**Newsletter February 2022**

Website http://nazarethlutheranchurch.yolasite.com/

**Marcia Kisner, Pastor**

**Eileen Lewis, Administrative Assistant**

**From the Pastor**

***2****Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. Hebrews 13:2*

Please, invite someone to church. Not because we want the pews to be filled and the offering plates to be full but to share the love of Jesus with others.

Jesus asks us to live our lives as his followers and to be Christ like in all we do and say to each other. So, why don’t we invite others to church? Do we fear that others will see us as imperfect and hypocritical? Perhaps. But instead boldly ask someone to church to share with them your acceptance of them and your love of Christ.

I like people and I know you also like and even love others. Let’s share our hospitality with our family, friends, and neighbors. There are many ministries among us and others might want to participate.

The first is worshipping together…praying, singing, and listening. Participating as ushers, altar guild, or readers is a ministry. We also offer Sunday school for children and adults where we can talk and question. Then there are social events such as Kumla meals, plays, the Silent Auction, making Lefsa and Kringla, and the ever popular fellowship after worship on Sunday morning.

One of the highlights for me on Sundays are the stories I hear from all of you and sharing in much joy and laughter. Also, the sharing of the struggles and prayers with each other.

So, please, invite someone to church you never know you might be inviting angels. *Pastor Marcia*

**In Our Prayers This Month**

All the people of the world as COVID-19 threaten.

All people with cancer, Ruth Olson, Jayna Grauerholz, Ken Bauge, Allan Duhn, Pastor Melisa Bracht-Wagner, Nancy Reed, Matt Carver, Neal & Denise Kisner, Greg Leavengood, Nathan Hovland, Alyce Madren, April Leber, Shirley, Brandon Sorenson, Mike Peterson, Jean Olson, Tim Barker, Lori Ness, Shari Kisner, Liam Griggs, Neal Hovland, Mary Ann Apland, Scott, John, Janet & Roger Thorsen,

And all Veterans, & active military especially Drayke & Dylan Eshelman, Jacob Morgan, Taylor Bartleson, Alex Kuberry, Jackson and Winter Ringgenberg.

**February Birthdays**

1 Jordan Aust

2 Doug Larkin

2 John Egeland

4 Richard Ness

6 Bill Hook

8 Lilli Hasbrouck

9 Ellen Olson

26 Jason Hasbrouck

28 Becca Hasbrouck

31 Joan Weatherman

1 Jordan Aust

2 Doug Larkin

2 John Egeland

4 Richard Ness

6 Bill Hook

8 Lilli Hasbrouck

9 Ellen Olson

26 Jason Hasbrouck

28 Becca Hasbrouck

31 Joan Weatherman

1 Vince Tomlinson 7 Jessica Leber

10 Pastor Marcia 11 Mark Lewis

17 Dale Dunlap 27 Lisa Smith

Please call Eileen at the church office, 515-383-4328 to let her know if you know of a birthday that is missing or incorrect.

**Income Report**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| December | Income | Attendance |
| 12/5 | $ 2,170.00 | 28 |
| 12/12 | $ 653.00 | 25 |
| 12/19 | $ 889.00 | 34 |
| 12/24 Christmas Eve | $ 1,205.00 | 39 |
| 12/25 Christmas Day | $ 101.00 | 19 |
| 12/26 | $ 43.00 | 15 |
| January | Income | Attendance |
| 1/2 | $ 15,700.00 | 4 |
| 1/9 | $ 1,510.00 | 14 |
| 1/16 | $ 1,135.00 | 15 |
| 1/23 | $ 1,105.00 | 16 |
| 1/30 |  |  |

The church needs $5,604.17 monthly to meet budget and does so through your generous giving.

**Children’s Sunday School**

Spring Curriculum: Theme “I Will Follow Him”

**Lessons and stories on Paul**. We will begin with Paul’s call from Jesus. Another story is of Paul preaching and [Eutychus](https://biblehub.com/greek/2161.htm) so badly wanting to hear him climbs a 3 story building only to fall asleep and fall out of window. Be sure and come hear the rest of the story. A highlight story will be Paul goes to prison. This story will have props and the children acting out the story. We will learn the song “Our God is an Awesome God” and will present the story in church on February 20 for the congregation. Two other Paul stories will be Paul shipwrecked and Paul writing letters to the churches he wishes to tell about Jesus.

Games will happen which will include 4 Square. Looking forward to playing and winning prizes. Several songs learned will be “I Will Follow Him,” “Our God is an Awesome God,” and “This is the Day That the Lord Has Made.” Two of the crafts will be messages in a bottle and making quill pens and ink out of blackberries.

The second half of the curriculum will be the several of the parables. Acting out and presenting one or two to the congregation. Looking forward to a good time.

**Confirmation Class**

Confirmation classes have begun again this spring. We are covering Bible stories from the Old Testament and lessons on prayer. We meet Wednesdays at 1:30pm – 3pm at the church.

**Speaking of having Fun**

On Feb 4, at 6:30 pm, Nazareth will be hosting a Game Night at church for anyone who wants to come and socialize and play some games. We aren’t sure what games, but probably Uno and Sequence or maybe even Charades!

Please come and bring a snack to share!

**Kumla!!**

 March 19 we are selling Kumla. It will be a pick up only at the church between 4:00 and 6:00 pm. We are serving Kumla and ham only. Orders will need to be placed between now and March 16th. There are two different options – single order is 2 kumla balls and ham for $8.00 or a family order of 8 Kumla balls and ham for $25.00.

Please email us at [nazareth\_lutheranchurch@yahoo.com](mailto:nazareth_lutheranchurch@yahoo.com) or call 515-383-4328. We will take checks or cash or credit cards, although there is an additional charge of $1.00 for using a credit card.

**Nazareth Lutheran Church Council**

**Sunday, December 15, 2021**

Meeting was called to order by President Mark Lewis at 11:43 AM following fellowship. Present for the meeting were Mark Lewis, Vince Tomlinson, John Egeland, Dave Lewis, Nathan Hovland, Lisa Smith, Pastor Marcia, Joyce Allen, and Church Administrator Eileen Lewis. Minutes from the October 26th meeting were approved as read. (There was no council meeting in November.)

**Treasurer’s Report**: Thanks to the “church ladies” and their cooking skills, deposits were more than disbursements this month. Lefsa / Kringla sales brought in $1,007.00, and we received a Thrivent Grant of $158.00, along with offerings of $4180.00. So a deposit of $5,524.03 was added to the opening balance of $6,683.39. Also included in the deposit was a special offering for the food pantry of $64.64, which will end up being a disbursement. Disbursement totals came to $4,748.53, leaving a balance of $7,458.89. Capital Improvement has a balance of $21,964.09. SCRIP opened with a balance of $1,885.13, deposits totaled $1,553.45. $38.45 is actually Kringla / Lefsa sales paid for by credit card, which will be transferred to general fund. Disbursements came to $548.05, but not all requested gift cards have been purchased. So, the ending balance of $2,890.53 will change next month.

**Pastor’s Report:** Been busy with the Christmas Play and visits. Confirmation and adult Sunday School will resume January 12th.

**Committee Reports:**

**Property**: Mark heard from John Lequa regarding furnace repair. Turns out the furnaces are still under warranty, and the needed part is in stock, so we will only need to pay for its installation. We’ll be warm for the holidays!

Pastor’s tree has been taken down, but not sure if we’ll be responsible for hauling away its remnants or if Roger will after taking it down. Eileen will text him to find out if he can, and have it done by Wednesday as parking spots will be needed for Christmas worship. Depending on his reply, John, Vince, and Nathan will be on hand at 10:00 AM on Thursday to clear it away.

The parsonage still has work to do, such as the bathroom light/vent, which Vince will address.

**Christian Ed**: Pastor is working on her Sunday School children’s faith journeys

**Stewardship:** Joyce motioned to give Pastor $100 as a Christmas gift, seconded by Vince, motion carried. This will be given on Christmas Eve.

**In reach/outreach**: nothing to report

**Music and Worship**: nothing to report

**Old Business:**

Our Kumla dinner will be held Saturday, February 19th. To avoid running out this year, all dinners will be pre-order only, and orders will be taken through February 16th by 8:00 PM. Dinner prices are $8.00 for a single order, which consists of two Kumla and two slices of ham, and family dinners are $25 for eight Kumla, and eight slices of ham. And of course there’s always Kringla and Lefsa available, too. Dinners can be picked up between 4:00 – 6:00 PM on Saturday.

**New Business**:

Discussion given regarding special offerings for 2022. This year, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday went to MICA, and Christmas program, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day went to general fund. Motion made by Lisa to keep 2022 offerings the same, seconded by Dave, motion carried.

Pastor mentioned the $64.64 special offering for the food pantry was politely declined, stating they really didn’t need it and would rather it went to someone who did. John motioned to donate it to the Duhns, seconded by Nathan, motion carried.

Pastor was asked if the church could be used by a non-member for a wedding in July, and if it could be officiated by someone other than Pastor Marcia. She agreed, but discussion was then given about rental charges. Motion made to raise the cost of $150 to $300, plus $100 for cleaning, seconded by Dave, motion carried.

In other business, the Annual Meeting is scheduled for January 16th following worship, and Council planning retreat will be February 20th following worship, luncheon plans to be determined, but no doubt the Kumla will weigh in the decision.

There being no further business, meeting was adjourned at 12:43 by Mark Lewis and closed with the Lord’s Prayer. Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Allen, Council Secretary.

**Nazareth Lutheran Church**

**Congregational Meeting**

**Sunday, January 16, 2022**

The annual meeting of Nazareth Lutheran Church was called to order by President Mark Lewis at 11:00 following worship, and opened with prayer led by Pastor Marcia. Fourteen (14) voting members were present. Mark began the meeting by reflecting on the “Oh God” movies, where the theme was “think God” and encouraged us to do likewise – think God. Members were given a copy of the agenda to review, which Eileen moved to adopt, and seconded by Lisa Smith. Motion passed. Minutes from the 2021 meeting were approved as read by Joyce.

Attention then went to the Budget report. Lisa Smith pointed out under Budget History, the amounts paid out for building/grounds were divided between derecho repairs, and regular repairs. Joyce asked if Pastor’s salary which remained unchanged was okay, due to the rising cost of living – groceries, gas, etc. Lisa Smith pointed out the proposed amounts for gas and electric, as well as insurance was raised instead. Vince moved to approve the reports, Dave Lewis seconded, motion passed.

**Pastor’s Report**: Pastor was excited about baptisms, new members, and Memorial Services conducted over the year. There were three baptisms, three new members brought in, one funeral, and presided at the Will Clough Memorial Service.

**Old Business**: Nothing to report

**New Business:** Eileen moved that $1000 for Mission Support remain the same, seconded by Lisa, motion passed. Likewise, Dave moved designation offerings remain the same, seconded by Joyce. Therefore, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday offerings will go to MICA, and Christmas Program, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day will go to General Fund.

The proposed budget for the year is set at $70,280, or $5,856.67 per month. Eileen moved to accept the budget, seconded by Vince, motion carried.

Eileen then brought up Nazareth’s fundraisers. She pointed out our four – Kumla take-out dinner, silent auction, dinner theatre, and Kringla/Lefsa sales – and gave an opportunity for any other suggestions. Pastor Marcia stated she’s not a big fan of fundraisers, and would just assume keep things as is, especially since these contribute to and are enjoyed by the community. Eileen then mentioned the quilting material being stored in the basement. Since the quilters have disbanded, she asked if we would like to donate the material to a group that meets at the church in Huxley. The Story City Sewing Guild makes clothes for people in Nigeria but only has need for larger pieces of material, but she might know of a quilters group who could use the smaller pieces. Pastor motioned that the material be donated, seconded by Vince, motion carried.

Last on the agenda was election of officers. Pastor Marcia moved to keep the same officers, Dave seconded, and with no objection from the officers, themselves, motion carried.

Meeting was closed at 11:22. Respectfully submitted by

Joyce Allen, Council Secretary.

**Upcoming Worship Volunteers**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **February** | Greeters/Ushers | Lector | Alter Guild |
| **2/6** | Mike | Mike | Lisa |
| **2/13** | Nathan | Eileen | Mark |
| **2/20** | Ray | Ray | Mike |
| **2/27** | Steve | Steve | Nathan |
| **March** | Greeters/Ushers | Lector | Alter Guild |
| **3/2 Ash Wednesday** | Vince | Vince | Steve |
| **3/6** | Dave | Wendy | Vince |
| **3/13** | Doug | Eileen | Wendy |
| **3/20** | John | Ellen | Dale |
| **3/27** | Kevin | John | Jessica |
| **April** | Greeters/Ushers | Lector | Alter Guild |
| **4/3** | Mark | Joyce | John |
| **4/10** | Mike | Mike | Kevin |
| **4/14 Maundy Thursday** | Nathan | Mark | Joyce |
| **4/15 Good Friday** | Ray |  |  |
| **4/17 Easter Sunday** | Steve | Nathan | Lisa |
| **4/27** | Vince | Ray | Mark |

**Bible Study**

Attached is a calendar for both January and February that has bible chapter to read and spend some time in reflection. I will be adding the calendar for the whole year to the church website.

I know January is over, but if you want to start at the beginning…

**Activities for the Month of February**

**Tuesday**

**Feb 1:** 6:00 PM Food Pantry

**Wednesday**

**Feb 2:** 1:30 PM Confirmation

**Saturday**

**Feb 4:** 6:30 PM Game Night

**Sunday** 9:15 Adult Sunday School

**Feb 6:** 10:15 Worship

11:15 Kid’s Sunday School

**Tuesday**

**Feb 8:** 6:00 PM Food Pantry

**Wednesday**

**Feb 9:** 1:30 PM Confirmation

**Sunday** 9:15 Adult Sunday School

**Feb 13:** 10:15 Worship

11:15 Kid’s Sunday School

**Tuesday**

**Feb 15:** 6:00 PM Food Pantry

**Wednesday**

**Feb 16:** 1:30 PM Confirmation

**Saturday** Kumla To Go

**Feb 19:** 4:00-6:00PM

**Sunday** 9:15 Adult Sunday School

**Feb 20:** 10:15 Worship

11:15 Kid’s Sunday School

**Tuesday**

**Feb 22:** 6:00 PM Food Pantry

**Wednesday**

**Feb 23:** 1:30 PM Confirmation

**Sunday** 9:15 Adult Sunday School

**Feb 27:** 10:15 Worship

11:15 Kid’s Sunday School

**Tuesday**

**Mar 1:** 6:00 PM Food Pantry

**God doesn’t give us more than we can handle, The Story of Cheyenne.**

“Watch out! You nearly broad sided that car!" My father yelled at me. "Can't you do anything right?"

Those words hurt worse than blows. I turned my head toward the elderly man in the seat beside me, daring me to challenge him. A lump rose in my throat as I averted my eyes. I wasn't prepared for another battle.

"I saw the car, Dad. Please don't yell at me when I'm driving."

My voice was measured and steady, sounding far calmer than I really felt.

Dad glared at me, then turned away and settled back. At home I left Dad in front of the television and went outside to collect my thoughts.... dark, heavy clouds hung in the air with a promise of rain. The rumble of distant thunder seemed to echo my inner turmoil. What could I do about him?

Dad had been a lumberjack in Washington and Oregon .. He had enjoyed being outdoors and had reveled in pitting his strength against the forces of nature. He had entered grueling lumberjack competitions, and had placed often. The shelves in his house were filled with trophies that attested to his prowess.

The years marched on relentlessly. The first time he couldn't lift a heavy log, he joked about it; but later that same day I saw him outside alone, straining to lift it. He became irritable whenever anyone teased him about his advancing age, or when he couldn't do something he had done as a younger man.

Four days after his sixty-seventh birthday, he had a heart attack. An ambulance sped him to the hospital while a paramedic administered CPR to keep blood and oxygen flowing.

At the hospital, Dad was rushed into an operating room. He was lucky; he survived. But something inside Dad died. His zest for life was gone. He obstinately refused to follow doctor's orders.

Suggestions and offers of help were turned aside with sarcasm and insults. The number of visitors thinned, then finally stopped altogether. Dad was left alone.

My husband, Dick, and I asked Dad to come live with us on our small farm. We hoped the fresh air and rustic atmosphere would help him adjust.

Within a week after he moved in, I regretted the invitation. It seemed nothing was satisfactory. He criticized everything I did. I became frustrated and moody. Soon I was taking my pent-up anger out on Dick. We began to bicker and argue.

Alarmed, Dick sought out our pastor and explained the situation. The clergyman set up weekly counseling appointments for us. At the close of each session he prayed, asking God to soothe Dad's troubled mind.

But the months wore on and God was silent. Something had to be done and it was up to me to do it.

The next day I sat down with the phone book and methodically called each of the mental health clinics listed in the Yellow Pages. I explained my problem to each of the sympathetic voices that answered in vain.

Just when I was giving up hope, one of the voices suddenly exclaimed, "I just read something that might help you! Let me go get the article..."

I listened as she read. The article described a remarkable study done at a nursing home. All of the patients were under treatment for chronic depression. Yet their attitudes had improved dramatically when they were given responsibility for a dog.

I drove to the animal shelter that afternoon. After I filled out a questionnaire, a uniformed officer led me to the kennels. The odor of disinfectant stung my nostrils as I moved down the row of pens. Each contained five to seven dogs. Long-haired dogs, curly-haired dogs, black dogs, spotted dogs all jumped up, trying to reach me.

I studied each one but rejected one after the other for various reasons: too big, too small, too much hair.

As I neared the last pen a dog in the shadows of the far corner struggled to his feet, walked to the front of the run and sat down. It was a pointer, one of the dog world's aristocrats. But this was a caricature of the breed.

Years had etched his face and muzzle with shades of gray. His hip bones jutted out in lopsided triangles. But it was his eyes that caught and held my attention. Calm and clear, they beheld me unwaveringly.

I pointed to the dog. "Can you tell me about him?" The officer looked, then shook his head in puzzlement. "He's a funny one. Appeared out of nowhere and sat in front of the gate. We brought him in, figuring someone would be right down to claim him. That was two weeks ago and we've heard nothing. His time is up tomorrow." He gestured helplessly.

As the words sank in I turned to the man in horror. "You mean you're going to kill him?"

"Ma'am," he said gently, "that's our policy. We don't have room for every unclaimed dog."

I looked at the pointer again. The calm brown eyes awaited my decision. "I'll take him," I said. I drove home with the dog on the front seat beside me. When I reached the house I honked the horn twice. I was helping my prize out of the car when Dad shuffled onto the front porch. "Ta-da! Look what I got for you, Dad!" I said excitedly.

Dad looked, then wrinkled his face in disgust. "If I had wanted a dog I would have gotten one. And I would have picked out a better specimen than that bag of bones. Keep it! I don't want it" Dad waved his arm scornfully and turned back toward the house.

Anger rose inside me. It squeezed together my throat muscles and pounded into my temples. "You'd better get used to him, Dad. He's staying!"

Dad ignored me. "Did you hear me, Dad?" I screamed. At those words Dad whirled angrily, his hands clenched at his sides, his eyes narrowed and blazing with hate. We stood glaring at each other like duelists, when suddenly the pointer pulled free from my grasp. He wobbled toward my dad and sat down in front of him. Then slowly, carefully, he raised his paw...

Dad's lower jaw trembled as he stared at the uplifted paw. Confusion replaced the anger in his eyes. The pointer waited patiently. Then Dad was on his knees hugging the animal.

It was the beginning of a warm and intimate friendship. Dad named the pointer Cheyenne . Together he and Cheyenne explored the community. They spent long hours walking down dusty lanes. They spent reflective moments on the banks of streams, angling for tasty trout. They even started to attend Sunday services together, Dad sitting in a pew and Cheyenne lying quietly at is feet.

Dad and Cheyenne were inseparable throughout the next three years. Dad 's bitterness faded, and he and Cheyenne made many friends.

Then late one night I was startled to feel Cheyenne 's cold nose burrowing through our bed covers. He had never before come into our bedroom at night. I woke Dick, put on my robe and ran into my father's room. Dad lay in his bed, his face serene. But his spirit had left quietly sometime during the night.

Two days later my shock and grief deepened when I discovered Cheyenne lying dead beside Dad's bed. I wrapped his still form in the rag rug he had slept on. As Dick and I buried him near a favorite fishing hole, I silently thanked the dog for the help he had given me in restoring Dad's peace of mind.

The morning of Dad's funeral dawned overcast and dreary. This day looks like the way I feel, I thought, as I walked down the aisle to the pews reserved for family. I was surprised to see the many friends Dad and Cheyenne had made filling the church. The pastor began his eulogy. It was a tribute to both Dad and the dog who had changed his life.

And then the pastor turned to Hebrews 13:2. "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it."

"I've often thanked God for sending that angel," he said.

For me, the past dropped into place, completing a puzzle that I had not seen before: the sympathetic voice that had just read the right article... Cheyenne 's unexpected appearance at the animal shelter... his calm acceptance and complete devotion to my father... and the proximity of their deaths. And suddenly I understood. I knew that God had answered my prayers after all.

Life is too short for drama or petty things, so laugh hard, love truly and forgive quickly. Live while you are alive. Forgive now those who made you cry. You might not get a second chance.

Share this with someone. Lost time can never be found. God answers our prayers in His time... not ours.

God doesn't give us what we can handle, He helps us handle (stands with us, and gets us thru) what we are given. In other words, God's Grace keeps Pace with what we face!!

-----2 Corinthians 12:9

Trees of the Field

