

FEBRUARY 2016

NORTHLIGHTS

NEWSLETTER OF NORTHLAKE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Member Congregation of the Northwest Washington Synod,
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



NORTHLAKE LUTHERAN CHURCH
P O Box 82603
6620 NE 185th Street
Kenmore, Washington 98028
www.northlakelutheran.org

Pastor Anja Helmon
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Newsletter editor is Susan Frederick. Please send articles by the 20th of each month to: office@northlakelutheran.org or drop them by the office.

Welcome!

Our Mission

To share with all people the presence of God and the love of Christ



Members of Northlake Lutheran Church are committed to fulfilling the acts of Jesus Christ.

We are also part of a larger church.; a church that believes in caring for all and advocating for those who don't have a voice.



February has arrived!



This beautiful artwork was created by Pam Lehde. The tree represents the cross, and the valentines and primroses are in honor of February!

Thank you for sharing your artistic gifts with us, Pam!

Lent Begins!

**Ash Wednesday is February 10
Worship at 12 noon and 7PM**

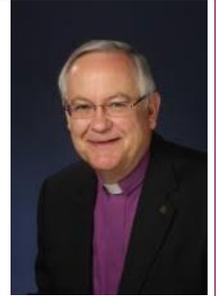
**Celebrate
LENT
2016**



Midweek Lenten Services through March 16
Wednesdays at 11:30AM (followed by lunch) **and** at 7PM

I Pray That They Might Be One

Kirby Unti, NWWA Bishop
The Spirit, February 2016



For he himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall. Ephesians 2:14

I was not prepared for what I was about to see. I knew it existed but I had never set eyes on it. Living in the State of Washington, I have crossed into Canada many times but I had never seen the iron wall that cuts through the heart of Nogales, Arizona dividing families who live on the United States side of the wall from those living on the Mexican side.

The people of Nogales for hundreds of years moved freely through their town until an agreement was reached between the United States and Mexico that would draw the border which now divides the city. It is North America's Berlin.

Kim and I watched two women, perhaps sisters, trying to hug one another through the narrow opening in the wall. Alongside the woman on the Mexico side of the border stood another woman holding her baby. She was trying to show the baby to the woman on the opposing side. It broke my heart. How could this be America?

We gathered around Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton as bishops and spouses and she led us in prayer reminding us of who our God is. The God who breaks down the walls that separate us from one another. The God who hears the cry of God's people and comes down to be with us. One of our bishops spoke the words of Ronald Reagan, "Gorbachev, tear down this wall."

Later that day we gathered at St. Andrews Episcopal Church in Nogales and heard the stories of those who are trying to seek legal entrance into the United States. The paperwork is so burdensome and the rules so confusing, that it is not unheard of to take up to ten years or longer. And you better have a good immigration attorney because on your own you have little or no hope of navigating a cumbersome system.

I could not help but think about what it was like to try to secure the military benefits my parents were qualified to receive as they neared the end of their lives. They were both World War II Veterans. If it were not for my brother, who is an attorney, we would have given up.

(Continued on page 4)



Confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed." – James 5:16

In this Lenten season, we will explore what it means to confess to one another. Confession carries different meanings for different people. For some, confession brings healing. For another, it is guilt. For yet another, vulnerability. I say it brings all these and more.

Did you know that Martin Luther originally claimed three sacraments? The Catholic church had (and has) 7, and Martin, when reforming the church, claimed only 3: baptism, Eucharist, and confession. In time, confession became part of the Eucharist, and so there are 2 today; baptism and communion.

From Pastor Anja

Those of you who went through Confirmation and learned the Small Catechism may remember that confession is part of the Small Catechism. Throughout Martin Luther's life, he encouraged all Christians to confess regularly. His objection with the Catholic church was in calling it a sacrament, and in making it required.

(Continued on page 4)

Thank you notes!



**Maritime Ministry of Puget Sound
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Northwest Washington Synod
5519 Phinney Ave. N.
Seattle, WA 98103-5299**

January 8, 2016

Northlake Lutheran Church
6620 NE 185th St.
Kenmore, WA 98028

Dear friends in Christ,

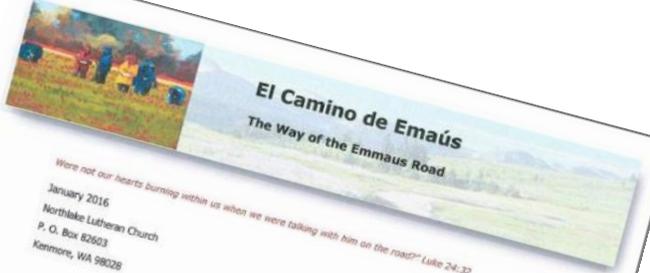
Thank you for your generous December gift of \$100 for the Maritime Ministry of Puget Sound. We were happy to be able to provide ditty bag gifts around the holidays for people who might not otherwise get a Christmas present.

The availability of a chaplain's listening ear throughout the year, as well as help with transportation on brief stops in port means a lot to seafarers from around the world.

Yours in Christ,

Sue Wanwig
Pastor Sue Wanwig

Your thoughtfulness is much appreciated.

El Camino de Emaús
The Way of the Emmaus Road

Were not our hearts burning within us when we were talking with him on the road?" Luke 24:32

January 2016
Northlake Lutheran Church
P. O. Box 62603
Kenmore, WA 98028

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

We at El Camino de Emaús would like to take the opportunity to express our appreciation for your ongoing support. Without you, we could not continue to do our work in the Latino community of the Skagit Valley.

Thanks to your generous support, this year we have been able to help individuals and families to find the programs and resources that they need for their day to day life. We also started our first confirmation class on Sundays and enrichment Activities Tuesdays and Thursdays. Through this class we have seen how our kids are sharing the love and the grace of God, and also how they are developing relations and growing in unity, "called to be saints, together with all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours." (1 Corinthians 1:2).

Last year we visited other congregations to talk about the ministry and give thanks for the support we have received. Unfortunately, due to new change our worship time and a busy calendar, we could not visit as many congregations as we have been doing in previous years. Our hope is to do more visits in 2016, and we would welcome your invitation. For more information, visit our website or our Facebook page.

Thank you, our partners in ministry, for walking with us as faithful companions of the Way. Your generosity and continued prayers have played a vital role in empowering us to participate in God's work in the world. May God continue to bless your ministry to the church!

En Cristo,

Ft. Emilio Benitez
On behalf of El Camino de Emaús
134 E Victoria Ave, Burlington, WA 98233
<http://elcaminodeemauslutheran.org>

Your donation for 2015 amounts to: \$185.00

This letter acknowledges receipt of your gift as a charitable contribution. In keeping with IRS regulations, it is understood that no goods or services were provided in exchange for this charitable donation. Please retain this letter as a receipt for our records. It is an important document necessary for any available income tax deduction for this gift. Your support is greatly appreciated. El Camino de Emaús relies on the generosity of our members and supporters. El Camino de Emaús, 134 East Victoria Avenue Burlington, Washington 98233 (360) 332-4377. El Camino de Emaús is a not-for-profit 501(c) 3 organization, Fed. Tax ID: 20-3628425.

Letter from Bishop Kirby Unti *(Continued from page 2)*

I understand the need to keep drug dealers and criminals out. But surely we can find a more just and human way to welcome those who are seeking work or to be reunited with their families - in the same manner most of our families were welcomed.

The grace moment of the trip happened earlier in the week as we gathered at the historic San Xavier Catholic Church. It would be a first for this congregation. They not only welcomed us as Lutherans - they were willing to allow us to use their altar table to celebrate Holy Communion. We witnessed one wall erected and participated in breaking down another.

Letter from Pastor Anja *(continued from page 2)*

On March 16, 1522, he preached:

I wish him [the pope] to keep his hands off the confession and not make of it a compulsion or command, which he has not the power to do. Nevertheless I will allow no [hu]man to take private confession away from me, and I would not give it up for all the treasures in the world, since I know what comfort and strength it has given me. No one knows what it can do for him except one who has struggled often and long with the devil. Yea, the devil would have slain me long ago, if the confession had not sustained me . . .

Luther spoke of the many healing qualities of confession. It unburdens a soul. It opens us up to the love of God. It allows us to approach God and each other with humility. Confessing to one another brings a vulnerability to the one who confesses, and allows a community to carry the vulnerable and bring healing through words of forgiveness.

All of these; unburdening, humility, vulnerability, healing and forgiveness, are what we are called to experience during the Lenten season. It is a time of wandering through this wilderness of our own limited natures. For it is in that wilderness that we are most open to the healing Jesus brings. It is in this wilderness that we come to realize we are unable to ever earn God's love, yet that love is truly and authentically offered to us. This is why Lent is the perfect time to explore confession.

And so, you are invited. Invited to reflect deeply within yourselves, to identify your own burdens, and to expose them. Ask yourself... what makes you feel as though you are not worthy of God's love? Instead of pushing it down, raise it up. Bring your confession out.

This Lent, you are invited to anonymously share that confession with others. Allow your soul to be displayed. And allow God, and this community, to respond to your vulnerability with healing and grace.

For you are forgiven. Always.

A note from Susan in the church office...

I was listening to NPR on the way to work recently. There was a review of Marie Kondo's best-selling book "*The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up: The Japanese Art of Decluttering and Organizing.*" In essence, Kondo's philosophy is that we should discard everything that doesn't 'spark joy', and that we don't need more boxes, bins and organizers; we have all the storage space we need...just too much stuff!



My first thought was, "Are you kidding? What if I throw something out, and then I decide that it DID spark joy, and I wish I'd kept it? What if I regret my quick decision?"

Then I started thinking about all the things around my house that may spark MORE joy in someone else than they do in me (like those high heels I'll never wear again). That maybe someone walking through St. Vincent de Paul would spy the very item she'd been looking for, and it would absolutely make her day. It would spark joy!

As Lent nears, I am thinking about the things that bring me joy, and really, they aren't 'things' at all. They're faith, hope, charity, and the people I love and care about. Sending prayers that your Lenten journey is a time for reflection and renewal as we move toward the *true joy* that is Easter.

Blessings, Susan

Ways we help others in our community

Nyer Urness House in Ballard

by Nancy Martin

Through our gifts of dollars and donations, Northlake Lutheran supports Compass Housing Alliance, which provides housing, shelter and support services to people experiencing homelessness and poverty.

Nyer Urness House is one of the many programs run by Compass Housing Alliance. Located in Ballard, it is named after the late Rev. Nyer Urness, whose philosophy of meeting people where they are is a fundamental principle of the work at Nyer Urness House.

The building has 80 units of permanent housing. The residents are all formerly homeless adults. Nyer Urness offers supportive services such as case management, an onsite medical clinic operated by Neighborcare Health, daily meals and other community-building resources.

Nyer Urness is one of eight housing units managed by Compass Housing Alliance. Another is Northlake Grove, which are our neighbors to the north!

Through Social Ministries, Northlake Lutheran supports Compass Housing Alliance with financial gifts and a Breakfast Basket we donate each year for their annual auction.



Nyer Urness House in Ballard

Living Stones Prison Congregation

by Cindi Englehardt

Northlake has been designating funds to Living Stones Prison Congregation at the Washington Corrections Center in Shelton for a few years now. This is their website <http://livingstonesprisoncongregation.com/>.



The website explains that Pastors Neil Thompson and John O'Neal began visits to the Corrections Center long before a congregation was established. Their intention was to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ to the men behind bars and "set the captives free" spiritually, emotionally, and physically. The congregation is a joint ministry with congregations of the Southwestern Washington Synod of the ELCA.

A few years ago, I accompanied a few Northlake members to attend one of their Saturday church services inside the Corrections Center. It was a very inspiring experience. The inmates leading the church service played music, prayed, read scripture, preached and seemed eager to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. They were grateful for our attendance and their enthusiasm for God's love and forgiveness was contagious. As the website explains, "These men know their need of God, celebrate God's redemptive gift, and actively seek God's will for their lives."

People "are invited to participate in this ministry through prayer, worship, financial support, and/or our transition program." Northlake currently provides some financial support and of course prayer!

Take a look at the website to read the amazing effects of this ministry on the incarcerated men. It states, "Only God's love can heal the pain and break the cycle of harm pervading our communities. Thank God, God is able!"

REPORT AND PLANNING CONGREGATIONAL MEETING (*not yet approved*)

January 31, 2016

The meeting was called to order by President Beverly Peterson at 11:25 AM. Bev opened the meeting with prayer and a challenge to people to use a scripture verse when they are writing church reports, etc.

Pastor's Report

Pastor Anja mentioned that this was the last day of her first year at Northlake and thanked the congregation for the welcome, support, visits to homes, etc. The focus of her work this first year has been outreach and has included attending City Council meetings and taking other opportunities to be out in the community. This coming year she will expand the focus to visioning. Her report concluded with the explanation that she would have further input later in the meeting.

Past President's Report

Nancy Martin outlined some things that had been accomplished in the past two years and included things that will be worked on in the coming months. She thanked the congregation for its support during her tenure in office. Appreciation for her work was expressed with applause.

Financial

Bev Peterson reported that there are some corrections to be made in the financial section (Income/Expense Report) of the printed Annual Report. The corrected pages will be emailed to people in the coming week, and additional printed copies will be available in the narthex. Other financial items:

There was discussion of the approved 2016 Budget projected offerings versus the 2015 actual offerings.

It was requested to report financial information in the monthly newsletter or in some other form.

It was reported that a Finance Team is meeting regularly to bring the church more in line with the Synod financial guidelines. This group is focusing in depth on all aspects of Northlake's finances.

Synod Assembly

The NW Washington Synod Assembly is on May 20-21 in Everett, and Northlake is allowed two voting members plus the Pastor. Rick Heinbaugh, Marla Blaser and Victoria Newland volunteered.

MOTION: It was moved, seconded and passed (**MSP**) that Rick Heinbaugh and Marla Blaser be elected as voting members, and Victoria Newland was elected as a Visitor (Synod's designation for those who attend but are not voting members.)

Constitutional Matters

A Constitution Committee has been formed, using people who volunteered. This group will rewrite the current constitution, which was written in 1992. Pastor Tor Berg is the Synod's constitutional expert, and he is advising the committee.

Bev Peterson reported that Northlake's Constitution requires congregational approval of all acquisition or disposition of church assets. This has not always been done. She requested after-the-fact approval of past asset activity, to put us in compliance until the constitution is updated. She also asked congregational approval be given to the Council regarding other asset activity.

MOTION: (**MSP**) to accept her request for after-the-fact approval of acquisitions and dispositions.

MOTION: (**MSP**) to allow the Church Council to approve asset activity up to \$3,000, until the constitution has been updated.

MOTION: (**MSP**) to give the Church Council approval to authorize asset activity up to \$300 to a committee without Council approval, until the constitution is updated.

When rewriting the constitution, the Constitution Committee will include directives about donations and the need to approve any donation given with strings attached.

It is understood that the congregation will have final approval of a new constitution.

Planning

Pastor Anja led this exercise designed to begin the discussion/action of Visioning and to highlight the ministry of the church committees. Each committee leader gave a brief synopsis of the committee's work. After hearing these reports, attendees broke out into small groups for a short discussion, after which they reported back to all. Newly designed Time and Talent Sheets were available for people to use to indicate their interests.

Report and Planning Congregational Meeting *(continued from page 6)***Miscellaneous**

It was announced the Church Picnic is scheduled for June 19.

Rick Heinbaugh is taking over as chair of the Redevelopment Committee.

Living Local – it was again explained that this is a process where we are trying to get back into the community with a larger presence. Outreach is living local – the challenge is to begin thinking about outreach opportunities.

Rick Heinbaugh talked about the Web Site and Northlake's Facebook page.

Adjournment

MOTION: MSP to adjourn (1:00 PM). The meeting closed with prayer.

Submitted by:

Jeanie McBee, Secretary

HAPPENING AT NORTHLAKE LUTHERAN AND BEYOND

The Bishop is coming! The Bishop is coming!

Sunday, February 28

Bishop Unti will be here to preach and teach a class called

"Stop! They're pushing my buttons!"

Class will begin immediately after service. Lunch will be provided.

Blood Drive!

Tuesday, February 16, 2016

12:30am—7:00pm

Northlake Lutheran Fellowship Hall

Coordinated by Boy Scout Troop #582



A blood drive reminds us that we have so much to be thankful for ~ especially our health. Every blood donor is a potential lifesaver. Every unit of donated blood can benefit up to three patients right here in our community. ***Please donate!***

An Invitation to the upcoming Women's Fellowship at Faith Lutheran Church in Redmond

May 21 at 9am

The Women's Fellowship Team at Faith Lutheran in Redmond invites the women of Northlake Lutheran to a morning of faith, fellowship, and fun.

The Women's Fellowship is a 3-hour event on Saturday, May 21, beginning at 9:30am. Lunch and babysitting are provided.

For more information, see the flyers and handouts on the table in the Narthex, or contact Colleen Thompson at 425-885-1810 or by email at flcwomensfellowship@gmail.com.



