

First Lutheran Church Newsletter

March 2008

Blessings and Brokenness

With our congregation's blessings and support I was able to attend the ELCA youth and family ministry conference in Anaheim, California. I spent four glorious days in sunshine, prayer, personal reflection and attended seminars and workshops. We were invited to "be here and be freshened by the grace of God". The event was an educational banquet, a time to network, and a time to become spiritually healthy. We were blessed, anointed, and celebrated. We communed together as one, washed each others feet, and placed stoles as a symbol of God's love and grace on each others shoulders. We were sent back to our congregations "refreshed". Thank you for this great blessing.

The welcoming keynote speaker, a vibrant youth minister, asked us to place a card on the altar telling God of our brokenness. I really wasn't sure what to do, I wasn't broken...my congregation liked me, things were going fine, and I loved where I served. No brokenness here. But as I immersed myself in the conference it didn't take long to find out how broken I really was.....

When I take God for granted, when I'm too busy to pray, when I forget to listen to His voice, or read His word, pieces of my relationship with God break off. I am no longer whole. I am no longer at peace with myself or others and I don't have the strength to use the gifts God so wisely gave me.

The Lenten season is a reminder that out of this brokenness comes the ultimate blessing, Christ's own life for me. Christ comes as a healer, a friend, our savior and all I need to do is to say "I am here Lord, walk with me today."

*God's blessings,
Rosemary*

Church Council - February Highlights

The council met with 13 members present along with Pastor and Rosemary. Cathy Hinrichs gave the devotions.

Election of Officers: David Meyers was elected as President of the Congregation. Cathy Hinrichs was elected as Vice President. Linda Copeland agreed to be Secretary again. Jason Robshaw will be the Treasurer.

Pastor's Report: Pastor encouraged council members to attend the CRE in March. (So

far there are six people going - great!) Plans for taking care of the church while pastor is gone were discussed. The council retreat was set for April 6th. The council will meet in its regular monthly meeting at 11:15 a.m. have lunch, and then look at plans for the new year and leadership development. The next mission trip is June 1-6 in Mississippi. Although this is primarily a youth trip, we could use adults to help with the building projects. Synod convention is June 13-14. Dave Meyers has said he will go so we just need one more female delegate. Pastor also read thank you

notes from Luther Seminary for our support of Nathan Clements and from LOMC for our benevolent support. Pastor passed out committee responsibility worksheets for the council members to look over.

Worship: The hymns were discussed for March. Lynda VanDyke will remain as chairperson. Marilyn Melton will secure readers this year.

Property: Repairs around the church were discussed. They fixed a damaged tile from the roof leak. The leak in Rosemary's office has been temporarily patched.

Education: The Bible verse party went very well. A family night was planned for April. Sunday School teachers are needed for the rest of the year to take the rotational sessions (one class for a month – it's easy, you can do it.)

Evangelism: "Pack the Pews" Sunday and pamphlets for new people who visit us were discussed. The Barber Shoppers will sing for us. The "Pack the Pews" Sunday is March 30th, the Sunday after Easter. Plans for the Graduates Sunday were also discussed.

Youth Director's Report: Rosemary reported that on March 9th the FLY group will discuss the mission trip and make plans at that time. The pizza sales went well. The next brunch is March 30th.

Some of the council members could not find their constitutions so those will be provided.

The meeting ended with prayer.

January Financial Report

	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Building</u>
Beginning . . .	\$15,282.71	17,896.88
Income	21,058.98	1,056.00
Expenses	18,239.43	1,052.42
Balance	18,102.26	17,900.46

Next Committee & Council Meetings

Tuesday, March 11th

Committees – 7:00 p.m. Council – 8:00 p.m.

First Communion Classes Begin

Fifth graders begin their preparation for their first communion this month. The first class will be March 2nd. Parents and kids will meet after Sunday School, have a pizza lunch and discuss the meaning of the Lord's Supper. On Mar. 16th the kids will meet with Pastor during Sunday School. On Mar. 20th parents, kids and the congregation are invited to a Seder Dinner at 5:45 pm. During the Maundy Thursday service the students will receive their 1st Communion. We ask that you make a reservation for the Seder Dinner. Sign up sheet is in the Narthex.

Simply Christian Class Continues

Join us for some good discussion on the basics of the Christian faith and how we present that to the people around us. This new book looks at the "echo of a voice" that speaks to all about the presence of God in our life. You will find some very interesting examples of what the faith means and how to verbalize it. A video walks us through the book, which also is available. For those who don't have time to read the book you will get all you need from viewing the video. If you would like to catch up, see Pastor to borrow the DVD. We meet during the Sunday School time in the conference room. We will not meet March 16th.

Mid-Week Lenten Schedule:

Dinner–6:00 pm Worship–7:00 pm

Lenten Theme: We will be using a series of meditations on the Beatitudes from Matthew 5 - the Sermon on the Mount. Despite the weather, we have had great attendance so far. Thanks to all who have helped with the Holden Evening Prayer. If you have not heard this, you are really missing a beautiful and touching service. Thanks to Rita Olson, Kiersten Wold, Marilyn Melton and Aaron Johnson for

helping with the dialogue sermons. These midweek events have been a living example of our being blessed indeed.

Dinner: The serving groups need to be at church by 5:30 p.m. They also help with clean up. We ask that each committee provide enough desserts for 45 servings. Please check with your committee the week before you serve. A free will offering will be received to cover the other costs of the meals. Left over money will be used for hunger projects. Thanks to Rita Olson and Rosemary Sibley for cooking and all of you who contributed hamburger. Hope you can be there.

Lenten Menus and Servers:

March 5: Dinner served by FLAG – Crusty Beef Noodle Bake

March 12: Dinner served by Stewardship & Evangelism – Cheesy Beef Macaroni

March 20: Dinner served by Worship – Seder Dinner with Meat Pie

Congregational Resourcing Event

The synod's CRE will be on March 8th in Malta, IL at Kishwaukee College. This year's main presenter is Dr. Ralph Kline. He will be addressing the ELCA theme on reading the Bible. The worship service preacher is Pastor Lowell Allman who was the secretary of the ELCA since its conception. He has recently retired. There are workshops for evangelism, worship, education, church council leadership, prayer, youth ministry and a host of other topics for the church. See Pastor Olson for registration materials.

Pastor Olson is chairperson for the Congregational Life Committee for the synod and is the "MC" for this event where 500-600 people from our synod come together. The cost is paid for by the church, this is a great chance to increase your leadership skills.

Waxing the Floors – Mar. 6-8

On Wednesday night, March 5 we will break down the chairs and tables after dinner and get the hall cleared for the yearly waxing. We need volunteers to help. See Carl Melton or Mark Melton for details.

Holy Week Schedule:

Palm Sunday: March 16th

Procession with Palms (kids meet in the back of the church to be a part of the procession)

Maundy Thursday: March 20th

Seder Dinner 5:45 p.m. (Sign up)

Worship & Communion 7:00 p.m.

The celebration of our Lord's institution of the Lord's Supper. We also welcome to the Lord's Supper our 5th graders.

Good Friday: 2:00 p.m. at Nursing Home
7:00 p.m. at FLC

We gather to reflect on the nature of the suffering and death of Christ for us. The use of darkness and beautiful music help us appreciate what is to come: the resurrection.

Easter Morning: 6:00 a.m. Sunrise at Congregational Church - Breakfast to follow
9:00 a.m. at FLC - Worship and

Communion

Gather to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The whole of our faith rests on this celebration.

Pack the Pews Sunday March 30th

The Evangelism Committee has planned some exciting events for this year's Pack the Pews Sunday. The **Barber Shoppers** will be on hand to lead us in worship and entertainment. We will be led in music with the Band and contemporary worship. Brunch will follow. Begin to think of whom you will invite. Bring friends, relatives or neighbors for this special service. This is the Sunday where we confront the normally

low attendance, Sunday after Easter, with a special evangelism effort. Let's keep the excitement of Easter going. You will receive a letter with a post card to let us know if you will be "packing the pews". More details coming.

Circle Meetings

Lydia-Miriam Circle will meet on Mon, March 10th at 7:00 p.m. in the Church Conference Room. Pastor Olson will be the Bible leader for the evening.

Esther-Ruth Circle will meet on Wed, March 12th at 2 p.m. in the fellowship hall.

WELCA

The general meeting of WELCA will be held on Wednesday, March 26th at 1:30 p.m. at the church. The program will be led by JoAnne Cocking. Hostesses for the meeting will be Shirley Jensen and Jean Milnes.

A WELCA Board meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 17th at 9:30 a.m. in the narthex.

Thank you

Thank you to my church family for the calls, visits, cards, memorial and other gifts and words of sympathy and encouragement following my Mother's death.

Jan Carlson

March Birthday Celebrations

We wish to send a "Birthday Greeting" to all of our members celebrating this month. A special greeting is extended to our members who are 80 or over.

Dorothy Moews – 12th

Frank Milnes – 16th

Josephine Dykema – 20th

Please refer to your church directory for the entire birthday list of our members.

NIU Tragedy: Our Response

With the loss of life on February 14th was indeed a shocking event in our area. The ELCA sponsors a Campus Ministry site at NIU. The Bishop has been there several times to support the Campus Pastor and the student ministers there. FLC has also responded. The council has sent \$500 to help with the extra expenses. The Ministry is open 24/7 with food and refreshments for the students to come and talk. Also, Pastor Olson took a turn of being there to help students and relieve the Campus Pastor who has been very active in the healing process. If you know families or students from our area who may have special needs due to this event, let us know.

Jr. League Baking

Saturday, March 15th meet at 2:00 p.m.
More Details to follow.

Assisting in March

Ushers: Rod & Linda Copeland,
Dave & Kerry Meyer, Dennis Johnson

Greeters: Gordon & Lonna Zschiesche
Donna Roland, Charlene Hanson

Assisting Minister:

16 – Marilyn Melton

23 – Denise Cady, Ken Cocking

Altar Committee: Joan Johnson, Jodi Farral, Michelle Wetze

Cantor: Cathy Hinrichs

Readers:

9 – Marilyn Skromme

12 – 7 p.m. – JoAnne Cocking

16 – Connie Johnson

20 – 7 p.m. – Rosemary Sibley

21 – 7 p.m. – Marilyn Melton

23 – Judy Johnson

30 – Peggy Kuelper

Nursery

- 2 – Becky Emery
- 9 – Linda Copeland
- 16 – Margaret Lundberg
- 23 – Gayle Melton
- 30 – Amanda Schanze

Acolytes

- 2 - A.J. Ackerman
- 9 - Kiersten Wold
- 16 – Stephanie Emery
- 20 - 7 p.m. – Gabe Larson
- 21 - 7 p.m. – Riley Meyer
- 23 – Jake Plautz
- 30 – Daniel Proeger