

Pastor's Letter

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Christ is Risen! He is Risen

Indeed! Alleluia! Whew. It feels so good to say that again. Our contemplative season of Lent has concluded and we are on to the celebratory season of Easter. We can bask in the good news of a risen Christ and live as a resurrection people.

In the weeks to come we will hear stories of the early church, how they lived into their identity as brothers and sisters in Christ. As we hear those stories, we will lift up ways to become closer kindred here at ALC following the imperative of our strategic plan to become a Genesis 12 congregation.

Kindred

A few kindred events coming up:

April 8th and 15th Continued opportunities to take a family photo to be included in our new directory.

April 28th All Daughter Celebration to get to know the women and girls in our congregation

May 13th Prayers for our high school seniors and gifting them with quilts lovingly made here

May 27th Launch of summer schedule one service at 9am all summer with time to socialize following worship (Krispy Kreme Sunday sounds good to me!)

Being a Genesis 12 congregation means taking risks and trying new things because God has asked us to so that we might be kindred who are blessed to be a blessing. Like the early church we can try new things in becoming better siblings in Christ.

Pastor Elizabeth

Stewardship Matters: Cracking the Code

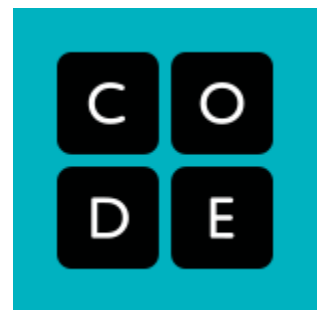
Code words are curious. The words themselves stand for something else and are meant to convey a disguised or tongue-in-cheek message. Code words sometimes have double or misinterpreted meanings: LOL can mean Laughing Out Loud, Lots of Love, or Little Old Lady. And anyone who has lived in the American South knows that "Bless Your Heart" can be uttered in two completely different contexts. Understanding the context is the key to deciphering the code.

Churches have code words, too, and stewardship is one of those words. In its best interpretation, stewardship means "we recognize God's gifts of abundance." More commonly, however, stewardship means "we want your money." Why is that? When viewed through the lens of consumerism - material possessions, extracurricular activities, wealth accumulation - it sure would seem that the church is standing in line to get into our wallets. We hear the word stewardship and immediately jump to the belief that "the church" thinks we should manage ourselves and our money differently.

Perhaps stewardship cynicism stems from the timing of stewardship messages. After all, aren't most stewardship conversations relegated to the Fall season, timed to coincide with the annual budgeting process? How convenient.

Faithful stewards think differently. They know that looking inward through the lens of God's abundance is the more fitting way to approach stewardship. Our response to that abundance is then reflected in our giving which allows us to look outward in service to others, answering the call to be Christian. No codes, no hidden messages.

At ALC, being Christian means that we are *kindred*, going where God leads us in order to be a blessing to



others. We will accomplish this journey when, individually, our stewardship equation is in balance: Stewardship = Time + Talent + Money. ALC is a family of faithful stewards! Next month we'll crack the stewardship code further by exploring our congregational trends in the giving equation. Until then, you are invited to consider your own application of the stewardship code.

Financial Update

	Income	Expense	Net
Month of February 2018	\$ 37,188	\$ 46,067	\$ (8,879)
2018 YTD Actual	\$ 74,157	\$ 95,088	\$ (20,931)
2018 YTD Budget	\$ 97,825	\$ 97,825	\$ -
Variance YTD	\$ (23,668)	\$ 2,737	\$ (20,931)

Adult Forums

April 1

Easter Sunday Coffee

Fellowship: Join family and fellow American Lutherans for coffee and donuts as we celebrate the resurrection and end our Lenten fasts.



April 8

Coffee Fellowship

April 15

Boy Scout Breakfast: Proceeds support the activities of American Lutheran Troop 10.

April 22

What's Happening in our Schools? With the tragic shooting in Parkland, Florida, violence in schools has been prominent in our news this winter. During this forum, we'll hear from our young people how this issue is being handled in Billings and how we might respond as followers of Christ.

April 29

Heart Mountain World War II Confinement Site: ALC member Al Rapacz is the architect of this interpretive

center in Northern Wyoming. His presentation will tell the narrative of preserving this site and the difficult story of those Japanese Americans who lived there for future generations.

New Member Brunch: During this forum, we'll also be introduced to our new members and have a brunch to celebrate their becoming part of our community of faith.

Anniversary

The congregation is invited to join us for cake, goodies and coffee during the Forum on Sunday, April 22nd, to celebrate our 50th Wedding Anniversary. Your presence is appreciated, but please – no gifts.

Art & Marian Eichlin

Friends' Group:

Will be meeting for our first lunch of the spring on **Thursday, April 12 at 11:00 a.m.** We will be going to the **Cracker Barrel** and should be home close to 1:00 p.m. If you have not been a part of this group before, we meet several months of the year to go to lunch together. It is a great time to get to know your fellow ALC members more fully and to have a great meal together. All are welcome. Please sign up at the reception desk if you are able to attend.

Youth Schedule

The schedule for Sunday and Wednesday youth activities during the month of April is listed below. Please email Rochelle at rochelle@amluth.org if you have any questions.

Sunday, April 1st

NO SUNDAY SCHOOL – EASTER SUNDAY

Sunday, April 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th

9:45 – 10:45 Sunday school (opening in chapel)

Wednesday, April 4th

NO WEDNESDAY NIGHT ACTIVITIES!

Wednesday, April 11th, 18th, 25th

5:00 – 6:00 Kid's Club

6:00 – 7:00 Dinner

7:00 – 8:00 Confirmation

7:00 – 8:30 Youth Group

Newcomers Class at American Lutheran



- A two-part class on April 15 & 22 at 9:45am
- In the Shepherd Lounge (at the end of the office wing, watch for signage)
- For those who want to know more about the programs and ministries of our congregation
- Meet the staff and other new members, learn more about being "Lutheran"
- Nursery is available for those with young children

Congregational Potluck Brunch Sunday, April 29th at 9:30

Brunch

- Please bring a large egg dish, pastries, or fruit to share
- Kitchen volunteers are needed! Please sign up at the reception desk or contact the church office if you can help.

All Daughter Luncheon Tickets on Sale

- Sunday mornings during April
- Look for the ticket booth in the church lobby
- \$5/person
- Must purchase ticket in advance



American Lutheran's

All Daughter Luncheon Saturday, April 28 at noon

For the women and girls of our congregation, and their guests



Featuring everything from the nifty 1950s, including Sandee's food truck



Tickets on sale during the month of April \$5/person

Writers Needed for All Daughter Lunch

- Looking for 12 men/boys from ALC
- Saturday, April 28th
- 11:30-1:30, serve & clean up
- Wear white t-shirt, jeans, sneakers
- Free "Sandee's" lunch, included
- To volunteers, sign up at reception desk, or call the church office

Props and Decor Needed for All Daughter Lunch...

Do you have any cool memorabilia from the nifty '50s that we could borrow and use as decor for our upcoming event? We are looking for any of the following items: poodle skirts, dresses, letter sweaters, letter jackets, cheerleader outfits, megaphones, pompoms, high school yearbooks, record player & record albums, and 1950s vehicles!

Touch base with Kristin Rapacz, kristin@amluth.org or call the church office if you have something to loan us.

Coming this Spring: Our Brand New Church Picture Directory...



The Congregational Life Committee wants to create a fresh, new American Lutheran picture directory, and we want every member to be part of it! Picture directories aid us in

connecting with one another, and further reaching our congregational goal of becoming "kindred". Besides updated photos, our directory will contain updated phone numbers and email addresses. Photos for this directory will be taken on Sunday mornings in the chapel (the pretty "blue" room on the left that is up the steps from the coffee window) on four consecutive Sundays: March 25 (Palm Sunday), April 1 (Easter Sunday), April 8 and April 15. No reservations or appointments are needed. Photos will be taken after both the early service and the late service on those days. There is no cost, and nothing to purchase. The finished directories will be free of charge for members of ALC.

Photographers are needed!

If you would like to help take photos, please contact Kristin Rapacz at kristin@amluth.org.

March Pastoral Acts

Baptism: Audrey Daniels

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

April, 2018

Information for our Congregations

Adults and families: Spend some time in a lovely mountain setting with some of the most-fun-to-be-with people, at our Work

Weekend May 25-28, Mountain

Weekend 1 June 29-July 1, the

Continuing Education Retreat for

rostered ministers, interested lay

people and their families, July

31-Aug. 3, Mountain Weekend 2

August 3-5. It's also possible for adult groups to

schedule a backpack trip – just call us at 656-1969 to

schedule. Watch for your brochures in the mail and

at your church soon.



The annual **Christikon Benefit Auction – “The 4 R’s – Restore, Rebuild, Renew, Re-Create”** will be held on Sunday, **April 29, at the Billings Depot, 4-7 p.m.** Food

and beverages will be available, and of course, some

of the finest artistry in both a live auction and a silent

auction, including a variety of hand-made quilts, art

work, gift baskets, Vikings Football Package, jewelry

and much more. We'll also be seeking special

support for our Sojourners Camp for at-risk youth.

Admission at the door is \$15. Hope you will come

and join the fun!

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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