



Fields of Grace Newsletter

<http://www.fields-of-grace.org>

Vol. 7, Issue 4 Bernadotte, First & Swan Lake Lutheran November 2017

Swan Lake ladies to hold supper

The Swan Lake women will hold a fall supper on Thursday November 16 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. They'll serve a simple meal of turkey commercials, stuffing, coleslaw and apple crisp. Sounds yummy! Everyone welcome.

Bernadotte will host annual Thanksgiving Eve service

This year's community Thanksgiving Service will be at Bernadotte Lutheran on Wednesday, November 22, at 7:00 p.m. Members of our FOG churches, as well as St. Gregory the Great and St. George Catholic, will join together for this special community service.

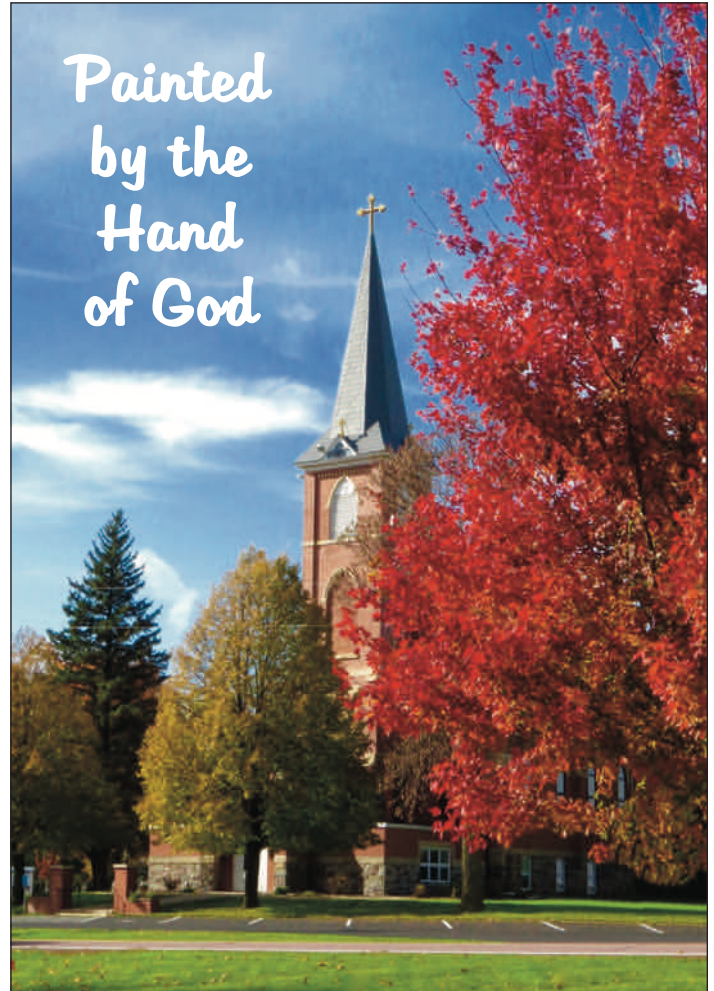
Fall Festival at First Lutheran

The annual Fall Festival at First Lutheran is Saturday, November 19, beginning with a bake sale, crafts, cards, and free egg coffee at 9:30 a.m. Check the poster on the back page of this newsletter for all the details!

Confirmation services set

Ben Radke, son of Steve Radke and Judy Radke, will be confirmed at Bernadotte on Sunday, October 29.

Kaylyn Broste, daughter of Jeremy and Carmen Broste, will be confirmed at First Lutheran Sunday, November 26.



Wednesday School

Fields of Grace fifth through ninth graders meet most Wednesday evenings for "Wednesday School" led by minister Heidi and youth director Mark Haler. After a quick supper cooked by Mark, the group gets down to work. Twenty kids attended the October 11 session.



FIELDS OF GRACE WORSHIP SERVICES

Swan Lake Lutheran—8:00 a.m.—Communion the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month

First Lutheran—9:30 a.m.—Communion the 1st and 4th Sundays of the month

Bernadotte Lutheran—11:00 a.m.—Communion the 2nd Sunday of the month

Heidi's Intern Minister Message

The 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation has come and gone. What about the next 500 years? Most predications that I hear about the next 500 or 50 or five years tell us that decline will simply continue indefinitely and we are just going to have to accept that. I don't.

I don't think that the antidote to decline is to simply be better sales people for church with flashier and shinier features to entice the largest slice of a shrinking pie of interested people into church.

I think the church is about to be one of the few places of hope that many people will have to turn to in our increasingly chaotic world. I think that some political leader may just push that red button (and no it will not be like an apocalypse movie) or some aspect of climate change will be pushed over the edge, or some hacker will decide that it is time to empty everyone's bank account. Most likely, through difficult struggle and resistance, the average people of the world—who are sick of living under systems that privilege a small few—will decide this is not acceptable anymore.

And a pared down church will have to be ready. Ready to welcome the masses who have nowhere else to turn for hope. The masses who no longer rely on the invisible forces of the world (governments, international organizations, corporations and civil society) to care for them.

Over the coming years and decades, as most church leaders anticipate more decline, I think the world just might surprise us. The world is going to surprise us by needing what the church has to offer.

Let me offer an example. In 2015, the National Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada wanted to challenge their church body with four different ways of commemorating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. They were encouraged to raise \$500,000 for the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), to provide 500 scholarships for students in Jordan and the Holy Land, to plant 500,000 trees, and to sponsor 500 refugees.

Apparently, the initial idea was the above with one fewer zero on each number. But a particular council member said, "let's slap a zero on these challenges."

Of course the council did not expect the members to meet those goals, but swinging for the upper deck was better than just going for a base hit.

Two years later, they have raised 150,000 for the LWF (three times the pre "slap a zero on it goal"), provided 160 scholarships (three times the original goal), and planted 80,000 trees (almost two times the original goal). But here is where it gets interesting. They have also sponsored 540 refugees, exceeding the "slap a zero on it" goal and more than 10 times the original goal! How did they do that?

Well just a couple months after their 2015 national convention,

the body of a young Syrian boy named Alan Kurdi washed up on a beach in Turkey. A boy who had been denied entrance to Canada. A boy whose tragic death mobilized the world.

So did they meet their "slap a zero on it goal" because they are a church of expert refugee sponsors? Hardly.

The world needed what they had to offer, which was communities small enough to care for families who needed help, but large enough to mobilize enough money, furniture, and volunteers to settle newcomers in their communities.

All they needed to do was let their anxieties about decline die just long enough to see that God was bringing about tangible new life through them. God was using them for real resurrection. It is in this intersecting place that a declining church meets a world in need of hope.

The decline of North American churches in the past few decades is not a never ending trend. But I do think God is using this time to help us shed our baggage. God is letting us struggle so that we can get all the wrong fixes and solutions to decline out of our system. So that we can try trendy music and flashy tech and hip pastors. So we can try to reincarnate the knitting groups and service clubs and youth groups of the past. So that we can get all the complaining and shaming of our family, friends, and neighbors over with. So that we can see that nothing we come up with will be the solution to our problems.

God is letting us experience decline long enough to finally die to our memories and nostalgia of the glory days and realize that the only thing the church ever had was the good news of Christ's death and resurrection. All we ever were at our best are communities grounded in Christ's new life given for us.

To be honest, I think, in many ways, the next 500 years for Lutherans and for North American Christianity will look a lot like the last 500. We will continue to be communities where the gospel is preached and where the sacraments are administered. Sometimes we will be strong in number and power. Other times we will be weak and marginalized. But in the end, neither of those realities matter.

That God is answering all the sin and death in the world with resurrection and new life proclaimed in churches just like us does.



To contact Heidi, call 507-766-2729 or email heidijohagstrom@gmail.com

NOVEMBER 2017 WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

First Lutheran Church

Ushers: 5 & 12-Bill Y & Tom B; 19-Howard & Darlene L; 26-Bill Y & Howard L
Greeter: Al Y
Liturgist: 5 & 12-Charles Y; 19-Charlie H; 26-Jorja L
Readers: Linda Y & Cindy Y
Visiting: Marie C & Myra S
Communion Bread: Joyce Reese
Altar: Trudy H & Carmen B
Coffee Servers: 5-Marie C & Sue H; 12-Laurie L & Linda Y; 19-Wendy H & Angie H; 26-Mary M & Charlene N.

Bernadotte Lutheran

Greeters: Mia & Jason Ross
Readers: 5-Lowell Sjostrom, 12-Rosanne Johnson, 19-Ruth Klossner, 26-Sally Webster
Acolyte: Jason Ross
Ushers: Shaun Anderson, Jerome Anderson, Brian Pettis, Lincoln Langhorst, Bryce Peterson
Communion (Nov. 12): S-Shaun Anderson; C-Lori Fenske; U-Jerry Oscarson & Dave Nelson
Coffee Servers: 5-Wendy Schulz & Pam White; 12-WELCA/LCM; 19-Rosanne Johnson & Romi White; 26-open.

Meeting Dates

- First Lutheran Council—Mon., Nov. 6, 5:30 p.m. at First
- Bernadotte Council—Mon., Nov. 20, 7:30 p.m., BLC
- FOG Budget Meeting—Mon., Nov. 27, 7:00 pm., BLC
- FOG Council—Wed., Nov. 29, FLC, 7:45 p.m.

Sibley Co. Choral Society at BLC

The Sibley County Choral Society will present a concert at Bernadotte Saturday, December 9 at 7:00 p.m. Two to five volunteers are needed to take tickets, serve refreshments and coffee provided by choral members. Contact Deb Sjostrom if you can volunteer that evening.

Bernadotte WELCA/LCM notes

- Joint LCM-WELCA Meeting, Sun., Nov 12, noon. Devotions- Denise Johnson, Hosts/hostesses: Jerome & Shaun Anderson, Brent & Sarah Johnson, Lowell & Adrienne Sjostrom, and Jim & Konnie Bartels.
- Annual Advent Potluck Dinner, Sun., Dec. 3, after morning worship. Coordinators: Renee Rasmussen, Judy Ross, and Sally Webster. M through Y serve.

An invitation to all women of Fields of Grace

The Bernadotte WELCA ladies invite all women from FOG to a relaxing social evening Thursday, November 9, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at Chankaska Winery in St. Peter. Buy a glass of wine and visit with each other to become better acquainted with the Fields of Grace ladies. Please RSVP to Jackie Helget at 507-351-8632 by noon on Wednesday, November 8.

Looking ahead to the holidays

- First Lutheran Sunday School Christmas program, Sunday, Dec. 10, 4:00 p.m.; family BBQ meal follows.
- Community Christmas Sing-a-Long, Sunday, Dec. 10, 7:00 p.m., First Lutheran
- Joint Service—Sun., Dec. 24, 9:30 a.m., First Lutheran.
- Christmas worship services—7:00 p.m., Christmas Eve at Swan Lake; 9:00 p.m., Christmas Eve at First; and 8:00 a.m. Christmas morning at Bernadotte.
- Joint Service—Sun., Dec. 31, First Lutheran.

Information on Bernadotte's Sunday School program is pending; check the December newsletter.

Busy days in Bernadotte

There was a lot of "commotion" in Bernadotte this past week. Crews from Ground Zero and M R Paving paved the church's parking lot—at the same time that Winthrop Telephone was laying fiber optic cable through the area.



Bloodmobile at Laf. Charter School

The Red Cross Bloodmobile will be at the Lafayette Charter School gym on Monday, November 13, from 1:00 to 7:00 p.m. Please give!

To make an appointment, call Lori at 507-228-8788 or visit redcrossblood.org and enter "Lafayette" to schedule an appointment.

Newsletter editor has new email address

Newsletter editor Ruth Klossner is changing her email provider. As a result, she has a new email address—cowladyruth@gmail.com. Please use it for any communication.

Ready or not...

Day Light Savings Time ends Sunday, November 5. Set your clocks back...or you might be an hour **early** for church!

Sunday School

Sunday School classes are held at 10:15 a.m. at Bernadotte and 10:30 a.m. at First Lutheran. There will be no Sunday School on November 26 due to Thanksgiving.

Wedding bells

Benjamin Anderson, son of Bob and the late Lisa Anderson, and Cassandra Johnson were married at Bernadotte Saturday, September 30.

Katie Nelson and Tim Decko were married at First Lutheran on October 7.

Memorial services held

A memorial service for Swan Lake member Roger Currier, 85, of Nicollet, was held at Swan Lake Lutheran Church on Saturday, October 21. Roger passed away Monday, August 28.

Bernadotte member Delores Peterson of New Ulm, 85, passed away Tuesday, October 3. Funeral services were held Saturday, October 7 at Bernadotte Lutheran. Burial was in Bernadotte cemetery, along with the ashes of her late husband Harvey Peterson.

Upcoming Area Events

- Scandian Grove Lutefisk & Meatball Meal—Sat., Nov. 4, 11:30-5:30 pm.
- Lutefisk/Swedish Meatball Supper at Zion Lutheran Church in Buffalo Lake, Sun. Nov. 19, 4:30-6:30 p.m.



Swan Lake benefit breakfast



Scrambled eggs, sausage, and pancakes were on the menu for the annual Harvest Breakfast at Swan Lake Lutheran Saturday, October 7. The free-will breakfast was a benefit to assist the Kevin and Beth Fluegge family with expenses after an isolated tornado hit their farm in July.



The Fluegges—Trent, Emmalie, Kevin, Beth, Kaleb, and Cole. Not pictured: Anesa.



Operation Christmas Child at First & Bernadotte

Here's special information for anyone interested in putting together an Operation Christmas Child shoe box. Wendy Hagberg is coordinating the project at First Lutheran and Rosanne Johnson at Bernadotte. Wendy is setting up a display of sample boxes in the entrance at First and a donation of clear boxes is available in there for your use. Or, Walmart sells the boxes for 94 cents. The Dollar store has great gift items to put in boxes.

For those unable to fill a box, but would like to help, you can donate toward the cost of shipping. The Christmas Child program asks for a \$9.00 donation per box for collecting, pro-

cessing, and shipping the boxes to over 100 countries. That donation also covers the cost of "The Greatest Gift Gospel Booklets" which are included in each box. Even if unable to help with the \$9.00 donation per box, members can still fill a box.

Imagine the joy that each box will bring to a child in need or who has never received a gift or the Good News of Jesus Christ. Filled boxes need to be returned to church by November 13 for processing for shipping.

Have questions? Contact Wendy Hagberg at 228-8569 or Rosanne Johnson at 228-8551.



Martens on Honor Flight

First Lutheran member Carl Martens, accompanied by his son Brian, traveled to Washington, D.C. Saturday, September 30, along with 77 other WWII and Korean veterans and their escorts in a whirlwind 14-hour visit. The vets participated in a fully paid excursion through the Twin Cities Honor Flight Hub. The trip was made possible by an anonymous donor who paid \$5,000 for up to 10 New Ulm WWII Vets to go on the trip. Honor Flight is a nation-wide organization with a mission of taking WWII and Korean War Veterans to see "their memorials."

Brian read letters to Carl during a special "mail call" for all vets during the flight. Hundreds of well wishes were received from area school children and businesses. Carl also received a hand-written letter from former US Senator Dave Durenberger who had worked with Martens on several key agricultural projects while in office.

Carl and Brian were greeted by Senator Al Franken on their arrival in DC. A special police escort whisked the tour busses through the busy streets of Washington so that the group could see the Air Force Memorial, Pentagon, Navy Memorial, US Capitol, WWII Memorial, Korean Memorial, Vietnam Memorial, Lincoln Memorial, Women in Military Service Memorial, and Changing of the Guard at Arlington National Cemetery.

Internship committee seeks input

The Lay Internship Committee, formed recently to assist Heidi as she completes her internship at our Fields of Grace congregations, is asking for input from members. The committee's purpose is to walk with and offer support and encouragement to the intern, and is a requirement of the Seminary

Two members of each congregation are on the committee—Joanne Gieseke and Darwin Gieseke of Swan Lake, Traci Abrahamson and Dennis Sjogren of First, Tim Schulz and Sally Webster of Bernadotte, and Stuart Hartley representing the youth.

The committee wants to hear from ALL members of the congregations. Please share your comments, concerns, observations, and suggestions. There also is a need for a few "sermon listeners" within the congregations. A member of the committee may ask you to take a few sermon notes, just like confirmation all over again! With your participation and God's guidance, we hope that this year of Heidi's internship will be a great and rewarding experience for her and for the FOG Parish.



GOOD NEWS

Jasenko Gavranovic of First Lutheran, left, captured second place in the Intermediate male division of the eighth annual Youth Fitting Contest at World Dairy Expo Sunday, October 1 in Madison, Wisconsin. The first place winner, Tyler London, left, is from Kentucky. Contestants were allotted one hour to prepare an animal to show-ready quality.

**First Lutheran Church
of Lafayette**

Fall Festival

Saturday, November 18, 2017
9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Bake Sale★ Cards★ Napkins

Coffe Hour

serving
Free Egg Coffee
from 9:30 to 10:30

•••••

Dinner

Bone-in Ham
and Swedish Meatbal,
Real Mashed Potatoes
Corn, Cole Slaw,
Buns and Desserts.
\$11.00

Free Bingo for kids upstairs

Quilt Raffle

