

GOTHENBURG FIRST UNITED
METHODIST
1401 LAKE AVENUE
GOTHENBURG, NE 69138
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SERVICE AT THE SHELTER

Some members of the Christians In Action (CIA) youth group travelled to the Connection Homeless Shelter in North Platte on Sunday, March 4. Several families donated money to purchase groceries, and the youth, assisted by the adults, prepared a wonderful meal of spaghetti, meat sauce, garlic bread, salad, and cookies. While the sauce simmered, the group took a tour of the shelter and the construction thrift store next-door. Although we did not go into the clothing thrift stores across the street, we did get to see that baler that the shelter uses to ship unsold clothing to Omaha, which is then sent to the needy overseas. We also donated some toiletry and cleaning items from the shelter's wish list that were purchased by the junior high and high school Sunday School class.

Following the tour, the youth put the final touches on the supper, and served it to the residents. We also had the opportunity to sit and share the meal with the residents and have some good fellowship. Everyone who participated really enjoyed the experience, and we look forward to doing it again!



"Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms."

~1 Peter 4:10

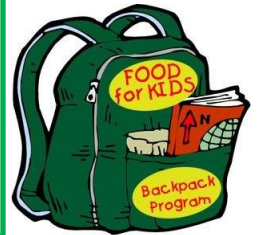


Sunday School Scoop

On Easter Sunday, Lynnette will lead all the students in learning the Easter story and how it pertains to their lives. On April 8th, Sunday School children will be joined by Casey and Charity's children to sing for second service. Dannette and Kristi will lead the singing. During Sunday School, the junior and senior high youth will teach the students about creation. The Sunday's of April 15th, Jami Brundage will teach, on the 22nd Lindsey Tederman will teach, and on the 29th Sarah Anderson and Jami Brundage will teach. Creation and Earth Day will be topics for those days. Thanks to the MANY teachers who led the students, both adult and youth during the month of March!

Sunday School Mission Project

Offerings this year have been earmarked for the Backpack Program in Gothenburg. We will be presenting the money to Shawn and Kendra Boyd in the next month or so. If you would like to donate to this mission, please make your checks out to the SUNDAY SCHOOL MISSION PROJECT.



April Birthday's

Happy Birthday

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 1— Jack Ostergard, Sheila Jobman | 22— Delmer Brass |
| 2— Brad Jorgenson, Karla Bryant | 23— Shane Kruse, Cody Larson |
| 3— Marvin McMichael | 25— Robin Hiatt |
| 4— Ann Foster | 26— Shirley Logan |
| 5— Roger Kennicutt, Ted Haney | 28— Axel Jorgenson, Mark Boson |
| 6— Page Peterson | 30— Gerald Johnson |
| 7— Joan Windrum | |
| 8— Alvin Geiken | |
| 9— Doug Ostendorf | |
| 10— Craig Bartruff, Kai Jorgenson, Parker Graves | |
| 11— Brody Stienike, Kimberly Bartruff | |
| 12— Austin Macek | |
| 14— Kay Grove | |
| 15— Lyndsey Anderson, Dwight Edson | |
| 17— Reed Weyers | |
| 18— Dakota Macek | |





Pastor's Perspective

Four years ago on Palm Sunday, John—my late husband—began to slip into an encephalopathic coma. I was preparing to go to work at the church I was serving and had tried to awaken him to say goodbye before I left. But he was very groggy and confused, and I could not get him to make sense; I thought he was having a stroke, or ????. I called my Associate Pastor to conduct worship for me while I took John to the hospital emergency room. That Holy Week, with John in and out of the hospital several times, was the beginning of our long journey from life to death, a journey that taught me many things—and which raised a thousand more questions as well.

Being a United Methodist, I don't often quote Martin Luther—the one who is credited with setting loose the Protestant Christian movement. I am far more likely to quote John Wesley (of course!) But Luther said something that is important for us to hear post-Easter; he said: "...in the midst of life, we are surrounded by death. Death punctuates embodied existence. Each moment is perpetually perishing, dying that new experiences may emerge."

My head has understood this for a long time. As a clergy person, I am very aware of the fact that life and death are always around us. In fact, some of my most powerful days as a clergy person have been the days in which I have talked with someone who was dying and then gone down the hospital hallway to where a mother and her newborn were waiting to go home; or I have baptized a child and grandparent has died; or I have celebrated with someone who has just gotten their dream job while another parishioner has lost theirs; or where one person has received good news about medical tests and another has received a terminal diagnosis. My late husband and I lived in the tension of just such moments while he was on the waiting list for a liver transplant—for him to live would mean that someone had died—and how does one pray for such things? Death and Resurrection in each and every moment...

It can be difficult to hold these images together, which is why I think that Easter is challenging for us to imagine and celebrate in the way we can Christmas. Who doesn't want to celebrate the birth of Jesus? A baby that is coming into the world to change things—who wouldn't want to celebrate that? (Except someone who really likes things the way they are, I suppose...) But Easter is a completely different thing. In order to celebrate Easter, we must first acknowledge death; and not just any death, but a death born out of injustice and abusive power.

This year we celebrated Easter on April Fool's Day, a day of jokes. Some have said that it is appropriate as Jesus has played a joke on death—and the world will never be the same. So this year as we reflect on Jesus' sufferings on the cross, we might ask: What is finished? What ends on Calvary? And, this year as we celebrate Jesus' resurrection, we might ask: What has been given new life? What begins anew, now that the tomb is empty?

Fun at the Movies

The Mission, Outreach and Evangelism Committee (MOE) held a movie day on Sunday March 4th. We invited Joyful Noise Preschool and Learning Adventures Daycare. The kids made invitations to invite their families. We had 44 attendees enjoy the sloppy joes with all the fixin's. The movie was "2x2 God's Little Creatures". So much fun was had by all. We will continue our quarterly movies with our next one being held in June. We invite any and all to come and enjoy these outreach events inviting friends and family to come enjoy and learn about our Lord Jesus.



READING TIME

March was MOE's annual reading month. We read to the daycare every Monday at 4 pm. This was an amazing opportunity to outreach to the young people that share our beautiful church and they thoroughly enjoy it. Reading books, singing songs, and just laughing with the was a great way to spend a Monday afternoon. We would like to do this later in the year and invite more of the congregation to share in this experience. This is a wonderful warm, welcoming way to add value to the children's lives and let them know how much we care and how much we want them to know Jesus.

Music Minute

Choir presented our Easter cantata "Hallelujah! What a Savior" at the Late service on Palm Sunday. It was a memorable experience through word and song of Jesus' last week. When I heard this for the first time I knew I had to try to do it, even though I knew it would be a challenge. A special thanks to everyone who participated in the cantata, the choir for all the time you have spent practicing, practicing, and practicing some more. To Matt Weiss for consenting to narrate for us, as always you do such a wonderful job. To Devin for making us sound good, and to Wendy for running the power point. Every year I am happy when the cantata is over and that we made it through with a minimum of errors but I am also sad because it means that we are done with choir until the fall. Thanks to the choir and Barry for providing special music this month. I also thank the band for leading the praise songs every Sunday, and to all those running the sound and power points. I am so blessed to be able to work with so many talented and awesome people that we have in our church— praising God with a variety of music styles.





Figures and Finances



Mission Shares	Percent of Budget	100%
	Paid to date	\$5,002
YTD General Expenses	(through Mar 31)	\$48,0236
YTD Budgeted Expenses	(through Mar 31)	\$47,829
% of Budget		100.4%
YTD General Giving	(through Mar 31)	\$42,489
YTD Budgeted Giving	(through Mar 31)	\$47,829
% of Budget		88.8%



2018 GIVING AND ATTENDANCE REPORT					
	4-Mar	11-Mar	18-Mar	25-Mar	TOTAL
Early Worship	38	32	42	27	139
Late Worship	60	37	78	75	250
Sunday School	24	10	N/A	N/A	34
BUDGET					
Undesignated	\$ 5,554.60	\$ 1,636.00	\$ 2,472.75	\$ 1,541.55	\$1,204.90
"Local Only"	\$ 150.00	\$ 1.00			\$ 151.00
"Apportion"	\$ 450.00	\$ 150.00	\$ 150.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 800.00
GENERAL TOTALS	\$ 6,154.60	\$ 1,787.00	\$ 2,622.75	\$ 1,591.55	\$12,155.90
Budget + or -	\$ 2,529.60	\$ (1,908.00)	\$ (1,072.25)	\$ (2,103.45)	
NEEDED PER WEEK IN 2018 TO MEET OUR BUDGET - \$3695					
IN & OUT					
Finance Meal	\$ 17.00	\$ 50.00			\$ 67.00
Camp Comeca	\$ 10.00	\$ 10.00	\$ 10.00	\$ 10.00	\$ 40.00
Funeral Ctte.	\$ 30.00				\$ 30.00
UMCOR		\$ 562.00			\$ 562.00
Endowment	\$ 684.84	\$ 43.29			\$ 728.13
Epworth Village	\$ 100.00		\$ 100.00		\$ 200.00
SS Mission	\$ 9.00	\$ 5.00			\$ 14.00
Wedding Deposit				\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00
Youth Projects				\$ 65.00	\$ 65.00
IN & OUT TOTALS	\$ 850.84	\$ 670.29	\$ 110.00	\$ 375.00	\$ 2,006.13
Memorials					
MEMORIAL TOTAL	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
ADA Restroom	\$ 272.00		\$ 1,110.00	\$ 1,953.00	\$ 3,335.00
BLDG/MAIN.TOTALS	\$ 272.00	\$ -	\$ 1,110.00	\$ 1,953.00	\$ 3,335.00
TOTAL GIVING	\$ 7,277.44	\$ 2,457.29	\$ 3,842.75	\$ 3,919.55	\$ 17,497.03

Mark your Calendars!

Retired Persons Lunch Bunch

The Lunch Bunch Retirement Group will be celebrating birthdays this month. All seniors age 55 and older are welcome to come and participate. The party will be in the Fellowship Hall at 11:30 am on Wednesday April 4th. Bring your favorite party dish to share, cake and ice cream will be furnished!! See you at the party.



Spring Cleaning

The Trustees will be having a “spring cleaning” day in the future, and will be preparing for another silent auction. No date has been determined at the time of press, so stay tuned so you don’t miss out!!

CAMP COMECA

Campers and Parents!!! Be on the lookout for a letter coming in the mail in early April. This letter will give you information about Camp dates and scholarships available to all campers.



Project Complete

A project that has been years in the making is finally complete. What was once used as a cloakroom has been transformed into a handicap accessible Family restroom. On Sunday March 25th, following late service, the Finance and Trustee Committees held a spaghetti fundraiser to help raise the remaining funds needed to pay for the room. A wonderful turn out was had and almost \$2,000 was raised, and the best part of all...there was NO spaghetti left over!! We still need approximately \$3,000 to meet our goal, so please continue to give.

Thank you to all the Trustees and Finance Committee who helped make our fundraiser a success. A special thanks to the Judi Davis family for providing the pie and ice cream that we had for dessert. Everyone’s contributions were greatly appreciated. The next time you are in the building, stop by and take a look at the improvements that we have made to our building.