

GEHSEMANE

Lutheran Church

News from 4040 N. 108th Street, Omaha, NE 68164

May, 2017



Know the Truth

“Your word is truth.” - John 17:17

Human beings have never stopped desiring to search for the truth. And who can blame us?

As we swim our way through life, so often we find ourselves in deep water over our heads, water that has a muddy bottom which is sometimes slimy and threatens to trap our feet. What could feel better than to finally touch a smooth, solid, rock bottom where we can plant our feet and rest, keep our heads above water, catch our breath?

God’s word is rock-solid truth. That’s how Jesus described it. He was speaking to his heavenly Father in prayer when he said, “Your word is truth.” Though such a simple statement, it is a profound reality. The Son of God, Jesus Christ, testifies that the word of God the heavenly Father is truth!

It’s hard sometimes to hear the truth. It can cause us to hang our head in shame and even cringe with fear. Truth that God tells us is every bit as difficult to hear. He tells us the truth that we are sinful. The sin that swirls around in our heads and floods our hearts is devastating. Sin brings death—every kind of isolating, slimy, feet-trapping death, including the eternal kind.

God tells us the truth about sin so that we are willing to listen to a more important truth. The truth that his Son, Jesus Christ, came and lived the perfect life required of those who want God to care about them in this life and save them for the life to come. The truth that he died the perfect death on the cross that completely paid for sin. The truth that he rose again to prove he had done everything that is necessary for our salvation. The truth that he did this for every sinful human being. He did it to give us a firm foundation for life—a blessed life with God now and forever.

And do you know how God gives us everything Jesus earned for us by his life, death, and resurrection? Through his rock-solid word.

And that’s the truth!

JUSTIFIED BY FAITH

Galatians 2:15-16



"We who are Jews by birth and not 'Gentile sinners' know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.

Paul continues to correct Peter who had reverted to following Jewish custom and ceremony in the presence of Gentiles after Jewish Christians had arrived in Antioch from Jerusalem. By his actions, Peter - who had been practicing his Christian freedom by eating and mingling with both Jews and

Gentiles prior to this - was giving the Gentile Christians in Antioch the impression that works of law and Jewish ceremony still had some relevance and importance. As we mentioned last month, this public sin called for a public rebuke. Paul "reminded" Peter that we are justified - declared "not guilty" before God - by faith in Jesus Christ, not by observing the law. If they as apostles and as Jewish Christians understood that and believed that, then why should they expect Gentile Christians (who had never been under the requirements of the Old Testament ceremonial law) to keep any of those requirements or customs? Such requirements could only burden consciences "because by observing the law no one will be justified."

There is the reminder for us. We are saved by grace alone through faith alone. Our good works have nothing to do with our justification. Our good works are our response to the fact that God has declared us "not guilty" in Christ. Let's not burden our own consciences or the consciences of others by turning God's free forgiveness in Christ into something that we must earn or into something that requires us to "be a good person." Christ died for sinners. Sinners respond with good works - good works that God prepared in advance for us to do.

PRAYER: *I thank you, Jesus, that you did everything for my salvation. You lived the perfect life of obedience for me. You paid the penalty that God demanded for my sin. Help me now, in faith, to show you my gratitude by the way that I live. Amen.*

School News



May greetings to you all!

Over the next three weeks our school year will come to a close. Your prayers, support, and offerings have provided Christian education for 95 students. Your prayers, support, and offerings have provided the called workers needed for our six classrooms. Your prayers, support, and offerings have provided the needed facility and materials to operate an elementary school. Most importantly your prayers, support, and offerings have brought God's Word to our students and 63 families.

As this school year closes, we surely look forward to celebrating 70 years of Christian education provided by Gethsemane Lutheran Church. We have much to be thankful for!

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- 7-8TH graders from GLS and Good Shepherd returned from their Washington, D.C., field trip last week. We thank God for a safe and educational trip.

- Our track team is getting ready to go! Weather-permitting, our team will attend track meets at DeWitt (APR 29), Geneva (MAY 2), and Utica (MAY 6).
- Our GLC/GLS 8TH graders will be confirmed on MAY 7. We pray that God would grant them to stand firmly on their faith and confirmation promises all the days of their lives.
- School wraps up with a busy week during the week of MAY 15-18. Our school year's closing service is WED, MAY 17. Kindergarten and 8TH grade graduations will be part of that service. Join us if you can!
- Our GLS 8TH graders will be finishing their studies on MAY 18. We pray that God continues to guide and bless them as they enter high school next fall.

Mr. Pederson

FOCE

Friends Of Christian Education

On Tuesday, May 16th, we will be having a Field Day for the students. We need as many adults as we can get to assist with the games/activities. If you're able to help, please let Wendee or Liz know. Thanks!

Please turn in any Campbell's soup labels as soon as possible! This program ends soon.

We are so thankful and grateful to all our church/school families who helped us meet our goals this year, thanks to financial support and fundraising. Here's a list of everything we've been able to purchase this year:

- ✓ Books for classroom libraries
- ✓ Projectors/some wiring
- ✓ Soccer chairs
- ✓ Document camera
- ✓ Installation of water fountain (grant written)
- ✓ Chrome books
- ✓ Mulch for the playground
- ✓ Picnic table
- ✓ iPads and Tiggly
- ✓ athletic jerseys
- ✓ chrome cart
- ✓ gym/PE equipment

Your fundraising makes a difference! THANK YOU!



Liz K, Secretary

OWLS

Organization of WELS Lutheran Seniors



The April meeting began at the Durham Museum with a trip to the Soda Fountain for 19 fellow OWLS. Dick started us off with a devotion and meeting. After the meeting, we checked out the museum. There were so many exhibits to see, one of which was a 70's exhibit which brought back many memories! There was even a working pin ball machine! If you have not, please check out the Durham Museum.

Upcoming events discussed:

- In May, we honor our fallen veterans on Memorial Day at Omaha's Memorial Park, May 29 (Monday) around 11:00 a.m. Exact time will be determined. Meeting and lunch after is at Beacon Hills in Aksarben Village. Because of limited parking it may be necessary to congregate and share rides.
- June 10th, we will have a Breakfast at Garden Café with Pastor Jeske
- July 9th, we propose a concert at Soaring Wings.

Visitors are welcome! Contact Dick or Sandy if you are interested in coming.

Sandy T, Secretary



Women IN God's Service



Thank you to all of the ladies that helped with the kitchen cleaning! We had an awesome turnout and got everything checked off the list, plus a few extras. We couldn't have done it without you!

Our last event before summer will be **Monday, May 15th at 7 p.m.** We will be meeting at La Mesa at 108th and Maple for some fellowship and a quick vote of officers. If you have any interest in serving as an officer, please let Christine Hinnerichs, Shonni Johnson, Becky Golden or myself know; and we can give you more information.

In Christ,
Rachel Clayton, Secretary



Lutheran Women's Missionary Society

"May the Mind of Christ our Savior"



The Spring LWMS Rally was held at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Omaha on Saturday, April 22nd. There were 8 people from Gethsemane that attended the rally. Since our congregation had the most people from one congregation in attendance, we took home the traveling trophy. ☺

Pastor Koester opened the rally with a devotion. The guest speaker was Linda Liesner, who is the (CAMM) Central African Medical Mission Committee Chairperson. She spoke about the work being done in Zambia and Malawi. CAMM is not funded directly by the WELS, so they are so appreciative of any gifts that they are given.

The staffs of both clinics treat the patients for a variety of illnesses daily, with malaria being the #1 disease that is treated. They also teach nutrition classes included with a devotion. Such a wonderful way to witness!

There were 41 people that attended the rally, and \$647 was collected for the offering. The election results for the board are as follows: President—Nancy Aaberg; Treasurer-Joanna Schwede; Secretary-Leslie Brauer; Spiritual Growth Woman-Wendy Roberts; Spiritual Growth Pastor-Pastor Kendall Cook.

The Fall Rally will be held at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Norfolk on Saturday, October 7th. The guest speaker will be John Sebald, who will speak on "Truth in Love Ministry" (Outreach to Mormons).

The new Befriend-a-Missionaries information has arrived! They are as follows:
Home Missions-The work being done with the Hmong Mission, based out of Manitowoc, WI; Titus Lee.
World Missions-One Latin America, Guanajuato, Mexico; Pastor Joel Sutton.

Want to take a trip to Florida? This summer is your chance! The 54th Annual LWMS Convention will be held in Orlando, Florida, June 22nd-25th, 2017!

May Prayer Requests

- Our new Befriend a Missionaries
- The work being done in Africa by CAMM.
- The graduates of both Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and Martin Luther College.

Leslie B
~Reporter



Nebraska Ev. Lutheran High School

- Extra-curricular update:

- The NELHS speech team finished in 5th place at the state meet highlighted by our newest state champion, Samantha E, who took first in serious prose.
- The NELHS track team is competing well and gearing up for their conference competition on Saturday, April 29 and their district track meet on Wednesday, May 10. Both of these meets will take place at Osceola.
- The NELHS soccer team is competing and picked up their first win of the season against the Seward JV team last week.

- Association News:

- NELHS will be seeking two tutors from Martin Luther College in May as Tutor Annie Scharf is getting married in June and Tutor Alex Mielke has completed three years of service to NELHS and has accepted a call to Rocky Mountain Lutheran High School.
- Kathy Stern has returned the call to teach at Wisconsin Lutheran College and will continue her work at NELHS. Praise the Lord!
- As of the end of March, NELHS needs **\$178,000** in donations from our congregations and individuals to meet budgeted amounts by the end of June. Please consider making a one-time or monthly donation to help us meet these goals. The finances of the high school are extremely tight right now and donations are needed badly.

- "This is Our School" Campaign

As of April 24, we have **27 donors** supporting our school monthly with **\$2,030** for a total of **\$24,360** a year. Please pray about this and consider making Nebraska Lutheran your school by supporting it with a monthly donation. Our goal is to get over 100 donors giving \$100,000 annually to the high school. Please consider supporting this campaign. You can start your monthly donation at www.nelhs.org.

- Upcoming events:

- April 27 (10 a.m.), April 28 (7 p.m.) and April 30 (3 p.m.) NELHS will present the play "The Curious Savage"

- May 12: 5 p.m. booster feed, 6 p.m. Awards program, 7:30 p.m. Commencement Concert, 9:15 p.m. Pre-Grad Party.
- May 13: Graduation at 10 a.m.
- June 11-14: All Sport Camp for elementary students in grades 5-9. Contact Benjy Wells at bwells@nelhs.org if you would like registration information.
- July 15: Work Day at NELHS
- July 29: Tuition Assistance Golf Outing at Eldorado Hills Golf Course in Norfolk. Contact Benjy Wells at bwells@nelhs.org for more information
- **Recruitment:** Our goal is 40 new students for next year. So far, **25** have applied (20 freshmen, 3 sophomores, 1 junior, and 1 senior). If you know of a family whom we can contact to tell about our ministry, please let Administrator Mark Otte know at motte@nelhs.org or call 402-728-5236. Keep praying!

Mark Otte, Administrator

10th Annual NELHS Golf Classic

“Tee it up for Tuition Assistance”



Please join us for our tenth annual NELHS Golf Classic to be held at
Eldorado Hills Golf Course in Norfolk on Saturday, July 29th.

The money raised for this tournament will go towards our Tuition Assistance Program. The cost per golfer includes 18 holes of golf, a cart, dinner and more! The deadline to submit your team is Monday, July 17th. If you are unable to get a team together we will do our best to put you on a team. Any questions can be addressed to Benjy Wells via email at bwells@nelhs.org or by phone at (402) 806-7564.



Date: Saturday, July 29th
Registration: 12:00 pm
Time: 1:00 – 6:00 pm (meal and program to follow at 6:30)
Location: Eldorado Hills Golf Course (Norfolk)
Golfers: Four per team (best ball scramble format)
Cost: (team) \$360.00
Cost: (individual) \$90.00 (\$20.00 for meal only)
Prizes: Yes! (flag prizes and door prizes)

Mail your entry form with payment, payable to NE Lutheran High School, to:
 Nebraska Lutheran High School
 c/o Benjy Wells, Tournament Director
 203 Kendall Street
 Waco, NE 68460

Foster Creek Foundation grants

The application deadline to apply for the Foster Creek grant to attend Nebraska Lutheran High School (NELHS) for the 2017-18 school year is Monday, May 1, 2017.

Through the generosity provided by the Foster Creek Foundation, funds are available (\$4,250 per student) for two students to attend Nebraska Lutheran High School for the 2017/2018 school year. Any interested Gethsemane member family is eligible to apply.

The following criteria will be used for selection:

1. Financial Need (based on application through TADS) The code needed to apply on TADS is [4224107](https://secure.tads.com/Accounts/Login.aspx?fa=1&lang=en). <https://secure.tads.com/Accounts/Login.aspx?fa=1&lang=en>. If you have applied for financial assistance through TADS for NELHS, there is no need to apply through TADS again.
2. 250 word essay by the student as to why Christian education is important to the student
3. Minimum GPA of 3.0

Application deadline is **May 1, 2017**. Please submit items #2 and #3 to Brian Bollich (bbollich@cox.net). Contact Brian if you have any questions about the grant or need assistance with the application process.

Disclaimer: Gethsemane is acting as the administrator for this grant. Fund quantities and availability are dependent upon the Foundation and will be administered based on that availability.

Deacons

Thanks to all who helped out with the spring clean-up day. Many cobwebs met their final demise and the secretary can see out beautifully clean windows!

Thanks to a grant from Wal-Mart and a special donation, the new drinking fountain with bottle filling station was installed in the school hallway. The kids are having a great time keeping tabs on the tally of water bottles kept out of the landfill. This tally is kept on a meter on the drinking fountain. Check it out!

Normal maintenance has taken place. Filters were changed for the quarter, and mowing has begun.

The mowing schedule is out for the weeks of summer beginning in May. Thanks to Jeremy J. for taking on the mowing duties in April. Look for your schedule in your member mailbox. If it doesn't work on that particular weekend, please trade with someone. If you aren't on the list, and you are disappointed, please contact the church office. We could probably use you anyway!

The kitchen sinks clogged and needed some serious TLC. Thanks to Bruce D for taking care of this.

Thanks to our landscaping guru who has beautified our property with the lovely pansies at Easter time. They took a hit with a frosty night, but we enjoyed them while we could!

We appreciate everyone's help in picking up trash, if you come across it. If you see something that needs to be repaired, please let the church office know. Thank you for helping us to keep the property in ship shape!



Discipleship

Sunday School



Sunday School starts each week at 9:15 a.m. Please help your child to be on time and attend as often as possible. We carefully prepare lessons each week and look forward to sharing God's word with as many students as possible.

May Lessons for Preschool-6th Grade

- 7 - No Sunday School--Confirmation Sunday
- 14 - Our Savior Dies
- 21 - Jesus' Grave Is Opened
- 28 - No Sunday School- Labor Day weekend, End of School year

Look for information coming on Summer Sunday School.

A big thank you to all our teachers, helpers and substitutes who put in time, talents, and resources to have lessons and activities planned for their classes.

Thanks to all our teachers who have taught our students this year! Your dedication to the Sunday School Program and our children is truly a blessing to all of us here at Gethsemane. Thank you all for a great Sunday School year.

*Nickie L
Sunday School Coordinator*



- Lutheran Night at the Storm Chasers
 - o June 5th is the annual Lutheran Night at the Storm Chasers. The game starts at 7:05, but join us beforehand for fellowship and tailgating. Hamburgers, brats and hot dogs will be provided, but each family attending the tailgate is asked to bring a side dish to share. Tickets are \$9, and there is a signup sheet in the fellowship hall. More details concerning time and location of the tailgate will be coming in May.

- Annual Gethsemane Camping Trip
 - o The annual Gethsemane Camping Trip will be held August 4th and 5th at Fremont State Lake's Recreation Area. Join us for fun, relaxation and a camp-side devotion. There are 3 camper spots and 2 tent spots still available. Cost for the weekend is \$47.74. Please contact the church office if interested.
- Currently our year to date budget deficit sits at about \$24,000 combined between the General and Building Funds. We made some pretty big strides through Lent and Easter at attacking the deficit, but we want to make sure that we carry this momentum through the end of the fiscal year. As we move forward to May, we begin to enter the summer season and it seems our calendars quickly become filled with vacations, travel, weddings, and all of the other activities that may prevent us from attending services at Gethsemane consistently. The summer months also mark the time in the church calendar where our offerings historically take a dip for the year. One way we can ensure that our faithful offerings to the church remain consistent throughout the entire year is by utilizing Simply Giving. Simply Giving is a form of electronic

giving that is a convenient, safe and simple way to make regular church offerings without the need to write checks, carry cash or prepare envelopes. Simply Giving provides convenience for church members, keeps us on track with our stewardship, and guarantees our uninterrupted support to Gethsemane. Simply Giving is not only good for church members but also good for Gethsemane by providing much-needed offering consistency. If you are interested in this service or have questions, please see a member of the Stewardship Board (Todd Linde, Avery Quandt, Kurt Brauer, Tim Schoell, or Nick Remm).

Book Club



My thanks to all who were able to participate in our monthly book club get-togethers over the last 8 or 9 months. We read some really good books and some not so good, but that's the fun of a book club - reading things we might individually not ever pick up and consider!!!

Thanks to Dawn for hosting the last get-together of our book club year. We had a very enjoyable evening munching and chatting while the rain continued outside!!!! We had a lively discussion of *The Magnolia Story* by Chip and Joanna Gaines (and Dawn even had *Fixer Upper* running on the TV for us).

We discussed when next we'd meet again - that will be in August - the 29th - host location yet to be determined. We decided to stay with the last Tuesday of the month as that seems to fit pretty well in with all the other things going on at Gethsemane as well as everyone's calendars.

So....for right now for this coming fall you can plan on August 29th, September 26th, October 24th (last Tuesday is the 31st so that won't work!!!!), and probably December 5th (as the last Tuesday of November is the week of Thanksgiving so we'll push that one back a week).

Books decided on for summer reading include -

- **The Foundling**, by Paul Joseph Fronczak
- **Hacksaw Ridge**, by Booton Herndon
- **Watching Over Me: A World War II Story of Survival and a Quest for Peace**, by Elfi Lee
- **If I Run**, by Terri Blackstock

If anyone picks up another book they think would be good for the group - please share that with us. We will decide closer to our August date which one we'll discuss first. The author of the **Watching Over Me** book happens to be a member of St. Mark's in Lincoln. Leslie is going to reach out to her at some point and find out if she'd like to come to Omaha and join us for the discussion of her book. That will help us determine which month we might be discussing that book.

Please enjoy your summer and happy reading!!

Becky G

Vacancy Call News

Pastor Hillmer declined the Call to serve at Good Shepherd. As of this writing, their church council and their voters will meet to discuss and present a recommendation to go to the Assignment Committee and request a graduate from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.

Please keep our brothers and sisters in Christ in your prayers. Pastor Helwig will continue to serve as the vacancy pastor for Good Shepherd until the Lord of the Church provides them with a new pastor. We pray that this will be soon.

Life of Luther Seminar

Brian Hennig, Professor of History & Theology, Martin Luther College, will be here at Gethsemane on Saturday, May 20th to present a CAP (Congregational Assistant Program) seminar on the Life of Luther. The cost is \$10 per person, which covers the course materials. The congregation is also providing a free will offering lunch, and childcare is available.

This event is open to all - pastors, teachers, and lay people. It is not necessary to be involved in CAP to attend this seminar. Anyone interested in learning more about the Life of Luther is encouraged to attend. Check out the flyer on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall with the information on it.

Pastor Helwig is the contact person for the seminar. If you have any questions about this seminar, or if you would like to register, please contact him. Registration is greatly appreciated and aids in our planning. The deadline to do so is Thursday, May 11th.

For further information about the Congregational Assistant Program, please check out www.mlc-wels.edu/cap/. If you have any questions about the program, please contact the church office.



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In this year of milestone anniversary celebrations (e.g., the Reformation in 1517; World War I in 1917), our Lutheran Military Support Group (LMSG) is so blessed to exist for a little more than one calendar year. We thank God that so many of the ELS/WELS congregational (350) and individual members are backing our efforts.

Our congregations are making a difference in the lives of military members and their families. In support of those local efforts, LMSG awarded 14 grants totaling nearly \$56,000 in 2016; so far this year, four grants totaling \$13,650 were disbursed. Learn more about these grants on our LMSG website: <http://www.lutheranmilitary.org>

Recent studies are staggering. The latest suicide rates among U.S. veterans are 20 per day; the average age is 50. Many of these tragedies are tied to the mental damage caused by some trauma the service member underwent while in the military. Spouses and families are affected, too. It is difficult to see the deep, punishing wounds they suffer, but as Christians, we can and should reach out in love to share God's plan of salvation.

LMSG asks for your help with our "Ammo Box" donation drives scheduled to take place each year at Memorial Day and Veterans Day. Many churches already have ammo boxes; if you don't have one, please check our website for order information. Materials like prayers and bulletin inserts will be provided to you by email during the next few weeks. More ideas for recognizing your veterans during or after a church service can be found on our website, too.

Thank you for continuing to assist those heroes who are serving or have served in the United States military, so that we all can continue to worship without fear and persecution.

Erhard/Erik Opsahl
President, Lutheran Military Support Group



Remember -
our fallen heroes.
They are the reason
that we are free.

Memorial Day, May 29, 2017

Sarpy County Mission Meeting

The WELS Nebraska District Mission Board invites all of you to a meeting on **Wednesday, May 31, at 7 p.m. at Gethsemane Lutheran** about the potential plant of a mission church in Sarpy County. This meeting is a follow-up to the meeting held in mid March, where substantial support for a Sarpy County mission church was expressed. WELS Mission Counselor Mark Birkholz will be joining us to talk about the ways WELS Omaha members can contribute to this gospel work.

It's Camp Time!

Rocky Mountain Christian Camp

Registration for Rocky Mountain Christian Camp is open. This year camp is running from July 15-22. All registrations will take place online this year. There are no forms to download. Please go to our website where they will find a link to our registration page. If we hit the max number of campers and junior counselors, applicants will be put on a waiting list, so please apply as soon as possible.

Rocky Mountain Christian Camp (RMCC), located in Leadville, Colorado gives our young people an opportunity for Christian fellowship with others of their same faith. RMCC aims to assist youth in their spiritual growth while offering them a unique camping experience in the Rocky Mountains. The camp is attended by youth from all over, including New Mexico, Utah, Nebraska, Colorado and Wyoming.

Youth entering 6th grade thru 9th grade are eligible to attend as campers. Older teens who have just completed 10th grade thru 12th grade may serve as Junior Counselors, provided they have attended RMCC in the past. The cost is \$130 per person (includes all food & tents).

For more information and to register ONLINE see: <http://www.rmcc-wels.com>.

WELS Teen Camp Jefferson

Online registration is open for this camp which will take place Sunday, July 30 through Wednesday, August 2 in Fairbury, Nebraska. Teen Camp Jefferson is for students entering 9th grade through age 19. The cost is \$65.

Encourage your teens to join us for Bible study, games, movies, sports, crafts, swimming, and more!

If you have questions, please call/text 402-310-8538 or email welsteencamp@yahoo.com.
See the flyer on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall!

To all our moms:

