

American Lutheran Church

February, 2018

Pastor's Letter

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing."

At this year's Pre-Annual Meeting Meeting, I spoke of religious scholar Phyllis Tickle's theory that every 500 years the church has a *rummage sale*, defined as *ridding ourselves of all those practices, beliefs and ways of being that are no longer effective and get in the way of being the church we are called to be*. At our meeting, I handed out a set of questions entitled *New Questions for a New Day*, questions that are an example of this *rummage sale*. One of the old questions was, *What's our vision and how do we implement it?* A new and better question reads, *What's God up to and how do we get on board?*



Our Strategic Planning process is an example of asking this new question. You may have expected this process to end with several bullet points identifying goals under the different ministry areas

that were identified in the process, a way of answering the old question, *What's our vision and how do we implement it?* I know that I certainly did! But our Strategic Planning group ended in a very different place, a place of living into the questions instead of putting forth answers, a place of asking the new question, *What's God up to and how do we get on board?* The following year will be marked with congregational-wide Bible study on Genesis 12, intentional worship and sermon series, and conversations about being *kindred*.

I invite you to read those pages in our *Annual Report* dedicated to our Strategic Planning process. They represent a good summary of the work of the past

year. The following statement is taken from that summary, and it captures the hopefulness and the energy of moving forward with this process: *We are God's people, "kindred," called to take chances, and go where God will lead us even if we can't see that place, and to do so that we might be a blessing. If we work out of that understanding, decisions about the future of welcome, mission, communication, and worship are all shaped by that—being God's people so that we might be a blessing.*

Looking to our future in faith,

Pastor Tim

Chocolate Lovers' Lunch

Sunday, February 11th at noon

- 3 succulent soups & a dozen delicious desserts
 - All are welcome! No tickets needed- just show up!
 - Free-will donations accepted
 - Please sign up at reception desk if you can help in the kitchen and/or bring a chocolate dessert to serve
- 12



Ash Wednesday, February 14 (yes, Ash

Wednesday in on Valentine's Day this year):



Services at **noon** and **7:00 p.m.** will both include **Holy Communion** and the **Imposition of Ashes**. Please note that there is no soup lunch or supper served on Ash Wednesday.

Lenten Services

Will be held on Wednesdays, **February 21** through **March 21**. The first service will be at **noon**, followed by a **soup lunch**. **Soup supper** will begin at **6:00 p.m.** and be followed by our **evening service at 6:30 p.m.**

Lenten Wednesdays: Schedule will be as follows:

Noon- Lenten Service

12:30 p.m.- Soup Lunch

5:00—6:00 p.m.- Kids' Club

6:00 p.m.- Soup Supper

6:30 p.m.- Lenten Service

7:00 p.m.- Confirmation, Youth Group, and Chancel Choir

Be the Light Gathering for Young Adults (those age 40-ish and younger)

Build friendships and find out more about how ALC can "be the light" to the community around us!

- Saturday, February 17, 5-7pm
- Thirsty Street Brewing, 3008 1st Ave N
- Pizza provided, you buy beverages of your choice
- Childcare provided at American Lutheran

Reserve childcare by contacting the church office



Altar Guild Meeting: Saturday, February 17 at 10:00 am.

All altar guild members are invited to this meeting in which we will discuss altar guild process and procedures and any questions or concerns people might have. Coffee and goodies will be served.

Be the Light Gathering for our Sandwich Generation (those age 50-ish - 60-ish)

Building relationships and find out more about how ALC can "be the light" to the community around us!

- Thursday, February 22, 5-7 pm
- Thirsty Street Brewing, 3008 1st Ave N
- Pizza provided, you buy beverages of your choice

Volunteer Training for new and current Communion Assistants



Sunday, February 25 at 9:45 in the sanctuary. The pastors will review all the particulars, and answer questions.

Youth Schedule

Below is our Sunday school and Wednesday night schedule for February. Please feel free to email any questions to rochelle@amluth.org.

February 7th, 21st, and 28th

Kid's Club, 5:00 – 6:00

Meal, 6:00 – 7:00

Confirmation, 7:00 – 8:00

Youth Group, 7:00 – 8:30

February 14th

ASH WEDNESDAY - NO WEDNESDAY NIGHT ACTIVITIES

(Church Services at Noon and 7:00 pm)

February 4th, 11th, 18th, and 25th

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

** Join us on February 11th for another session of 'Family Sunday School'. We will meet in the chapel for opening, then head upstairs for discussion and activities that focus on the upcoming season of Lent. **

Adult Forums:

During the month of February, we will be hearing from several ministries to which we are strongly connected, either through our youth ministries, capital campaigns, or by being an ownership congregation.

Feb. 4

Andrea Chambers, Outreach Coordinator for Senior Independence of Montana, will be with us to talk about this relatively new ministry. It is part of the **Home Health and Hospice** program of **St. John's Lutheran Ministries**.

Feb. 11

Lisa Donnot, Executive Director of Family Promise of Yellowstone Valley, will update us on this homeless ministry. American Lutheran's next week to host families will be during Holy Week, March 25—April 1.

Feb. 18

Jennifer Lackman, Community Outreach Volunteer Coordinator will describe the ministry of **Family Services**. For the past 15-20 years, our **Confirmation classes** have been sorting clothing, organizing Christmas gifts, putting together bags of flour and sugar and otherwise volunteering at this agency that is on the front lines of service to the Billings community.

Feb. 25

Georgia Cady, Drop-in Center and Human Trafficking Program Director for Tumbleweed will describe her work combating human trafficking in the Billings area. Tumbleweed is a ministry that *offers safety, assistance, and hope to Billings' vulnerable and homeless youth.* \$10,000 from our *Be the Light* campaign has been pledged to this very worthy ministry.

Holy Week



March 25

Palm/Passion Sunday: 8:30 and 11:00 a.m. worship, including procession of palms and dramatic reading of the passion drama. Palm Sunday Breakfast served from 9:30 am—11:00 am. Please note this change from our traditional breakfast. It will allow our youth group, their families, and our kitchen staff to spend Easter with family.



March 29

Maundy Thursday: 7:00 service includes Footwashing and Holy Communion

March 30

Good Friday: Noon and 7:00 p.m. worship

Easter

April 1

Easter Sunday Celebratory Worship: 8:30 and 11:00 a.m. Coffee, treats, and fellowship between services.

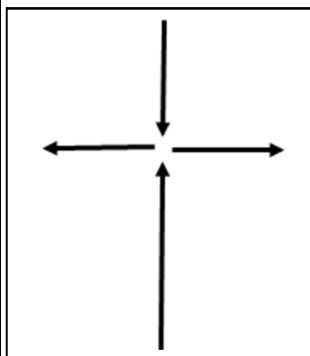


Stewardship Matters: It's about Love

Is there a word that has more definitions or carries more weight than the word LOVE? The word even has its own holiday - Valentine's Day - along with a dedicated symbol, the heart.

Stewardship is all about love. It's a culture, a mindset and a discipline centered around the way we use all of the resources that God has entrusted to our care so that we can love God and our neighbor. The practice of stewardship has its own symbol, too – the

cross.



God makes the first vertical line DOWN. Stewardship begins at creation, where God first comes down to us. We are first receivers of God's love, not givers. We are claimed by God in baptism; we belong to God and all that we have belongs to God.

Next, God's faithful people follow by moving IN to the center, responding with gratitude to the grace freely given. When we realize that all we have belongs to God and not to us, we can't help but give it away in thanksgiving for God's generosity to us. Finally, we look OUT to our neighbors on either side, both near and far, to see how God is calling us to love our neighbor with all that God has entrusted to our care. We are a church that believes Jesus is God's blessing to us. Our lives can be a blessing to others: we are called to love, not just with our words but with our whole lives transforming God's commandment to "love our neighbors as ourselves" from a religious expression into a way of life. Stewardship is love!



Source material: Stewards of God's Love, published by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 2013.

http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/ELCA_Stewards_Of_Gods_Love_Resource_and_Inserts.pdf

Financial Update

	Income	Expense	Net
Month of December 2017	\$ 80,160	\$ 53,252	\$ 26,908
2017 YTD Actual	\$ 554,911	\$ 545,154	\$ 9,757
2017 YTD Budget	\$ 550,000	\$ 550,000	\$ -
Variance YTD	\$ 4,911	\$ 4,846	\$ 9,757

Ladies, mark your calendars... 2018 All Daughter Luncheon



- "Peachy Keen" 1950's Themed Event for the women and girls of ALC
- Saturday, April 28 at noon
Featuring Sandee's Food Truck and many other nifty activities!

2018 Offering Envelopes



Pick up your 2018 offering envelopes at the welcome desk. Envelopes will not be mailed out this year. If you can't find yours, or have any questions, contact the church office.

You can now make a contribution to American Lutheran Church with a quick text message from your cell phone!

Simply send a text to **406-221-1343** with the amount you would like to contribute. Choose your dollar amount along with the word for which fund you want that contribution to go towards.



GEN = General Fund
SKY = Be the Light- Skylights
RAD = Radio Broadcast
FLO = Altar Flowers

Contact the church office with questions.

Christikon Clips

February, 2018

*Information for our
Congregations*



Christikon Youth Camp

Brochures have been mailed to every young person in your congregation who are in grades 4-12. The brochures detail some very special possibilities, and some very special deals for registering early for camp. Save by registering before March 15. Additional brochures are available from your church office.

Family.Adult Brochures will be out soon. Watch for yours in the mail or at your church.

Do it online! You can use the Internet to register for all camp sessions at Christikon, or to make a gift, or to find out more about this special ministry. Go to **www.christikon.org**.

Save the dates: The Annual Christikon Benefit Auction at the Billings Depot is coming on Sunday, April 29th.

Too few young people (not to mention adults) have significant outdoor experience. Christikon combines spirited outdoor experience with focused community experience, helping to open people to the deeper realities of 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.

CHRISTIKON • 1108 24th Street West • Billings, MT 59102
406 656-1969 • christikon@aol.com • www.christikon.org