

Outreach Idea of the Month

This month's outreach idea comes from Pastor Tony and Melissa Pittenger of Bethany Lutheran Church, Port Orchard, Washington. The idea is called "Jesus Rocks". It is a great project for Sunday schools, youth groups, ladies groups, or for the whole congregation. Start by collecting large-ish smooth rocks (see photo). On each rock write a message. At Port Orchard they wrote, "He is risen" on one side and on the other side wrote the address to the church's website. Melissa commented that sharpies worked well for putting the information on the rocks. Place the "Jesus Rocks" out in the community, in parks, on fence posts, in flower gardens; any place people will notice them.

Then, when people find a "Jesus Rock" and go to the church's website they find a "Jesus Rock" link and are prompted to "Click here for more info" where they find the following message and information:

Did you find a Jesus Rock? Post a pic on social media with the hashtag #BLCJesusrocks and tell us where you found it.

Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. (John 6:68)

Dig down; beneath the mulch, the mud, and even beneath the soil . . . What will you find? Bedrock. Buildings and bridges drill and anchor into it for stability. When this bedrock is pushed up into the sky we marvel at the beauty of the mountains. When it fractures and quakes beneath us, our homes and lives are torn apart. We hold our breath, fearful that the sea might drag us into its abyss.

Jesus spoke of Himself and His Word as being a sure foundation, solid footing for this life and for the one to come. This may not have the grandeur of Rainier, the Cascades, or the Olympics; but it also does not have the hidden faults that threaten to reduce our lives to rubble or to swallow us up forever.

"Everyone then who hears these Words of Mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the Rock. (Matthew 7:24-25)

Join us to hear more of Jesus' Words of eternal life. We will commemorate His death on **Good Friday, March 25th at 7:00 PM** and we'll celebrate His resurrection on **Easter Sunday, March 27th at 7 & 10 AM** with a complimentary breakfast served from 8-10 and again at 11:30.

Our Regular Worship Schedule
Sunday Worship 8:15 & 11:00 AM
Sunday School 9:45 AM
Monday Worship 7:00 PM

To get a better understanding visit <http://www.bethanylutheranes.org/jesus-rocks>.



ELS Missions Newsletter

March 2016



Evangelical Lutheran Synod

Board for World Outreach

Thank you for Indian orphan support!

Mary Ann McKay, a member of Our Savior Lutheran Church (ELS), Naples, FL, has led the effort to encourage the congregations of our Synod to "adopt" an orphan home in India. For the second time, photos of Indian children and invitations to participate have been sent to every ELS parish. Since the program began in 2014, an increase in support for the 20 orphan homes under our care has been noted. Thanks to all who are helping!

For several years, Cross-stitch, the network of ELS Women's Mission Societies, has been providing support twice each year to buy two changes of clothing for 300 orphans plus their school supplies.

One inspiring contribution to this effort has been made by Ella Oberer at Hope Lutheran Church (ELS), Farmington, MN. She created an offering jar for the children of her mission congregation to share with children in need in India. Guess what? Adults are contributing, too! So far over \$200 has been collected.

Here's another: an ELS couple in northern Minnesota learned that it costs about \$15 per month to care for an Indian orphan. They sent a check in an amount that pays for one year's care for six orphans – in gratitude to God for their six healthy grandchildren!

There are multi-generational blessings in our support for orphans! For many years St. Joseph's Lutheran Church has operated an orphan home for destitute children in the village of Ankalagudem, West Godavari District of Andhra Pradesh in India. Some of the children have lost both parents, some have lost a single parent and the surviving spouse is unable to care for the child, and some come from such poor families that they are given into the care of others. St. Joseph's church and orphan home are under the ministry of Gospel Worker M. Samson Raju. On Sunday, January 25, 2015, two babies, Sowmya and Beulah, were baptized in the afternoon worship service. What makes their baptism especially significant to us is the fact that the mothers of these girls, Roja and Pallavi, were raised in the congregation's orphan



home. As children they were taught Lutheran doctrine by their caregivers in the home, and now as mothers, they brought their daughters to be baptized and committed themselves to nurturing them in the Christian faith.



 **Evangelical Lutheran Synod**
Board for Home Outreach

Faith – San Antonio, Texas

- Pastor David Thompson serves Faith Lutheran Church in San Antonio, Texas. Faith now has 69 souls.
- The congregation hosted its second annual Worldview Conference on February 5th & 6th. The conference attendance was 105. Pastor Thompson stated, “The evaluations were very good overall. Our purpose of the conference is to 1) benefit our members with a better understanding of the world in which they live and of how to communicate the gospel, 2) benefit the church at large, 3) reach out to those who might be looking for a congregation whose message is in keeping with the pure Word of God.”



- Faith is also working on an evangelism video. The video features many of the congregation’s members expressing their faith, describing Faith, and inviting the community to join them. The project is in final edit and should be released soon.
- Meet Faith’s new Director of Evangelism, Mark Harrington. Mark has only been on the job for a short time and has been busy making personal contacts in the community. He was also instrumental in the preparation and advertising of the Worldview conference. Welcome, Mark. God’s richest blessings on your work!
- Visit <http://www.flc-sa.org> for more information.



Hope – Farmington, Minnesota

- Hope Lutheran Church in Farmington, Minnesota is served by Pastor Dan Oberer. There are 76 souls on the membership role.
- Hope broke ground for their new church building in the fall of 2015. As soon as the frost is out of the ground construction will begin. They are planning on worshipping in the new church in October.
- In February Hope held its second annual bags tournament and chili cook-off. Pastor Oberer reported that there were 30 people in attendance.
- The congregaton is updating their media outreach technology. With the assistance of ELS Communication Director Paul Fries they will soon be “Live Streaming” their worship service. Roll-out date is planned for March 20th.

