May, 2018

...In sacred places...

CELEBRATING MINISTRIES OF CALVARY AND ZION LUTHERAN CHURCHES

In many ways, my job is unique. Perhaps one of the most enjoyable unique things about pastoral ministry is that I get to interact with people of every age. From baptizing little infants to visiting senior members in their homes, I get to walk alongside people from several generations. According to Dr. Rich Melheim, this is one of the distinct things about Christian community. Melheim writes that "the church is the only true cross generational community available to most children today. It is the only place where all living generations are gathered together under one roof."

Living and working in this community, I have days that make me feel really old (and receiving an invitation to my 20 year high school reunion this summer didn't help.) For instance, in talking with some of our confirmation students, they who had no idea who Mother Theresa or Ghandi were (so much for trying to use those religious greats as examples in class!), they use of computers, ipads, and other technology in the classroom daily, and they talk about having active shooter drills in school (something that never would have even crossed our minds back in the pre-Columbine days). Seeing our youth of every age (including really little ones) who are so comfortable and proficient in technology also makes me feel my age.

If you are smiling or laughing at that paragraph and are tempted to remind me that I am not "that old", you are right. When I spend time with many of our homebound members, I am struck by the incredible amount of change that these saints have experienced in their life time. We aren't just talking changes in technology (though they certainly have experienced a great deal of that), but medical, religious, and societal changes. Over the course of their lifetime, they have seen the culture shift to be less religious, more diverse and accepting of people of different races, more inclusive of women with more financially independent women. They have seen the rise of divorce, of children born out of wedlock, and of dual income families with fathers taking on more and more of the household and childcare responsibilities. Then there is it rise in informality in the workplace and in churches as well as a decrease in respect for elders and (especially in more urban places) a loss in the sense of support and camaraderie among neigh-

(Continued on page 2)

Thank you . . .

Dear Friends at Swede Home,
You bring us the "best" stuff!! Always some unique and specialty items, and just the right kinds of food, grocery, and household supplies to help our clients. We appreciate your consistent and regular donations like these throughout the year—these needed items are given out every week to those who are struggling. We are working on plans to expand our services and increase access to women in our communities to assist with identified needs. This "open arms" program will require time and funding—it is a building project and an investment in people. Thank you for all the ways you support the work of Genesis House.
Sincerely,
Pat Lostroh

Dear Zion Lutheran Church,
Thank you for your continued participation in mission share during 2017. Through your undesignated offering shared with the Nebraska Synod and the larger ECLA, you do ministry that changes live and literally spans the globe.
As your partners in ministry, we are grateful for you and your stewardship. In the year ahead, if we can be a resource in anyway, or helpful in your congregation by telling these stories, please let us know. We are grateful for the invitation to visit, and serve in ministry, walking alongside together.

Christ's blessings and peace,
Rev. Brian D Maas; Bishop, NE Synod
Deacon Timothy Siburg; Director for Stewardship

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(Continued from Pastor Kim's Message on page 1)

bors. There have been wide spread changes in what behaviors are considered acceptable and, in the priorities and values people now hold.

I marvel at the sheer volume of changes that they have experienced. I marvel too at the way that these changes have been accepted (both gradually and quickly) and the grace and maturity that many of these older generations have shown. It might not have always been easy or understandable, but by and large, they have adapted.

I think one of the things that has allowed them to do this is their faith community. Throughout the years, church is perhaps the one place where there has been much less change and at a much slower pace. It can be easy then to resist change in our congregations when there is so much changing in the world.

Now, I am not saying that we are going to be bringing a bunch of changes to the church, in fact I can't think of much to change right now (that means you are doing stuff right!), but I say this because a book I have been reading recently made me think. Author Martha Grace Reese talks about the kind of changes that we have seen in our world and says that people want church to be a steady port in a storm of change. But the truth is the church is called to change—not change for changes sake but change to meet the needs of the lives of those it serves. If you are looking for a steady port in the storm then, you need to ground yourself on the foundation of Jesus Christ. God's love for us in Jesus Christ is something that will never ever change. Though we may find ourselves overwhelmed at the changes we face (or even just the pace of life with all its commitments and obligations), we can know that we are never alone for the never changing, always loving God walks with us. Armed with this knowledge, we can accept, welcome, and embrace the true uniqueness of Christian community. We can be blessed with what Melheim calls the "wonder of our children and the wisdom of elders" all at once. Each of these things will help us grow and thrive in our faith walk and daily life.

Thank you for being communities where both of these are honored and where people from each generation can find welcome.

In Christ,

Pastor Kim

W.E.L.C.A. News

As the saying goes, "April showers bring May flowers" – but come on – April snow showers? My daylilies are looking like the leaves poking through are frost bit!

*Service for month of May is an offering to help defray expenses for Vacation Bible School. Ruth Circle will also help with VBS treats. Thanks for your help!

*May Altar Care will be by Mary Anna circle.

*Flowers this month by Ruth. Thank you for watering the plants, too.

*Many enjoy the fellowship time following worship on Sunday mornings. We only need volunteers for the last second to the last Sunday in May (before WELCA scheduling in the summer).

*Quilting fun and fellowship will be on May 24. Please join us.

*Bingo at MCH will be on Tuesday, May 29 at 2:00 p.m. Thank you Mary Anna circle for your help with this.

May

	Hostess/Dessert	*Bible Study*
RUTH – 5/9	Kay Jones	Work Day
MARY ANNA-5/10	Linda	Linda
MIRIAM- 5/11	Mabel	Venida

Grace & Peace to you,

Cheryl

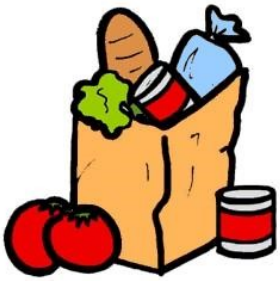
Mission and Ministry Update

Huch'uy Runa

(Little important person)

Every weekday morning, 120 elementary school children fill the dining hall at the Help the Children Association School to eat a warm breakfast. While each child has a different story, the children have one thing in common—they all come from an area of extreme poverty in and around the ancient Incan capital city of Cusco, Peru. The school, known locally as Huch'uy Runa, began 31 years ago to meet the basic needs of the children in Cusco. In Quechua, "huch'uy" means little and "runa" means a well—rounded person who contributes to the well—being of the community. The two words combined, "huch'uy runa" mean "little important person.' And the children of this city carry this identity with pride. The school, with support from ELCA World Hunger, has been able to change the lives of many "little important person(s)" and their families for more than a decade. Through your gifts, the children of this city receive a primary education, meals and snacks, and training in trade skills that include carpentry, metalwork, pottery and weaving—skills they can use to support themselves and their families in the future. Thanks to your support, the children in Peru are gaining lifelong skills. As one teacher shares, "(it) is like a family trying to equip the children to be able to survive and succeed in life, hoping to build a solid base on which they can stand."

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 May, your donations will go to Genesis House.

Most recipients of Genesis House are women and children in need. They are in need of Household items: Laundry detergent, tall kitchen sized trash bags, TP, Clorox, gallon sized zip lock bags, light bulbs, AA batteries, postage stamps. Personal Care: Body wash, Kleenex , children's toothpaste, deodorant, children and adult ibuprofen and Tylenol, sunscreen lotion. Food and Grocery Items needed are canned meats, regular coffee, boxed food, taco shells and seasonings, flour, sugar, mayo, salad dressing, pancake mix and syrup, cooking oil, dry packages of gravy and sauce mixes, canned fruit and juices, canned mixed vegetables carrots, (they have plenty of beans, peas, and corn at this time), small boxes of Velveeta, cake and brownie mix, frosting, tea bags, Kool-Aid/lemonade. Healthy Foods/ Snacks for Children: microwave meals/entrees, instant oatmeal, granola/cereal bars, pudding/fruit cups, fruit juice in small boxes, (at this time we have plenty of regular boxes of cereal), dry and evaporated milk.

Money to purchase fresh foods occasionally bread, milk, and fruit.

Funds support general operating expenses, utilities.

Seasonal items: window size or small fans, solar lights, large swimming towels for children.

All of the items we donate are greatly appreciated by the recipients as they help meet critical needs.

Thank you continued/announcements

Thank You…

To the members of Calvary Lutheran Church from the Nebraska Synod of the ELCA. In grateful appreciation for giving monetary gift for Mission Support beyond the congregation for synodical and churchwide ministries of the ELCA.

Brian Maas; Synod Bishop
Elizabeth Eaton; President Bishop

Thank You…

Pastor Kim & the Good folks of Calvary,

Thank you! Thank you! Your much needed support is so greatly appreciated. I look forward to our next visit. Please let me know if you'd like an update or speaker any time this summer.

Blessings,
Joel; Development Officer
Lutheran Family Services

Thank You…

Swede Home Lutheran Church,

Thank you so much for thinking of Youth for Christ when donating 2 quilts. Your thoughtfulness allows us to meet the various needs of the many youth we serve!

May God Bless you in Return

From all the staff at YFC

Thank You…

The worship and music committees of Zion and Calvary would like to thank everyone who participated in our Lenten and Easter season services, especially those who read parts and Scripture. These services were very meaningful and we could not have done them without your help.

Thank you...

Dear Calvary Lutheran Church,
Thank you for your continued participation in mission share during 2017. Through your undesignated offering shared with the Nebraska Synod and the larger ECLA, you do ministry that changes live and literally spans the globe.
As your partners in ministry, we are grateful for you and your stewardship. In the year ahead, if we can be a resource in anyway, or helpful in your congregation by telling these stories, please let us know. We are grateful for the invitation to visit, and serve in ministry, walking alongside together.

Christ's blessings and peace,
Rev. Brian D Maas; Bishop, NE Synod
Deacon Timothy Siburg; Director for Stewardship

Out of the Office

Pastor Kim will be out of the office May 7-9 and the 18th for continuing education. If you need to reach her, please call her cell (402)764-0481 and leave a message. She will return your call as soon as possible.

Calvary Sunday School

Sunday, May 6th marks the end of our Sunday School year at Calvary Swede Home. This year the youth have been studying the church year and all of its colors and symbols. They will help lead worship that morning to share with what they have learned. Please join us for worship at 10:30am.

Joint Service

Memorial weekend Sunday service will be a joint service of Calvary and Zion. These services will be held at 9:30am at the brick pavilion in Buckley Park in Stromsburg (note the different location!). Zion will be hosting fellowship time following service.

Announcements

Roller Skating Party and Easter Egg Hunt

March 25th Benedict Community Sunday School kid had a blast roller skating and playing games at the York Roller Skating Rink!

It was a very cold morning on March 31st, but we still had kids wanting to find some eggs! We hid 622 eggs, and they were all found within about 5 minutes. Thanks to everyone who helped with this event! A special thanks to Girl Scouts for donating cookies and drinks for the kids.

Thank you…

Thank you to everyone who helped with highway pickup on April 22nd. It was a beautiful day to be outdoors and we had some great fellowship!

Sunday School Leader Needed

Calvary is looking for a Sunday School leader for the 2018-2019 school year. If you have any questions about what it entails, please talk to Tina Watts and if you are interested in serving in the Sunday School ministry, please let Pastor Kim know. A special thanks to Tina for her years of faithful service in our Sunday School.

Benedict Community VBS

Mark your calendar for Benedict Community VBS! This will take place the week of June 11-15th! The theme this year is Shipwrecked—Rescued by Jesus! You aren't going to want to miss this! There will be a volunteer sheet coming out soon, so you can either volunteer your time or bring snacks, craft items, etc. Watch the bulletin for more information.

Confirmation Sunday

Confirmation Sunday will be May 20th. Kolton Neujahr and Colby Nelson will be affirming their faith in God. Colby Nelson will also be baptized that morning. Please join us for worship that Sunday and help these two remarkable young men celebrate the work of the Holy Spirit in their life of faith.

Congratulations

Congratulations Megan Johnson on your graduation from Osceola High School.

Welcome!

We want to welcome Braxton Kush to the Zion Family. Braxton was baptized on April 22nd. His parents are Jacob Kush and Cheyanne Johnson, grandparents Ken and Dawn Kush, great-grandparents Jim and Donna Stearns, and Sponsors Cory Kush and Johnny Johnson.

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

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

Council Members:
Linda Fuhr, Doug Jones, Bill Carlstrom, Todd Hanquist, Lynn Hofmann, 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

Council President Cal Bittinger
Yvonne Stauber, Organist
Chris Jarosz, Sunday School

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

Swede Home Cemetery Association

The Swede Home Cemetery Association will be holding its annual Memorial Day Service on May 28th at 9:00am. Pastor Kim Belken will be the speaker.

Osceola Community VBS

Osceola Community VBS will be the week of June 4-8th and will be held at St. Paul's Lutheran in Osceola. Registration forms are available from Pastor Kim or will be handed out in Osceola Schools. Make sure to join us for a week of fun as we learn about what it means to be rescued by Jesus.

Meet a Member

Meet Megan Johnson:

Megan Johnson, daughter of Craig & Sarah Johnson of Osceola, has lived there her entire life. Megan is a Senior at OHS and has a younger sister, Jadyn. They have a family dog named Lucy and a cat named Millie.

Megan plans to attend University of Nebraska – Lincoln this fall with a major in psychology. In the summer of 2016, she became a Certified Nursing Assistant and enjoys working at Good Samaritan Nursing Home in Osceola as a CNA.

Megan and her family enjoy traveling, and they have been in 14 different states: Nebraska, Wyoming, Minnesota, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Texas, Kentucky, Colorado, California, Florida, New York, Oklahoma, and Hawaii, as well as Washington, D.C.

For fun, Megan enjoys hanging out with friends, listening to music, watching Netflix, and hot tubbing.

When asked what she's passionate about, Megan said she loves helping others. She also loves meeting new people and experiencing new things. She hopes to have the opportunity to study abroad in London while in college.

Megan loves the late night Christmas Eve service at Calvary. She has grown to love Swede Home over the years and feels blessed to have attended church here all of her life.

Thank You...

Dear Friends at Swede Home,

Thank you for the recent donation of funds that will help us continue our services at Genesis House. Your generous and regular support for our work is vital to our continuation and we are working on plans to expand our programs to reach out to more women and children in our communities. We enjoy visits – please come see us soon.

Sincerely,

Pat Lostroh

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:

Rick & Kathi Jones
May 1st
Bill & Venida Carlstrom
May 2nd
Brady & Katina Hanquist
May 5th
Ed & LeAnn Willhoft
May 7th
Mark & Penny Udey
May 19th
Craig & Sarah Johnson
May 30th

Zion:

Adam & Amber Rediger
May 20th

Birthdays

Calvary:

01—Bob Dittmer
01—Jennie Mandigo
03—Tom Hoffman
05—David Udey
08—Lewellen Nielsen
08—Vance Toline
12—Karen Gestrine
12—Cheryl Jones
15—Ty Twarling
16—Tammy Jones
16—Steve Oquist
26—Greg Dittmer
27—Krystal Berggren
28—Kit Waller

Zion:

09—Michelle Blair

Zion Worship Assistants

May

Communion Assistant: Dawn Kush
Usher: Fred Ehlers
Greeter: Michelle Blair
Reader:
6—Melaine Meister, 13—Jacob Kush, 20th—Dawn Kush, 27–Teresa Bittinger
Acolyte:
6—Lyndsey Bolton, 13—Isaac Reetz, 20—Tierney Schoch, 27—Harley Martin

Calvary Worship Assistants

May

Assistant Ministers—
Scripture Reader— Wayne Johnson
Ushers— Bill & Venida Carlstrom
Acolyte— Jadyn Johnson
Altar Care— Mary Anna's Circle
Bell Ringer— Scott Walgren

May 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 7p Numbers Bible Study	2 9:30a Join the Conversation Bible Study 6p Confirmation 7p Council Meeting	3	4	5
6 8:30a Zion Holy Communion Worship 10:30a Calvary Holy Communion Worship	7	8	9 6p Confirmation 7p Men's Bible Study 7p Ruth's WELCA Circle	10 2p Mary Anna's WELCA Circle	11 9a Miriam's WELCA Circle	12
13 8:30a Zion Worship 10:30a Calvary Holy Communion Worship	14	15	16 6p Confirmation	17	18	19
20 8:30a Zion Holy Communion Worship 10:30a Calvary Holy Communion Worship/Confirmation	21	22	23	24 9a Quilt Day	25	26
27 9:30a Joint Calvary & Zion Sunday Worship @ Buckley Park	28 9a Swede Home Cemetery Association Annual Service	29	30	31		

Know God, Love God, Share God's Love

Council Notes

Council Notes, April 3, 2018 meeting

- Pastor opened the meeting with devotions based on "The Christian Way is different"
- Pastor report included updates on Worship and Music plans, April Bible study on Tuesday nights at Calvary, Wednesday morning Join the Conversation. Confirmation will be Sunday May 20. May 6th is the end of the Sunday School year at Calvary. There will be a special service that day, led by the youth.
- Tina has submitted her resignation as Sunday School Co-ordinator after many years of service. We can't begin to express our appreciation for her dedication to the Sunday school program. We ask members to prayerfully consider stepping up to this position. Tina will serve as a mentor
- Council was reminded of highway clean up on April 22, with rain day April 29th
- Property committee will order gravel for the parking lot to be delivered this spring. They will also work with Dave Scott on the issue of the bricks in the steeple
- Council will follow up on a recommendation to replace the existing sound system in the church.

Next meeting will be Weds, May 2

If you have been in church the last few weeks, you probably have noticed that we have all our stained glass windows back! Kruse Stained Glass has clean and restored them to the original and vibrant condition. Because of the size and the cost of the project, Kruse has worked out a payment plan for us. We have already made 2 of the 3 payments from our improvement fund. We are in need of you financial support to cover the final payment. Mark your donation "Improvement Fund" and we will make sure it goes to covering the cost of these beautiful windows.

Treasurer's Report	**March, 2018**
Beginning Balance	**$389.89**
Offering:	
General Offering	**7831.00**
Lent—Backpack Program	**868.00**
Sunday School Offering	**66.00**
ELCA Disaster Relief	**5.00**
ELCA Mission Share	**205.00**
Transfer from Improvement SAV	**7740.00**
Zion for February Share	**1849.18**
	18559.18
Expenses:	
Vanco eCheck Monthly Fee	**8.79**
Postage Expense	**26.08**
Polk County News 1 YR Subscription	**35.00**
Office Net; Quarterly Service & Paper	**265.87**
NE Synod ELCA—Mission Share	**1000.00**
Zion Benedict March Share	**1937.36**
Utilities:	
Church:	**1834.98**
Parsonage:	**426.54**
Salaries:	
Pastor	**2230.98**
Mileage	**332.40**
SECA	**221.82**
Portico Benefits	**1046.82**
Continuing Education	**125.43**
Diana	**445.41**
LeeAnn	**236.64**
Bri	**549.99**
Supply Pastor Karen Tjarks	**169.84**
Substitute Organist	**50.00**
	18683.95
Balance as of February 28, 2018	**$265.12**

*This page is only seen by Calvary Members

.....in sacred Places.....

CALVARY Lutheran church
Nebraska Synod, ELCA

950 Road 129th
Stromsburg, NE 68666

Return Service Requested

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**