Newsletter for the Fisher Bygland Lutheran Parish Lutheran Parish
September, 2019

THE MESSENGER

From the Pastor's desk...

September Stewardship

September will be a busy month around here. Farming will be busy with the different crop harvests seeming to come at the same time. School is back in session with fall sports in full swing. Church will be busy too. "God's Work. Our Hands." Sunday and Sunday School Rally will be September 8, check the calendar for the schedule of events.

Confirmation for students in grades 6-8 along with their parents will have an informational meeting on Wednesday, September 4, 6:15 at Fisher Lutheran. Councils will reconvene after an August break. We will return to our regular Sunday schedule of worship in each congregation. Busy, busy, busy.

Fall has also traditionally been a busy time in the church for stewardship activities. Many congregations have their annual pledge/commitment campaigns in the fall. Offerings increase in the fall as people worship more regularly. Efforts are made to contact all members of the church to make sure that the year ends in the black financially. Busy, busy, busy.

The goal of stewardship ministry is to strengthen and deepen our relationship with Jesus. Here are my suggestions for fall stewardship:

Daily devotions and prayer. Amid all this business, it is easy to lose focus. Christ in Our Home devotions and Spark family devotion books are available in the church narthex at both congregations. Take time to pray and read the Bible. It will give you peace in the midst of the business.

Worship. Gather with other believers to offer your prayers, praise, and thanksgiving, being fed with the Word and the bread of life. If you are in a farm vehicle on Sunday morning, you can tune into several worship services on your radio. If you are out of town for sports, visit a congregation where you are.

Give offerings. You may want to consider a ten percent tithe of your summer income as a joyful thanksgiving for all God has giving you this year. Fisher Lutheran members are invited to sign up for electronic giving. This is a way to directly deposit your offering as a discipline of first fruits giving.

Serve. God's work. Our hands. Sunday give us a chance to gather school kit and health kit items to give to those in need. At Bygland we will also have the chance to care for creation doing Adopt-a-Highway. You may also consider how God is calling you into ministry. Are you asked to teach Sunday School, work on a committee, or volunteer your time at a local charity?

All these things will strengthen and deepen your relationship with Jesus, the goal of stewardship.

Looking forward to seeing all of you in worship,

Pastor Karen

Let's Honor The Lord With Our Giving

"Remember this, whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly. And whoever sows generously will also reap generously."

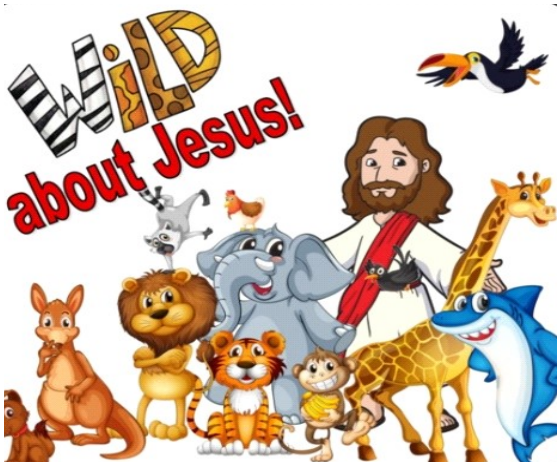
Welcome to Fisher Lutheran's

2019-2020 Sunday School Year

Wild About Jesus!

Rally Sunday will be on September 8th at 10:00 AM!

The Fisher Lutheran Rally Sunday session will feature Interactive games, music and activities to Introduce everyone to the new education year.



Be sure to bring your backpacks to have them blessed during the church service at 11 AM!

WHAT'S SUNDAY SCHOOL ALL ABOUT?

- Children 3 years old to 5th grade are welcome to join us each Sunday at 10:00 AM
- The Spark Sunday School curriculum will guide our students through a comprehensive Bible-based curriculum the follows the sermons you'll hear from Pastor Karen each Sunday!
    - Gather – Kids enjoy a welcoming activity and prayer
    - It's all about the Bible – Bible discovery and exploration is integrated in every program, every lesson, and every age group – from preschoolers to preteen.
    - Activities kids love – Lively, age-appropriate activities – such as games, crafts or creative play – accommodate all ways a kid learns!

OFFERING

Offering will be taken each week but with a little variety. God wants us to give with a cheerful heart and a generous spirit!

- Bring pocket change the **FIRST** Sunday of each month beginning Oct. 6th for a **"Noisy Offering"**

  Noisy Offering collected through December will be given to a selected mission or ministry. Funds collected Jan. through May will be sent to Pathways Lutheran Outdoor Ministries. Pathways is a Bible Camp Corporation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and is committed to providing unique experiences where God encounters people and renews them to live lives of love. Pathways provides faith building opportunities through youth summer camping programs and year-round youth, adult and family retreats.

- We will celebrate each child's **Baptism** on the **SECOND** Sunday of each month. Those with baptism anniversaries during the month are asked to bring pennies that will be counted out in a special baptism offering for each year of their lives. We will begin the year with August/September baptism recognition on Sept. 15th. Those with baptism dates in June & July will be recognized in May 2020.
- The **THIRD** Sunday of each month will be designated as **Mission Sunday**. In lieu of a monetary offering, the children will be asked to bring items to donate to Northlands Rescue Mission in Grand Forks or other charity projects. ***Current needs will be noted in the Fisher Lutheran newsletter as well as in the weekly Sunday School email.***

ATTENDANCE

- Each Sunday, children will be able to "check in" on the attendance chart outside our Gathering space.
- Should a child be visiting another church on a given Sunday, please bring a bulletin or visitor item so that their attendance can be added to their home church Sunday School attendance chart.
- Children will be recognized for faithful attendance at the end of the school year.

MEMORIZATION GOALS

- Preschool – Grade 2 – The Lord's Prayer
- Grades 3 & 4 – The Ten Commandments
- Grade 5 – The Apostle's Creed
- All classes will learn the Books of the Bible through a variety of songs, creative games & activities.
- Students will be recognized for reaching their memorization goals.

IMPORTANT DATES

- **Rally Sunday – Sept. 8, 2019**
- 3 Yr. old & 3rd Gr. Bible presentations during 11 AM church services on Sept. 22, 2019. *Parents are invited forward with their children for the presentations.*
- Christmas program - December 15th
- "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord"

  The children will take part in the church service on Palm Sunday.

  - **Sun., April 5**
- Service Projects
  - **Sept. 8th** School Kits for Lutheran World Relief. Items gathered during Sunday School offering and packed after the church service as part God's Work, Our Hands Sunday.
  - **Oct. 6 – Dec. 8** ELCA Good Gifts Collection. On Dec. 8th, the students will combine their funds and select "Good Gifts" from God's global barnyard that will make a world of difference for a family in need. Go "Tail" it on the Mountain!
  - **Nov. 17** Items for a Thanksgiving meal will be gathered as part of Mission Sunday
  - **Nov. 24** Blizzard Bags will be packed and donated to Lutheran Social Services for distribution to Meals on Wheels participants. "For I was hungry and you fed me…." Matthew 25:35
  - **April 26th** Mother's & Father's Day Gift Project
- Sunday School WILL NOT be held on the following dates:
  - **Oct. 20**
  - **Dec. 1**
  - **Dec. 22**
  - **Dec. 29**
  - **Feb. 16**
  - **April 12**
- Last Day of Sunday School
  - **May 17**

GOD'S WORK OUR HANDS SUNDAY
September 8th, 2019 at 11:00 AM
Fisher Lutheran Church

*Please bring items for School and Personal Care Kits
*Stay after church for a bite to eat
*Help assemble Kits for Lutheran World Relief (LWR) and weather permitting, fall clean up around the church property .

Following is a list of items; please consider donating any amount of any of these items.
Purchasing all items for a complete kit is not necessary.

Be sure to wear your Thrivent "Live Generously" T-shirt if you have one!

- Four 70-sheet notebooks of wide or college ruled paper, approximately 8"x10 1/2"; no loose leaf paper.
- One 30 centimeter ruler, or a ruler with centimeters on one side and inched on the other.
- One pencil sharpener (not battery Operated.)
- One pair of blunt scissors (safety scissors with embedded steal blades work well.)
- Five unsharpened #2 pencils with erasers
- Five black or blue ballpoint pens (no gel ink.)
- One box 16 or 24 crayons
- One 2 1/2" eraser

- One light-weight bath-sized towel (between 20"x 40" and 27" x 52"), dark color recommended.
- Two or three bath-sized bars of soap equaling 8 to 9 oz., and brand , in original wrapping.
- One adult-size toothbrush in its original packaging (toothbrush multi-packs may be used by sealing an individual toothbrush in a business-size envelope: not plastic bags or wrap.)
- One metal nail clippers (attached file optional), remove packaging.
- One sturdy comb, remove packaging (no fine-toothed combs or picks, See photo.)

FISHER NEWS

QUILT? NO EXPERIENCE REQUIRED!!

Tues. September 24th 6:30 at the church. Spend an hour tying and/or pinning a quilt, cutting squares of fabric and Learning what you can do at home that would benefit this mission. All are invited to spend an hour!!

(This is a Thrivent Action Team Event)

THANKOFFERING- Women of the ELCA Thankofferings help support the ongoing ministries of the churchwide women's organization. This includes justice and advocacy work, communication ministries, conventions and conferences, program resources and so much more. Go online to : womenoftheelca.org...check out Daily Grace, Bold Cafe, Podcasts, and Faith Reflection. If you wish to make a Thankoffering, envelopes will be provided at church to be placed in the offering plate, or the WELCA mailbox in the narthex, or given to Sheryl Tinkham.

Sept. 9th & 10th 9:00 AM Quilting
Sept. 14th & 15th NWMN Synodical Women's Convention
Sept. 18th 9:00 AM Bible Study
Sept. 23rd & 24th 9:00 AM Quilting

BYGLAND NEWS

God's Work. Our Hands. Sunday: Join us for packing school kits after Worship on Sept. 8th. See page 4 for items to donate.

Family Fellowship Sept. 15th

BOOK CLUB NEWS: Members of the book club will meet at 7:00 on Monday, September 23, to discuss EDUCATED: a memoir (Tera Westover). Unless the weather is unusually mild, we will meet at the church. New members are always welcome!

Quilting: Sept. 4 and 11, beginning at 9:00

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

Sunday 9-8-19:
Rally Sunday/Sunday school registration at Bygland - 10:00 a.m.
Blessing of the backpacks during the 9 a.m. service.
God's Work, Our Hands Sunday
Adopt-A-Highway - 10:00 a.m.

Sunday 9-15-19
Installation of Sunday school teachers and staff during the 11:00 service.

Northwestern Minnesota Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Bishop Installation

The Northwestern Minnesota Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
cordially invites you to attend the Worship
Celebration and Service of Installation for

Rev. William "Bill" Tesch, Bishop

Rev. Karla Mickelson, Associate to the Bishop
Sharon Josephson, Synod Vice President

Sunday the Eighth of September

Two thousand nineteen
at four o'clock in the afternoon

Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, Presiding

A reception at the church will follow the service.

Trinity Lutheran Church
210 7th Street South, Moorhead, Minnesota

ACT JUSTLY. LOVE TENDERLY. WALK HUMBLY WITH YOUR GOD.

Micah 6:8

Parking is available both at the church and across the street on the north side.

For additional information, feel free to contact the Northwestern Minnesota Synod
218-299-3019 or czeh@cord.edu

"We Are Church:" ELCA Churchwide Assembly Report

On August 5, 2019 the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), began its fifteenth churchwide assembly in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Under the theme *We Are Church*, nearly 1000 voting members and guests gathered to worship, review the work of the churchwide organization, and vote on matters of governance and policy. Twenty-one voting members from the Northwestern Minnesota Synod participated in the assembly along with similar contingents from the ELCA's other 64 synods.

Major actions taken by the Assembly included:

- Re-electing Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton on the first ballot, with over 81% of the vote. Bishop Eaton, who was first elected in 2013, will serve a second 6-year term through 2025.
- Electing Deacon Sue Rothmeyer as Secretary of the ELCA. The Secretary is an officer and executive administrator for matters pertaining to the ELCA's governing documents, organizational structure, and maintenance of the rosters of ministers and congregations.
- Adopting the social statement, ***Faith, Sexism and Justice: A Call to Action*** along with its implementing resolutions. Read the statement at https://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Current-Social-Writing-Projects/Women-and-Justice?_ga=2.42569253.1467322994.1565617712-1136517837.1447278879
- Approving ***A Declaration of Inter-Religious Commitment*** which now complements the 1991 ELCA statement, *A Declaration of Ecumenical Commitment.* Read the *Declaratio*n at https://www.elca.org/Faith/Ecumenical-and-Inter-Religious-Relations/Inter-Religious-Relations/Draft-Policy-Statement?_ga=2.9038389.1467322994.1565617712-1136517837.1447278879
- Approving a change to the ELCA constitution stating that the entrance rite for deacons (rostered ministers of word and service) will be **ordination** rather than consecration.
- Receiving and approving **budgets** for the churchwide organization during the next triennium. To find out how you contribute to the life and mission of the ELCA go to: Where does my offering go?
- Receiving the results of ***Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA***. This $198 million campaign was approved by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly. At the Campaign's conclusion on June 30, 2019 nearly $250 million has been raised through gifts, pledges, and planned giving.
- Presenting a Declaration to People of African Descent to representatives of the African Descent Lutheran Association—and voting to commemorate June 17 as a day of repentance and remembrance in the ELCA for the deaths of the "Emanuel Nine" who were murdered on June 17, 2015, during a Bible study at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church in Charleston, South Carolina.
- Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the ordination of women, the 40th anniversary of the first ordination of a woman of color in the ELCA, and the 10th anniversary of the ELCA's acceptance of persons in committed same-sex relationships (since 2015, marriages) on the ELCA rosters of ministry.

Lawrence R. Wohlrabe
Bishop, Northwestern Minnesota Synod ELCA

"When Jesus died, something happened as a result of which the world was a different place. By six o'clock on the evening of the first Good Friday, the world had changed. A revolution had begun." N.T. Wright, The Day the Revolution Began, p. 355.

What Might it Mean to Be a Sanctuary Church Body?

By Bishop Larry Wohlrabe and Bishop-Elect Bill Tesch, NW MN Synod ELCA

On Wednesday, August 7, 2019, voting members of the ELCA Churchwide Assembly adopted a memorial that included an amendment "to declare the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America a sanctuary church body." (The full text of the memorial is available at http://nwmnsynod.org/resources/ca19-03-11-churchwide-memorial-declaring-the-elca-a-sanctuary-church-body/)

Unfortunately this action was picked up by a national cable news network that broadcast a five minute "discussion" by three panelists, none of whom were present at the Churchwide Assembly, nor are they members of the ELCA or authorized to speak on behalf of the ELCA. The broadcast conveyed misinformation about the Assembly's action, implying that ELCA congregations would simply ignore U.S. law, **which is not true.** Also, a panelist implied that undocumented immigrants carry disease and pose a public health risk, **which is also not true.**

So what might it actually mean for our ELCA to be a "sanctuary church body?" In response to this legitimate question, ELCA leaders familiar with our church's strategy for engaging issues around immigration and refugees have offered the following information:

- In its simplest form, becoming a sanctuary denomination means that the ELCA is **publicly declaring** that walking alongside immigrants and refugees is a matter of faith. The ELCA Churchwide Assembly, the highest legislative authority of the ELCA, declared that when we preach on Sunday that Jesus told us to welcome, we will use our hands and voices on Monday to make sure it happens.
- We have a broken system regarding immigration, refugees and asylum-seekers. To declare ourselves a sanctuary church body is to say that we seek to provide concrete resources to assist the most vulnerable who are feeling the sharp edges of this broken system.
- Being a sanctuary denomination is about loving our neighbors. While we may have different ideas about how to fix this broken system and may have different ways of loving our neighbors, our call to love our neighbor is central to our faith.
- Being a sanctuary denomination will look different in different contexts. It may mean providing space for people to live; providing financial and legal support to those who are working through the immigration system; or supporting other congregations and service providers. The ELCA churchwide organization cannot mandate or direct our congregations and ministries to respond in specific ways. Each must work out what this means for them in their context.
- While we don't yet know the full scope of the work that this declaration will open for the ELCA, we do know that our faith communities are already doing sanctuary work. Sanctuary for a congregation may mean hosting English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, marching as people of faith against the detention of children and families, providing housing for a community member facing deportation, or, in some of our congregations, having thoughtful conversations about what our faith says about immigration. All of these are a step closer to sanctuary in our faith communities and sanctuary in our world for people who must leave their homes.

- Except for our members whose ancestors were here before European settlement or others who were forced to come to the U.S. against their will, the ELCA is an immigrant church. Our decades-long work with immigrants and refugee *is* how we practice our faith in the world. Lutherans started Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS), one of the nine refugee resettlement agencies in the U.S.
- At our 2016 Churchwide Assembly, we also committed to walking alongside Central American children and families fleeing their communities by passing the AMMPARO strategy (*Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities*).
- Through the AMMPARO strategy, we are also working through our global partners in Central America to alleviate the conditions that cause people to migrate. We support organizations and faith communities that work with deported migrants in Central America and advocate for the humane treatment of immigrants in Mexico. In the U.S., we have a network of 151 welcoming and sanctuary congregations that are committed to working on migration issues and a welcome for immigrant communities. The church also has five sanctuary synods (our regional structures), all of which do work with immigrants, refugees and asylum-seekers.
- In baptism, we are brought into a covenantal relationship with Jesus Christ that commits us to strive for justice and peace in all the earth. Following the example of Martin Luther, we believe that advocacy is a crucial expression of baptismal identity. As a church, we have advocated for stopping the detention of children and families for decades. We have spoken out against family separation, sought a pathway to citizenship for community members that have lived in the U.S. for many years, and have taken steps to address the root causes of migration in a way that honors the humanity in people who must flee. Being a sanctuary denomination means that we, as church together, want to be public and vocal about this work. At the same time, we will have conversations about what sanctuary means with many of our members and discern future action and direction. For us, welcoming people is first and foremost a matter of faith which impacts how we live out all our vocations in God's world, including our political life.

CA19.03.11 Churchwide Memorial Declaring the ELCA a Sanctuary Church Body

CA19.03.11. To receive with gratitude the memorial from the Metropolitan New York Synod concerning sanctuary;
To reaffirm the long-term and growing commitment of this church to migrants and refugees and to the policy questions involved, as exemplified most recently in the comprehensive strategy "Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities" (AMMPARO);
To recognize that the ELCA in congregations, synods and the churchwide organization are already taking the actions requested by this memorial; and
To request that appropriate staff on the AMMPARO team, LIRS, and the Domestic Mission, Global Mission, and Mission Advancement units review the existing strategies and practices by the five current sanctuary synods and develop a plan for additional tools that provide for education and discernment around sanctuary;
To declare the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America a sanctuary church body; and
To request the ELCA Church Council, in consultation with the appropriate churchwide units and offices, provide guidance for the three expressions of this church about what it means to be a sanctuary church body and provide a report to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly.

July Church Council Highlights

Bygland Meeting July 10

8 members present, 4 absent

Devotions were based on the Synod Assembly bible study of book of Jonah.

Reports were received from the secretary, treasurer, and pastor.

Old business included membership roster, constitution, parsonage, roof contract, security, and the Bygland community picnic.

New business included information on Call-M-All church messaging, a free trial will be utilized. An update to the constitution was also discussed.

Next meeting: September 11

Fisher Meeting July 17

7 members were present

Devotions were led by Pastor Karen

Secretary, treasurer, and pastor reports were received.

Correspondence was shared.

The property committee presented a bid from Wagner's landscaping to fix the drop from the new asphalt to the grass. A motion to accept the bid was passed.

Bruce Newhouse gave a report on the pledges for the new parking lot.

Old Business included constitutional changes and committee assignments

New Business included information on Call-M-All church messaging, a free trial will be utilized.

Next meeting: September 18

Northwestern Mental Health Center in Crookston is a Certified Crisis Response Provider. Mental Health practitioners and professionals are available to have phone contact or face-to-face contact with all Individuals in crisis to assess and provide services. Screenings and assessments are provided on phone, or in person. Services are available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week and can be accessed by calling the crisis line at 1-800-282-5005.

Valley Senior Living

After 96 years of caring for the long term care needs of our community, we continue to be locally-owned, not-for-profit and governed by 25 are Lutheran congregations.

The only thing changing is our name!

We will continue to provide compassionate Christian care and service to enhance the quality of life for those we serve.

valleyseniorliving.org 701-787-7900