

Painted Pictures

"In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters."

—Genesis 1:1-2

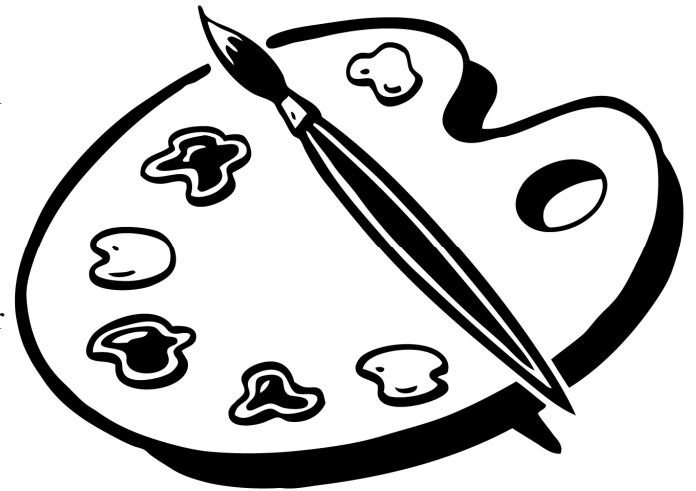
In the beginning when artists sit in front of their canvases, about to create something majestic and beautiful, the canvas sits blank, void of any color, and bare; while inspiration fills the mind of the artist and the hands are set into motion.

I think most people know by now (because I say it every year) that I love the season of Lent. It is a time when we look inward and reflect on ourselves and our lives. It is a time when we meditate on Jesus' teaching that we live with humility and love. It is a time when we are reminded to consider others before ourselves.

I also love Lent because it's the time each year when we rehearse and retell the story of our salvation, made possible through our Savior's death on the cross. We retell some of the most beautiful and sacred biblical stories, including the entire story of creation shared at the Easter Vigil.

Each year, one of my passions and joys is finding ways of retelling these stories in new and different ways that might bring renewed devotion and renewed faith. Last year images and photographs were projected onto the wall during our Wednesday Lenten worship. This year, there will once again be images, but this year those images will come to life.

Starting with Transfiguration Sunday and Ash Wednesday and throughout the Wednesdays in Lent and at each service during Holy Week, at the front of the sanctuary will sit an artist. Each artist will have already meditated, for weeks in advance, on the words, prayers, and hymns for the service. After their personal time of meditation and devotion on the texts, they will give life to painted pictures. With paints and brushes, they will begin painting on blank canvases at the beginning of worship. They will paint as we pray and sing and read the Word of God. And their paintings will draw to a close at the end of worship.



Lent



As you pray and meditate during this Lenten Season, I invite you to be drawn into the painted pictures of each artist. Watch the prayerful movement of the artist's hands as the bristles connect with the canvas. Watch the dance of the brush as colors and shapes begin to emerge. May these painted pictures renew the sacred stories of our faith. As life and breath are breathed into the dry bones in Ezekiel, and as life and faith are painted on canvas, I pray that you may find new life and hope in your faith and in your lives.

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

Highlights from February Council Meeting

- The council spent a significant amount of time with the Organizational Meeting, at which officers were elected, newly elected members were given an orientation, and those continuing on council discussed the importance of their work together in providing ministry.
- It was suggested that a board of Wiota's upcoming events be created in time for the Norwegian dinner.
- Many preparations have been made in anticipation for Lent and Easter. Throughout Lent, several artists will take turns painting during worship.
- The two furnaces that provide heat to the fellowship hall have been replaced and paid for.

Pastoral Acts: Baptism of Ella Noel Daentl on February 9th, 2014.



Don't forget to join us each Wednesday in March at 7:30pm for Lenten Worship, Holden Evening Prayer. On Ash Wednesday, March 5th the LYO will host a dinner before worship beginning at 5:00p.m. There will be light refreshments following worship on all other Wednesday evenings.



Memorials and Donations:

- A \$25 donation in memory of Barbara Holt

Attention Thrivent Members!

Are you taking advantage of choosing where you want your choice dollars to go?
Call 1-800-847-4836.



A reminder that we "Spring Forward" one hour on Sunday, March 9th!

In our prayers: Karen Noble, Carol Broge, Shirley Johnson, Clare Pehl 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, Ruby Gebhardt, Jayne Kent, and Judy Fernstaedt.

Sunday School Schedule

March 2nd: The Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-13)

Plan to stay for worship to watch the alleluias "go away" for Lent.

March 9th: The First Sin (Genesis 3:1-24)

Saturday, March 15th: St. Patrick's Day—Abraham's Call (Genesis 12:1-9)

March 23rd: Woman at the Well (John 4:5-42)

March 30th: Pool of Siloam (John 9:1-41) *Children will sing in church.*

April 6th: Lazarus (John 11:1-45)

April 13th: Palm Sunday—Movie



March Birthdays



January Treasurer's Report

- 1 Chaesta Shager
- 3 Jase Michael Johnson
- 3 Marie Zuberbuhler
- 4 Taylor DeNure
- 4 Ancil Norland
- 6 Hailey Schulte
- 6 Rhonda Pehl
- 8 Theron Bud Olson
- 9 Eunice Jenson
- 9 Randy Jenson
- 9 Christina Kurschner
- 10 Cody Bocklund
- 10 Jerry Eames
- 11 Roger Mayer
- 12 Jon Olson
- 13 Donna Cannon
- 13 Kay Wang
- 14 Carole Broge
- 15 Sandy Seffrood
- 16 Helen Johnson
- 16 Mavis Shager
- 17 Don Redden
- 20 Lisa Wang
- 21 Luke Caygill
- 22 Tim Berget
- 23 Aaron Norland
- 23 Alice Wang
- 25 Troy Nickels
- 26 Gary Johnson
- 26 Noah Caygill
- 26 Jacob Kluckhohn
- 26 Dianna Komprood
- 27 Andrea Rygh
- 27 Jason Thomas
- 28 Craig Jorgenson, Jr.
- 28 James Leu
- 29 Marlene Rygh
- 30 Courtney Bocklund
- 31 Brian Larson
- 31 Cameron Shager
- 31 Jayla Thomas

Balance 12/31/2013			\$ 83.10
Income:			
	01/05/2014	Sunday	Weekly Offerings 1,614.00
	01/05/2014		Craft for a Cause 70.00
	01/05/2014	Coffee Hour	Donations 8.00
	01/05/2014		Memorials for General Fund 20.00
	01/12/2014	Sunday	Weekly Offerings 2,217.00
	01/12/2014		Craft for a Cause 35.00
	01/12/2014	Coffee Hour	Donations 9.00
	01/12/2014		Loan from Memorial Fund 2,000.00
	01/19/2014	Sunday	Weekly Offerings 1,541.00
	01/19/2014		Craft for a Cause 35.00
	01/19/2014	Coffee Hour	Donations 11.00
	01/26/2014	Sunday	Weekly Offerings 1,670.00
	01/26/2014		Craft for a Cause 285.00
Total Income			\$ 9,515.00
Expenses:			
	01/06/2014	Chateau	Worship/Church Supplies 420.00
	01/10/2014	Church Mutual	Insurance - Worker's Comp 251.25
	01/12/2014	Luke Smetters	Pastor Base Salary 1,582.67
	01/12/2014	Luke Smetters	Pastor's FICA-Church Share 156.46
	01/12/2014	Luke Smetters	Pastor's Mileage 582.75
	01/16/2014	Connie Bocklund	Custodian 308.22
	01/16/2014	Brooke Ames	Office Secretary 323.22
	01/16/2014	Rachel Jensen	Financial Secretary 450.00
	01/16/2014	Rita Norland	Financial Secretary 450.00
	01/16/2014	Postmaster	Postage/Copier/Office Supplies 200.00
	01/17/2014	Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative	Electricity East 40.00
	01/22/2014	Augsburg Fortress	Worship/Church Supplies 915.70
	01/22/2014	Augsburg Fortress	Worship/Church Supplies 85.83
	01/22/2014	Neighborhood Office Solutions	Postage/Copier/Office Supplies 178.87
	01/22/2014	Regez Supply Co.	Cleaning Supplies 33.90
	01/24/2014	Church Mutual	Insurance - Com'l Ppty 231.92
	01/26/2014	Luke Smetters	Pastor Base Salary 1,582.67
	01/26/2014	Luke Smetters	Pastor's FICA-Church Share 156.46
	01/30/2014	Alliant Energy	Electricity Wiota 365.51
	01/30/2014	Alliant Energy	Electricity Parsonage 126.30
	01/30/2014	Alliant Energy	Fuel Wiota 285.42
	01/30/2014	Alliant Energy	Fuel Parsonage 216.04
	01/31/2014	Reliable Office Supplies	Postage/Copier/Office Supplies 315.99
	01/31/2014	CenturyLink	Telephone Wiota 40.86
	01/31/2014	CenturyLink	Telephone & Internet Parsonage 108.58
Total Expenses			\$ 9,408.62
Balance 01/31/2014			\$ 189.48
Bills unpaid at month end:			
		South Central Synod of WI	Benevolence - October thru Januar 2,000.00
		Portico	Pastor's Pension & Insurance/Dec 1,167.50
		Portico	Pastor's Pension & Insurance/Jan 961.18
		Memorial Fund	Borrowed from Memorial Fund 7,000.00
			\$ 11,128.68
Account Balances:			
		Church Usage	Regular Savings \$ 650.50
		East Repair & Maintenance	Regular Savings \$ 6,510.34
		Memorial	Regular Savings \$ 8,293.67
		Music & Education	Regular Savings \$ 102.22
		Parsonage	Regular Savings \$ 1,155.35
		Wiota Repair & Maintenance	Regular Savings \$ 6,127.97

Take the 2014 Challenge

Whenever any offering or donation is made to the church by check or with cash in an envelope that notes the giver's name, that donation is recorded. These donations are calculated annually and a giving statement is provided at the end of the year which serves as a receipt for your taxes.

Check out these statistics on recorded giving in 2013:

- 94 families who receive *The Word* did not give an offering.
- 25 families gave \$5-49.
- 23 families gave \$50-99.
- 21 families gave \$100-199.
- 27 families gave \$200-499.
- 29 families gave \$500-749.
- 19 families gave \$750-999.
- 15 families gave \$1,000-1,499.
- 5 families gave \$1,500-1,999
- 6 families gave \$2,000 or more.

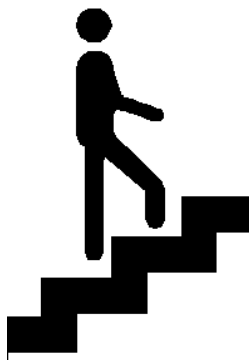
To all of our givers, thank you for thinking about the church when you consider your own budget and personal finances.

Here's the 2014 Challenge! It's a challenge for every family to "step up" their giving!!

- Of those that gave \$0, the church's goal is to motivate 15 new givers.
- \$5-49 Goal = \$50
- \$50-99 Goal = \$100
- \$100-199 Goal = \$200
- \$200-499 Goal = \$500
- \$500-749 Goal = \$750
- \$750-999 Goal = \$1,000
- \$1,000-1,499 Goal = \$1,500
- \$1,500-1,999 Goal = \$2,000
- For those that gave \$2,000 or more, thank you!!!

Step Up!!!

Please prayerfully consider increasing your giving in 2014. Help our congregation focus on the abundant gifts, resources, and programs we have available. We've been operating with a small deficit for the past few months. Since announcing these statistics at the annual meeting in late January, there has been a slight increase in giving. It is our hope that that increase will continue. Help us eliminate the deficit! Keep Wiota Lutheran Church a priority in your busy life and help it remain an important pillar of our community! There is indeed much to be thankful for!



News from the Bold Café Gals

Garage Sale and Flea Market

Have you been cleaning out closets and cupboards? Do you have items you don't need or use any more? Have you been wondering what to do with all the things you don't want? Would you like some place to sell things that you make? Well, the Bold Café Gals have just the answer to your problems. We are having a Garage Sale & Flea Market during May. We are renting out the use of parking stalls at the Wiota Church for \$5.00 each. All you have to do is bring your own tables, tents, and items to sell. If you don't have enough things to make your own stall, the Bold Café Gals will be accepting donations for a garage sale inside the church. If you have any questions, please contact Sue Buetzer at 966-3362.

Keep an eye out for more details to come.



Our next meeting will be held at 6:30pm on Thursday, March 13th Please join us!



March 1st—we will be hosting a craft day at the church from 8am-8pm. We will be working on “dresses for Africa” and “britches for boys”. We will also be making cards. For anyone who would like to join us (and other crafters from the area), cost is \$10 for the day plus an additional \$5 if you would like to order lunch from Subway. Contact Jenna Bocklund for more details. (608)-293-1785

March Worship Assistants

- March 2nd:** Greeters: The Jenson Family; Ushers: Jonathan & Sheila Carrington; Bread: Audrey Carpenter; Elements: Sandy Potter; Worship Asst.: Lenita Stark
- March 9th:** Greeters: Arleigh & Mary Lou Hansen; Ushers: Gary & Lenita Stark; Elements: Marne Wilson; Worship Asst: Sam Glanzman
- March 16th:** Greeters: Tim & Rhonda Pehl; Ushers: Steve & Kay Wang; Bread: Brooke Ames; Elements: Miss D. Jorgenson; Worship Asst: Don Seffrood
- March 23rd:** Greeters: Willard & Mavis Shager; Ushers: Allan & Sandy Potter; Elements: Rita Norland; Worship Assistant: Connie Bocklund
- March 30th:** Greeters: Ray & Leona Meier; Ushers: Arleigh & Mary Lou Hansen; Elements: Audrey Carpenter; Worship Asst.: Jalaine Ruegsegger

*Ushers, don't forget to count attendance (babies and children, too). Please place this number with the date in the offering plate.

BAKELESS BAKE SALE

On March Sunday and Lenten service dates, the Wiota Women of the ELCA will be holding a BAKELESS BAKE SALE to raise funds for local projects and to give Wiota Lutheran Church members an opportunity to contribute to the ELCA Malaria Campaign. Giving to this campaign helps fight this deadly disease in various ways; for example:

\$10.00 provides an insecticide-treated mosquito net and education to protect a family from malaria.
\$50.00 provides enough medicine to treat 25 people infected with malaria.
\$100.00 trains a village health team to help treat and prevent malaria in their community.
\$250.00 provides enough medicine to prevent 125 women and their babies from contracting malaria during pregnancy.

Therefore,

A bit of news we have today, a BAKELESS BAKE SALE is underway.
In these busy days, who wants to bake pies, cookies, or even a cake?
You'd be surprised when counted, the cost, of materials, heat and the time you've lost.
Baking for sales is extra work, yet nobody really wants to shirk.
So we've thought of a plan that's truly grand, and feel quite sure you'll understand.
In the provided pans please put the price of a pie or a cake or something nice.
Without fuss or bother, you've done your part; we hope you'll give with a willing heart.
This is the end of our little tale, so let's all help have a successful BAKELESS BAKE SALE!

MARCH W-ELCA

- March Malaria Campaign/Bakeless Bake Sale Month
March 5 9-10 a.m. – *Gather* Bible Study;
10-10:30 a.m. – Hannah Circle (Marne) serves coffee break;
10:30 a.m. – WELCA business meeting
March 7 World Day of Prayer
March 18 9 a.m. – Quilting day with potluck
In March, the following Circles serve coffee hour after Lenten Service:
12th – Hannah 19th – Abigail 26th – Miriam



W-ELCA meeting minutes: reported by Marne Wilson
Minutes are posted on the W-ELCA bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall.

“Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”

Philippians 4:6

UPCOMING APRIL EVENTS “Preparing for Easter”

- April 2 9-10 a.m. – *Gather* Bible Study;
10-10:30 a.m. – Deborah circle (Lenita) serves coffee break;
10:30 a.m. – WELCA business meeting
April 2 Deborah Circle serves coffee hour after Lenten Service
April 9 Abigail Circle serves coffee hour after Lenten Service
April 16 9 a.m. - Quilting Day with potluck
April 26 Monroe Conference Spring Gathering at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Brodhead.
Plan now to attend.



Special Appeal for Audio/Visual Technology

One of the important necessities for any business or organization is a view toward the future. If an organization is not constantly innovating and renewing its product, those products can quickly and easily become obsolete, forgotten, or ignored. The ultimate demise for those organizations that do not innovate is bankruptcy or going out of business.

While the church is not exactly like a business, there are some similarities and therefore we can learn a few things from the business model. As the church, the primary product we offer is the story of God's love and grace. If we believe in our product (and hopefully we do) that love and grace of God is what enables us to forgive one another and embrace one another in love. That love and grace of God enables us to be a part of a community of believers, to feel like we are never alone.

Our "product" is not changing. God's love and grace are eternal. However, how we offer that "product" may need to adapt from time to time. Adapting the methods of delivery can enhance how we share that story of God's love and grace. It can even lead to new "clients" or inspire new disciples.

So just for a moment, imagine with me.

- Imagine walking into church to see announcements and church photos scrolling on tv screens in the narthex.
- Imagine watching video montages of loved ones on those tvs during funeral visitations.
- Imagine if the church had a wireless microphone people could use to share their Sunday morning announcements.
- Imagine brides and grooms declaring their vows with a wireless microphone during their wedding ceremony for all to hear.
- Imagine two projectors and screens mounted in the sanctuary that could facilitate multimedia worship, adding photos or video clips during sermons, adding hymn texts during dark nighttime services.
- Imagine having the capability to video record worship services, weddings and funerals.
- Imagine being able to watch worship in the fellowship hall while caring for fussy babies.
- Imagine the other endless possibilities that audio and visual enhancements could add to our life at Wiota.

At our Annual Meeting in January, we talked about how this might draw in new members who are seeking a church home. We talked about how the youth might better be drawn into worship. We talked about how the barriers of not being able to see and hear very well might begin to be broken down by utilizing this enhanced technology. And so we voted to formally launch a special appeal for this Audio/Visual Project.

An initial quote has estimated that the breadth and depth of this project would cost \$27,000. The council is in the process of obtaining additional quotes, but we believe this estimate is relatively accurate. Technology is not cheap, but the benefits are huge. Help us work toward affording this technology by making a special offering for this project. To contribute, write "A/V Project" in the memo line of your check or on an envelope. Put this contribution in the offering plate with your regular weekly offering, or mail it to the church office.

I pray that you'll catch this vision with me and your congregation council as we continue to share the amazing love and grace of God here at Wiota Lutheran Church. —Pastor Luke

Craft 4 A Cause

We had another success *Craft 4 A Cause* held on January 30, January 31, and February 1. There were 26 people that braved the cold weather and the snow to come out for socialization and some quality crafting time. We raised \$1,000 for the Child Advocacy Center in Green County. We also held a supply drive and I am pleased to announce that four large boxes of supplies are being donated to the Child Advocacy Center through this drive.

Once again I couldn't have pulled this successful weekend off without the help of many individuals. I want to give a special thanks to Rachel Jenson, Sue Buetzer, Janeen Trame, Sandy Seffrood, and Connie Bocklund. Also I want to give a huge thank you to everyone who donated supplies for the drive or gave a monetary gift. Mia Holverson donated bottled water for my crafters to drink during the weekend. We also had special guest, Mandy Koch. We donated to Mandy's cause in October of 2012. Mandy enjoyed her time with us so much that she volunteered her services and offered 10 minute massages to my crafters for \$10. All of the money made from those massages was then donated to the Child Advocacy Center.

Also I want to thank Pauline Mau who works with the Child Advocacy Center. She stopped in and helped with meal preparations on Saturday night. The ladies that craft had a little extra special treatment as she brought out drinks to everyone and made sure that everyone had anything they needed.

Our next Craft 4 A Cause will be held in October with a date yet to be determined. As you can see, there can be many surprises for the crafters. Hopefully you will consider joining us next time.

If anyone has a special cause they would like us to craft for, please let me know. We try to focus on helping local people and organizations.

Thanks again.
Jenna

ELCA Stories of Faith in Action: A jewel on the heartland

Head south from Fargo on I-29, drive about 25 miles to County Road 2 and wind your way along the Wild Rice River to discover a picturesque white, steepled church that could be the setting for a movie.

"A jewel on the heartland," is how Dan Forsberg describes it. Dan is the newly installed pastor of Richland Lutheran Church in Walcott, N.D., a congregation established in 1879.

"An architectural masterpiece, like a well-cut diamond," recalled Dan as he described his first visit to the church last fall while going through the call process. "Vaulted ceilings and a beautiful gathering space greeted me. I was inspired enough by the church itself, but it got better."

Better, because he was invited to attend one of the highlights of congregational life at Richland — the annual lutefisk dinner.

Lutefisk for all

Officially called the Richland Lutheran Men's Supper, this community-wide event started in 1930 and, except for two years during World War II, the dinner has been held the last Friday in October every year since. Last October's dinner served more than 1,000 people.

“As far as I know it’s moved pretty much the same through the years, except we have gotten water and electricity at the church,” said long-time member Sharon Rostad, noting that many modern-day improvements were made possible from funds raised at the annual dinners.

“It is a community event, plus what I think is more important is the fellowship among the men. Some dads start their boys out when they’re in grade school. And then the men keep on (as long as) they possibly can,” said Sharon. “If they get short of help, the women are at the ready to pitch in. I’m not real anxious to get in there and help because I think this is so good for the men to have this fellowship and work together.”

“I wanted to jump in, to join the throng of men — young and old — who worked side-by-side, a team you wanted to belong to, be a part of,” said Dan.

Although the dinner itself has remained much the same for more than 80 years, there was something new to celebrate in 2013. The congregation had just completed a new addition with a much-needed elevator.

“We’d been talking about making (the church) handicap accessible because we feel so bad when it’s a struggle for a grandma to come to her granddaughter’s wedding,” said Sharon, who described how hard it was to know older relatives couldn’t attend special events such as confirmations and weddings because they couldn’t climb the stairs.

Accessibility for everyone

With assistance from the Mission Investment Fund, the ELCA’s lending ministry, the congregation launched “Building on Blessings,” a capital campaign that raised \$500,000 — no small feat for a church with less than 200 members. “We have very generous members,” said Sharon. The new space, which includes a gathering spot for coffee before and after services, is a source of pride for the members of Richland.

“We have never seen so many walkers and canes and wheelchairs come into our lutefisk dinner.” Sharon estimated at least 100 people used the elevator.

The blessings continue

Richland is a growing congregation, filled with people who are new to the community as well as those whose families who have been members for many generations. “There are a lot of people who say, “My great-grandparents are buried out there,” said Sharon, referring to the cemetery across the road from the church.

“But now we have a resurgence because young people want to get out of the city and come back to this area and raise their family, and raise them in our church. They are committed to the congregation being successful and they’re doing all they can,” said Sharon. “Richland is a caring and hospitable community where everyone is encouraged to use their gifts for the health and building up of God’s church,” said Dan, who emphasized that his visit last October provided more than a good meal and a chance to meet the members at Richland.

“It was an experience that generated hope, reminding me that God’s church is here to stay, that God’s people were alive and well.”

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See more at:

<http://www.elca.org/Living-Lutheran/Stories/2014/02/140129-A-jewel-on-the-heartland#sthash.tIqJOrH.dpuf>