

Friedens Ev. Lutheran Church  
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**PASTOR'S PAGE...**

One of my favorite Old Testament texts that I have been thinking about a lot recently comes from Ezekiel and is often titled "The Valley of Dry Bones". While the title doesn't sound very encouraging, it is actually a text full of hope and the promise of God's faithfulness to God's people. It tells the story of the life that can come from that which seems dead when God gets involved.

The story (Ezekiel 37:1-14) is a conversation between the prophet Ezekiel and God. Ezekiel describes a place to which God has led him to a valley where he "saw a great many bones... that were very dry."

God asks him the question: "can these bones live?" The likeliest answer seems to be "of course not!" But Ezekiel replies noncommittally "LORD, you alone know."

And so God tells Ezekiel to "Prophecy to these bones and say to them, 'Dry bones, hear the word of the LORD... I will make breath<sup>[a]</sup> enter you, and you will come to life. <sup>6</sup>I will attach tendons to you and make flesh come upon you and cover you with skin; I will put breath in you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the LORD.'" And though perhaps doubtful as he prophesies, it happens. The bodies become whole once more. In the next command and prophesy though "breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet".

God tells Ezekiel that "these bones are the people of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up and our hope is gone; we are cut off.'" But instead God promises "you, my people, will know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and bring you up from them. <sup>14</sup>I will put my Spirit in you and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I the LORD have spoken, and I have done it."

The images of this text have always struck me as powerful: that something which seems as hopeless as a valley of dry bones, which have long ceased to live, can be the source of new life. The text paints such a stark contrast between the barren landscape and lack of life in the first scene, and the fullness of life and presence of Spirit at the end. God speaks of resurrection hope; of new beginnings; of hope when there seems to be none; and of life where there appears to be only death.

As the text reminds us of God's faithfulness, it also reminds us of God's propensity for working in unexpected ways. God often brings life and hope for the future in ways, places and people that we do not expect. We are also reminded that the community of God's people always continues, even when it looks different than it did and first and sometimes (as in this text) having undergone unfathomable change!

It is a good text to ponder in the coming days and weeks as we discern the future at Friedens: what God is calling us to do, who God is calling us to be, and what form that ministry might take.

It is also a good text for our daily lives. In moments of trial or despair, when we are ready to give up, we are reminded that with God all things are possible. In this way, even a valley of dead bones can become God's living people once more. So we too, in the face of struggles, with God's help can be sustained and have the hope of life in us again. God's Spirit moves among us bringing new life and, in Christ, God walks with us even (and especially) in places of death and despair.

May you know God's presence in your struggles and "dry places". And may we seek together the possibilities for new life and ministry at Friedens prayerfully in the coming days.

In Christ's service,  
Pastor Kate

Upcoming dates...



**Lent Schedule**

Mar 2 — Ash Wed. — 7:00 pm

Mar 8 Soup supper 6 to 7 p.m.

Mar 15 Youth Choir 6:30

Mar 22 Worship 7:00

Mar 29 Adult Choir— After Worship (7:40)

April 5

\*Times are good for Mar 8 — April 5

April 9 — Palm Sunday — 10:30 p.m.

April 13 — Maundy Thursday — 7:00 p.m.

April 14— Good Friday — 7:00 p.m.

Mar 27 — Easter — TBD

**Note: Confirmation classes will not meet at Grace during Lent. Instead, confirmation students should attend the midweek service.**

## Annual Reports for 2016

We have reprinted three out of the dozen reports included in our Annual Meeting booklet. Look for additional reports in the next newsletter.

### Memorial

The Memorial Committee consists of five members which includes the Chair who was also the Council Representative. Members of this Committee are Carolyn Hogg, Amy Rezny, Peggy Russell, Irene Newhouse, and Donna Splichal.

This past year we contributed funds for the following: \$160 towards the Registration Fees for the Transformational Ministries Training. There was \$760 in Memorials received and a small amount of interest. This makes the current balance in our checking account \$9,835.17, the current balance in our CD is \$9,299.61 for a total of \$19,134.78.

I thoroughly enjoy being a member of this Committee and look forward to continuing to serve our church. I want to thank each member who served on the Committee for the past year and look forward to working with each of you in some capacity during 2017.

Thank you, Amy Rezny

### Stitch and Prayer

We meet one Sunday each month. Our Feb. will be on the 12 from 2-4 at the Church. We have variety of projects to give out in 2016. We have made prayer cloths and crosses to hand out to people that have already received prayer shawl or lap robe. We are planning on blessing these items soon. Anyone is welcome to join us even if you are not sure how to knit or crochet, we would love to help you learn. Contact Donna Splichal if you have questions about the date or time.

### Women of ELCA

It does not seem possible that 2016 is over. The year went by so quickly. We have not been as active this year as in the past. We have 6 members, the oldest 92 and youngest 65. We meet the 1st Tuesday of the month at 4:30 pm. We meet at the Van Dorn Villa, 51 & Van Dorn. We do not meet in January and February. We do a bible study and then go out to eat at a nearby restaurant. Any female member of the church is welcome to attend our meetings.

We participated in the Mother's day brunch. The men of the church prepared, served and cleaned up. We thank them for all their hard work. They served approximately 53 women. Flowers were given as prizes. Tom Roth was our entertainer this year. He presented a program singing Andy Williams and Elvis songs. Our theme was hats. The table decorations were a variety of hats. Due to our small group and not all can participate, we feel we can no longer do the Mothers' Day brunch.

We did serve one funeral this year. The family requested cookies and coffee. We decided since our group is so small and not all can participate in helping with a funeral luncheon, its with regret, we will not be able to continue serving funeral luncheons.

At our December meeting, we voted to send donations to Tabitha Meals on Wheels, Lutheran campuses in Lincoln and Kearney, Food Bank for the backpacks program, Oaks Indian Mission and Pastor Kate Woolf. We also purchased a case of copy paper for the office and wine communion. We have purchased product's for the kitchen. We also gave money to the church to pay on the loan.

Treasurer's report — As of December 31, 2016 we have a balance of \$253.19

I'm going to close with Matthew 6:3-4 "But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing that your charitable deed may be a secret and your Father who sees in secret will himself reward you openly." May God continue to bless us as we continue to do his work.

Submitted by Maxine Pfrimmer, President.

### **Scrip Program Resumes**

Our Scrip program is a great way to purchase cards for items you would be buying anyway (ie. groceries) while raising money for Friedens. We participate in the Lincoln Lutheran Schools Scrip Program. Funds raised through this program are designated to payment on our renovation loan. Scrip orders will be taken the first Sunday and gift cards delivered to you the third Sunday of the month. If you are not familiar with the Scrip program please speak with Kathy Holland or Julie Erickson. More information and order forms may be found in the entry way of the church.

Please remember that if you are unable to come to Sunday morning worship service during the winter because of bad weather, our operating expenses still go on. If you are unable to come to church, you can still mail in your offering to the church office or make your offering on line on Friedens website. Either way, it will help us to be able to pay our bills and keep our lights on. Thank you in advance for remembering Friedens even when you are unable to come worship.

### **PRAYER CHAIN...**

The Prayer Chain at Friedens (and all other churches) is a vital part of the ministry we do. Caring for others in general, but especially for those in our church family, is what we are called to do. You are needed. Please call Maxine Pfrimmer (402-464-3024) and tell her you would love to be part of the prayer chain.



## **MARCH WORSHIP**

### **2017 LEADERS**

#### **Altar Guild**

Donna Splichal & Deb Marr

#### **Head Usher**

Gary Hardt

#### **Communion Assistant**

1 — Fran Zessin

5 — Carolyn Hogg

19 — Karen Scribner

#### **Lectors**

1 — Carolyn Hogg

5 — KC Melang-Thoren

12 — Mark Grimes

19 — Abby Newhouse

26 — Kathy Holland

#### **Greeters**

1 — Rempe Family

5 — Linda Dreith & Carol Boellstorff

12 — Alma Wilson & Judy Trampe

19 — Chuck & Lori Schwahn

26 — Steve & Peggy Russell



# LENT

**Lenten Suppers begin March 8<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm**

There will be a light supper prior to Lenten Worship every Wednesday, starting February 17th. We will begin serving at 6 pm but join us when you can any time prior to our Lenten Service at 7 pm.

If you can volunteer to help with the meal or clean-up, look for the sign-up sheet in the entry way to the sanctuary, beginning February 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Renovation Loan**

Thank you to those who took part in the matching fund challenge to raise additional funds to cover the remaining principle of our renovation loan. Thanks to an anonymous donor who offered to match any donation up to \$1,500.00 in November - December, we raised \$3,823.00. This amount was put towards the principle of our loan leaving the remaining balance of the loan \$19,821.57 . Our current monthly payment is \$366.00 per month.

Any donation to the renovation loan is always welcome. Our goal is to pay off this loan during our 110th year!

**Ash Wednesday**



**March 1, 2017.**

**Guest Pastors in February**

**February 5th — Rev. Bob Bryan,**  
Followers of Christ, Prison Ministry

**February 12th — Rev. Adam White**  
Lutheran Campus Pastor, The Lutheran Center @UNL

**February 19th — Rev. David Sites,**  
Tabitha Chaplain

**February 26th — Service of the Word**  
with folks from the congregation talking about how faith informs vocation

**Mitten Tree Christmas 2016**

Thank you to all who donated mittens, gloves, scarves and hats for our Christmas Mitten Tree. We collected many items this year! These have been donated to Everett Elementary School. Thank you for providing some winter warmth to those in need!



**Did you forget the check book? Did you forget your cash? This could help you out...**

The following is some information on how you can give online safe and secure from your own home. If you go to [www.friedens.org](http://www.friedens.org) (the Church Web site) and go to the bottom of the page there you will find a blue square with the word DONATE. When you click on it, it will take you to a secure website that says Welcome Friedens. You will need to create an account. Once you have created an account you will just have to sign in each time before you make your donation. You can make a onetime donation or set up a weekly donation, it's your choice. Below is some information about Vanco the company Friedens uses for this service. Vanco is very helpful if you have questions. Their phone number is below or you can call the church office at 402-476-3888.

**Vanco does what we do best—payments—to help you do what you do best.**

Vanco Payment Solutions provides the specialized payment solutions that let you better do the important work you're called to do. We work closely with churches, schools and other faith-based organizations to move you beyond a cash-and-check-only environment. With the ability to accept credit card, debit card and eCheck donation from anywhere within your organization, you're able to meet more needs, extend your reach and strengthen vital relationships.

Vanco is the payments partner with the in-depth understanding of what it takes to facilitate predictable donations from members. Our technology and services were specifically designed to help manage this key part of a faith-based organization's operations. Vanco has the know-how you need to make your entire giving process effective, secure and easy for you—and those you serve.

More than 18,000 churches, schools and other faith-based organizations nationwide rely on Vanco Payment Solutions for convenient electronic donation and payment services. Our specialized solutions provide much-needed financial stability, better forecasting and greater confidence in meeting financial goals and operations.

**Vanco is endorsed by:**



**Questions? Customer service representatives are available 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (ET) Monday through Friday. Emergency Technical Assistance available 24/7. 1-800-675-7430**

**When we give freely.....**

We are able to be a part of God's Kingdom work at Friedens, in Lincoln and around the world.

We serve an incredibly generous God and count it a privilege to give back to Him what He has generously given to us.

### News from the Annual Meeting

Friedens Annual Meeting was held Sunday, January 22 after the worship service. The meeting had been postponed from the 15th due to the impending ice storm.

Reports from the secretary, the treasurer, and all the committees were accepted. If you have not had a chance to read these reports, they are printed in the annual meeting booklet and are available at the church. We will also be publishing some of these reports in the newsletter over the next couple of months.

The document review committee presented recommendations for revisions to the church's bylaws. These revisions were reviewed and approved.

Voted to serve on the church council were Karen Rempe, Carolyn Hogg, Stacey Schild and Kathy Rempe. These wonderful people join Kathy Holland, Linda Dreith, and Peggy Russell as council members. Thanks to Gary Hardt and Amy Rezny who are retiring from the council after their 6 years of dedicated service.

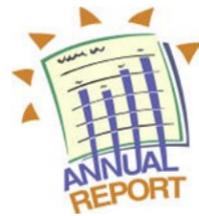
Members selected to attend the Synod Assembly were Linda Dreith and Amy Rezny. Julie Erickson will be the alternate.

Much discussion was held on the budget. A 1% raise was approved for the pastor, the office secretary and the music director. It was noted that for a number of years the contributions have not kept up with our expenses and our saving accounts are dwindling rapidly. Funding raising opportunities were discussed.

Peggy Russell, council president, shared that Pastor Megan Morrow, Assistant to the Bishop, met with the council in early January to discuss options for Friedens to decrease expenditures going forward. Future meetings are planned. The congregation will be kept updated.

Gary Hardt will head the committee to make plans to celebrate Friedens 110th Anniversary. Contact Gary to volunteer with the fun!

The meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.



**In Our Thoughts and Prayers...**Please let the church office know if there has been a birth, baptism, marriage or death in your family that you would like to share. Let us know if someone is hospitalized or needs our prayers. With your permission, this request will be added to the list of Prayer Concerns in the Sunday bulletin. If you would like immediate prayers for the individual, the office will initiate the Prayer Chain.

HIPPA regulations do not allow a hospital to notify the church if someone in our congregation is hospitalized, Please call the church office with this information at 402-476-3888 or email at [office@friedens.org](mailto:office@friedens.org). You can also call the Pastor @ (316)371-0803, in case of an emergency.



### Prayers....

Rod Magnuson  
Brad Magnuson  
Delores Kaufman  
Gladys Herstein

Ethan Butler and Family  
Berneta Miller (Peggy's Mother)  
Karen Melang (Anne's Mother)  
Nick Busker (grandson of Sue & Dick Busker)



Has your Email changed? If so, please let the office know by sending an email to ...  
[Office@friedens.org](mailto:Office@friedens.org)



## FEBRUARY Birthdays and Anniversaries

- (2) Rachel Johanson
- (5) Jane Cosier
- (6) Amanda Zweerink
- (6) Alexander Schild
- (8) Christin King
- (8) Colton Hauschild
- (11) Kathy Harris
- (11) JoAnn Ninneman
- (12) Abigail Newhouse
- (13) Nancy Svoboda
- (14) Daniel Trout
- (17) Peggy Russell
- (17) Geoffrey Wendland
- (18) Rick Harris
- (19) Anne Melang-Thoren
- (19) Malachi Detty
- (20) Lou Skrdlant
- (20) Breann Anderson
- (21) Nathan Johanson
- (21) Courtney Russell
- (22) Raven Pinkerton
- (24) Madeleine Melang-Thoren
- (24) Miles Melang-Thoren
- (28) Steve Russell
- (29) Nicholas Hardt

## FEBRUARY WORSHIP

### LEADERS

#### Altar Guild

Maxine Pfrimmer & Carolyn Hogg

#### Head Usher

Kent Vollenwider

#### Communion Assistant

5— Becky Roberts

19 — Peggy Russell

#### Lectors

5 — Joyce Boerger

12 — Kathy Holland

19 — Carolyn Hogg

26 — KC Melang-Thoren

#### Greeters

5 — Amy Rezny & Joyce Boerger

12 — Irene Newhouse & Maria Kildau

19 — Nancy Borrell & Jane Cosier

26 — JoAnn Ninneman & Jimmy Oltmer



### FEBRUARY Opportunities to Grow in Faith

**Thursday morning Bible Study** — 10:00 — 11:00 at Friedens (Annex)

**Women of the ELCA Bible Study** — 4:30 — 5:30 at Van Dorn Villa, the first Tue. of each Month (this group does not meet in December, January or February)

Watch for more information about Special Sunday educational opportunities.

