

Coming in January 2020

Festival de Reyes! Three Kings Festival and Dinner!

Sunday, January 5

at 5:00 in the afternoon at Oak Grove!

Come join Tapestry and Oak Grove for a fun night of singing, eating, and fellowship together! A delicious meal, prepared by Georgeanne and Martha with Mexican and Greek flavor, is on the menu. The lamb that will be prepared was donated to us, once again, by Dave from Christmas in the Barn!

Please bring a side dish to share and a small gift for a child, if you are able.

Freewill donation accepted. Hope to see you there!



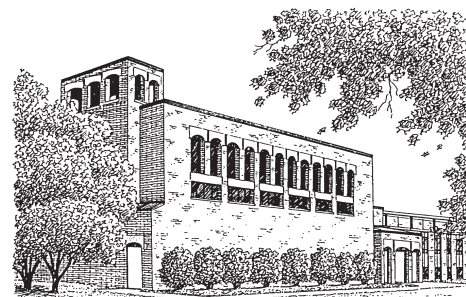
Collaboration Update

Our Collaboration of Richfield ELCA Churches (House of Prayer, Oak Grove, and Woodlake) is excited to announce three new joint initiatives for and with the community of Richfield! Below is a brief summary of the process we worked through in 2019 and the ideas we are ready to act on.

In spring, leaders from all three churches agreed to hire a community organizer as a consultant to lead us on a path to discern the ways our congregations could collectively make an impact outside our walls. Laura (our consultant) first met with several leaders from each congregation to hear what needs & opportunities we are already aware of and excited about. Then they and additional volunteers canvassed neighbors around our church buildings to get direct community input. Small groups also met with several key community leaders like the mayor, school principals, Rec Department staff, and more. Collectively, we learned that our passions and the community's needs overlapped strongly around the topics of youth programming, helping seniors stay in their homes, and building relationships between immediate neighbors. In early December, we agreed to explore the following initiatives:

- **Middle School Partnership Project:** Hosting additional after-school activities and small groups at Woodlake Lutheran for the middle schoolers across the street. This would complement the existing after-school programs and increase their capacity.
- **Home Helpers:** Building a network of volunteers from our congregations to assist senior neighbors or those with disabilities with basic home maintenance: mowing, shoveling, raking, minor repairs, etc.

(Collaboration Update continued on page 3)



Oak Grove Lutheran Church

Richfield, Minnesota

January 2020

What's Inside . . .

January Birthdays	2
Wednesday Night Dinner	2
Circles	2
Deaths	2
Baptisms	2
From the Pastor	3
Adult Forum	3
Snapshots	4
Note of Thanks	4
Calendar	5



January Birthdays

- 3 - Sandy Barnes, Arnie Johnson
- 4 - Agnes Becker
- 5 - Brad Dimond
- 7 - Steve Benzschawel
- 8 - Sharon Anderson
- 9 - Kjersten Brehmer, Amy Hero Jones
- 11 - Matt Cutter
- 14 - Ryan Hinton, Brad Sveum
- 18 - Thomas Olson, Michelle Kerwin- Paquin,
Moreau Sankey, Amanda Tveite
- 19 - Jennie Moe
- 20 - Kelli Olson
- 22 - Vivian Stromback
- 23 - Hadley Barrows
- 24 - Alec Wigdahl, Zoe Zarth
- 25 - Nicole Hanson, Ellie Maurer
- 26 - Kelly- Ann Larson
- 28 - Kayla Brehmer, Bob Meinke, Todd Refsal
- 29 - Bret Behnke, Kim Grussendorf
- 30 - Jesse Gmitro

Wednesday Night Dinner

January Menu

- 1 – Happy New Year!
- 8 – Sloppy Joe's, Corn Chowder &
Soup du Jour
- 15 – Tex Mex Bake
- 22 – Baked Chicken with Roasted Potatoes
- 22 – Meatloaf with Garlic Mashed Potatoes

All Dinners include Entree, Salad.
Dessert and a Beverage.

Dinners are served from 5:45 to 6:30.

We ask for a minimum donation of \$4.00 per plate.

All are welcome!!

Invite your friends and neighbors!

Circle Meetings for January

All Circles will meet the first Tuesday of the month,
January 7, unless otherwise indicated:

Esther – 7:00 pm in the Fireside Room.

Lydia-Ruth – 7:00 pm

Deaths



We extend our sympathies to the following family:

Marcia Bishop - passed away on November 24,
2019. Her funeral service was at Oak Grove on
December 14, 2019.

Baptisms



Mallory Jean Morgart on December 22, 2019.

Parents: Joshua Morgart and Sarah Becker

Sponsors: Rachel and JR Gardner

Men's Bible Study



Men's bible study meets on Saturday
mornings at 8:00 a.m. in the library at
Oak Grove. All are welcome! Please join
us for bible study, coffee and donuts.

Questions, please call Bob Olson at 612-866-7827.





As Time Goes By

I expect you are reading this just before or just after the calendar flips over to a new decade. If it's after, then we are still here—the sun has not gone cold, nor the moon dimmed, nor have the skies rolled up like a scroll, ushering in the final coming of the kingdom. It's just from one day to the next on the calendar, but big changes, like to a new decade or century, have often given people to speculation about the end of all things. Good to know that in 2020 we are still here and will all be fine.

Not that we aren't surrounded by the swirling storms of havoc and change. The president has been impeached and the coming weeks will hardly bring any more unity to our divided country. All the old problems of climate, race, violence, patriarchy, and privilege still hang over us. And we in the church don't fare much better. There's quite a lot of hand-wringing over empty pews on a Sunday morning, and people my age are baffled as to why none of their children go to church.

Maybe it's just being lazy, but I hope it's some of the peace that we long for with the passing of years when I find myself not worrying so much about the future as I used to. Our sturdy constitution can withstand the tests and challenges that it faces. The next generation seems to be taking their role in addressing the world's big problems with great heart and creative thinking. Lutherans have always touted the importance of reforming the church (*Semper Reformanda!*) so things aren't all bad on that front either.

Besides, whether life goes on smoothly, or civilization as we know it is shaken to its foundations, or if the universe itself comes crashing to a completion, we trust that we're all still safe in God's hands. The Year of our Lord 2020 is just that: God's year, just like the last one, and just like next. We'll take what comes and do our best to see God's blessing in it. And we'll keep trusting that God will be with us, whatever else happens.

Pastor Tom Zarth

Adult Forum

Sunday, January 19 - 9:45 am

Come to the Adult Forum in the Fellowship Hall between the worship services on January 19 for an introduction to the "Claiming Our Voices Faith Agenda," an initiative of the Faith in Minnesota project, the ISAIAH church-based organizing network, its Muslim Coalition, and the Barbershop and Back Church Coalition.

The goal of the initiative is to encourage church members to attend their upcoming precinct caucuses on Tuesday, February 25, and to impress upon our candidates for the Minnesota House and Senate our hopes to build a state which is inclusive and just for everyone. We want A Democracy that Honors Every Person's Dignity, and A Caring Economy that Allows Everyone to Thrive.

The forum will be led by The Rev. Dr. Mark Wegener.

(Collaboration Update continued from page 1)

- **Love Your Neighbors Challenge:** Inviting individuals from all congregations to build deeper relationships with neighbors on their block or in their apartment building through specific tasks each month for six months.

A huge **THANK YOU** to all the leaders who helped these last several months and to Laura for guiding us through the process. Now the fun begins! Each of the three initiatives will need additional volunteers to help plan or just participate so please let us know if you are interested in helping out or have more questions about the process or ideas.

Middle School Partnership: Pastor Neal Cannon
ncannon@woodlakechurch.org

Home Helpers: Pastor Ben Sandin bsandin@hoplc.org

Love Your Neighbors Challenge: Ben Whalen
bwhalen@hoplc.org

Snapshots from the Advent Fair and Service Project

Thank you to the many volunteers who helped make our Advent Fair merry and bright! From making hats and scarves to decorating Christmas cookies, a fun time was had by all!!



Joy to the World

Note of Thanks. . .

Thank you Oak Grove!

Since November last year, we have collected over 1,000 box tops to send to the Navajo Lutheran Mission in Arizona. As some of you have noticed, there are some changes coming for the Box Tops for Education program.

What is changing, you may ask? They are switching out the physical box tops for a more digital process. This will be happening over the next few years. This digital process works through a new cell phone app, called Box Tops for Education, which is used to take photos of your receipts. The app will then automatically scan the receipt to determine what items are eligible and register those items for the school.

At the moment, since physical box tops are still around, those items have the opportunity to count as double if they are registered through the app by scanning your receipts as well as by sending in the physical box tops!

To find more information, check out the Box Tops for Education website (BTFE.com), the boxes of those items, or talk with Elisa Tvete at emtvete@gmail.com.



Annual Congregational Meeting
Sunday, January 27th
9:25-10:45 in the Sanctuary
First Worship Service – 8:30-9:15
Second Worship Service – 11:00



Youth & Family - Check out Oak Grove's Website for 2020 Upcoming Activities & Dates!

Summer Stretch is a day of service and fun for youth in 6th - 12th grade. It takes place on Thursdays during June and July. Come and share in the work and the play. Registration and other information can be found on Oak Grove's webpage.

Milestones Set for Start of 2020

Baptism Milestone – Sunday, January 12 for anyone baptized in 2019.

This special event gathers these families together to celebrate the blessing of baptism.

Jesus Love Me Milestone – Sunday, February 16 for two-year-olds and their families.

This milestone features making prayer pillowcases.

Demystifying Death – Sunday, March 8 for teens, their families and interested congregation member to tour Morris-Nilsen Funeral Home and discuss healthcare directives, funeral planning, Biblical references, and grief. Sign-ups will be in the church office starting at the end of February.

First Communion Milestone – Sunday, March 29 & Thursday, April 9.

This milestone is for youth and their families interested in participating in Communion. Sign-ups will be in the church office in mid-March or contact Pastor Brice, Pastor Zarth or Deanne Beaudet for more information.