

"So we are ambassadors
for Christ..." -

2 Corinthians 5:20

March 2019



Lenten Supper 5:30 p.m.

Lenten Worship
Wednesday 6:30 p.m.

Sunday Worship
8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

Family Express Worship
9:10-9:40 a.m.
with Sunday School
following

Christ Lutheran Church
700 County Highway B
Stoughton, WI

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Christ Lutheran Ambassador

A Gracious God—A Generous People



***"Live generously and graciously toward others,
the way God lives toward you."
Matthew 5:48b***

Pushed by the Dove

by Pastor Paula Geister-Jones

At the annual meeting in February, the congregation heard the unexpected news that we simply do not have the funds to call a second pastor. It was hard to take. The good news is that pledges are up 18.5% from last year, but the cost of pastors is also up, and many people in the congregation have not realized how economical it has been to have a clergy couple these past fifteen years. The congregation has paid for one health insurance policy and one housing allowance. Although we were each paid 30% of our base salary for housing, that now equals what synod guidelines suggest for one fair housing allowance, considering the cost of living in Dane County.

In March we begin Lent with the story of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness. What I love about that story is that the wilderness was not Jesus' first choice of where he wanted to be. He was "pushed" by the dove (Mark 1:12-13). Out in the wilderness, outside—no, way beyond—his comfort zone, he was forced to trust that God was guiding him and rethink so many things. He came out of that wilderness preaching fire and brimstone like John, at least for a few verses, and then realized he must have the courage to speak the word God revealed to him during those forty days of solitude and temptation. That new word emphasized God's compassion and forgiveness. By the end of the chapter, people are beginning to realize that this Jesus is "something different."

The dove this Lenten season has pushed us out into the wilderness. It is not our first choice. We don't want to be here. After 50 years of two pastors, we assumed that would be our future. We may very well go back to that kind of staffing, but the numbers are telling us not right now. Like Jesus, outside our comfort zone, we are being asked to rethink our assumptions and trust that the Spirit is guiding us. Jesus was "something different," and that "something different" was a great thing for this world. "Something different" right now could very well be a great thing for us as well.

Lenten Series: African-American Spirituals

by Pastor Paula Geister-Jones

This year we will once again use the Holden Evening Prayer service for our liturgy and African-American spirituals as the basis for the meditation.

Lament Psalms are fitting during the time of Lent, sorely missing from our ELW. They are in the Bible, but the folks who put together our worship book focused on Psalms of Praise and Thanksgiving, throwing in a few Royal Psalms. Lament Psalms are just what their name means. In them you will hear the pain and the suffering of the psalmist. Details of their experience are seldom given. What we hear crying out from the pages is their agony. They were included in the Book of Psalms because their experience is the human experience. While some end with just pain, most turn towards the end to express their hope that God will deliver them or the story of God's deliverance. Lent is one of the few times during the church year that the church drags them out. African-American spirituals are probably the closest thing we have to laments, so I love to sing them during Lent. So that is what we will do.

We will use Holden Evening Prayer, and when the time comes for the meditation, a spiritual will be sung by one of the choirs, a soloist, or the congregation, followed by a homily. In the homily, we will examine the story behind the words.

Ash Wednesday, March 6: "Shut de Door, Keep Out de Devil"

March 13: "Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen"

March 20: "Down by the Riverside"

March 27: "I Want Jesus to Walk with Me"

April 3: "Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel?"

April 10: "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot"



March Lenten Supper Menus

Supper will be served from 5:30–6:30 p.m. A donation of at least \$3 each is requested to help cover the cost of the meal.

Wednesday, March 6

Spaghetti with Sauce with or without Meat, Lasagna with or without Meat
Lettuce Salad, Garlic Bread, Cupcakes
Coffee, Milk and Apple Juice

Wednesday, March 13

Tater Tot Casserole, Wild Rice and Chicken Casserole, or Homemade Mac and Cheese
Fresh Vegetables with Ranch Dressing, Homemade Bread
Apple Crisp with Ice Cream
Coffee, White and Chocolate Milk, Apple Juice



Wednesday, March 20

Homemade Pizza, Breadsticks, Lettuce Salad
Root Beer and Orange Floats or Sundaes
Coffee and Milk



Wednesday, March 27

Meatloaf, Scalloped and Baked Potatoes, Green Beans, Dinner Rolls
Cookies and Ice Cream
Coffee, Milk and Apple Juice



Guest Preacher on Sunday, March 31

Rev. Jack Finney will preach on Sunday, March 31, at all three services. Pastor Paula and Scott are taking a week off to fly down to Arizona, visit some old friends, see the sights, and enjoy the warmth. Jack has preached at CLC before, and he is a favorite of many.

President's Report

by Dan Matson

The 2019 budget was approved at the February 3 congregational meeting. Since there were not enough funds to move forward with hiring a co-pastor, the Call Committee was charged with reviewing how we might support Pastor Paula with additional help. Currently the Call Committee is drafting a job description for a position such as a Lay Minister, which (along with other options) will be reviewed with Pastor Paula and the Church Council. By time you read this, the job description should be done, and we will be analyzing our next move. It is not known at this time whether additional support will be temporary or permanent.

Lutheran Worship—The Sermon

by Sophie Geister-Jones

When my brothers and I were younger, we used to time our parents' sermons. If the sermon of the day ended up being longer than ten minutes, they'd have to pay us cold, hard cash. If it wasn't, then they were off the hook.

We did this mostly because as kids we got bored easily. We did it also because there was a good chance one of us would be featured in some capacity, and keeping the inevitable, slightly embarrassing story as short as possible was something all three of us could get behind.

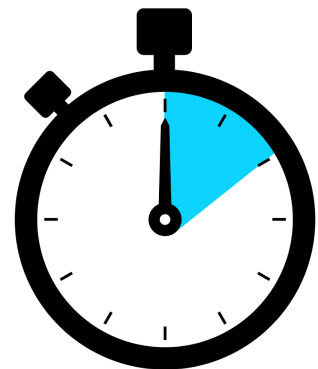
But now, after sitting through many hour-long lectures in college and building up a tolerance to where I actually *enjoy* sitting and listening to people talk, I still stand by the ten-minute time limit for sermons. Ten minutes is good—it's long enough to really dig deep into an idea, but not long enough to completely lose the crowd. It allows the pastor to take *one* idea and, in lieu of a complete exegesis (exegesis means *a critical interpretation and explication of scripture*) of the text, to take one bite out of it. Something that invokes thought but also sparks conversation. Because a sermon should, at the end of the day, be the *beginning* of a conversation surrounding scripture, not the last word.

Gordon Lathrop, a retired ELCA professor of liturgy, wrote, "Preaching is the living and contemporary voice of one who interprets in all the Scriptures the things concerning Jesus Christ. In fidelity to the readings appointed for the day, the preacher proclaims our need of God's grace and freely offers that grace, equipping the community for mission and service in daily life."

When I've mentioned the "mood" or "theme" of the worship in my articles, the sermon is basically what I'm alluding to. Sermons are the defining aspect of worship services. This partially goes back to pre-1517, when the Bible wasn't translated for the masses and the only way for plebeians to learn scripture was through preached word. But mainly, the sermon is important because it takes really freaking old stories and makes them relevant.

Because let me tell you, the Bible is *kind of* boring. Growing up, it just felt like watered-down words that had been translated and retranslated for millennia. But part of the exegesis process that a good pastor (and my momma is a good pastor) should complete when writing their sermon is looking at the scripture for the week and (with the help of their MDivs) finding the nuance within those words. To find the radical in Jesus' actions. To find the truth that applies just as much to the wandering tribes of Israel, lost in the desert, as it does to Wisconsin residents lost in snowbanks.

It is the nuance and the universal truths and questions that can be found in scripture that are highlighted in sermons. Preaching is a way to humanize those words and begin a dialogue about what they meant *then*, what they mean *now*, how that's changed, and how we should change (or if we should). The Bible is about the human condition, and just like the human condition, it is deeply imperfect and honest and paradoxical. Sermons unravel those tightly-wound moments and give the congregation something tangible and touchable that provokes. Hopefully in ten minutes or less.



Who's Who in the Pew—Jan Finney

by Diane Matson



Acronyms. Where would we be without them? If you read Sophie Geister-Jones' column from last month, you became familiar with PK (Pastor's Kid) and TO (Theologian's Offspring). This month, meet a bona fide PS (Pastor's Spouse)! Jan Finney has been married to Pastor Jack for 56 years, and crisscrossed the state of Illinois as he filled pulpits in Port Byron, Glenview, Franklin Park, and Oak Park before retiring.

A native of Western Ohio and a graduate of Mariemont High School, where her father was Superintendent of Schools (and where all the high school boys were afraid to ask Jan for a date because of her father's position), Jan chose to attend Wittenberg University. There she met fellow student Jack Finney. Marriage and children followed.

Daughter Debbie and son David both followed in the footsteps of their parents and are also Wittenberg graduates, making them the third generation to attend Wittenberg, where both of Jan's parents had also been students.

Jan gives her father much credit for insisting on women needing to further their education. She was offered three options: she could be a secretary, a nurse, or a teacher. Not wanting to be tethered to a typewriter for eight hours a day, and having an aversion to blood, Jan decided that the teaching profession was the right one for her. Illinois communities found Jan raising children while teaching students in kindergarten through third grade, as Pastor Jack accepted calls to various churches.

Stoughton has daughter Debbie and son-in-law Larry to thank for relocating the Finneys to Stoughton in 2008. Having visited Debbie, Larry, and grandchildren Emily, Cole, and Ava, who had moved to Stoughton for Larry's area law practice, Jan and Jack found the perfect spot for retirement. And now, even though the Petersons have relocated to the Columbus, Ohio, area, the Finneys remain. Visiting there and in West Hartford, Connecticut, home to David's family and two more grandchildren, Collin and Craig, the eastern states have made the list of great travel destinations, in addition to visiting Jan's brother and sister-in-law in Fort Myers, Florida.

In retirement, Jan has found time to resume piano lessons (she doesn't practice on Saturdays or Sundays). She is a member of PEO, sings in the CLC Choir, participates in the Elizabeth Circle (where she is the Sunshine Chairperson), enjoys the monthly Senior Luncheons, reading, shopping, and naps whenever she feels like it, but her favorite "hobby" is her grandchildren. To communicate with them, Jan has perfected the art of e-mail, texting, and flooding their mailboxes with cards for all occasions.

We're so glad you found a home with us, Jan. Christ Lutheran is enriched by this gracious lady, who shares that she loves being able to "be herself" here, rather than just being known as the "PS."

Go and Tell

by Roger Slack

The Apostle John's Gospel starts at the point where both John the Baptist and Jesus are 30 years old. In the Old Testament, in the tribe of Levi, the young men could serve as Levitical Priests when they reached the age of 30. At this point, they were considered mature men and hopefully wise enough to lead the people. Unfortunately for me, there are so many things that I wish I knew about the life and happenings of Jesus up to this point.

In John 2 we have the Wedding at Cana, where Jesus turns the water into wine. After the wine supply gives out, in verse 3, Mary comes to Jesus with the expectation that He could do something to remedy the situation for the young couple. It makes me wonder how she knew He could possibly do something on such short notice. Had Jesus, in His youth, prayed for a member of their family when they were sick, and Mary saw that person come back to good health almost immediately? Maybe there were other things, but limited to His family. In verse 4, Jesus responds as if to say, "It isn't our business, and it isn't my time to reveal myself yet." Between verses 4 and 5, it almost seems like there is a gap in what happens. To me, there should almost be a verse 4½, where "Mary looked at Him as if to say, 'I know better than anyone on earth who you are, God's Son, but I am your mother, and I cannot bear to see my friends humiliated on their wedding day.'" Then comes verse 5: "His mother said to the servants, 'Whatever He says to you, do it.'" It is almost as if she played the "Mom card" and pushed Jesus, as she knew He could help so many people, not just her family.

I don't presume to know anything that went on behind what we are shown in the Gospel accounts. Just as the Old Testament priests were to be a guide to the people and a source of blessing and help, Mary's push, for whatever reason, opened that door for Jesus' ministry to be just that.



“God and Games”



4th–6th graders
Wednesday evenings
6:30–7:30 p.m.

“God and Games” will continue to meet during the season of Lent. While you play in the gym, your parents can worship in the sanctuary. Supper will be served between 5:30 and 6:30 p.m. The gym is yours from 6:30–7:30 p.m. No **BIG** people are allowed in. Jacob Fitzsimmons, a college student at Edgewood, is your fearless leader, with a variety of high school youth helping out. Brady Estervig is a regular, and so are Lani Estervig, Zach Thomas, and Colton Suddeth.

**7th and 8th Grade Sunday School
in March**

- March 3: Final preparations for Mardi Gras
- March 10: Help with garage sale set-up
- March 17: Class with Todd Hipke
- March 24: Pajama Sunday—
Movies and Popcorn
- March 31: Class with Todd Hipke



**Christ Lutheran’s Mardi Gras
Sunday, March 3
10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.**



Lunch will be served in the Manna Café. The menu includes Chicken and Sausage Gumbo over Rice, Corn Bread, Buttered Noodles, Chicken Alfredo with Vegetables, Pancakes with Strawberries and Whipped Cream, Meatballs and Mashed Potatoes, Strawberry Shortcake, Coffee, and Milk.

The activities this year include past years’ favorites: In Jail with Paul and Silas, Cross the Red Sea with Moses Cakewalk, Bounce with Joseph Bounce House, Bible Bingo, Some Awesome Crafty Jacob Crafts, Esther’s Face Painting Beauty Parlor, Fishing with the Disciples, Resurrection Bean Bag Toss, and **Cast Your Lots with Jonah Raffle**. Raffle tickets are for sale on Sundays. Crafts the youth will be making will also be on display.

And there will be a Hallway of Games like Twister, Giant Jenga, and Giant Yahtzee.

Once again we will need cakes, pies, cupcakes, brownies, etc. for our Cakewalk. If you haven’t signed up yet to bring a cake, the sign-up sheet is in the narthex on the Information Desk.

Please support your youth and plan to attend!

Buy your tickets for...

Cast Your Lots with Jonah Raffle

1 ticket-\$2.00 3 tickets-\$5 7 tickets-\$10.00

Prizes:

- Few Nights Out in Stoughton Basket
- Let Someone Else Cook Basket
- Sports Basket and more...

We have yet to determine the 1st Prize!

The drawing will take place at 12:30 p.m. on Sunday, March 3.



Sunday School News for March

by Jenny Hoffman

The kindergarten students will be working on the bulletin board in March, and the theme will be "More Precious than Gold." Students will share thoughts on what is more precious than gold to them.

Please note that on **Sunday, March 24**, we are going to have **Pajama Sunday**. Everyone is invited to wear their pajamas to church that Sunday. Following church, our Sunday School students will be doing a large-group activity.

A lot of our Sunday School lessons this year have emphasized how even the smallest among us can make a big difference. To reinforce this with all of our students, I asked our fourth, fifth, and sixth graders to come up with service project ideas that could be done during Sunday School. The sixth grade class decided to help promote and work on the Mardi Gras food drive. The fourth and fifth grade classes have also developed service project ideas, which we will implement over the next couple of months.

Sunday School Mardi Gras Competition for the Stoughton Food Pantry

The first Sunday in March is Mardi Gras, and we will still be trying to reach our goal of three tons of food for the Stoughton Food Pantry. To help celebrate, there will be a **competition** among the Sunday School classes to see who can bring in the most food. Each youth who brings food will receive a bag of cotton candy, and the class that brings in the most food will each receive a frozen apple pie to take home and share with the family. The pie will be prepared by the participants in the mission trip this summer to Jamaica. The sixth graders will help weigh the food and make the cotton candy.

On Sunday, February 17, the sixth grade class took the \$250 Seed Action Grant we received from Thrivent and went to Walmart to shop for groceries. They purchased \$250 worth of groceries for the Stoughton Food Pantry.



Meet Sunday School Teachers Alexa Wuennemann and Taylor Dyreson

by Jenny Hoffman

Our Sunday School has four teachers who will be graduating from high school this year. These four students (Alexa Wuennemann, Luke Geister-Jones, Taylor Vingum, and Taylor Dyreson) have worked with me since I began working as the Sunday School Director last year. They are all very involved in things at school and in activities in the community. Despite having many competing obligations, they have chosen to take time to serve the church each week for the entire school year. They are all a great asset to our Sunday School and will be greatly missed next year. I asked two of them to share some of the reasons why they choose to teach Sunday School and what they have gained from the experience.



Alexa Wuennemann co-teaches the fifth grade students and has for the past two years. Alexa decided to start teaching through encouragement from Pastor Paula. From teaching Sunday School she felt that she has gained both leadership and social skills. She found that she really enjoys working with the younger kids and getting to know them through talking and working with them each week.

I also spoke with Taylor Dyreson. She has taught Sunday School for three years and has spent the last two co-teaching our second graders. She got involved in teaching Sunday School because she loves kids and she wanted to find a way to be more involved in the church. She felt that teaching would be a perfect way to do both. Through teaching, she says that she has gained the ability to take charge in any situation. She also feels that teaching has improved her public speaking skills.



Both feel that they have gained a lot from the experience. When asked, Alexa said that she recommends teaching Sunday School to anyone because she feels that she has learned so much from the experience and she would like everyone to have an opportunity to experience it for themselves. Next month I will introduce you to Luke Geister-Jones and Taylor Vingum.



Adult Bible Study

Join Pastor Paula on Thursday mornings at 9:00 a.m.
March 14 and 21
April 4 and 11
Tales of God's Pointless People

Daniel Erlander has always been one of my favorite theologians. In this short (25 page) book, he describes original sin as "keeping points." We have an obsession with "keeping points" to somehow prove to ourselves and God that we are worth loving. God is not interested in "keeping points." Some of the chapters are entitled "The Snake, the Big Box and the Little Box," "The Pointless People Draft a Sexuality Statement," and "The Sabbath Gift." Together we will read two chapters a week and discuss their contents, all in one hour.

Rebecca's Rebels



Monday, March 18
Viking Brew Pub—6:30 p.m.

Women of the Bible: Deborah and Jael—
Breaking the Stereotypes

I know we were scheduled to study these two amazing women in February, but in February we completed our discussion on two other women, Ruth and Bathsheba. Deborah and Jael certainly broke stereotypes of women in any age. Deborah was a Judge and leader in Israel, and Jael's actions led to the defeat of Israel's enemies. Come and hear their stories. The sign-up sheet is on the Information Desk in the narthex.

Men's Night Out



Monday, March 25
Viking Brew Pub
6:00 p.m. pints, with supper at 6:30 p.m.

Program: Living Generously, with Terry Niedfeldt from Thrivent Financial

Terry will share with us the ways Thrivent is helping people to live out the legend printed on the front of their t-shirts, "Live Generously." The sign-up sheet is on the Information Desk in the narthex.

Senior Excursion



Nunsense the Musical
Saturday, March 23—7:00 p.m.

Cost: \$17 for the ticket plus the cost of supper

Our own Village Players are putting on *Nunsense the Musical*, so I thought it might be a good senior event. Linda Kunz, Mary Onsager, and Leo Endres are of course heavily involved.

The show starts at 7:00 p.m. For those who are interested, we could meet at the Viking Brew Pub at 5:30 p.m. for a bite to eat. The sign-up sheet is on the Information Desk in the narthex.

Senior Luncheon

March 19—11:30 a.m.
Cost: \$10

Program: Irish Dancer Ella Post



Ella broke her foot last year and was unable to perform. This year that foot is healed, and she is ready and excited about dancing for us. Ella is an 8th grader and an accomplished Irish dancer. She will join us for lunch and then entertain us for about a half hour in the sanctuary.

Menu: Corned Beef with Cabbage, Potatoes and Carrots, Irish Soda Bread and Swedish Rye, Bread Pudding with Rum or Lemon Sauce, Coffee and Milk



Fourth Grade First Communion Instruction

On March 10 and 17 and April 7 and 14, parents and their fourth grade children will meet in the Conference Room from 10:30–11:00 a.m. for First Communion instruction or on the same Sunday evenings at 7:00 p.m. Scott Geister-Jones will teach the morning session and Pastor Paula the evening.

On Wednesday, April 17, we meet in the church kitchen right after school until 5:00 p.m. to bake bread. If you need a ride from school, please let Scott or Pastor Paula know. On Thursday, April 18, we gather for Maundy Thursday worship, where we will hear the story once again of the first time Jesus shared the bread and wine of Holy Communion with his disciples. Our young people will receive a gift before the worship begins, and they and their parents will be asked to come forward first to receive Holy Communion.



Huge Garage Sale/Bake Sale/Raffle/Silent Auction at Christ Lutheran



A gym, five classrooms, and a hallway full of treasures!

Food for Sale in the Manna Café!

Meatballs and Mashed Potatoes, Corned Beef and Cabbage, and more!

Friday, March 15 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Saturday, March 16 9:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

The Public Is Welcome!

This event is a fundraiser for the CLC Youth Mission trip to Jamaica.

If you would like to donate your treasures to the Garage Sale, you may drop them off Friday, March 8, from 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.; Saturday, March 9, from 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.; Sunday, March 10, from 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.; Monday, March 11, from 4:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.; and March 12-14 from 9:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.



Let's Celebrate "Fat Tuesday" by Collecting Three Tons of Food for the Stoughton Food Pantry



Did you know that "Mardi Gras" is French for "Fat Tuesday"? It comes from the tradition of slaughtering and feasting upon the fatted calf the day before Lent, because with Lent came a forty-day fast during which all Christians in the early days, then Catholics following the Reformation, gave up eating meat. Mardi Gras has also been called "Carnival," and *carnival* comes from the Latin words *carne vale*, meaning "farewell to the flesh."

It is not a Lutheran tradition to give up anything or "fast" during Lent. The Ash Wednesday liturgy encourages us to focus instead on "acts of love." We are still collecting food donations for the Stoughton Food Pantry and will continue collecting through Fat Tuesday, March 5. Decorated paper bags will be handed out for you to take home (filled with a Thrivent "Live Generously" t-shirt). Thrivent will be helping us reach our goal by donating \$250 worth of groceries. This year our goal is three tons or 4,000 pounds. How is that for a challenge? We did it last year; we can do it again! Can we collect three tons? Bob the Builder would say, "**Yes, we can!**" God would say, "Nothing is impossible for those who believe."

Global Health Ministries

by Pastor Paula Geister-Jones

It's that time of year again, time to start collecting for Global Health Ministries. The kits are our offering at the Synod Assembly in May.

The HIV/AIDS epidemic has added enormous challenges to health care worldwide. Missionaries, their health care worker colleagues, and patients' families in third world countries must provide daily care to AIDS patients who suffer from the symptoms of a devastating end-stage disease. There is pain, nausea, diarrhea, and skin eruptions, to name a few. It is not a disease we can ignore, and it is not going away.

How can we help? By creating this AIDS/Hospice Kit, we can provide cleanliness and comfort to someone who is suffering. By enclosing a devotional booklet in this kit, we can provide comfort and hope. And through our prayers and generosity, we can reach far into the lives of those who have been affected.

Hospice Kits

New or gently used items:

- 1 regular size bath towel
- 1 washcloth

New items:

- 1 bath size bar of soap (wrapped)—any kind
- 1 toothbrush, single and in original packaging
- 1 toothpaste (size medium or large—or two small sample sizes)
- 1 "pick" comb
- 1 nail clipper
- 6 Band-Aids
- 1 jar or tube of petroleum jelly (4 oz. or more)
- 1 pair heavy-duty household gloves (kitchen type), size medium
- 1 small devotional booklet, *Portals of Prayer* or *Christ in Our Home*



The birth of a baby should be a happy experience. In some countries, however, it brings new worries and problems. What if the baby is ill? How do we keep the baby warm? How do we feed another mouth? When the newborn arrives, it may be with the assistance of the local midwife—if there is one in the area, and if the family will accept her assistance.

The midwife has the training and knowledge to handle the delivery, but often does not have the very basic equipment, such as a clean cloth for the mother to lie on, a suitable instrument to cut the umbilical cord, or a towel to dry and wrap the baby.

Now imagine a baby born at a hospital in your hometown. Then take a moment to imagine a baby born in Africa, India, Madagascar, or Papua New Guinea. That baby has the same need to arrive in a well-prepared environment—and the same need for a chance to survive as a baby born at a well-equipped suburban hospital in the United States.

How do we bridge the gap between abundance and nothing?

As friends of Global Health Ministries, we have the opportunity to serve in a very special way by providing much-needed medical supplies and equipment to areas of the world where the people have very little. We have been challenged to provide Newborn Kits which GHM will send to the areas where they are needed so that the midwives and the new mothers may feel that they are not alone, that someone cares, and that they can welcome the babies into a safer world.

Our reward: Their profound appreciation and the joy of serving the Lord and making a difference.

Newborn Kit:

Please use new or clean used items in excellent condition.

- 1 regular size bath towel—no longer than 48"
- 1 36" square of muslin or sheeting
- 1 washcloth
- 1 bath size bar of Ivory soap
- 1 newborn stocking cap (keep hand-knit ones very small, use baby yarn)
- 1 small baby shirt, size 0-3 or newborn
- 1 receiving blanket (approximately 30" x 30")
- 2 cloth diapers
- 2 diaper pins

Disconnection

by YAGM Andrew

Disconnecting can be powerful. Hard, but beneficial in many ways. Getting a break from certain things in your life can open new doors in your life.

When you talk about disconnecting, however, you probably mean social media. Facebook or Netflix.

What about disconnection from your home culture? Your home country? Your native language? Getting a break from everything you know?

You might be thinking that sounds like a little much.

When I accepted the position to come to Senegal for 11 months, I didn't think about disconnection. I simply thought, "I'm going to be doing good stuff."

I've always wanted to go out of the country, and I've happily grown up going to an ELCA church and working multiple summers at an ELCA summer camp. I trust the church to use me for and teach me something good. It won't be that different. It won't be that ridiculous.

But it is different. It is ridiculous. Yet that's probably my favorite part of being here.

I've gone a month or two without Facebook before. That disconnection was great. And lucky for me, somehow this entirely disconnected, much more than just a month without Facebook, part of being here I didn't consider, year of living in another country, turned out to be great too.

There are several things here that disconnect me from my normal life. Not having regular friends to communicate with nearby. No Internet connection at home to talk to any of my regular friends or family at all. Having only two people I can completely, effectively communicate with within a 30-mile radius. A culture focused more on relationships and "being" than getting things done and "doing." Combine all of that, and you get a culture where you're sitting around without much Internet, either in silence, watching TV in French (I don't know French), or talking in Wolof (I don't know that either). So, I have nothing to do. *[Editor's note: Andrew's comprehension of Wolof is amazingly good after only four months of study.]*

But this has led to the largest reorganization of my daily life I've ever had. Did you know there are literally millions of books out there about anything? That don't require an Internet connection to use? That reading the news and keeping up with the world can be fun? That you could learn to think in a different language? That you could be happy in another community, culture, country, and continent, despite being one of just a few Americans for miles and miles?

I've read books here that have reshaped my view on family, relationships, immigration, climate change, faith, charity, and interreligious relationships. I have books on my shelf here on feminism, race, persecution of Native Americans, the universe, being an effective person, and the Bible. I've been captivated by the ideas in these books. And the only reason I've had time to read them is because I wasn't able to use my phone at home.

I've started getting a daily news email, The Skimm, looking at it whenever I get Internet access. This has led to me keeping up with other news sources and world governments and politics. I've finally figured out that keeping up with that matters.

And having limited access to Internet and my family, I've thought more carefully about who I truly care about and want to keep in touch with despite my being a continent away.

I have stepped away from every habit I had in the U.S., looked at it, and have said to some things "yes, I should keep doing that" and to other things "eh, maybe I should stop doing that." And I can actually stop doing those things, because of the lack of distraction here.

In the words of philosopher Alan Watts, "An enormous number of people devote to keeping their minds busy, and feel extremely uncomfortable with silence. When you're alone, nobody's saying anything, there's nothing to do...there's this tick tick tick tick.... This worry, this lack of distraction. I'm left alone with myself, and I want to get away from myself."

When you're forced to be left alone with yourself, I've found that life becomes more clear. You know the consequences and meaning of each one of your actions. Even though you have nothing to do for 10 months, time becomes valuable. Each choice is worth something. I'm genuinely worried I won't have enough time to think and discover things about myself and the world during these 10 months, before I face my distractions again. Before the day I go back to the U.S., and am distracted again by TV, Internet, and the "productive" American lifestyle.

I'll be savoring the moments here until that day comes, and preparing for it. Because this mindset could be one of the best things that's ever happened to me, and I must not take it for granted.

Baptism:



Leander Wayne Ciano, son of Anthony Ciano and Abby Vike

Memorials:

In Memory of:
Max Kapfer
Larry Ganshert
Max Kapfer

From:
Dwight and Debra Pautz
Mark and Karen Benson
Theodore and Susan Ormond



Altar Flowers Chart

If you would like to give flowers on a special day, call Gloria at 873-9353. The cost is \$32.50. The dates available are: April 7, 21, and 28; May 5; June 9, 16, 23, and 30; August 4, 18, and 25; September 15; November 3 and 10; December 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29.



Church Directories Are In!

The church directories are in. If you had your picture taken you can pick up your copy. The directories are on the Information Desk in the narthex

Shining a Light on Hearing Loss

A free, informative program and discussion of hearing loss, its health and social effects, and how you can learn to live better with your hearing loss.

March 21, 2019, at Covenant Lutheran, 1525 North Van Buren in Stoughton. Join us for the morning session at 10:00 a.m. or in the evening at 6:30 p.m. Hearing loss affects nearly 40 million people in the U.S., but less than 20% take action to hear better. Failing to do so has negative effects on our everyday lives: in our jobs, our family life, and our social interaction.

Topics include: Types of Hearing Loss, Hearing Aids and Cochlear Implants, Effect on Personal, Family and Social Lives, Resources and Information, Financial Resources Available, Listening Accessories, and more.

Presented by Jerry Lapidakis and Penny Vodak, with materials and support from the Madison Chapter of the Hearing Loss Association of America.

If interested, call or email Jerry Lapidakis (jlapidakis@gmail.com, 873-5100) or Penny Vodak (pennyvodak@charter.net, 302-9130).

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**Christ Lutheran Church
700 County Road B
Stoughton, WI 53589**

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

“So we are ambassadors for Christ...” -

2 Corinthians 5:20

Pastor Paula Geister-Jones

Phone: 608.873.9353

Fax: 608.873.3949

**Email: pastorpaula@clcstoughton.org
office@clcstoughton.org**

CLC Website: www.clcstoughton.org

Staff:

Gloria Hayne, Church Secretary

Eileen Klinzing, Financial Secretary



Easter Flowers Order Form

The following plants are available for Easter:

Lily - \$18.00

Tulip - \$15.00

Daffodil - \$17.50

(Make check out to Christ Lutheran Church)



Given by: _____

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

Kind of plant: _____

Please give your order to Gloria in the church office by April 14.

