

Returning to Life

"Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaining. Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen." —1 Peter 4:8-11

The sounds of summer have begun. The weather is finally warm enough that I can occasionally open my windows. I hear birds, lawn mowers, classic cars, tractors, and children. It's always exciting when our little village of Wiota returns to life, especially after a long, hard winter during which everyone hibernates indoors.

Five years ago I moved to this little town, just a few days before Christmas. It wasn't until this time of year when the park and ball diamond and food stand came to life. My first thought was: "where did all these people come from?" Children and adults of various ages would step onto the ball field for a little fun and play. Warm smiling faces would serve up hotdogs from the food stand. Ahh, the sounds of summer!!

Now that I've been around for a while, there are other sounds I notice too. It's the quiet sound of people serving this community, working tirelessly and without recognition. They're not looking to be thanked. They do what they do simply because they love this town. Just three days ago a few folks cleaned the bathrooms in the park, sweeping and scrubbing. Weeds below the bleachers and in the volleyball court are silently tackled by human hands. Fresh coats of paint are added where necessary. The food shack is restocked and reorganized. Garbage cans (and recycling bins!!) get a facelift. The ball diamond and volleyball court are dragged, grass is mowed, and light bulbs replaced.

It's the joy of serving—no paycheck here—maybe an occasional thank you there. And the people that do this work are more than happy to do it. They know and understand how their efforts bring this community together. They beautify the park and then the community is further beautified when we all come together for sport and fun and social interaction. This really is a beautiful town to be a part of!!! And regardless of where you actually live, by being a member of Wiota church, you are a part of the wonderful Wiota community. You are a part of something small, and yet something incredibly great!!!

So I hope to see you out and about this summer. (I think it goes without saying that I hope to see you in worship—at least semi-regularly.) But I also hope to see you out and about at the park, in the food stand, in the bleachers, on the swings, in our community garden, pulling weeds.....somewhere. Because we live in a beautiful community full of beautiful people!!! This place is full of warmth and great joy!

Oh... I almost forgot... Don't forget the Wiota wave if you're driving by!!

With every hope and prayer, I remain faithfully,
Your brother in Christ,
Pastor Luke

Highlights from the May Council Meeting

- Donations totaling \$31,000 were received to pay for the audio/visual project.
- Members of our congregation will participate in Habitat for Humanity's fundraiser at Cadiz Springs State Park.
- A community garden is being erected on the church property.
- Theology On Tap (TOT) will resume in June.

Community Garden

The purpose of our church's community garden is twofold:

- 1) To grow food for those who would like something fresh but aren't able to grow it.
- 2) To visit with those who could use some company.

We are looking for help harvesting and delivering vegetables. We would like to deliver every week. You could volunteer whenever it would fit your schedule. If you know of someone in our community that would like fresh food, or if you would like to help deliver, please talk to Courtney Bocklund, Elsa Meyer or Sandy Seffrood.



Theology on Tap (TOT) is back for the Summer!

Join us for our first meeting hosted by Jason and Jill Thomas on Friday, June 6th at their residence at 13338 Dobbs Rd., Darlington, WI at 7:00pm . BYOB, a chair for around the fire, and a snack to share. Bring out all your challenging Bible and faith questions and be sure to bring family and friends!



Parade Float

The concept and vision for this year's parade float has begun!! It will be BIG in a small way!!! If you're interested in helping put it all together, please contact Pastor Luke. Once we get a team together, we'll schedule a few "construction" dates.



Booster Seats

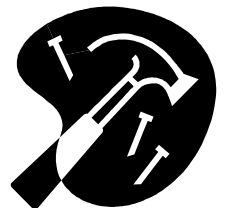
Do you have a booster seat in your attic that you no longer need? Consider donating it to the church. It would be great if we had two or three!!

In our prayers: Karen Noble, Carol Broge, Shirley Johnson, Clare Pehl, Hazel Miller, and our homebound members.



Also in our prayers: Leona Reed, LuAnn Komprood, Dorothy Wicklund, Delbert Shager, Barb Dinges, Mark Reilly, David Gertsch, Jaden Goninen, Nick Saataff, Rudy Gebhardt, Jayne Kent, Judy Fernstaedt, Tom Garvey, and Ruth Vosberg.

Thanks to generous donations totaling \$31,000, the audio/visual upgrades will soon become a reality. Please pardon the dust and drilling during the installation process. Once the system is installed, we will bless the equipment, that it may be used to give glory to God.



JUNE W-ELCA

"Summertime Expectations"



- June 4th 9:00a.m. *Gather Bible Study*
- 10:00a.m. **Abigail** Circle serves coffee break
- 10:30a.m. WELCA business meeting
- June 17th 9:00a.m. Quilting Day with potluck.



WELCA meeting minute highlights: reported by Marne Wilson

THANK YOU to MARGIE OLSON for the beautiful slide/video presentation of Hawaii on Saturday, May 3rd. Thank you to our officer team for planning and preparing the luncheon. Thank you to our servers Sue Nethery, Barb Berget, Audrey Carpenter, Diane Jorgenson, Barb Eicher, Diane Updike and Lenita Stark. Thank you to those who attended our Luau Salad Luncheon. We had 27 guests in attendance with a profit of \$280.00.

Thank you to Ramona Komprood, Margie Olson, Lenita Stark, Sue Buetzer and Sandy Potter for attending the Monroe Conference Spring Gathering at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Brodhead on April 26th.

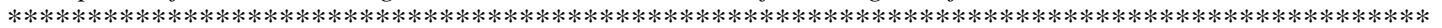
Thank you to everyone who helped bring food, serve and donate money during our Lenten service coffee hours.

Lenita Stark and Sandy Potter will be attending the *Gather Bible Study* at Wartburg Seminary May 21st and 22nd in Dubuque.

Full WELCA minutes are posted on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall.



"The plans of the mind belong to mortals, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord." —Proverbs 16:1



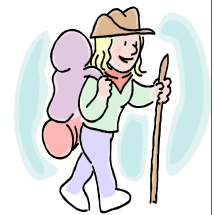
UPCOMING JULY EVENTS

- July 2nd 9:00a.m. *Gather Bible Study*
- 10:00a.m. **Hannah** Circle serves coffee break
- 10:30a.m. WELCA business meeting
- July 15th 9:00a.m. Quilting Day with potluck.



Habitat 4 Humanity Hike-Walk

On Sunday, June 8th, 2014 Wiota Church has a team to participate in the Habitat for Humanity Hike-Walk. The hike-walk will take place around Cadiz Springs Lake in Browntown, WI. Check in is from 10:30am-11:30am by the second shelter. Registration is \$25 before the event and \$30 on the day of the event. Food and beverages will be served and everyone who participates receives a t-shirt. If you are interested in joining the team for that day or making a donation, please contact Jalaine Ruegsegger. We had a great team from our congregation hike last year. Let's do it again!!!



Craft 4 A Cause

The Green County Child Advocacy Center would like to thank Wiota Lutheran Church's: Craft 4 A Cause for the generous donation of \$1,000. This donation supports the expansion project and renovation of the Green County Child Advocacy Center. The money raised specifically goes toward renovation and furnishings for the new space, equipment, ongoing training for members, and continued maintenance and upkeep of the new space.

June Birthdays



April Treasurer's Report

- 2 Tyler Shager
 - 2 Ben Stewart
 - 3 Jonathan Carrington
 - 3 Rhonda Fuchs
 - 3 Jim Wehinger, Jr.
 - 5 Andrew Schulte
 - 6 Mitchell Johnsen
 - 7 Joyce Berget
 - 7 June Purvis
 - 8 Teresa Dorsey
 - 8 Connie Redden
 - 9 Chris Jorgenson
 - 9 Kaitlin Ducker
 - 9 Pastor Luke Smetters
 - 10 Danielle Stewart
 - 10 Gwendolyn Jamison
 - 11 Kali Shager
 - 14 Clarice Goepfert
 - 14 LeAnn Kurschner
 - 15 Agatha Rygh
 - 15 Marjean Bondele
 - 17 Pam Scheider
 - 18 Barb Eicher
 - 18 Betty Johnson
 - 19 Marissa Monson
 - 21 Jacob Holverson Jr.
 - 21 Lucas Stapp
 - 25 Gary Jenson
 - 25 Spence Seffrood
 - 28 Emma Johnsen
 - 30 Penny Berget
 - 30 Vernon Johnson
 - 30 Stacie Mohr
- Please let us know of any birthdays we may have missed.

Balance 3/31/2014			\$ 354.52
Income:			
04/02/2014	Wednesday	Lenten Offerings	566.00
04/02/2014		Pointsettias and Easter Lilies	17.00
04/06/2014	Sunday	Weekly Offerings	1,532.00
04/06/2014	Coffee Hour	Donations	7.00
04/06/2014		Pointsettias and Easter Lilies	162.00
04/01/2014	Simply Giving	Weekly Offerings	300.00
04/09/2014	Wednesday	Lenten Offerings	1,023.00
04/09/2014		Pointsettias and Easter Lilies	34.00
04/13/2014	Sunday	Weekly Offerings	2,696.00
04/14/2014	Simply Giving	Weekly Offerings	20.00
04/15/2014		Church Usage Transfer	550.00
04/21/2014	Thursday	Lenten Offerings	475.00
04/21/2014	Friday	Lenten Offerings	375.00
04/21/2014	Saturday	Lenten Offerings	162.00
04/21/2014	Sunday	Weekly Offerings	601.00
04/21/2014	Sunday	Weekly Offerings	2,222.00
04/27/2014	Sunday	Weekly Offerings	1,355.00
04/27/2014	Coffee Hour	Donations	12.00
Total Income			\$ 12,109.00
Expenses:			
04/11/2014	Chateau	Worship/Church Supplies	322.00
04/18/2014	South Central Synod of Wisconsin	Synod Assembly & Convention	824.00
04/11/2014	Luke Smetters	Pastor Base Salary	1,582.67
04/11/2014	Luke Smetters	Pastor's FICA-Church Share	156.46
04/11/2014	Luke Smetters	Pastor's Mileage	227.36
04/13/2014	Connie Bocklund	Custodian	308.22
04/13/2014	Brooke Ames	Office Secretary	323.22
04/11/2014	Diane Updike	Organist & Musicians	461.75
04/11/2014	Quin Huebner	Organist & Musicians	184.70
04/13/2014	Margaret Shager	Organist & Musicians	150.00
04/18/2014	Portico	Pastor's Pension & Insurance	961.18
04/18/2014	Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative	Electricity East	32.00
04/23/2014	Church Mutual	Insurance - Com'l Ppty	545.30
04/15/2014	Postmaster	Postage/Copier/Office Supplies	200.00
04/15/2014	Luke Smetters	Church Usage - Wedding	150.00
04/15/2014	Connie Bocklund - Expenses	Church Usage - Wedding	150.00
04/15/2014	Sue Buetzer	Return Church Usage Deposit	250.00
04/30/2014	CenturyLink	Telephone Wiota	40.98
04/30/2014	CenturyLink	Telephone & Internet Parsonage	109.76
04/29/2014	Alliant Energy	Electricity Wiota	187.25
04/29/2014	Alliant Energy	Fuel Wiota	222.61
04/29/2014	Alliant Energy	Electricity Parsonage	92.96
04/29/2014	Alliant Energy	Fuel Parsonage	164.76
04/27/2014	Luke Smetters	Pastor Base Salary	1,582.67
04/27/2014	Luke Smetters	Pastor's FICA-Church Share	156.46
04/27/2014	Luke Smetters	Worship/Church Supplies	37.44
04/30/2014	Internal Revenue Service	Employees FICA - Employee Share	205.68
04/30/2014	Internal Revenue Service	Employees FICA - Church Share	160.68
04/30/2014	Regez Supply Co.	Worship/Church Supplies	19.24
04/30/2014	Carmen Meier	Worship/Church Supplies	55.00
04/15/2014	Vanco Services E-Service	Postage/Copier/Office Supplies	0.80
04/30/2014	South Central Synod of Wisconsin	ELCA	2,500.00
Total Expenses			\$ 12,365.15
Balance 4/30/2014			\$ 98.37

ELCA Stories of Faith in Action: The Potato Project

By: Megan Nuehring

“Your help is needed for hungry neighbors in need ... The 2014 Seed Potato Cutting sessions are Saturday, April 26, 1-5 pm and again Sunday, April 27, as needed 1-5 pm ... Bring your own snacks and knife.”

This is the announcement on IHartHarvest’s website, an appeal for volunteers willing to get their hands dirty with The Potato Project.

In 2009, Walt and Linda Zawaski, members of Trinity Lutheran Church in Kutztown, Pa., started The Potato Project in Berks County with funding from an ELCA Domestic Hunger Grant. This was a project created to provide produce to neighbors who were hungry and also utilize vacant farmland. In 2012, The Potato Project was first highlighted in Living Lutheran’s story, “The versatile spud.”

Since then, The Potato Project has experienced amazing growth.

According to the 2013 Potato Project Report, 202,276 pounds of potatoes were harvested — nearly 100,000 more pounds than expected.

Walt states in the report, “I quietly confided to a friend that if we had a real good year, we might be able to make 160,000 pounds. But we harvested 202,276!”

This increase in production couldn’t be managed solely by Walt and Linda, so in 2013 approximately 1,367 volunteers from ELCA congregations, Mennonite youth groups and Roman Catholic parishes helped with the work. The project has consistently brought individuals from all faith backgrounds together to serve their neighbors.

“The fall harvest is completely donated to local food pantries and the Greater Berks Food Bank for hungry neighbors in need,” stated The Potato Project Seed Cutting announcement for 2014.

The food that is distributed to the Greater Berks Food Bank then serves about 300 charitable food programs, including Kids Cafes, pantries, soup kitchens and more. The Greater Berks Food Bank valued The Potato Project donation at \$153,729 in 2013. With this donation and donations to three local pantries, The Potato Project reaches six counties serving 22,680 people.

“The Potato Project has grown into one of our largest suppliers of fresh produce,” said Doug Long, manager of marketing and development for the Greater Berks Food Bank. “What they are able to provide us is a blessing to thousands of local families in need and we truly appreciate the massive effort that is put into this wonderful project.”

As the project continues to grow and volunteers prepare for the 2014 harvest — the sixth — the goal is to harvest 80,000 to 115,000 pounds of potatoes to distribute to the community. The Potato Project has even planned a service event for “God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday on Sept. 7, 2014.

“There is some Scripture that reads, ‘the harvest is plentiful but the harvesters few.’ With the greatest harvest we have ever completed in 2013, more people came together to help neighbors in need than ever before,” said Walt.

Though the production and impact of The Potato Project is bountiful, no one is resting on their accomplishments. The project continues to seek more acres of land for the program, new volunteers, equipment and support. They are even trying new crops.

Their growth and mission remains grounded in Jesus’ words and actions, inspiring them to love and serve their neighbors in need through offering food from the land they have been given to manage — land that provides bounty and nourishment for everyone.