



CrossWinds

Newsletter of Winds of the Prairie Ministry

Bethany: Bethany-Elim: Grace: Peace: St Paul

January 2014

Volume 10

Issue 1

First Word

Jessica Epple, one of our parish members who is attending Concordia College in Moorhead, sent me a request to fill out a survey for one of her classes. At first I thought it to be an easy task. Done in fifteen, I thought. Three hours later, I was still reflecting on the questions that she posed. As I reflected, I realized again that the gift of the call of God is something that is found in everyone's life. From young to old, male and female, all are called in a special way to be a part of God's great plan for the Kingdom.

As we continue our ministry theme for this year through this season of Epiphany, "God's Work, Our Hands," we will focus on but a few of the missions to which God is calling people in our parish and community. With that in mind I thought it would be good for you to hear the way that God has been active in shaping me into a godly servant (Obviously, God is not finished yet....)

What is your call story?

Well, God's been at this call business all my life. Born into a strong Christian home, nurtured through joyous and difficult times by a caring and supportive Christian community, growing up with active Christian friends, learning to do community service as a natural part of daily life, and having strong pastoral role models all served to make ministry a possibility. That, coupled with a voracious interest in the spiritual nature of the creation and a desire to understand the deep questions of life, left me with few alternatives. I tried cabinetry and construction, cooking and even, for a couple of misguided months, considered a place in the insurance industry. I found that I could make better money doing about anything else other than ministry, but I could not have as deep a meaning in my life in the community of faith.

What is your favorite part of ministry?

I love people. There are times when I am overjoyed just to see the amazing diversity of gifts that God gives to his people to use in community. Stories of faith shared by common ordinary folks overwhelm me with grace. Most of the time I find that people take that grace for granted, and as such do not celebrate their gifts. It is fun to point them out to folks and watch what happens. Nurturing the gifts of others is the best part of being a pastor.

I also love language, speech and the way music allows for communication. I love to tell the stories of the faith, and the stories of the faithful.

What is your least favorite part?

I hate sinfulness – that broken part of us that loves sin and attempts to put self before others, personal desire over community, and refuses to acknowledge the promise of the other. While this may sound that I do not like conflict, let me say that conflict is an essential part of growth. But conflict for conflict's sake, or a refusal to welcome the other as Christian and Christ-bearer before judging the other as not worthy is very close to blasphemy against God.

How do you deal with the “business” of the church?

In a word, as quickly as possible. The true business of the church is and must remain our marching orders in Matthew 28:16-20. (look it up!) Everything ought to focus on this. In order for us to be able to accomplish this task, we are bound to being in the world. We cannot go into all the world without being in it. Being in the world means being a 501c3 non-profit organization, bound to certain rules of civil society regarding our fiscal, social and communal life in the world. These must be met wisely and with care.

Was being a pastor what you expected it to be?

I thought that being a pastor meant that I would spend all my time talking to people about Jesus. So, in a sense it is what I expected. But also I began to realize that true ministry is daring to walk with Jesus into the lives of people, all people, not just the ones who show up on Sunday morning. It does not mean being preachy, but rather being authentic. I came to realize that in order to be a pastor, I must continue to deepen my own faith, my own understanding of the hard questions of life, and to learn to live this learning in response to the world and the people who share it with me.

If you could change one thing about your job what would it be and why?

I would require that God make days 28 hours long, and that there be two Sabbaths in every nine day week. No, really. There is never enough time to accomplish all that my conscience defines as necessary to accomplish the task before me. But for that I love my job, except when it overwhelms me in not such a good way. The task remains ever before me, and if God is not at work within me, if I am too tired to acknowledge or use his presence, I am lost and easily beaten down by the task. But I must remember that it is never my ministry, it always belongs to the Triune God.

How do you deal with/ avoid burnout?

Burnout happens to everyone. Sabbath is essential, not a burden but a necessity. I know that there are aspects of my personality that could be neglected to the point of frustration, and that the frustration would take itself out on the very people I am called to serve, including my family and closest friends. So I rely on them to tell me that I must take time for self. I need to do tasks that are actually finished and stay finished for at time. Ministry is always unfinished. Maybe when the end comes, there will be an end to the need for ministry, but never an end to praise and vocation I pray.

I play music to put life in perspective again.

What is your leadership style?

The development of strong lay leadership allows for the ministry of the Gospel to grow and prosper as well. I seek to enable others to do ministry. I would see myself as an encouraged and equipper, not a leader from the front, but a leader from the side. I am not a general who sits in the rear and directs the movement of the troops. I am not the Captain who must be at the head of the charge, and never looks to see if anyone is following.

Has that changed since you have become a pastor?

I don't think that my style has changed, but my acceptance of the style has changed. I used to think that I needed to fit all the expectations of the members of a congregation for leadership. To do so left me ragged and confused. Charges of "Why don't you tell them to...?" or "We all expected to have a pastor who did ..." would leave me undirected, awash and bitter with the members and with myself. I have my best experiences of accomplishment and faith-filled community when people are empowered to find their personal ministry and use it to serve the whole. Such experiences just make any other style of leadership seem to be pallid and unfulfilling.

So my friends in Christ, until I see you face to face, pray for me in this my calling. I will pray for you.

Pastor Stephen

Intern's Intonations

When I got home from the Junior High Youth Gathering at the beginning of the month, I was feeling a bit overwhelmed. It wasn't because I had spent the previous 24 hours with about 800 12-, 13- and 14- year-old people of God's kingdom, although that was most definitely an immersion experience. It was mostly life in general kind of stuff. I felt like I didn't quite have my feet firmly planted on the earth. I was coming home from this event which had been the last in a recent series of pretty intense experiences in my life of late – the myriad of experiences and feelings drawn out by being on internship, serious family discussions and events. Let's not forget transitioning to the anticipation time of Advent and preparing for the annually astounding proclamation that God came to live among us in this poor and vulnerable infant born against all odds 2,000 years ago. (Kind of a big deal.)

I'm pretty sure you, dear reader, have probably experienced this before. Maybe it's not over the same topics or items that would overwhelm a nerdy seminarian, but the result is the same: you've got so much going on in your head and your heart and your calendar, you end up wondering things like "Did I forget something?" or "Did I stop for that red light?" or "Am I really paying attention?"

So that's how I was feeling when I pulled into the garage after Junior High Youth Gathering. I had just dropped off my charges for the gathering – three lovely young women from Grace Lutheran who drove up to Willmar with me to meet the rest of the people there from Winds of the Prairie.

I was unloading the car and cleaning things up after the road trip and that's when I saw it. It was written on the back window in the condensation that forms when the cargo inside the vehicle is warmer and more humid than what's outside the vehicle. "Trust God," it reminded me.

Trust God. And that pretty well sums up what I learned from all those youth gathered in Willmar that weekend. The reminder written in my window capped off an experience where I laughed, sang, listened and prayed with these young people; an experience where I was truly inspired and moved by the witness they made to trusting God in their lives and in this complex world they are growing into.

In fact, the whole crazy and wonderful experience of youth gathering is a powerful argument to trust God. The group comes in on Friday evening, bounces off the walls in every direction and velocity imaginable, and then leave just before lunch on Saturday. A second wave of 800 comes in Saturday evening to do the whole thing over again.

I think many of you will agree with me when I say this particular age group is the perfect example of something that is beautiful and terrifying all at the same time. They are living in that exhilarating and uncomfortable space between childhood and adulthood. Their brains are busy making leaps toward maturity. By day they are often impatient for independence, relentless in their endeavors to test the system and push the boundaries. And by night they still catch contagious giggle fits and clutch their favorite stuffed animals and blankets as they drift off to sleep and – you guessed it – more brain development.

In fact, this age group is developing new synapses and strengthening existing brain connections at the same rate as toddlers. From what I've been able to understand in my lay-person's foray into studying our scientific understanding of the human brain, the rate of brain development at these two times in our lives is at its highest.

So you can imagine all the brain activity going on at that gathering. You could feel it thickening and heating up the air. For us chaperones and organizers of the event, it may be one of the most amazing acts of God's continuing creation we ever witness. Because, let's face it, who but God could get some developmental traction among kids this age? What but God's activity could keep up with these youngsters of the Kingdom – creating connections in their brains and hearts and experiences of what it means to be faithful, what it means to be part of a Christ-centered community? Through the people who spoke, the music they heard, the worship they participated in, they were given the opportunity to peer into a mirror and see themselves and the rest of creation as God does – breakable, indeed, but also beautiful, full of potential, and very good.

Trust God.

Vicar Ann



On the Lighter Side of Life.....

Burglars just broke in

An elderly woman had just returned to her home from an evening of religious service when she was startled by an intruder. As she caught the man in the act of robbing her home of its valuables, she yelled, "Stop! Acts 2:38!" [Turn from your sin]

The burglar stopped dead in his tracks. Then the woman calmly called the police and explained what she had done.

As the officer cuffed the man to take him in, he asked the burglar, "Why did you just stand there? All the old lady did was yell a scripture at you."

2013 Annual Meetings will be held during worship.

Bethany—January 12th

Bethany-Elim—February 2nd

Grace—January 26th

Peace—January 19th

St.Paul's—January 19th

PASTOR'S ACTS

Report for November 2013

Funerals/Burial/Committal

November 1: Kurt Dougherty funeral at Bethany—Pastor Steve

November 8: Steve Johnson funeral at Grace—Pastor Steve



Narrative Lectionary for January

The Narrative Lectionary is an awesome, exciting, integrated, organized, unique means of experiencing the Bible story in worship. We began at the beginning of the Bible as the story of God's creation and involvement with humanity was revealed in the stories of the ordinary people who believe in an extraordinary God. During the Fall, we remembered the Old Testament witness of God's Chosen People. We now use those stories to reflect upon the fulfillment of God's plan and purposes to find a way for the relationship with humanity to be repaired.

After Christmas we begin the conversation with our companion this year the Gospel of John. The last gospel written it tells the story of Jesus the Christ in a different way. His perspective is one from heaven from which Jesus came to abide with humanity. A sense of God here and now is the grammar of the gospel rather than what is to come in the future. Rather than parables and sermons, Jesus has a lot of conversations and discussions with people to answer their questions. Jesus is more often in Jerusalem partaking of the Jewish festivals, giving them new meaning. The signs or miracles of Jesus which frame this story are done very publically so that people can see his divinity. John tells his story in a way that makes you feel like you are there and being enlightened to the mystery of God's plan to redeem humanity from sin.

Each week there will be a devotional study and readings on the back of the bulletin for you to read the stories in between the Sunday readings. With some daily reading you will see the unfolding of God's plan for humanity. Why not use the daily reading as a way to begin or end your day to let God's Word be an active part of your life.

The Orange Project

What exactly is it? Your Prairie Conference is selling source verified citrus from Mc Allen, TX to benefit our companion synod partners in South Africa. Sales will be conducted both online and at your Congregation from January 1st until January 31st.



You can consult by going to
www.orangeproject.weebly.com

Date	Supporting Reading	Psalms	Gospel Reading	Theme
January 5	1 Samuel 3:1-20 1 Corinthians 6:12-20	Psalms 139:1-6; 13-18	John 1:35-51	Baptism
January 12	Isaiah 62:1-5 1 Corinthians 12:1-11	Psalms 36:5-10	John 2:1-11	Wedding at Cana
January 19	Exodus 20:1-17 1 Corinthians 1:18-25	Psalms 19	John 2:13-25	Cleansing the Temple
January 26	Amos 2:12-3:8 1 Corinthians 7:29-31	Psalms 82	John 3:1-21	Jesus & Nicodemus
February 2	1 Kings 2:1-11	Psalms 111	John 4:1-42	Samaritan Woman at a Well

God will never leave you empty.
 He will replace everything you lost.
 If He asks you to put something down,
 it's because He wants you
 to pick up something greater.

www.Frankieighn.com



January 2014 Preaching Schedule						
Date		Grace - 8:30	Peace - 10:30	Bethany- Elim - 8:30	Bethany - 8:30	St Paul - 10:30
Sunday, January 05, 2014	Holy Communion	Rasmusson	Rasmusson	Gonyea- Alexander	Anderson	Anderson
Sunday, January 12, 2014	Service of the Word (Wedding Service)	Rasmusson	<i>Peace</i> <i>ANN MTG-</i> <i>Rasmusson</i>	Gonyea- Alexander	Anderson	Anderson
Sunday, January 19, 2014	Holy Communion	Gonyea- Alexander	Gonyea- Alexander	Rasmusson	<i>BETH-</i> <i>ANY ANN</i> <i>MTG</i> <i>Anderson</i>	<i>ST PAUL</i> <i>ANN MTG</i> <i>Rasmusson</i>
Sunday, January 26, 2014	Service of the Word	<i>GRACE</i> <i>ANN MTG</i> <i>Rasmus-</i> <i>son</i>	Gonyea- Alexander	Anderson	Gonyea- Alexander	Anderson
Sunday, February 02, 2014	Holy Communion	Anderson	Anderson	<i>BE</i> <i>ANN MTG</i> <i>Rasmusson</i>	Gonyea- Alexander	Gonyea- Alexander

GOD'S WORK OUR HANDS T-SHIRTS



T-shirts in Adult and Ladies sizes are available for \$15 from the WOTPM office. They are bright green with the WOTPM logo on the front and hands on the back bearing the faith practices of the home and the community of faith. Call the office to get yours and it can be delivered on Sunday to you at worship.



Secretary's Corner

A kind reminder to help keep things simple , please send all news to WOTPM@FRONTIER.COM. Thank you!

Please remember to send your newsletter & weekly announcements to the office on time. If they are not here by the deadline we will not be able print them. This is necessary to get our mailings out in a timely manner so that everyone is able to make plans.

We also do have the 866-944-9687 number for those outside the Ivanhoe calling area to reach the office and will be directed to the On-Call Pastor after hours and on weekends.

Please start thinking about getting your information gathered for the Annual Reports, we are already starting to work on them even though the year has not come to an end. Please also keep in mind that we will be having the Annual meetings during worship. We hope that you are able to attend your church's meeting.

We are aware that Winter is upon us, with that being said, please keep in mind that when schools are called off, I may be working out of the Grace Lutheran office on those days, granted that I can make it into town. If I am not able to make it to the Ivanhoe office and there is an emergency, please keep in mind that the phone is forwarded to the "On Call" pastor. You may also leave a message and we will get back to you as soon as we are able.

**TFA~ When school is called off in RTR or Lincoln-Hi there will be NO TFA. When in doubt please call 866-944-9687.

I also wanted to say THANK YOU to everyone for being patient with me as I have been learning many, many new things since I have taken the position of your WOTP Parish Office Manager position! I have met so many wonderful people and many new friendships have blossomed in the past 11 months. I look forward to building new friendships and what this New Year has to offer.



Winds of The Prairie's Website
www.windsoftheprairie.org

Thank You! *Brandee*



THANK YOU to all who attended “Celebrate the Child”! We received a wonderful message & enjoyed singing Christmas carols together.

Thank you to Emilee Deutz for being our baby Jesus for the evening. She is the daughter of Miranda Klitzke & Ben Deutz.

God has been up to something again in the Southwestern Minnesota Synod. Through parents, her congregation, pastors, camps, college and seminary teachers and friends God has been at work. God called Bailey Landa Fossum to become a pastor. She has been called to serve at American Lutheran Church of Worthington. Pr. Bailey Fossum was ordained today at her home church of Tracy Lutheran. Thanks to all who made the ordination service possible. We give thanks to God for the gift of a new pastor to help build up God's Church and proclaim the Good News we know in Christ Jesus.

Bishop Jon Anderson
December 22, 2013



Stephanie Christoffels

After four years as a chaplain candidate, I have been approved as a Chaplain in the MN Army National Guard. I will be serving the 1-125 FA Battalion, headquartered out of New Ulm. It also includes units in Jackson, Fairmont, St. James, St. Peter, Luverne, and Pipestone. Praise be to God for the opportunity to serve His people serving in our military.



The Hurricane

The Newsletter of WXY

January 2014

CONSIDER SERVING YOUR AREA CHURCHES AS A LUTHERAN YOUTH ORGANIZATION LEADER

The Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO) is an organization of high-school age young people who are members of the ELCA. There are nearly 100,000 ELCA youth across the United States and the Caribbean.

The LYO is a place where the voices of young people are lifted up in the church. This ministry happens through young people discussing and advocating issues of importance to them concerning faith, youth ministry, the ELCA, local communities, and the world.

The LYO Board is made up of 15 youth and 10 adults from our synod. They plan and coordinate the synod's Jr. and Sr. High Youth Gatherings and raise up the voice of youth on a synod level. Youth who serve on the LYO board are in grades 9-12 and are elected at the Sr. High Youth Gathering. Each conference has an adult representative on the LYO board that is elected or appointed by the conference. Youth Ministry Coordinator, Sarah Hausken advises the LYO board.

For updates and for future events please check your weekly church bulletins or call the office.

Venture Crew

January 12th at 3:30pm meeting at Grace

TFA—Recommences on January 8th at Bethany

Save the Date

March 21-22nd at Shetek for TFA—this is mandatory—please stay tuned for details.

SR. High Youth Gathering is in Mankato on March 28-29th. We will have registration packets if you are interested in attending. Please contact the office.

February 1st is our tentative date for our WXY Youth groups to go ice skating in Marshall. Please contact the office to let us know you are interested.



SAVE THE DATE

2013 MAP (Multiple Area Parish) Summit

Saturday January 18, 2014

St Matthew Lutheran Church of Wabasso

Leadership and Members gather to learn and share their experience of cooperating in ministry with sister congregations.

Come to learn from Dr. Scott Fredrickson about framing and affirming our ministry. Registration on the www.swmnelca.org website in early December. Talk to your Council members or pastors about attending. All are welcome.



NEWS FROM THE PEWS

BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH

Ushers for January
Wayne & Dar Scheurs

Assisting Minister
5 Ardis Henriksen
19 Dar Schreurs

Lector
5 Marie Henriksen
12 Ron Madsen
19 Morgan Possail
26 Allan Lundberg

Altar Guild
Jewel Noble

DECEMBER WELCA AT BETHANY

BETHANY-Elim women are invited to join the Bethany WELCA for our Christmas party/meeting. The program will be "A Sweet Christmas", an object lesson using candy to tell the Christmas story.

Christmas is a sweet time in our year. Not only are we filled with the sweet smell and taste of Christmas goodies but it reminds us of our "Sweet Lord".

VICAR ANN TO BE FEATURED SPEAKER AT FAMILY NIGHT

Bethany WELCA invites families of WOTP to attend their family night on January 19th beginning at 5 p.m. Our featured speaker will be Vicar Ann Gonyea. She will show slides and tell us about her trip to Turkey the year before coming to be our vicar.

Vicar Ann had the opportunity to tour this country in May 2013 for a class on the book of Revelation, archeology, early church history and inter-faith studies. Turkey continues to be a secular culture with a parliamentary constitutional republic form of government. It's population is largely Muslim. So they live in the tension of being a nation of great religious, ethnic, political diversity. Ann will bring an interesting outlook at what is a very fascinating country where so much of the early Christian church took shape. Please join us.

Save the Date(s)

January 9—WELCA at 1:30pm

January 19—Family Night—ALL WOTP families are invited—Potluck supper at 5pm followed by a program on Turkey by Vicar Ann Gonyea

January 22—Women's Bible Study at 9am



BETHANY-ELIM LUTHERAN CHURCH

Ushers for January

5 Clyde & Wendy Rost
12 Kevin & DebSwanson family
19 Marlin Toft & Val Whipple
26 Mike & Margo Willert

Assisting Minister

5 Val Whipple
12 Margo Willert
19 Amy Clarke
26 Chris Clarke

Lector

5 Kristina Richmond
12 Sherry Rost
19 Margo Willert
26 Arlinda Bednarek

Acolyte

5 Kira Gifford
12 Ethan Krier
19 Jennifer Krog
26 Molly Krog

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Ushers for January

Ed Brockhouse

Carl Burk

Mike Czech

Lloyd Dahl

Altar Guild

Judy Thomssen

Deacon/Lector

Karen Lichtsinn

Acolyte

5 Tyson Weets

12 Emma Czech

19 Zach Miller

26 Brandon Hefti & Brock Hefti

Annual Meeting is February 2nd following worship.

Gracious Words submitted by Karen Lichtsinn

When I say that 'I am a Christian'...

When I say that 'I am a Christian', I am not shouting that 'I am clean living. **I'm whispering 'I was lost, but now I'm found and forgiven.'**

When I say 'I am a Christian', I don't speak of this with pride.
I'm confessing that I stumble and need Christ to be my guide.

When I say 'I am a Christian', I'm not trying to be strong.
I'm professing that I'm weak and need His strength to carry on.

When I say 'I am a Christian', I'm not bragging of success.
I'm admitting I have failed and need God to clean my mess.

When I say 'I am a Christian', I'm not claiming to be perfect.
My flaws are far too visible, but God believes I am worth it.

When I say 'I am a Christian', I still feel the sting of pain.
I have my share of heartaches, so I call upon His name.

When I say 'I am a Christian', I'm not holier than thou,
I'm just a simple sinner who received God's grace.

Keep In Your Prayers

Bethany, Arco

Buck Barber, Dorothy Bunjer, Norma Renken, Harvey & Blanche Jorgensen, Dagmar Blegen, Travis Noble, Connie Clausen (mother of Brenda Possail), Elsie Barber.

Bethany-Elim, Ivanhoe

Donna Kurth, Davey Lundberg, Ray & Ruth Johnson, Jeff Neyens, Rhoda Larson, Bruce Kelm (brother of Gretchen Suhr); Gabriel Johnson (Grandson of Norma Jean Johnson); Mike Kropp (son-in-law of Ken Swanson); Jackson & Mary Grace Nelson (children of Ryan and Kate); Nancy Resmen (sister-in-law of Bernadine Olsen), Ralph & Lynn Holland.

Grace, Lake Benton

Anne, Lichtsinn, Rick Midden, Faye Rochel, Norma Nielsen (Wanda Nordmeyer's sister), Marian Bennett, Brian Evers (son of Don & Diane Evers), Cheryl Kjergaard, Mary Haugen, Naomi Enke, Norma Burdick, Annette Fehrman, Nancy Johnson, Paula Jacobson (Daughter of Wayne & Annette Fehrman), Earl Klitzke, Chet Borresen.

Peace, Ruthton

Leon Mortland, LeRoy Hartson (Rosmary's son), Bonita Fuhrmann, Carolyn Holck, Rosmary Hartson, Edwin Ewald, Ellen Hansen, Edna & Vern Haraldsen, and Cliff Kittelson.

St. Paul's Minneota

Clara DeRoode. Those away from home.



Those with silent health issues & undergoing treatments away from home.

Tyler Nursing Home

Cliff Kittelson, Carolyn Holck & Bonnie Fuhrmann (Peace), Annette Ferhman (Grace).

Hendricks Nursing Home

Ila Rasmussen (Bethany), Norma Burdick (Grace), Ruth Josephson (B-E)

Divine Providence Nursing Home

Mabel Dressen, Elsie Barber & Dagmar Blegen (Bethany)

Military

Pray for the leaders of this great nation & all nations of the world that seek peace. Pray for those who have family & friends who serve in the military or reserve forces. Especially: Jesse Zafft, Lucas Dougherty, Christian Vizecky, Danielle Thomsen, Michael Colman, Ross, Ryan, Angela & David Nelson, Allan Peterson, Derrick Linneman, Todd Board, Kyle Shiek, Alyson Bylone, Jim Pedersen, Justin Schmidt, Adam DeRoode, Pam Gregor, Paul Gregor Jr., Corey Gregor, Christopher Gregor & Paul Gregor.

Pray for the families of

Steve Palmer from St. Paul's

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Grace Lutheran	507-368-4243
Peace Lutheran	507-658-3329
St. Paul's Lutheran	507-694-1238

WOTP's email: wotpm@frontier.com

Secretary Office Hours
(Bethany-Elim Office)

WOTP Office Hours: Monday to Thursday
9:30 am to 2:00 pm

Evan