



# Lifetimes

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August 20, 2017

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## Blessings of the Backpacks & The Great Incarnation Fall Get Together

On Sunday, September 10, Incarnation will be celebrating the start of a new school year and new program year with the Blessing of the Backpacks and The Great Incarnation Fall Get Together. This is a time to come together as a community and bless those who are attending school, working with children in school, creating education opportunities, and those who support everyone in an educational setting. We invite parents, children, and those who work to educate young people to participate in one of the four worship services to receive a blessing. Children are invited to bring their backpacks to worship. What an opportunity for our faith community to come together and lift up the children, parents, and those in education in prayer and blessing.



The Great Incarnation Fall Get Together kicks off the school year with festivities happening both inside and outside the building. Inflatable bounce houses, an obstacle course, a hoop shoot, bean bag toss, ladder golf and fair-like food stands set up on the front lawn.

As a part of the September 10 celebration, there will be two service opportunities for families. Food items will be collected for Centennial School District’s weekend backpack food program, Powerpacks. Not only do we have a chance to support our kids through prayer but we also get to support kids within Incarnation and in our larger community through the donations and sorting of food. Secondly, families may also choose to make and write cards to children who are battling cancer.

Sign up for SPARK Sunday school and Wednesday programs for children ages three years through high school on the Incarnation website, [incarnationmn.org](http://incarnationmn.org). Sunday programming for children begins on September 17.

## From The Council

Mary Hoyme

Council President



My husband Jim and I have been members since 1991. Incarnation was instrumental in helping us raise our children and has played a vital role in our lives over the last 26 years. As a parent, it is incredibly rewarding to see your adult children continue to keep faith an important part of their lives - through their school years in the Mounds View system, while away at college, and now as young adults. I am eternally grateful to all of you who helped them in their faith journey. I believe that Incarnation is a church with a fabulous ministry, a strong foundation, and a solid, rich history. For this, I am very grateful for all of the dedicated staff and congregation leaders at Incarnation. Thus, I write this letter to you with a sense of deep gratitude for the past.

At the same time, I am filled with excitement and anticipation for the future. As you have probably heard, Incarnation is in the middle of a Long Term Planning Process - an effort that we hope will inspire you and your family. While this process is time consuming and lengthy, the Council feels it is important to reevaluate where we are and what we want to continue to be as a congregational family in the future. Our new mission statement “Filled by God’s grace, we feed the hungry in heart, body, mind and spirit.” truly embodies who we are and defines our mission for the future. It is very exciting to see the different ways that our new mission statement has re-energized our people and programs. It is a call to action!

The initial phase of our Long Range Planning Process is complete and we are now focusing on a Five Year Plan with annual actionable steps. We will keep you informed along the way.

It is my hope that your life at Incarnation has created a hunger for learning and sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ and the desire to be God’s hands and feet in this world as we share our God-given

*continued on pg. 3*

# Bringing Tanzania Into Our Home

by Kara Jacobsen

Many years ago, Pastor Jeanne had just returned from her first trip to Tanzania, Africa to visit our ministry partners. Hearing her speak, my husband and I said, “we need to do that trip with the kids”. Our youngest child was three years old at that time and the others were seven and nine years old. I wanted my kids to be invested in this adventure so I asked Pastor Lynda Thompson if she could contact the pastor of our partner congregation, Mkwawa Lutheran Church, to find a family with children of similar ages to mine. I thought perhaps for the next two years we could start a “pen pal” relationship to make this more real to my children and learn something about our brothers and sisters in Tanzania in the process. I had no idea how God had planned the next 10 years of my life or what this “simple request” would become for our family.

We were paired with the Lungo family who had four children in addition to the two parents. They were among the poorest of the congregation, but their oldest child, Samuel, showed a strong interest in education and learning outside his little village, so Pastor Koko of Mkwawa thought the Lungos would be a good fit. We wrote letters and sent little gifts to the Lungo family every time Incarnation sent travelers to Tanzania. In return, we got drawings and letters as Samuel was starting to learn English, and pictures of our new friends. We loved it and kept their pictures on our refrigerator to see our African friends every day.

In 2007, we went to meet our new friends in person. My son, Nicolas, was the youngest traveler that Incarnation has ever sent, going at age five (with his arm in a cast as he’d had arm surgery three weeks prior to leaving!). As soon as we saw each other, our two families recognized each other immediately. Africa had meaning to my kids and this family warmly welcomed us into their home (mud house) and their lives so generously.

Over the next few years, Samuel got older and needed a sponsor in order to continue his education. Luckily Incarnation has a program in place to help educate the youth of our partner congregations so it would be easy to sponsor this boy we had befriended. I knew my church would have evaluated the program and my money would be used for education and not wasted. Our investment in Samuel and his education has paid off even more than we ever imagined. Samuel was able to attend their version of “high school” at the same time my oldest attended high school in Minnesota. Samuel attended the university while our oldest attended college in Minnesota. Samuel’s dream was always to become a doctor, which many in his village laughed off because he came from a cracking mud hut. Again, God had a bigger plan with this partnership between our church and our partner congregation. We are now helping him pay for medical school. It has been the most wonderful experience.

My family has now been to Tanzania twice. Each time I traveled, I was astounded to see what a difference our scholarship program is making. There is a rigorous process of establishing and following those who get scholarships from Incarnation. The scholarship program has been improved so that money raised by Incarnation can be used to help more students while asking Tanzanian families to also help with some of the costs. While there is no longer a one to one pairing of Incarnation households to students, the pool of resources can be used for more: secondary and post-secondary scholarships, school building improvements, and secondary teacher training. Together, we are good stewards of the money donated to improve the lives of the largest number of students in the most efficient way. It has proven incredibly successful as most who receive secondary school scholarships go on to universities and then return to their communities to build and improve their local economies.

Our family’s “simple request” to expand our worldview has changed our lives forever. We communicate regularly with

our “African son”. My children talk to Samuel via “WhatsApp” or Facebook asking Samuel for advice and he asks the same of us. The scholarship program brought Tanzania into our home and it has been the most beautiful experience.

*You are also invited to be a part of bringing the dream of education into the lives of young Tanzanians by making a financial donation. To do this, contact Becky Benson at [bbenson@incarnationmn.org](mailto:bbenson@incarnationmn.org) or go to [incarnationmn.org](http://incarnationmn.org) under online giving.*



## Worship Banners for Ordinary Time

The banners during the liturgical season of Ordinary Time, meaning ordered or numbered time, represent the Holy Spirit coming to us at Baptism and at Pentecost. The banners remind us to live in daily acknowledgement and awareness of the indwelling Spirit and meditate upon Christ’s life. The Sanctuary banner and Incarnation Hall banner have similar green and blue designs on a white background. The larger Sanctuary banner is draped with panels of green and blue. The smaller banner in Incarnation Hall hangs over a green background panel. Green, the color for Ordinary Time, is considered a symbol of growth and rebirth. Blue represents Baptism.

*From the Council, continued from pg. 1*

gifts. As your representatives on the Incarnation Congregation Council, we welcome your input and hope that you, too, share in the excitement of what we can become. Together we can make a difference in our own lives and those around us. Together we can work towards “A world filled with God’s grace and love”.

Incarnation is 55 years young and I am excited to see where the next 55 years will take us. I look forward to working along side you on this journey.



# Feeding Hungers of the Heart with *Connecting in Grace*

What are you hungry for? If it's meaningful conversations, a sense of being part of something bigger than yourself, a next step in your faith, a short break to gain a fresh perspective, practical ways to live out your faith, getting to know new people, or maybe a deeper connection to someone you already know . . . chances are good that many others share the same hunger.

Recognizing these hungers - hungers of the heart, mind, and spirit - has led Incarnation to create a new faith study, specifically designed and written for small groups at Incarnation. *Connecting in Grace: Filled by God's Grace* will give small groups a chance to explore themes that are at the heart of our faith and to see how these themes are part of our daily lives, our faith community, and the wider world.

The faith study draws from themes found in Incarnation's new Mission, Vision and Values Statement - *Filled by God's grace, we feed the hungry in heart, body, mind and spirit* - by exploring topics around spiritual hunger, grace and love, discovery, relationships, service, generosity, physical hunger, worship and more. Exploring these themes in a small group could be a starting place for filling a hungry heart.

Small groups using *Connecting in Grace* are a chance to engage in thoughtful and light-hearted conversations, ask questions, and get to know one another in new ways. The faith study includes short videos of well-known Christian writers and speakers, along with reflections by Incarnation staff and pastors. There is a chance to take part in several short, easy-to-do, on-site service activities to make an immediate, direct impact on the

community. And, the conversations are a way to imagine new, practical ways to live out your faith as an individual, with friends and family, in your group, and across the community.

This is the seventh faith study written at Incarnation for small groups, all part of the *Connecting in Grace* family. Writing is underway this summer, with the faith study set to begin in October. Taking part is extremely easy to do, with no preparation or prior experience needed and in groups that meet just once a month. More than 15 small groups (new and continuing groups) have already signed on to take part. Watch for more information on new small groups in the coming months! All this has been made possible by the people of Incarnation and the Incarnation Endowment Fund.

## Solid Ground Winter Coat Drive

Who wants to think of winter when we are basking in the warmth of summer? In a few months we will be slipping on our warmer jackets and bundling up as the weather turns colder. We all have the opportunity to help families at Solid Ground stay warm this winter. Please consider donating new or clean gently-used winter coats, boots, hats, gloves and scarves of all sizes to keep families warm as they walk in the cold to bus stops and play in the snow this winter. Although all items are needed, boots are always in short supply. Please drop off winter wear September 3 through October 8 in the Coat Drive Box located in the Atrium.

There are instances where we do not have the right size coat or boots for a child or parent. We welcome monetary donations to purchase needed winter wear items for those individuals.

The families at Solid Ground will greatly appreciate your donations in keeping them warm this winter.

## Incarnation Lutheran Church

### Worship, Prayer & Among the Congregation

**Hospitalized:** Linda Armstrong; Karen Dunlap.

**Sympathy to:** Brian Arends and family on the death of his father; Rocky Chapin and family on the death of his father; Marshall and Jane Kult on the death of their son; the family of Louise Holmes on her death; Craig Christenson and family on the death of his mother; Jennifer Quackenbush and family on the death of her brother; the Family of Doug Arndt on his death; Alice Huemoeller and family on the death of her son.

**Congratulations to:** Jane Robertson and Dick Trapp; Kelsey Mackereth and Nate Blinn on their recent marriages.

### Connect and Grow

#### The Blessing of the Backpacks and The Great Incarnation Fall Get Together

Be a part of the Blessing of the Backpacks during all worship services September 10, followed by the Great Incarnation Fall Get Together from 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.! Invite your friends and family to come along with you. Bring a donation that day for Centennial Schools weekend Powerpacks and/or sign up to volunteer to help that day. Details about the events, items for Powerpacks and volunteer opportunities can be found at [incarnationmn.org](http://incarnationmn.org), clicking on the lower center box.

When: September 10.

#### Women Read New Booklist is Available

Need some summer reading ideas? The booklist for the 2017-2018 season of Women Read is now available on the Incarnation website at [incarnationmn.org/connect-grow/adults](http://incarnationmn.org/connect-grow/adults) towards the bottom of the page. Women Read is a monthly opportunity for women who enjoy discussing a wide variety of books.

When: The next gathering is September 20.

#### Save the Date: Fall Financial Peace University

Have you considered signing up for Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University (FPU) at Incarnation but it never seems to be the right time? It's time to make time to craft a healthier and more fruitful financial future. Free childcare will be provided for children age 8 and younger. Sign up in the Incarnation Office. Cost: \$89. Scholarships available.

When: Sundays, October 8 - December 3, 4 - 5:30 p.m.

#### Connecting in Grace small groups

Connect with others around the new *Connecting in Grace* faith study, written for Incarnation small groups. Take part in meaningful conversations around values important to our faith. New groups are starting on a variety of days/times. Check out the article in this issue of Lifetimes. Go to [incarnationmn.org/connect-grow/small-groups](http://incarnationmn.org/connect-grow/small-groups) for the latest information. More groups will be added throughout August and September. To register or tell us of your interest: [dfloe@incarnationmn.org](mailto:dfloe@incarnationmn.org).

#### Women of the Bible: Small Group for Women

Connect with other women in a small group setting, while exploring the stories of Biblical women and their insights for life today. This group will watch videos and talk about five women from the Bible using the faith study, Twelve Women of the Bible. Space is limited. Starting in September. Suggested contribution: \$5. Register: [dfloe@incarnationmn.org](mailto:dfloe@incarnationmn.org).

When: Five Tuesdays, 5:45 - 7:15 p.m., September - November.

## Children, Youth and Family

### Open Gym

Children ages 5-10 and a parent/caretaker are invited to Incarnation Hall for unstructured gym time to shoot hoops, jump rope, and play ball games. Each session, Pastor Janet will include a "sports tip takeaway" from her Christian perspective. No sign up required. When: Tuesdays, Now - August 29, 3 - 4:30 p.m.

### Small Groups for Moms

Connect with other moms for conversation and a chance to grow in your faith. New small groups are starting this fall. Check out the groups listed below and go to New Small Groups under Connect and Grow for updates. Register: dfloe@incarnationmn.org. Nursery is available with pre-registration for an additional cost (scholarships available).

- Wednesday morning (twice/month) for all moms, especially preschool.
- Friday mornings (once/month) for moms of infants to early elementary.
- Thursday evening (once/week for five weeks) for moms of elementary/middle schoolers.

## Serve

### Tons of Love

THANK YOU, Incarnation! Officially the Tons of Love campaign ended July 31 and donations were coming in until the building was locked Monday night! 10,958 lbs of donations were gathered for Ralph Reeder surpassing the 5 ton goal. While we are so grateful for your generosity, as was announced last week, Ralph Reeder distributes 4 tons each week to its clients. August will also be a challenging month for families who use the food shelf. Your continued donations and prayers for the Ralph Reeder Food Shelf and the people they serve are greatly appreciated.

## Congregational Business

### Summer Incarnation Office and Building Hours

Starting Friday, June 2 - Friday, September 1, the Incarnation Office and building will be closed on Fridays at 12:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday, the Incarnation Office will be open from 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. and Sundays 8:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

Non Profit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
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Twin Cities, MN  
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Address Service Requested

4880 Hodgson Road  
Shoreview, MN 55126

Incarnation Lutheran Church



### INCARNATION LUTHERAN CHURCH GENERAL FUND - INCOME & EXPENSE REPORT FOR THE MONTH ENDING JUNE, 2017

REVENUE	YTD ACTUAL	YTD BUDGET	YTD VARIANCE
Member Envelopes/Loose	\$824,327	\$857,715	(\$33,388)
Special Env./Misc.	\$21,605	\$26,371	(\$4,766)
<b>Total Offering</b>	<b>\$845,932</b>	<b>\$884,086</b>	<b>(\$38,154)</b>
Other Income	\$4,929	\$5,951	(\$1,022)
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$850,860</b>	<b>\$890,037</b>	<b>(\$39,177)</b>
EXPENSES	YTD ACTUAL	YTD BUDGET	YTD VARIANCE
Missions	\$111,194	\$111,000	\$195
Salaries/Wages	\$688,577	\$700,000	(\$11,423)
Ministries	\$13,647	\$53,575	(\$39,927)
Administration	\$29,420	\$33,625	(\$4,205)
Building	\$87,251	\$105,300	(\$18,049)
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$930,090</b>	<b>\$1,003,500</b>	<b>(\$73,410)</b>
<b>Net Income (loss)</b>	<b>(\$79,230)</b>	<b>(\$113,463)</b>	<b>\$34,233</b>

### CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Beginning of the Month balance	\$269,649
Net Income for the month	26,375
Mortgage Payment	(28,540)
Other Capital Expenses	(145)
<b>Monthly Ending Balance</b>	<b>\$167,340</b>

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

