



SHEPHERD'S STAFF

SHEPHERD OF THE VALLEY LUTHERAN CHURCH
A CONGREGATION OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

Volume 59 Issue 11

NOVEMBER 2017

Life to the Fullest

As I write to you, Reformation Sunday (the 500th!) is approaching, including the gospel reading that includes John 8:32: "[I]f the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed" (NRSV). So that's the gospel that's been bouncing around in my mind in thinking about what's coming up in November, including Stewardship Sunday on November 19. And this promise of being "free" raises the question, when we talk about stewardship do we miss something Jesus has in mind for us?

Stewardship is a noble idea, a biblical idea. We are indeed called to take care of Christ's kingdom—the "stuff" of God's marvelous creation, but more importantly the people, the relationships God gives us. We do that until he returns, which as we are reminded around November and Advent every year, may happen any day now. Stewardship describes well the Christian life and the promise it anticipates.

But does stewardship, this calling Christ gives us in baptism, speak to the freedom Jesus talks about in John 8, or is there more going on here?

Relationship with Jesus frees us to be stewards, but Jesus is talking also about what it frees us *from*. In the gospel of John, Jesus makes his purpose clear: "I came so that they could have life—indeed, so that they could live life to the fullest." Relationship with Jesus means we can begin to let go of what otherwise holds us back from the fullness of life: selfish desires; mistrust; worries; fears about the future; despair. In place of these things comes their Christ-like opposites: generosity; willingness to trust; peace; confidence in God's future; joy. And reveling in those gifts is what living "life to the fullest" is all about.

That's what stewardship alone didn't say much about: how relationship with Jesus means not just caring for Jesus' kingdom, but being transformed and freed by his gifts. Jesus turns our world upside down, so that the secret of wealth is generosity, the secret of fear is to comfort the fearful, and the secret of living in an uncertain present is trusting God's certain future. All so that you and I can experience the fullness of life in Christ, the brilliance and beauty of life lived generously, hopefully, trustingly. "If the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed." Amen!

Yours in the spirit,

Pr. Scott

† IN OUR PRAYERS †



Intercessions: **Nevagay Abel, Neva & Don Abel, Dyvone Freburg, Kelsey Hernandez, Stu Hoffman, Lisa Jones, Doris Kampfe, Kevin Persaud, Carline Talmadge, Alice Kundo, Annette Aken, Doris Dohlen, John Miller, Myrna Hagemann, Sally Schrader, Judi Fields, Ken Barton, Linda Longardner, David Johnson** (nephew of Dyvone Freburg), **Phil Armato** (Patte Lund's father), **Mildred Anderson** (mother of Cheryl Erdmann), **Lyle Solko, Don Johnson** (friend of Lyle & Phyllis Nelson), **Carol Triplett** (friend of the Smalley and Wacker families), **LeAnn Dahl** (daughter of Carol Dahl), **Pastor Jane McChesney, Bill Wolf** (father of John Wolf), **Don Stinson** (friend of Don & Neva Abel), **Lois and Mike Virtue** (friends of Scott & Sue Francis), **Katie Fields** (Judi's daughter-in-law), **June Cain** (Synod bookkeeper), **Pam Welter** (daughter-in-law of Bev & Adolph Wacker), **Virginia McIntyre** (mother of Mike McIntyre), **Karen Nitz** (mother of Kevin Nitz), and the **Stubbs** family, (missionaries in Tanzania).

(Please review this list and let either Pastor Scott or the church office know when a name can be removed).

We extend our sympathy to Annette Aken and her family on the death of her mother Ivanelle. Please keep the family in your prayers.

Become a Member

Please speak with Pastor Scott after worship if you would like to be received into our community of faith on the Baptism of our Lord, January 7, 2018 .

Senior News

There is no senior event in November



The classes are adjusting well. They enjoyed having Mom's come to school for "Muffins with Mom". They're excited to wear their costumes for Halloween.

The 4 year-old class will sing for the residents of Rosewood Care Center.

The 3 year-old class will have parents and grandparents in to share a few Halloween songs with them.

Please let the church office or Pastor Scott know if there are items you would like to see in the newsletter.

Keeping Shepherd of the Valley up-to-date

Please be sure to let the office of Shepherd of the Valley know when you have a change in address, phone number or e-mail.

The church office will be closed Thursday, November 23 in observance of Thanksgiving, The office will reopen on Monday, November 27.

This year we are combining our Thanksgiving service with Alpine Lutheran, The service will be at 7:00 p.m. at Alpine.

Have a safe and happy Thanksgiving.



Daylight savings time ends November 5th. Remember to set your clocks back. Enjoy that extra hour of sleep!!

All Saints Sunday **SUNDAY**
NOVEMBER 5

CELEBRATE THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS THAT HAVE GONE BEFORE US THIS PAST YEAR.

- LOIS GRUENBERG
- ROBERT FRITZ
- KEITH TALMADGE
- GILBERT DOHLEN
- LOIS JOHNSON
- HELEN SWANSON
- RUBY WATSON

On October 29th Justin Abel and Lauren Spangler will affirm their baptism.



Social Ministry



Social Ministry

The David Persaud family could use our help. Their son, Kevin, and his mom will be in Philadelphia for eight weeks starting October 14th for Kevin to receive further treatment for his recurring cancer. Can you help out by providing a meal or donation for a meal? Please see the sign-up poster in the narthex or talk with Kris Tukker.

November 6th we will be providing "Pizza Night" for the Rock House Kids. Make donations through the church offering by marking an envelope "Rock House Kids".

If you would like to take some blankets home to tie, please see Kris Tukker or Sherry Scheider. Finished blankets will be donated to Rock House kids!

SAVE THE DATE
FAMILY CHRISTMAS CAROLING
DECEMBER 10

On Sunday, December 10th, the Fellowship committee will be hosting a Christmas Caroling event to our homebound member. The caroling will occur in the afternoon. Please look for the signup to participate in this rewarding time of spreading the Christmas gift of songs. We will need singers and drivers to caravan the group. Any questions, please contact Janette or any member of Fellowship.

Faith Forum

Join us in Shepherd Hall (down the hall from the office), 11:00-11:45 A.M. most Sundays for Faith Forum (a.k.a. Adult Forum). Each month we'll follow this pattern:

- * 1st Sunday of the month: Together in Faith (informal coffee and conversation in Moline Hall)
- * 2nd Sunday of the month: Living Lutheran (discussing last month's *Living Lutheran Magazine*)
- * 3rd Sunday of the month: Connecting the Faith (how our faith matters in the world)
- * 4th Sunday of the month: Deepening the Faith (topics to deepen our roots in the faith)



There is an exciting trip next summer, June 27 - July 1, to the ELCA National Youth Gathering in Houston, Texas. If you are part of the high school graduating classes of 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, or 2022 you are invited. Imagine 30,000 youth from all over the country gathered in one place having a good time, playing, worshipping, serving, and eating. You'll find that the Gathering is a very full experience that goes from sunrise into the late evening each day. But, it's not about filling time, keeping busy, or packing a lot of life into a few days. It's about you and your relationship with God. If you are interested in joining other youth from around the country, contact Pastor Scott or talk to him any Sunday morning. Your friends are welcome, too.

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

THIS CHANGES EVERYTHING.

2018 ELCA YOUTH GATHERING

JUNE 27-JULY 1 + HOUSTON, TX
GATHERING@ELCA.ORG + 888-411-3522 + ELCA.ORG/GATHERING

FOR BY **GRACE** YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED THROUGH FAITH, AND THIS IS NOT YOUR OWN DOING; IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD. - EPHESIANS 2:8

@ELCAGATHERING FB.COM/YOUTHGATHERING @ELCAGATHERING

#ELCAYG2018

PRE-GATHERING EVENTS + JUNE 24-27

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MULTICULTURAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP EVENT OF THE ELCA AN ELCA GATHERING OF YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

Rockford area Lutheran Churches (ELCA)
and Katie's Cup
invite you to:

**HERE WE STAND:
DIALOGUES OF
FAITH AND THE
REFORMATION**

Tuesdays September 12th, October 3rd,
and November 7th
6:30pm at Katie's Cup
On the corner of 7th Street and 4th Avenue

September 12th discussion featuring
the Rev. Dr. Martin Lohrmann,
Assistant Professor of Lutheran Confessions and Heritage at
Wartburg Seminary
and Dr. Jacob Kohlhaas, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Moral Theology at Loras College

Northern Illinois Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Katie's CUP

Rockford Area
Lutheran
Ministries



**Please join Denise & Marc Purvis
as they celebrate their
20th wedding anniversary and support
Family Counseling Services
They will be Dancing with the Rockford Stars
November 18th at Giovanni's**

beginning at 6:00 pm

For more information go to:

www.dancewithrockfordstars.com

If you are unable to attend, donations can be made on the website. Thanks!

\$70 per person

\$650 per table of ten

\$40 for children's meal

Let Denise know when your ticket is purchased and she will arrange for you to sit at her table.

Rockford Area Lutheran Ministries

TRIVIA NIGHT

Friday, November 3

Our Savior's Lutheran Church
3300 Rural Street, Rockford
6 pm doors open, 7 pm play begins
\$ 15 per person

Tables of 8 available or sign up individually
www.RockTheGood.com
RalmMail@aol.com 815-962-4279

Do you like us on facebook?
www.facebook.com/RockfordAreaLutheran

Pre-registration required

Celebration

Open House at All Saints Lutheran Church in Byron for Pastor Janet Wold

All Saints Lutheran Church invites the community to an open house to celebrate the 30 year anniversary of the ordination of Pastor Janet Wold. Drop in and join us at All Saints Lutheran Church on Sunday, November 12th, between 11:45 am to 2:00 pm. There will be light refreshments served in the fellowship hall and a chance to visit with Pastor Janet. Pastor Janet Wold has served as pastor at All Saints for the past three years. All Saints Lutheran Church is located at the corner of Route 2 and Luther Drive.

As we commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, *Living Lutheran* is exploring 500 of its unique aspects. This series continues this month with 14 more facts.

- 40** The first Lutheran worship service in North America is believed to have taken place in what is now Manitoba, Canada, on Jan. 23, 1620.
- 41** Today, more than 200 denominations and churches in North America have histories connected to the Reformation.
- 42** Worldwide, the number of Christians has [more than tripled](#) in the last 100 years. But the world's overall population also has risen rapidly, so Christians make up about the same portion of the world's population today (32 percent) as they did a century ago (35 percent).
- 43** An abundance of festivals, exhibits, concerts and tours are taking place across Germany throughout 2017 in recognition of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.
- 44** Christian education was a passion of Luther's. He encouraged a partnership between the home and the church in which parents would take the lead and the church would assist.
- 45** The reformers taught God's dominion over the world, creation and all things and helped revive an interest in the world that was increasingly receptive to an encouraging of exploration, study and rediscovery of nature and the universe—without losing sight of faith and spirituality.
- 46** Stirring changes and new thinking about the church, religion, politics, law, economics, education and society, the Reformation influenced the transition from the Middle Ages to the modern period and Age of Discovery.
- 47** Luther didn't lay a personal, unique claim to his beliefs and teachings. He declared in a sermon, "It is not my doctrine, not my creation, but God's gift Dear Lord God, it was not spun out of my head, nor grown in my garden. Nor did it flow out of my spring, nor was it born of me. It is God's gift, not a human discovery."
- 48** Researchers and archaeologists have recently corroborated the assertion that Luther was a well-educated thinker and prolific writer, producing an average of 1,800 pages a year.
- 49** Recently discovered archive documents have revealed that an arranged marriage of Luther by his father may have been imminent for the young man and most likely played a major role in his leaving his study of law and joining the order of the Augustinian Hermits at the monastery in Erfurt.
- 50** During and after the Reformation, there was a sharp decline in the commissioning of large-scale works of biblical art by Protestant churches.

(Reprint information was granted by *Living Lutheran* magazine for this article as it first appeared in the June 2017 issue of *Living Lutheran*.)

Youth Survey

Tony Fiorenza is planning to remodel the youth room for his Eagle Scout project and would like your input. The survey is in two parts. Please follow these links and complete and submit both parts. <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BPPDQG5> <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/B6NWLRM>

Nursery Assistant

The schedules for November and December are on the Doodle website. Follow these links:

November: <https://doodle.com/poll/pfryzd6v9puuf2sk>

December: <https://doodle.com/poll/sm8i7p96z9hiefm9>



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Office Hours, Monday - Thursday, 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

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RETURN SERVICES REQUESTED

Officers of the Congregation

President - Carol Bailey
Vice-President - Sherry Scheider
Secretary - Vicki Nitz
Treasurer - Phil Smalley

Congregation Council

Carol Bailey, Christian Education
Janette Erickson, Fellowship
Vicki Nitz, Preschool
Sherry Scheider, Worship/Music
Zane Smalley, Youth Ministry
Kris Tukker, Social Ministry
Peggy Wenstrom, Personnel
Don Wiese, Finance
John Wolf, Stewardship
Outreach
Property

Staff

The Rev. Scott Benolkin, Pastor
Judi Fields, Secretary
Linda Longardner, Organist
Phil Smalley, Treasurer
Susie Smalley, Music Coordinator
Patte Lund, Christian Education
Anita Ralston, Custodian

Warm Feet

'Warm Feet Mission' is looking for your kind donations of either socks or monetary donations, to purchase socks.

There will be a box, on the table by the side of the Sanctuary, for all contributions.

We will also have socks available, that you may purchase for donation, at church on a Sunday to still be determined.

Thank you in advance.

See Ann Honer for more information.

