



ALMA LUTHERAN CHURCH
NEWSLETTER

January 2018

FROM THE PASTOR

From Pastor: *Sister Act* & Being an Open and Active Church

Perhaps I'm aging myself with what I'm about to say, but oh well. It's the evening of winter solstice (December 21st) and I just watched *Sister Act*, starring Whoopi Goldberg, for the first time ever. I have to admit it was, indeed, a catchy movie. The thing about it that was most catchy for me, and perhaps this is because of my vocation, was when Sister Mary Clarence leads the nuns out past the gates of the convent into the surrounding community—cleaning up the area, connecting with the locals, and casting a new light on the church. This outreach effort ultimately jeopardizes Deloris's (under the guise of Sister Mary Clarence) life, but at the same time nurtures a faith deep down within her that had nearly died from years of hard living. Deloris (played by Whoopi Goldberg) is transformed by the nuns who welcome her in, while simultaneously also transforming their convent for the better.

The movie does a great job of portraying both a church hidden in plain sight—closed off in fear of the world around it—and what the church can (and should) look like when it opens itself to the community, embracing the people and engaging the needs around it. In watching this movie, I wonder: *Are we fearfully closed off from the community around us, or are we faithfully open to embrace and engage with those and that which God has placed beyond our doors?* As we move into this new year, we need to ask ourselves this question which should always be in the forefront of our minds—guiding us forward to evaluate what we're already doing and why, and what new things the Spirit is calling us to do and how we can further spread the gospel through our words and actions.

We—individually, communally, and congregationally—are so greatly blessed. We are blessed with our relationships and resources, in our particular callings and the creativity we have as we come together. The possibilities we have to serve and minister in our communities are endless. *What do you hear the Spirit calling us to do as the church in this place? How can we use that which we've been given by God to bless those around us? Do those beyond our walls see us as closed off or open? Are we being the body of Christ in all that we say and do?* So long as we continue to ask one another and ourselves these questions, we remain critical in our mission and ministry as the church. If ever we stop pondering on these and other such questions, we fail to be who Jesus calls us to be.

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.



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BUDGET

Treasurer's Report 31-DEC-17

Income \$121,706.18

Expenses \$122,406.96

Balance -\$700.78

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Annual Meeting

Our congregational annual meeting is scheduled for immediately following worship on Sunday, January 21. We will be having a potluck and moving straight into congregational business. This is an open meeting for all in the church.

Church Treasurer Needed

After 10 faithful years of service, June Moline is retiring at the end of year from her position as Alma Treasurer. We give thanks to God for June, her gifts shared, and all she has done for our congregation in this crucial work. The council is looking for a candidate to fill this position, starting the first of the year. If you're interested, please see Jamey or Pastor.

Epiphany Social Statement Forum

Our annual epiphany social statement forum is planned for 5pm on Sunday January 14th at the parsonage. This year we're going to go over the ELCA's 2009 statement: *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*.

Brandy & Pastor are making chili, baked potato soup, fixins, and dessert. This forum is open to any and everyone—all stances, all opinions, all feelings. We hope you'll come join us for some good food, learning, and

ANNOUNCE. CONT.

hearty dialogue about what we believe as Christians in the Lutheran church.

Draft Social Statement on Women and Justice available for review

The ELCA Task Force on Women and Justice has released a draft of a social statement that examines the big picture of sexism and patriarchy in church and society. The task force invites you to study the document and provide feedback. Hearing your input is an essential part of the process to ensure that the draft speaks for and to ELCA members. The comment period for the draft is open until Sept. 30, 2018. The social statement is available as a download or you may order a print copy.

<http://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Current-Social-Writing-Projects/Women-and-Justice/Draft>

INFORMATION

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Pastor's Email - revdrew@me.com

Facebook -

Secretary's Email -

Search for "Alma Lutheran Church" and "Alma Lutheran Educational Ministries"

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MISSION STATEMENT

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