



**500th Anniversary of  
the Reformation  
October 31, 2017**

## Grace Notes

### A Gift of Love

When the letter came I didn't think much of it, at first. It was not the first letter that I had received from the Red Cross asking me to donate. I happen to have the type of blood that everyone can use, so they like to see me as often as they can. But this one was different. It was not my blood they were after this time. It seems that I was a close match for a bone marrow transplant. Cindy and I had entered the bone marrow data base a few years earlier when they were seeking a match for a young man when we lived in Santa Barbara. Soon after the blood was taken, I forgot about the need and what we had done, until...

It took awhile to get schedules together so that I could make the trip to Ventura to give another sample of blood. I am fascinated by the process that one goes through to donate or get tested – all those questions. I am fascinated even more by the withdrawal of blood. I don't watch myself get poked, but I do watch the blood as it fills vile and sack. Somehow, contained in this dark red liquid is the stuff of life. If not enough of the right kind can be found, or the supply is tainted, others suffer, even die. It is an awesome thought as I watch "the life" drain from my arm only to be given to another.

But this was different. I asked, "Who is he? Who needs my marrow and how serious is it? Will I get to meet this person? And one more thing, if I am able to donate marrow, will it hurt?" Deep inside of me it was this last question that was most important, though it wouldn't stop the process. The woman who was taking the blood from my arm looked at me and responded by saying, "You haven't been told anything?" "No, only that I am a close match for someone. I'm assuming that if you are seeking marrow it is serious, even terminal."

She rifled through her papers looking for what information she could

*(Continued on page 4)  
A Gift of Love*



#### Inside this issue

Ring In The New Year .....	2
Waiting In The Dark.....	2
Eating Together .....	2
Standing Rock.....	3
Church Happenings .....	3
Dwelling In The Word.....	4

#### Special points of interest

- we often begin with confession and forgiveness using these words: "We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves."
- It occurs to me that 'confession' and 'repentance' are not the same thing.
- The Christian church is strengthened when its members eat together.



## Eating Together

In the Bible, we often read about people eating together. Jesus ate with his disciples and the early Christians shared their meals. These stories show the importance God places on eating together. Yet many families almost never eat together. When family members make the effort to eat together, they can share experiences, voice concerns, discuss topics, and laugh. Sharing of faith and values takes place during a family meal. Many families begin their meals with prayer. Some add a devotional time. Many children first learn about prayer at the family meal.

The Christian church is strengthened when its members eat together. Holy Communion is the special meal shared by church families together in worship. Eating together as a family at home provides blessings as well.

## Ring in the New Year

In Isaiah 43:19-21, the prophet talks about new beginnings. Our church calendar begins anew during Advent, while our secular calendar starts with New Year's Day. Either time provides an opportunity for family members to reflect on blessings received and challenges faced in the past year and to look forward together to the future.

Start your new traditions with a family notebook. Purchase a spiral notebook to place by the telephone. Invite family members to record phone messages, as well as thoughts and feelings, successes and failures. Encourage your family to write positive comments to each other as well. Family members who can't write may dictate their ideas or draw pictures. Save the book and use it during family times through the year. (You may need more than one book!) Look through it together next year. It's fun to see how each person grows and changes throughout the year.

Play together a favorite board game or

card game. If you have time, let each family member pick a game to play. Enjoy a special snack. Serve treats that the whole family has helped prepare, such as "ants on a log" (celery stalks filled with cream cheese or peanut butter and dotted with a row raisins). Sandwiches cut with holiday cookie cutters are also fun to make.

Close with devotions. Gather together around a lighted Advent wreath or large candle. Read aloud Isaiah 43:19-21. Talk together about how it feels to start afresh, and that God forgives mistakes and offers us new challenges each year. Share one way that God helped you during the past year and invite other family members to do the same. Then think about the many blessings God has given you. Distribute slips of paper. On each one have family members draw or write about a way God has blessed them. Roll up each slip and tie it with yarn to form a prayer scroll. Put them in a basket or box, which you label: Our Basket of Blessings. Read the blessings during the year to remember how God has blessed

## Waiting in the Dark

Have you ever been awake at night when the electricity went off and everything got dark? That can be scary! It can also be a time of hope, because you know that the electricity will come back on eventually, and daylight will come again. That's what Advent is all about. The word Advent means "coming." We see things differently because Jesus came to us and will come to us again, and that fills us with hope. That's why Advent's color is blue—for hope. It could also be purple—reminding us that Jesus is a royal king.



On the "New Year's Day" of the church—the first Sunday of Advent—we start using a different series of Bible readings in worship. Some years we read from the book of Matthew, the next year we use Mark, and then we use Luke. The Gospel of John is used every year.

Advent is a time of waiting. Sometimes the four weeks of Advent seem like a long time, but that time can help us remember that there is more to Christmas than shopping for Christmas presents! Some people light a candle on each of the four Sundays of Advent, both at church and at home. Some people use Advent calendars to count the days until Christmas. Some people drill holes in a log, one for each day before Christmas, and put a candle in each hole. One candle is lit each day. Sometimes Advent carols are sung, and prayers for those who are homeless or hungry are shared. Why not try some of these ideas in your home this year? Jesus came to save us all!



# Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Nov. 14, 2016

## Statement from ELCA Presiding Bishop Eaton on Standing Rock

When we come together for worship, we often begin with confession and forgiveness using these words: “We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves.” Lutherans acknowledge that this is a broken world and, as part of it, even our best wisdom and efforts fall short. Very often we face issues of extraordinary complexity in which all sides make reasoned arguments for their reality. The current situation at Standing Rock in North Dakota is just such a case. The route of the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) runs through contested land, which the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe sees as their homeland and sacred places, including burial grounds. Proponents of the DAPL sees it as a combination of public and private property. The pipeline will run under Lake Oahe, the primary water source for the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. What we see is the tension between two peoples trying to share one land. We can also see the tension between our dependence on fossil fuels and the commitment this church has made to care for creation. This past August, the 2016 ELCA Churchwide Assembly passed a resolution repudiating the doctrine of discovery. In it we pledged “to practice accompaniment with Native peoples.” The doctrine declared that indigenous land was “unoccupied” as long as Christians were not present. Land deemed “unoccupied” was, therefore, “discovered,” as if it had been previously unknown to humankind. This doctrine was used as justification for European monarchies, and later the U.S. government, to take land from Native people. Many of us in this church who are immigrants have benefitted from the injustices done to the original inhabitants of this land where we now live and worship. Our church also includes American Indian and Alaskan Native people, who have been on the receiving end of the injustices done. When we repudiated the doctrine of discovery, we Lutherans pledged to do better together in the future than we have in the past. Acknowledging the complexity of this issue and the limitations sin places on human decisions, I believe that we are called as a church to support the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe: to stand with the Tribe as they seek justice, to encourage our congregations to pray for them and to offer material support, and to examine the racism inherent in our system that contributes to the current crisis. As promised in our resolution repudiating the doctrine of discovery, we will listen to tribal leaders and respect their wisdom.

We will lend our presence when invited, our advocacy when requested, the resources of our people when asked, and our prayers, friendship and repentance at all times.

Your sister in Christ,

Elizabeth A. Eaton  
Presiding Bishop Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

## Church Happenings

### *Tapping Into Faith*

See you in January. We will pick up again on Friday, January 27th @ the Hermiston Tavern @ 7pm. Don't miss out on the lively conversation, good fellowship, and a frosty one or two — that taps into every subject imaginable as we run it through the lens of faith — its where faith and the world intersect!

### *Novel Ideas Book Club*

See you in January when we will discuss *The Paradise of Glass* by Petra Durst-Benning, the third book in the Glass Blower series.

Johanna, the oldest of the three Steinmann sisters, has successfully managed the family glassblowing business since her father's death, and her sister Marie's artistic gifts have made their wares unexpectedly famous. But now the livelihood of the town of Lauscha, Germany—known around the world as the “paradise of glass”—is in danger. The local glassworks is about to be sold, and rumor has it the buyer wants to make changes that will challenge glassblowing tradition.

Join us on Tuesday, January 31st at 5:30ish in Davis Hall, that's the narthex (big room) outside the sanctuary at First United Methodist Church, 191 E. Gladys Ave, across from City Hall.

### *Local Action*

Local Benevolence for December is **Kiva** and the local **Community Dinners**. Kiva is an international non-profit, founded in 2005 and based in San Francisco, with a mission to connect people through lending to alleviate poverty. We celebrate and support people looking to create a better future for themselves, their families and their communities.

Laurie Ball-Kiser has coordinated the meals since 1990. It includes hundreds of volunteers and has served more than 800 people. All types of volunteer opportunities are available for all age groups. People can donate for one hour or more.

Food delivery service and rides can be provided for the meal. Financial donations to help with the meals, which also includes one on Christmas Day, can be given to local churches, dropped in a donation basket at the meal or sent to CFD, P.O. Box 1551, Hermiston, OR 97838.

Grace and Mercy Welcomes You

Contact Us

Give us a call for more information about our services and ministries.

Grace and Mercy L.C.

POB 1108

Hermiston, OR 97838

(541) 289-4535 (church phone)

(509) 398-0258 (pastor's cell)

[gandmlutheran@gmail.com](mailto:gandmlutheran@gmail.com)

Visit us on Facebook at Grace and Mercy Lutheran Church

## Dwelling in the Word

2nd Sunday in Advent - December 4, 2016

*"In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.'" Matthew 3:1-2.*

It occurs to me that 'confession' and 'repentance' are not the same thing.

"Confession" is acknowledging our wrong, or the world's wrong, before God.

"Repentance" is a turning away from the power that has captivated my soul. Repentance is turning away for the sake of turning towards - and in this case a turning towards God's kingdom which is drawing near.



This Sunday an expected 2,000-3,000 U.S. Veterans will be going to Standing Rock to protect the American citizens there being fired upon with rubber bullets and fire hoses. They will be interposing themselves between 'us and us,' that is between the Water Protectors and local police or National Guard. What have we all come to? This is beyond bazaar, one more wrinkle around these interesting days in which we live. Pray for our Veterans, law enforcement, Water Protectors and the earth's water itself.

The "those days," as in "In those days ..." of our lesson beg for definition, don't they? I suspect most of us have something to say about "these days" in which the Gospel also comes. Usually we try to apply the Word to modern day contexts. Perhaps it will be enough to say "these days are hard, aren't they?" There is significant turmoil in our world today, and much to be played out over the next few months.

My question for myself this week, though, is "How will I repent?" Or, more specifically, "What am I ready or willing to turn

*(Continued on page 6)  
Dwelling In The Word*

*(Continued from page 1)  
A Gift of Love*

give me. "He's a young man, in his thirties. There are two processes that can be used to harvest marrow, but the doctor will decide which is best for the one receiving. At worst it will feel like you got hit in the lower back. You will be sore and stiff for a couple of days. But the doctor will decide what is best for the patient. And yes, arrangements will be made to try to get you and the recipient together after the transplant."

The words were a shock, the first concern is for the recipient. Whatever is done will be done to assure her/his health and recovery first.

*"Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem...He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn."*

Luke 2:4-7

So we come to the Gift of Life. In concern for and love of the creation, God sent the Son to be born among us. Not in palace or mansion; not in a bustling metropolis; not before a gathered crowd of humanity, but in a small country on the edge of the known world, in a stable, among the animals. In concern and love for the creation God sent his only Son to be among us, to be one with us. Here is the Gift of life – come in unknown ways to an unsuspecting world.

We celebrate and proclaim this gift in the name of the Father, and + of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

# December 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 10a Quilters— off 'til Jan- uary	2	3  Pastor Inch— Hermiston
4 2 Advent 8:45a Worship 10a Education/ Fellowship Hour 4p Festival of Trees	5 6:32a Next Text Classic 10a Next Text 2.0	6 8a Coffee	7	8	9	10
Pastor Inch—Hermiston						
11 3 Advent 8:45a Worship 10a Education/ Fellowship Hour 5p Worship @ Prison	12 6:32a Next Text Classic 10a Next Text 2.0	13 8a Coffee  6:30p Leader- ship Team @ Pastor's	14  10a Gather Study	15	16	17  6-8 Living Nativity
Pastor Inch—Hermiston						
18 4 Advent 8:45a Christmas Program 10a Fellowship Hour 4-6 Living Na- tivity	19 6:32a Next Text Classic 10a Next Text 2.0	20 8a Coffee	21  9:30a Foot Clinic	22	23	24 <b>Christmas Eve</b>  7pm Worship
Pastor Inch—Hermiston						
25 <b>Christmas</b> 10:30a Worship 	26 <b>St. Stephen Martyr</b>	27 <b>St. John Apostle</b>  8a Coffee	28 <b>The Holy Innocents</b>  10a Gather Study	29	30	31 <b>New Year's Eve</b> 
Pastor Inch—Hermiston						

## Serving God's People

<i>Date</i>	<i>Reader</i>	<i>Refreshments</i>	<i>Acolyte</i>

## Celebrations

<i>Date</i>	<i>Celebration</i>	<i>Celebrant</i>
Dec 4	Birthday	Caitlin Cozad
Dec 12	Anniversary	Candace and Dwight Osborne
Dec 24	Birthday	Rick Cooper
Dec 27	Anniversary	Dot and Dick Henseley
Dec 29	Birthday	Rochelle Meyers
Dec 31	Anniversary	Cindy and Tom Inch

*(Continued from page 4)*

*Dwelling In The Word*

away from?" In a word I am done letting the country's political angst and chaos dictate my life for me. I'm turning away from FB posts, news saturation, worry, anger and grief. No more @realDonaldTrump or #FTS devotions. It's not a matter of whether I am for or against. It is a matter of having my life revolve around issues of power and politics rather than the "real" kingdom. This doesn't mean I'm through engaging important issues. It's just that I'm moving from "reaction" to "response." My "reactions" are dictated by world events. My "responses" are born of faith.

"The winnowing fork is in God's hand ..." Matthew tells us. This is not a new truth. It is not about American politics. Rather, American and global politics, economics, injustices and pressures are what is to be winnowed. Or rather, those of us who participate in the world are what - who - is to be winnowed. So, I am ready to repent? Yes, I believe I am. I am ready to turn away from that which causes me to faint, fail or swear. I am also ready, with God's help, to turn towards that kingdom which puts me to work protecting, feeding and pointing towards another Way.

A voice is crying out, the Spirit is baptizing, fruits worthy of repentance are ripening. It is the Advent of our Lord. Thanks be to God!

Bp. Dave Brauer-Rieke