



# ALMA LUTHERAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

February 2018

## FROM THE PASTOR

### From Pastor: Grayson Oliver Lee Dietzel's Baptism

Each time I meet with a family and sponsors ahead of a baptism, we look through the pattern of worship for Holy Baptism in the hymnal. We talk about the words spoken, and what they mean. We look at the various liturgical pieces, and discuss the historical context behind them. We also work our way through the various promises made during the service. Explanation is given to parents on what the long list of promises they are making look like with regards to participation in the life of the church. Sponsors receive encouragement on how they can fulfill their promises by being present, listening, and supportive figures in the faith life of the newly baptized. And lastly, I read for them the promise those gathered in the congregation will be making on their child's behalf: *People of God, do you promise to support \_\_\_\_\_ and pray for them in their new life in Christ. (If so, say: **We do.**)* Every time I read this to the family, I follow up by humorously saying: *And well, they haven't let me down yet.* I tell them, also, that if there is one thing that can be certain about this congregation it is that you all have a solid understanding of the importance of baptism and when you make that promise—to love and support the newly baptized—you don't make it lightly. You love and cherish every person baptized—and it shows.

I say all of this to families not to woo them into church engagement, but because it is true. Baptism is fundamental to the church universal, yes; but, in this particular place, it is looked upon as a gift for all—a gift that whether received or witnessed, blesses all of us gathered together. The sacrament of baptism is the beginning of the life, and journey, of faith. Anyone can attend and participate in the congregation, regardless if they are baptized or not. Baptism, however, is where we publicly, initially (and formally) receive the gifts of forgiveness of sins and new life in and through the death and resurrection of the Crucified and Risen Jesus and are welcomed into the Body of Christ, which is the church, to learn and grow in the faith given to us by the Holy Spirit. Brandy and I were very intentional when the time came to have our oldest, Aidan, baptized. We had no church home up in Iowa and were eager to not push it off too much further since he was already nearly six months old. So, surrounded by our family, friends, and a deeply loving congregation, we chose to have him baptized the same night I was ordained down in Texas. As we were embarking on a new journey of ordained ministry here with you all, simultaneously our son was beginning his journey of faith. I still get tingles every time I think about it.

So now, it feels like *déjà vu*. Our youngest, Grayson, is a hair over six months old and again we are about to embark on a new journey. Again, Brandy and I want to be very intentional about it and are not eager to push his baptism off any further. Surrounded by family, friends, and two deeply loving congregations, we've decided to have him baptized here in Nebraska. Here is where he was born. Here is where we have been blessed these last four and a half years. Here is where you all have kept him and us in constant prayer as we prepared for our family to grow from three to four. Just because Grayson will not physically be here as he learns and grows in his faith, does not mean that you all won't be involved in loving and supporting him from afar. I believe without a doubt that you will love and care for him, as much as you have for Aidan, as much as you have for Brandy and I. As such, we long to share this joyous day of Grayson's baptism with you all. He will be baptized by Bishop Brian Maas, of the Nebraska Synod, at Alma Lutheran Church in Mead on Sunday, February 11th. Worship will be at 10:30am, and we will be having a meal afterwards downstairs that we would love for you to attend in honor of this beautiful occasion. If there is any gift you can give, it is the gift of your presence that day and the gift of your promises—to support and pray for Grayson Oliver Lee Dietzel as he begins his new life in Christ. I hope you'll be able to be there with us! Thank you.

God Bless,  
Pastor Andrew

## ACTIVITIES

### Childrens Sunday School -

9:15am every Sunday except the 1st Sunday of the month. Ages 3 years old through 8th grade. Meets in the basement of the church. Contact Moriah Nygren for more information.

### Adult Bible Study -

Meets at 9:30am every Sunday except the first Sunday of the month. Meets in the room behind the altar. Contact Doug Gustafson for more information.

### Youth Group -

For 7th grade through 12th grade. Contact Megan and Weston Engel for more information.

### Hope Circle -

Meets the fourth Tuesday mornings of the month at 9:30am. Location varies. Contact Janice Gustafson for more information.

### Faith Circle (MGM) -

Meets the fourth Thursday at 1:30pm @ Bethlehem in Wahoo. Chat & Sew - meets the 1st Tuesday at 8:30am. Contact Sharon Hollst or Lana Krumpus for more information.

### Prayer Shawls -

Meet the second and fourth Saturday mornings from 9-11am. Contact Viki Miller for more information.

### Book Club -

Location and date varies. Contact Viki Miller for more information.



219 West 5th St.  
P.O. Box 88  
Mead, NE 68041  
(402) 624-3015

## BUDGET

### Treasurer's Report 22-JAN-18

Income \$11,879.89

Expenses \$5,436.62

Balance \$6,443.27

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Women's Retreat Opportunity

Through the Door - a women's getaway. Camp Moses Merrill - Morse Bluff, NE Friday evening through Saturday, March 2-3rd.

\$80 covers overnight, dinner Fri, breakfast and lunch Sat, craft and girlfriend time, Worship, speaker, breakout groups, rest. sign up at [www.campmerrill.com](http://www.campmerrill.com). See Angie with questions, this is a great getaway, and not too far from home!

### New bishop in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land

Please keep the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) in your prayers as it installs the Rev. Sani Ibrahim Azar as the ELCJHL's fourth bishop. The Rev. Munib Younan concludes his 20-year service as bishop and becomes bishop emeritus. ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton is in the Holy Land leading an ELCA delegation attending the installation. For more information about the ELCJHL, visit [elcjl.org/](http://elcjl.org/).

### 40 Days of Giving

Coming soon! The 40 Days of Giving is a way for ELCA members to support this church's hunger and poverty ministry during Lent. Choose one of five ELCA World Hunger programs that urgently need support, and walk alongside our neighbors as they address hunger in their communities.

## INFORMATION

Pastor's Cell Phone -(402) 607-9096

Pastor's Email - [revdrew@me.com](mailto:revdrew@me.com)

Secretary's Email -  
[almalutheran@gmail.com](mailto:almalutheran@gmail.com)

## ANNOUNCE. CONT.

Online giving is open from AshWednesdaythrough Easter. Learn more and plan your congregation's activities

at [ELCA.org/40Days](http://ELCA.org/40Days).

### Living Lutheran study guides available

Every month there are two study guides posted on LivingLutheran.org that accompany stories in the print issue. The study guides are designed to spark group discussion about topics that relate to articles in the magazine. You can find and download the free study guides from LivingLutheran.org under the "[Spiritual practices and resources](#)" tab.

### Save the date! "God's work. Our hands." Sunday 2018

"God's work. Our hands." Sunday will be Sept. 9. This annual day of service is an opportunity to celebrate who we are as the ELCA—one church, freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor. You work every day to make your community a better place. Let's continue doing this work together in 2018. Start planning at [ELCA.org/DayofService](http://ELCA.org/DayofService).

## MISSION STATEMENT

Disciples by grace, Growing in faith, Living our hope, Sharing God's love.

Website - [almalutheran.com](http://almalutheran.com)

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