

THE VINE
January 2016

WHITE AS SNOW

ISAIAH 1:18

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S t a f f O f f i c e H o u r s :

Pastor Lee
Monday to Thursday
9:00 am to Noon



Quinn Friesen
Tuesday to Friday
9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Katharine Heimbigner-Tenor
Monday to Friday
9:00 am to 1:00 pm

Mariette Jessup
Please contact via email
children@oursaviourchurch.ca



Subscribe to The Vine Online!

Simply email office@oursaviourchurch.ca with 'Electronic Vine' in the subject line. Your email address will be added to the distribution list! ALSO you can find the Vine on our church website. Please contact the Church Office with any questions.

Periodically during the day, I take a look at myself in the mirror. Usually it's to check if my tie is straight (if it's a tie day), my hair is combed or to see if there is some little green thing stuck in my teeth. Other times I might take a closer look to see if there are more wrinkles and gray hair. But seldom do I talk to myself when I look in the mirror.

During our times of worship on the first Sunday of the new year, I offered an assignment, or was it a challenge, or perhaps an opportunity...oh, well, I made the proposal that we look in the mirror once a day, each day in January, and say:

I am a child of God, deserving love and respect, and God will use me to make a difference!

This becomes an important reminder of what really defines us. The disciple, John, declares in the first chapter of his gospel that Jesus came that we might become children of God. David Lose picks up this theme in one of his blogs: *"Children, that is, who are not dominated by the circumstances in which we find ourselves, not defined by our limitations or hurts, and whose destinies are not controlled by others. Rather, we are those individuals who know ourselves to be God's own beloved children."*

There truly is a difference between that which **describes** us and that which **defines** us. We can too easily be compartmentalized, stigmatized, or categorized according to our gender, background, physical deficiencies, social status, financial situation, etc. But these become lies if we allow them to completely define us. For after all, we are precious in God's sight, honored and loved (Isaiah 43:4).

So take the time this month to look in the mirror once each day. Remember that God has called each one of us to be his children; children who have infinite worth in God's eyes, deserving love and respect and God will use us to care for others and the world, to make a difference. It can be a good way to begin this new year no matter what lies ahead. So repeat after me:

I am a child of God, deserving love and respect, and God will



I'm a newbie at this; and at first I was scared ... People are Expecting A Show!!!

But then people say things to you like, "Don't worry, people just want to see the cute kids", and it helps to relieve the pressure!

It feels like Family when you go around asking people to do certain roles - you know that some really don't want to - but you know what, they say yes, because they have the sense that they are part of the LCOS Family and they don't want to let anybody down ... and that is a nice thing, a very nice thing, indeed.

You can't do something like this yourself ... It's a team project ... People stepped-up and stepped-in ... Thank You!

You lie awake at night thinking about things like ... where to secure the perfect stuffed sheep or if anyone will be allergic to incense

The best things when it was over were:

1. Kids who were nervous and not sure of their abilities, bravely donned costumes and stretched themselves. When it was done and they knew that they had done a great job - well, not much beats that feeling!
2. The things that weren't my idea and came out of the clear blue were the best parts of the pageant!
3. People calling me to say how much they enjoyed the production Well, that gives you a warm glow that gives you the courage to think about next year!

Happy 2016!

Mariette Jessup

Children's Ministry Coordinator







Camp Kuriakos



Love Of God, Others & Self

What is it?

LOGOS is both a fun and a deep Christian experience, presented as a 3-day retreat. LOGOS is designed to revitalize your life of faith in the atmosphere of Christian community. People who attend and people who serve LOGOS say it is one of the best faith experiences they have ever had.

The Greek word *logos* means “word.” In the Gospel of John *logos* refers to Jesus, the word-made-flesh. The intent of LOGOS is that you encounter the Living Word and that God will speak a word to you, just for you.

What can I expect?

On the LOGOS weekend, you will spend time in a small group of people. You will hear talks, sing, worship, eat, and do a service project. Although the format is very simple, you can expect so much more. You can expect to be inspired, to laugh, to be moved, and to finish your weekend with a renewed vigor for life.

Who is it for?

LOGOS is for confirmed youth from around the synod who are interested in:

- deepening their faith life,
- getting to know and getting connected with other youth around the synod, and
- developing their leadership ability.

Why is it SO CHEAP?

Thanks to a grant from the *Lutheran Triune Educational and Benevolent Society of Calgary*, we are able to offer this first LOGOS at Camp Kuriakos *for half price!* Our goal is to introduce this experience to youth from as many different Lutheran congregations around the synod as we can... but we only have room for 40 participants. Therefore, for the first two youth from each congregation, the cost is only \$70 each. [For any additional youth, the cost will be \$135 plus GST.]

How do I register or get more information?

The registration deadline is Sunday, January 10, 2016. To register, go the Camp Kuriakos website <www.kuriakos.ab.ca> and look for LOGOS or call Camp Kuriakos at (403) 746-2702.

For more information, contact Pastor Phil Holck by email (philholck@gmail.com) or phone (403) 813-6797.

THE STORY On Sunday Mornings we will be having "The Story."

Through video, pictures, and story telling we will be working through the story of the Bible, and experiencing how God interacted with man throughout history. The teaching will be followed by fun and games of course!

The Experiment is officially launching its Thursday Night Week-

ly Meetings. We will be meeting at the church every Thursday from 7-8:45 (unless otherwise mentioned). This time includes teaching, bible study, fun and games, small groups, and guest speakers. All youth from Grades 7-12 are invited to attend. If you are interested in serving this ministry please contact Quinn.



For parents: I realize that I have not met with a lot of you and you are probably wondering a bit more about who I am and what my plans are. **Sunday Jan 17th at 10pm** in the Fellowship Hall I will be holding a meeting while the Youth are in Sunday school. All parents are highly encouraged to attend.

Girls Spa Night– Saturday Jan 30th starting at 6:30 pm:

This event is hosted by Kerry-Lynn Fielden at he home. We will paint nails, have snacks/ hot chocolate, make bath fizzers, and make earrings. She needs a rough head count to know what supplies to have on hand, and needs to know which girls have pierced ears (for girls who don't have their ears pierced she will provide clip ons) This is geared for **grades 5 to 9**, but the older girls are more than welcome to come too.



Guys Night - Friday Feb 5th 6pm-10pm. We are going to have a super fun night of **gaming, snacking,** and getting a little **crazy** in the Church **Friday** night. Dudes from **grades 5-9** and really any other dudes who want to come are **welcome to join.**



Our Urban Missions Weekend and Coldest Night of the Year walk

will continue this year! Details are still being worked out. We are going to need to do a little fundraising for the walk. Sunday Feb 7th we are scheduled to put on a Bake Sale in the Church. Parents or Kids remember to bring some goodies to help raise donations.


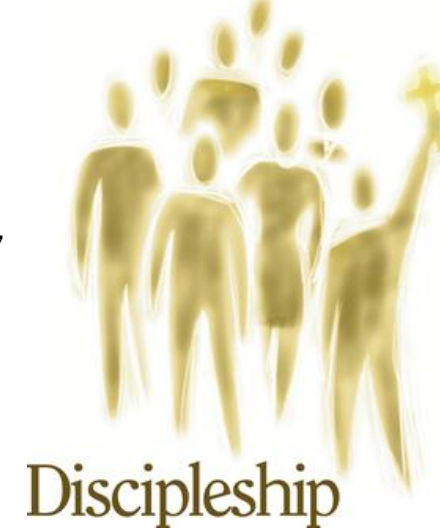
Volunteers Needed for the Experiment- Do you have a heart to see young people encountering God and following Him? Are you looking for an opportunity to serve? You don't have to be young or cool, you just need a willing heart. We are looking for more volun-



Discipleship is a two year program for students in Grades 7&8. Pastor Lee will be meeting with the students twice per month on Sunday evenings from Fall until Spring. They will explore the Bible, the Creeds, the life of Jesus, what it means to be Lutheran, and many tough questions along the way. Check the calendar for meeting times. If your youth or friends from outside the congregation are interested in this opportunity, please see Pastor Lee.

We meet from 6:30 to 8:30 pm Sunday evenings. Our tentative schedule for the year is:

January 17th	March 20th
February 7th	April 10th
February 21st	April 24th
March 6th	May 1st



Christian Book Sale

Feb 25 - 27

at LCOS

Better Books & Bibles

&

Used Book Treasures

will be selling used and new Christian books
for child thru adult. Everyone welcome.

Hours:

10 am to 9 pm Thursday and Friday

Children) is an international organization that is geared toward supplying support for Moms. MOPS creates a time out for Moms filled with fun, food, learning, fellowship, and faith while their kids are having fun in MOPPETs; the childcare program.



Our meeting schedule in January is:

Jan 13th Nutrition presentation by Dr. Dustin Whitney

Jan 27th To be Announced

Our Self-defense presentation and how to teach your children to be safe presentation originally scheduled for January 27th has been rescheduled for later this winter.



Your first visit is free and you are always welcome to join any time.

More information, including registration forms and pricing,

is available from the LCOS website <http://www.oursaviourchurch.ca/#/connect/mops-momsnext>

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Luther Reading Challenge—500 years in the making!



As we approach the 500th anniversary of the posting of the Ninety-Five Theses on October 31, 2017, Martin Luther is going to be a significant topic of conversation and debate. That is where the Luther Reading Challenge comes in. An assortment of the reformer's writings will be presented online for everyone to read and to reflect upon. The texts range from Luther's personal letters and hymns to his doctrinal and social treatises to his catechisms and his will. Each text is prefaced with an introduction to orient the reader. The reading part is just the beginning. Readers can also participate in online discussions. You simply have

to register! The initiative is a joint venture of [The Lutheran World Federation](#) and the [Institute for Ecumenical Research in Strasbourg](#). Highly recommended!



Jan 16th



MINIONS

You bring the family and we provide the popcorn!



together

Help for today. Hope for tomorrow.

DATE:

Sat. April 23, 2016
8:30am – 4:30pm

DON'T DELAY:

\$119 for first 100
couples to register,
\$149 after first 100
couples

LOCATION:

Glenmore Christian
Academy Theatre
16520 24th Street SW
Calgary, AB T2Y 4W2

PRESENTED BY:

Bright Conferences
AND
Glenmore Christian
Academy



A DAY
together

For Couples Wanting More For Their Relationship

CONTACT:

www.brightconferences.ca





Family Movie Night : "The Minions"
 January 16th at 6:30 pm
 You bring the family and we provide the popcorn.
 No RSVP necessary.



**MOPS (Mothers of Pre-Schoolers) and
 MOPNext (Mothers of School Age Children) meet**
 Jan 13th with a nutrition presentation by Dr. Dustin Whitney
 Jan 27th—topic to be announced



Parents of Youth Meeting
 Sunday January 17th at 10:00 am
 All parents are highly encouraged to attend.



Girls Spa Night for grade 5 to 9 (high school if interested)
Saturday Jan 30th starting at 6:30 pm
 This event is hosted by Kerry-Lynn Fielden at their home.
 Please RSVP to Quinn by January 24th.



Guys Night for Youth Boys
Friday Feb 5th from 6:00 to 10:00 pm.
 Gaming, snacking, and getting a little crazy in the Church Fri-
 day night.



Family Movie Night : "Pixels"
 February 6th at 6:30 pm
 You bring the family and we provide the popcorn.
 No RSVP necessary.

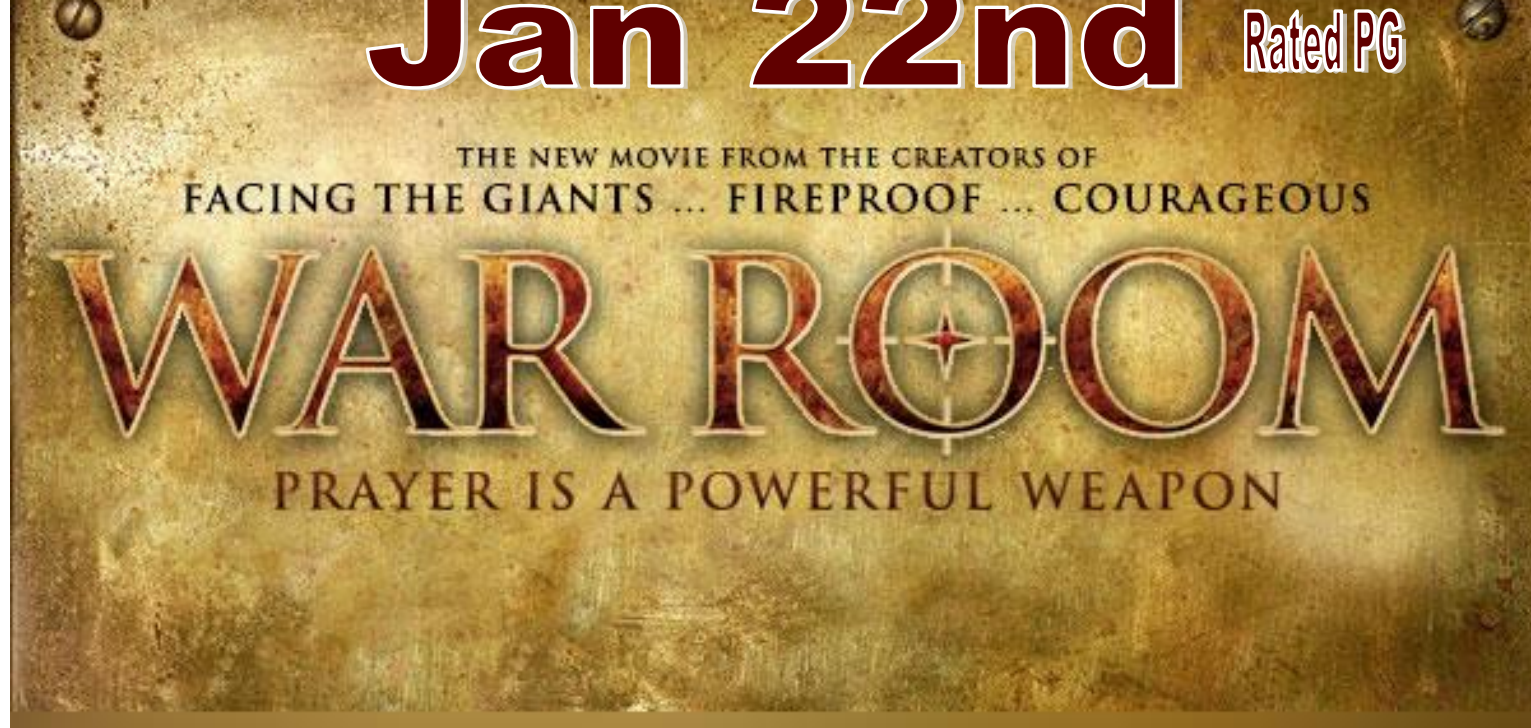


Bake Sale Fundraiser February 7th between Services
 For Coldest Night of the Year
 In support of the CHILL team.



Join the CHILL team (Christians Helping Individuals Lift Lives)
 At Coldest Night of they Year on Feb 20th
 You can sign up to walk or donate at www.thechillteam.com





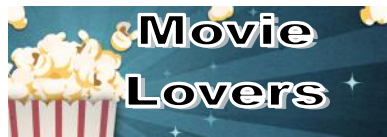
Bring a friend! Bring a snack!





Choir—practices Wednesday nights

Do you have a song in your heart? Do you enjoy music and like to laugh? If the answer is "Yes", then do we have a place for you. The LCOS Choir rehearses on Wednesday nights at 7:30 pm, only for one hour. You'll share your time with like-minded folk, and come away feeling better for the songs and the fun. Questions? Contact Terry Lee or Alex McKay.



Movie Lovers will meet occasionally throughout the year. On January 22nd we will be watching "The War Room" at 7:00 pm and on February 12th we will be watching "Luther" at 7:00 pm. Both will be at the church. Please bring your own snacks.



Sunday Morning Drop-In Bible Study—10 am Sunday mornings

This weekly drop-in class is held between the services on Sunday mornings. We are presently studying the Book of Hebrews with Jens Kaack. Contact the office for more details.



Experiencing God—meets every Wednesday at 9:30 am at LCOS

This group of "mature" women always has an extra chair open to talk about faith, life, and God's Word over coffee. For more information, please contact the church office.



Fireside Group—meets twice a month on Mondays

This small group enjoys meeting to study, converse, celebrate and have something to nibble on. They look at a variety of topics, books, and videos to deepen their faith together. You're welcome to attend! For more information, please contact the church office.



Morning Glories—meets 2nd and 4th Thursday of every month at 10:00 am with December off. This group of "mature" women always has an extra chair open to talk about faith, life, and God's Word over coffee. For more information, please contact the church office.



Today's Pilgrims—Today's Pilgrims will meet January 12 & 26th, which are the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month. We meet in the fireside room at 7:00 PM. We are studying "Love To Pray" which is a devotional for deepening your prayer life. There is new information even for veteran pray-ers! Contact the church office for information.

Crossways Divine Drama Bible Study runs every Monday night for 16 weeks at 7:00

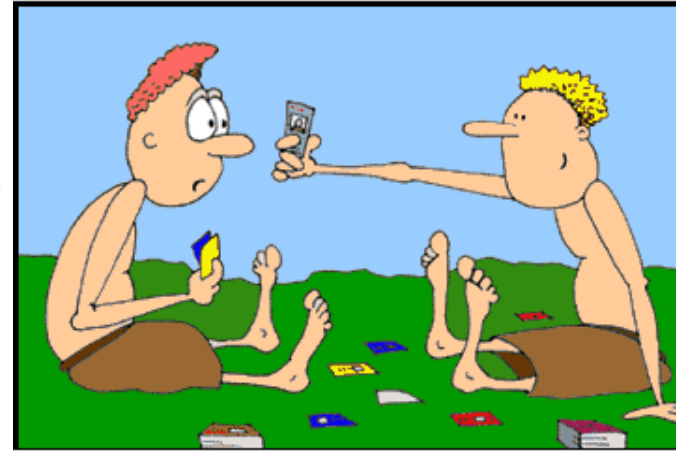
January 5th & 19th

You are welcome to drop in at any time.

We accept new members year round.

We play Bridge, Mexican Train, Cribbage and a variety of other games and always are looking at learning more. Join us for a game or two and get to know us. We also enjoy celebrating life's big events of our members such as birthdays, anniversaries and other life events.

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08-16-1999

PROPHET TRADING CARDS

WE CARE Backpacks Work Bee

We Care Backpacks Work Bee are a great "giving opportunity" and a way to support refugees around the world, and the work of Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR) by filling a backpack to support those presently in refugee camps around the world. Our church council is proposing a goal of 500 "We Care" Bags. A dual challenge, also to observe the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

Our Work Bee is tentatively scheduled for March 5th.

We have a number of items for the backpacks already but need the following items:

- Toothpaste
- Nail clippers
- Wide toothed combs
- boxes of band aids
- small containers of Vaseline
- small hand towels



To view the lists of requested items for the backpacks please go to http://www.clwr.org/what-we-do/We_Care_instructions.htm

Watch for more information or contact Jaqui Anderson 403-452-4071

lunch program for children at Acadia School and David Thompson. Each week 700 children need an entire lunch or a supplement because they are coming to school hungry. A child may need help once or multiple times each week.



We had been providing lunches twice a month on Wednesday. Beginning in February we will be providing lunches every week and also adding a small amount of assistance to Lord Beaverbrook High School.

To be able to continue this program and to keep costs minimal there is a need for either cash donations (please direct to urgent care) and/or items such as brown paper bags (lunch size or a little bigger), plastic snack bags, plastic sandwich bags and 7 oz. plastic glasses (for the fruit and veggie cups).

In addition, each week we provide 20 – 24 healthy cookies. To date there have been a few people from the congregation baking cookies, but as we move to a weekly schedule we need additional bakers. We ask the cookies be healthy and please remember **NO NUTS** and **NO PEANUT BUTTER**. This would be a huge help.

If you are interested in learning more, or supporting the program with time or financial support please contact Pastor Lee or the office.

Don't know what a healthy cookie recipe looks like? Here is just one recipe to try out and we have other suggestions.

1/4 c. butter or non-hydrogenated margarine (softened)	1 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 c. sugar	1/2 tsp baking soda
1/2 c. packed brown sugar	1/4 tsp. salt
1 large egg	1 packed cup coarsely grated carrots (about 2)
1 tsp. vanilla	1/2 c. raisins or dried cranberries
1 1/2 c. flour	lemon cream cheese frosting (optional)



Preheat oven to 350 degrees

- Beat with mixer, butter, sugar, brown sugar, egg and vanilla until well blended and smooth.
- Add flour, cinnamon, soda, salt and carrots and stir by hand until almost blended.
- Add raisins or cranberries if desired and stir just until combined.
- Drop spoonfuls of dough onto a baking sheet sprayed with PAM.
- Bake 12-14 minutes until they are barely golden around the edges, but still soft in the middle.

February 20th Family Friendly Fundraising Walk



Join the CHILL team (Christians Helping Individuals Lift Lives)

for our third annual Coldest Night of the Year Walk on February 20th. This 2, 5, or 10 km hike is a fundraiser for Feed the Hungry, Acadia Place and the Mustard Seed. You can sign up to walk or donate at www.thechillteam.com

[Acadia Place](#) is a project that supports housing first, a successful model that places people in a home with the supports they require to live a long and prosperous life. Located in southeast Calgary, Acadia Place, which is owned by [Calgary Homeless Foundation](#) and operated by CUPS, has 57 units housing a blend of single adults, couples and families, with the majority being families who were experiencing homelessness or were at extreme risk of becoming homeless. KAIROS Calgary, an ecumenical Social Justice initiative in Calgary, is currently fundraising to retire the mortgage on Acadia Place. Funds raised from CNOY will support this effort.

[Feed the Hungry](#) (FTH) is a Sunday Night dinner program offering a sit down meal in St. Mary's Hall in downtown Calgary. A ministry of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Calgary, *each week FTH offers 500 guests a three course dinner that is served by volunteers*. FTH is intentional about creating an atmosphere of dignity and welcome. Proceeds will support the ongoing needs of the program.

[The Mustard Seed](#) is non-denominational Christian charity that builds community, grows hope and supports change. It has been impacting and changing lives for more than 30 years. With support from donors and volunteers, the organization provides food, clothing and shelter to men and women who are experiencing poverty and homelessness in Calgary. It also helps them find homes and jobs and improve their overall health – physically, mentally and spiritually. Proceeds will be used to provide meals, employment coaching, and housing assistance.

Also, don't forget to mark your calendar for February 7th between Services to purchase baked goods in support of the CHILL team.





REFORMATION CHALLENGE!

2017 marks the 500th anniversary of the Reformation

Join with Lutherans across Canada and take the **Reformation Challenge** as we commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation and demonstrate our excitement for the theme

Liberated by God's Grace in the following 4 ways:

The Reformation Challenge calls us to:

Help provide 500 scholarships for schools of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land



The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) carries out its ministry in the midst of the conflict in Palestine/Israel. The church is committed to a hopeful, sustainable and peaceful future for the whole community. ELJCHL schools welcome children of all faiths, primarily Christian and Muslim. The schools provide education, job skills and leadership formation.



Human Beings –
Not for Sale



The ELCIC and [Canadian Lutheran World Relief](#) support many projects with the ELCJHL ministries, including the schools. A scholarship of \$1400 will allow a student to attend school for one year. As with all schools, steady enrollment of students paying tuition helps the ELCJHL schools to be sustainable and effective.

Investing in a student's future and forming leaders dedicated to peace is a tangible expression that human beings are not for



The goal of [The Lutheran World Federation \(LWF\) Endowment Fund](#) is to ensure that we continue the good work the LWF has been doing since its founding in 1947. The Fund's capital is kept in perpetuity with annual earnings going to designated LWF ministries and projects.

The Fund helps ensure that the witness and ministry of the LWF is sustained and expanded for future generations - our family of over 72.2 million people does make a difference! Projects include:

- * Advocacy for peace with justice
- * Community development
- * Ecumenical and interfaith relations
- * Holistic mission
- * Human rights
- * Humanitarian assistance
- * Theology

The Fund currently has \$9 million Euros and has a goal of reaching \$16 million by Reformation 2017.

Donations to the LWF Endowment Fund may be forwarded to the ELCIC as part of your offering (please note that it is designated to "LWF Endowment Fund").

Supporting the LWF Endowment Fund is a tangible way of joining with Lutherans around the world to share the good news that salvation is not for sale.

Help plant 500,000 trees

A tree is a gift in so many ways; absorbing carbon dioxide, retaining soil, providing shade, being beautiful. The world needs more trees.

Where do you see a need for trees? Where could you plant them? In your neighbourhood, at your congregation or around the world? The ELCIC encourages our members to find diverse ways to gift the world with trees.

The following are two opportunities to consider supporting to help us reach this goal:

- The Environmental Education Centre (EEC) in Beit Jala, Palestine plants olive trees. These trees create more green spaces in Palestine and combat climate change. IT costs the EEC \$12 per tree, which includes students participating in the tree planting process.



Plant tree seedlings



of degraded land will be covered with trees in the two year period. \$50 provides for a grove of 50 trees.

Planting trees is a tangible expression that creation is not for sale.

Sponsor 500 refugees to Canada



Refugees are people who have been forced to leave their homelands and can't voluntarily return. They have been persecuted because of their race, religion, nationality, social group or political opinion. Sponsorship is a ministry of compassion, hospitality, friendship and support.

Our partner, [Canadian Lutheran World Relief](#) (CLWR), is a Master Agreement Holder. Through CLWR, congregations can sponsor refugees. CLWR has the wisdom, experience and guidance to support congregations choosing to commit to sponsorships. As a Synod Conference we are investigating coming together to sponsor refugees. Please watch for more details, contact the office or Jaqui Anderson.

It costs about \$6,000 to sponsor one refugee (i.e. a family of four counts as four people). Along with financial commitments, sponsorship involves social and emotional support as people adapt to a new society, form new community and adopt a new homeland. Sponsorship is a long-term commitment as it can take years to process a refugee claim.

Welcoming refugees is a tangible expression that human beings are not for sale.

Please complete the mission survey

Sponsor a panel for \$40.00
and be entered into a draw to win one of 10 Ark prints.

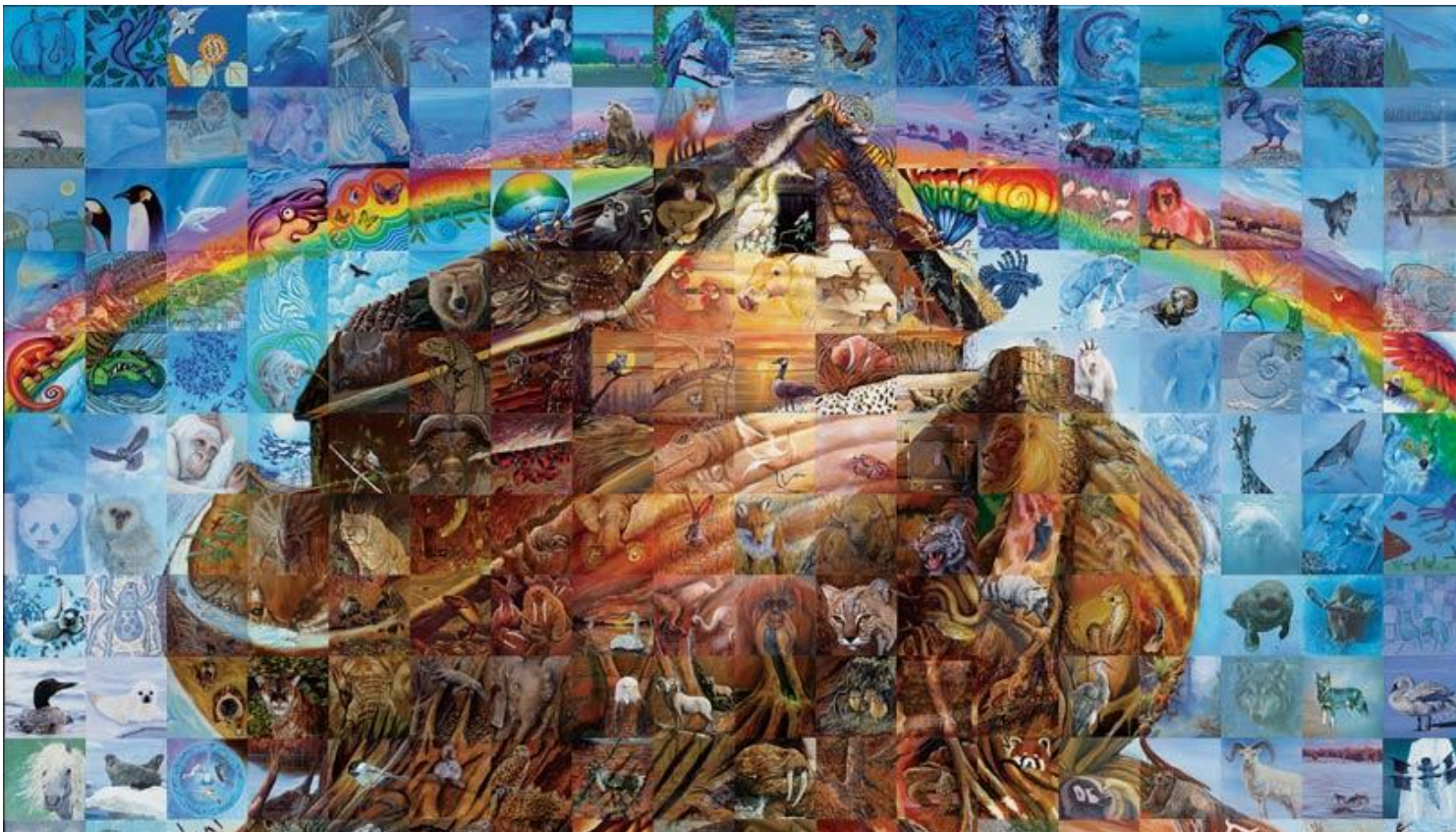
For \$100.00 you may sponsor a panel and receive your choice of one of three
prints by the same artist: “The Ark”, “King of Kings” or “The Price”.

A portion of each donation is tax receiptable.

Watch for mural assembly days on various Sundays were you can affix your panel.

Please contact the office with questions.

We are half done completing our Ark!



A total of 79 pledges have been received committing a total of \$213,354 for 2016.

This compares to 2015 where there were 79 pledges for a total of \$216,400.

This is a 1.4% decrease in the amount pledged.

Get on PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittance) at LCOS

Did you know that you may give to LCOS via pre-authorized remittance one time per month from your bank or credit union chequing account? This program is like any other pre-authorized debit program and is called the PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittance) program. Debits will be drawn from accounts on the 20th of each month. Whenever the 20th falls on a weekend or holiday, the debits will be drawn on the first business day following the 20th. Donations via the PAR program will be recorded on quarterly statements and year-end tax receipts along with all other giving.

Amounts from PAR can be directed to:

- 1) The LCOS general budget
- 2) Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR)
- 3) Mortgage debt reduction

You can give additional amounts and to other purposes via your regular donation envelopes.

The minimum amount to give via this program is a total of \$50.00 per month.

You can sign up, make banking or donation amount changes, or withdraw from the program at any time. These changes will be effective the month following the submission of the change. Forms are available to process these changes. The program is administered by the Financial Secretary. Authorization forms are available in the Place of Welcome.

PAR: If you give via the Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR) Program and you have made a change to your pledge amount for 2015 (as compared to 2014), you will need to complete a PAR Amount Change form and submit to the Financial Secretary via church mailbox # 91. If the form is submitted by February 01, 2015 the amount will be effective for the February 20, 2015 withdrawal.

Internet e-transfers are also available!

To make a one time or recurring email transfer simply send donations to donate@oursaviourchurch.ca. Please include either your envelope number or your name and address in the email so that we can give you a proper receipt at the year's end.

Flower Chart

The 2016 flower chart is on the Worship Bulletin board by Pastor Lee's office.

If you would like to place flowers on the altar in memory, celebration, or just because, please write your name on the Sunday you choose. Contact the church office with any



Report by Jan 15th to the office. Anyone is welcome to submit a report including (but not limited to) small group leaders and those managing the various ministries at LCOS. For electronic submission please submit to office@oursaviourchurch.ca

Annual General Meeting of Lutheran Church of Our Saviour will be held on Jan 31st at 11:30 am. The annual report will be available Jan 24th in hard copy and electronic form. The report will include the proposed budget for the 2016 year and an update from various ministries in the church.

AGM

The proposed schedule for the day:

9:00 am— No Service

10:00 am— Regular programming

11:00 am— Brief Worship Service

11:30 am— Annual General Meeting. Childcare provided.

12:30 pm (approx.) - Potluck lunch. If your surname begins with:

A-G please bring dessert

H-M please bring sandwiches

N-Z please bring salad or raw veggies

Everyone is welcome to speak at the AGM. However, due to government regulations, if you wish to participate in the voting process you must have completed one of the following requirements:

- 1) Confirmed member of LCOS (Affirmation of Baptism)
- 2) Baptized as an adult at LCOS
- 3) Transfer membership as an adult to LCOS.

Truth About Giving

by Duane Grady

Once upon a time there was a small-membership congregation that struggled with its finances—this may be hard for you to believe, but stretch your imagination. As things got financially tighter, members began to grumble against each other, with some older members saying that the newer and younger members were not contributing their fair share. Someone decided to have a look see and discovered, much to everyone's surprise, that it was the newer members who were giving at a higher rate than were the more established members. This discovered to more grumbling but of a slightly confused nature. "How can this be?" people wondered out loud. Pat-

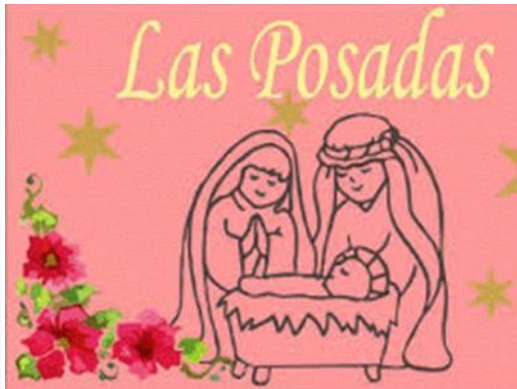
Offering Envelopes





Throughout 2016 I invite you to reflect with me on the theme of “Practicing Our Faith” as you gather for church council, adult study, youth group, coffee group, choir rehearsal and are engaged in learning, discernment and reflection together. Dorothy Bass has edited an excellent resource published several years ago by Jossey-Bass, *Practicing Our Faith*, which I will be using as a primary resource. Together with Don Richter, Dorothy Bass has also edited a second book, *Way to Live: Christian Practices for Teens*, published by Upper Room Books, which is also an excellent resource. Each article will include a Scripture reference, thematic reflection, questions for consideration, and a prayer.

+++++



Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to the stranger. Romans 12:13

En nombre del cielo, buenos moradores, dad a unos viajerosposada esta noche.
(In the name of God, we ask those who dwell here, give to some travellers lodging this evening.)

Traditional Song for *Las Posadas*

Hospitality

For many decades, this particular congregation and neighborhood has been a home and a welcome *posada* (shelter) for a diverse group of people. The various cultures which make up the neighborhood create a rich and vital community.

On this December evening, children of every age process down the street, some with lighted candles in hand and others carrying on their shoulders statues of Mary and Joseph. Each Advent, the young and the old re-enact the story of Joseph seeking lodging for his young wife, Mary, who is weary from travel and heavy with child.

For nine nights in a row, children and adults assume the identity of the weary couple or of the innkeepers, processing around the inside of the church or throughout the neighborhood, moving from one designated location to the next. This is the cherished ritual of *Las Posadas*.

At each site an ancient exchange is repeated. Those playing the role of Joseph approach the inn, knock on the door, and say in a loud voice: *En nombre del cielo, buenos moradores, dad a unos viajerosposada esta noche*. From inside a chorus of voices responds: *Aquí no es meson sigan adelante; yo no puedo abrir no sea algun tunante* (This is not an inn; move on – I cannot open lest you be a scoundrel). As Joseph moves from one inn to the next, the innkeepers grow angry and even threaten violence, while the night grows colder and the couple’s weariness turns to exhaustion. *Venimos rendidos desde Nazareth, yo soy carpintero de nombre José* (We are tired travelling from Nazareth; I am a carpenter named Joseph), Joseph anxiously implores. Finally, he even reveals Mary’s true identity, begging for *posada* for just one night for *la Reina del Cielo*, the Queen of Heaven – to no avail.

Finally, on the ninth day, the eve of Christmas, Joseph’s request moves the heart of an innkeeper, who offers the couple all that he has left – a stable – and this humble place becomes the birthplace of Jesus.

In an outpouring of love and festivity, those gathered on the final night celebrate the generosity of the innkeeper and the *posada* given to Mary and Joseph in song and dance, food and drink. Candy and treats from the *piñata* shower the children, and the community recalls anew how the stranger at one’s door can be God in disguise.

Hospitality was a crucial practice among the early Christians. One word in the New Testament incorporates a profound truth: *xenos*, the Greek word that means “stranger”, also means “guest” and “host.” This one word signals the essential mutuality that is at the heart of hospitality. No one is strange except in relation to someone else; we make one another guests and hosts by how we treat one another.

Las Posadas is more than a ritual. It crystallizes the community’s experience of being nourished and challenged daily by a central Christian mystery – namely, that the stranger at our door can be both gift and challenge, human and divine – every day of the year.

Read and Reflect: Romans 12:9-13

Discuss and Reflect:

What in this reading leads you to say, “I wonder about...”, or, “I noticed...”

Share a story in which you experienced being a stranger, describing the situation and emotions you experienced. Did anyone receive you with hospitality? If so, what concrete forms did the hospitality take?

Comment on the following: One Greek word in the New Testament incorporates a profound truth: *xenos*, the word that means “stranger”, also means “guest” and “host.” This one word signals the essential mutuality that is at the heart of hospitality. No one is strange except in relation to someone else; we make one another guests and hosts by how we treat one another.

Pray together: *Gracious God, let your grace enfold us in confidence and peace, that we may welcome every stranger as guest and host. In Jesus’ name. Amen.*

The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:13).

In Christ Jesus –

Shalom,

The Rev. Dr. Larry Kochendorfer, Bishop

Synod of Alberta and the Territories

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

Service at

7:30

February

10th

ASH
JAMES 5:16
Wednesday



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 9:00 & 11:00 Worship Service 10:00 Adult Bible Study Young Explorers The Experiment 12:30 Israel Meeting	4 7:00 Divine Drama 7:00 Al-anon	5 1:00 Games Group	6 9:30 Experiencing God 9:30 MOPs Steering 11:00 Acadia Lunch Program 7:00 Al-anon 7:30 Choir 8:30 Praise Team 11 AM	7 7:00 The Experiment	8	9 6:00 am Breakfast at The Seed 1:00 Pre- school Open House
10 Sandwich Sunday 9:00 & 11:00 Worship Service 10:00 Adult Bible Study Young Explorers The Experiment 7:00 12th Night	11 1:00 Memory Plus Alzheimer support group 7:00 Divine Drama	12 7:00 Today's Pilgrims 7:00 Yoga	13 9:30 Experiencing God 9:30 MOPS 7:00 Al-anon	14 10:00 Morning Glories 7:00 The Experiment 7:15 Flock Care	15	16 6:30 Family Movie Night "The Minions"
17 9:00 & 11:00 Worship Service 10:00 Adult Bible Study Young Explorers The Experiment Youth Parent Meeting 6:30 Discipleship	18 1:00 Memory Plus support group 7:00 Fireside Group 7:00 Divine Drama	19 1:00 Games Group 7:00 Church Board 7:00 Yoga	20 9:30 Experiencing God 11:00 Acadia Lunch Program 7:00 Al-anon 7:30 Choir 8:30 Praise Team	21 7:00 The Experiment	22 7:00 Movie Lovers: The War Room	23 1:00 Al-anon
24 9:00 & 11:00 Worship Service 10:00 Adult Bible Study Young Explorers The Experiment	25 1:00 Memory Plus Alzheimer support group 7:00 Divine Drama	26 7:00 Today's Pilgrims 7:00 Yoga	27 9:30 Experiencing God 9:30 MOPs Steering 7:00 Al-anon 7:30 Choir 8:30 Praise Team 11 AM	28 10:00 Morning Glories 7:00 The Experiment	29 LOGOS Youth Retreat Jan 29 to 31st	30 6:30 Tween Spa Night
31 No Service at 9:00 10:00 Adult Bible Study Young Explorers The Experiment 11:00 Worship Service			Upcoming Events: February 5th—Youth Guys Night Out February 6th—Family Movie Night: "Pixels" February 7th—Bake Sale for Coldest Night of the Year February 10th—Ash Wednesday Service			

The following survey is designed to gather feedback on the mission priorities of LCOS for the coming year. Please ensure you complete the survey by January 17th and return to the attention of Garry Mihaichuk.

AT LCOS we define “mission in broad terms that includes local and international projects. Directly below can be found a sampling of active initiatives and possible future initiatives for the coming year in the mission area:

International Focus

WeCare bags for distribution in refugee camps

Operation Christmas Child boxes

Disaster Relief (floods, earthquakes etc.) through CLWR

Syrian Refugee emergency appeal through CLWR

Children’s Village in Uganda through Watoto Children’s Choir

Local Focus

Acadia Place to provide home to those at risk of being homeless

Acadia School lunch program feeding hungry children at two local schools

Wee Reads program for ESLO learns at Acadia School

Lenten Project for the Brenda Strafford Centre for domestic violence survivors

Breakfast for the homeless through Breakfast at The Seed

Sandwich Sunday provides food to the Calgary Drop-In Centre

Reformation Challenge (new opportunities)

The National Church and the Synod of Alberta has asked that all churches accept the Reformation Challenge leading to the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation in 2017. Through the support of the local churches the National Church as a whole has embraced four main goals:

- 1) 1) Five hundred scholarships for schools run by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land. These schools work towards a peaceful coexistence in the Palestine/Israel region. They accept all faiths but predominately educate Christians and Muslims together.
- 2) 2) Provide \$500,000 to the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Endowment Fund to provide support to LWF(CLWR parent) in perpetuity.
- 3) 3) Help plant 500,000 trees to support the environment locally and abroad.
- 4) 4) Sponsor 500 refugees to Canada through CLWR.

International Focus (CLWR, Operation Christmas Child, Watoto Choir etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local Focus (Acadia Place, Acadia Community, local organizations)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Benevolence Giving (Alberta Synod and National Synod)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. Please indicate your interest in supporting these new programs:

	Strongly Support Program	Somewhat Support Program	Neutral/ Not Sure	Somewhat Do Not Support Program	Strongly Do Not Support Program
Financial support towards the goal of 500 Scholarships for schools in Jordan and the Holy Land.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Financial support towards increasing the endowment fund of Lutheran World Federation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Financial support for planting of 500,000 trees world wide	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Physically Planting of trees locally in support of planting 500.000 trees world wide	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sponsor 500 refugees to Canada (various types of support available)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Yes	No	Unsure
General Financial Assistance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In-kind donations (Furniture, clothing etc. to establish a home for a family)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Housing Support (Provide boarder or rental accommodations)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Personal Support (Assistance with transportation, English language practice, and help navigating in a new culture)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)/Additional Comments

4. The cost of sponsoring a refugee is approximately \$4,000 per year or \$13,500 per family of four. Please rank in order of preference your preferred method of financial support. (#1 being the most preferred)

Rank	
1 to 5	
	Direct/ local LCOS responsibility with funds taken from general revenue of LCOS. This would require reallocation of resources and the reduction or elimination of some initiatives that are presently active.
	Direct/ local LCOS support with funds coming from a Designated Giving account. (This means only donations given above and beyond your general/pledged funds would be used in support of the program).
	Partnering with other congregations through the South West Conference of the Alberta Synod. The objective would be to sponsor 5 families of 4 refugees each through the conference. Funded from LCOS general revenue .
	Partnering with other congregations through the South West Conference. The objective would be to sponsor 5 families of 4 refugees through the conference. Funded through Designated Giving .

	None	\$1 to \$99	\$100 To \$299	\$300 To \$499	\$500 To \$999	\$1000 or more
Sponsorship of Refugees to Canada	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Planting of trees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Contribution to Endowment fund of Lutheran World Relief	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Contribution towards scholarships for schools in the Holy Land	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. Are there any other comments you would like to make?