughout the state was attending the Assembly, the 11 am service was live streamed and congregations across the state had the option of joining the live stream service.

Swede Home elected to move our service to 11 am and join in with other across the state. Thanks to Andrew Adelson for setting up the equipment, we had a relaxed service in the fellowship hall, complete with coffee and cookies. We were able to worship with the Assembly delegates and join in the music and prayers.

One of the featured Assembly speakers, Jeff Chu, gave the inspirational talk. Comments by those attending at Swede Home, were positive. It always a blessing to hear God's word and worship with others across the state.

Our delegates this year were Lynn and Tom Hofmann, and PR Hillary and PR Evan Christensen. Wilder had the pleasure of attending his first Assembly and being one of the youngest present.

Stewardship Short

We are trying something new in adding a small article about

stewardship each month called our "Stewardship Short"

Stewardship Short: Stewardship of Civility

There used to be a wise saying about arguments that helped keep things civil. One party or the other would say, "I disagree with what you say, but I defend with my life your right to say it." That sounds downright quaint in today's climate, where partisans are more likely to say, "I disagree with what you say, and you are evil and have no right to that opinion!"

This month, as we celebrate Independence Day, we can relish the freedoms we take for granted, including freedom of speech, religion, and assembly. At the same time, as Christians we remember Jesus' commands not only to love our neighbors as ourselves (Mark 12:31) but also to do unto others as we would have them do to us (Matthew 7:12). The "neighbors" and "others" certainly include those who hold different ideas on issues of the day. How can we celebrate our freedom of expression in the context of Jesus' commands?

Listen carefully, being open to another person's ideas.

Respond thoughtfully and calmly, citing facts to support your argument.

Do not attack the person, only the ideas.

If things get too heated, discontinue the discussion.

Remember the wise old saying, "I disagree with what you say, but I defend with my life your right to say it."

We are stewards of our relationships with our neighbors. As followers of Jesus, we can be stewards of civility and lead our country to calmer, more amicable times.

Calvary Lutheran Church
Nebraska Synod, ELCA
950 129th Road
Stromsburg, NE 68666
Church Phone: (402)764-5981
www.calvaryswedehomechurch.com
Email calvaryswedehomechurch@gmail.com
Facebook "Swede Home"

Every Member of the Congregation—Ministers
Kent Adelson, Council Chairman
Jennifer Fjell, Council Vice Chairman
Missy Althouse, Council Secretary
Amy Harris and Janet Nielsen, Music
Linda Fuhr, Church Office Manager
LeeAnn Willhoft, Custodian

Council Members:
Andrew Adelson, Jennifer Fjell,, Dan Oquist,
Kent Adelson, Missy Althouse, Kris Udey, Randy Lott
Jarrett Althouse, youth representative

Pastor Evan Cell Phone 402-689-5495 (text or call)
Email: evan@pastorchristensen.com

Pastor Hillary Cell Phone 402-980-1102 (text or call)
Email: hillary@pastorchristensen.com

IF you are texting or emailing a pastor, please include both pastors in the text or email

Please contact Linda Fuhr, Church Office Manager at

calvryswedehomechurch@gmail.com or text or call 402-366-2091, If you have not done so, follow **Swede Home** on our Facebook page.

The Soll Family reunion will be held at the church fellowship Sunday, July 14 at 12:30

There will be coffee fellowship following the church service as usual.

THANK YOU

We have received appreciation notes from Cross Cunty, High Plains and Shelby-Rising City. They were signed by the attendees—

Thank you for supporting the ministries of Women of the ELCA with your recent gift of $255. Your faithful generosity makes a real difference. THANK YOU.

Your giving really does make a difference. Thank you

With Gratitude, Linda Post Bushkofsky, Executive Director

Blue Vally Community Action Partnership appreciates your donation of $255 to our Polk County Family & Community Services Center. Your generosity will make a difference in the lives of those we serve in your community.

Thank you for "Helping People and Changing Lives"

Heather Lytle, Administrative Director

Kelsey BVCA Family Development Coordinator

Thank you again for restocking the pantry at Genesis House! A young mother came in last week and I was able to give her food so she could save her money for her lawyer fees. Genesis House appreciates YOU

Sheri Nielsen, Director

On Behalf of Lutheran Family Services I want to express our gratitude for your recent gift on behalf of your congregation. We are glad to be in partnership with you and your community. We look forward to our continued partnership in serving God's children in need. Than you again, and God's blessings on your community and church.

Jens Acamo, Church Relations Specialist

Thank you for giving the gift of camp! We are grateful to be partners in ministry.

Jacob Spillar, Director of Development
Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries

We Reach to all our faith family in prayer and celebration

Remember in your prayers

Monty Jones
Kathi Jones
Duane Jones
Janice Forsberg
Melissa Forsberg
June Larson
Beth Jones Wienck
Jan Wells Bachman
Alan Willits
Rich Schneider
Luna Stauber

- Genesis House and Living Waters Rescue Mission, Blue Valley Action
- Houses for Health recipients.
- Bishop Scott Johnson and the Nebraska Synod staff
- Bishop Elizabeth Eaton and all ELCA congregations and members
- Brody Ienn in service to our country
- Our government leaders
- Our companion synods in Tanzania and Argentina

To request prayers please email the church or call Linda (402-366-2091) or Cheryl (402-366-4797)

Thank you Vacation Bible School Helpers

Vacation Bible School was held at St. Paul Lutheran Church the first week of June.

We thank our members Koleton and Kamdyn Udey for being youth helpers and to members of Ruth Circle for providing daily treats for the helpers.

Anniversaries

July

03 Chris and Heidi Smith
06 Bob & Bonnie Dittmer
12 Josh & Kailie McCarville
20 Tom & Lynn Hofmann
23 Lew & Carolyn Nielsen
27 Rod & Kay Jones

Birthdays

July

01 Betty Hinkle
03 Jacob Adelson
04 Jessica Noble
05 Patrick Bush
08 LeeAnn Willhoft
10 Teresa Johnson
10 Jill Westring
11 Missy Althouse
13 Ryan Johnson
17 Carol Nicholson
18 Kris Udey
21 Carolyn Nielsen
25 Kirk Dittmer
25 Tina Kilgore
26 Scott Fredrickson

July

Assistant Minister - Gia/Kent

Scripture Reader – Gia/Kent

Ushers – Todd and Wayne

Altar Care—Diana

Acolyte –

Bell Ringer – Todd

We thank all those who agree to help with the worship service each month. **Please let Jean Waller or Carolyn Nielsen know if you can help**

July 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 10:30 Worship Service, Council meeting to follow worship	8	9 7 pm Men's Bible Study host Wayne Johnson	10 9 am Ruth Circle at 4th Street Coffee Shop	11 9 am Miriam Circle host Sandy Johnson	12	13
14 10:30 am Worship Service 12:30 Soll family reunion in fellowship	15	16	17	18	19	20
21 10:30 am Worship service, NO coffee after service 6-8 pm Ice cream Social	22 2:30 pm Ice Cream Social at MWCH	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	**Mark your Calendar for August 11—LaVerne Stevens** will be celebrating her 100th birthday! (which is August 12) Her family is hosting a noon meal at the Polk County Fair Grounds in Osceola—watch the August newsletter for more details.		

Dear Family, Friends, and Supporters of Calvary Lutheran Church of Swede Home:

In the frigid winter months of 2022, a pipe froze and burst in the upstairs bathroom of our Church Parsonage destroying much of the house.

Shortly after, Calvary joined in a shared ministry agreement calling Pastors Hillary and Evan Christensen to serve Calvary as well as First English Lutheran Church in Rising City and Augustana Lutheran Church in Genoa. With the Parsonage in Swede Home unavailable, they made Genoa their home in the Fall of 2022 and moved into Augustana's Parsonage.

Even with the new pastors living elsewhere, our Church Council and Property Committee sought to repair the damaged living spaces. Disagreements between our initial choice of contractor and our insurance provider delayed any hope of progress for months. After more than a year of negotiations, it was clear that a different contractor was the only option to move forward. We are grateful to have found Trevin and his crew who were excited for the project. In October of 2023, our Congregation approved $150,000 to be spent on parsonage renovations, with these funds coming from savings and insurance. Weather delayed starting the renovation until March of 2024.

There's a phrase especially apt for this moment: "God's timing is not our timing." It is fitting because those months of delay were also months of discernment for our new pastors. While Genoa is a wonderful community with many local institutions so close, God was calling them elsewhere, but it was by no means to different congregations. It became a clear though difficult decision that relocating to Swede Home and living in the parsonage was the best thing for them as Pastors of the three congregations and as a young, growing family. The centralized space would afford better coordination and commute to the people, communities, homes, and hospitals that the families and members of all three congregations frequent.

Their eventual arrival to Calvary's Parsonage allowed Council to make some significant considerations for renovation. The project shifted from a repair to a remodel. The last major remodel was in 1956, then the Parsonage was updated to a smaller more modern home. The garage was added later, and it has remained quite similar until today.

We are excited for our pastors and their young family to move into our parsonage, and we have made considerations of what might best serve them. Yet we also know this is an investment in not just today, but our future. Pastors Hillary and Evan will join a long line of ministers who have served Calvary and lived in our Parsonage, who have raised their family here. Though neither we nor they plan on going anywhere else any time soon, we also know, trust, and believe they will not be the last to call Swede Home, well, home.

The time for this major renovation is now, and we as a congregation agreed at a special congregational meeting on April 14th, when we approved an additional $100,000. Of this, $80,000 was needed to be raised through the generosity of the families, friends, and supporters of our congregation. At the time of this letter, $12,500 (15.6%) had come in.

So yes, this is a letter that tells a story, and it is also one that asks for your support. Please, as you are able, make a financial contribution to this project. Either through special monthly giving, a one-time gift, or even a pledge of what you'll be able to offer in the future.

But we ask for even more than your financial support. Please keep this project and all involved in your prayers. Pray for our Pastors, Hillary and Evan. Pray for the many workers and crews making this renovation happen. And pray for our congregation as we undergo a significant project and a big change.

Thank you in advance for your generous support and trust,

Calvary Church Council

Calvary Lutheran Church of Swede Home

(See list of renovations on page 10)

LIST OF RENOVATIONS:

Kitchen à Open concept Kitchen & Living Room

- New cabinets, island, appliances, and flooring
- Moved pantry & laundry room
- Added coffee-bar & cabinets
- Moved garage access door
- Added basement access door and stairs
- Removed wall that divided kitchen and living room

Living Room à Open concept Kitchen & Living Room

- Reduced bathroom from full-bath to half-bath
- Moved stairs to the upper floor to the northwest
- New front door
- Removed entryway
- Extended living room wall south to include front door
- Removed wall that divided living room and kitchen
- Removed chimney

Main Floor Bedroom & Office room à Primary Suite

- Removed built-in shelving in office
- Removed built-in closet in bedroom
- Moved access door to bedroom
- Entryway renovated to walk-in closet
- Office renovated to three-quarters bath with double vanity

Upstairs

- Stairs moved to northwest
- Moved full bath
- Added storage
- Removed small bedroom and extra room
- Removed sliding-door closet
- Removed chimney

Basement

- Added stairs to kitchen
- Added access hallway to utilities
- Moved heating & air to storage room
- Removed partial wall to open the main room

General Interior

- New flooring throughout house
- New windows
- Repurposed doors as often as able
- New light fixtures
- New paint

General Exterior

- New gutters, windows, siding, soffit, and fascia
- Back deck wash, repaired, and stained

Council Notes

June 2024

Church Council met on June 9th, 2024, following worship service

Present: Kent, Andrew, Jarrett, Missy, Kris, Pastor Evan
Absent: Jennifer, Dan, Randy

Property Committee updates:
Parsonage update - Siding and windows start this week; Remove small awning over entry door and replace; cabinets are ordered
Spongy tiles on kitchen floor will be looked at
Coverage when pastors are on maternity/paternity leave - Pastor Evan will lead communion Sundays and on no communion Sundays, church leadership will lead
Highway signs - moving forward with Speed Pro in Omaha
Capital Campaign - watch for information in the July newsletter and the thermometer sign in the entry way
New insurance coverage is being looked into
Having a clean the kitchen and Sunday School room day
September 29 combined worship with First Lutheran (Outside Picnic) at 11:00 am at Rising City Park

Treasurer's Report

	May 2024
Beginning Balance	**$13,512.32**
Offerings:	
General Offering	7,755.00
Disaster Relief for Sunday Family	915.00
ELCA Disaster Relief	705.00
ELCA Mission Share	450.00
First Lutheran R.C.; April Share	3,953.86
Augustana Genoa; April Share	5,988.32
	19,767.18
Expenses:	
Vanco eCheck Monthly Fee	10.41
Office Supplies	15.81
Text Messaging Flocknote	22.00
Cody's Computer - Contract Agreement	39.99
Christ In Our Home	85.90
Sundays & Seasons Year C 2025	224.29
Boxed Offering Envelopes for 2025	376.73
ELCA Disaster Relief	725.00
Tornado Disaster Relief - Sunday Family	1,000.00
NE Synod ELCA Mission Share	1,595.00
First Lutheran R.C. May Share	1,901.12
Augustana Genoa May Share	2,998.65
Utilities:	
Church	321.98
Parsonage	55.30
Genoa Parsonage	116.13
Salaries:	
Pastors Hillary & Evan Christensen	2,684.96
Portico Benefit Services	1,266.80
Commuting Reimbursement	158.34
SECA	236.24
Mileage Reimbursement	512.90
Cell Phone Reimbursement	38.00
Amy & Janet	258.57
Lay/Music Mileage	301.50
LeeAnn	250.73
Linda	318.61
	15,514.96
Balance as of May 31, 2024:	**$17,764.54**