

Easter Hope, Easter Joy

We were all hoping for a mild winter this year and for a while it seemed like that would happen. Early winter went by without any heavy snow or ice storms or severe cold, and January looked like it was going to be the same until it became bitterly cold. Then came February, with snow and more snow and later in the month heavy, wet snow that caused many roofs on barns and pole sheds to collapse killing livestock. Even some church roofs around the region fell from the weight of the snow. Winter became ugly and brutal. March brought a little warmer temperature, yet the storms kept coming. This time as rain on top of snow which began to melt too fast across the region, causing severe flooding for people along major streams and rivers. For many, hope turned into struggle and despair.

Into the mix of fluctuating weather, Lent called us to turn our eyes and hearts to the One who saves us from sin, despair, hopelessness, and death. We remember and recall that Jesus Christ set his face toward Jerusalem. April brings us to the climax of Christ's journey; his death and resurrection. During "Holy Week" we move from a triumphal entry into Jerusalem--to betrayal, denial, despair, a trial, execution, death, and burial. All the promise and hope that Jesus brought along the way, is snuffed out like a candle extinguished of its flame. What happened to the promise? What happened to the hope that Jesus was the Messiah of God sent to save the whole world?

Recently, I had a dream just before I woke up. In the dream I was having fun with my sons Ben and Aaron at a church camp. We were laughing and playing games with others at the camp when suddenly I couldn't find them anymore. I went looking for them, calling their names and asking if anyone had seen them. No one saw them. I kept looking and looking even as a thunder-storm blew up in the sky to the West and tornado warnings were issued. I kept looking and looking like a good Dad would look. Then I woke up. It all felt like a nightmare. Quickly, a thought gently crept into my mind and heart, "*Valerian, you can't find your sons because they are no longer here.*"

This dream is my current reality; "Our sons are no longer here." Yet, I have hope. When I shared my dream with Christine, she said; "You had fun again with our sons!" There is the hope, there is the Joy! Yes, I will have fun again with my sons because of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. I am again reminded of what the angels said to the women at the tomb. "***Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, He has risen!***"(Lk.4:5) I will not find our sons here among the dead. I will have fun with my sons again, among the living. There is hope because of the risen Christ. Christ is Risen! He is risen indeed! Happy Easter to all of you! Keep faith, hope and love alive!



Sunday School News

April 7 – Sunday School @ 9:45 am

April 14 – Kids sing @ 8:30 am service

~~~~Sunday School @ 9:45 am

April 21 – No Sunday School (Easter)

April 28 – Sunday School @ 9:45 am

**Council  
Meeting is  
Tuesday, April 2  
at 7 p.m.**

## **FOOD PANTRY**

**THE FOOD PANTRY COLLECTION  
IS THE 2<sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY OF THE  
MONTH.**

~~Lenten Service Schedule~~

Wed, April 3 and Wed, April 10 –

Lenten Service with light supper @ 6:30 pm

## **Do you want to FAST this Lent?**

*In the words of Pope Francis*

- ❖ Fast from hurting words and say kind words.
- ❖ Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude.
  - ❖ Fast from anger and be filled with patience.
  - ❖ Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope.
    - ❖ Fast from worries and have trust in God.
- ❖ Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity.
  - ❖ Fast from pressures and be prayerful.
- ❖ Fast from bitterness and fill your hearts with joy.
- ❖ Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others.
  - ❖ Fast from grudges and be reconciled.
- ❖ Fast from words and be silent so you can listen.

**Spring Cleaning? The Youth Group is collecting aluminum cans!! Please bring your cans to the receptacles in the back of the church or contact Kellen & Lindsey Nelson.**

# Palm Sunday Pancake Breakfast



*Sunday, April 14 ::: 9:30-11 am*

*\$\$ Free will donation \$\$*

*\*Funds are used to support Youth programs*

*Helpers are needed for this day! Please contact Stephanie or any of the WELCA officers if you can help. Youth are welcome to help as well.*



## March 5, 2019 Congregational Council Meeting (Unapproved)

Meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by acting Vice-President Jim Odness. Members present were Brandi Berg, Jim Odness, Keith Nelson, Linda Odness, Tom Johnson, Bruce Thompson, Pastor Ahles, Becky Rongstad and Cedric Anderson

Pastor led us in prayer and devotion with a reading from 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians. We are chosen by God. Apostle Paul reporting to the people because he had heard somethings about what they had been dong in the community. Like those in Paul's time we are encouraged to be imitators of God's grace and love. We also want others to hear about the things that are happening in our Congregation.

Pastor also shared his time at the Rural Ministry Conference and how comforting and rejuvenating it was for him and Christian to be around those he has known for 30 plus years and love them on the anniversary of Ben's death. Pastor wants us to love all people and love the place we are at both in our faith journey and church family.

First action item was to appoint positions of the newly elected members.

Becky made a mot ion to appoint Brandi Berg as Treasurer, Linda Odness as Recording Secretary and Stephanie Rumstick as Financial Secretary. Bruce 2<sup>nd</sup>, motion carried.

Brandi made a motion to appoint Jim Odness as President and Keith Nelson as Vice-President, Cedric seconded the motion, motion approved

Treasurer's Report provided and presented by Brandi Berg

### January

- Checking Account - \$13601.58
- 2020 General Fund - \$35,397.42
- Church Savings- \$14,362.40
- Building Fund Checking - \$5245.47
- Memorial Fund - \$3,313.10

### February

- Checking Account - \$12,330.68
- 2020 General Fund - \$25,408.67
- Church Savings- \$14,367.08
- Building Fund Checking - \$5,246.99
- Memorial Fund - \$3,313.41
- CD - \$10,000.00 13month

It should be noted that as approved by a special council meeting \$10,000.00 was transferred from the 2050 fund to be deposited into a CD.

Motion was made by Linda to approve report as presented, Tom seconded and motion carried.

Secretary's report for the December Congregational Council Meeting was read by Linda; motion to approve as presented was made by Bruce, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Tim; motion carried.

## Pastor's Report

- Pastor conducted 7 worship services, attended 7 text studies, and attended the Winter Theological Retreat and Dairyland Conference meeting. He made 7 home visits, provided communion to 12 shut-ins and made 8 hospital visits. He performed 3 funerals and one baptism. He participated in the two days of our Lutefisk dinner providing entertainment for all four settings.
- Pastor shared some upcoming events which including NWS- Walking Together Event on March 3, 2019 at UWEC, and Boundary Training Event @ NWS office on April 9, 2019

## WELCA

- Lutefisk supper held on February 16<sup>th</sup> was a great success. Thanks for all who helped out both days and we look forward to seeing you in 2020.

## **Parish Secretary Update**

- Crystal will be on vacation beginning March 18 so Linda Odness will be preparing the bulletin for Sunday service on March 24.

## Janitor

Brad has questions about past funerals that he has not been paid for. He shared that a few have been paid and he has contacted the funeral home in Osseo and they are checking their records.

## Parish Council

- Jim shared updates regarding meeting in February. Officers were elected with Tom Wagner- President, Steve Ebert-Vice-President and Pam Johnson-recording secretary.
- Jim highlighted conversation about Lenten service times: Immanuel will have Maunday Thursday service and Elk Creek will have Good Friday service.
- Next schedule joint parish meeting is June 18, 6:30 at Immanuel in Strum.
- Discussion about how to pay and what to pay a supply pastor with payment to remain 50/50 split.

## Old Business

1. Jim installed the light in the office at the parsonage
2. Ben Aiona has serviced both heating systems
3. Becky shared that the organ is making noise again and perhaps it is the speaker and a few men can move it a little and it may improve, rather than contacting a repairman
4. Sunday School Room Space/Concerns will be addressed at a later date as Pam was not available.

## New Business

1. Jim and Allan Rongstad replaced the sump pump in the furnace room
2. A big thank you to Bruce Thompson for plowing the parking lot and driveway at the parsonage.
3. A big thank you to Allan Rongstad for thawing the frozen pipes in the bathroom during the cold spell. Action may need to be taken to move the pipes to help eliminate future freezes.
4. Copier has been repaired
5. Jim will get at least 3 bids for the church roof replacement
6. Anyone interested in organizing a fund raiser for the roof contact a council member.
7. Linda will look into what is going on with the eternal candle
8. Discussion about Confirmation and our students:

The following plan will be implemented;

During lent students will help with meals as their service project

Pastor will meet with students after each service

After Easter, beginning April 24 until May 29 Pastor will be meeting with students on Wednesday's from 5:30 until 6:30. Students will continue instruction with Donna on Sunday's

Motion to adjourn made by Tom 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bruce, motion approved. Meeting adjourned at 9:45, we closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by Linda Odness, Recording Secretary.

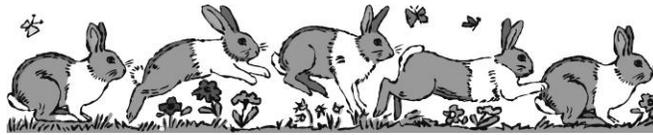
**Sunday, April 28** we are designating as  
"Personal Care Kit" Sunday! These items are collected as  
mission kits and distributed to those in need through the  
Lutheran World Relief. Start collecting items for these kits  
and bring them to church on the 28<sup>th</sup>:

- 1 dark lightweight bath-size towel
- 1 toothbrush
- 2 bath-size soap bars (4-5 oz.)
- 1 sturdy comb (no picks or fine-toothed)
- 1 metal nail clippers (attached file optional)

**Lines from LaVerne...** Yes, God is in everything. In everything give thanks for this is the will of God. We need to realize that everything is directly from His hands. He gives you all the freewill to do our own thing, which was sometimes disobedience. You must bow before God and realize that you must trust His understanding and not your own. God steps in to change unhappy or even disastrous situations in our lives when we thank Him for the situation itself. He is the one that leaves the 99

sheep safely in the fold and goes out after the one lost lamb because He cares. We are to praise God even for unhappy situations. God allows us to have disappointments, frustrations, or even worse, because He wants us to see that our joy is not such as worldly pleasures and success or money or popularity or health, our joy is the fact that we have a relationship with God. Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say, Rejoice; in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. Giving thanks always for all things unto our heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus. P.S. Think spring! The birds will sing and the flowers will bloom again. Rejoice!

Your Lay Minister, LaVerne



WELCA Meeting 2/10/2019

Jan Berg called the meeting to order at 10:18 am. We read the Creed and Theme Verse. Secretary's report was read by Tammy, and placed on file. Becky read the treasurer's report. \$5662.75 in checking account. Treasurer's report was placed on file.

#### **Old Business:**

- Jan will contact Sojourner House about distribution of the socks collected on Sock Sunday.
- It was noted what a wonderful job our ladies do at funerals as a sendoff for our members.
- Lutefisk Dinner seating's are full.
- Brandi is looking into Bible Study to examine.

#### **New Business**

- Tammy read letters / Thank You's.
- Roseanne asked if we should buy another large coffee pot. Barb made a motion, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Deb, approved. Becky will shop for it.
  - Deb shared information about her daughter, Shelley, who will be going on a mission trip to Russia in July. This is with Orphan Outreach. She asked us to pray for her and her work. In addition, if we would be willing to help her with sponsorship. Tammy made a motion to give \$500.00 to this cause, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Josie. Approved.
  - Stephanie will make a signup sheet for Lenten Suppers once we find out the hours.
  - Last Sunday of this month is the Fabric Sunday.

Offering was collected. Meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer at 10:55 am.

Minutes by Tammy Danenberg for Barb Fischer