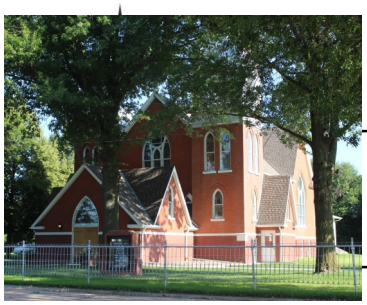


OCTOBER 2023

150 YEARS—1873–2023

CELEBRATING MINISTRY OF CALVARY LUTHERAN CHURCH

Go and… Ask.

How many questions do you ask in a day? Questions like: What are your plans for this weekend? When will you be home from work today? How do you do it all? Who is that? Where is the remote? And so many more. Questions are how we learn more about ourselves, people around us, and anyone or anything else in the world. We might experience this most among children. Kids ask so many questions because everything is unknown. It is how they learn about their world. Have you ever had a kid ask you why so many times that you end up not being able to find an answer?

We also experience many, many questions in scripture. God, Jesus, prophets, disciples, and crowds all asked questions. Sometimes the answers to these questions are obvious, but sometimes those questions do not result in clear answers. In a world that is shifting and changing, we have come to recognize the importance of asking good questions that make us think, wonder, and sometimes leave us without a perfect answer.

Many times, our questions end up being answered as "both/and." That is one of those hallmarks of Lutheran thinking. For example, are we sinners or are we saints? Well, both because we are simultaneously sinning, yet we are forgiven and made saints through Christ. Is Jesus God or human? Both, because he is fully human and fully divine.

While "both/and" can still leave us wondering, it helps us learn about the world around us and makes us aware for the complexity of life. But it also helps us trust that God is present with us in our uncertainty, for we can be certain of God's love for us through Christ Jesus. As Christians, we are called to ask questions because of our faith, not to prove it or earn a better seat in heaven, but to understand more about who God is and how we are to worship, praise, and serve. This is what faith is all about, seeking to learn more about God and God's people. So, ask the questions and seek the answers together. Amen.

+Pastor Hillary

Questions to Consider:

- What big questions are on your heart and mind?
- What is a question you are afraid to ask?
- What would you add to Martin Luther's 95 Theses?
- What is a '*GO* to' question as you engage in conversation?

Prayer: Knowing God, what are you asking of me? Amen.

WELCA News Page 2
What's Happening Page 4
Calendar Page 8

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 October donations go to: Blue Valley Community Action

HIGHWAY PICK-UP

Our commitment to the Highway Litter Pickup each fall and spring are part of our "God's Work – Our Hands" that Swede Home members are always so good to do.

This fall we had 14 dedicated workers help with the litter pickup on highway 39 and they joined together for food and fellowship following at Monty & Cheryl Jones' house. We want to thank Deb & Layne Hanquist; Missy & Jarrett Althouse; Jen & Eli Fjell; Kay Jones; Bonnie Carlson; Mike & Deb Cramer; Pastor Evan; Doug Jones; and Monty & Cheryl Jones.

Thanks to all and thanks also to Cheryl and those who provided refreshments and food!

PERSONAL CARE KITS

In October, we will be assembling personal care kits to be sent to Lutheran World Relief November 1.

Once we have receive all the supplies we will set a date to assemble the kits. We will announce time and date later

W.E.L.C.A. News

*Service for month of October is an offering for Genesis House (monetary or tangible).

*Altar care for October will be Jean Waller. November will be Miriam Circle, and December will be Cheryl Jones and Kay Jones.

*Flowers and Cheer in October, November and December will be by Miriam circle.

*Look for information elsewhere in the newsletter for date to pack the personal care kits for Lutheran World Relief. We'd love your help as we work to help others in need. This is a Lutheran World Relief project replacing the quilts.

*Offerings can be given at your circle meetings, mailed to Bonnie Carlson, or left in her box in the church office. Thank you.

*2024 Yearbook will need to be worked on soon, so please think about when you'd like to host, do bible study, or help with WELCA responsibilities at Swede Home. If you have ideas or suggestions for us to consider for next year, please talk to Cheryl or Bonnie. It will be nice to have options to discuss at our fall Executive Committee meeting.

*Save the Date of Sunday, December 3 for our General Meeting. Special Guest Speaker will be Sherri Nielsen, director of Genesis House. (Executive Committee will need to meet in November to discuss giving and 2024 yearbook.)

OCTOBER

	Hostess/Dessert	*Bible Study*
Ruth – 10/12	Carolyn	@ 4th Street Coffee
Miriam – 10/13	Gloria	*(not listed)*

"Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God;" ~ 1 John 4:7a

God's Blessings to you,

Cheryl

Learning opportunities

Starting in October, the Youth Group will meet on the 1st and 3rd Sundays at 6:30pm

Please plan to attend, and bring a friend. If you have not attended in the past, it is not too late to start. It's a fun evening of fellowship with the youth in the church, games, bible study, get to know the Pastors and each other.

Starting in October, Pastor will be leading a book study on "Making Sense of the Cross" it is not too late to sign up. There are books for purchase and you may keep, or you may use a book without purchase.

Pastor Evan will be offering 2 opportunities for the study, feel free to join in whichever fits your schedule. Beginning Tuesday, October 3 through November 14 (skipping October 24) the Study will meet at Augustana at 12:15 pm. Each study will last approximately an hour.

Beginning Thursday, October 5, through November 16 (skipping November 2) the Study will meet at Calvary-Swede Home at 7 pm. Each study will last approximately 1 hour.

Recipe

Pumpkin Bars

INGREDIENTS

2 1/2 cups flour
1 1/2 tablespoon baking sod
1 1/2 teaspoon salt
2 sticks unsalted butter, softened
1 3/4 cups granulated sugar
1 can 15 oz. pumpkin puree
1 egg
1 1/2 tablespoons vanilla extract
1 cup chocolate chips
1 tablespoon pumpkin pie spice Optional

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a 9×13-inch baking pan
In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, pumpkin pie spice, baking soda, and salt.
In a separate bowl, beat butter and sugar until fluffy.
Mix in the egg, pumpkin puree, and vanilla.
Slowly add in the flour mixture and mix until combined. Fold in the chocolate chips.
Spread in greased pan.
Bake 30-35 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

Prayer with Questions

"Remain in me as I remain in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit from itself unless it remain in the vine…if you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall happen for you." Selected words from Jesus in John 15:4,7

FORMATIVE PRACTICES:

1. Quiet yourself - body, heart and mind - and be aware (or become more aware) of God's Presence and your own. Interiorly offer a prayer, such as, "Holy Spirit
2. Breath, guide me into your truth. May I be transformed into Christlikeness today…
3. " Reflect on the above scripture. Listen as though Jesus is speaking this to you slowly and lovingly

- Breathe in concert with Jesus through his Holy Spirit/Breath breathing in: Holy
- Breathing out: Spirit or Breath

1. Abide. When distracted, come back to "Holy Spirit" or "Holy Breath" When finished:
2. Ask Jesus what he longs for you to know (about yourself, God, your life, calling or whatever comes up for you). If you feel safe and comfortable to do this, let God ask you questions in return…

Trunk and Treat

Once again, Swede Home will be represented at the local Trunk and Treat events.

On Thursday, October 25th, Gia Adelson and Lisa Oquist will be handing out treats in Polk Nebraska, from 6:30pm to 8:pm

On Sunday, October 29th, from 4pm to 6pm Kris Udey will be at the Trunk and Treat event in Osceola.

On Tuesday, October 31, from 4pm to 6pm Sandy Johnston will be at Stromsburg Boo!!

Please thank these ladies for representing Swede Home at these events.

Congratulations Swede Home on attaining a monumental milestone!!

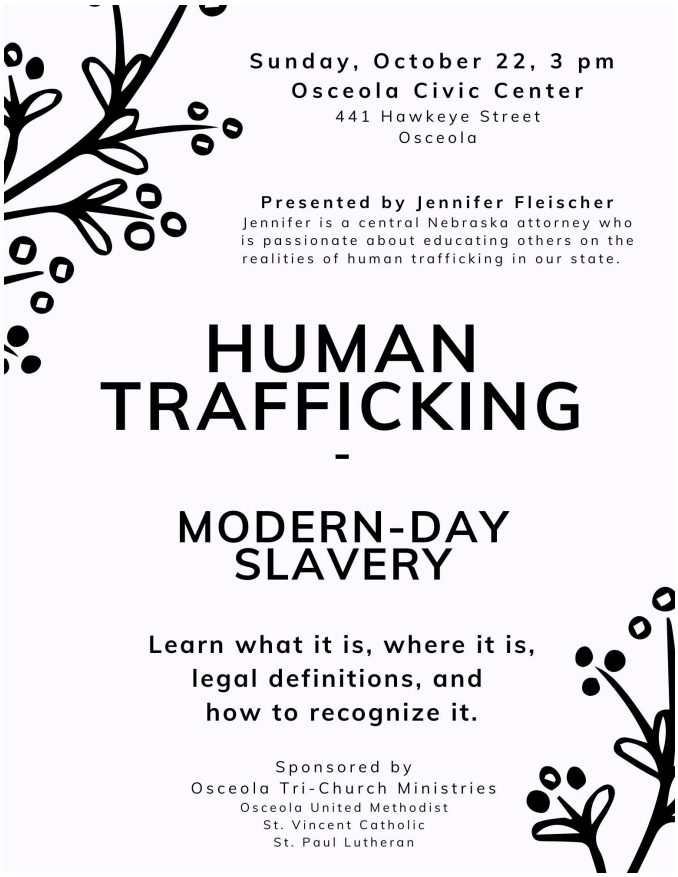
150 years of Christian leadership, fellowship and faithful devotion by your congregations—past and present– and now to the future has led your church to this moment.

Your church could not have reached this wonderful occasion if not for the commitment of your congregation to follow Christ's teachings.

Yours sincerely in Christian Love,

United Methodist Church—Stromsburg

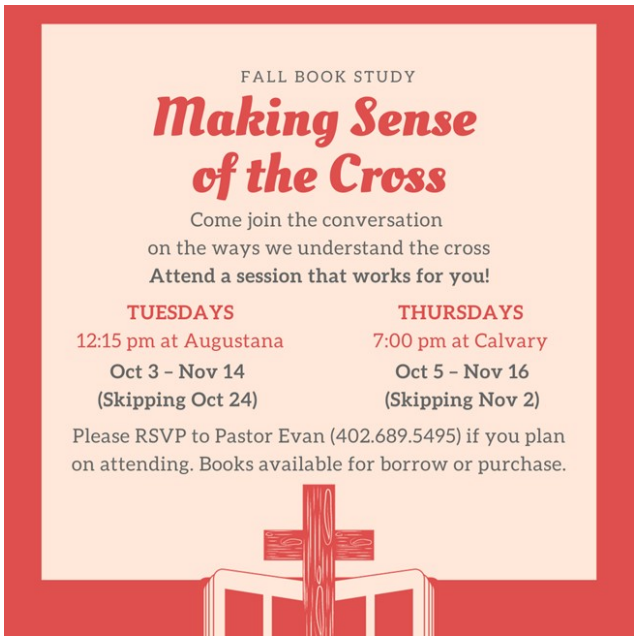
Upcoming events

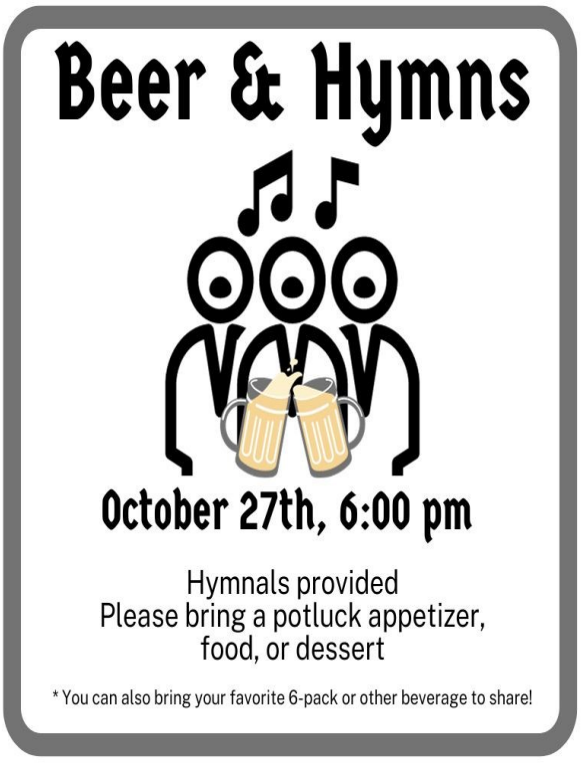


BEER AND HYMNS —

Friday October 27, we will have our 2nd annual Beers and Hymns. We will have craft beer and wine tastings (feel free to bring some favorite if you want) and we will have potluck appetizers, food and snacks – bring something to contribute if you would like – but it is not necessary, just come and you are welcome to bring some friends. Food will be available at 6 – and following some social time, we will sing some favorite hymns – many were written by Martin Luther to the tune of "beer drinking songs" -

Upcoming Events





Pastor Hillary and Pastor Evan will be attending the Fall Theological Gathering, 10/23 –10/24, in Kearney.

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
Randy Lott, Council Chairman
Kent Adelson, Council Vice Chairman
Missy Althouse, Council Secretary
Diana Johnson, Organist
Linda Fuhr, Church Office Manager
LeeAnn Willhoft, Custodian

Council Members:
Todd Hanquist, Lynn Hofmann, 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.

Meet the Member: Diana Johnson

For over 40 years the members and guests at Calvary Swede Home have been blessed to have this exceptional organist at the keyboard. From Sunday morning worship service, to Lent and Advent services, weddings, funerals and even Beer and Hymns—Diana has provided the music. We are grateful for her talent and for sharing it with us.

On Sunday, October 22—Diana is presenting the second of 2 worship services that will highlight the history of the stain glass windows and the pipe organ. The first service was held on April 30, 2023.

Following the worship service the Anniversary Committee will host a special reception in Diana's honor. Please plan on attending and bring friends.

Diana's official retirement will not be until December 31, 2023. If you live out of town but would like to send a card of congratulations to Diana on her service to Calvary and her retirement, you are invited to do so. Her address is:

Diana Johnson

Box 45

Osceola NE 68651

We Reach to all our faith family in prayer and celebration

Remember in your prayers

Monty Jones
Kathi Jones
Karen Gestrine
Duane Jones
Charles Hays
Janice Forsberg
Melissa Forsberg
June Larson
Beth Jones Wienik
Jane Wells Bachman
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 everyone at Calvary for the prayers, cards, food and words of sympathy we received since the passing of my mom.

Brad and Susan Sundberg

Anniversaries

October

06 Mike & Deb Cramer

15 Wendy & Kelley Shafenberg

27 Ryan and Jennifer Fjell

Birthdays

October

03 Clayton Watts
05 Tamara Rowse
07 Andrew Adelson
09 Kent Adelson
09 Elaine Toline
10 Randy Lott
18 Ava Ernst
18 Clerissa Udey
20 Hadley Ienn
21 Nate Johnson
21 Peter Jones
22 Gabe Hanquist
23 Hillary Christensen
24 Corey Watts
27 Yancy Krol
28 Rick Jones
28 Jaxon McCarville
31 Anita Haack
31 Marvin Larson

OCTOBER

Assistant Minister - Sandy Johnston
Scripture Reader – Lynn Hofmann
Ushers – Randy and Fran 1st Sunday
Altar – Jean Waller
Acolyte – Peyton and Rylee Hofmann
Bell Ringer –

We thank all those who agree to help with the worship service each month.

October 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 10:30 am Worship with Communion Special Congregational Meeting Council meeting 6:30 Youth Group	2	3 12:15 pm Bible Study at Genoa	4	5 7 PM Bible Study at church with Pastor Evan	6	7
8 10:30 am Worship	9 7pm 3-point council meeting	10 12:15 pm Bible Study at Genoa 7pm Men's bible study at Wayne Johnson	11 9am Ruth Circle at 4th Street	12 9 am Miriam Circle, 7pm Bible Study at Church	13	14
15 10:30 am Worship service with communion	16	17 12:15 pm Bible Study at Genoa	18	19 7pm Bible Study at Church	20	21
22 10:30am Worship service	23 Pastors at Fall Theological Gathering Kearney	24 Pastors at Fall Theological Gathering Kearney	25 6:30-8pm Polk Trunk and Treat	26 7 pm Bible Study at Church	27 6 pm Beer and Hymns Potluck meal	28
29 10:30am Reformation Service with Communion 4-6pm Osceola Trunk and Treat	30	31 12:15 pm Bible Study at Genoa 4-6pm Stromsburg Trunk and Treat				

Council Notes

The church council met on Sunday, August 27th following worship service. Present were: Pastor Evan, Lynn, Randy, Todd, Kris, Dan, Absent: Kent, Jarrett, Missy. This meeting was for September, there was no August meeting due to Pastors vacation.

- The August 13, 150th anniversary service was well attended
- Property committee reported on some small projects that need attention.
- Discussed the 3 point council meeting, Pastor will coordinate dates
- Highway pickup is schedule for September 24
- Diana's recital/reception is October 22
- Beer and Hymns will be a potluck on October 27 at 6:00 pm
- We will again do Trunk and Treat events in Polk, Osceola and Stromsburg
- Future mission events will be Personal Care Kits and Christmas meals
- Council set a special meeting for Sunday October 1, following worship. Purpose of the meeting will be to present plans for the repair/remodel of parsonage and vote on funding proposal. Meeting notice will be in announcements and email notices for 3 consecutive weeks before the meeting.

There will be no fellowship coffee following worship service on Sunday October 15th. The fellowship hall will be used for a family dinner.

Treasurer's Report

	August 2023
Beginning Balance	**$17,371.43**
Offerings:	
General Offering	10,953.00
ELCA Disaster Relief	5.00
ELCA Mission Share	400.00
Q150 Mission Giving	956.00
ELCA World Hunger	250.00
ELCA Disaster Relief - Maui	971.00
First English Rising City; Aug Share	2,316.78
Augustana Genoa; Aug Share	3,154.12
	19,005.90
Expenses:	
Vanco eCheck Monthly Fee	10.36
Text Messaging System-monthly fee	22.00
Harland Clarke Check Order	27.15
Cody's Computer Maintenance Plan	39.99
Noyd Repair LLC; A/C maintenance call	66.00
Eakes Office Solutions; legal copier paper	82.90
USPO Postage Expense	96.30
CCLI Copyright License Renewal	158.00
ELCA World Hunger	250.00
Lisa Johnston cupcakes; Q150 dessert	264.00
Boxed Offerings Envelopes for 2024	357.90
JW's Catering Q150 Dinner	2,205.00
Q150 Mission 4 Schools @ $700 each	2,800.00
Nebraska Synod, ELCA - Mission Share	1,580.00
First English Rising City; August Share	2,178.35
Augustana Genoa; August Share	3,154.12
Utilities:	
Church	349.53
Parsonage	61.64
Salaries:	
Pastors Hillary & Evan Christensen	2,474.56
Portico Benefit Services	1,207.12
Commuting Reimbursement	158.34
SECA	217.67
Mileage Reimbursement	151.17
Cell Phone Reimbursement	38.00
Continuing Education	282.72
Diana	476.24
LeeAnn	241.50
Linda	580.94
Supply Pastor Leroy Hoyer	257.09
Supply Pianist Amy Harris	50.00
	19,838.59
Balance as of August 31, 2023:	**$16,538.74**