



Country Chronicles  
August 2019  
Cannon River and  
Cross of Christ Lutheran  
Parish, ELCA



## Ministry Notes

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I went to see a good friend last night, Pastor Wal Reat. He's an ELCA missionary serving in the Gambella region along the border of South Sudan and Ethiopia. Technically it's Ethiopia, but the people living there are in refugee camps on the run from tribal violence in South Sudan.

Wal is a big man, tall, with enormous hands and a warm smile. With an even bigger heart. After his presentation I went up to say hi, and extend a hand shake. He grabbed my hand and pulled me into a bear hug.

I first met Wal about twelve years ago. We were at a monthly conference meeting of pastors and he singled me out to talk with me. His accent was hard to understand. He mentioned there was a group of people in Austin that were looking for a worship space, and he wondered if the church I was serving would be open to the idea. I said, "It wouldn't hurt to ask."

The next Sunday I was leading worship and noticed five well dressed gentlemen near the back of the sanctuary. One of them was Wal. After the service I was greeting people as usual and I noticed them leaving the church by a different door.

I ran after them and caught up with them on the sidewalk. I met them all, and with Wal as the spokesman, we agreed to

meet the next morning in my office. I had a pretty good idea what we were going to talk about, so I contacted all the appropriate leaders and got the go-ahead to initiate a conversation.

The next morning my office was full of people from the Nuer tribe. We started talking and I was so deeply moved by their stories of faith and resilience. When we were done talking, I offered to say a prayer. I don't even remember what I prayed, but from that moment on we've been brothers.

Wal went on to go to Seminary and be ordained in the ELCA. About three years ago he decided to go back to Africa. His wife and children live in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, where he visits as frequently as he can. But most of his time is spent in ministry in the Gambella region.

According to the UN refugee agency, there are more than 400,000 refugees in this area living in various camps. This is exactly where Wal is setting up churches and commissioning lay pastors to serve them. Last night he said there are about 4,000 members in all the churches he has set up. Wal talked about the medical needs and the despair. These are people who want to go back home, but are afraid for their lives.

As Wal was talking, I got a sense of how overwhelming the whole situation was. So many people, so much need, you hardly even know where to start. And Wal seemed subdued, he is usually witty and chatty, but last night as he was talking, he seemed broken.

Through his pictures, through his posture, he barred his soul. When I was talking with him, I shared that we pray for him. And his eyes lit up! It was so important for him to know there are people in the world who are remembering him and his work.

The Cross of Christ mission committee had decided to give his ministry some money and it was my privilege to give it to him. What we do here at Cross of Christ and Cannon River makes a difference in the world. We heard that from Karen Anderson a couple weeks ago and I saw it on Wal's face last night.

Blessings, my friends...

Deacon Todd Portinga

***Contact Information for Todd Portinga:***

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***Email:*** [pastor@cccchurch.com](mailto:pastor@cccchurch.com)

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# Cannon River News

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## Attendance

July 7 <sup>th</sup>	25
July 14 <sup>th</sup>	27
July 21 <sup>st</sup>	18

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## Financial Report

	Income	Expenses	Net
Jan	\$2,481	\$1,661	\$819
Feb	\$2,132	\$4,679	(\$2,547)
Mar	\$3,420	\$4,613	(\$1,193)
Apr	\$2,602	\$2,956	(\$354)
May	\$2,098	\$3,648	(\$1,550)
June	\$4,114	\$3,241	\$872
<b>Year to Date</b>	<b>\$16,847</b>	<b>\$20,801</b>	<b>(\$3,954)</b>

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## **Saturday, August 3--Save this date! You're not going to want to miss this!**

We're going to "Worship Under the Stars". The fun evening will start with a potluck picnic at 6 pm on the church lawn. This will be followed with worship and communion around the bonfire. Bring lawn chairs and invite your friends.

(There will not be Sunday morning worship on August 4 at Cannon River)



# Cross of Christ News

*We are called by the Spirit to be a lasting presence in our community,  
faithfully sharing the Word of God through worship, fellowship and  
service to our neighbors.*

*Faithful through Generations*

## Assistants for August

### Greeters

August 4th	Jean Kehren
August 11 <sup>th</sup>	Darwin & Cheryl Fox
August 18 <sup>th</sup>	Jeff & Rhonda Meyer
August 25 <sup>th</sup>	Wayne & Sonja Munson

### Readers

August 4 <sup>th</sup>	Mary Fjetland
August 11 <sup>th</sup>	Jim Hill
August 18 <sup>th</sup>	Joan Slingsby
August 25 <sup>th</sup>	Sandy Luhman

### Altar

4 <sup>th</sup>	Jean Kehren
11 <sup>th</sup>	Jean Kehren

### Council Person

Ann Kulla

### Attendance

### Kitchen

	June 23 <sup>rd</sup>	53
	June 30 <sup>th</sup>	40
Sandy Luhman	July 7 <sup>th</sup>	51
	July 14 <sup>th</sup>	48
	July 21 <sup>st</sup>	49

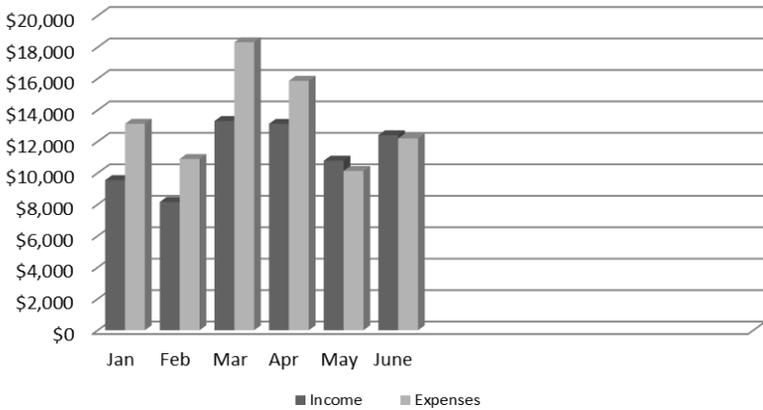
### Ushers for August

Paul Hansen, Jeff Busse, Jim Chester

# Cross of Christ Financial Report

	<b>Income</b>	<b>Expenses</b>
Jan	\$9,543	\$13,128
Feb	\$8,159	\$10,890
Mar	\$13,302	\$18,310
Apr	\$13,126	\$15,858
May	\$10,780	\$10,125
June	\$12,402	\$12,192
<b>Year to Date</b>	<b>\$67,313</b>	<b>\$80,502</b>

**2019 Income/Expenses**



## Financial News

The **Kwik Trip card** sales have made a big difference for us. If you frequent Kwik Trip, contact Julie Schriefels at 388-2326 to buy some pre-paid cards. A portion of your purchase price comes directly to Cross of Christ. It is a very easy way to support your church!

The **Simply Giving Program** allows you to have your church offering automatically deducted from your checking or savings account, biweekly or monthly. Please contact Rebecca Peterson for help with setting up scheduled donations through Simply Giving.

If you make any purchase on **Amazon.com**, you can designate .5% of your order to come to Cross of Christ by using **smile.amazon.com** instead, and designating us as the recipient.

The next Finance meeting will be **Wed, August 7, 7:00 pm at church**. Detailed reports of income and expenditures are always available upon request.

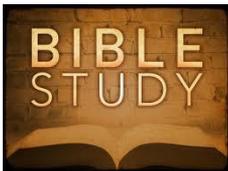
Rebecca Peterson, Treasurer

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## **Kwik Trip Cards**



— Help support our Building Maintenance Fund by buying Kwik Trip cards. The cards can be used to purchase anything at Kwik Trip from gas, groceries and car washes to anything else they sell. Available in **\$10, \$20, \$25, \$50 and \$100**. You pay the amount of the card being purchased; the church makes 5% of the sales and another 10% for non-fuel purchases made with the cards. Contact Julie Schreifels to purchase at [hjschreif@live.com](mailto:hjschreif@live.com) or 651-388-2326. The **next order** will be put in on **Tuesday, August 13<sup>th</sup>** and will be available during church on Sunday, August 18<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to those who have ordered Kwik Trip Cards.



The WELCA Bible Study group will Tuesday August 13<sup>th</sup>. at 9:00 in Dahlen Hall. Hostess Millie Niebeling. Deacon Todd will lead the bible Study.



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## Community Meal

Cross of Christ served dinner at the Methodist Church on July 14, 2019. We had an indoor picnic and served 66 people.

Our efficient team of helpers got the meal served and clean up done by 6:30. I want

to thank Dennis & Jackie Martin, Todd & Kris Portinga, Deanna & Beretta Gehloff and Kelley Mittelsteadt and, of course, my coffee maker and dish washer, Ken.

We took in an free will offering of \$51.00.

Thank you, Joan Slingsby

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## Taste of Welch

ANYONE having items for Raffle please contact Millie Niebeling at cell #651-380-0776 or Kelly Mittelsteadt at cell #1-651-764-9889

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## Missions

### Mission Updates:

*Please* continue to save your Family Fare store receipts! Both Cross of Christ and Cannon River churches are collecting receipts and participating in this great mission outreach. Remember that only the store receipts are valid; no e-receipts.



***To date, our collection totals \$78,000!!***

***When*** the receipts total \$150,000, we will receive a check for \$1,000 which will go to Feed My Starving Children.

We have already reached this goal twice, and are now on our third collection. It's amazing!

***Shop, bring your receipts to church*** and we will support children who are hungry!

***Thank you,*** the Mission Committee

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## Youth

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**Vacation Bible School: Short Stories: Parables of Jesus** THANK YOU to all who helped make VBS a great success this year. We had 30 young people take part in VBS, 9 were older children who took the part of *shepherds* for their small flocks of *sheep* (younger kids) and a few wondering sheep (4<sup>th</sup> graders).

**Thank you** to those who provided the supper meal each night, Robin for directing the music, Deacon Todd for telling the Bible stories, Deanna and Rebecca for directing the crafts, the older “Shepherds” for directing the games, acting in the skits and keeping track of their “sheep”, Julie for reading the stories and coordinating VBS.

**Sunday School:** We will start the new Sunday School year (2019-2020) with Rally Sunday September 15<sup>th</sup>. We have a new curriculum from Sparkhouse digital.

*If you are interested in helping with Sunday School in any way please let Julie Schreifels know.*

### **Activities & Reminders:**

August 22: River Clean-up (Cannon River) Stay tuned for more specifics

August 27: Valley Fair More info to come.

September 15: Rally Sunday

### **Mission Projects:**

Weekly offering will be used towards the assistance of Gabby, a child in Tanzania.



**Noisy Offering:** Each Sunday we pass around a globe for the children to put *coins* in for a “noisy” offering.



**Send some coins with the kids for this offering.**

Julie Schreifels

Sunday School Superintendent [hjschreif@live.com](mailto:hjschreif@live.com) h. 651-388-2326

c. 507-990-7024

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The next **WELCA meeting will be Wednesday, August 7<sup>th</sup> 7:00pm**. The agenda will include: Days for Girls kits, Blood Drive, SEMN SWO Convention, Triennial Gathering fundraising, TOW, other.

**Red Cross Blood Drive:** Our next Blood Drive will be September 5<sup>th</sup> from 12:00-6:00. Come and donate blood-Save lives. Helpers needed.

**Days for Girls Kits:** Washable feminine hygiene kits for girls in the Kuwaa Mission in Liberia.

**123 kits** in all have been assembled and shipped to the Kuwaa in Liberia. We plan to continue the Days for Girls mission project as there will always be a need. Please let Joan Slingsby or Julie Schreifels know if you can help with this. Donations of darker flannel material (for liners) and 100% cotton material for bags and shields, and PUL for the shields would be helpful.

[www.DaysforGirls.org](http://www.DaysforGirls.org) .

**Guidelines for Church Use:** The Guidelines for Church use have been reviewed and revised. They will be posted on the church web site after the council approves the revisions.

**Taste of Welch:** Saturday, October 12, 2019 9am-2pm Get your crafty side going to create some items for the craft sale. Contact Kelley M. or Millie N. regarding items for the raffle. We will also need items for the bake sale and lunch and of course workers. Ideas for improving our annual mission fundraiser are welcome. The different committees were discussed:

Bake and craft sale: Yvonne Nelson, Jean Kehren, Joan Slingsby. Doris will help with lunch.

Publicity: Julie and Millie.  
Raffle: Millie and Kelley  
Grant and Business Donations: Julie

**SE Minnesota Synodical Women's Organization Convention:**

September 21, 2019 Trinity Lutheran Church, Owatonna. See the poster on the bulletin board for more details and registration form. The *Love Offering* will go to Rachel's Light a homeless shelter for women and children in Owatonna. There is a basket in the back of the sanctuary for donations of: bathroom items such as soap, toilet paper, Kleenex, lotions, shampoo, body wash even shower curtains and/or gift cards to Target, Walmart, Kwik Trip, and Hy-Vee. WELCA will pay the \$25 registration fee for women from Cross of Christ. Julie Schreifels will be the voting member.

**The Call to Courage:** This is a Netflix special by Brene' Brown. Our Women's Retreat Program was based on her work. The plan is to have Pastor Karna back to present more of Brene' Brown's work at our retreat in Jan. 2020.



The Eleventh Triennial Gathering of the Women of the ELCA will be held in Phoenix, AZ July 16-19, 2020. There will be a small group of us going, if you would like to join us talk to Julie Schreifels. We will be planning some fundraisers to help with expenses. A couple of ideas are a Thatsmypan sale and a pie auction.

**Future Events:**

**Red Cross Blood Drive:** Thursday, September 5, 2019 12-6 pm

**SE Minnesota Synodical Women's Organization Convention:** September 21, 2019 Trinity Lutheran Church, Owatonna

**Taste of Welch:** Saturday, October 12, 2019 9am-2pm  
**2020 Women's Retreat:** January 24-26, 2020 Cedar  
Valley Resort, Lane  
**11<sup>th</sup> Triennial Gathering:** July 16-19, 2020 Phoenix,  
Arizona

*Officers: President: Julie Schreifels Vice- President: Tracy  
Harth Secretary: Charlotte Leurquin Treasurer: Jean Kehren  
Kitchen Committee: Doris Gruber, Joan Slingsby, Diane  
Hermanson, Jean Kehren, Janet Daley & Sandy Luhman.  
God go with you! Your sister in Christ,  
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