

Excerpts from Our Congregation's Early History and Anniversary Sermon

I recently came across a document written by Pastor Clauson that describes our congregation's very early history. In honor of our 170th Anniversary (which we celebrated on Reformation Sunday, October 26th), I'm including a few excerpts here that I think you may find interesting.

"Comments regarding the Norwegian Lutheran Congregation in Wiota, or Hamilton Settlement, Iowa County, Wisconsin. [...] The first two Norwegian services in this settlement were conducted by the undersigned, February 13, 1844, in the forenoon at K. Knudsen's house in Wiota, and in the afternoon at Peder Davidsen's house about 5 miles from Wiota. [...] At Hamilton Settlement conditions were difficult, at least to begin with, because people were living there only temporarily. Most of them were working in the lead mines and as a rule moved away after a few weeks or months of residence. [...] In November 1844, Pastor J.W.C. Dietrichson began organizing a Norwegian Lutheran Congregation."

"In the spring of 1845 there were 97 members, including children, but by the summer of the same year so many had left that at one time there were only about 50 left. On November 26, 1845, [Pastor Clauson] dedicated a cemetery for the congregation on Niels Nielsen Lunde's property."

When the congregation called Pastor Clausen to be their pastor, he was hired for a total of 6 worship services per year at a rate of \$6 per service. The letter of call was signed, but the document follows with this lengthy paragraph.

"No one should be surprised that it did not prove to be entirely binding, for it must be remembered that the congregation was very small to begin with and that it consisted mostly of persons whose residence in the community was only temporary. There was also reason to fear that the lead-mining (which was the chief source of livelihood for most people) would cease. Then the settlement and the congregation would also cease, or at least have to be satisfied with only the most necessary pastoral services. This fear abated when it became apparent that the settlement was taking on a more stable character, which attracted many new emigrants from Norway who settled there and became miners. Soon a new concern became evident when it was feared that church life would cease because of the membership's indifference and resistance to each effort toward sound Christianity and church order among them. There was an all too common tendency toward drunkenness and other failings. [...] A place for church services was also sorely needed by the congregation. They were aware of this and met several times for the purpose of building a church. But those efforts ran into difficulties because of the many differences of opinion as to where the church should be built—and no one would give in."

Happy 170th Anniversary!!! You know, when I read this the other day, I couldn't help but think to myself, after 170 years, how much has really changed? The congregation is still considered "small" by some standards, as it was in 1844. Folks are more settled and our livelihoods no longer come from lead mining. There is still indifference and resistance, there is still drunkenness and other failings, there are still differences of opinion regarding church buildings.

I have to admit, I was a bit surprised to read all this. There is a lot of fear noted in these pages. Fear about economy, fear about livelihoods, fear over outbreaks of diseases, fear about what life would hold for each person, and fear over how long a church might exist.

The truth is, none of the first hundred members of our congregation or its pastors had it all figured out. There was indeed a lot to be afraid of. And yet, those individuals had faith that God was guiding them. They weren't sure of where or for how long, but they believed God was guiding them and they clung to that hope that they were not alone and that they would never be abandoned. Even as they

questioned their faith, even as they questioned if any of it mattered, they still continued on a journey of faith.

In a way, nothing has changed in our 170 years, and that is part of the beauty. God is still journeying with us as we seek to make sense of our lives as Christians, as human beings. Many of us still have fears over the economy, diseases, our livelihood, and the future of the Wiotia church. And yet, our hope and faith remains as strong as ever, even amidst our doubts and questions. And that is how Jesus makes us free, to live as we are, full of questions, as we seek answers, striving to live with each other, even amidst change.

The truth is, we're not sure exactly where God is leading us or for how long, and yet we have faith that God is indeed guiding us. So let us live with boldness, stepping out of the box, freed by Christ to make mistakes as we strive to remain relevant in this time and in this place. As a beautifully woven tapestry, past, present, and future are all knit together. Together, let us celebrate the communion and community Christ has built here.

Happy Anniversary everyone!!!

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

Highlights from October Council Meeting

- The church's website has seen a reasonable amount of internet traffic! Continue sharing the address of our new website with your family and friends.
- Pastor Luke has worked with various members in the congregation to create 5 minute videos to help people think about what our church means during this year's Stewardship Month.
- WOW is going very well and continues to be out of the box. Spread the word about this unique worship, education, fellowship event to help it continue growing.
- For safety and security reasons, the church is being monitored by closed circuit cameras.
- 8 young adults are registered for the 2015 Lutheran Youth gathering in Detroit, Michigan.
- The church celebrated it's 170th Anniversary on Sunday, October 26th.
- A special committee is being convened to begin brainstorming plans and preparations for our 175th Anniversary. This monumental anniversary in 2019 will likely include a full year of celebratory events!
- The Annual Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 25, 2015, following worship.

Pastoral Acts

- Marriage of Leon and Alissa Helmich on September 20th, 2014
- Baptism of Charley and Lennyx Corley on September 28th, 2014

Consider an Anniversary Gift

We recently celebrated our 170th Anniversary as a congregation!! Consider making a special financial contribution in honor of our anniversary. Help sustain our ministries as we continue growing in God's grace and love into the future!



Daylight Savings Time Ends!

Remember to set your clocks back before you go to bed on November 1st!!



WOW (Worship On Wednesdays)

Is there something you've been missing? Is there something you feel like you have not been getting out of worship? Let Pastor Luke know and let's creatively think together how we might be able to incorporate whatever it is that might be lacking. The sky is the limit since WOW is all about letting God "out of the box." Let's rethink together about how we live out our faith and practice spirituality.

In our prayers: Karen Noble, Carol Broge, Clare Pehl, and our homebound members.

Also in our prayers: Leona Reed, LuAnn Komprood, Dorothy Wicklund, Delbert Shager, David Gertsch, Jaden Goninen, Nick Saataff, Jayne Kent, Judy Fernstaedt, Tom Garvey, Ruth Vosberg, Mindy Bocklund, Teresa Strahm, Elliot Larson, Sarah Holzhuelter, and Gary Lancaster.



Thank yous!!

- Thank you so much for the beautiful flower's for Shirley's funeral. This church meant so much to her for so many years! —The Johnson Family
- Thank you for the floral tribute given to our mother's memory. —The family of Betty Iverson
- A special thank you for all who remembered Hazel in any way. All the memorials, the food and the ladies who worked in the kitchen, Pastor Luke and his comforting words. God Bless! —Hazel Miller Family.

Bold Café Gals Meeting

The next Bold Café Gals meeting is Monday, November 3rd at 6:30pm. We will engage in Bible study, as well as plan our next activity.



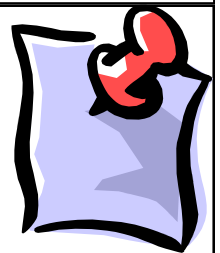
WOW!! It's Supper Time!!

Is anyone interested in making a simple meal for our Wednesday night WOW? You can even team up with another family for good food and fellowship. There is a sign up sheet in the church kitchen. Supper usually includes approximately 40 people. Get the entire family involved and enjoy providing fellowship for this ever-evolving event!

Fun With Senior Activities

*On Thursday, November 20th from 1:00pm until 4:00pm. We are playing Swap Bingo. Everyone is encouraged to bring a \$1-2 wrapped item for a bingo prize. We will play Bingo for 1 hour and share some refreshments.

*We are planning a trip to Madison to do a little shopping and lunch on Thursday, December 4th. We will leave Wiota Lutheran Church by 9:30am and return by 2:30pm. We plan on going to Kohl's, Barnes & Nobles, and possibly a few other stores in the West Town Mall area, as well as lunch. If you are interested in going or possibly driving, please let Sue Buetzer or Pastor Luke know by Sunday, November 30th so that we can make sure there is enough transportation available for everyone. You don't need to buy anything to enjoy this time out.



November Birthdays



September Treasurer's Report

- 11/01 Ramona Komprood
- 11/01 Ron Nethery
- 11/02 Diane Updike
- 11/03 Margaret Shager
- 11/07 Dave Carpenter
- 11/08 Everett Thoreson
- 11/08 Cody Wick
- 11/09 Kassandra Paulson
- 11/10 Steven Rygh
- 11/12 Todd Meier
- 11/13 Nikki Cooper
- 11/14 Doris Johnson
- 11/14 Justin Jenson
- 11/15 Craig Jorgenson
- 11/15 Stuart Seffrood
- 11/16 Dorissa DeNure
- 11/17 Jean Carpenter
- 11/18 Sherman Johnson
- 11/18 Donna Bondele
- 11/19 Brooke Ames
- 11/20 Levi Fritsch
- 11/25 Kristin Sawdey
- 11/27 Faith Potter
- 11/28 Paul Johnson
- 11/28 Tammy Larson
- 11/28 Sam Johnson

November Anniversaries

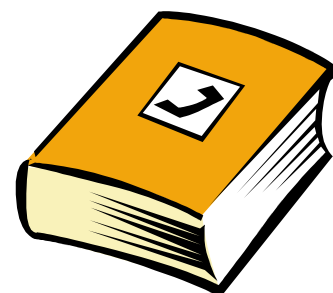
There are no anniversaries for the month of November.

Please let us know if we missed your birthday or anniversary.

Balance 8/31/2014			\$ 346.48
Income:			
09/01/2014	Simply Giving	Weekly Offerings	300.00
09/07/2014	Sunday	Weekly Offerings	2,282.00
09/10/2014	WOW	Weekly Offerings	489.25
09/10/2014	Coffee Hour	Donations	11.00
09/10/2014	Community Garden	Donations	3.00
09/14/2014	Sunday	Weekly Offerings	775.00
09/14/2014	Coffee Hour	Donations	20.00
09/14/2014	Community Garden	Donations	11.75
09/17/2014	WOW	Weekly Offerings	148.00
09/21/2014	Sunday	Weekly Offerings	492.00
09/15/2014	Simply Giving	Weekly Offerings	20.00
09/24/2014	WOW	Weekly Offerings	1,139.25
09/28/2014	Sunday	Weekly Offerings	2,123.25
Total Income			\$ 7,814.50
Expenses:			
09/07/2014	Chris Strohm	Supply Pastor	200.00
09/09/2014	Luke Smetters	Pastor Base Salary	1,582.67
09/09/2014	Luke Smetters	Pastor's FICA-Church Share	156.46
09/19/2014	Postmaster	Postage/Copier/Office Supplies	200.00
09/21/2014	Connie Bocklund	Custodian	308.22
09/21/2014	Connie Bocklund	Worship/Church Supplies	24.79
09/21/2014	Brooke Ames	Office Secretary	323.22
09/22/2014	Luke Smetters	Pastor Base Salary	1,582.67
09/22/2014	Luke Smetters	Pastor's FICA-Church Share	156.46
09/15/2014	Vanco Services E-Service	Postage/Copier/Office Supplies	0.80
09/30/2014	Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative	Electricity East	123.00
09/30/2014	Alliant Energy	Electricity Wiota	177.87
09/30/2014	Alliant Energy	Fuel Wiota	11.70
09/30/2014	Alliant Energy	Electricity Parsonage	150.24
09/30/2014	Alliant Energy	Fuel Parsonage	9.58
09/30/2014	CenturyLink	Telephone & Internet Parsonage	110.57
09/30/2014	CenturyLink	Telephone Wiota	40.89
09/30/2014	Portico	Pastor's Pension & Insurance	1,907.40
09/30/2014	Church Mutual	Insurance - Worker's Comp	251.25
09/30/2014	Church Mutual	Insurance - Com'l Ppty	545.30
09/30/2014	Regez Supply Co.	Cleaning Supplies	87.38
09/30/2014	Neighborhood Office Solutions	Postage/Copier/Office Supplies	116.10
Total Expenses			\$ 8,066.57
Balance 9/30/2014			\$ 94.41
Bills unpaid at month end:			
	South Central Synod of WI	Benevolence: March - September	3,500.00
	Portico	Pastor's Pension & Insurance	953.70
	Church Mutual	Commercial Insurance	545.30
	Wiota Sanitary District	Fire Protection - Q2	848.68
	Memorial Fund	Borrowed from Memorial Fund	9,500.00
			\$ 15,347.68
Account Balances:			
	Church Usage	Regular Savings	\$ 100.85
	East Repair & Maintenance	Regular Savings	\$ 6,517.65
	Memorial	Regular Savings	\$ 6,860.12
	Music & Education	Regular Savings	\$ 102.34
	Parsonage	Regular Savings	\$ 4,557.15
	Wiota Repair & Maintenance	Regular Savings	\$ 3,615.92

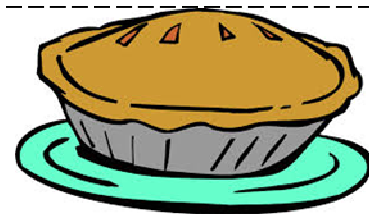
Update on Church Directory

Our church directory is being created and will be available to all members sometime after Christmas! Thank you to all who got their picture taken for this project!



LYO Stuff

The LYO has been up to many great things! Recently we have completed "That's My Pan" sales. Thank you everyone for your support. We had a fantastic time at the Harvest Ball, where we gathered for dinner, hayrides and a bean bag toss and were entertained by the great music of Jonathan Carrington and his band Rockabilly Junction. WOW is in full swing on Wednesday nights, please feel free to come and gather for an evening of food, worship and personal growth at 6:30pm.

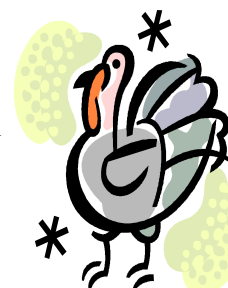


Just in time for the holidays we are having our annual pie sale. We are taking orders the weeks of November 2nd and November 9th after church for pecan, apple, and pumpkin pies. The cost is \$10 for apple and pumpkin and \$13 for pecan. The pies will be ready for pick-up on November 16th.

We would like to sincerely thank the WELCA ladies for their gracious donation to the Wiota LYO. Your donation will help offset the cost of the Youth Gathering in Detroit, planned for next July.

Thanksgiving (Eve) Worship

Join us for a special WOW worship on the eve of Thanksgiving. Our meal will be served at 6:00pm and worship will begin at 7:00pm. What a perfect time to try something new. We have much to be thankful for!



A special thank you to all who helped make the Harvest Ball a fun and successful event!!!

Artists!

Were you one of the artists who created a piece of art during Lent last year? Please fill out the informational form you received. The artwork is being displayed at Monroe Clinic in 2015.

November Worship Servants

11/02/2014

Greeters: Chris/Elsa Meyer
Ushers: Everett Thoreson/Alice Wang
Elements: Eunice Jenson
Bread: Betty Johnson
Worship Assistant: Del Norland
Acolyte: Anna Carper

11/09/2014

Greeters: Wayne/Marne Wilson
Ushers: Larry/Sue Buetzer
Elements: Elsa Meyer
Worship Assistant: Chris Meyer
Acolyte: Karl Seffrood

11/16/2014

Greeters: Don/Margaret Shager
Ushers: Connie Bocklund/Arnold Lancaster
Elements: Leona Meier/Mavis Shager
Bread: Barb Eicher
Worship Assistant: Marne Wilson
Acolyte: Jady Saalsaa

11/23/2014

Greeters: Smiley/Judi Schmitz
Ushers: Curt/Becky Wang
Elements: Sandy Potter
Worship Assistant: Jalaine Ruegsegger
Acolyte: Ben Cooper

11/30/2014

Greeters: Don/Barb Eicher
Ushers: Chris/Elsa Meyer
Elements: Rita Norland
Worship Assistant: Courtney Bocklund
Acolyte: Miles Carper

NOVEMBER WELCA NEWS

“Praise and Thanksgiving”



Nov. 5 th	9:00am	<i>Gather</i> Bible Study
	10:00am	Hannah Circle serves coffee break
	10:30am	WELCA business meeting
		Thankoffering Service and install officers
Nov. 18 th	9:00am	Sewing Day with potluck.

WELCA HIGHLIGHTS:

- WELCA sent 110 quilts, 70 school kits, 26 baby care kits, 9 fabric kits, and 14 personal kits to LWR in October.
- Thirty three ladies and eight LYO members helped work/serve at our annual bazaar. Many more people gave donations, bought food, and purchased items to help support us with our annual fundraiser. The 2014 bazaar raised a total of \$3,847.40
- Our newly elected officers for 2015-16 are President, Sandy Potter; Secretary, Marne Wilson; Assistant Treasurer, Marlene Rygh. Congratulations ladies.
- Be sure to remember your Thankoffering for our November meeting.
- Full WELCA Minutes are posted on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall.

Jesus sat down opposite the treasury, and watched the crowd putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. Then he called his disciples and said to them, ‘Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For all of them have contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.’

—Mark 12:41-44

UPCOMING DECEMBER EVENTS

Dec. 3 rd	9:00am	<i>Gather</i> Bible Study
	10:00am	Deborah Circle serves coffee break
		Secret Sister program
	11:00am	WELCA business meeting

Craft 4 A Cause

Our last Craft 4 A Cause had a total of 17 crafters and raised \$446 in donations! The next Craft 4 A Cause is being planned for the end of January. Dates and times will be available in upcoming newsletters!

ELCA Stories of Faith in Action: “A Gift of Women Teaching Women” By Nathan Schmidt

Monica Melanchthon is an International Leader who has always sought to gain knowledge to help herself and her community. With her father a pastor, she grew up in India surrounded by a vibrant church community, but she aspired to increase her role in the church. Looking back at her father, who died from a stroke in 1995, she appreciates his steadfast support. “He was someone who ... impressed on us,” she said of herself and her sisters, “that literacy is essential to counter exploitation and victimization ... and to use knowledge for the benefit of the church and the community.”

Under her father’s advice, Monica pursued theological studies at the United Theological College in Bangalore, and graduated with a Bachelor of Divinity degree in 1986. However, she found it difficult to find a position even with her education.

“There is a great discrepancy between the idealized concept of women,” Monica said, “and the real-life situations in which Indian women find themselves.”

Nevertheless, Monica continued to find jobs with various church organizations and looked for ways to further enhance her education. In 1989, with the assistance of the United Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India and the support of the ELCA’s International Leaders scholarship program, she applied to study Old Testament at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago.

Monica’s study program at Chicago gave her critical understanding on scholarly approaches to the Bible, allowing her to explore the Old Testament in new ways. What struck her most about her studies though was the school’s diversity and commitment to humanity, enabling her, she said, to have an “appreciation for difference, cultural diversity, and also for our oneness in faith and humanity.”

After completing her studies in 1995 with a Master of Theology degree and a Ph.D., Monica returned to India and taught at Gurukul Lutheran Theological College, contributing greatly to the institution for 17 years. In addition, she was ordained by the Andhra Evangelical Lutheran Church in 2009. She currently teaches at the University of Divinity in Melbourne, Australia.

Monica feels that her greatest achievement over the years has been teaching her many pupils. She has worked to create a dynamic teaching method that allows students to interact with the world around them and apply their experiences to the Scriptures. “I really enjoy being in the classroom,” she said, “and am at my best when I am given opportunity to work with the biblical text and bring it into conversation with culture and society.”

However, Monica also feels that she has the responsibility to provide better education and agency for women, especially in India, where patriarchal traditions influence all areas of society and limit women’s potential. “I therefore dream of a future when Indian women will find a safe place to pursue theological education.”

As a result, she is grateful for the opportunities provided through the International Leaders program and the ELCA. “The program is invaluable,” she said, “and provides people such as myself the opportunity for study at an advanced level, and apply those skills in our countries. I know that my growth as a theological educator would not have been possible without the training and formation I received at [the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago].”

Through *Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA*, our church has committed to help 200 more international women like Monica gain access to educational opportunities through the International Leaders program. To make a gift or learn more, visit www.ELCA.org/InternationalLeaders.

- See more at: <http://www.elca.org/en/Living-Lutheran/Stories/2014/10/141022-The-gift-of-women-teaching-women#sthash.ANGbPLdS.dpuf>