



St. Luke Lutheran Church

Faith. Hope. Love.

A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

August 2016 Newsletter

Living our faith with hope, we share God's unconditional love with all.

A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR

"The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork."
Psalm 19:1

In the summer, we are just naturally drawn out of doors. We crave the sunshine and soft breezes that we find when we are out in God's creation, and sometimes, we even feel closer to God in a hike up a wooded trail or in a chair in the leafy shade of a large tree than we do in church! It is good to be out enjoying the natural world that God has created for us.

Evidently, it is also beneficial to our health in many ways. In this week's *Time* magazine, I found an article by Alexandra Sifferlin titled: "The Healing Power of Nature." She writes about how researchers in Japan have discovered that trees and plants emit "...aromatic compounds called phytoncides that, when inhaled, can spur healthy biological changes in a manner similar to aromatherapy...." Who knew?

By simply spending time around the trees and plants of God's creation, you can lower your blood pressure, lower your risk for cancer by increasing the number of natural killer cells that support the immune system, decrease symptoms of depression and anxiety, and even help with ADHD symptoms. Considering that high blood pressure affects 1 in 3 Americans, it's very good news to find out that 10% of people with high blood pressure can get their hypertension under control just by spending 30 minutes or more in a park each week.

My favorite benefit is that exposure to creation can increase the presence of awe in your life and spirit. The article notes: "In a 2015 study, researcher Paul Piff of the University of California, Irvine, found that people who spent 60 seconds looking up at towering trees were more likely to report feeling awe, after which they were more likely to help a stranger than people who looked at an equally tall—but far less awe-inspiring—building." We know that God loves us and loves the created world, and we know that we usually enjoy time outdoors, but now we find that God even included measurable therapeutic benefits for us when we enjoy what God created.

Let's do our bodies and souls some good this summer and treat ourselves to a weekly 30 minute period of nature therapy in one of our many local and state parks. I invite you to spend part of that time in prayers of thanksgiving for the wonderful world God created for us.

Let's also be mindful of all the ways we can work to keep our air and water clean and healthy, the way God would have it for us.

"God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good." Genesis 1:31

Praising God with you this summer,
Pastor Joan

COUNCIL'S CORNER Council met once in July with our new members. We reviewed minutes from the previous month's meetings as well as the Treasurer's Report. Council discussed Chapter 8 in our book, *Real Good Church*.

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|---------------------|--|
| President | Laura Helton |
| Vice President | Todd Whitford |
| Secretary | Jan Dill |
| Treasurer | Hank Nienaber |
| Financial Secretary | Irvina Sandmann |
| Members | Micki Watson Mitch Talbott Dana Bradley Pastor Joan Armstrong |

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Tuesday, August 2 - Men of the Church will meet at 6:30 PM for fellowship, Bible study, food, and lively discussions! All men of the church are invited to join.
- Wednesday, August 3 - Young at Heart meeting at 11:00 AM.
- Sunday, August 14 - AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: The Lord's Prayer Study Part III after service
- Tuesday, August 23 - Ladies Picnic at 6 PM. Hot dogs will be provided. Please bring a covered dish to share.

| | | |
|----------------------------|---------|------------|
| OFFERINGS/ RECEIPTS | 6/26/16 | \$1,685.00 |
| | 7/3/16 | \$1,518.00 |
| | 7/10/16 | \$1,405.00 |
| | 7/17/16 | \$2,718.66 |

BIRTHDAYS

| | |
|------|---------------|
| 8/20 | Dana Bradley |
| 8/20 | Molly Bradley |
| 8/21 | Linda Reller |
| 8/29 | Mitch Talbott |



ANNIVERSARIES

| | |
|-----|-----------------------|
| 8/4 | Lloyd & Janice Weaver |
|-----|-----------------------|

**PRAYER
EMPHASIS**

Please be in prayer over how we can personally work to understand the issues that put so much racial tension between our African American neighbors around the country and the police who are there to protect and serve them. Pray for inspiration from the Holy Spirit to find ways to alleviate the fear and suspicion that clouds police and citizen interactions. Pray that those tempted to take out their frustration and anger through violence would turn away from that sinful path and find positive ways to improve life in our communities, including for the officers who live and serve there. To God, all lives matter.

**SPIRITUAL
DISCIPLINE**

In this month of bountiful fruits and vegetables, let us practice mindful eating. After thanking God for whatever tasty bit sits before you, take a moment to savor the beauty and aroma of ripe and well-prepared food. Let your first bite be a slow one to appreciate the complexity of the flavors God has given each thing. Remember the farmers and harvester, and thank them for their efforts. At the Farmers' Market, take time to tell the farmers there how grateful you are for what they do.

**NEWS
&
UPDATES****AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: The Lord's Prayer Study**

Our next meeting to learn more about the prayer our Lord Jesus taught us will be on Sunday, July 11th after church. We will be ordering pizza from LaRosa's to share for lunch.

As you know, St. Luke is a host church for **Family Promise**. St. Luke's will be hosting out of St. Joe's Convent. Our Support Churches are St. Mary's, Next Chapter and Family Worship Center. We are still waiting on two more churches to jump on board with us. St. Luke's will host two of our seven nights. If you signed the sheet saying you are willing to help, Cindy Weiner will be contacting you soon for our first week August 14th to the 20th. Our second week will be September 25th through October 1st. Thanks for all the support and prayers.

Thanks to all who helped make our **One Day Fun Day** a success. We had lots of fellowship and fun! The Kona Ice was delicious and yes, some of the adults jumped in the jump house! Once again we had lots of participation from our members and we couldn't do it with out all of you. Thank You!

Fun, Fun, Fun, the next **yard sale** will be Saturday, September 3, from 8 to 3. During the week help is needed to unload the bags and boxes. If there is a certain price you want on your donation, tape the price to it and date it 9/3/16.

The **Luther Rose Bazaar** this year is on October 8, from 9 to 3. Only hand made items are allowed. If you know anyone interested in renting a booth, inside table is \$30.00 and outside space is \$15.00. Advertising this event is a critical part of the process. We have a bake sale table, which is always a hit. Miscellaneous raffle baskets donated. Our own craft table, so get to work. Lunch is also available for a small price.

Play, Breathe, and Pray is just a fun day on the fourth Sunday, of every month, from 2 to 5. Play is to bring the items you want to share. Whether it is knitting, coloring, beading, scrap booking, wood working, sewing, reading. Breathe is time to relax, enjoying your gift from God. Pray is how you can include this in your work.

BULLETIN

Kim Wood prepares the worship service bulletin. If you need to have information placed in the bulletin, or would like to add someone to the prayer list, please make sure she has your information by 2:00 PM each Wednesday. Her email address is **wood.ks@icloud.com**.

NEWSLETTER

Laura Helton prepares the monthly newsletter. If you have information or insertions to be placed in the newsletter, please provide this information to Laura by the 20th of every month. Her email address is **lbhelton@gmail.com**.

AUGUST 2016

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|--------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------|--------|----------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| | | Men's Meeting 6:30 PM | Young at Heart 11:00 AM | | | |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| | | Council Meeting 6:30 pm | | | | |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| | | TMT Meeting 6 pm | | | | |
| | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| | | Ladies Picnic 6 PM | | | | |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | |
| | | Play, Breathe, and Pray 2-5 PM | | | | |

Prayer Ventures for August 2016

1 We remember in our prayers students who have returned or are preparing to return to school that they will grow strong in wisdom, faith, knowledge and friendship with their peers.

2 We give thanks to God for the special work of teachers, principals, custodians, cooks, student teachers, administrative staff, counselors, librarians, nurses, bus drivers and all who play a role in the education, well-being and development of our children and youth.

3 In the face of threats of terror and uncertainty in the world, we pray that we embrace God as our refuge and strength and resist the human urge to respond with violence, debilitating fear or hatred.

4 We remember in our prayers regions and communities across the United States that have suffered loss and hardship from flooding, wildfires and severe weather. We ask that those who suffer and are trying to recover experience God's presence and hope, as well as the caring assistance of emergency responders, relief workers and neighbors.

5 We come to God in our human weakness and distress and pray God will grant us the bold faith and courage needed to speak peace and reconciliation into the commotion of hatred and division that exists today and live the truth that all people are created in God's image.

6 For all ELCA pastors, rostered leaders and missionaries we give thanks to God. We pray they find daily encouragement, spiritual renewal and supportive partners for the work God has called them to in the world.

7 We give thanks to God for the certain gift of eternal life we have in Jesus Christ and pray that this confidence will set us free to love our neighbor and be generous with everything we have, especially for the well-being of people who live in poverty and hunger.

8 *ELCA Churchwide Assembly* We remember in our prayers the pastors, leaders and voting members gathered in New Orleans for the 2016 Churchwide Assembly. We pray the Spirit will guide and energize their discernment, discussions and decisions that shape the mission of the ELCA and how we go about God's work in the world.

9 *International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples* There are an estimated 370 million indigenous peoples living around the world. We ask God to stretch our awareness and empathy and move us to join the work to protect and promote the rights, culture and land of indigenous people – children of God, brothers and sisters in Christ.

10 *Grace Gathering* We pray the Spirit will bless the experience of all those gathered at the Grace Gathering in New Orleans and that God's people will be recharged for faith-driven, heartfelt witness and service in the world as Lutheran Christians.

11 We remember in our prayers the bishops and staff of our 65 synods that God will sustain and encourage them in their faith and ministries as they serve and support congregations, leaders and communities across the country.

12 *International Youth Day* We pray young people everywhere will thrive, be healthy and live with hope alongside caring, attentive adults, parents and mentors.

13 Nurses serve in many contexts and attend to the physical, spiritual and emotional needs of people of all ages – from birth to death. We give thanks for their gifts and service and pray God will strengthen and sustain them for the ever-changing challenges they face.

14 We ask God to grant us courage, hope and a confidence grounded in Jesus Christ, especially when our service and witness in the world proves difficult or discouraging.

15 *Mary, Mother of Our Lord* We are all bearers of good news – the gospel – no matter our social standing, abilities, education, age or position. We ask the Spirit to permeate everything we say and do with expressions of joy and hope.

16 We give thanks to God for the leadership, service and vision of Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton and pray that God will continue to strengthen her faith, deepen her wisdom and bless her witness and ministry on behalf of the ELCA.

17 Refugees and immigrants in the world continue to seek safe, welcoming communities in which to live, work, form new relationships and become self-sufficient. We pray God will safeguard their journeys and provoke us to be active in welcoming, supporting and advocating for all who are displaced by war, national instability, poverty or persecution.

18 We pray that we will tell without reluctance or shyness the story of God's presence, love and justice in the world throughout history and not forget to weave in our own stories as loved and forgiven children of God.

19 We remember in our prayers the young adults serving in Rwanda with the Young Adults in Global Mission program. We ask God to bless their work with the congregational, social and reconciliation ministries of the Lutheran Church of Rwanda.

20 We give thanks to God for the young adults who have served in ELCA outdoor ministries this summer and ask God to bless their lives and drive their desire to serve others – in the name of Jesus Christ – as they return to school, work, new ministries or volunteer opportunities.

21 When traditions, routines or rituals – even those of the church – inhibit us from caring for our neighbor, we ask God for the wisdom to discern what is most important and to not fear change for the sake of doing God's work in our communities and the world.

22 We remember in our prayers Jenna Bergeson, the Rev. Carolyn Schneider, the Rev. Wayne Nieminen and the Rev. Christa VonZychlin, ELCA missionaries serving in Hong Kong. We ask

God to bless their work in theological education and teaching English with our partner churches and institutions.

23 We give thanks to God for being our hope and trust, our refuge and rock, from the day we are born until we enter the kingdom of heaven.

24 We ask God to help us be faithful followers, students and servants of Jesus Christ, bold in our faith and willing to go wherever God sends or leads us in the world, even into our own neighborhoods.

25 We pray for the Reformed Church in America, a full communion partner with the ELCA, and for the continuing growth of our relationship as together we share the gospel and do God's work in the world.

26 In the midst of our country's discussions and impassioned debates about reducing gun violence, we ask God's forgiveness for our failures to keep human lives – God's handiwork and gift – in the foreground. We plea for God's help and wisdom in reaching self-sacrificing, life-valuing, effective answers – together.

27 Katherine Graf, Rachel Eskesen and Aliyah Richling serve as ELCA missionaries in Hungary. We pray for their partnership and service with small and re-emerging Lutheran churches, especially in the areas of teaching, Roma ministry and parish ministry.

28 As followers of Jesus Christ, we pray that our spirit and actions express humility, concern for our neighbor and a desire to first honor and serve others rather than ourselves.

29 As congregations prepare programs for fall, we ask God to bless their planning and leadership. We pray their efforts and creativity will encourage people of all ages in their faith and touch the hearts of those who yet seek or hunger for the good news found in Jesus Christ.

30 Following God's ways and trusting in God's love, our hearts are firm and steady, and we are not afraid; for these blessings we give praise and thanksgiving to God.

31 We remember in our prayers seasonal workers seeking new employment, moving or facing the emotions that come with change. We pray that our congregations be inviting and welcoming for people in transition, that we are communities of faith offering acceptance, stability, friendship and support.