



Bethesda News

December 2016

Bethesda Lutheran Church: a congregation of S.W.I.M
South West Iowa Ministries, Western Iowa Synod, ELCA
2475 140th St., Clarinda, IA 51632

<http://swimwebsite.weebly.com>

Sunday School @ 10:00 a.m.

Fellowship Coffee @ 10:15 a.m.

Worship @ 11:00 a.m.



Pastor Ann Albert ~ Phone: 712-379-3332 or email: grace200062@yahoo.com

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

**(1) O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.**

***Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.***

I wonder how we would write a verse for 2016. Since I have little poetic talent, I offer a prayer.

Dear Lord,

Help us prepare for the birth of your Son as Jesus would have us prepare:

Help us to show love for all the people in our lives.

Help us to focus more on Jesus than the trappings of the season.

Help us to be aware of those who are poor, remind us to be generous in our giving to those who need it the most. Be generous with the bell ringers, food pantry donations, and gifts for the poor.

Help us to be kind and caring to those who have lost a loved one this past year. Let us offer a listening ear and a shoulder to cry on.

Martin Luther says we are to be “little Christs” to the people in our lives. Help the world see God in our actions.

Be with us Lord,

Amen.

May God bless all of you with His Peace, and His Joy this Advent season.

I am here for you.

Pastor Ann



The Lydia Circle will meet on Thursday, December 15th at 2:00 p.m. in the Upper Room at Bethesda. See you There!

Bethesda Women of the ELCA decided at our November meeting where we would like to give some “gifts” this year. Here is a list of the ones that were chosen: Lutheran Lakeside Camp \$50.00, Lutheran Services in Iowa \$50.00, Open Door Mission \$50.00, ALS Association \$50.00 and ELCA Good Gifts \$100.00.

The **Good Gifts** reflects God’s love, making a difference in peoples’ lives around the world. The Bethesda Ladies chose to provide 2 goats. Goats are a favorite when it comes to sustainable development. Why? Because they can go where others can’t—surviving in some of the world’s harshest environments – rocky terrain, drought prone areas, small plots of land - you name it. **Fresh milk from a goat provides daily nutrition for children and their families**, and their offspring can rapidly transform a community when offspring are shared with other families in need.

Thank You from Open Door Mission



Dear Women of the Bethesda ELCA,

What is your favorite Thanksgiving memory? The mouth-watering smell of turkey roasting in the oven? The rare and precious time together with those who mean most to you?

Most people have special memories of the holidays. But for the hungry and homeless men, women, and children who will break bread with us at Open Door Mission this Thanksgiving, their memories are more bitter than sweet. For whatever reason, the ties to home and family have been broken.

That’s why I am so grateful for YOU. With your recent gift of \$50.00, you have helped ensure that our neediest neighbors will have a place to go this Thanksgiving. A place to enjoy a delicious home-cooked meal, a warm welcome, and the support of a family—our staff, volunteers, and friends like you who truly care.

Because of YOU, hurting people know they are not alone—that they have the support of a compassionate community. This inspires HOPE for lasting change! So thank you again for your donation.

Thanksgiving Blessings,
Candace L. Gregory, President/CEO



December 11th during morning worship, the Bethesda musicians will present **Savior of the Nation, Come**, an Advent/Christmas Hymn Festival. The concert will include congregational singing, the Bells of Joy, Bethesda Recorder Consort, Women's chorus and the Sunday School children. We will premier a new piece written for our bell choir in memory of John Lind.



Thank you to our faithful lawn mowing crew: Steve Johnson and family, Dave Jones and Dennis Boger, Chris and Christie Vanderholm, Colby Carlson and family, and Stanley

Johnson. The churchyard always looked well cared for and loved. Your time and effort are appreciated by the church council and congregation.



Thank you to everyone who shared God's love by donating hats, mittens and gloves to the Southwest Iowa Families project. They were delivered the end of November.



Take a look at your own heart, and you will soon find out what has stuck to it and where your treasure is. It is easy to determine whether hearing the Word of God, living according to it, and achieving such a life gives you as much enjoyment and calls forth as much diligence from you as does accumulating and saving money and property. *Martin Luther*



The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Jan. 22, 2017, at 10:00 am in the basement during coffee time. Please mark your calendars and we will see you there.

Advent is the first part of the Christian "New Year" and prepares us for Christmas. We light candles to dispel the darkness and count the Sundays until Christ is born. Advent is a season of confession, even introspection. The church in Advent summons us to wait, be still, reflect, and with John the Baptist rage against injustice....Advent asks us to "Make straight a path for the Lord in the midst of our wilderness of materialism" if we can but take its message more seriously. God can surely speak to us through this season and help us to prepare more fully for the Incarnation, that incredible word made flesh, to come into our midst whether we're ready or not.

The color for Advent is blue, symbolic of penitence or confession and also symbolic of royalty or the coming of Christ as king. The music is filled with hope, expectation longing, rejoicing and lament.

From A Child Shall Lead: Children in Worship by John D. Witvliet



Soles for Souls-Stanley's Thrivent Action Project

Thank you to all of you that brought shoes for this project. We delivered 150 or more pairs of shoes and 150 pairs of shower flip flops to Open Door Mission just before Thanksgiving. We also took about 50 pairs of men's socks. With cold weather there is a definite need for all to wear real shoes. Also those in the shelter are required to wear flip flops in the community shared showers to control foot problems. Men's socks are especially appreciated in cold weather. We purchased these socks making an effort to find the size 12-15 for larger feet. Another bundle of new socks will be delivered in the near future. Candace Gregory sent a special thank you email for our delivery. Our help is greatly appreciated. We also had blankets, toys, and other clothes to deliver.

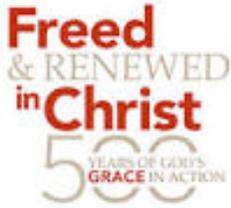
Moo, Gobble, Oink was Judy's Thrivent Action Project completed earlier in November. The money was used to purchase a variety of meat for families in need in the Clarinda area. The Clarinda Community Center coordinated the delivery in time for Thanksgiving. Jeanette Wilson wants to thank Bethesda for always helping her see that there is food for the needs. This project especially targeted elderly individuals who have very limited income. Meat is one of the high priced items on their shopping lists and often skipped.

Clean and Beautiful is Barbara's current Thrivent Action Project

The Thrivent money has been used to purchase specific items requested by Open Door Mission to give new Intakes at the center. The items are put in zip bags so they are ready to hand out. Shampoo, lotion, razors and shave cream, toothpaste and brushes and a wash cloth give each individual a start. All the items are sorted and bagged. One more stop at the store and the kits will be ready to go. As a side result of this project was the need for street kits. These are zip bags with soap, shampoo and lotion from motels stays. They are handed out to those who are living on the street. We have gathered several boxes of these items and hope the children can help sort and bag them after Sunday School. If you have any of these little items please bring them to church. They can be left on the kitchen counter. This will be an on going project since the need will also continue.

A New Thrivent Action Project

Barbara was contacted this past week asking if we could help 4 children. Their father owns and operated the Mexican restaurant in Clarinda. Several months ago he became ill and had to close down. Since then he has been hospitalized and undergone surgeries and treatment for pancreas problem. The 4 children went to relatives at first, but wanted to come back to school in Clarinda where they had friends. A special family (with 3 children of their own and limited income) agreed to take the children into their home. This is a real financial stress. Will you let us use your Thrivent Action Cards to help. They need winter clothes, food, and Christmas gifts. If you are interested in helping, please contact Barbara.



Morning Worship @ 11:00 A.M.
Sunday School @ 10:00 A.M.
Fellowship Coffee @ 10:15 A.M.
Communion first and last Sunday of the month

Preaching Schedule at Bethesda

Dec. 4 Ann Albert
Dec. 11 Christmas Concert
Dec. 18 Ann Albert
Dec. 24 6:00 p.m. Ann Albert
Dec. 25 10:00 a.m. Ann Albert

Worship assistants in December

Greeters Joni Sunderman & Deb Wagoner
Reader Lori Lastine
Communion Asst. Shelly Warner
Ushers Steve & Lori Lastine
Mike & Sheila Freed
Altar Guild Mike & Sheila Freed

Coffee Servers

Dec. 4 Chris & Diane Campbell
Dec. 11 Deb Wagoner & Joni Sunderman
Dec. 18 Mike & Sheila Freed
Dec. 25

December Birthdays

8 Deb Nelson
12 Colby Carlson
13 Joni Sunderman
14 Connie Freed
14 Nita Lind
19 Sandy Carlson
23 Barbara Johnson
27 Chris Campbell
27 Joan Setterburg
28 Cole Buttercase
29 Laura Kirchert

Wedding Anniversaries

11 Doug & Judy Johnson



6:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service
10:00 a.m. Christmas Day Service

Upcoming Events

Dec. 7 6:30 p.m. Handbell practice
Dec. 11 11:00 a.m. Bethesda Advent/Christmas concert
Dec. 14 7:30 p.m. Church Council meeting
Dec. 15 2:00 p.m. Lydia Circle meets in the

Upper Room

Dec. 24 6:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service
Dec. 25 10:00 a.m. Christmas Day service
Dec. 25 newsletter items are due. Send to Yvonne (johnsony@myfmtc.com)



Merry Christmas from LSI

“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” – John 1:5

As Christmas approaches, we give thanks for you! Every day, as a ministry partner of LSI, you help bring the light of Christ to others.

At LSI, we know many people experiencing deep darkness. We know adults with disabilities who have no caring family presence in their lives. We know families in Des Moines who spent 20 years living in refugee camps and are finally regaining some hope for the future. We know teens who are aging out of the foster care system and fear they will never belong to anyone or have a family to love them.

LSI’s work is Christmas work, shining love, compassion and light in places of darkness, despair, abuse, neglect, addiction and crisis. We could not do this important work without you, and we are so grateful.

Wishing you a blessed and merry Christmas from LSI!

Our Mission: Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at www.LSIowa.org and www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa.

A New Kind of Family

For Kristie, respite caregiving through LSI’s Services for People with Disabilities is more than just a job. It’s a time for her to be with family.

Kristie has helped to take care of Trevor since she began working with LSI. Trevor stays one night with her family most weekends and during many weeknights, he spends time and eats dinner with Kristie’s family.

“He gets to come over and go to sporting events, or go camping, or go to family functions with us,” Kristie says. “He likes to interact with my own children, who are about the same age.”

The whole family has developed a relationship with Trevor, and even extended family members consider him as “one of the kids.”

“Respite care has been a great outlet for me and my kids, and it’s a growing opportunity for all of us. I’ve developed a relationship with Trevor’s family. It gives them a break, and my kids can learn and grow,” Kristie says. “This gives me an opportunity to work with kids and still be able to do things with my own family. It doesn’t interfere with my life. It adds to it.”