

FROM THE PASTOR

“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” Jeremiah 29:11

Someone once said, if you don't do any planning, you are planning to fail. Our God is a planner. His plan is that we recognize our need for him in our lives, that we see our sinful shortcomings, that we appreciate the wonderful solution to our disconnect with him that he has provided us by the work of his Son Jesus Christ. His plan is that we let our light shine for him out into the world, so that others want to know the reason of the hope we have in Christ. His plan is that we love others, as He has loved us. His plan for us is that we realize we never need be discouraged, because he has given us hope. What hope is that? We have the hope that He is with us every step of the way. We have the hope that our trials are temporary, that we will get through them with His strength. We have the hope that all things do work for our good in life, and that heaven awaits us at the end of this life. Our Lord continues to prosper us, and never intends to harm us in any way.

As I look at the future of Open Bible Lutheran Church, I see some planning that needs to be done in the months ahead. We have some small children in our congregation who need to have spiritual training. So we need to look at setting up a Sunday School next September for them. We need to plan for having more storage space, and additional classroom space, so we need to look at potential plans for a pod or portable classroom. We need to plan for additional seating in our church, and determine if additional worship times are necessary. We need to plan for additional ministries at Open Bible, where we can provide opportunities for members to serve their Savior. We need to plan how we can build more bridges to the unchurched in our community, so we can share Christ with them. Like our Lord, we need to do some planning. And like our Lord, we are confident that we have hope and a bright future.

During the summer months, I am planning to do extensive work on following up on the prospects we have on our data base. I am planning on conducting several New Life in Christ classes with these prospects. Further, I am looking forward to the musical that the kids from King of Kings will put on at the Carriage House on May 13th at 11:00 am. If you are in town that day, make plans to show your support and attend. We will have a chance to rub elbows with the residents of Carriage House, who may be looking for a church home. Just this past Sunday a resident of Carriage house walked to our church for worship, and Richard Langer gave her a ride home.

On June 25th a group of 15 teens and 4 chaperones will arrive at Open Bible. They will be doing some canvass work for us in Bison Valley, and Parkwood. They will be staying overnight and be in need of accommodations. Diane and Ron Brutlag have agreed to coordinate their overnight accommodations with the members of Open Bible. If you can host a couple of teens for the night and serve them breakfast, please let Diane know.

Our Sign committee should be submitting its report to our church council any day now. They were waiting for the final bids for two new signs on our church property. The designs for the sign were produced by Nikki Mitra, a graphic artist, who is a member of Open Bible and lives now in Calcutta, India.

Please continue to pray for me and our congregation that we continue to see clearly the direction the Lord wants us to take as we reach out into a world that desperately needs to hear about and believe in Jesus as their Savior and Lord. Go Open Bible!

FROM THE PRESIDENT

It's early May and many, if not most, of our winter residents have begun or completed their journeys back to where they call home. Some of us permanent Floridians will also be traveling sometime soon and have probably begun the planning process. I would imagine that all travelers have put some extra travel time into

their itineraries for the miles of construction detours we encounter on our nation's road systems. I remember a friend who moved to Florida before we did, commenting on how it seemed that Florida roads were always under construction causing detours. These detours are just a way of life whether we like it or not.

Detours, in general, are designed to serve a purpose. They are there to take us along safe routes and assist us in getting to our final destinations. God also takes us on detours in our lives. When we think we are settled into a life which is best for us, unexpectedly God often takes us in a different direction than we had intended.

Think back for a moment in Bible history to the detour that Saul (Paul's) life took, or how about Moses or Noah? You think Joseph encountered a bit of stress on the journey that God took him?

When trouble strikes, it's good to know that we are still the servants of God through faith in Christ. It's that faith in Christ that assures us that God is directing us according to his plan of what is best for us. We are his people whom he bought for himself by the blood of Jesus. He is leading us on the way to our eternal promised land in heaven. Every detour on which our loving Maker and Savior takes us is intended to bring us safely to that goal.

Most of life is learning and growing, falling and getting back up, forgiving and forgetting, accepting and going on. Thankfully these are methods or tools that God uses to guide our lives. Similarly, when we travel, we often use a directional devise called a GPS. This instrument is usually very helpful in guiding us along our path. God too uses a GPS (God's Perfect Solution). He invested the life of his only Son in our eternal welfare providing us with another fail safe means of reaching our final destination. Certainly he is also taking care of us daily in this life.

The will of God is always best
And shall be done forever
And they who trust in him are blest:
He will forsake them never.
He helps indeed in time of need,
He chastens with forbearing:
They who depend on God, their Friend,
Shall not be left despairing.
May this, Lord, be our comfort. Amen

May we all have safe travel in this world and the next.

God's blessings to all,
Greg Wendorf

WHO'S WHO AT OPEN BIBLE

By Leslie Nelson



Carol and Michael Benrud, two very special people as you will see, have been worshiping with us for 3 winters now. They still have a home in Altoona, Wisconsin. Carol was born and raised in La Crosse, and

Michael was born in Viroqua, but spent most of his boyhood years in Cashton until the age of 15, when his father died and the family moved to La Crosse. Michael was baptized and confirmed in Moen Lutheran Church in Cashton. Carol was baptized and confirmed in Immanuel Lutheran Church in La Crosse. They both attended Luther High School in La Crosse, and Michael went on to Wisconsin State University in La Crosse, where he earned his teaching degree in history and physical education. They met as high school Juniors and were married on Nov. 25, 1967.

The Benruds have three children. Jeffrey is married to Helen and has a girl, 13, and a 3-year-old boy who is adopted. Jennifer is married to Jim Rooney and has three boys, aged 14, 11 and 9. Jamie is married to Pastor Tim Spiegelberg. They live in Toronto and have two boys, 12 and 10, as well as two girls, who are 8 and 6 years old. It must be a lot of fun when they all get together!

Before their children were born, Carol had a career as secretary to the Business Manager at UW-La Crosse. The Benruds gradually accumulated rental properties which she still manages. Michael owned a real estate brokerage company, a building company and a company which developed subdivisions. In 1974 they moved to Eau Claire, and started spending their winters in Florida in 2011.

Michael likes to read nonfiction and books about history, while Carol loves mysteries and books about the Amish. As for TV, Carol chooses Amazing Race, American Idol and Castle. Michael's favorites are military history.

They heard about this area by word of mouth and bought a home in Del Webb's Spruce Creek Country Club. They keep very active, Carol with quilting, bridge and reading, and Michael with pickle ball, tennis, softball, bow hunting and tree planting. They both play golf, also.

Their daughter Jamie's family, the Spiegelbergs, are leading a WELS church, Hope Lutheran, in Toronto which is a wonderful spiritual haven for many Caribbean and African immigrants and refugees. The worship services there are definitely not typical WELS, with unique music, etc. Please pray for these people, and especially two women and their young children who are being sent back to Africa due to immigration issues.

The Benruds are working on building a sports/church complex on the Island of St. Lucia through our WELS church there, Trinity Lutheran. They have raised \$400,000 in non-synod money so far to build this recreational facility. It is so badly needed, as the Island is very poor with very dense and meager living conditions and a large number of fatherless households. The young people badly need somewhere to go where it is safe and they can experience positive influences in an enjoyable environment. In addition to the normal sports activities of basketball, volleyball, etc., they hope to bring pickle ball to the Island! It is felt that the facility, under the direction of staff minister Eric Landwere and Pastor Tim Spiegelberg will have a very positive effect on a whole island of people (population 120,000). Organized recreational endeavors are almost non-existent.

The construction of the new church, and now the sports facility, is an answer to many prayers, really a dream coming true. Michael and Carol plan to spend one month in St. Lucia again next winter.

PLANNING FOR ETERNITY

One of the famous slogans at Open Bible that some of us have shared with some of our unchurched friends is, "You planned for retirement; what's your plan for eternity?"

We do a lot of planning for our retirement years, but have we really focused in on what really happens to us after death. As a Christian, we believe the inspired words of Paul who said: "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain." (Philippians 1:21) Death is not the end for us but it is the door to experience eternal life in heaven. Since none of us know the day or hour of our final day on this earth, it is important that we make plans ahead of time, so that the day of our death will be a victorious day of celebration for those we leave behind. How wonderful it will be for those we leave behind if they can know ahead of time what hymns, Scripture, and other arrangements we would like to see at our funeral.

Further, we might share with them about our involvement in various churches and the ways we loved to serve our Savior. But we need to put this information down in a logical and orderly way. At Open Bible, on our Friendship Table, and in your mailboxes, we are making available a 4 page document that you can fill out and return to the church for safekeeping. If you are an Associate Member, and would like a copy, just let us know, and we will mail one out to you. Planning is important, especially for eternity.

FROM THE WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Our April meeting was mainly an evaluation of all the services during the Lenten season and Holy Week. All in all the services were done well and attendance was up from previous years. In the future, we have suggested that Pastor get help during Holy Week especially on Maunday Thursday.

During the summer months we will have a variety of how the Psalm is sung during worship. Also, solos, duets, and small groups will provide extra music for our worship services.

The following article is a brief explanation of what makes a church a liturgical church.

Liturgical Worship

The Lutheran church along with the Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, and Episcopal are known as liturgical churches. But what does this mean? It means that services are conducted according to a certain order. The word liturgy comes from the Greek word, leitourgia, meaning "work of the people or service of the people", and describes the celebration of a specific order followed by the members and led by the pastor.

The liturgy in use today is not new. Its origin goes all the way back to both the Old and New Testament times. Our liturgy has its basis in the early Jewish way of worship. The early Christians were Jews and they were used to worshipping in a certain way, prayers, songs, and words of praise to God. It is no wonder the early church brought these items into their New Testament worship services. They were familiar with them. The early Christians added some things to their worship such as readings from Scripture and the Lord's supper.

Thus we can see that our liturgy goes back a number of years but its origin is found in Scriptures. We also can see that our liturgy hasn't changed much throughout

the years. Language has changed, new songs have been written but the main parts have not changed.

What are the changeless parts of a liturgical service?
The historical form of liturgy contains the following:

1. Confession of sins
2. Pronouncement of forgiveness (Absolution)
3. Acknowledgement of God's authority (Prayer or verse of the day)
4. Readings from Scripture
5. Hymns
6. Sermon
7. Thank Offering
8. Prayers of the Church
9. The Lord's Supper

As you can see the first eight parts are used in each and every worship service. The Lord' Supper was offered each Sunday but we have chosen to celebrate this holy meal twice a month. The focus of liturgy is Jesus Christ. We hear of His life in the readings, we confess our sins to Him, we receive absolution of our sins because of His redemptive work, we praise Him in song and prayer and He speaks to us in the readings and the sermon.

As long as we use the above mentioned form we can be called a liturgical church. Language can change, prayers can be modernized, new songs can be introduced, new liturgies can be written and used, but we are still liturgical if our worship services following the historical format of worship.

The liturgies that are found in Christian Worship have been placed there because they are liturgical. However, they are not the only liturgies that can be used. They have been given to the church because they follow the liturgical form and have been deemed good worship liturgy. But we can still be liturgical if variations of them are used or something new is introduced. New Testament Christians are not bound by a set of rules when it comes to worship. Often we bind ourselves in traditions and forget to look at the content of instead of the foundation of our liturgy.

FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

This coming Saturday we will be sponsoring another game night for our membership. It was requested that we have a third game night because the others have been so much fun and well attended. So mark this Saturday, May 4th on your calendars. Enjoy games and fellowship from 6-9 pm. Bring along your favorite game

and a snack to share. Soda and water will be provided. Hope to see you there.

We would like to sponsor a river wildlife boat ride this summer during the month of June if there is enough interest. Cost would be around \$20 per person and we would car pool. Of course lunch could be worked into the day. If you are interested in going on this event please sign up on the sheet provided on the pass through counter. Ten or more would be needed.

CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

The regular monthly council meeting was held on April 18th. At this meeting various aspects of church life were discussed. A few of the highlights were as follows:

- The banner committee is ready to make more banners to enhance our worship services
- A rotation plan for replacing council members was established so that not all council positions will be up for replacement at the same time.
- The carillon will try to be set so that it will automatically play on Sunday morning while worshipers are arriving and at noon and five pm each day of the week.
- Elders are trying to do a better job with assimilating new members.
- New members and prospects seem to visit every Sunday.

The treasurer's report showed positive figures for both the month of March and the year to date.

March income =	\$33,814.87	YTD = \$80,785.07
March expenses =	\$16,854.30	YTD = \$46,079.49
Favorable for March =	\$16,960.57	YTD = \$34,705.58

Praise The Lord! His work is being done through our members.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS PLAN

What is it? What does it have to do with me (us)?

The Open Bible Disaster Preparedness Plan is a proactive plan to help members and friends of Open Bible in the event of a severe storm (hurricane, tornado, or violent thunderstorm). The plan is to provide a safe haven out of harms way for all members and friends who may be in need. Also, if you do not evacuate your

primary residence during a storm, but sustain damage to your home, a host family is available to take you in.

Some assumptions are made in this planning:

1. It is assumed that members living in block or frame homes built to withstand winds of hurricane force would be reasonably safe and could provide a safe haven for those living in homes not so rated (i.e. double-wide homes, 5th wheels, etc.)
2. It is assumed that all members have taken steps to have on hand a hurricane kit, necessary staples as recommended by the national hurricane preparedness organizations.

Some members and friends have already been assigned to host families. There are currently eight (8) host families with no assigned evacuation family.

This plan is also available for anyone living alone, who may feel more comfortable during a storm with other friends.

If you are interested in signing up as an evacuation family or host family, please contact Pastor Schulz, Karen (our church secretary) or an Elder and ask for a copy of the disaster preparedness plan. We can always use more host families as the need may arise if many homes are damaged.

BEING PREPARED IS KEY DURING THE HURRICANE SEASON!

SPRING MUSICAL



The King of King's School children from Maitland will be presenting their spring musical: "A Kid's Life" at the Carriage House in their Activity Room on Monday,

May 13th at 11:00 am. Let's show our support by marking this date on our calendars and attending this event. It will be an opportunity for us to reach out to the residents of Carriage House.

TEEN GROUP TO VISIT OPEN BIBLE

A youth group from the Twin Cities area in Minnesota will be traveling to a Youth Rally in Orlando this summer. They have requested to do a mission project with Open Bible before the start of the rally. Our

council has approved their request and will provide them an outreach opportunity. They will be arriving on June 25th and leaving again on the 26th. We have arranged for them to do outreach in a few family areas close to our church. Projects such as this one gives our youth first hand experience with mission work on a local level.

We will need to house this group for one evening, Tuesday, June 25th. Pastor has asked Diane and I to make housing arrangements. We are looking for several homes to house these teens and their chaperones. Pastor Dale and Connie are taking one set of chaperones, (their daughter and son-in-law along with three boys). We are in need of a home for the other set of chaperones, Mr. and Mrs. Schulz. Homes to host the following groups of teens: three homes to house 2 girls each, one home to house 3 girls, and one home to house 2 boys. Host families will pick up the guests at 9:00 pm on June 25th at the church. Hosts would also be responsible to serve breakfast and return the teens to the church by 9:00 am Wednesday morning. If you have questions or concerns please contact the Brutlags. There will be a sign up sheet on the pass through counter for the next few weeks. Be part of this mission outreach program by opening your home to these eager young missionaries.

WOMEN OF OPEN BIBLE

Elections were held in our April meeting. Elected were Sandy Hahm, President, Judy Anderson, Vice President, Carol Benrud, Secretary. Ruth Vance will continue to serve as treasurer since the treasurer's office was not up for re-election this year.

Thank you to all the ladies who helped make our 4th Annual Salad Luncheon and Fashion Show a huge success. 105 ladies attended the luncheon. Your help in set up, clean up and supplying all the delicious salads was very much appreciated.

Our next monthly meeting is May 8th. Women of Open Bible do not meet during the summer months of June, July and August.

A luncheon is being planned in June for the ladies. Please sign up on the sheet in the kitchen pass thru and select what restaurant you would prefer. All ladies are invited.

Sandy Hahm, President

QUILTING UPDATE

The Open Bible Quilters, although a fairly small group, have been busy making lots of beautiful and colorful quilts and lap robes this winter. In addition to the donations reported a few months ago, six lap robes were recently delivered to Heidi's Haven in Fruitland Park (where Tony Anderson used to live), four larger quilts and several handbags and stuffed animals were given to Shepherd's Lighthouse in Belleview, six more children's blankets were gladly received by La Faye's Precious Angels in Ocala, and one special blanket, plus a little quilt for her dolly, was given to a 2-year-old who now has her own bedroom at her grandparent's apartment. A dozen quilts/lap robes are awaiting shipment to missionaries and health workers in Zambia, as soon as we figure out the best way to get them there.

So you can see that we are not only having fun making things, but we are doing something to make other people happy. If you are a lady with a little time to spare, come and join us at church from 9 a.m. to noon on the first Friday of every month.

Leslie Nelson, Square Cutter

KEEP IT UP!

Many visitors and new members of Open Bible have commented to me how friendly our congregation is to visitors, and to our new members, whether they transferred in from another WELS congregation, or have recently completed a New Life in Christ class.

What a special tradition! Let's keep up this tradition, even when the skies are cloudy, or even if it is raining!

Duane Anderson, Chair of our Out-reach Committee

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY



Fred & Loreli Aguda – 14
Russ & Ruth Niermeyer – 28

HAPPY BIRTHDAY



Doris Schlicht – 2
Bill Gebhard – 5
Ron Brutlag – 9
James Pergola – 10
Adrianna Thise – 19
Tom DeWitz – 21
Dave Bliss – 23
Ina Taylor – 24
Beverly Dickson – 25
Evelyn Emmons – 25
Darla Cucchi – 26
Stacy Vance – 27
Charlene Vatthauer – 31