



St. Luke Lutheran Church

Faith. Hope. Love.

A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

July 2016 Newsletter

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

A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR

In the June issue of Living Lutheran magazine, I found a very interesting article called: "Why we will no longer be a welcoming church." Lutheran Church of the Master in Colorado decided to stop putting their energy into becoming a welcoming church. They changed worship styles, trained greeters and ushers, brewed coffee, and put their friendliest people on the front lines each Sunday morning—all done to become more welcoming to any visitors that came their way.

Sounds pretty familiar, doesn't it? St. Luke is very good at genuine hospitality and gives a warm welcome to anyone coming through the doors. But maybe we can learn something from this sister congregation. They realized that welcoming is not missional. Being welcoming is too passive for a congregation that wants to be doing God's work in the world and making disciples for Jesus. They decided they were no longer going to wait for people to find their way to them, and they now call themselves an invitational church.

Being invitational seemed to be too audacious and frightening at first, so they started doing some exercises to make the task less daunting. Here are five challenges that the congregation tried.

Challenge 1: Try using the phrase "my church" with one person each week. One person, one time each week. "My church is right across the street from the new LaRosa's." It's as simple as that.

Challenge 2: Consider one word or phrase that describes your congregation well, then use that word to finish the phrase: "My church is _____." Again, one person, one time each week. "Homelessness? My church is doing something about it."

Challenge 3: Think about one thing your congregation does very well. Use that to finish the phrase: "My church is really good at _____." I'd say: "My church is really good at loving hurting people and caring for them." One person, one time each week.

Challenge 4: Invite one person to check out something in which your congregation is involved. This should be done in appropriate conversations when an opening naturally presents itself. "Doing anything special on July 16th? Sometimes my church just likes to do fun things for the community and we are having a One Day Fun Day. Want to come?" How hard is that?

Challenge 5: Invite someone you know to come to worship with you. While this might seem frightening to you, keep in mind that the basis of our identity as people of God is our new life given to us in Jesus Christ. We have so much to offer others with our emphasis on grace and hope.

Please commit to trying these exercises and keep doing them until you are comfortable with them. There are people out there that need the special gifts that St. Luke's disciples have to offer and we need their gifts as well. Let me know how your conversations go!

Serving our Lord with you,

Pastor Joan

COUNCIL'S CORNER

Council will be installing two new members to replace Kim Wood and Sue Huff. We thank Kim and Sue for their time and dedication for the past three years! The congregation unanimously voted in Dana Bradley and Micki Watson who will be installed in July. We are happy to have these two amazing women join us!

President & Financial Secretary	Irvina Sandmann
Vice President	Todd Whitford
Secretary	Jan Dill
Treasurer	Hank Nienaber
Members	Mitch Talbott
	Kim Wood
	Laura Helton
	Sue Huff
	Pastor Joan Armstrong

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Tuesday, July 5 - 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, July 6 - Young at Heart meeting at 11:00 AM.
- Sunday, July 10 - AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: The Lord's Prayer Study Part III
- Monday, July 11 - Vision Team Meeting at 7 PM.
- Saturday, July 16 - One Day Fun Day from 11 am - 2 pm. Cindy Weiner will need assistance replacing Vacation Bible School. We are planning to have ponies, Kona Ice, and a jump house and water games! We need volunteers to help - please see Cindy Weiner.
- Tuesday, July 26 - Ladies Meeting. Time and location are TBD.

OFFERINGS/	5/22/16	\$1,056.00
RECEIPTS	5/29/16	\$908.00
	6/5/16	\$2,502.00
	6/12/16	\$1,326.00
	6/19/16	\$1,506.00

BIRTHDAYS

7/29

Kim Wood

ANNIVERSARIES

7/24

Don & Lorie Scott



PRAYER & EMPHASIS

As the tragic mass shooting in Orlando revealed, some of our brothers and sisters in Christ are hated just because of their sexual orientation. Pray for those who are different and who struggle with sexual issues. Pray that all would be reminded that we are created in the image of God and beloved of God, even when we fall outside the physical and emotional norms of the culture. Help us to see others through God's eyes.

SPIRITUAL & DISCIPLINE

This month, practice stewardship of creation. Be intentional about how you use the gifts of creation like water and energy. Do you really have to water the lawn? Turn off lights and fans when you leave the room. Close blinds and drapes to help to keep your home cooler without the AC. All of these resources are provided by God, and just like our financial resources, we should be mindful of how God would have us use them.

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.

One Day Fun Day is July 16th from 11 am to 2 pm. All children (and adults!) are welcome to attend and bring guests. The more, the merrier! Cindy Weinerl will need assistance with crafts, water games, a welcome table, food service, and face painting. Please see Cindy with questions and to volunteer.

Our first **Family Promise** rotation is August 14th to the 20th. We need volunteers to spend the night for two evenings as well as volunteers to prepare, serve, and join meals for two evenings. Other volunteers can do a craft, read stories, and spend time with the kids. Please see Cindy with questions and to volunteer.

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.

JULY 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4 Happy Independence Day!	5 Men's Meeting 6:30 PM	6 Young at Heart 11:00 AM	7	8	9
10 Confirmation: The Lord's Prayer after service - 1:30 pm	11 Vision Team Meeting 7 PM	12 Council Meeting 6:30 pm	13	14	15	16 One Day Fun Day 11 am - 2 pm
17	18 TMT Meeting 6 pm	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						



25 *James, the Apostle James, a son of Zebedee, is remembered for his humanness and martyrdom as a follower of Jesus. We pray that we too, imperfect as we are, will trust in God's mercy and be fearless in sharing the gospel and serving our neighbor in the name of Jesus Christ.*

26 We remember in our prayers the youth of the United Church of Christ, an ELCA full communion partner, who are gathering in Florida for their National Youth Event. We pray for God's blessings on their experience that all may envision God's purpose and plan for their lives.

27 We give thanks for the growing impact of Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA and the generosity of members eager to share the gospel and grow the church, as demonstrated by the 62 new-start ministries welcomed into the ELCA.

28 For the faith and gifts of all musicians and composers who bless our lives and worship, helping us praise God, sing for joy and express our faith, we give thanks to God.

29 As congregations, pastors, leaders and delegates prepare for our Churchwide Assembly, we pray God's Spirit will ready their hearts and minds for fruitful discussions and work to advance the ELCA's mission of sharing the gospel, serving our neighbor and doing God's work in the world.

30 *World Day Against Trafficking in Persons* We ask God to embolden us in our actions and advocacy to end crimes of human trafficking that exploit women, children and men everywhere for purposes including forced labor and sexual exploitation. We pray for freedom, healing and hope for all victims.

31 We pray that our identities are not wrapped up in the comforts of personal success, abundance of possessions or greed but rather in the love of God that grounds our lives in generosity, service, concern for others and humility.

This resource may be copied and shared among members and friends of the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Contact info@elca.org for additional information. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Chicago, IL 60631. Telephone: 800-638-3522, ext. 2458.

PRAYER VENTURES

JULY 2016

These petitions are offered as guides to prayer for the global, social and outreach ministries of the ELCA. Thank you for your continued prayers for the life and mission of this church.

1 Many congregations are tending community gardens and are now harvesting vegetables and fruit to share. We pray for abundant harvests and blessings on their efforts to engage members and neighbors in gardening—and learning to garden—for the benefit of those who are hungry.

2 We ask God to watch over youth and adults who venture into unfamiliar places on mission trips and service learning experiences, that they be safe yet open to unexpected opportunities for seeing the world through God's eyes, having assumptions and prejudices challenged, and experiencing mutual care.

3 As we are sent into the world and everyday life to do God's work, we pray that we be willing servants and disciples, trusting in the presence and power of God with us and in us—for the sake of the world.

4 *Independence Day* We give thanks to God for the freedom and abundance that we experience as a nation and pray that we will continue to challenge ourselves to embrace and demonstrate in our lives and laws values of freedom, justice, equality and care for all people.

5 ELCA Global Mission Gatherings take place across the country throughout the summer and help equip us for God's work—globally and locally. We pray the Spirit will fill participants and gathering leaders and musicians with energy, hope and wisdom for God's mission in the world.

6 We pray for The Episcopal Church, an ELCA full communion partner, and for the continuing growth of our relationship as we work together and discover how our gifts, leaders and ministries complement each other in sharing the gospel and serving our neighbor.

7 The Rev. Elisabeth Johnson, Anne and Willie Langdji and Susan Smith are ELCA missionaries serving in Cameroon and the Central African Republic. We give thanks for their ministries and faithful service and ask God to bless their work in education, health ministries, sustainable development and in helping our partner churches prepare leaders.

8 We remember in our prayers families, communities and nations recovering from natural disasters, including the earthquakes in Japan, Nepal and Ecuador, wildfires in Canada and the U.S., severe weather and flooding in the U.S., and areas of drought around the world.

9 In the midst of our presidential campaigns, we ask God to create in us mutual respect, wisdom and concern for each other, particularly for people—of all ages and situations—who are often excluded, unnoticed or reviled.

10 The “neighbor” that Jesus directs our attention and concern to goes beyond the familiar person next door. We pray God will open our eyes and hearts to our neighbors who are strangers, who cause us discomfort, who disagree with us, who live in places we’ll never see or who are scorned by society.

11 We ask God to forgive us when we stray from God’s truth and ways, that we will stay on paths of humility, love and justice.

12 We remember in our prayers leaders of the church in the past and present who have committed themselves to furthering ecumenical unity and a united Christianity, in the name of Jesus Christ.

13 For our parks, wilderness areas and public lands we give thanks to God; we praise God for the wonders of the earth and the heavens that inspire us and give us joy in every season.

14 There are regions of the world and the United States continuing to suffer from drought conditions. We pray they receive the rain and water necessary for life and self-sufficiency and for the wisdom and creativity to manage limited water resources in new ways.

15 We pray the Spirit will help us discern what is true and consistent with God’s Word in the mix of all the messages and influences that come at us each day and that we will have clarity and courage in sharing the gospel.

16 We remember in our prayers people who devote their lives to caring for, restoring and understanding nature and the environment, and we give thanks for the ways in which they draw our attention to the beauty and wonder of God’s amazing handiwork.

17 We give thanks to God, creator of all things in heaven and on earth, for reconciling all humanity and creation through the sending and sacrifice of Jesus Christ—an undeserved gift of love and forgiveness.

18 We pray for the end of oppression, enslavement, inhumane treatment and practices that victimize people for economic gain, power or personal advantage and that we will instead behold and treat each other as beloved and valued brothers and sisters in Christ.

19 We remember in our prayers and give thanks for the more than 900 women and men who have studied at colleges, universities and seminaries in the United States and around the world with the assistance of global companion churches and the ELCA International Leadership Development Program.

20 In the face of persistent gun violence in the United States, we remember the victims and their families in our prayers and pray that God will strengthen our will to tackle the complex causes of violence for the sake of human lives and safe communities.

21 When we feel weak, experience trouble or fear our enemies, we pray to God for strength, giving thanks and praise for the promise of God’s enduring love and refuge.

22 We remember in our prayers the six young adults serving in Cambodia through the Young Adults in Global Mission Program. We pray that God will guide and bless their work with local congregations and organizations in areas of rights-based development and teaching English.

23 Throughout history women have served in orders, organizations and ministries serving the poor, hungry, sick and oppressed. We give thanks and affirmation for their faithful service and devotion to doing God’s work in the world in some of the most difficult situations.

24 We come to God in prayer, trusting in God’s patience and responsiveness to our concerns, appeals and expressions—spoken and unspoken—and ask that God will deepen our faith and teach us to pray without hesitation or self-consciousness.