



ST. BARTHOLOMEW NEWSLETTER



MARCH 2017

"To God be the Glory!" (1 Peter 4:11)

Take Time For Lent

LENT TAKES TIME

Wednesday night services we're supposed to attend; daily devotions.

LENT TAKES TIME

Sorry, we don't have time! Wish we did!
Up early, on the go all day long;
Trying to keep up with all the demands;
Dead tired when we finally get home;
Lent? Out of sync with our busy times!

LENT TAKES TIME

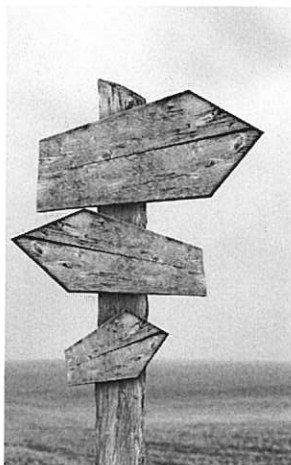
Time out from the busyness;
Time out from trying to stay on top of things;
Time out from being schedule driven;
Time out to deny yourself, take up the cross and follow Jesus!

HE TOOK TIME

For you He fasted 40 days in the wilderness;
For you He walked the land, preaching, teaching;
For you He spent long hours in prayer;
For you Jesus took time on the cross, a time of hell so you can have eternity in heaven.

"DENY YOURSELF AND FOLLOW ME!"

Jesus, help me surrender my schedule to You. Holy Spirit, give me the courage to leave some things undone. Father, make me out of sync with this world and in sync with Yours. Teach me to number my days and apply my heart to wisdom. For Jesus' sake. Amen.



I pray that you will "take time" to join us "At the Crossroads" on Wednesday nights as we hear from people who were involved in the Passion of Christ came to a crossroads and had to decide which way to go. Each service will also show us how Christ and His cross lead us to decide the path of God's will for us.

In our services on Sunday mornings, beginning March 12, we will focus on a hymn so that we might hear some of the wonderful truths God wants to share with us and gain a greater understanding of the words which we sing.

Together in Christ,

Sharing, Believing, Living, Caring

FINANCIAL REPORT SUMMARY

January 2017

Year-to-date Income: \$ 13,636.64
Year-to-date Expenses: \$ 11,431.05
Year-to-date Budget: \$ 13,320.00

+ + +

SPECIAL FUNDS CONTRIBUTORS

Organ Fund

Janet Kalies in memory of Howard Haese
Gary & Linda Streck in memory of John Ruh
Pastor & Kris Krueger in memory of John Ruh
Janet Kalies in memory of John Ruh

Hearing Loop Fund

Delvaux Family in memory of Phyllis Krahn

DEATH

John Ruh 2/18

KINGDOM WORKERS - MARCH

The following members are listed as Kingdom workers for March in the following areas:

Ushers (Wednesdays): Jim Wendling, Dave Sonnabend
(Sundays): Kelly Behnke, Pete Vechart

Altar Guild: Norma Drumm, Denise Fallier

Greeters: Mar. 1 - Kris Krueger
5 - Kris Krueger

Acolytes: Mar. 1 - (Ash Wed.) - Bailee
5 - Hilary
8 - (Wed.) - Meghan
12 - Evan
15 - (Wed.) - Ashley
19 - Spencer
22 - (Wed.) - Amber
26 - Rachel
29 - (Wed.) - Bailee

ST. BARTHOLOMEW MISSION STATEMENT

Sharing the Good News of salvation with others
(Matt. 28:19)

Believing in Jesus as our Savior (John 3:16)

Living our faith in what we say and do (James 2:18)

Caring for those in need (1 Peter 3:15; Mark 10:45;
Eph. 4:28; 1 John 3:17)

SHARING, BELIEVING LIVING AND CARING



If you would like to have a prayer sent on the Prayer Chain, please contact any one of the Prayer Chain members:

Judy Baer	756-2696
Renee Bonick	(920) 296-9164
Sue Detert	756-3439
Ralph & Sandy Haberland	(920) 524-2016
Kris Krueger	756-3912
Jean Peter	(920) 875-0164
Faith Sonnabend	756-2779
Joan Zutz	756-2501

All requests will remain strictly confidential!

Sunday school (all grades) will sing in the worship service on Sunday, March 12th!

Welcome

NEW MEMBER



Zachary (Zach) Zoellner
February 12, 2017



Spring ahead – Don't forget to set your clocks ahead one hour before you go to bed on Saturday, March 11th.

Living Generously

The purpose of this newsletter is to share God's Word so that our members will better understand who we are to be and what we are to do in the light of the Scriptures. It is our hope that this monthly publication will help you grow in your relationship with the Lord and as a Christian steward.

Living Wisely

"Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding, for she is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold" (Proverbs 3:13-14). Throughout Scripture, and especially in the book of Proverbs, the virtue of wisdom is extolled. It would be beneficial to us, then, to concentrate on living wisely

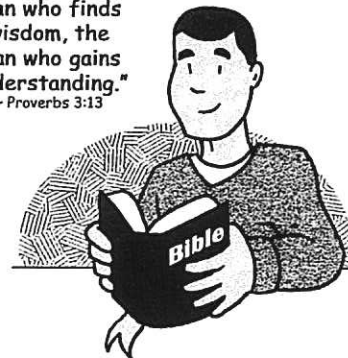
How do we gain that wisdom that Solomon wrote about? We learn from Proverbs 9:10 that *"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."* Proverbs 2:6 points out that *"... the Lord gives wisdom, and from His mouth come knowledge and understanding."* Our God, Creator of all good things, is also willing and eager to give us all these things, including the gift of wisdom.

For how many of us is living wisely a goal? We pursue health, wealth, power, and success. Where on our lists of priorities is a desire for wise living? In our acquisition of facts, information, and knowledge, are we gaining wisdom as well?

When Solomon, renowned through the ages for his great wisdom, became king, God told him to ask for whatever he wanted. Solomon requested, *"So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people . . ."* (1 Kings 3:9). A chapter later, in 1 Kings

4:29-30, we read, *"God gave Solomon wisdom and very great insight, and a breadth of understanding as measureless as the sand on the seashore. Solomon's wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the men of the East, and greater than all the wisdom of Egypt."* That same wisdom is available to us. James 1:5 exhorts us, *"If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, Who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him."*

"Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding."
~ Proverbs 3:13



God's Power

God's love is the energizing power so essential to every life. Christ's love summons us to a secure and happy life of repentance, forgiveness, and sanctification. *"For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that One died for all, therefore all died. And He died for all that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him Who died for them and was raised again"* (2 Corinthians 5:14-15). Because of God's love, we put away all idols which the devil, the world, and our own sinful nature place before us. That love causes us to put duties before pleasures, to love God and our neighbors.

Receiving through Giving

It is ironic that, while we spend an inordinate amount of time and energy working to achieve personal satisfaction and success, that goal is more readily attained through giving to and serving others. As we give ourselves to others, we are also being refreshed and blessed. *"A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed"* (Proverbs 11:25). Proverbs also says, *"He who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and He will reward him for what he has done"* (Proverbs 19:17). Through faith, we can choose to take time from our busy schedules and make a commitment to help those in need. As we, in Christ, help and give support to the needy, God will also bless us.

God Uses the Ordinary

Why does God elevate those of us with few talents, the foolish, and the lowly to be His workers? A reason may be found in 1 Corinthians 1:29: *"so that no human being might boast in the presence of God."* It is only by God's grace that we are saved, called, and equipped to be in His service. If we come into God's work with impressive talents, we risk taking the glory and credit for ourselves. God desires the weak and the lowly. As Paul said, *"Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong"* (2 Corinthians 12:9-10). God uses ordinary people to do extra-ordinary things. Are you ready for duty?

Gambling Can Enslave You

A *Business Week* magazine observed that gambling has indeed entered the mainstream of American society. It is now touching the lives of nearly everyone, even the person who does not gamble. Since gambling can

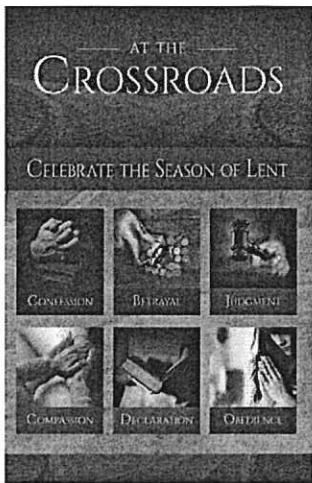
enslave people and bring them personal and family tragedy, Christians need to provide spiritual care to one another in this area. Only the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose love sets us free, will enable us to overcome such a burden (Romans 8:1-17). God loves us deeply, forgives the sins of those who trust in him, and helps us to resist the temptation to "lay up treasures" for ourselves. Our sins are forgiven in Christ, including the sins of greed and lovelessness toward others. At the same time, God helps us to open our hearts in love and kindness, for he is at work in us both *"to will and work for His good pleasure"* (Philippians 2:13).



Stewards; Not Owners

In order for us to honor God with our finances, we need to remember that our money is really not our money. Psalm 24:1 says, *"The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein"* God owns it all and gives to us as He pleases. No matter how much we like to think we earned it, we don't have anything that God didn't give us. The first job Adam and Eve were given—even before they fell into sin—was management. They were put in charge of the Garden of Eden. They were to tend it, but they did not own it. In the same way, we are only tending what is in our possession. Nothing we have will be ours for eternity. Whatever we have came from God and will return to Him.

Blessings as you Live Generously!



At the Crossroads

Many of those involved in the story of the Passion of Christ came to a crossroads and had to decide which way to go. Some chose well, some did not, and the stories of each of these experiences at various crossroads help us to know

what to do and what not to do when we encounter similar crossroads in our own lives. In the end, each service in the series reveals in some way how Christ and His cross lead us to decide the path of God's will for us.

Ash Wednesday, March 1 – 7 p.m.

Confession – Psalm 32:1-5

As a model for us, the psalmist David reaches the crossroads of confession and confesses his sins to the Lord. We are called to confess our sins to the Son of David and find forgiveness in him.

Wednesday, March 8 – 7 p.m.

Betrayal – John 13:21-30

When Judas Iscariot comes the point where he must either listen to Jesus or listen to the devil, he chooses to betray Jesus. When we are tempted by Satan to betray our Lord, we gain strength from our Savior to say, “No” to the devil.

Wednesday, March 15 – 7 p.m.

Judgment – Matthew 27:11-26

When Pontius Pilate is called upon by the crowds to make a judgment call about Jesus, his decision not to decide results in the death of Christ. We look to the cross of Christ to make definitive judgment calls in our lives.

Wednesday, March 22 – 7 p.m.

Compassion – Luke 22:47-51

When Jesus is taken into custody, he chooses to show compassion to a wounded participant in the arrest. We are called to show compassion, not anger, even to those in our midst whom we might consider our enemies.

Wednesday, March 29 – 7 p.m.

Declaration – Luke 22:54-62

When Peter is asked to declare whether or not he knows Jesus, he decides to deny his Savior. When questioned about our Lord, we are called to boldly declare our faith in Christ.

Wednesday, April 5 – 7 p.m.

Obedience – Matthew 26:36-46

When Jesus nears the time when He must die for our sins, He asks His Father if the cup might pass from Him. But when the time comes, He obeys His Father's will. When we are called upon to follow God's will, we must obey.

Palm Sunday, April 9 – 9 a.m.

Suffering – John 12:12-36

When Jesus enters Jerusalem for the last time, He knows the suffering that awaits Him there, yet He does not turn back. Though we know suffering is part of being a follower of Christ, we must carry on for Him.



Maundy Thursday, April 13 – 7 p.m.

Forgiveness – Matthew 26:26-29

When Jesus institutes the first Lord's Supper, He grants forgiveness to His disciples through the bread and wine.

When we receive the bread and wine of Communion this day, we receive that forgiveness and in turn forgive others in remembrance of Him.



Good Friday, April 14 – 1 p.m.

Death – John 19:17-30

When Jesus is on the cross, He accepts the power of death upon Himself and does not turn away from it. We must face death when it comes and not turn away from it, knowing that His salvation awaits us on the other side.



Easter Sunday, April 16 – 7 a.m. & 9 a.m.

Life – John 20:1-18

After the risen Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene, she responds by telling the disciples, “I have seen the Lord!” We who know that our Redeemer lives must share that news with others.





Easter flower order forms may be picked up from your church mailbox. If you would like to donate your flower in memory of someone there is a place on the order form to note that. Deadline to order is Monday, March 27.



JOIN THE MADNESS!

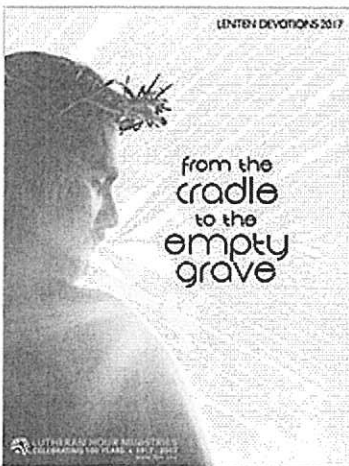
MARCH MADNESS begins March 14. For \$1 you can enter your selections in the St. Bartholomew ESPN bracket challenge. The winner will receive a \$25 scrip card. The proceeds will go to the Hearing Loop Fund. This is open to all ages and members of the congregation. Give us your name, email address, and \$1 if you want to participate. You can sign up in the narthex after services or in the church office. The deadline to sign up is March 5.



Lenten Meals

Remember to sign up on the bulletin board for the meals. The first meal will be on Ash Wednesday, March 1.

The remainder of the dates are March 8, 15, 22, 29 and April 5. You can enjoy a good meal and fellowship before the Wednesday evening Lenten services.

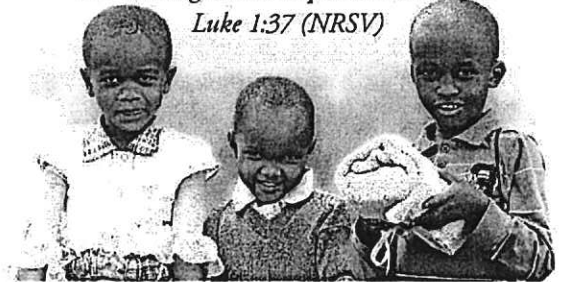


Lenten Devotions from Lutheran Hour Ministries

Available to read online or as a podcast beginning March 1, 2017, *From the Cradle to the Empty Grave* can also be received as an e-mail subscription throughout the Lenten season. Go to www.lhm.org/lent.

BASKETS of PROMISE

"For nothing will be impossible with God."
Luke 1:37 (NRSV)



You responded very generously last year. Hopefully, you will do so again this year as we will once again participate in the Lutheran World Relief Baskets of Promise campaign.

Each week, during Lent, we will collect a specific item to form Personal Care Kits that will help impoverished people stay healthy in life's most challenging situations.

Consider giving one or more complete kits. The total cost for a complete kit is under \$10.

Check the bulletin each week for the collection schedule. If you have any questions, please contact the church office.

Can we match or exceed the number of kits from last year (84)?



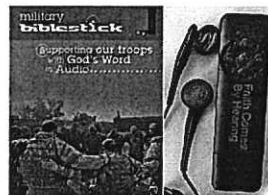
PENNIES FOR LIFE

Thank you to everyone who donated their pennies. We collected \$80.49 for Lutherans For Life during January.

ELDER GROUPS

(Baer-Geiger)	Gary Koerth	864-7714
(Giese-Krahn)	Rick Riemer	(920) 841-7346
(Kremer-Reinke)	Gary Lemke	853-3846
(Riemer-Zutz)	Deacon Bonick	(920) 366-2766

MILITARY BIBLESTICKS



During the month of February, donations were collected for Military Biblesticks at St. Bartholomew. Through those donations, 28 Biblesticks were able to be purchased.

St. Bartholomew Lutheran Church
Voters Meeting
January 29, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 10:15 by President Joel Koerth. Pastor led in opening prayer.

Members Present: 21

Secretary's Report: Motion to accept as printed in newsletter made by Ralph and 2nd by Gary. MC

Membership Gains and Losses

1. Gains: Shelly Christopherson (Dylan & Ben Wilson, Makayla, Nathaniel) by transfer from Good Shepherd Lutheran, Oshkosh
River Janet Grace Blattner by baptism.
2. Losses: Phyllis Krahn by transfer to the Church Triumphant
River Janet Grace Blattner by transfer to Bethlehem Lutheran, Sun Prairie, WI

Motion to accept Gains and Losses by Deb K and 2nd by Roger B.

Treasurer's Report

At the end of December we were \$22,319.60 in the black. Only a little over budget. As of January 24 we were \$24,219.66 in the black. We are \$3800 over the debt retirement budget so that money was moved to make loan payments. Should be able to pay off the loan in October.

Board Reports

Elders

1. We got one new elder. Deacon Bonick
Motion to accept Deacon as an elder was made by Deb and 2nd by Roger. MC
2. We had 1 Funeral, 1 Wedding and 1 Baptism.
3. We have heard good feedback on Continuous Communion.
4. Trying to keep up with the Absentee list.
5. We will have no more Grasscutters. Unfortunately they have ended their group.
6. Trying to figure out what is going on with the Lutheran Digest.
7. Tim and Melissa Pope started a bible study and they are not sure if they are going to continue it.

Christian Education

1. Trying to get VBS going again. Thinking the last week of school. Since School lets out on a Tuesday we would do VBS on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Pastor and Kris will run VBS.
2. Melissa and Holly would like to have a Lock in with the older kids.
3. Youth Gathering informational meeting since we have 16 eligible kids to go.

Stewardship and Evangelism

1. There is a simple sign up online for greeters.
2. Hopefully we will have Lutheran Digest by this fall.
3. Looking into a digital sign.
4. We are planning a Jim Hendricks Piano Concert. At the Endries Performing Arts Center on April 9th at 1-3 pm. Free will offering at the door.

Trustees

1. Just Odds and Ends.
2. Replaced at least 20 light bulbs

Pastors Report

1. Membership we had: 359 souls we now have 363 souls
We had: 310 Communion we now have 312 Communion
2. 1 Baptism, 5 transfers in and 1 transfer out.
3. We are starting to get ready for mid-week lent. We are doing at the Crossroads.
4. Military Bible Sticks \$25 for a Stick.
5. We will be doing Baskets of Promise again.
6. Haven2Go will be here February 12th with a free will donation.
7. Chili dinner will be February 26th; looking for help.
8. March Madness \$1 per person.

Unfinished Business

1. Deacon will be an elder.

New Business

1. We discussed what to do with our left over money from the tree sales. We earned \$9,667.79 houses are \$3,600 what should we do with the left over money? We had 4 trees that did not sell. We donated 1 of the trees to one of our adopted families. Do we want to leave the money in the account so we can try to build 2 houses next year? Or save and give to the youth? Gary made a motion to table the idea and Ralph 2nd the motion. MC
2. We are looking for someone to replace Howard on the tree selling committee. We are looking for someone to be the head of the group. The head of the group is in charge of ordering trees in June, make sure doors are open to the sellers. We are looking into getting a push button lock where we would just give a code to the seller so they can unlock the door.
3. We are prioritizing major projects. Working on prioritizing projects: Organ, Parking lot, and then Church Roof.
 - Organ part 1. \$39, 209 Part 2. \$10,310 \$3,200. We are running on borrowed time with the organ.
 - Parking Lot remove and put in new. Keep Price 7/1/17
East lot \$44,414
South lot \$46,420
South lot is worse than the East lot.

We should look into Loan Rates and get a loan from a real bank. Gary K made a motion to look into getting a \$150,000 loan for the organ and the parking lot and Ralph 2nd it. We should also get this information out to the Congregation.
4. We are only a quarter of the way to get the hearing loop. We should look into other churches that have the hearing loop and ask if their congregation use it.

Adjourn: Motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:16 made by Gary and 2nd by Deb. MC

Pastor led in closing Prayer.

Amanda Krahn
Secretary

SPECIAL VOTERS MEETING

Sunday, March 12

After church

The purpose of the meeting is to decide whether or not to take out a loan to replace the church parking lot and to upgrade and repair the church organ. All confirmed members, 18 years old and older, are encouraged to be in attendance.

Here are some financial details for you to look over:

Payoff Existing Loan using Excess Budget Dollars
\$13,013.66

Current excess budget dollars
\$22,845.96

Excess budget dollars after paying off current loan
\$9,832.33

Proposed Projects:

Complete replacement of Parking Lot \$103,109.00
Organ upgrade and repair \$55,000.00
Total Cost: \$158,109.00

Available funds:

Building Fund \$3,898.72
Organ Fund \$14,156.00
McVicker Fund \$3,315.00
Total Funds Available: \$21,369.72

Need to Borrow from LCEF \$136,739.28

Approx. Monthly Payment Amount \$1,335.00

Current annual debt retirement budget \$13,000

New annual debt retirement budget \$16,000

We would need to bring in only about \$60 more a week to cover the budget increase.

The current parking lot is 40 years old. The asphalt would be removed, the lot regraded, new asphalt put down, and a concrete gutter and curb along the east side.

The organ is almost 38 years old and has not had any major repairs or upgrades. The mechanical workings would be changed to electronic and some upgrades to the organ console.

International Christian Pianist

Jim Hendricks

In Concert

Endries Performing Art Center

Sunday, April 9

1 p.m.

Pianist Jim Hendricks grabbed the attention of musicians and family members as a young child with the uncanny ability to play anything he heard on records and memorize any printed music that came across the piano. While still in grammar school, Jim was able to transcribe by ear complex harmonies and melodies – without the use of a piano. He continued intensive musical studies and was considered a professional as a teenager.

After high school, Jim performed with such legends as Dave Brubeck (piano duets), Della Reese, Rita Moreno, Tito Puente, Maynard Ferguson, Jack Jones, Louie Bellson, Clark Terry, Arturo Sandoval, John Davidson, Jon Faddis, and many others. He also competed in numerous international piano competitions, was a featured orchestral soloist performing the piano music of Rachmaninoff, and was granted a music professorship by the age of twenty-five.

While he was on tour with the Glenn Miller Orchestra (the band still continues its concert tours since Miller's death in the War), Jim felt a very strong call from the Lord to use his musical gifts for the glory of God. Already being a dedicated Christian for many years, he knew it was time to follow his calling into Christian ministry.



Since then, Jim has performed more than 1,300 Christian piano concerts in churches all across the land, including several appearances at

the former Crystal Cathedral. He has made fourteen piano recordings, performed on ABC, CBS, TBN and PAX, authored the book Contemporary Arrangements for Today's Church Pianist, and been featured in Clavier piano journal. The Lord has greatly blessed his decision to bring glory to Christ through music.

Loving and Helping Others

God commands us to love one another even at some cost. Jesus said, "This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:12). Jesus' sacrificial love has set a standard that is higher than anything that has been done before or will happen in the future.

However, we are blessed at times to hear of individuals who have gone above and beyond to share their love and compassion for others. One such instance is Ray Blankenship who one summer morning was preparing his breakfast, when he gazed out the window and saw a small girl being swept along in the rain-flooded drainage ditch beside his Andover, Ohio, home. Blankenship knew that farther downstream, the ditch disappeared with a roar underneath a road and then emptied into the main culvert. Ray dashed out the door and raced along the ditch, trying to get ahead of the floundering child. Then he hurled himself into the deep, churning water. Blankenship surfaced and was able to grab the child's arm. They tumbled end over end. Within about three feet of the yawning culvert, Ray's free hand felt something—possibly a rock—protruding from one bank. He clung desperately, but the tremendous force of the water tried to tear him and the child away. "If I can just hang on until help comes," he thought. He did better than that. By the time fire-department rescuers arrived, Blankenship had pulled the girl to safety. Both were treated for shock.

On April 12, 1989, Ray Blankenship was awarded the Coast Guard's Silver Lifesaving Medal. The award is fitting, for this selfless person was at even greater risk to himself than most people knew. Ray Blankenship couldn't swim. Even though he couldn't swim, he was willing to risk his own life to help a person who was in need.

As God's people, our love for others comes from Him. "We love because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19). Because God loved us so much that He would give His son for us (John 3:16), we, too, can love. God expects that the love He lavishes on us will naturally flow out of us into others. Real love is evidenced by action, both in acts of love to fellow

believers and to our neighbors as well (Galatians 6:10). Many of us will never help someone in such a dramatic and heroic way as Ray Blankenship's, but as Christians we have the opportunity to share the Good News of life that comes through Jesus by our words and deeds. May God always receive the glory in our acts of love.

Expressing Thanks

As Christians, we truly understand the importance of being thankful because we know that all we are and have are gifts from God. God has created us and recreated us in Jesus. In the following story, we see a man who thanked God in a unique and special way:

An old man walks on a Florida beach carrying a bucket of shrimp. He makes his way to the end pier, and soon a mass of dancing dots fill the sky. The evening silence gives way to screeching birds. For half an hour the man stands surrounded by the birds until the bucket is empty. But even when the food is gone, the gulls perch on his hat and linger. This weekly offering to the sea gulls was his way of giving thanks.

The man is Eddie Rickenbacker. In October 1942 he was flying his B-17 on a mission to deliver a message to General Douglas MacArthur when he went down in the Pacific. All eight crew members escaped into life rafts. After eight days, all their rations were gone. All means of survival had been exhausted. In a weakened state, the men shared in an afternoon devotional service and then tried to rest. As Rickenbacker was dozing with his hat over his eyes, he felt something land on his head. He knew it was a sea gull, which meant food. The crew survived. God had sent a sea gull hundreds of miles from shore to their rescue. Rickenbacker never forgot to say thanks.

God rescued Mr. Rickenbacker and his crew in a dramatic way, and, in a very special way, He rescues us daily from the guilt and condemnation of our sins. May God open our hearts and eyes to see what God is doing in our lives and may we give thanks to Him for all that He has done and continues to do for us.

Middle School Love, Compassion— and Outrage

by Sue Domeier (LifeDate Spring 2017)

It was a typical Friday morning at Immanuel Lutheran School in East Dundee, Illinois. It was January, snowy, and cold—a normal day in the life of the school. Basketball season was in full swing, and the kids were wearing their Eagle team attire as it was tournament time. As principal, it was my responsibility to teach seventh grade confirmation on Friday mornings because it was the pastor's day off.

The topic was sanctity of life. As a former science teacher, I love connecting science and God's Word. I think I was the only person looking forward to the lesson that day—but that soon changed as I pulled out the fetal models—the babies.

Middle schoolers are fascinated by babies. Sometimes they are actively fascinated. Other times they try to be cool. Once the babies came out of the box, active fascination became the norm. As we talked about human development in the womb, we looked at organ development and the size of the developing baby. Soon each baby was in the hands of the kids—and they didn't let go. Sometimes I think I could have been reciting the alphabet for all the attention I appeared to be receiving during the lesson, but truly they were listening—hanging on every word while passing the babies around and tenderly holding them. Some even reminded their classmates to “watch his head.” It was a wondrous thing to witness.

We talked about how much each student weighed at birth, how big they were, and what they looked like. Each student had a story to share. It was turning out to be a good lesson.

Whenever I introduced the topic of abortion, typically our kids are shocked and angry that any parent could think about such a thing. They are usually filled with outrage. This year we had a set of quadruplets in the class—three girls and a boy. The quads had shared their birth weights, and we compared their birth weights to the models, and we marveled at God's goodness and the miracle of life.

Then it all changed in an instant. The boy of the quads raised his hand and said quietly that when his mom was carrying them, the doctors wanted to do selective reduction on them—and he was the baby targeted for this procedure. Noah is the biggest of the quads. He's now a big and strong middle-school boy—popular and a good athlete. The outrage that

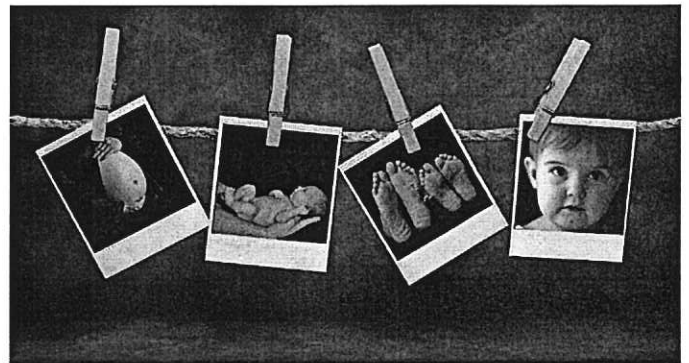
followed his announcement raised the roof! These kids were angry! How could our Noah not be here? What was the doctor thinking? Middle-school outrage is something to behold. There is something grand about watching middle schoolers ramp up into a roll. The idea that one of their own might not have been there was an outrage to their moral code, and the outbursts that followed were intriguing: “Why would God allow this to happen?” “Why doesn't God just stop this?” “Why do people have abortions?” “Don't they understand?” So many questions to which we don't always have answers.

What was clear that day was that God was active, alive, and working in the lives of these children. They went back to Scripture. They read David's psalm (139) reminding us that we were known and knit before we were born. They reminded themselves and one another of God's perfect plan for each of them. Jeremiah's words reminding them of God's plan for their lives gave them comfort—but didn't calm their outrage.

As we talked, prayed, and contemplated, we were reminded of the words of Ezekiel and the “time” passage—a time to live. What does that mean for God's people in today's world? We don't always have the answer to that question, but we do know that the youth learning in our Lutheran schools are both the present and the future. On that day, our future was secure. Our children stood For Life—especially the life present in the womb. Our future was also secure in that our God promises us the security of heaven. The children knew that and claimed that promise. These young people will be our leaders, workers, moms, and dads in the years to come.

This day they stood strong for God's plan For Life—their own and that of life in the womb.

What a wondrous future it will be!



I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.” (Psalm 139:13b)

JANUARY SCRIP TOTALS

CARD NAME	TOTAL	PROFIT
BP	450	6.75
Buffalo Wild Wings	100	8.00
Cobblestone	50	2.50
Dairy Queen	25	5.00
Deer Run	25	2.50
Econo	2725	81.75
Exxon	100	10.00
Festival	975	29.25
Fleet Farm	50	2.50
Gordmans	100	7.00
iTunes	30	1.50
Kohls	900	36.00
Kwik Trip	1050	42.00
Menards	50	1.50
Piggly Wiggly	200	6.00
Red Robin	50	4.50
Roundy's	200	8.00
Shell	500	50.00
Shell (Presto)	150	3.00
Shopko	200	10.00
WalMart	1050	26.25
Woodmans	300	15.00
TOTALS	9280	359.00



CONGRATULATIONS!

We're excited to share that in 2016 over 335,000 Thrivent members chose to direct Choice Dollars® to more than 32,000 churches, schools and other nonprofits, including St Bartholomew Lutheran Church, through Thrivent Choice®. **Based on member recommendations, St Bartholomew Lutheran Church received \$1,787 in charitable outreach funding in 2016.** The Thrivent Choice program helps members of Thrivent Financial make a positive impact in their communities.

Don't forget to direct Choice Dollars®

Eligible Thrivent Financial members who have Choice Dollars available have until **March 31, 2017**, to direct any remaining 2016 Choice Dollars. Help support St. Bartholomew Lutheran Church. Go to Thrivent.com/thriventchoice to learn more. Or call 800-847-4836 and say "Thrivent Choice" after the prompt.

Don't let Choice Dollars expire!



BIRTHDAYS

2 nd	Lorraine Evel	18 th	Harper Horn
2 nd	Hilary Sonnabend	18 th	Faith Sonnabend
2 nd	Kayla Woldt	19 th	Russ Bolt
3 rd	Sue Detert	19 th	Lindsey Vechart
5 th	Erin Zutz	20 th	Kassandra Kupsky
6 th	Gary Koerth	20 th	John Levash
6 th	Mitchell Krahn	21 st	Jr. Doughty
6 th	Ron Zeuske	21 st	Cole Peter
7 th	Nathan Irish	21 st	Reed Peter
7 th	Emma Krahn	21 st	Olivia Riemer
7 th	Rick Riemer	22 nd	Melissa Day
8 th	Mike Delvaux	25 th	Robin Eichhorst
10 th	Meghan Propson	25 th	Brigette Sonnabend
11 th	Pete Zarnoth	26 th	Parker Sonnabend
12 th	Jon Mignon	27 th	Scott Eickert
13 th	Ralph Haberland	27 th	Ben Kalies
14 th	Cole Reinke	27 th	Damian Wetzell
15 th	Jessica McWilliams	28 th	Addison Grenzer
17 th	Bob Koffarnus	28 th	Renee Maeder
18 th	Josh Delvaux	29 th	Lois Cmejla

ANNIVERSARIES

11 th	Erin & Ken Zutz
18 th	Dave & Debbie Kamps
28 th	Scott & Mary Eickert

Please forgive us and politely notify us if an anniversary or birthday is missing from the list. Thank you.



Sunday, March 19th @ 1PM, the C.H.A.O.S. Youth group will have a Youth Fun Day. This will take the place of our regular evening meeting. Watch the bulletin for more details.

SAVE THE DATE: Friday, April 14th, the Youth group will host the Good Friday Fish Fry. Watch the bulletin and April newsletter for more information.

"Laughter can be heard farther than weeping."

-Jim Reed
via The Joyful Noiseletter