

GRACEVINE

October 2014



IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

747 Ann Street – Chadron, NE 69337

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Pastor Ann Sundberg

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Where God is with us as we grow in faith!

Pastor's Message

“For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven.... a time to keep silence and a time to speak.” --Ecclesiastes 3:1,7

When in our busy lives is there ever a time for silence? Is there ever a time when you are not tuned in to some form of sound? Our world has become amazingly noisy. Whether it's the TV, the radio, the music in your earbuds, it is really hard to get away from constant sound.

John and I lived in Waltham, MA, a suburb of Boston, during the year of my internship. Housing was not provided by the congregation, so a couple of months before the internship began, I went to rent an apartment. I found a place that seemed ideal – a large loft right downtown, near to transportation, the city green, shopping and restaurants, and only a mile from the church. The landlord even agreed to allow our dog! I gladly signed the lease.

But when we moved in, we soon discovered being near transportation meant constant traffic noise. Proximity to shops and restaurants also meant hearing loud karaoke singing from the bar across the alley late at night. On snowy mornings, we were awakened at 5:00 am to the noise of the snowplow clearing the parking lot across the street. There was no place in our apartment to retreat from the noise.

Here in Chadron, we have come to appreciate the quiet. It's possible to go less than a 5-minute drive and leave behind any human-made sound.

We human beings need silence. We need to get away from the sound of music, news, voices, machines, traffic. We need to find space to be quiet, to simply be.

Silence enables me to listen more carefully to what someone else is saying. Silence enables me to hear the sounds of nature. Silence enables me to quiet down my own “inner voice” and make space to hear God’s voice.

Try this the next time you pray: Simply sit quietly for a few minutes and feel your breath going in and out of your lungs. As you breathe in, imagine God’s spirit filling your being. As you breathe out, imagine God’s spirit filling the world.

May you be blessed in your speaking and your keeping silence.

Immanuel Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes –

September 2014

The Immanuel Lutheran Church Council met Thursday, September 4, 2014 in the Fellowship Hall of the Church at 6:00 p.m. Members present were Robyn Baquet, Lisa Briggs, Jane Darnell, Julie Duncan, Karleen Gramberg, Laurie Harris, Jeanine Mohr, Laurie Schmidt, Pastor Ann Sundberg, and Sharon Thurlow. Those not present were Jarrod Briggs, Dave Coe, Leo Vander May, and Walt Mays. Pastor Ann convened the meeting for President Jane who was returning from a meeting in Lincoln. Her arrival was anticipated at any time.

Opening devotions by Pastor Ann were individual reflections on a blog post “Attachment to God” by Elizabeth Palmer. “Which earthly attachments might God be calling you to give up? What are some ways in which you can use your earthly attachments to live out your vocation? When are the moments that you most keenly perceive your own deep attachment to God?”

Laurie Schmidt moved and Julie Duncan seconded the approval of the August minutes. Karleen moved and Lisa seconded acceptance of the August Treasurer’s report. Offerings were down, but the year to date figures reflected all bills being paid and fiscal operations were below budget.

Pastor’s report was a list of upcoming events. September 7: God’s Work, Our Hands Sunday; September 10 Wednesday School and Confirmation classes begin; September 14 Jon Fredericks, Director of Development for NE Lutheran Campus Ministry will visit and preach; October 26 Planned Giving Seminar after worship with Craig Stirtz of Lutheran Planned Giving Services (a potluck has been scheduled for that visit; dates to be determined reception of new members and the delivery of the original altar to the Pine Ridge Retreat Center.

Buildings and Grounds - Dave spoke with Lucinda about pruning. Dave revised the work day schedule and it will be posted so that people unable to attend Saturday the 27th may work at their convenience.

Education – Wednesday School and confirmation have been planned to begin September 10. The program is growing so volunteer opportunities are available—kitchen help, meal preparation, staffing. The weekend prior to Thanksgiving the Nebraska Synod is offering a Mom and Daughter retreat for tweens and teens. Lisa and Kat2yn plan to attend. Others are encouraged to join them. Lutheran Youth of Nebraska (LYON) will take place November 21-22 in Kearney.

Evangelism – The sound system update continues to move forward. Assistive hearing technology is in place and is available from the ushers. Pastor will visit Haggerty’s Music in Rapid City for a more user friendly headset for her Lavolier mike and the older system will be used as a mike for the assisting minister. No new action with the western entrance road sign.

Fellowship – move in day went well with at least 126 served; thanks to all that planned, prepared food, served, and cleaned up. Harvest Dinner is just around the corner (November 16th).

Social Ministry – Excitement is growing for God’s Work Our Hands Day. T-shirts are in; Kit has designed a mural and mixed paint. A potluck will follow worship, and then workers will be dispatched to different venues.

Stewardship – no report.

Worship – Uati is working on an AV plan for worship. Julie is pursuing a children’s bulletin and offering in addition to the children’s sermon Sunday morning.

New business—Laura Empson has requested use of a space at Immanuel for Musikgarten, a program for toddlers and preschoolers two sessions Friday mornings. Laurie moved and Robyn seconded; motion approved. John Parton has asked to expand his community meditation time to afternoons (4:30-5:00) as well. Neither use request will conflict with Wednesday school programing. Jeanie moved and Lisa seconded; motion carried.

Courtney Pendleton was invited to attend the council meeting. She is Immanuel’s Lutheran student campus liaison. Robyn volunteered her husband Bob as the chef for the first campus dinner September 22. Laurie Schmidt will be part of the advisory committee as evangelism chair.

The meeting was closed with the Lord’s Prayer.

Respectively Submitted by
Laurie A. Schmidt
Secretary pro-temp

Blessing of Animals



St. Patrick's Catholic Church will host a Blessing of Animals service on Sunday, October 5th at 1:00 p.m. in the Church parking lot. The service honors St. Francis of Assisi, who renounced wealth and privilege to devote himself to serving the poor. Francis had a spirit of gladness and gratitude for all of God's creation. All are welcome to bring pets or animals of any kind.

Educational Estate Planning Seminar

Our congregation will be hosting an educational estate planning seminar featuring Craig D. Stirtz, CRFE and President of Lutheran Planned Giving Service, NE on Sunday, October 26th, 2014 following worship. We will have a potluck brunch following service and then hold the seminar.



Why is our congregation hosting an educational estate planning seminar?

Most of us have loved ones we wish to remember in our estate plan. Most Lutherans also support ministries that are important to them, including our congregation. Yet few really know the best way to do everything we want to do for loved ones while remembering a gift for ministry as well. We are often reluctant to attend a seminar for fear we will have our arms twisted or will receive a sales pitch.

Lutheran Planned Giving Services offers over 20 educational seminars per year for ELCA congregations. These are not high pressure, sales pitch meetings. Rather they are purely educational, offering information about mistakes people can make in their estate plans (resulting in more taxes and less to their loved ones). The seminar also provides information on various ways members can make reduced tax gifts for their loved ones and for ministry. You can leave your checkbook at home, as LPGS has nothing to sell. LPGS is funded by the ELCA and the agencies and institutions of the church as a free gift to our members.

If you do not have a will, if you have not created or reviewed your estate plan in the past 5 years, or if you just want ideas on how to reduce taxes and get more to your family and your favorite charities, it is important that you attend this seminar! Join us to learn valuable information about how careful estate planning can be a great blessing for you, your loved ones and for any ministries you wish to include.

Stewardship

God's FIRST RESPONDERS

By Michelle Cobb

Daily, the news stories capture our attention: public servants – some paid, some volunteer – who respond to emergencies of every type. Outwardly, they are known by their bright and well-recognized garb: hats, boots, coats that identify these persons as first responders in times of great need. We applaud their successes and mourn with their families and communities when some make the ultimate sacrifice to save the lives of others.

In the local church community, we have the opportunity to learn to be first responders, offering the generosity of God. This generosity was revealed when God gave the world Jesus Christ. God's Son expresses the depth of God's generosity. Like those who are trained for work in perilous circumstances, God calls us to be fearless in our living, our giving, and our service.

Fearless Living

The local church community is the primary place for cultivating an attitude and practice of generosity. Here we are taught what it means to be stewards of all that we have. Here we are taught how to give or offer the time, spiritual gifts, skill sets, and finances with which we have been entrusted.

In the Parable of the Sower (Matt. 13:3-9), there are different responses to the generosity of God. There are those who choose to not respond. There are those who have an initial response but then turn away. And there are those who respond fully – at 100 percent! When the soil of the heart is fully responsive to the message of God's generosity, the result is abundant, fearless living (Mark 4:8). When we live abundant, fearless lives, we do not worry about the necessities of life, i.e., food, clothing, or any other needs that we may have (Matt. 6:33). We do not worry because our trust and our commitment are in our generous God who promises to provide for our needs (Phil 4:19).

Fearless disciples who live their lives with a belief in the abundance of God create fearless and generous church communities.

Fearless Giving

Giving is our response to the generosity that we have received from God. We are to give of ourselves and the resources that we have. We are to give fearlessly and freely and not with an attitude of scarcity.

In the midst of economic and life uncertainties, it can be tempting to permit fear to control and influence the resources that we have. Such fear can lead some of us to believe that we must hold on to our resources. This attitude and mindset can and will lead to stress, uncertainty, and a distorted view of God. Jesus said, "Pay attention to what you hear; the measure you give will be the measure you get, and still more will be given you. For to those who have, more will be given; and from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away" (Mark 4:24-35, NRSV).

The annual stewardship campaign in the local church provides the occasion for us to respond to our God who has given and continues to give so much to us through Jesus Christ. It is an opportunity for us to discover that giving is about a way of life, an abundant life that is not just focused on finances.

Although the annual stewardship campaign provides financial support for the ministry-related needs identified by our faith communities, it also serves as an opportunity for the followers of Jesus Christ to gauge their level of response to our generous God. The campaign reveals whether we are living abundant and fearless – or fearfull – lives. Our giving, demonstrates the depth of our love for God and our trust in God. The level or amount of our financial commitment expresses our belief that God is a generous God who "is able to do more than we can ask or imagine" (Eph. 3:20) or that God is a God of scarcity.

Fearless Service

Through the power that God has given to us individually and as communities of faith, God will work through us to reveal God's generosity to others.

Again, Paul reminds us that we "cannot begin to think or imagine" how God in whom we trust will work through us and through the church to accomplish God's will in the world, now and in the future. It is the local church community that corporately expresses the generous nature of our God to a world that hungers to see an alternative to the imaginations of fear and scarcity.

Let us live, give, and serve fearlessly as God's first responders. May we be well known and recognized as carriers of God's grace-filled generosity to a world in need!

Upcoming Events in the Nebraska Synod



Synod Field Trip: October 25th-26th at Spirit of Grace in Holdrege. Come be a part of this year's service/worship/fellowship experience.

Lay Leadership Academy: Bible Study for Dummies, November 15th-16th at Carol Joy Holling Camp, led by Diane Jacobson, Director of the ELCA's Book of Faith Initiative.



LYON (Lutheran Youth of Nebraska) Assembly: November 21st-23rd at the Holiday Inn and Convention Center in Kearney. All youth in grades 9-12 & adult leaders are welcome

Musikgarten Classes

Musikgarten classes will be held at Immanuel Lutheran Church upstairs in the youth room. There will be two classes offered. "God, My Family, and Me" for ages 15 months-3 1/2 years will be at 9:15-9:45am. "Friends in God's World" for ages 3-5 years will be from 10:00-10:45am.

Musikgarten is a program in early childhood music education — for children and teachers, that offers a complete multi-year educational program that helps infants, toddlers, and children develop a deep love of music and the ability to express it.

To register or for more information contact Laura Empson at (308) 430-5133 or visit www.musikgarten.org.



Harvest Dinner

Sunday, November 16, 2013 - 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Calling all Immanuel Lutheran Church Members!!



Come and help make this year's Fall Feast (formerly Community Harvest Dinner) a success. We need everyone's participation this year to invigorate our community to come and enjoy their Thanksgiving favorites with us.

We need help from all congregation members to promote the event to your family, friends and neighbors; distribute flyers and pre-sell tickets within the community. We would also like everyone to sign up for at least one of the food items that we will be serving.

We also need volunteers on the day of the event. Please sign up to: help in the kitchen, help in the dining room, or help at the entrance (with selling tickets, taking tickets and greeters). Or call the church office to let us know how you will help.

This year we will also promote the work of our Shepherd's Pantry. Attendees are encouraged to bring non-perishable foods to restock our shelves.

Treasurer's Report

September 2014

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Beginning balance August 31, 2014 | \$ (2,452.36) |
| Income Weekly Offering | \$ 7,371.56 |
| Other Income | \$ 387.95 |
| Coffee/tea sales | \$ 45.00 |
| Thrivent | \$ 94.00 |
| Interest checking | \$.11 |
| Total Income | \$ 7,898.62 |
| Expenses | \$ 8,439.61 |
| Ending balance as of September 30, 2014 | \$ (2,993.35) |

Worship Attendance

| Date | Sunday Service |
|--------------|----------------|
| September 7 | 57 |
| September 14 | 52 |
| September 21 | 47 |
| September 28 | 45 |

Thank you to Garden Caretakers

Fawn Larsen would like to thank all of those volunteers who helped keep the gardens at the church looking their best this summer. Your work and dedication to the beautification of the church grounds is much appreciated.



Hearing Assistance Available

Please note that hearing assistance receivers are available to those in need during church service. Headphones and receivers are located at the rear of the sanctuary when you first come in. You may also bring headphones of your choice from home to use with the provided receivers. Please ask the Ushers or Greeters for help locating these items if you can not find them.



Immanuel Lutheran Church
747 Ann Street
Chadron, NE 69337

COUNCIL MEMBERS

President - Jane Darnell
Vice-President - Leo Vander May
Secretary - Sharon Thurlow
Treasurer - Laurie Harris
Building & Grounds - David Coe
Education - Lisa Briggs
Evangelism - Laurie Schmidt
Fellowship - Karleen Gramberg
Social Ministry - Robyn Baquet
Stewardship - Jeanine Mohr
Worship - Julie Duncan
Youth/Young Adult - Jarrod Briggs
Youth/Young Adult - Walt Mays
Pastor - Ann Sundberg

Other Staff -

Financial Secretary - Lorrie Bauer
Custodian - Michelle Haynes
Church Secretary - Whitney Tewahade

Important contact information:

Nebraska Synod Website:
www.nebraskasynod.org, phone number
402-896-5311

ELCA Church wide Website: www.elca.org,
phone number 800-638-3522