

Early this morning, June 7th, I officiated at a service to end life support for a child of God. In my years of ministry, I have participated in numerous such traumatic occasions but never for a family member. I gathered with Kelli Ellisen, Tyler, Courtney, and Sarah as they said their final goodbyes (until they meet again) to their husband, father, and for me, a younger brother. I shared scripture, prayers, and promises made to Stephen and to all of us.

In the midst of grief, I shared the words of John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life". That is the promise made for Stephen, as a baptized, confirmed child of God.

By the time you read these words, a service of celebration for Stephen's life will have been held at Our Savior's, officiated by our own Rev. Dewey Wisner. That afforded me the opportunity to grieve and celebrate Stephen's resurrection, not as a Pastor, but as a brother.

I give many thanks for all those who assisted me through this difficult time.

- ... My excellent staff, Marcie, Ruthie, Karen, and Cheryl. How wonderful is your care and compassion that helped me navigate through these difficult days.
 - ... Pastor Dewey who so quickly responded, "Here I Am", when asked to assist.
 - ... Our Council President, Sue Schultz, who understood the need for respite for reflection and prayer.
 - ... And to all of you who have responded with love, care, cards and prayer.
- Thank you all. I feel blessed to be at Our Savior's serving as your Interim Pastor.

God Bless you and your loved ones,

Interim Pastor Dennis E. Ellisen

Confirmation News

Confirmation Camp 2018

In mid-June, Our Savior's sent six soon-to-be-eighth graders off with Bibles, prayers, insect repellent and swim suits to Crossways Camps, Imago Dei Village, in Clintonville for a fun, faith-filled week. Our campers had a sunny, beautiful week of weather and created new friendships and memories while getting closer to Christ in nature.

Thanks to our generous congregation for their prayers and support for making camp a reality for our kids.



Some of our youth play a team building game at Confirmation Camp.

What is our Bishop up to This Summer?

From the Bishop

Two big trips are on the bishop's calendar in the coming weeks. I will be in Houston the end of June along with 600 youth and adult leaders from this synod as we gather with over 30,000 others for the triennial National Youth Gathering. "This Changes Everything" is the theme of the gathering. While there will be lots of singing and servant events and loads of youthful energy, the gathering is really about faith formation. The leaders spell it out this way: 'We want youth to understand the fierce love that God has for them, just as they are, and that by grace, through faith, they have been saved. When young people truly understand this ... this changes everything.'

I imagine that after the gathering, as has been the case in the past, there will be youth and young adults who say it was a life-transforming experience.

The second trip is in early July to our companion synod, the Western Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of South Africa. Forty-six (46!) people from this synod will leave on July 4 for two weeks in South Africa. We will visit the Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg and begin to learn what it meant for white and black people to have lived for generations with racism codified in the very structures of society. We will hear the stories of struggle and about the leadership of Nelson Mandela. We will travel to Rustenburg where our hosts will meet us. Our travelers will disperse to the congregations and homes of people throughout the diocese. We will build relationships, hear stories, pray and worship and sing songs. Anita and I also are traveling to South Africa and will be hosted by Bishop Ubane and his wife.

The purpose of these companion synod visits is to deepen relationships with our brothers and sisters around the world. They help us to comprehend what we confess in the creed, that we believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic church. Each ELCA synod has at least one companion synod relationship. These relationships help us to understand more fully the catholicity of the Church. They remind us of the global dimension of the Body of Christ. So we will learn about the Church in South Africa; we learn about the lives of our brothers and sisters in their work and leisure, in their families and communities. We also learn about ourselves as we experience life in a different culture and are able to look at our own with some new perspective.

And I imagine that after two weeks of travel, besides being tired and feeling enriched, some among us will say the experience has been life-transforming.

(cont. on page 4)

"God's Work. Our Hands" - Yes, YOU can make a difference! Here are some opportunities to share God's love in our community.

Supporting Our Missions

Milwaukee Mission Trip — At the writing of the July Voice, our mission group of 12 is preparing to leave for Milwaukee. We'll have an update for you in the next edition.

SAVE THE DATE! - God's Work. Our Hands. Day is Sunday, September 9. It's an opportunity to celebrate who we are – a faith community saved by grace ... called to love and serve others. Do you have an idea for a service project or are you interested in joining the planning team? Contact Marcie Kimmes or Ruth Melzer at 725-3956.

Are You a Thrivent Member? - If you are, we'd love to know! There are opportunities for you to help the church through the Action Team initiative and Choice Dollars program. Please contact Marcie Kimmes at mkimmes@our-saviors.org or call 725-3956.

Do You Visit Rummage Sales?

If you enjoy checking out those neighborhood sales (or local thrift stores), please consider picking up a few things for one of our mission outreach programs. Here's what we need.

New or "gently used" baby clothing, sizes 6 to 24 months:

- t-shirts (long-sleeved or short-sleeved)
- sleepers or gowns, without feet if possible (we can modify as needed)
- baby socks
- cardigan sweaters or jackets (with hoods, if possible)
- baby receiving blankets (the cotton or flannel type, not fleece)
- new cloth diapers (flat-fold or prefold)

All items can be dropped off in the pantry closet across from the church office. We'll send our gifts to Lutheran World Relief this fall, and every small donation will make a huge difference in someone's life! Thank you!

Website Re-Design

We are in the process of re-designing our website to be mobile friendly with current content to reflect who we are as a congregation. Watch for it to be released soon.

Can You Press the Play Button?

As part of our new website, we'll be adding videos of Pastor's sermons. We need individuals to record them on an iPad (provided). When you are here for worship, please volunteer – it's a small, easy click-a-button task that may have a huge impact on those searching for God in this crazy world.

Contact Marcie Kimmes or Debbie Burmeister for more information.



Men's Breakfasts

The men's Bible study meets on the second and fourth Saturday of every month. We meet at 8:00 a.m. in the meeting room of Perkins Restaurant across from Wal-Mart. This month we meet on July 14 and 28. Come and join us. All men welcome.

OSLC Mission Quilters

Come see how much fun we have! This month we meet in the church gym on:

July 5, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

July 19, 9:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.

Women's Book Club

The book club at OSLC welcomes you to join our friendly group of 10 to 12 women. We generally meet at 6:30 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of each month in the church library. This month we meet on July 24. Come join us!

Prayer Shawls Needed

Our supply of shawls is dwindling, specifically bridal and baptismal shawls. Knitted or crocheted shawls are needed if the ministry is to continue. Recipients of shawls have included those grieving the loss of a loved one, facing surgery, and even hurricane victims. White shawls have been given to brides and small shawls have been given to babies.

A supply of yarn in basic colors and white is usually available at the church in the room housing the food pantry. You are welcome to provide yarn in a color of your choice. Patterns can be found in the tract rack near Ruthie's office. Suggested sizes for infant shawls is approximately 30 square inches and an adult shawl utilizing the pattern available uses five skeins of yarn is approximately 50 inches long. Completed shawls may be dropped off at the church office or the closet across from the office.

From the Bishop *(cont. from page 2)*

Bishop Eaton and the ELCA Church Council has lifted up Leadership and Congregational Vitality as two primary emphasis in our life together. Congregational Vitality is about life-transforming relationships. All of our life is to be centered in Jesus Christ. In Christ, God meets us with grace and mercy. God's steadfast love forgives and heals and creates new life. We want our congregations to be places of faith, life and vitality. That is, we want them to be fostering life-transforming relationships with God, with one another and with the world around us.

Have you heard people say that their participation in the life of your congregation has been a life-transforming experience? I hope so. And I hope we can find ways to encourage one another in our life and faith together. I hope we can learn from one another. We want all our congregations to be places where the Good News of Jesus Christ is nurtured and people experience their lives transformed in powerful ways.

As the youth gathering says, "this changes everything."

-Bishop Gerald Mansholt



Fox Valley Lutheran Homes News

I have information to share with you about our Fall Fundraiser! Its official title is **VACATION – SPORTS – QUILT AUCTION**. It will take place on Sunday, October 14, at the Riverview Gardens, 1101 S. Oneida St., Appleton. There will be a live auction at 2:00 p.m. featuring vacations from around the state and beyond, sports tickets and sport opportunities around the state, and beautiful quilts to purchase! All the items available for purchase will be available to view on our website approximately one month ahead of time. Mark your calendars now, for an enjoyable Sunday afternoon.

Our Mission and Ministry Committee is all about 'Embracing, Equipping, Empowering, and Educating.' We meet as a committee once a month, and sometimes only once a quarter – as needed. What we need most are some new willing hands and hearts to do ministry and to care about the mission. How about your hands and heart? Let me know if you might be interested.

The invitation is always open to drop by and visit us. My administrative assistant, Katie, or I would love to give you a tour of this lovely place. It really is a delightful facility and if you haven't seen it, you should take the time to see how nice it is. Be sure to notice how much the people living here enjoy themselves too. I'll look forward to seeing you!

*Becky Luett, Deacon
Executive Director*

Mental Health Minute

-Articles Brought to You by the OSLC H.O.P.E Team-

Seize the Awkward

Author: Katie Van Beek RN, BSN

When we picture what summer in Wisconsin looks like most of us may imagine sunshine, campfires and the resonating smell of grilled food throughout the neighborhood. What we may not visualize is an individual going through the motions of summer's splendor, while battling an internal darkness caused by a mental wellness crisis. This individual may be a stranger, acquaintance, friend or family and you both are attending the same outdoor summer event. Imagine this individual asks how you are doing. You turn and out of habit say, "I'm good, how are you?" They respond with, "today I am not doing so good." What do you say? How would or should you respond? Does your return response change if they are a friend or family?

With any crisis whether witnessed or reported we must remember to offer support. As spoken in Romans 15:1, "We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves." Supporting responses include engagement (face them with your entire body and let them take the lead in conversation), validation of feelings (it's ok to feel that way), don't offer advice on fixing their problems, ask open ended questions and encourage them to talk to an expert if they haven't already.

Seize the Awkward is a new ongoing campaign from the Ad Council which aims to show people that making sure we're supporting and engaging each other is far more important than experiencing awkward conversations regarding mental wellness. So instead of envisioning the picturesque commencement of Wisconsin's long-awaited summer season, reflect on how you would respond to the "awkward" conversation. Your response is their first aid. Be the difference, squash the stigma and seize the awkward!

Sources:

<https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/2018/06/bethedifference-june-awkward-conversation/>

<https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/2018/06/bethedifference-june-awkward-conversation/>

<https://seizetheawkward.org/#starting-the-conversation>

The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it. ~ Psalms 24:1

Generous People...

Guatemala Mission Trip

Our Savior's has partnered with From Houses to Homes in Guatemala for several years. When the news of the volcano eruption came out, several people contacted us to see what impact the eruption had on the people of Guatemala. We are thankful that all of the From Houses to Homes folks are fine and none of the homes that had been built in that area were damaged. However it will take time, people and monetary donations to help those who lost what little they had.

In 2019, we'll be sending another mission group to build two homes in five days. The dates of the trip are March 23-31. Please prayerfully consider what you can do/give to help those who've suffered so much loss and devastation. Contact Marcie Kimmes or Rich & Pam Garman for more details.

Generosity is...

...keeping the big picture in mind. When we think about our financial goals, keeping our "God goals" in mind will help the rest fall into place.

Generous Congregation...

Unified Budget YTD

Through May

Income \$ 181,066.32

Expenses \$ 191,640.76

(\$ 10,574.44)

Opportunities For Giving...

Memorial Funds

The Christian Action Committee administers these funds. Gifts are made in memory or in honor of loved ones, and may be designated or undesignated. Generally, memorials are to be for a concrete item that is not normally covered in the budget, such as paraments and altar ware, library books, shut-in ministry and women's retreats. Contributions can be made by using the envelopes in the pews and noting Memorial or by contacting our bookkeeper, Dave Zernicke.

Memorials Received

A special thank you to those who remembered

Irene Stinson

Building Fund...

Through May

**Remaining on Loan:
\$420,853.77**

**Principal Paid on Loan
\$ 78,440.00**

**Total Contributions:
\$ 92,105.45**