

Volume LIV
Number 3

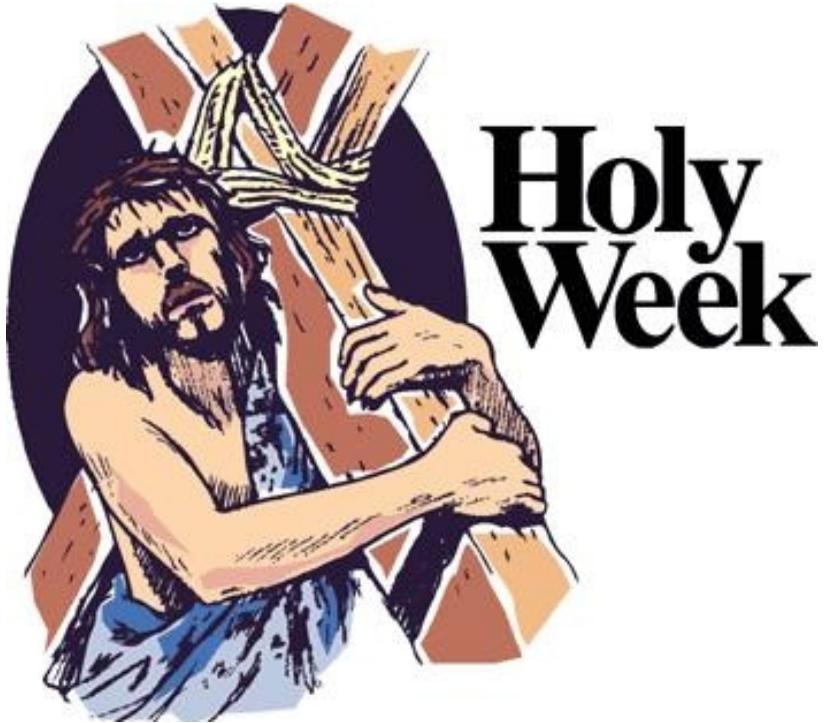
March 2016



Messenger

MOUNT OLIVE LUTHERAN CHURCH

7301 North 28 Avenue Omaha, Nebraska, 68112 402-455-8700 www.mountoliveomaha.com



Sunday of the Passion (Palm Sunday)

Sunday, March 20, 9:00 A.M.

Holy (Maundy) Thursday Eucharist

Thursday, March 24, 7:00 P.M.

Good Friday Worship

Friday, March 25, 7:00 P.M.

Great Vigil of Easter

Saturday, March 26, 8:00 P.M.

Easter Sunday—March 27

Easter Breakfast, 7:45 A.M.

Festival Holy Communion, 9:00 A.M.

I read about a zookeeper who saw a mouse that had fallen into the glass enclosure of a large snake. Although the snake was sleeping in a bed of sawdust, the mouse knew it was only a matter of time before he became supper. The man could almost see the gears of the mouse's mind turning and churning, as he tried to find a remedy to his situation. He couldn't climb the glass walls to freedom. He couldn't tackle the snake in direct confrontation. In desperation, the mouse did the only thing he could do; cover the snake with sawdust chips. The chips flew fast and furious until that mouse had buried the snake. Now the mouse might have been content with his paw work, but the man knew the clock was still ticking—the snake would awake—the mouse would die. That's when the man took a wooden rod and placed it into the snake's cage. The mouse grabbed hold and was freed.

That is the story of humanity. We are the mouse. Because of sin, we find ourselves face-to-face with death and the snake, Satan. No matter how hard we try on our own, there is no way out. We, like that mouse, can try to bury our problem, cover it up, make it go away. We might even be satisfied with our work and think we are safe, but God knows better. God knew that death would sometime, somewhere, somehow, eat us alive. God, like the man observing the mouse, had pity on us. That's when God, like the man, extended a pole, a wooden cross that would lift us to salvation.

Of course, when the man put the stick into the snake's cage, it cost him nothing. But for God to save us, He had to send someone to take our place. Unbelievably, God sent His



Son to do that job. Jesus died the death that we had coming. Jesus died so that we might live. Jesus was crucified so that we might be free. Jesus came down so that we might be lifted up. None of us would sacrifice His child to save a mouse. But God, in His grace, in His unmerited kindness, did just that. God sent His Son to die on a wooden cross so that we might be saved. Now for us who cling to that cross, there is salvation. We are brought to safety by God's great grace, by His unmerited love.

What makes Jesus' death on the cross unique is that three days later He conquered death. He came back from the grave as God had promised. Three days after He had been buried, Jesus conquered the cross. He defeated death. Jesus' resurrection is the single most important event in history. The resurrection is the event which turned the cross into God's symbol of hope and heaven. (Thank you to Rev. Ken Klaus for many of these words.)

Let us walk together in these final weeks of Lent that culminate in our Easter celebration.

—Rev. Roland A. Jank, Jr

MIDWEEK LENTEN WORSHIP SERIES CONTINUES

Please join us on Thursday evenings at 7:00 p.m. as we continue with our Midweek Lenten Services. These special services continue every Thursday until March 17. Did you know the word Lent comes from old German and English words for “spring?” Now is the ideal time for some “spiritual” spring cleaning.

Each service will focus on a word to consider during Lent. We will see how the passion narratives of Christ take on more significant meaning for us when we see them through the lens of the empty tomb. The words/dates for each service will be:

Proclaim, Thursday, March 3

Praise, Thursday, March 10

Pain, Thursday, March 17

Lenten Meal Menu

Thursday, March 3, Diner Night: hot roast beef sandwiches, mashed potatoes, gravy, green beans, assorted pies

Thursday, March 10, Picnic Night: fried chicken, salad, corn, oreo fluff, banana wafer pudding

Thursday, March 17, St. Patrick’s Day: corned beef & cabbage, carrots, Irish potatoes, Irish soda bread, rye bread, assorted jell-o

Children’s meal of mac & cheese, hot dogs, chips is available.

Mount Olive Annual Easter Egg Hunt Sunday, March 20, 2:00 P.M.

How quickly time does go by. Why do I say this? Well, it is again time for the annual Easter Egg Hunt! Again, we will be having it at the park at 28th and Craig at 2:00pm on Sunday, March 20th, with a snow or rain date of Saturday, March 26th, at 2:00pm. In years past we have had every type of weather possible that could have threatened an outdoor event (rain, snow, and last year, strong winds) but, how gracious our God has been. He gave us windows of time to let us reach out to our neighborhood. So, we will be forging on again to prepare for our annual egg hunt, to reach out to our neighbors, to show God’s graciousness through our time, lots of plastic eggs, and many other surprises. Of course, please let it be on your prayer list that this outreach is God-pleasing and that we can plant more seeds for the kingdom.



-Laura Hogan, Board of Evangelism, Outreach Coordinator

English Language Learning

Mount Olive's English Language Learning spring session has begun! Each semester we meet new students from different countries. I would like to thank the volunteers for their time and dedication.

Teachers

Jessica Dvorak
Dixie Gerhart
Arnie Jacobson
Victor Padron
Denise Taylor
Joan Welsh
Jeri Ziegler

Helpers

Cindy Wilbanks
Cheryl Ligon
Karen Liske
Jody Wells-Padron
Gloria Sorensen
Mark Sorensen
Bonnie White
Galen Behr

Greeters

Rosalie Soodsma
Barb Stacy

There is still room for you to help!
 This semester ends April 25th.
 Please contact **Marsha Behr**
 (mjbehr@cox.net or 402-250-1269) if you would like to learn more.



Our LWML group, COSMO, met Tuesday, February 16th. **Jody Wells-Padron** led us in a Bible Study about forgiveness entitled "Is My Heart Really Unforgiving?" which centered around the quote "We, as Lutherans, know how to confess our sins, but we don't know how to live forgiven". Our discussion raised very thought provoking questions about confession, God's forgiveness of us and our forgiveness of one another. We also discussed the changes that come from forgiveness. It was a timely Bible Study as we enter Lent. **Annette Hurt** provided refreshments. Our recent mission project was a Diaper Drive for



(Continued on page 14)

The Mount Olive Book Club will meet at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 1st, at the home of **Jill Clausen.**



Laverne Middendorf will provide dessert.

In honor of St. Patrick's Day we will discuss An Irish Country Doctor by Patrick Taylor. Barry Laverty, M.B., can barely find the Northern Ireland village of Ballybucklebo on a map when he first sets out to seek gainful employment there. But Barry jumps at the chance to secure a position as an assistant in a small rural practice. At least until he meets Dr. Fingal Flahertie O'Reilly. The older physician has his own way of doing things. At first, Barry can't decide if the pugnacious O'Reilly is the biggest charlatan he has ever met or the best teacher he could ever hope for. Through O'Reilly, Barry soon gets to know all of the village's colorful and endearing residents and a host of other eccentric characters who make every day an ed-

(Continued on page 11)

Please join your fellow Mount Olive movie buffs on Friday night, March 11, at 7:30 p.m. We will be showing the movie "The Wizard of Oz." I hope the Friday Nite Flixers are ready for this because it is going to be...a...SING-A-LONG!! **Suzan Jank** and I have been practicing "We welcome you to Munchkin Land." You have been warned.



It's going to be different. I think it's going to be fun...why not check it out?

Popcorn and movie candy will be provided. Circle the date!

— **Dixie Gerhart** (402-602-3252)

In Ministry With God's People

We remember in prayer

...**Carol Childers, Rod and Karen Lorang, Kathy Mansfield, Mike McGrath, Dawn Payne, Gloria Sorensen, Nancy Stierle, Don Weihe, and Janet Zulfer.**

...our youth confirmation class - **Robbie Mof-fett, Jr., Kailyn Townsend, and Isabella Wegner.**

...the English Language Learning (ELL) classes at Mt. Olive and the teachers, greeters, and coordinator, **Marsha Behr.**

...our congregational effectiveness in bringing the Gospel to the hurting of our community.

...the ministry of **Emad and Shireen Tawadrous** in their

(Continued on page 14)

EASTER BREAKFAST

Don't miss breakfast on Easter morning, March 27, beginning at 7:45 a.m. The Youth Group is hosting this fundraiser for youth activities here at Mt. Olive. The suggested cost is \$4 for adults, \$2 for children under 12, and \$15 for families.

Easter breakfast dates/times:

- Saturday, March 26, 9am, Youth Group Easter Breakfast set up
- Sunday, March 27, 7am, Youth Group Easter Breakfast to prepare food and prep
- Sunday, March 27, 7:45am, breakfast is served





Mt. Olive Prayer
Chain

If you have a prayer request, please call **Kristi Townsend** at 402-457-9611 or by email at townsend.kristi@gmail.com

Thank You

Thank You

Thank you to **Sharon McDonald, Barb Stacy, and Bonnie White** for helping with the February Messenger.

POBLO

I want to thank everyone for all their prayers and cards. I am so blessed to be a part of my family in Christ.

- Carol Childers

Thank you to **Barb Stacy and Bonnie White** for taking the finished newsletter to the downtown post office.

We continue to assemble a few bags of groceries for our POBLO work with families who are in need. Items that can be used are: sugar, salt, tea, rice, flour, cooking oil, dried beans, jam, sugar-free peanut-butter, cookies, juice. Please no canned vegetables or macaroni and cheese. A receptacle for such foodstuffs is in the north hallway.

Daylight Savings

A special thank you to **Rich Wismont** who takes care of all of the church's recyclables.

Thank you to **Rosalie Soodsma** for weekly lending a hand in the church office.

Daylight Savings Time begins Sunday, March 13th. Be sure to "spring forward" and set your clocks one hour ahead on Saturday night March 12.

- Teresa Kuti

Thank You!

Lutheran Family Services gratefully acknowledged Mt. Olive's expression of love for all God's people through a gift of \$821 in December. This gift was made possible by the generosity of you, the members of Mt. Olive.

Easter Lilies

Would you like to donate a lily to decorate the altar for Easter? The cost is \$10. You can either take the lily home with you after Easter services or donate the lily. Please sign up no later than March 20. The sign up sheet is in the narthex on the back table.



LCMS App Now Available

Need to find an LCMS congregation while on the road? Want to connect with other LCMS Lutherans? Seeking a daily devotional resource? The new, free LCMS app offers these advantages and more.



“We’re delighted to offer this means for LCMS people to connect to their church with their mobile devices,” said David L. Strand, executive director of LCMS Communications. “Now, wherever you are, a wealth of beneficial resources concerning the church and our lives of faith is literally at hand.”

Available on both the Apple© and Android (Google Play) app stores, the easy-to-use app features links to some of the most popular information on the LCMS website, including the LCMS church locator and links to news stories, giving opportunities, LCMS social media and other ways to connect with the LCMS.

Foster Care

Open your heart and your home to a foster child. Training and 24-hour support provided. Make a difference in a child’s life - become a foster parent. For further information, go online to www.lfsneb.org or call 402-661-7100.

To get the app, search “LCMS” on the Apple or Android app stores or visit www.lcms.org/resources/mobileapps.

“Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.”

—Martin Luther King Jr

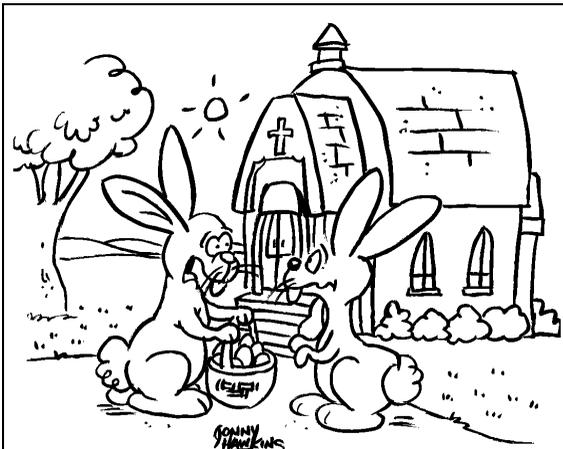
Lutheran Witness

It's time to order your subscription to THE LUTHERAN WITNESS for 2016! The Lutheran Witness is the official periodical of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Published 11 times a year.

Features include:

- Stories on current events.
- Doctrinal, theological, and confessional stories.
- “How-to” stories on ways Christians can serve Christ.
- Bible Studies ... and so much more!

The new subscription year doesn't begin until June 1, 2016, but orders need to be in to the church office by March 20, 2016. The cost is \$15.96 per year. Subscription payments should be given to the church office or placed in the offering plate in an envelope marked “Lutheran Witness”. If you have any questions, contact the church office at 402-455-8700.



“Here at the church, I only use Resurrection Eggs.”

OUR MISSIONARIES ABROAD

Mt. Olive is helping to support two missionaries and their families who live abroad. We remember them periodically in our public prayer. We ask that you continue to support them financially with your regular gifts. Information about their work is shared on the north hall bulletin board and in our Sunday worship. May it serve as an encouragement for your continued interest and support. For the year 2016 our missionaries abroad are:

Julie Lutz

Box 803
Mt. Hagen,
Western Highlands Province
Papua New Guinea
lutz.travel@gmail.com

Concordia English Center
Sharon Owens
174 Rud de Pequim
Com. Bldg. Kong Fat 6 A-B
Macau, SAR China
smomacau@yahoo.com

BE NOT AFRAID

“Be not afraid” is one of the most commonly repeated phrases in the Bible.

It is a phrase spoken by God, prophets, kings and angels. It is uttered to nations, to shepherds and to a young woman named Mary. In so many ways, and to so many people, these words of comfort are expressed over and over again.

Jesus was well aware of how fear impacts people, and in the Sermon on the Mount he encourages his disciples to not be distracted by food, clothing and the worries of life, but to realize how valuable each person is in the eyes of God (*Matthew 10:31*).

Even with these assurances, our human tendency leads us to fear. And fear often results in worry and frustration. But rather than living in fear of the future, consider how you can be a good steward of your health, resources and life:

- Health—Am I taking care of myself? Will I live a long and healthy life?
- Finances—Do I have enough now? Will I have enough for the future?
- Legacy—Why am I here? Am I living my life with purpose?

It requires intentionality and action to live as good stewards. And it takes practice to walk in faith instead of fear. While we might still feel afraid, God has promised to be with us, to surround us with those who can help us and to bring perfect love which casts out fear (*1 John 4:18*).

Perhaps one of the reasons that this phrase is used so often in Scripture is that we seek reassurance all along life’s journey. But whatever the concern, whatever the challenge, our directive is steadfast: Be not afraid.

This article provided compliments of Thrivent Financial and **Sarah Jank**, Financial Associate, 402.905.4229, sarah.jank@thrivent.com.



Lent is a season of repentance. Repentance is turning away from sin, while we turn toward God for the forgiveness of sins. During Lent, we hear the Word of God and consider our lives in light of it. We confess our failures, and receive absolution, that is, forgiveness, and then commit ourselves to do better.

What does God say about giving to the Church? The Bible tells us. Our giving should be first fruits giving (*Genesis 4:4; Proverbs 3:9*). Our giving should be regular, on the first day of week, which has the Sunday Service in mind (*1 Corinthians 6:1-2*). Our giving should be proportional: according to our income (*1 Corinthians 16:1-2*), according to what we have been given (*2 Corinthians 8:12; Luke 12:48*), our giving should be given with a spirit of eagerness and enthusiasm (*2 Corinthians 9:2*), generosity and liberality (*2 Corinthians 8:20*), cheerfully without compulsion (*2 Corinthians 9:7*). Our giving should be directed to those who teach us (*Galatians 6:6-7*) because a laborer is worthy of his hire, and we all know the going rate of such laborers in our communities (*Luke 10:7; 1 Timothy 5:18*).

Now consider your own giving in light of the Bible's teaching. Are you giving of your first fruits, taking it out of your paycheck first, or does God get what's left over? Are you giving voluntarily and cheerfully? Are you giving proportionally and generously? Are you giving with eagerness and enthusiasm? Are you giving to your local congregation, sharing all good things with the one who teaches you? If your answer to any of these is "No," then repent. Turn away from your sin and toward God for forgiveness. Confess your failure. Receive absolution. And commit to do better.

We know that the Spirit is willing but our flesh is weak. We believe, and we pray that God, through Word and Sacrament, would help our unbelief, our lack of trust in His ability to provide.



The Power of Forgiveness

And this is precisely what God promises. This is what St. Paul wrote to the Church in Corinth: "The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. As it is written, 'He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.' He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way for all your generosity, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God" (*2 Cor 9:6-15*).

St. Paul tells us that the Lord of all will both supply and increase what you need to give to the church for its work in and for the world. He tells us that this work that God is doing in us will enrich and bless us in every way and through this it will produce thanksgiving to God. Everyone benefits. We will be blessed in

our giving, and it will produce thanksgiving to God in those who receive it.

Giving to the church is not a burden, just like all of God’s teaching (*1 John 5:2-4*).

They are not a burden because of He who gives it: the God who loves us and gave His only Son to die so that we may live. He loved us in that He sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the law to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption as sons. . . . So we are no longer slaves, but sons, and if a son, then an heir through God (*Galatians 4:4-5, 7*). We are heirs. We receive the full rights of sons, a status that Christ our Lord achieved for us by His death, resurrection, and ascension.

So we strive to do what He asks because we are His children. And when we don’t, we repent. We confess our sins. We receive absolution. We desire to do better, praying that God would work in us both to will and to do according to His good pleasure (*Philippians 2:13*).

- Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod

Representatives from each of the 10 congregations of the Omaha North Circuit are gathering on Saturday, April 16th, at Bethany Lutheran Church (5151 Northwest Radial Hwy). If you are able to attend, please contact Mike Townsend, Jr.

The purpose of the Summit is as follows:

- 1. To establish communication and relationships between North Circuit congregations.**
- 2. To identify challenges to growth and outreach facing many of us today.**

(Continued from page 4)
 ucation for the inexperienced young doctor. Ballybucklebo is a long way from Belfast, and Barry is quick to discover that he still has a lot to learn about country life. But with pluck and compassion, and only the slightest touch of blarney, he will find out more about life--and love--than he ever imagined back in medical school. *(Review from Amazon.com.)*

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, April 12th, at **Gloria Sorensen's** home. **Bonnie White** will provide refreshments. We will discuss House of Living Stones by Katie Schuermann.

3. To learn of the efforts each congregation is undertaking to address these challenges.

4. To discuss ways we can collaborate to address these challenges (*both traditional and out of the box solutions*).

5. To gain knowledge and techniques for outreach from Mark Schoepp from Wheat Ridge Ministries (*Wheat Ridge Ministries offers resources to Lutheran congregations to stimulate health and human ministries*).

6. To organize and set a plan in motion for next steps.

Women’s Heart Health

This article is provided by Mount Olive Health Ministry.

Every minute in the US, someone’s wife, mother, daughter or sister dies from a form of heart disease. Although heart disease rates among men have declined steadily over the last 25 years, rates among women have fallen significantly less.

IN HEART DISEASE, MEN ≠ WOMEN

“We are just beginning to understand the difference between the sexes when it comes to heart disease,” says Bairey Merz, the director of the Women’s Heart Center at Cedars-Sinai Heart Institute in Los Angeles CA. “There is enough research to conclude that women and men can experience different types of heart disease.” According to Dr. Merz, men generally suffer from “coronary artery disease” due to fatty plaques build-up in the large arteries around the heart; but women are more likely to have major arteries that are clear of plaque while their smaller coronary blood vessels fail to constrict and dilate properly, creating a lack of blood flow and oxygen to the heart (“ischemia”) resulting in symptoms such as chest discomfort, shortness of breath and nausea.

Some of the staggering disparities:

- women age 45 and younger are more likely than men of the same age to die within one year of their first heart attack
- only 65% of women said the first thing

- they would do if they thought they were having a heart attack was to call “9-1-1”
- men are 2 to 3 times more likely than women to receive an implantable defibrillator for the prevention of sudden cardiac death
- studies of heart disease and clinical trials of treatments have often been done with inadequate numbers of women in the study population, representing just 38% of subjects



RISK FACTORS FOR HEART DISEASE

The American Heart Association offers information about factors that can be modified, treated or controlled, and those that can’t... generally similar for men and women:

Can’t change...

- **increasing age:** over 83% of people who die of heart disease are 65 years or older (women who have heart attacks at older age are more likely than men to die within a few weeks of the heart attack)
- **being male:** men may have greater risk of heart attacks early in life, but after menopause, women’s heart disease increases to nearly the same level as men’s
- **heredity:** children of parents with heart disease are more likely to develop it themselves; heredity and lifestyle choices also contribute to high blood pressure, obesity and diabetes

Can control or treat...

- **tobacco use:** smoker’s risk of developing heart disease is 2-4 times greater than non-smokers; twice the risk of sudden cardiac death
- **high cholesterol:** as cholesterol levels

rise, so does risk of heart disease (levels are also affected by age, sex, diet and heredity)

- **high blood pressure:** increases the heart's workload, causing the muscle to become thicker and stiffer; increases risk of stroke, heart attack, kidney failure and congestive heart disease
- **physical activity:** a "couch potato" lifestyle is dangerous at any age; regular, moderate-to-vigorous activity helps prevent heart and vessel disease, control cholesterol levels, reduce risks of diabetes, obesity, hypertension
- **diabetes:** even when glucose levels are under control, diabetes increases risk of heart disease and strokes

SO WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES?

Symptoms of a heart attack - in both men and women - may include

- squeezing chest pain or pressure
- shortness of breath
- sweating (often "cold sweat")
- tightness in the chest
- pain radiating to shoulders, neck, arm or jaw
- feeling of heartburn/indigestion with or without nausea or vomiting
- sudden dizziness or brief loss of consciousness

Symptoms *more likely in women* include

- indigestion or gas-like pain
- dizziness or nausea
- unexplained weakness or fatigue
- discomfort/pain between shoulder blades
- recurring chest discomfort
- sense of impending doom/anxiety

WHAT TO DO???

- learn *all* you can about heart disease: recognizing that early heart attack symptoms occur in 50% of all heart attack patients; by recognizing and reacting to the first symptoms, you may prevent the heart attack
- develop a heart-smart partnership with your doctor: learn your risks and begin *now* to modify them
- learn CPR
- IF you experience (or witness someone else with) the symptoms of heart attack
 - ♥ call 9-1-1 immediately!
 - ♥ take one aspirin to chew (reduces blood clotting in the arteries of the heart)
 - ♥ provide CPR if appropriate
 - ♥ get to the hospital quickly – the longer it takes to start treatment, the more heart muscle is damaged

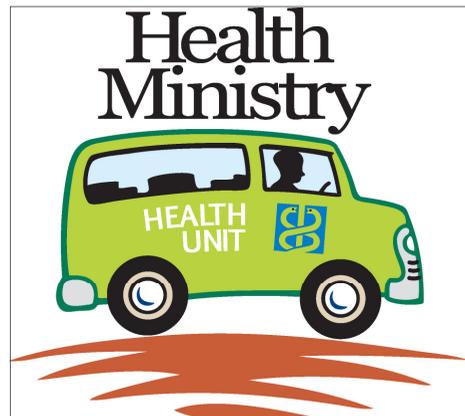
For more information, go to:

<https://www.goredforwomen.org/know-your-risk/find-out-your-risk/gender-heart-disease/>

www.healthline.com/health/heart-attack/symptoms

www.webmd.com/heart-disease/features/womens-heart-attack-symptoms

<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/hearttruth/>



(Continued from page 4)

Baby Jesus. We collected 1671 diapers along with other baby items. They were all given to Project Hope. Thank you to everyone in the congregation who contributed, as well as Thrivent Financial for providing seed money to get the project started.

Upcoming LWML events are our Zone Rally on Sunday, April 10th, at Zion West and the summer convention June 17-18 in Norfolk.

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, March 15, at 6:30. **Annette Hurt** will lead our Bible Study and **Jill Clausen** will provide dessert. All Mount Olive women are invited to join us.

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work as POBLO missionaries in metro Omaha and at the Peace International Center at 44th & Grover.

...the upcoming Omaha North Circuit Summit.