

THE WORD

The Rev. Luke S. Smetters, Pastor
WIOTA LUTHERAN CHURCH
January 2014

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**Reaching out to Congregation, Community and World;
Inviting all to hear and see the Gospel of Jesus Christ proclaimed.**

the often quiet but devoted caregivers

Some of my days, like those of most people, are busy. But I always try to notice the things around me. What I have been noticing lately is the abundance of caretakers that are in our midst. There are so many around us that I'm sure you can name a few yourself. Perhaps you are one such individual or maybe you are someone who is regularly served by a caretaker.

There are caretakers of different kinds. Some are more temporary and help assist someone through a recent illness or someone facing new and different life challenges. Some caretakers are more long term. There are caretakers that assist the elderly with some of their daily tasks which they otherwise wouldn't be able to do. Some caretakers tend to the dying, faithfully devoted to the one whom they serve until they draw in their last breath.

I have had the honor of meeting various caretakers. They are almost always quiet and humble, and their devotion often knows no limits. They are equipped to do any number of tasks from cooking and cleaning, to feeding house pets or birds in the yard. They help hang Christmas decorations. They bathe those who cannot bathe themselves. They deliver medicine and ensure the one whom they serve never suffers.

"For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me."
—Matthew 25:35-36

I've been impressed by the caretakers I have watched and witnessed lately. Through their humility and constant devotion, they emulate the life of Christ. If you are one such caretaker, thank you!

During these winter months, be attentive to the caretakers in our midst. Let's be sure to thank all those who serve us in any way. Let us thank them daily and express our utmost gratitude for all they do for us. Our community, our world, would not be a place of love and hospitality if we did not care for each other.

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

Highlights from December Council Meeting

- The 2014 budget was discussed at length. A copy will be printed in the Annual Report.
- The date of the Annual Meeting is Sunday, January 26th, immediately following worship.
- Annual Reports will be available in the church narthex on Sunday, January 12th.
- Congregation members are urged to complete and return their membership data forms, if they still haven't done so.
- Thanksgiving Worship was a beautifully, intimate service of thanks to God for all the wondrous gifts.
- \$1,500 was received from Wiota's Women of the ELCA, designated for the church's benevolence to the synod.
- There was discussion about planning an educational Norwegian cooking event, open to the larger community.
- A quote is being obtained on AV possibilities for the Wiota church.
- There was discussion on a paragraph in the Women's Year Book that has offended some members of the congregation. The council wants to clarify that dinners/meals do NOT need approval from the Women's group. The kitchen is part of the church and therefore subject to building usage contracts and agreements through the church office in conjunction with the council. Scheduling of kitchen functions (as is the case for any event that takes place in the church) is coordinated by the church office. It is a community kitchen, used by many different groups and individuals. Everyone who uses the kitchen is reminded to always leave it better than they found it.

Announcement of Annual Meeting

NOTICE: Our Annual Meeting will take place on January 26th, 2014 immediately following worship.

Please remember that worship time is sacred for many people. It is a time for worshipping God, NOT a time to prepare for the meeting.

Please respect all fellow members of our worshipping community by NOT discussing "business" matters before or during worship.

Thank you!

It's the time of year
for wicked

Wisconsin weather.

Please use good
judgment when it
comes to driving to

worship services or church events.

Worship is rarely cancelled. If any
worship is cancelled, it will be announced
on radio station 99.3.



Sunday School Schedule

January 5th:	Jesus the Word (John 1:29-42)
January 12th:	Jesus' Baptism (Matthew 3:13-17)
Saturday, January 18th:	The Lamb of God (John 1:29-42)
January 26th:	The Disciples (Matthew 4:12-23; 9:9-13; 10:1-4)
February 2nd:	Groundhog Day—The Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12)



January Birthdays



November Treasurer's Report

- 2 David Rygh
- 3 Wade Berget
- 3 Bryan Thoreson
- 4 Brandon Berrey
- 5 Travis Stauffacher
- 6 Eric Berget
- 6 Clara Johnson
- 6 Brad Schulte
- 8 Rachel Jenson
- 8 Margie Johnson
- 8 Pamela (Penny) Mayer
- 9 Sarah Stewart
- 10 Heather Stoeger
- 10 Gary Stark
- 11 Sue Elzen
- 12 Cara Carper
- 12 Ms. Diane Jorgenson
- 14 Shelly Eicher
- 14 Rachel Rygh
- 15 Richard Johnson
- 15 Cheyenne Shager
- 16 Lorene Peterson
- 19 Jason Cox
- 21 Jim Winn
- 21 Amber Ritschard
- 22 Tara Breadon
- 22 Jordan Monson
- 22 JoAnn Peterson
- 22 Allan Potter
- 22 Eric Wang
- 25 Brad Pehl
- 25 Jane Swanson
- 26 Jalaine Ruegsegger
- 28 Jayne Kurschner
- 29 Kevin Shager
- 29 Marcia Swiggum

Balance 10/31/2013			\$ 467.54
Income:			
11/03/2013		Donations	4.50
11/03/2013	Sunday	Weekly Offerings	2,442.00
11/10/2013	Sunday	Weekly Offerings	777.00
11/10/2013		Benevolence Wiota Women ELCLA	1,500.00
11/14/2013		Church Usage	715.56
11/17/2013	Sunday	Weekly Offerings	2,868.00
11/17/2013		Memorials for General Fund	75.00
11/24/2013	Sunday	Weekly Offerings	1,105.00
Total Income			\$ 9,487.06
Expenses:			
11/04/2013	Luke Smetters - Expenses	Pastor's Mileage	611.06
11/14/2013	South Central Synod of Wisconsin	ELCA	1,000.00
11/08/2013	Internal Revenue Service	Employees FICA - Employee Share	251.55
11/08/2013	Internal Revenue Service	Employees FICA - Church Share	206.55
11/10/2013	Luke Smetters	Pastor Base Salary	1,524.46
11/10/2013	Luke Smetters	Pastor's FICA-Church Share	148.33
11/14/2013	South Central Synod of Wisconsin	ELCA	500.00
11/19/2013	Blaser Pest Control	R&M Wiota	30.00
11/19/2013	Frontier-Servco FS	Fuel East	330.13
11/27/2013	CenturyLink	Telephone & Internet Parsonage	106.22
11/27/2013	CenturyLink	Telephone Wiota	40.73
11/21/2013	Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative	Electricity East	65.00
11/21/2013	Church Mutual	Insurance - Com'l Ppty	632.38
11/21/2013	Neighborhood Office Solutions	Postage/Copier/Office Supplies	315.60
11/21/2013	Augsburg Fortress	Worship/Church Supplies	79.80
11/24/2013	Luke Smetters	Pastor Base Salary	1,524.46
11/24/2013	Luke Smetters	Pastor's FICA-Church Share	148.33
11/24/2013	Connie Bocklund	Custodian	308.22
11/24/2013	Brooke Ames	Office Secretary	323.22
11/24/2013	Jacob's SWAG	Craft for a Cause	1,626.90
11/24/2013	Luke Smetters	R&M Wiota	111.76
11/30/2013	Walmart Business/GECRB	Cleaning Supplies	52.22
Total Expenses			\$ 9,936.92
Balance 11/30/2013			\$ 17.68
Bills unpaid at month end:			
	South Central Synod of WI	Benevolence - October	500.00
	South Central Synod of WI	Benevolence - November	500.00
	Thunder Bridge Trading	Craft for a Cause	319.10
	Alliant Energy	Electric/Fuel - November	469.00
	Portico	Pastor's Pension & Insurance - Oct	1,167.50
	Portico	Pastor's Pension & Insurance - Nov	1,167.50
	Memorial Fund	Borrowed from Memorial Fund	5,000.00
	Wiota Sanitary District	Water/Fire Protection	2,249.03
			\$ 11,372.13
Account Balances:			
	Church Usage	Regular Savings	\$ 650.00
	East Repair & Maintenance	Regular Savings	\$ 6,507.88
	Memorial	Regular Savings	\$ 6,981.11
	Music & Education	Regular Savings	\$ 102.18
	Parsonage	Regular Savings	\$ 1,155.33
	West Memorial	Regular Savings	\$ 2,801.86
	Wiota Repair & Maintenance	Regular Savings	\$ 3,323.78
	LYO Checking	Regular Checking	\$ 1,281.17
	LYO Savings	Regular Savings	\$ 4,904.98

News from the Bold Café Gals

Materials Needed

The Café Gals need your help! We're looking for gently used pillowcases, pieces of material and any rick rack, lace or ribbon that you may have lying around.



We will be making dresses and britches out of the materials and sending them to "Little Dresses for Africa", an international Christian organization. They specialize in providing relief to the children of Africa and the world (dresses for girls, britches for boys).

"Making a difference, here and across the ocean, one little dress at a time!"

Bring them to church or feel free to contact Courtney Bocklund (608)-293-0803 with any donations!

Women's Bold Café

We're an alternative women's Bible study and philanthropy group. We hold our meetings at night in order to create an opportunity for those who cannot make it to the Wiota WELCA meetings during the day. Come join us as we explore our faith and what it means in today's world. We have plenty of activities and projects that we are organizing to help those less fortunate, both in our community and throughout the world!

Our next meeting is Monday, January 13 at 6:30p.m. in the fellowship hall.

Who: Women's Bold Café

What: Bible study and philanthropy project planning

Where: Wiota Church Fellowship Hall

When: Monday, January 13, 2014 at 6:30p.m.

LYO News

Happy Holidays to you!!

We hope everyone had a great holiday season! Raise your hand if you've had a crazy year full of lots of changes (good, bad, or otherwise). 2013 was a busy year for LYO. Thanks to all the youth and their parents (and other adults too) who helped make this a great success! The LYO members learned a great deal, had a lot of fun, and even shared a few stories.

We started the year off with a great Norwegian dinner. We had a few visitors around town this year (Guardian Gnomes). The 4th of July parade was a blast, as well as camping at the church. We made pies, cookies, and a heck of a lot more. Wow! How the year went by. It was very successful because of all the great members, non-members, and supporters of the LYO. We want to say THANK YOU!!! Everyone has been so special and helpful.

We are now embarking on a New Year with new friends, new families, and lots of Joy. We would like to invite all of you to our next Norwegian Dinner on February 9, 2014!!!! We hope to have lots of fun, great food, entertainment, raffle drawings, and loads of fellowship. If anyone is willing to donate their time or baked goods (lefse or other Norwegian goodies are appreciated). We will also need lots of volunteers to help us make this event a huge success. If you would like to participate, watch for the sign-up sheet in the narthex.

God bless you all!

Wiota LYO

Memorials and Donations:

- A donation of \$400 in memory of Marie Jorgenson
- A donation of \$50 to the Sunday School in memory of Nathan Larson

Congratulations!

Congratulations to members Loren & Katie Daentl as they welcomed Ella Noel into the world on December 4th!



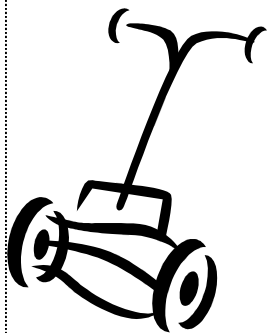
Membership Data Forms

Please continue to complete and return your membership data forms that were sent out in January's Word as soon as possible so that we can finish updating our records. Thank you for your attention to this matter!



Cemetery Bids

The West Wiotia Cemetery Association is taking bids for mowing during the 2014 season. All bids for consideration should be sent in writing to Delvere Norland, 6730 Hwy 78, South Wayne, WI 53587 by January 31, 2014. A board decision will be made in February and the chosen party will be contacted with a contract for services.



In our prayers: Karen Noble, Barbara Holt, Carol Broge, Shirley Johnson, and our homebound members.

Also in our prayers:

Leona Reed, LuAnn Komprood, Victor Burmeister, Dorothy Wicklund, Delbert Shager, Barb Dinges, Mark Reilly, David Gertsch, Jaden Goninen, Nick Saataff, Tyler Burichalter, Ruby Gebhardt, and Jayne Kent.



Save the date!

Our Annual Norwegian Dinner will be on February 9, 2014

Serving from 11:30am—2:00pm.

Our menu includes: delicious meatballs, tantalizing lefse (with or without butter and brown sugar), vegetables, Norwegian treats, and more!



Please have all materials for the Annual Report submitted NO LATER THAN the morning of January 5th! Please submit via electronic file (no .pdfs) in either Microsoft Word or Excel. These documents are needed promptly so that there is time to assemble and print by January 12th. Thank you!

Craft 4 A Cause

Mark your calendars for the next Craft 4 A Cause opportunity!!!

Thursday, January 30th: 3:00pm—11:00pm (cost: \$10.00)

Friday, January 31st: 8:00am—11:00pm (cost: \$15.00)

Saturday, February 1st: 8:00am—11:00pm (cost: \$15.00)



Save money if you craft for the whole weekend! Cost for the whole weekend: \$35.00

Everyone is asked to bring a snack to share. Meals will be provided on Thursday night, Friday night, Saturday lunch, and Saturday night. For Friday's lunch we will be ordering a boxed meal from Subway. This meal costs \$5.00 per person and includes a 6" sub, a cookie, and a bag of chips. You will receive more details upon registering for this event.

We will be crafting for the Green County Child Advocacy Center. This center provides a child focused, child friendly environment. Children who come to the center may have been abused themselves, witnessed another child being abused, or witnessed a criminal act. The center is a supportive and safe place for children as they provide testimony on what they have witnessed or experienced. A team of experts including law enforcement, family & victim advocacy programs (SARP, Green Haven Family Advocates, Victim/Witness), medical professionals, child protective services, prosecution, and mental health professionals work together to conduct a single forensic interview for each child. Additionally, each team ensures that no child is re-victimized at any time during the investigation, treatment, management, and prosecution of child abuse cases.

The Child Advocacy Center will be moving to a new, larger location and are in need of supplies to make this environment safe for the children. In conjunction with the Craft 4 A Cause event, we are doing a supply drive to help gather materials that can be used.

Materials Needed

Fabric Paint (for a handprint Quilt)

Crayons

Containers for crayons, markers, and pencils

Paper

Snacks (nonperishable)

Cleaning Supplies

Toilet Paper

Small Packages of all sized diapers

Reality based toys

Chalk

Markers

Colored Pencils

Coloring books (reality)

Drinks (nonperishable)

Kleenex

Anti-Bacterial Wipes

Baby Wipes

Reality based Books



The term "reality based" excludes fiction of any kind. As the children provides testimony, if fantasy or fiction arises at any time, the whole testimony can be regarded as questionable. If you have any questions about this list, please contact either myself or Pauline Mau, who works with the Child Advocacy Center. The supply drive will occur from Sunday, January 12 through Sunday, February 2.

If you would like to give a monetary donation, please write a check out to the church and simply put "Craft 4 A Cause" on the memo line and place it in the offering plate. If you would like to donate items for meals or volunteer to help serve any of the pre-planned meals, it would also be greatly appreciated.

Register for this crafting event with your RSVP no later than January 23. Payment is due in advance to reserve your table.

If you have any questions about Craft 4 A Cause, please contact me at 608-293-1785 or jenna_1785@hotmail.com

JANURARY W-ELCA



“Our Journey Begins . . .”

NOTE CHANGES IN TIME:

Jan. 8th 9-10 *Gather* Bible Study
 10-10:30 **Miriam** Circle serves coffee break;
 10:30 **WELCA Business Meeting followed by project work**

Jan. 21st 9 a.m. Quilting day with potluck.



W-ELCA meeting minute highlights: reported by Marne Wilson

Special recognition was given to Mavis Shager and Leona Meier our Mission Stewardship leaders, Marion Seffrood, our hardest working non-member quilter and Roma Anderson for knitting so many baby sweater and hat sets that we sent to LWR in October. Each lady received a coffee/tea mug, so they could take a much deserved ‘break’.

The officer team received THANK YOU gifts from Sandy for all their help and suggestions during 2013. Pastor Luke received a gift from the ladies for all his work preparing and leading our *Gather* Bible Study each month. The Sunday School received four packs of 18 each craft Christmas Tree trimming ornament sets (trees, bulbs, candy canes and gingerbread men). The officer team gave Sandy a beautiful candle that lights up.

Fifteen prayer shawls, seven Linus blankets and all the items on the mitten tree were given “Blessings,” by everyone present; so now we can deliver them before Christmas.

FULL minutes are posted on the W-ELCA bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall.

“REJOICE IN HOPE, BE PATIENT IN SUFFERING, PERSEVERE IN PRAYER.” Romans 12:12



Upcoming FEBRUARY events:

“Hearts, Love and something Soft”

Feb. 5th 9-10 *Gather* Bible Study;
 10-10:30 **Abigail** circle serves coffee break;
 10:30 WELCA business meeting

Feb. 18th 9 a.m. Quilting day w/potluck

Feb. 19th 2 p.m. Bingo at the Lafayette Manor

Feb. 23rd BOLD WOMEN'S DAY

Mission Action News

- 13 quilts were sewn in November.
- The next sewing date is January 21st.
- Thanks for the great response to the mitten tree. The items have been delivered to Argyle, Blackhawk, and Darlington Elementary Schools by Lenita, Marne, and Sheila.
- There are 4 quilts being donated to the South Wayne Fire Department, to be added to the food boxes.
- 6 quilts were donated to Family Advocates in November.

ELCA Stories of Faith in Action: Grateful for God's Creatures

Horses, peacocks, chickens, snakes, parrots, dogs, cats, lizards, tortoises and fish at church?

It's not unusual or too exotic for the annual Blessing God's Creatures Festival at First Lutheran Church and School in Torrance, Calif. First Lutheran welcomes animal lovers from all over the South Bay of Los Angeles to recognize God's calling to care for the world God has made — including all creatures. Their fifth-annual Blessing God's Creatures Festival was held on Oct. 5 this year. Jared Carson, pastor at First Lutheran Church and School, explains, "We always choose the first Saturday in October for this annual event for consistency in our parish schedule, but it also happens to be the closest weekend to the commemoration of St. Francis of Assisi."

The event has become well-known in the South Bay community. It really is a festival, with a petting zoo, pony rides and a bounce-house for children. Pet businesses and pet nonprofit groups, such as pet adoption groups, animal rescues, no-kill shelters and fostering programs, are invited to be festival exhibitors, offering their expertise, services and information in caring for animals — of all kinds.

On the main stage area of the outdoor courtyard, a wildlife biologist showcases exotic animals and talks about their habitat, food and care. Even with the festival atmosphere, the heart of the festival is the pastoral blessings that happen in the courtyard away from the noise and busyness of the exhibitors, main stage and children's activities.

A blessing for all

Here in the shade and quiet of the congregation's courtyard, pets and their human companions receive personal blessings from one of the pastors.

The pastors offer words of assurance to pet owners that God is blessing their beloved pets with health, life, love and a caring home. People receive the assurance that God is blessing them with animal companions as a sign of God's love and faithfulness. For many people, they have never heard these words of blessing, and it can be emotional for some pet owners.

"Our pets are those who comfort us when we are sad, bring us joy and laughter, and love us even when we can't love ourselves. By God's grace, they are as much of a blessing to us as we are to them," says Jared.

A witness to all

Without a doubt, there is an element of community witness and outreach through this event — welcoming more than 500 people this year. A few people have joined the congregation because of this event. Others simply find a new-found appreciation and respect for this community of Christian faith. Jared knows they are making a public impact when he runs into people in the community and they hear he's a pastor at First Lutheran. "They get a big smile on their face and say, 'That's the church that does the big animal-blessing event.'" "While our congregation actively engages in forming disciples, I take encouragement that this festival isn't a 'bait and switch membership drive.' We are authentic in our witness to the faith and this builds good will with our neighbors." "Maybe this is the best first step toward being a relevant Christian community in a new context."

January Worship Assistants

- Jan 5:** Greeters: Wayne & Marne Wilson; Ushers: Larry, Sue, & Russell Buetzer; Bread: Betty Johnson; Elements: Elsa Meyer; Worship Asst.: Chris Meyer
- Jan 12th:** Greeters: Don & Margaret Shager; Ushers: Connie Bocklund & Arnold Lancaster; Elements: Leona Meier & Mavis Shager; Worship Asst: Marne Wilson
- Jan 19th :** Greeters: Smiley & Judi Schmitz; Ushers: Curt & Becky Wang; Bread: Barb Eicher; Elements: Sandy Potter; Worship Asst: Brooke Ames
- Jan 26th:** Greeters: Don & Barb Eicher; Ushers: Chris & Elsa Meyer; Elements: Clare Pehl; Worship Assistant: Courtney Bocklund

*Ushers, don't forget to count attendance (babies and children, too). Please place this number with the date in the offering plate.