

A Time of Reorientation

"[Jesus] took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village; and when he had put saliva on his eyes and laid his hands on him, he asked him, 'Can you see anything?' And the man looked up and said, 'I can see people, but they look like trees, walking.' Then Jesus laid his hands on his eyes again; and he looked intently and his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly."
—Mark 8:23-25

If you're like me, sometimes things are blurry. We get into routines that lead us into patterns that affect how we look at things—or blindly overlook things. Take for example that familiar drive that you make that has become so routine it's as if the car drives itself. Every once in a while, on one of my familiar routes, I notice a house I have never seen before. It's as if it were built overnight. Clearly these "new houses" I see have been there. There's nothing new about them other than the fact that I've suddenly noticed what I hadn't before.

The same thing is true in my home and office. There are certain corners of the house and different walls that I see every day. However, there are also many parts of my home and office that frequently go unnoticed. That's one of the reasons I like to rearrange my furniture and redecorate every few months. It keeps things fresh and gives me a new perspective as the orientation of the furniture forces me to look in directions that I had been overlooking and to notice things that I hadn't before. (Thank you to the person who gave me a stack of old *Architectural Digest* magazines to inspire more redecorating!)

If you were at church during Holy Week, you will have noticed that the altar and pulpit have been rearranged, merely swapped really. The paintings that were created throughout the last 40 days of Lent now adorn the sanctuary, along with the gold fabric on the walls. Several of you have commented how "different" the sanctuary looks with the swapping of the pulpit and altar, noting that it brings a new and interesting perspective. For myself and the assisting ministers, we too are seeing things that we hadn't before.

I assure you, the swapping of the altar and pulpit is not heretical. The church teaches: "Central to our worship life is the presence of God through word and sacrament. The word proclaimed and the sacraments—both Holy Baptism and Holy Communion—are called the means of grace." (www.elca.org/worship) Since the Wiota church was built, the altar has sat in the very center of the chancel. Several years ago, the baptismal font used to be covered up and hidden (sometimes forgotten about) unless there was a scheduled baptism; now it rests at the entrance to the church as a reminder of our own baptism each time we enter the sanctuary. Baptism is the initiation rite by which a person enters into the Christian faith and life.

With the Word of God proclaimed when scripture is read and preached on, how will we think about it differently now that the pulpit sits in the center of the chancel? How has your perspective changed? How are you now oriented to the Word of God and the celebration of Holy Communion? It's not a matter of whether we like the new furniture arrangement or not, it's about stirring us to actively think about our faith. Why do we do the things that we do? Does it really even matter?

In our complicated world, surrounded by the pains and joys and struggles of all of our members, I believe that it matters. Faith matters when it comes to orienting our lives. And our orientation to God matters in all the good and bad we encounter. That's why Word and sacrament are called the "means of grace." They continually bring us renewed life and peace amidst a hurting world.

With every hope and prayer, I remain faithfully,
Your brother in Christ,
Pastor Luke

Highlights from the April Council Meeting

- Our congregation has many talented artists. The painting has been a very well received addition to this year's Lent and Holy Week observance. The paintings will be displayed in the sanctuary throughout the Easter Season.
- Plans are being made to arrange for new family photos of our members for an updated church directory.
- The council is exploring whether or not there is interest in developing a community garden.
- Bids were received for lawn mowing. Randy Paulson is again hired for mowing the church and parsonage lawns.
- Highway Cleanup will occur on April 26th.
- A letter of resignation was received from Rachel Jenson. She is stepping down from being the Sunday School Superintendent as well as from serving as one of the financial secretaries in order to spend more time with her family. The council thanks Rachel for her service to the church in these two capacities.
- Rita Norland continues to serve as a financial secretary. Brooke Ames now serves as a second financial secretary.
- Anyone interested in serving as the Sunday School Superintendent should contact Pastor Luke or Jalaine Ruegsegger to learn of the duties and responsibilities.
- A considerable amount of discussion and reflection was held on our congregation's mission statement and a motion was passed by council that church property may be loaned out at the discretion of Pastor Luke and the president of the council, in consultation with one another.

Community Garden

The stewardship and evangelism committees have begun planning for a community garden. If you are interested in receiving fresh produce and/or donating seeds, time, etc., please contact Courtney Bocklund at 293-0803 or Sandy Seffrood at 439-2697. If you leave a message, please indicate the types of produce you are interested in and/or the kind of help, seeds you would be willing to donate.



A Huge Thank You

A huge thank you to Rachel Jenson for her time and work as both a financial secretary and the Sunday School Superintendent. (Rachel gave a letter of resignation to the council and plans to spend more time with her family.) She has played an integral part in organizing the weekly Sunday School classes and has spent countless hours planning and preparing Christmas programs and Vacation Bible School. When you see Rachel, be sure to thank her for the many ways she has contributed to our congregation!

Financial Secretaries

The council has added 1/2 of the financial secretary duties to Brooke Ames' responsibilities in the office as Office Secretary. Brooke has signed the *Code of Ethics* for this position, regarding the privacy and safeguarding of all financial information. Brooke has been trained on how to accurately record and report data. Rita Norland continues to serve as the second financial secretary.

In our prayers: Karen Noble, Carol Broge, Shirley Johnson, Clare Pehl, Hazel Miller, and our homebound members.



Also in our prayers: Leona Reed, LuAnn Komprood, Dorothy Wicklund, Delbert Shager, Barb Dinges, Mark Reilly, David Gertsch, Jaden Goninen, Nick Saataff, Rudy Gebhardt, Jayne Kent, Judy Fernstaedt, and Tom Garvey.

Sunday School Schedule

May 4th: The Road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35)
May 11th: Mother's Day (last day of Sunday School); Breakfast with family and sing in church.

Have a fantastic summer!

MAY WELCA



May 3rd	10:30a.m.	'LUAU' SALAD LUNCHEON (cost \$7.00)
May 7th	9:00a.m.	<i>Gather Bible Study</i>
	10:00a.m.	Miriam Circle serves coffee break
	10:30a.m.	WELCA business meeting
May 20th	9:00a.m.	Quilting Day with potluck.
May 21-22		<i>Gather Bible Study training at Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque.</i>

WELCA meeting minute highlights: reported by Marne Wilson

- The March 'Bakeless Bake Sale' raised \$360.00 for the Malaria Campaign to be divided between New Guinea and Africa.
- In observance of Rachel's Day, we have purchased three copies of "Roland Rolls" by Jim Carrey to be placed in our local school libraries. Special thanks to Lenita Stark who delivered and read in Argyle, Leona Meier in South Wayne, and Sheila Carrington in Darlington.
- One year ago on April 20th we blessed our first group of Prayer Shawls. Since then, we have given 64 shawls to members of our church family. Thank you to everyone who has remembered someone in need of our prayers and for helping deliver the shawls.
- **Monroe Conference Spring Gathering** at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Brodhead is April 26th from 9:00a.m. until noon. A group of ladies are attending from Wiota.

*The full WELCA Minutes are posted on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall.

"Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality."

—Romans 12:9-13

Mission: Stewardship (Leona Meier and Mavis Shager)

- Twelve quilts were tied in March and nine in April. 64 quilts have been completed so far this year.
- We are in need of help to 'tie' quilts, see YOU in May.
- The four High School Senior quilts will be presented on Mother's Day.

A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU to everyone who helped by bringing food and/or serving during Lent. Also, **THANK YOU to you,** for your generous donations during Lenten Season.

Upcoming June Events:

June 4th	9:00a.m.	<i>Gather Bible Study</i>
	10a.m.	Abigail Circle serves coffee break
	10:30a.m.	WELCA business meeting
June 17th	9:00a.m.	Quilting Day with potluck

May Birthdays



March Treasurer's Report

- 1 Nancy Johnson
- 2 Vicky DeNure
- 2 Lacey Johnson
- 2 Diane Schulte
- 6 Amy Carpenter
- 6 Anna Carper
- 6 Ruby Rygh
- 7 Morgan Stauffacher
- 9 Mandy Johnson
- 10 Dan Eames
- 12 Connie Bocklund
- 12 Keith Komprood
- 12 Joe Olson
- 12 Clare Pehl
- 12 Pauline Wilson
- 13 Dan Johnson
- 17 Erica Jorgenson
- 17 Bud Strunz
- 17 Jenelle Ward
- 19 Ruth Eames
- 22 Willard Shager
- 23 Sara Larson
- 23 Brendan Jamison
- 24 Kari Kluckhohn
- 24 Joshua Nethery
- 25 Russell Buetzer
- 25 Rose Thoreson
- 26 Mindy Monson
- 27 Margie Bondele
- 27 Lynne Johnson
- 27 Jim Potter
- 28 Trevor Johnson
- 28 Parker Shager
- 29 Terry Berget
- 29 Shea Johnson
- 29 Shirley Johnson
- 29 Becky Wang
- 30 Dorothy Arthur
- 30 Trevor Rodebaugh
- 31 Hazel Miller

Balance 2/28/2013			\$ 102.44
Income:			
03/02/2014	Sunday	Weekly Offerings	1,483.01
03/02/2014	Coffee Hour	Donations	3.00
03/02/2014	Newsletter	Weekly Offerings	20.00
03/03/2014	Simply Giving	Weekly Offerings	300.00
03/03/2014	Canvas/Art Supplies	Transfer from Memorial Fund	320.89
03/05/2014	Wednesday	Lenten Offerings	602.00
03/09/2014	Sunday	Weekly Offerings	1,950.00
03/12/2014	Wednesday	Lenten Offerings	1,269.00
03/16/2014	Sunday	Weekly Offerings	840.00
03/16/2014	Coffee Hour	Donations	10.00
03/17/2014	Simply Giving	Weekly Offerings	20.00
03/19/2014	Wednesday	Lenten Offerings	475.00
03/23/2014		Memorials for General Fund	200.00
03/23/2014	Coffee Hour	Donations	3.00
03/23/2014	Sunday	Weekly Offerings	718.38
03/26/2014	Wednesday	Lenten Offerings	483.00
03/26/2014		Pointsettias and Easter Lilies	17.00
03/30/2014	Sunday	Weekly Offerings	994.00
03/30/2014		Pointsettias and Easter Lilies	17.00
03/30/2014	Coffee Hour	Donations	7.00
Total Income			\$ 9,732.28
Expenses:			
03/03/2014	Luke Smetters - Expenses	Worship/Church Supplies	320.89
03/09/2014	Luke Smetters	Pastor Base Salary	1,582.67
03/09/2014	Luke Smetters	Pastor's FICA-Church Share	156.46
03/10/2014	Wiota Sanitary District #1	Water Parsonage	46.16
03/10/2014	Wiota Sanitary District #1	Fire Protection Parsonage	130.68
03/10/2014	Wiota Sanitary District #1	Water Wiota	49.26
03/15/2014	Connie Bocklund	Custodian	308.22
03/15/2014	Brooke Ames	Office Secretary	323.22
03/23/2014	Luke Smetters	Pastor Base Salary	1,582.67
03/23/2014	Luke Smetters	Pastor's FICA-Church Share	156.46
03/23/2014	Luke Smetters	Continuing Education	325.00
03/23/2014	Marion Seffrood	Church Usage	200.00
03/23/2013	Connie Bocklund - Expenses	Cleaning Supplies	54.88
03/26/2014	Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative	Electricity East	19.00
03/26/2014	Neighborhood Office Solutions	Postage/Copier/Office Supplies	208.25
03/26/2014	Neighborhood Office Solutions	Postage/Copier/Office Supplies	136.57
03/26/2014	Augsburg Fortress	Education Materials	87.15
03/26/2014	Church Mutual	Insurance - Com'l Ppty	545.30
03/26/2014	Church Mutual	Insurance - Worker's Comp	251.25
03/26/2014	Church Mutual	Insurance - Umbrella	178.00
03/26/2014	Portico	Pastor's Pension & Insurance	961.18
03/17/2014	Vanco Services E-Service	Postage/Copier/Office Supplies	1.00
03/31/2014	Memorial Fund	Transfer Thrivent	127.00
03/31/2014	Alliant Energy	Electricity Parsonage	96.68
03/31/2014	Alliant Energy	Fuel Parsonage	224.15
03/31/2014	Alliant Energy	Electricity Wiota	198.81
03/31/2014	Alliant Energy	Fuel Wiota	340.51
03/31/2014	CenturyLink	Telephone & Internet Parsonage	109.71
03/31/2014	CenturyLink	Telephone Wiota	41.07
03/31/2014	Wiota Sanitary District #1	Fire Protection Wiota	718.00
Total Expenses			\$ 9,480.20
Balance 3/31/2014			\$ 354.52
Bills unpaid at month end:			
	South Central Synod of WI	Benevolence - October thru March	3,000.00

News from the Bold Café Gals

Vendors Wanted:

If you, or someone you know has a side business, their own crafts that they sell or even wants to have a garage sale without the fuss of planning, this event is for you!

What: Wiota Lutheran Church Flea Market/Garage Sale

Where: Church parking lot (6682 Hwy 78 N. in Wiota)

When: Saturday, May 10, 7:00am—4:00pm

Parking stalls (approx. 9 ft. x 12 ft.) will be \$5 each for the day



For more information, or to reserve your space, contact Sue Buetzer at 608-966-3362.

Donations welcome!

If you're doing some spring cleaning and have items you would like to donate, feel free to drop them off at the church. Please place your items in the Sunday School room next to the library. The Café Gals will sell any donated items they receive.

A concession stand will also be available throughout the day serving barbeque, walking tacos, chips, bars/cookies, lemonade, coffee, and water.

The next Bold Café Gals meeting is Friday, May 9th to set up for the garage sale.

Memorials and Donations:

- A donation of \$100 to the Wiota Repair and Maintenance fund in memory of Chloe, Dean, and Gary Thoreson.
- A donation of \$200 in memory of Roger Wang to the memorial fund.

May Worship Assistants

May 4th: Greeters: Jonathan/Sheila Carrington; Ushers: Dave & Audrey Carpenter; Worship Asst.: Jalaine Ruegsegger

May 11th: Greeters: Orville & Margie Bondele; Ushers: Jonathan/Sheila Carrington; Elements: Audrey Carpenter; Worship Asst: Sue Buetzer

May 18th: Greeters: Tim/Rhonda Pehl; Ushers: Del/Rita Norland
(East) Bread: Sue Buetzer; Elements: Janeen Trame; Worship Asst: Alice Wang

May 25th: Greeters: Dave/Audrey Carpenter; Ushers: Don/Barb Eicher; Elements: Marne Wilson; Worship Assistant: Wayne Wilson

ELCA Stories of Faith in Action: Companions on a Journey

By Wendy Healy

On May 4, as ELCA congregations recall the Luke 24:13-35 text, the well-known road to Emmaus story, congregations in the ELCA South Dakota Synod will take the less traveled route called *Companeros de Camino*. The Spanish translation means companions “along the way,” or “on the journey,” and the South Dakota Synod hopes to engage as many congregations and communities as possible on this special Sunday to learn about the lives of immigrants who are our companions on the way. The activities and worship resources pay particular attention to young adults who have lived here undocumented since they were very young and now desire to attend college. “*Companeros de Camino* Sunday is a time to connect the road to Emmaus story with the new U.S. Deferred Action legislation that provides a path to education,” said Jeanette Clark, mission developer and pastor serving *Pueblos de Dios* in Sioux Falls, S.D.

Jeanette hopes that all Lutheran congregations embrace the biblical connection between Jesus welcoming orphans, widows and strangers, and walking with immigrants today. “We need to support youth and adults as they try to make their way in the United States.” South Dakota, as is the case with a number of states, receives new immigrants — documented and undocumented — every day, particularly in areas with improving employment rates and growing economies. A new ministry, a new idea The idea for *Companeros de Camino* came from conversations among South Dakota synodical leaders and *Pueblo de Dios*, a new ministry under development that reaches out to the Latino community and works in close partnership with Augustana Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls.

Jeanette has been pastor at *Pueblo de Dios* for the past 18 months. Set in a diverse neighborhood, their Spanish-language and bilingual ministry draws mostly first-generation immigrants and their children. “The Spanish-speaking population in the area has grown substantially in the past eight years,” said Jeanette, “now estimated at 8,000 to 12,000 residents, so it’s a really growing area.” She says the goal of *Companeros de Camino* is to raise awareness for Deferred Action federal legislation. In 2012, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security said that children of immigrants who came to this country under the age of 16 are not at risk of being removed and can attend college.

Bill Tesch, director for evangelical mission in the South Dakota Synod, carries a keen sense of relationship between the present and future when it comes to the implications of Deferred Action for young immigrants. “I believe that following Jesus means seeing past issues and complications to the person that God has put right in front of us. That’s what Jesus did every time,” said Bill. “Each Wednesday evening my wife and daughter and I are blessed to be placed in the midst of six middle and high school-aged boys, several of whom could one day benefit from Deferred Action. They love hearing the story of God, and they dream about their future. Together we can help countless kids like them realize their dreams.”

The invitation goes beyond South Dakota The South Dakota Synod has invited congregations and synods throughout the country to join with it and has posted downloadable resources on the synod’s website, including a liturgy, a biblical and theological reflection, preaching helps, bulletin inserts and giving envelopes. The resources also include a video by Erika, an 18-year-old who immigrated to the United States from Mexico when she was 8 and whose last name was withheld for the video. A beneficiary of Deferred Action, Erika discusses how she graduated from high school and is going to college to study business management. She shares her feelings of fear, coming to a new country with no friends, and having to weather cold South Dakota winters. In her emotional story, Erika says she’s glad she’s here now, because she “wants to be something.”

Special offerings from *Companeros de Camino* Sunday will be used, said Jeanette, to help defray college application costs for Deferred Action students, which can often exceed \$450. “People of faith can disagree,” said Bill, “but quite apart from the politics of this issue, we hope that we can all see the real human need and the opportunity to make a life-changing difference in the lives of these amazing young companions on our way.” Jeanette hopes that this Sunday will be a conversation-starter and will help allay people’s fears and prejudices. “Jesus welcomes those rejected by others — the orphans, the widows and strangers. We’re called to welcome our immigrant brothers and sisters and walk in solidarity with them. It’s a biblical call connected to our lives,” said Jeanette.