

January, 2017

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FROM THE PASTOR: 100 and the New Year

A few years ago, my devotional reading on New Year's Day morning was written by a Jewish woman who was recommending a practice promoted in the Talmud. The Talmud is a collection of Jewish sacred writings and commentary on the Scriptures that has been preserved over the centuries. The Talmudic practice she recommended was to give thanks to God for 100 things each day. 100 things! Each day! While I did not even attempt to try this as a daily spiritual practice, it did strike me as an appropriate way to begin that particular New Year. So, as Phil and I drove down to the Cities to visit family on that New Year's Day, I made a list of 100 things for which I thanked God. (Phil was driving, obviously!)

The benefit of such an extensive list is that it forces us to move from vague generalities...like, "I'm thankful for my family" or "I'm thankful for my health"... to far more specific and concrete reasons for thanksgiving. When you're coming up with a 100 reasons to give thanks, you start to think of things like this: I'm thankful for the warm, spiced taste of hot chai tea on a cold morning. I'm thankful for my husband's willingness to rub my tired feet after a long day. I'm thankful for how my Christmas cactus is bursting with pink blossoms against the backdrop of this snowy day. I'm thankful for good tires on our car to drive us safely to visit family. And so on...you get the idea!

My plan is to again list 100 things for which I'm thankful on New Year's Day, 2017. January is named for the Roman god, Janus, who was the god of beginnings, transitions, and time. He traditionally was portrayed as having two faces; one looking back towards the past, one looking forwards towards the future. We can see how appropriately this first month of the year is named. And pondering at least 100 reasons for thanksgiving is a way we may look both to the past and the future. For what are we grateful in the year that is past, 2016? Yes, it was in many ways a year of national and international turmoil and divisiveness, but for what are we thankful? And what do we look towards in 2017 with hopeful gratitude? Yes, we have no idea what this year will bring, and there are plenty of fears and dreads to go around as we look ahead. But, for what may we look forward with hope and gratitude? Because regardless of circumstances, God has become incarnate in Christ. Emmanuel, God With Us, will be present for us in the past, the future, and the now. Why not exercise our spiritual muscles a bit, and discover at least a hundred reasons for gratitude as we enter 2017?

Here is a lovely, traditional prayer for your consideration and use as we enter the New Year: Eternal God, you have placed us in a world of space and time, and through the events of our lives you bless us with your love. Grant that in the New Year we may know your presence, see your love at work, and live in the light of the event that gives us joy forever---the birth of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

In Christ,

Pastor Susan Berge

WORSHIP IN JANUARY

This month we move from the season of Christmas to that of Epiphany. On January 1, we will observe New Year's Day, which is part of the 12 Days of the Christmas Season. Then we will move into the season of light and revelation that compromises Epiphany on Jan. 8. This season extends through Sunday, February 7.

Sunday, January 1-New Year's Day. We will use a traditional service this morning, including Holy Communion by intinction, as we get 2017 off to a blessed start! Pastor Paula Gaboury, from the United Church in Two Harbors, will be our guest preacher.

Sunday, January 8- Epiphany/Baptism of our Lord. We will celebrate the coming of the Magi to bring gifts to the Christ child on this morning, using a traditional service and receiving Holy Communion at the altar. We will also observe the festival of the Baptism of our Lord. As part of that observance, we will renew our own baptismal faith.

Sunday, January 15-A Sunday in Epiphany. We will utilize our Bread of Life Celebration Service as we commune by intinction on this morning.

Sunday, January 22-A Sunday in Epiphany. We will worship with a traditional style this Sunday, including receiving Holy Communion by intinction. A time for healing prayer will be included. The annual meeting potluck brunch will follow.

Sunday, January 29-A Sunday in Epiphany. Our We Are Called Service will provide our worship framework, including communion by intinction.

ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE

The Annual Congregational Meeting for our Knife River Lutheran Church will be held following worship on Sunday, January 22, during a potluck brunch. We hope everyone can attend this meeting! If you have a report to submit to Melanie for the Annual Meeting packet, please do so by Jan 8, so that we may distribute the Bulletin of Reports on January 15, the Sunday preceding the meeting.

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE SCHOLARSHIPS FOR COLLEGE AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES!

The Knife River Lutheran Church Endowment Fund has some limited scholarship monies available for college students who maintain a "C" average or above. Presently, we are able to give awards of several hundred dollars per semester to assist with incidentals or book costs. If you are interested in receiving a scholarship, please contact the Committee through Pastor Susan or Lawrence Burkhard, Endowment Committee chair. Scholarship requests can be done via mail (addressed to Pastor Susan at the Church) or via e-mail (kniferiverchurch@gmail.com). Each request needs to contain a formal written letter requesting the scholarship and a copy of your most recent grades transcript. (Note, if applying by e-mail, the letter and transcripts should be attachments in either docx or pdf formats). The deadline for submitting requests for the Spring semester is February 1, 2017. We would like to utilize this marvelous resource, so please apply.

WHITE ELEPHANT PARTY TO BE HELD ON JANUARY 10th! At 6 PM, our Women's Group will hold a Christmas/New Year/Epiphany party at Dawn Bendiske's home. (Formerly the home of Delores Jackson!) This is a potluck, so bring something to share, along with a silly white elephant gift. Even if you can't regularly attend W/ELCA, you are warmly invited to join us for this evening of fun!

DID YOU KNOW

The Knife River Lutheran Church website www.kniferiverlutheran.church is an incredible resource for all of us? You can now access Pastor's weekly sermons, the monthly church calendar, and the monthly newsletter on the website! In addition, there are a number of wonderful photos that change regularly! So much fun to see! If you have any announcements or information you would like to see on the website (including possible photo contributions), please forward to Bjorn Ojard at bjorn.ojard@gmail.com. Bjorn, in addition to taking over duties as our congregational president following the annual meeting, is taking on the updating of the website! Thanks, Bjorn!

Christmas Gifts

- ❖ A Christmas Poinsettia and a gift to God's Barnyard of BEES was given in memory of Charlotte Dent by Nancy & Michael Dent.
- ❖ A Christmas Poinsettia was given in memory of Ron Jackson and Helen Swanson by Delores, Jill and Leigh.
- ❖ A Christmas Poinsettia and a gift to World Hunger were given in honor of their family for their love and concern, by DeWayne & Maurine Rubedor.
- ❖ A Christmas Poinsettia was given in memory of their parents, George & Vera Swor and Rolfe & Marcella von Goertz by Paul & Mary von Goertz.
- ❖ A Christmas Poinsettia was given in memory of their family & friends on earth and in heaven by Bill & Pat Meyer.
- ❖ A special Christmas gift was given to the general fund by Alice Berry Johnson.
- ❖ A Christmas Poinsettia was given in memory of Bryan O'Geay and Ethel Wieme by Paul & Kay Struve.
- ❖ A Christmas Poinsettia was given by Rich & Shellene Rue.
- ❖ A Christmas Poinsettia was given in memory of Pat Williams and Ginnie Berge by the Pastors Berge.
- ❖ Two Christmas Poinsettias were given by Joanne Lind, one in memory of Sig and Emily Erickson, and one in memory of Norman (Hack) Lind.
- ❖ A special gift to the Music Fund for the purchase of music was given by Joanne Lind.
- ❖ Two Christmas Poinsettias were given by Steve & Anna Lu Hovis in honor of Mom, Dad and Aunt Hovis, and in honor of Ma and Pa Basson.
- ❖ A gift of choir folders was given by Anna Lu and Steve Hovis.
- ❖ A gift of a goat via God's Barnyard was given by Randi Alreck in honor of Dave & Sue Thomas.
- ❖ A gift of seeds honey and chickens was given via God's Barnyard by Steve and Anna Lu Hovis.
- ❖ A gift to Lutheran World Relief was given by Pat & Jim Hanson.
- ❖ A gift to God's Barnyard was given by Kay & Paul Struve.
- ❖ A gift to God's Barnyard was given in memory of Terry Berg by Paul & Mary von Goertz.
- ❖ A gift to the quilters was given by Steve & Sandra Bjorum in memory of Terry Berg.
- ❖ A gift to the memorial fund in memory of Terry Berg was given by Randi Alreck.
- ❖ A gift to the memorial fund in memory of Terry Berg was given by Bill Berg.
- ❖ A gift to God's Barnyard was given by the Pastors Berge.
- ❖ A gift to the quilters in memory of Terry Berg was given by Rich and Nancy Ojard.
- ❖ A special Christmas gift to the building fund and general fund was received from Rich and Nancy Ojard.

GIFT RECEIVED: A gift in memory of Bertil Carlson, combat wounded and Vernon Norgren (foster brother killed at the Battle of the Bulge) was received from Audrey Carlson in commemoration of the 75th anniversary of World War II.

TREASURER'S REPORT (YTD thru December 16, 2016)

<u>Actual vs Budget Summary</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Income	121,601.79	97,635.54	23,966.25
Expenses	92,830.66	101,298.60	-8,467.94
Mortgage Principal Paid	17,634.54	9,318.47	8,316.08
Net Income	11,136.59	-12,981.52	24,118.11

<u>Fund Balances and Activity</u>	<u>Balance</u>	<u>In</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Out</u>
General Operations Fund	17,033.67	97,664.79		90,518.09
Capital Improvement Fund	11,180.83	5,590.00		1,050.84
Mortgage Fund	7,090.39	17,042.00		18,704.00
Memorial Restricted Fund	2,275.28	340.00		678.25
Memorial Unrestricted Fund	2,756.49	965.00		0.00
Reserve Fund	5,000.00	0.00		0.00
Totals	45,336.66	121,601.79		110,951.18

Thrivent Mortgage Balance 14,418.72 Payoff in 17 Months

COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

4 Jim Bujold
4 Chris Cuypers
5 Bill Gorman
Anne Davies
8 Bob Anderson
Karin Harris
14 Chris Cuypers
20 Sandy Holt
24 Kyle Beardsley
28 Courtney Anderson
31 Richard Ojard
Laurie Peck

JANUARY VOLUNTEERS

SUNDAY	GREETERS/USHERS	LECTOR	OFFERING COUNTERS
Jan 1	Beth & Tim Anderson	Beth Anderson	Melanie McMillion & Darci Stiff
Jan 8	Beth & Tim Anderson	Beth Anderson	Scott & Anne Jaspersen
Jan 15	Sheri & Tom Gray	Sue Sigel	Scott & Anne Jaspersen
Jan 22	Sharon & Scott Shelerud	Scott Shelerud	Kay & Paul Struve
Jan 29	Sharon & Scott Shelerud	Scott Shelerud	Carmen Smith & Lisa Anderson

COMMUNION ASSISTANT FOR JANUARY – Steve Carlson
ALTAR GUILD - Delores Jackson

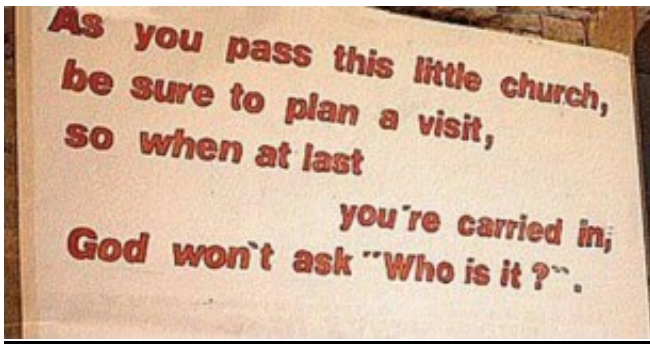
SUNDAY	FLOWERS	COFFEE	CHILDREN'S CHURCH
Jan 1	Randi Alreck		
Jan 8			Carmen Beardsley/Anne Jaspersen
Jan 15			Nikki Ojard/Bjorn Ojard
Jan 22			Bobbi Mattson/Susan Hubbartt
Jan 29			Lawrence Burkhard/Randi Alreck

FROM LYLE'S DESK

Our annual meeting will be held after worship if January 22, 2017. You can help by 1) being there and 2) perusing the annual report before the meeting.

One has to be continually encouraged by the members of our congregation who say "yes" to the appeal, "Can you help?" As others have said, "We just show up." For that we have to be thankful; however, much goes into planning and too often we leave committee work to just a few. As you review the church year, is there an area of interest that you could add yourself to and bring another voice to its efforts?

"There is one task only: the task of love. We are called by God to live this life with love for everyone. All that we do can be an expression of God's love. However mundane the task, perform it with a generous spirit and grateful heart. The most insignificant task performed with love is a tribute to God." – Christopher Maricle, *The Jesus Priorities: 8 Essential Habits*.



“No one is a failure in this world who lightens a burden for someone else.” – Robert E. Harris

A Thought for the New Year

“Preach the Gospel at all times. If necessary, use words.” – St. Francis of Assisi

FROM LYLE’S NOTEBOOK

What in life makes each of us equal to the most powerful man or woman in the world? What in life makes each of us equal to the richest man or woman in the world?

Each of us is given a full day of 24 hours, though admittedly without the power of the most powerful or the riches of the most wealthy. Still, as we look at our brand new calendars, with empty white spaces and no crumbled edges, what is done within them will be solely up to you and me.

But what can I do with just one day --- with just 24 hours? What can I, but one among billions, do with a day given to me by God? Let me share four personal ways I try to spend a day with which God has blessed me.

1. I can ***take the first step*** to accomplishing or ***completing that one thing*** I have always wanted to do.
2. I can ***make one small place in this big wide world a little better*** because I spent a day in it.
3. I can ***be a disciple to one person*** in need.
4. I can ***find a time for God***. (In that time to trust that the Holy Spirit will guide the offerings I will make of the gifts of time, talent and treasure.)

One of my favorite Christian authors, John Ortberg writes: “But when we take stock of our day-to-day actions, there is often a gap between what we value and the way we spend our time, money and energy.”

Each of us is given the gift of a day.

When we are given a gift --- any gift --- its value can be seen in how it is used and treated. How will we use the gift of another day? How will the blessing of today be valued to make a little part of His World a better place and an even better tomorrow?

May you find God’s blessing throughout the New Year.

THANK YOU!

There are not enough words in the English (or Norwegian) language to express our appreciation and gratitude for all that worked so hard to bring the JULEBYEN to life in Knife River on December 2-3-4, 2016. If you were there, you know what a special family celebration of Christmas the Julebyen is. This community celebration is indeed a summation of why those of us that call Knife River "home" do so with such love and pride. Thank you to the Julebyen Committee (chaired by Carol Ojard Carlson) for providing such a wonderful venue to celebrate our heritage, build community, celebrate artisans and entrepreneurs on the North Shore and herald in the Christmas season!

From Lyle Northey: My sincere thanks for the thoughts expressed in the calls, notes and memorials --- as well as the hugs upon the loss of my sister, Lois Northey. All were lifting and appreciated. All memorials were sent to the Eveleth Community Foundation, since it is the town she wished for her resting place.

WELCA!

The much anticipated and always fun "White Elephant Gift Exchange" will be held at Dawn Bendiske's home on Tuesday, January 10th. Beginning with a potluck at 6:00 pm, the fun follows with the gift exchange! All women are welcome, even if this is your first WELCA gathering or your only WELCA event of the year! Really! Re-gifting is encouraged! "WHAT WERE THEY THINKING" gifts are treasured, especially those gifts that have a history! Parting with your treasures is difficult (we know) but you will leave Dawn's home with another treasure! If you need additional insight into this event, seek out Vicky Gorman who created an ugly art space because of this event, or Audrey Carlson with her cherished talking parrot that screams "the Packers suck"!

WELCA SERVING SCHEDULE for 2017: January (White Elephant/Pot Luck)-Dawn Bendiske, February-Sandra Bjorum, March-Vicky Gorman, April-Laurie Jackson, May-Pot Luck at Delores Jackson's home.

KRLC WELCA will host the planning meeting for the spring WELCA gathering. The meeting will be held on Friday, January 6 at 1:00 for 10-15 women. Three volunteers are needed to serve refreshments for the meeting. Please see Pat Hanson for details.

Offering Envelopes for 2017 are now available in the Gathering Area. Please notice that your number has likely changed, and that the envelope design is different, also, giving more options for how your offering is to be utilized.

KRLC OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE - MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK!

You are invited to commemorate a special event with your church family by sponsoring flowers (\$15 each Sunday) and/or hosting coffee. If an event is special to you, it is special to us! Lots of dates remain open for 2017! The sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board!

The Altar Guild is a one-month commitment. Ideally, this is a month-long commitment so you might like to sign up with a friend. Responsibilities include weekly worship preparation; proper liturgical coverings for the altar and lectern, banners which coordinate with the liturgical calendar, and communion set-up. Additional information (and training) is available from Mary von Goertz mvongoertz@yahoo.com 834-5907 or Delores Jackson: dj271@live.com 834 2004.

Our Sunday School Recruiting Officers, Larry Burkhard and Mary von Goertz are on the march for additional Sunday School teachers. This is a fun job that includes an easy-to-use curriculum and teaching materials. Teachers work in pairs and take the children downstairs after "Kids Talk" for an activity, song and prayer. Everyone returns in time for communion. Subs are also needed from time to time! All teachers must fill out paperwork for a background check (paperwork available from Melanie McMillion. Contact Larry Burkhard lawrenceburkhard@yahoo.com or Pastor Susan.

+Connect with our homebound members. See Pastor Susan for opportunities to serve.

If you have information you would like included in the Church Mouse column, contact Lee Bujold@ 218-393-8795 or leebujold@lakeconnections.net