



# Epiphany of Christ Lutheran Church

## Newsletter

### August 2018

Hello everyone,

It's been awhile since a newsletter has been issued and with this edition we're trying a different approach. Each Council Member will be writing about their respective committee and then we'll publish on the website and also have a few "hard" copies available in the Narthex. We will strive to publish a newsletter monthly but we may have to push it out and publish quarterly. If you would like to see something different or an addition please let Bev know; this is your newsletter and we'd like to have content which you would like to see and read.

#### **Rev. Steve Crittenden, Pastor**

Sisters and brothers,

You may remember the account of two of Jesus' disciples meeting their risen Lord on the Road to Emmaus, though they did not recognize Jesus. During their time together, we are told, Jesus "interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures," (Luke 24:27). I can imagine Jesus interpreting a passage from Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope." This was a passage very familiar to all devout Jews in Jesus' day and Jesus gave to his two companions that day new meaning to the Prophet's words.

Through Jeremiah God announced the promise of a plan of restoration for Israel. A plan for the future. A plan that was always understood to refer to the long-awaited return from exile. Until that evening when two men walked with a stranger.

God kept that promise, by the way. But God always keeps promises in ways that we underestimate. It's called "abundance". The Jews did return and they re-built the Jerusalem Temple. But their rejoicing was impermanent. By Jesus' time, they were in a home-bound exile with the Roman Empire and its Emperor controlling all aspects of their lives – including the Temple.

When Jeremiah spoke God's words of "a future of hope", he meant it. But God's people squandered that hope and that future. On that road, Jesus shared with his friends the truth that, in Him is to be found the PRESENT and PERMANENT fulfilment of God's promise. Not to say that the Gospel is the announcement of a new plan from a new promise. No. The Gospel is the announcement of God's plan completed in Christ! God's people restored, not to a place, but to a relationship with God (righteousness). A PRESENT reality. A PERMANENT relationship. In some ways, that was the easy part (says a man who did not hang from a cross).

Much more difficult, history has shown, is restoring the relationship God intends between God's people. Rev. Heidi Torgerson-Martinez is the ELCA's Director for Global Services. I was once present for a sermon she gave in which she shared a sentence from a blog one of her (our) missionaries wrote, and I still cannot seem to let go of the image. The blogger wrote that "God is found in the disappearing spaces between God's people." God is found in the spaces that separate us from one another! Is God between us pulling us together? Or is it that when we turn to God we end up turning to each other also? I kind of prefer the second. I like the image of you and me turning to God and finding one another. I think that explains a world in which someone ends up with the last name Torgerson-Martinez.

We believe and rejoice boldly in Christ because Christ announces God's plan in completion. That is why we boldly live in hope given to us by God. Thanks be!

Peace, Pastor Steve

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Greetings to our year round Faithful Members of Epiphany of Christ Lutheran Church, our Associate Members and our Winter Friends—The high temperature on Monday this week was 115 and it reminds us of the reason many of our Flock have 2 places to call home.

It has been a very busy summer here, and our loyal and hardworking Volunteers have done much work to ready the facility to be ready for the Fall return of our Sister and Brothers in Christ. A Crew cleaned the church building from one end to the other –the little kitchen in the church building sparkles, and this is where we have our coffee and donuts following the service on Sundays during the summer. The grounds look very pretty—not a weed anywhere, and the vegetation is well trimmed and growing nicely.

Our attendance has been good this summer—We see 80-100 attending our worship service each week. The Council/Coordinating Committee is busy meeting each month to carry on the business of the Church and to prepare for the coming months.

We miss our friends who are scattered about the country, and we encourage each of you to send a note to the church to update us on any events in your life. It can be good news, special events in your life, prayer requests, or anything you might want to share. We see the reports of terrible weather in many parts of the country, and our thoughts turn to which families in our congregation might be in those places.

Blessings to all,

Judy Holder, President

## **TREASURER**

Most of you know me. The bookkeeping function was an appointed position since the reorganization. Lyle did a superb job setting up the records and keeping the financial records. However, the software that was purchased from Concordia, didn't have the reports wanted. Council gave the approval to purchase Quick Books. At the Annual Congregation Meeting in January, the bylaws were changed, providing a Treasurer position. I was elected Treasurer, term three years with voting position on the Council. Lyle continued on as bookkeeper. In April Lyle decided his time was limited to work at the Church, so he left the bookkeeper position. The Quick Books purchase went ahead and the books were converted July 1, 2018. Bev, the Office Manager, has taken over the bookkeeper duties along with her many other duties. I have been working with Bev closely for the past months. We have confidence that we will produce reports for the council and the congregation that will reflect our financial position.

I open all the mail and code the bills for the expense. Bev writes all checks and has payroll responsibility. I will balance the accounts at month-end and prepare the reports. Any questions, please ask. If I don't have the answer, I'll find it.

Respectfully,

Jan Andersen

## **MISSION**

As of this date we do not have a Mission Chairperson, but with our generous donors we have been able to send jars of peanut butter to Genesis, food to the Apache Junction Food Bank and school supplies were collected for both Project Help and The Navajo Nation. Our future missions will also help those in our community. Thank you for your generosity!

## **WELCOME**

Dan and I are on the Welcome Committee, and it is our desire to make you feel welcome at Epiphany of Christ. If you desire to join us as a full time member or associate member, we will be glad to have you join our family.

Yours in Christ,

Betty Miller



## **WORSHIP AND MUSIC**

Although the Worship and Music Committee does not formally meet during the summer, most of our groups continue to be very active.

The Altar Guild (always looking for new members) is responsible for communion activities which include preparing the elements on communion Sundays and making sure that there are sufficient volunteers to help serve on those Sundays. A non-visible (but still important) duty is the filling of all the candles with oil periodically.

The Ushers are very active and visible every Sunday, and we have been blessed to have a number of volunteers in that area.

And of course, our organist, Kay Johnson, is with us every Sunday providing us with preludes and offertories, as well as hymn accompaniments.

Respectfully,

Bob McDowell



## **DISCIPLESHIP**

The constitution of our congregation states this committee is to carry out the teaching ministry of our congregation. So it currently oversees the current scheduled regular Bible studies on Tuesday morning and the men's monthly meetings. These are currently conducted by our Pastor. In addition other study groups could be developed to meet the interest of the congregation. Fran LeVeque is currently chairperson of that committee and as such is a voting member of the council. She would be interest in any ideas for additional study pursuits.

Always,

Fran LeVeque

## **PROPERTY**

We have been keeping up the grounds & the shrubbery trimming thanks to the people who come from the city community service program.

We have had to have a plumber to take care of a couple of leaking problems and we've also had to have an electrician re-do some wiring on our air conditioning and also track down why some of our electrical outlets were not working.

I'd like to thank Marlys Lundgren for paying for our hot water heater in the Sacristy.

Thank you,

Don Gimpel

## **ALTAR GUILD**

The Altar Guild is an important part or our Music and Worship Committee. We care for the Altar area of the church. We see the candles are filled and lit, prepare communion, and see that it is served, removed and cleaned up. We order flowers and pick them up and place them in the chancel and distribute them after the service. We order the Christmas and Easter flowers and see that the paraments are changed when needed.

We need new members on our committee; men and women are welcome. Men have been changing the paraments and filling candles.

I want to thank everyone for their wonderful work for the Altar Guild. If God leads you in the direction to help us, please join us.

Yours in Christ,

Betty Miller

## **CARE**

Under caring we have a prayer chain for prayers for all and if we have addresses we send cards to those in the hospital and nursing homes. If you would like to add someone to the prayer chain or want cards sent please leave names and addresses with Bev in the office.

Yours in Christ,

Betty Miller

## **ENDOWMENT**

Endowment Committee members are: Pastor Steve, Nancy Patterson, Jan Andersen, Tracie Curtis, Milton Shelver, Marcella Durbin and Stan Dufrane. Total assets: \$409,578.29, Money Market: \$28,159.10.

The next meeting is October 15, 2018 at 10am. The committee meets quarterly.

Respectfully,

Tracie Curtis

## **CHURCH OFFICE**

When I first started with Epiphany I was told there would be some "down time" during the summer. Well, this summer has been anything but! We're in the midst of changing our accounting system to Quick Books and Pastor, Jan and I have been busy setting up the new system. We're looking forward to having a much easier, straight-forward type of accounting.

It has been quiet here, not many people coming in to visit. That might be heat related! (For all who are missing the monsoons and high temperatures, rest assured they are here and living up to their reputation.) Remember, we have donuts, cookies and coffee available every day, so if you have time stop in, say hi and mosey on down to the kitchen for some goodies.

Cheerfully in Christ,

Bev Hert, Office Manager

