

# American Lutheran Church

January, 2018

## Pastor's Letter

Dear ALC,

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." Good news from the Gospel of John, the gospel that will guide our Sunday morning readings for the months to come. John is unique gospel, the other three are paired together as the "Synoptics" meaning they share stories and timelines of the life of Jesus. The Gospel of John is more of a loner- no birth narrative, no parables, no Sermon on the mount. Instead he focuses on the spiritual side of Christ and a number of "I am" statements. Join us for worship and hear about this different side of our Savior.

A few notes about life together:

Two-thirds of our skylights are installed. The weather turned before the crew could place the last skylight. As soon as conditions improve, that last bay will be placed and the project completed! We continue to accept donations towards covering the cost of the skylights and pledges to do so can be made on our website [amluth.org](http://amluth.org)

With the turn of the new year, we have reached the end of our agreement with Jen Potts to oversee the 11am Praise Team. In December the council came up with a list of possible members for a new worship and music director search team. Those people are being contacted now and the final team will be approved by council at their meeting on January 16th. The team will be shared with the congregation at the congregational meeting at the end of the month. We know transition can lead to anxiety but trust the work of the congregation and appointed committees to lead us into the future well.

And now to end with the Gospel of John, the final verse captures the continuing work of the church and the promise of the Spirit's presence among us today,

"But there are many other things that Jesus did; if every one of them were written down, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written."

With thanks for the work of Christ in this place, through you people,  
*Pastor Elizabeth*

## Take one last deep breath...



and the holidays are over and 2018 starts off with the Cabin Fever Sale. We've collected a nice selection of items for the silent auction (something for everyone). Start packing up your

books, puzzles, toys, games, movies and music to bring in. Looking for donations of baked goods as we continue to expand our offerings at the sale with a small bake sale. Last minute info will be provided next week. Volunteers to help set up or work the sale can sign up at the front desk. Questions? Call Frankie @ 248-3098.

## Adult Forum

Jan. 7

**Coffee Fellowship:** A chance to catch up with your church family about this year's Christmas and New Year's festivities.

Jan. 14

**Cabin Fever Sale:** See details elsewhere in this newsletter

Jan. 21

**Pre-Annual Meeting Forum:** we will discuss the past year in the life of the congregation, review the budget and our *Be the Light* skylight campaign, hear a report from the Strategic Planning Task Force and discuss other matters pertinent to the life of the congregation. Since no official business is carried out at this Forum, we will use the whole hour for discussion, questions, and answers.

Jan. 28

**Annual Meeting:** will include a vote on the 2018 budget, an update on the *Be the Light* skylight campaign, and reports from the Strategic Planning Task Force, and other committees.

## Youth Schedule

I hope you all had a great break, and a Happy New Year! Below is our Sunday school and Wednesday night schedule for January. Please feel free to email any questions to [rochelle@amluth.org](mailto:rochelle@amluth.org).

### Wednesday, Jan. 3<sup>rd</sup>

NO WEDNESDAY NIGHT ACTIVITIES

### Sunday, January 7<sup>th</sup>

Sunday school, 9:45 – 10:45 (Opening in Chapel)

### Wednesday, January 10<sup>th</sup>

Kid's Club, 5:00 – 6:00

Meal, 6:00 – 7:00

Confirmation, 7:00 – 8:00

Youth Group, 7:00 – 8:30

### Sunday, January 14<sup>th</sup>

Sunday school, 9:45 – 10:45 (Opening in Chapel)

### Wednesday, January 17<sup>th</sup>

Kid's Club, 5:00 – 6:00

Meal, 6:00 – 7:00

Confirmation, 7:00 – 8:00

Youth Group, 7:00 – 8:30

### Sunday, January 21<sup>st</sup>

Sunday school, 9:45 – 10:45 (Opening in Chapel)

### Wednesday, January 24<sup>th</sup>

Kid's Club, 5:00 – 6:00

Meal, 6:00 – 7:00

Confirmation, 7:00 – 8:00

Youth Group, 7:00 – 8:30

### Sunday, January 28<sup>th</sup>

Sunday school, 9:45 – 10:45 (Opening in Chapel)

### Wednesday, January 31<sup>st</sup>

Kid's Club, 5:00 – 6:00

Meal, 6:00 – 7:00

Confirmation, 7:00 – 8:00

Youth Group, 7:00 – 8:30

## Soup-er Bowl of Caring

It's almost that time of year again..... SOUPER BOWL OF CARING! Please come to church on Sunday, February



4<sup>th</sup>, and help our youth raise money for the local high school food pantries. The food pantries serve as an important support system for homeless youth in Billings, and are run solely on the money and goods that they receive through donations. Show support for your 'Souper' Bowl team by placing your donation in their soup pot, and if you don't have a team, show your support for the commercials - we'll have a soup pot for them as well! The ALC youth truly appreciate your help with this worthy cause! Please feel free to send any questions to [rochelle@amluth.org](mailto:rochelle@amluth.org).

## Stewardship Matters: Being Christian by Sharing

On Gratitude Sunday in November, Pastor Elizabeth eloquently demonstrated the concept of sharing by lighting a single candle during the children's sermon and then sharing the flame with others in the sanctuary. She asked the kids if her light was any less because she had given it away. The looks on their faces were priceless – the light stayed the same! One child observed that the flame had actually grown larger as it was shared.

When gifts are shared, rarely do we find ourselves with diminished return. Loving



more people does not mean that there is less love to go around. Sharing our abilities does not diminish the amount of talent we have. Sure, giving up half of the candy bar or piece of cake means you have less, but in reality you come out ahead by not eating all of those calories!

The sharing of financial resources is no different. Give and you shall receive is likely one of the most used (and over used) Biblical adages, but it works. Yet for many, giving away money creates great anxiety. Deep down we know it's true that we will never go without when we share our money, yet we just can't help feeling fearful rather than joy-filled by the act of sharing.

Sharing generously creates more generosity in our lives. The reason we share is not about the return; it is in response to God's generous gift of grace and love to us. As we move beyond celebrating the gift of

love born to us in the manger to the season of Epiphany, let us be mindful that in being the Light of Christ in the world means we are called to share.

### Many thanks:

--To **Bill and Carmen Galt** for all the ways they shared their gifts over the holidays: for another wonderful Thanksgiving Dinner; for their leadership of the Wednesday and Thursday morning Bible study



group's effort to give Christmas baskets of food and gift cards to those in need, an effort that expands every year; for a wonderful Advent Recital series. Thanks for enhancing our life

together!

--To the **Musicians of American Lutheran**: Chancel Choir Director Diana Hill; Organist, Mike Everson; Praise Team leader Jen Potts; all choirs and volunteers of our music ministry. We are blessed with the many talents of these amazing musicians on a regular basis. They put in extra time during our Advent and Christmas. Many thanks for their efforts!

### Annual Meeting

will take place on **Sunday, January 28 at 9:45 a.m.** in the **Fellowship Hall**. Agenda items will include a vote on the **2017 budget**, an update on our **Be the Light skylight campaign**, a report from the **Strategic Planning Task Force**, and reports from various committees.

### Financial Update

	Income	Expense	Net
Month of November 2017	\$ 41,531	\$ 43,860	\$ (2,329)
2017 YTD Actual	\$ 474,751	\$ 491,901	\$ (17,150)
2017 YTD Budget	\$ 504,167	\$ 504,167	\$ -
Variance YTD	\$ (29,416)	\$ 12,266	\$ (17,150)

### 2018 Offering Envelopes



Pick up your 2018 offering envelopes at the welcome desk. If you can't find yours, or have any questions, contact the church office.

### December Pastoral Acts

Baptisms: Michael Olson  
Gabriel Olson



### Christikon Clips

December 2017

Information for our Congregations



#### Watch this month for Christikon

**brochures** on opportunities for youth. It's not too early to start thinking about this summer. Youth brochures will be mailed to every young person in grades 4-12 in our

congregations this month. Those brochures will detail some very special deals for registering early for camp. We hope to serve even more people from our member congregations in 2018!

**Save the date: Christikon Benefit Auction** at the Billings Depot is scheduled for April 29.

Too few of our nation's young people (not to mention adults) have significant outdoor experience. Christikon combines spirited outdoor experience with a community experience that helps open people to the life of faith. Think about joining the Christikon life this coming summer. It can do a world of good...

**It is the mission of Christikon to awaken and nurture faith in Christ— exploring God's creation and the adventure of life together.**

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