



Lifetimes

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Backpack Sunday & The Great Incarnation Fall Get Together

By Rebecca Christiansen

We live in Minnesota and that means summers go by so quickly! With fall fast approaching, we have been busy working on getting ministries set up for fall. Incarnation welcomes Pastor Joel Vander Wal to the Children, Youth and Family Team and are excited to dig into ministry with him.

You're invited to a special Blessing of the Backpacks Sunday celebration on September 11. It is a long standing tradition that at all worship services children and those who work with children in educational settings come to receive a special blessing acknowledging the beginning of the 2016-2017 school year and Incarnation's Children, Youth and Family programming for the year. There will be a children's message from Pastor Joel and all the children will receive a special gift to place on their backpacks for the school year to remind them of this special blessing they received. This year, all who are worshipping that Sunday will receive the special gift as a reminder that God Is With Us Wherever We Go! In addition to the blessing in worship, you are invited to have some fun post-worship fun! Plans are underway for The Great Incarnation Fall Get Together that will take place outside on the Incarnation front lawn. We will have food on a stick, inflatables, face painting, small group assignments posted and so much more. You will be able to learn about the ministries happening for SPARK, IGNITE, gLo, Faith Stepping Stones and FLAME. In addition, to those ministries you will be able to learn more about the intergenerational ministries that will be going on during the 2016 - 2017 program year. We will have service opportunities and experiences that will help us to grow in our faith together and in a closer relationship with Jesus. For more information about what is coming this fall go to incarnationmn.org or contact the Children, Youth and Family staff with questions.

During all worship services on September 11, a slide show of schools will be shown in support of students and educators. A list of schools is on the website under "Community Events"; check it to ensure that your child's school is included. To add a school, email Erin Thorstad the name, location, and a photo of your school at ethorstad@incarnationmn.org by Wednesday, September 7.

From The Council

Michelle Wood

Council President



With our daughter on the brink of starting middle school this fall, I've been reading my share of parenting books. A consistent theme among them is that young people will be better prepared for adulthood if they carry with them an attitude of gratitude.

"In our culture of plenty, gratitude is something we have to teach our kids and practice with them," writes Amy McCreedy, author of the *The Me, Me, Me Epidemic: A Step-by-Step Guide to Raising Capable, Grateful Kids in an Over-Entitled World*. "If you're truly thankful for what you have, it changes the core of who you are inside. You can't help but have a giving heart towards others," adds Kevin Leman, author of

Planet Middle School.

How can we instill such an attitude of gratitude in our children's lives - and our own? A first step is appreciating that all good gifts come from God and that we are merely stewards. "The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it; the world and those who live in it." (Psalm 24:1). Everything we have and all that we are belong to Him, not us.

My husband recently took our daughter canoeing in the Boundary Waters for the first time and the experience led her to a subtle shift in perspective on gratitude. In her eyes, running water became a luxury, our home a shelter from a storm, and a screened-in porch offered protection from ravenous mosquitoes. As we talked about her Boundary Water experience, she could better relate to many of my own feelings upon returning from Incarnation's mission trip to Haiti in 2014. I'll admit, it was easy to experience gratitude at first. The challenge has been not to become complacent, but rather to respond, and keep responding, with generosity to a world so in need of God's love.

Fortunately, Incarnation offers many opportunities to express our gratitude to God by giving generously of our time, talents, and financial resources. This fall consider volunteering as a confirmation guide, a worship team member, or small group leader. Perhaps you could donate a winter coat or boots to someone at Solid Ground during the fall drive or make a meal to support the moms and children of LifeHaven. Our SPARK Ministry program will be collecting items and offerings throughout the school year to support the Ralph Reeder Food Shelf and Feed My Starving Children. What great conversation starters to have with children around generosity and help them to better understand the needs in our own community and across the globe. However you chose to express your gratitude to our God of the universe, do it with a generous spirit that will shine His love in the world.

Sewing for Haiti

By Becky Benson

You may have seen evidence of dress-making taking place at Incarnation in recent months. Brightly colored, happy frocks made of cotton and perfect for little girls who live in hot, humid climates. Dresses and shorts and tote bags to be used by the poorest of the poor children in Haiti. A group of people who love to sew have been busily at work sewing these items from home and during some gatherings held at Incarnation. And some of their work is already in Haiti and being used; the rest will be en route to Haiti soon.

When asked how the dresses and other items were actually distributed to people in Haiti, Melody Sandell, Healing Haiti's Donation Impact/Activities Advocate and the person with whom Incarnation has coordinated transport of our sewn items, responded in the following way:

"When we asked the (mission) team to bring the dresses down for us, we requested they deliver them to Grace Village, Healing Haiti's orphanage and school. They then deliver them to the long term missionaries who provide them to the Haitian caregivers to give to the children. So, there is not necessarily a straightforward giving of items from the American short-term missionaries to the Haitian children. We try to intentionally distribute donations so that the transfer is as much from Haitian to Haitian as we can. We truly appreciate the donations; the dresses your seamstresses are sewing are beautiful and really a blessing to those in need in Haiti. We would love to distribute them additionally in the future, should they (the Incarnation sew-ers) decide to make more. We could send them to not only Grace Village, but to the other partner orphanages we assist in supporting, as well. We also visit hospitals and homes for ill children, where they would be appreciated.

Another idea is to add them to the dress closet vision at Hope Church (a church built in Cite Soleil, the poorest slum in the Western Hemisphere). Children often do not attend church, if they do not have anything to wear. Healing Haiti would like to set up a closet with church clothes for children, where families could seek assistance from the local pastors to ensure their children are able to attend church. This dress closet idea is in the works to be a reality soon! So, yes, we would love to receive another batch, whenever they are ready."

When asked of those who have sewn these items, why they wanted to be a part of this ministry, this is what they said: "After the opportunity was brought to my attention, I thought this brings my passion together with helping others. My encouragement to others is to step in and have fun! Don't worry about the details, everyone has questions and everyone can learn new techniques and refine old ones."

"As someone who loves to sew, this seems like a natural choice for a volunteer activity. While it is great fun to gather as we have to sew together at church, this project also allows me to sew at home. After seeing some pictures of children in Haiti, I know that these clothes and the book bags are a true blessing in answer to a great need. And, how simple the projects are! Simple straight seams and easy finishing make this a great way to be God's hands and feet at Incarnation for the sake of children in Haiti. Join the fun! "

"I decided that the 'Sewing for Haiti' sounded like something that would be fun to do, and would give me a chance to use my mom's and grandma's sewing things. I was happy to work on tote bags - where the seams didn't need to be perfectly straight and pretty basic. After being in Haiti and Tanzania, I am so amazed at how happy people are with so little compared to us, and just these simple things can make a world of difference to them. We take so many things for granted, and this is just one small way to help out. I'm thankful for the women who helped me learn to thread my mom's machine and cheered me on even

when I sewed the handles on backwards. They are all so helpful and caring."



"I just started sewing for Haiti this spring and I'm having such fun doing it. The projects don't take long to complete so it's kind of an instant gratification benefit! I can visualize a little girl swirling around in her new dress and a little boy filling the pockets of his shorts with rocks and other 'treasures'. The challenge then is to make each one cuter than the last! Every child deserves the dignity of having clothes and this is such a simple solution!"

"For me, sewing the dresses also brings back some warm childhood memories. When we lived on a farm, my older sister made dresses for me using feed sack prints selected at the local co-op. She used homemade patterns. When I turned 12, it became my turn to sew dresses for my younger sister. By then we lived in Minneapolis and were able to purchase material and patterns from a fabric store. My first attempts at dressmaking were less than perfect. Fortunately, that was the era of puffed sleeves and gathered skirts, so my mistakes were not immediately obvious. Sewing for Haiti rekindles those wonderful

memories of my sisters and our homemade dresses. We enjoyed wearing those dresses and it's rewarding to know that precious little girls in Haiti are enjoying their homemade dresses too."

At this writing, Incarnation has hosted Summer Stretch kids who have also gotten in on the action of sewing for Haiti, each with a mentor who walked each young person through at least two projects in a sitting. Like everyone else, the young sew-ers found gratification that their efforts could make a difference in someone else's lives. Be sure to look at the pictures posted on Incarnation's Facebook page of sew-ers who have sewn for children in Haiti.

Welcome Pastor Joel Vander Wal

Following an overwhelmingly positive congregational vote to call Joel Vander Wal as a full-time associate pastor, we are pleased that he began his ministry with Incarnation on July 19. Joel's primary focus is to provide pastoral leadership in the area of Children, Youth, and Family Ministry, along with worship leadership and other pastoral duties.

Joel was ordained in the Reformed Church in America (RCA) in 2009, and served his first call as an Associate Pastor of Youth and Young Adults in a Presbyterian Church (USA) in Peoria, Illinois. In 2014 Joel felt called to pursue a Master's of Theology degree at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, focusing on Pastoral Theology and Children, Youth and Family ministries. He feels a strong call to minister to children, youth and their families, which he has answered by serving in a variety of different roles as a volunteer, intern and professionally since 2000, in Iowa, Michigan, Illinois and Minnesota.

Joel's educational background includes a bachelor's degree from Northwestern College in Iowa in History and Youth Ministry; a Master of Divinity degree from Western Theological Seminary in Michigan; and a Master in Theology degree from Luther Seminary in St. Paul, focusing on Children, Youth, and Family ministry. Joel comes to us highly recommended by the St. Paul Area Synod of the ELCA of which we are a part.

Joel and his wife, Amanda, have two children - Sam, age 5 1/2; and Sybil age 2 1/2. Amanda is a nurse practitioner at a Fairview Clinic in Fridley. Currently they reside in New Brighton. As a family, the Vander Wals enjoy camping, going to the Children's and Science Museums, watching movies, traveling and spending time with each other. Joel enjoys running, reading, grilling, baking, learning new things and binge watching shows on Netflix.

In his own words, Joel is very excited about the opportunity to join the movement of the Holy Spirit, who is working in and through the lives of the people of Incarnation. Please uphold Joel, Amanda, Sam and Sybil in your prayers as they make this ministry transition in their lives.

Goodbye to Martie Martin

After 19 years as Director of the Incarnation Preschool, Martie Martin has retired effective July 27. Martie served as director since the preschool first opened. Over these many years, Martie has partnered with preschool staff, parent volunteers, and preschool families to build a preschool that is well respected in the community and well loved by preschool families because of the deep commitment to the development of the whole child.

We give thanks for Martie's gentle spirit, love and care for children and families, and deep faith, which have been a gift and a blessing to the Incarnation Preschool and the wider Incarnation community. Please keep Martie and her husband Don in your prayers as they enter this new phase of life together and with their family. They will continue to be a part of Incarnation.

Welcome Kirsten Barie

Kirsten Barie has recently joined the Incarnation staff as Director of the Incarnation Preschool.

Before working at Incarnation, Kirsten served as director and teacher at Lutheran Church of Peace Preschool in Maplewood. Before that she was a teacher at Augustana Lutheran Church Preschool in West Saint Paul for many years and taught English Language Learners in the St. Paul Public School district.

We are excited to have Kirsten join the staff with all of the skills and gifts she brings for leading the Preschool. Please pray for Kirsten, the Preschool staff, and Preschool families as they navigate this transition.

Kairos

The dictionary defines Kairos as "an opportunity" experienced in God's time. In our journey as people of faith, busy lives make it difficult to find time to learn about things that matter. The Kairos hour on a Sunday morning can help point us in a new direction through well-informed, spirit-filled presenters.

The line-up for this fall features a wide array of topics including practicing forgiveness, the impact of Pope Francis' leadership, Lutherans in America, and the faces of Islam in our community.

Additionally, there will be two Bible studies. Dr. Cameron Howard of Luther Seminary will present for two weeks on the Promise of Advent: A Pattern of God's Faithfulness and Pastor Jeanne Hartfield will provide a snapshot of the Gospel of Matthew in preparation for the coming lectionary year.

On September 21, Incarnation members Rev. Don and Eunice Fultz and Mary Blomquist will kick off the new Kairos season by presenting on the dynamic and relationship driven partnership between the Saint Paul Area Synod and the Iringa Diocese in Tanzania.

Kairos is offered at 8:45 a.m. and 10:05 a.m. most Sunday mornings from September through April in the Fireside Room. For a complete list of speakers and topics, go to incarnationmn.org/kairos.



INCARNATION LUTHERAN CHURCH GENERAL FUND - INCOME & EXPENSE REPORT FOR THE MONTH ENDING JUNE, 2016

REVENUE	YTD ACTUAL	YTD BUDGET	YTD VARIANCE
Member Envelopes/Loose	\$786,521	\$867,534	(\$81,013)
Special Env./Misc.	\$27,713	\$30,594	(\$2,881)
Total Offering	\$814,233	\$898,128	(\$83,895)
Other Income	\$5,989	\$5,692	\$297
Total Income	\$820,223	\$903,820	(\$83,597)
EXPENSES	YTD ACTUAL	YTD BUDGET	YTD VARIANCE
Missions	\$112,893	\$112,300	\$593
Salaries/Wages	\$676,844	\$687,500	(\$10,656)
Ministries	\$30,861	\$53,675	(\$22,814)
Administration	\$29,042	\$36,750	(\$7,708)
Building	\$90,904	\$99,275	(\$8,371)
Total Expenses	\$940,544	\$989,500	(\$48,956)
Net Income (loss)	(\$120,321)	(\$85,680)	(\$34,641)

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Beginning of the Month balance	\$140,998
Net Income for the month	\$25,474
Mortgage Payment	(28,540)
Other Capital Expenses	(119)
Monthly Ending Balance	\$137,813

Thank you for supporting the ministries, missions, and programs of Incarnation with your continued contributions. Your gifts are greatly appreciated.

Incarnation Lutheran Church

Worship, Prayer & Among the Congregation

Those hospitalized: Babs Riedel; Van Linck; Lisa Alben; Shayne Hamann; Lorraine Schneider; Randy Erickson.

Sympathy to: Walt Harmer and family on the death of his brother; Kathy Erno and family on the death of her sister; Jeanne Nierad and family on the death of her sister; Jim Meinen and family on the death of his step-father; Aimee Odahl and family on the death of her mother; Sharon Wilson and family on the death of her mother.

Congratulations to: Trent and Allison Riter on the birth of their daughter, Cecelia Frances; Christopher and Kelly Dunn on the birth of their son, Caden Anthony.

Congregational Business

Photo Directory Supplement Ready

A supplement to the 2015 Family Photo Directory is now available in the church office. The two-page supplement includes 35 new family photos. If you do not have a copy of the photo directory, you can also pick up a copy of the directory along with the supplement.

Ministry Focus

Solid Ground Winter Coat Drive

Help the families at Solid Ground stay warm this winter. There are 77 families, including 168 children, who are in great need of winter coats, boots, hats, water-resistant gloves, and scarves. Donate new or gently-used, clean winter-wear items in the coat drive collection box located in the Gathering Space during the month of September. Although all sizes and items are needed, K-12 children's boots and XL - XXXL coats are always in short supply. When: During September.

Connect & Grow

Hunger Advocacy & Awareness Group

Read and discuss the book, *World Hunger: 10 Myths*, and other articles related to hunger. This group gets together to study hunger issues, learn about organizations addressing hunger, and take part in advocacy efforts such as letter-writing. This on-going group is looking to welcome new people. Contact: Vernita Kennen at dvkennen@aol.com.

When: Once/month on Tuesdays, 7 - 9:00 p.m., starting in September.



Small Group: Praying with the St. John's Bible

This small group will use images from the Saint John's Bible and corresponding texts, to delve deeper into the Scriptures. The group will reflect on each text and image, through contemplative prayer practices (lectio/visio divina), and talk about how the texts and images speak to a life of faith. Suggested contribution: \$20. Register: dfloe@incarnationmn.org.

When: Once/month on Tuesdays, 7 - 8:30 p.m., October - May.

Men's Retreat at St. John's

The annual retreat at the St. John's University Abbey Guesthouse will feature presentations by political science professor Dr. Claire Haeg on the rise of neo-populism in advanced industrial democracies. The program will also include a discussion of current economic issues by economics professor Louis Johnston. Cost is \$130. Attendance will be limited to 13. Deadline for registration is Monday, October 10. For information, contact Jim Fruehling at 651-483-1704 or jamesw.f@icloud.com.

When: October 21 - 22.

Incarnation Lutheran Church Office: 651-484-7213

Web Site: www.incarnationmn.org - If registering online, most major debit and credit cards accepted
If payments are made at the Incarnation Office, Visa and Mastercard are accepted for payment.

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