

Lutherans in Indian Communities

LINC is a newsletter by the Montana District of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod for Native communities and the Lutherans living in and/or serving those communities.

Fall 2017 Issue #11

Reflections on the Reformation

On October 31, 2017 we celebrated the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. It was a simple monk, Martin Luther, who found in Scripture that our righteousness comes through faith in what Jesus Christ has done, not anything we do.

“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9).

The Biblical truth of being made right with God turned his life, his world, upside down. He was able to do something that no one else was willing to do. He was willing to be totally honest about who he was, about who we all are—sinners in need of grace—and totally honest about who Jesus is, and who we are in Him alone.

Saved by Grace alone

Through Faith alone

Through Scripture alone

Time Magazine said that Martin Luther, was one of the most influential human beings of the last 500 years. His willingness to stand for what God said, what he believed, was the beginning of the Reformation.

We remember with thanks, the man Luther, and what God did through him. Luther knew that his life was an undeserved gift from God. Right before he died Luther said, 'he was only a beggar totally dependent upon the grace of God and Jesus for all he was.'

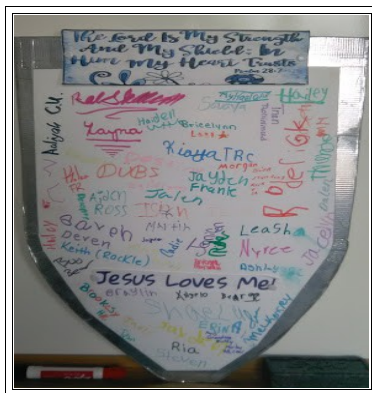
With Luther we boast in the Lord Jesus Christ **'who has become for us wisdom from God—our righteousness, our holiness, our redemption.'** (1 Corinthians 1:30). As we celebrate what this simple monk, Martin Luther, could do with a Bible in his hands; we, too, are to use our feeble hands, our weak knees and our stammering tongues to boast of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, whose death and resurrection gave us a free gift—eternal life. (excerpts from The Lutheran Hour—October 15, 2017)

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Reflections on Our Ministry at Powwows

North American Indian Days—July 7-9: “The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him...” (Psalm 28:7) was the theme for the outreach ministry of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church (Columbia Falls). A crew of 13 regular workers and several new volunteers were involved in preparation, transportation, and participation in the booth. This year we were located near the “arbor” entrance where the drumming and chanting provided a festive atmosphere. The stream of dancers clad in decorative regalia provided a stunning, heritage-rich backdrop for our ministry moments.

No matter where we set up the booth on the grounds, the kids find us and come in waves to do crafts, enjoy snacks, cold water, and hear about Jesus. A shield with the theme in cursive across the top was not easy for all to read but the words Jesus Loves Me could be read by all except the very young children. Most wanted to add their names to the shield as they heard the words “The Lord is my shield”. Laminated bookmarks of the theme adorned with a tiny shield and a colorful ribbon were distributed. Scratch art or creative projects using designs of fish, butterflies, and crosses enabled the adults to share the words from scripture that



reinforced the theme. Rubber band bracelets were a new craft that attracted several male teens from the First Nations Reservation in Alberta, B.C. Recognizing faces and remembering names makes an impact. This year a young woman came with a small girl. They stayed for awhile doing crafts when the mom said, “I use to come here all the time when I was young, so I wanted to bring my daughter.” Those words sent praise to God for allowing us to be a part of His divine plan, sharing the Good News from one generation to the next and beyond!

Submitted by Larry Workman, Columbia Falls

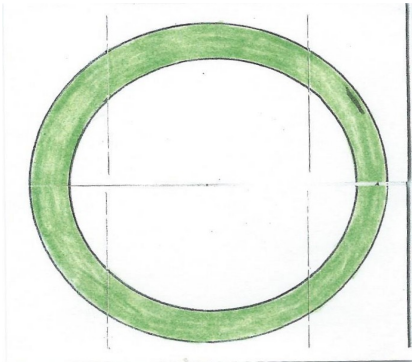
Wadopana Powwow—August 4-6 On Sunday morning we planned a worship service at the “arbor” for 10 AM. A drum group was in the area and continued singing and drumming, with no sign of disbursing until about 9:55. One of the group asked Dan Jacobs what he was doing? When she heard it was to be a worship service she said, “Oh good, we like church.” Others of the drumming group slowly joined us and 20 were there in time for the sermon. The text Isaiah 55: 1-5 shares how God fills holes and emptiness inside us. The setting encourages congregation participation and discussion followed. After the service a married couple from the drumming group asked Dan if they could keep the worship folder. “Of course” was the reply. Each folder contained the hymns for the day in one pocket and the Crow Lutheran Ministry's order of Confession and Absolution and the Apostles' Creed in the other pocket.

At the Wadopana Powwow VBS was only held on Friday afternoon as the wind was so powerful the booth had to be dismantled on Saturday morning. The focus for VBS was God restoring life through Christ in view of this world's brokenness because of sin. One of the craft items used was a small cardboard square that folds into four 'sides'. After going through the story several times each child was given a card to color and take home. Those attending on Friday enjoyed flipping through the four sides and telling the story.

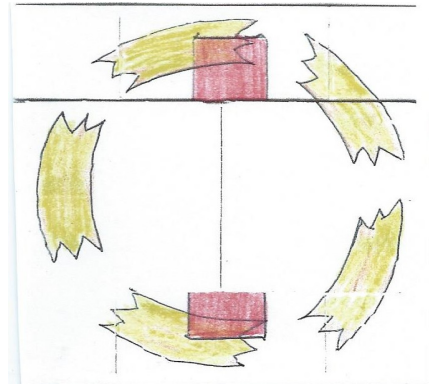
(On the following page is a description of the craft.)

VBS CRAFT

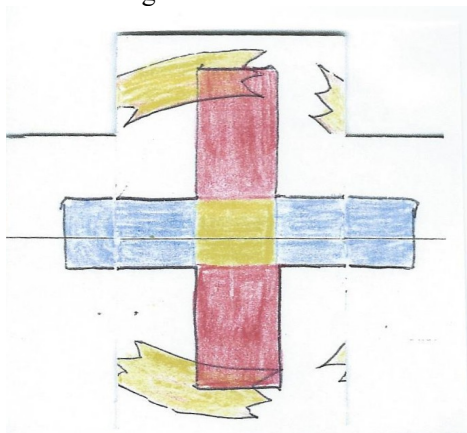
First: A circle that illustrates the wholeness and perfection of the universe as Creator made it.



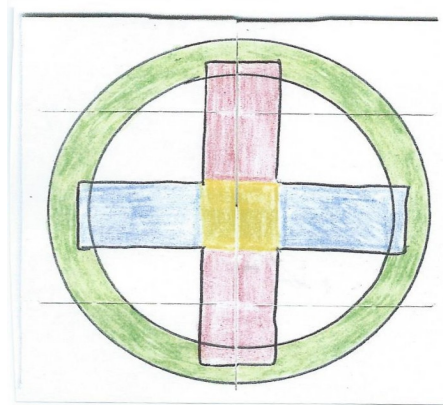
Second: A circle broken and dying because of rebellion against Creator, but there are two tabs reaching to the broken pieces, Those tabs illustrate God's continued care of His creation despite our sin, especially as He touches it through the promise of the Savior.



Third: This circle has a cross, also a symbol of Morning Star (Jesus) touching the broken circle.



Fourth: The last circle is healed and held together by Christ.



Reflecting on Every Day Ministries

Muddy Cluster on the Cheyenne Reservation: Worshippers at Circle of Life Lutheran Church hear God's Word preached by Rev. Dennis Bauer or Rev. Park Timber. Dennis Bauer and his wife Carol have been at Muddy Cluster for 35 years and have watched the ministry grow. Park Timber and his wife Sheri live between Muddy Cluster and Busby. Park has a full time job at St. Labre in Ashland. He has been serving as the assistant pastor for six years. Rev. Timber is responsible for youth ministry and he preaches the sermon once a month assisting with the liturgy every Sunday.

Irene Nelson, a member of the Montana District Indian Ministry Committee, who lives in Colstrip, periodically attends church at Circle of Life. She shared that there were 30 in attendance in mid September. On that particular Sunday and the third Sunday of every month, they schedule a fellowship meal.



In the **Native American Welcoming Center** at Benefis Hospital in Great Falls, the patients and their families are benefitting from copies of the Portals of Prayer, a devotional booklet provided by Peace and Trinity Lutheran congregations in Great Falls. Each copy has a sticky tab that marks the special needs prayers following the daily devotions. These prayers highlight words of support for those experiencing medical and emotional issues. The receptionist indicated that the quarterly booklets are distributed to those who are looking for comfort or guidance.

Reflecting on Future Ministry

The **Lodge at Muddy Cluster**: Great progress was made this summer. The goal was to have the roof on the structure so that work could begin inside. You can see that did not happen. This photo was taken in September and they anticipate placing one more row of logs before the frame is covered with tarps for the winter. All the work has been done by locals and volunteers from around the nation. Crews from Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, and Maryland were some of those who came this past summer to assist in this endeavor. This lodge when completed will be a facility for groups to use for retreats or when coming to work with the youth on the reservation.



Four cabins were constructed years ago by groups who wanted to help with the ministry at Muddy Cluster. As winter approaches the gift of funds to purchase large tarps would be appreciated. If you desire to help, contact Rev. Dennis Bauer, Box 458, Lame Deer (59043). circleoflife@rangeweb.net.

Advent Devotional Booklets: Rev. Dan Jacobs writes devotion booklets for the Advent and Lenten seasons. If you would like to have a copy of the Advent devotion booklet for 2017, contact him at Box 335, Crow Agency (59022). crowlutheranministry@gmail.com

Everything Beautiful Thrift Store in Lame Deer on the Cheyenne Reservation is working on completing an apartment in their new building. This will be for the caretaker of the facility. They continue to seek funds to enable them to obtain matching funds to make the new location for the thrift store operational. Check their Face Book page to follow their progress in both areas.

Dear Heavenly Father,

We thank You for the gift of forgiveness and right standing with You through faith in Jesus. We ask You to give wisdom to those working with people addicted to meth, opioids and alcohol. Work in their lives so they can see You through their mentors. We ask for strength for teachers as they model behavior and extend care and concern for students. Help them to not grow weary in helping young ones see the right way.

We ask You to fill us with Your Spirit so we recognize our need to repent of our sins.

Thank you for the assurance of Your forgiveness when we trust in what Jesus has done for us.

In Jesus name we pray. AMEN



Barbara Going, editor, is a member of the Montana District Indian Ministry Committee.
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