



Bethlehem Star

A Message from Our Pastor

A letter from Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton

May 28, 2019

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Children coming to our nation for safety and protection are still dying at our southern border while in U.S. detention. Carlos, a 16-year-old youth from Guatemala, died May 20 in the custody of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Customs and Border Protection (CBP). Wilmer, a 2-year-old, died May 14, also in the custody of CBP. They were preceded in death by Jackelin, Felipe, Juan and a 10-year-old girl from El Salvador who died in September 2018 but whose death has just been disclosed. One year ago, Claudia Patricia Gómez González, a 20-year-old woman from Guatemala, was shot in the head and killed by a Border Patrol agent while seeking safety in the United States.

I am deeply dismayed by the deaths of these children, made in the image of God, who came to our southern border as refugees and asylum seekers to ask us for protection. As a nation we denied them that safety, instead placing them in detention facilities, sometimes for months.

Our nation and its leaders have moral and legal obligations on behalf of those who seek safety in our land. As Congress considers federal funding for DHS, we advocate against further funds for immigration detention, deportation, and border militarization, and oppose intentional policy choices that harm children and families.

We follow a Lord who instructed, "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs" (Matthew 19:14). As we continue to serve and love our neighbor, we pray for the well-being of children and families in detention, and we urge the presidential administration to seek alternatives to the detention of children.

In Christ,
The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop, ELCA

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Membership Updates, Concerns and Thanks

Lutheran World Relief has distributed more than \$13 Million worth of quilts and kits to the Middle East since 2011!

HAPPY JULY 4th!
The pantry and offices are closed on Thursday, July 4, for Independence Day.

*Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center
LOMC*
So many new camps are available at LOMC this summer from rock climbing, to horse trail riding, exploring, fishing & swimming, etc. Sign youth up or inquire at lomc.org

Beautiful Garden Flowers???
Open summer flower dates:
July 14, 21,28
August 11, 25
Please sign up on Bulletin Board in the hallway!

NEEDED: PEOPLE TO HELP WITH FELLOWSHIP TIME THIS SUMMER!
Please sign up on the bulletin board in the hallway. Open Sundays are July 7,14 and August 4, 11, 25.

If you are willing to do some trimming, etc. in the church yard, see Pastor Elizabeth.

A big thank you to our lawn mowers, Jim M and Ted W. We appreciate all your hard work this year!

*Dear Pastor Elizabeth and Christ's people at Bethlehem,
"Thank you for your kind care for Rev. Bavani Rajan Joseph while he visited the Northern Illinois Synod. You made his visit memorable—he will treasure his time with you."
Blessings,
Pr. Gary Erickson*

MAY FINANCES	
Income/Members & Friends	10,997.93
Less: Expenses	- 11,051.14
Shortfall	-53.21



**In 2018,
Lutheran Disaster
Response was
working in
18
States and territories
in the United States**

**In 2018
Lutheran Disaster
Response was
working in
37
countries including
The United States**

Diakonia Graduation

**Musicians invited for Diakonia Graduation
3:00 p.m. Sunday, July 14
Hosted by Salem Lutheran**

We will gather a festival choir to honor 26 Diakonia graduates from Metro and No. II Synods who have completed a two-year program of spiritual formation and theological study, seeking to discern their gifts and more effectively share them in their congregations.

The choir will rehearse at 2:00 p.m., worship is at 3:00 p.m., followed by a reception. Please contact Carla V. at (815) 895-8521 if you would like to participate!

Fundraiser Garage Sale for Love Inc

A Yard/Garage Sale fundraiser for Love Inc will take place July 11-13, at 825 Birchwood Dr. in Sycamore. They need donations such as clean clothing, working appliances, games, pictures, sports equipment, antiques, anything and everything they can sell in this fundraiser to help the Love Inc ministry. All donated items will receive a tax letter for you to use. Drop offs and pickups are available. If you have questions, please call (815) 517-1928 or loveincdk@gmail.com.

Summer Day Trip Opportunity

Where: John Deere Museum in Grand Detour and Barnacopia in Polo.

When: Thursday, July 18

Cost: \$20.00 per person (includes bus, lunch and admission)

Itinerary: We'll leave First Lutheran at 9:00 a.m. on a Coach bus and travel to the John Deere Museum first. After our tour we will eat lunch (provided by Lincoln Inn) in the pavilion. Then we will travel to Barnacopia for a tour and a stop in the ice cream shop. We will then board the bus and return to church about 4:00 p.m. This is a great opportunity for a fun day with friends. Call First Lutheran for more information.

Thank You!

“Thank you so much to everyone who donated to this year’s Star Seminarian Fund! As we discussed previously, it was decided by the congregation that when there is no locally connected seminarian, the funds would be distributed to another similar cause. This year we are thrilled to announce that our Star Seminarian Funds of \$550 have been used to bless students locally and globally! Part of the funds have been dedicated by the council as a scholarship for our own Jennifer Huffman as she heads off to veterinary school in Florida. We are so excited for how she is using her God-given talents to care for God’s creatures!

The other portion of the funds will be going to the Everyday Better Initiative to assist with the construction of a High School with Jonathan Childcare Ministries in Bo, Sierra Leone. This project will allow hundreds of students to complete a high-quality education from preschool through high school. Thank you again for your gifts, for sharing the welcome and joy of Christmas with students we know and love and with students we’ve never met but love all the same!”

Lynnea,
Bethlehem Council President

Notes from the Grulke Family in Botswana

“We have been learning about weather in our recent language lessons. Turns out, weather is one of those universal easy topics of conversation! Everyone wants to lament how hot or cold it is. One lesson, we learned the term for “muddy”—*seretse*. This word stuck out to me because I remembered that it is the name of the first president of Botswana. My first reaction was “why would anyone name their child “muddy”? In my culture, muddy means dirty. We have idioms like *don’t muddy the waters*, and *his name is mud*. In Botswana, though, muddy has a connotation of the glue or cement that holds everything together. Mud is used to hold traditional houses together. Seretse Khama, the first president, was named “muddy” because he was born at a time of conflict between important families and the hope was that he would bring the families together.

This type of language and cultural knowledge is very important to Bible translation. How do we decide when to translate a concept literally and when to use an idiom? First and foremost, we rely on the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Second, we rely on our local translators and local community members. They understand their own language and culture better than we ever could. We do multiple stages of checking the translated Scripture to make sure that the concepts, not just the words, are getting across. Third, we rely on our training in translation and exegesis to know where sticky issues could come up and make sure we address them.”

- Pray for the Holy Spirit’s clean guidance as we translate God’s word.
- Pray that we would find a good balance between work and family life.
- Praise God for Judah’s swift recovery from a very serious infection.
- Pray for the country of Botswana; we are in a serious drought.
- Pray that God would continue to raise up supporters of our ministry—lbt.org/donate.

Grulke Family