



# The Reporter

## February 2020

The Reporter

Volume 18, Issue 02

### In this Issue:

Ministry & Funding Plan	3
Property & Mowing	4
Think about it!	4
Outreach News & February Birthdays	5
Notes & News	6
Reporters & Meetings	7
Seminary Touring Choir	7
Devotional Corner	8

### “Like Elijah?”

by Pastor Proeber

If we could be like anyone in the Scriptures, who would it be? Maybe Moses who stood in the presence of the Lord? Maybe Enoch who walked with God and was taken into heaven without seeing death? Maybe Joshua because of his great victories? Possibly the judge Deborah who displayed great courage and confidence in the Lord. Maybe we would want to be like Paul who faithfully proclaimed the Gospel throughout the world? There are many heroic figures in the Bible we might want to be like. Of course, we might be cautious about being like Elijah. Instead of standing firm, he ran. Instead of trusting the Lord, he despaired. Instead of being courageous, he was a coward. I don't think any of us would want to be like this. Yet, we can readily identify with Elijah. We have our fears, our failures, and our doubts. At the same time we have the Lord, his promises, and his presence. This is why we are quite happy to be like Elijah.

When you read through the book of 1st Kings, you learn a lot about Elijah. He was a powerful prophet standing up to wicked kings. He was a fearless prophet challenging the 400 prophets of Baal. He was a faithful prophet who never shied from proclaiming the Word of the Lord. This was what Elijah was like, at least until Jezebel—the queen of Israel—threatened him. This threat of death sent him running. He could not get far away fast enough. When he reached the end of his running at Mount Sinai, he expressed his hopelessness before the Lord. “I'm ready to die!” Elijah thought his time of service was done. The Lord had different plans for his prophet. These were revealed in the instructions and encouragement he offered. These are what we need to hear on a regular basis.

Like Elijah we are ready to give up. We are ready to call it quits. We are ready to tell the Lord how impossible the task is he has set before us. We believe we have every reason to say, “we're done.” If the Lord would call us to our eternal home, that would be even better.

The Lord has something different in mind, just as he had something different in mind for Elijah. The Lord's words are worth hearing —

<sup>5</sup>And the LORD said to him, “Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus. And when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael to be king over Syria. <sup>16</sup>And Jehu the son of Nimshi you shall anoint to be king over Israel, and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah you shall anoint to be prophet in your place. <sup>17</sup>And the one who escapes from the sword of Hazael shall Jehu put to death, and the one who escapes from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha put to death. <sup>18</sup>Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.” (1 Kings 19:15-18)

Continued on page 2

*Elijah, from page 1*

The last thing the Lord was going to do was allow Elijah to believe he was done. He gave him four tasks to complete, and did not allow for any excuses.

1. Go back the way you came (from Samaria)
2. Anoint Hazael as king over Aram
3. Anoint Jehu as king over Israel
4. Anoint Elisha as your successor

You could almost picture Elijah's surprise. "Didn't you listen to me Lord! I'm done! I'm tired!" Elijah overlooked one important truth. It is the Lord who determines the time of service. This is important for you and me to remember. Like Elijah we like to think we have done our share. It is time to let someone else do the work. It is time for me to be done. Strange thing is, God doesn't consult us. As a matter of fact, he wonders what are we doing.

We have the privilege to serve our Lord faithfully until he says we are through. That would be when we depart this world and are welcomed into heaven with a faithful servant's reward. Until that time, we do all our Lord has given us the opportunity to do. This could include prayer, sharing the good news with others, living to the glory of our Lord, and just being what he has made us to be—our vocation.

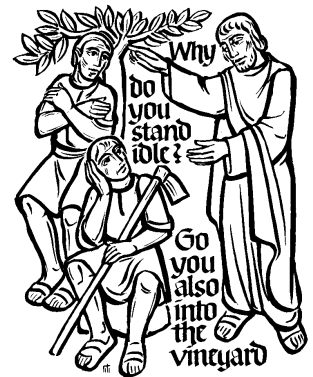
Now, we may question our ability. We may even wonder if we can really be and do what our Lord desires. Because we struggle, the Lord has also given us a promise of encouragement. For Elijah this came in two different forms. The first was the assurance of God's divine justice and retribution (1 Kings 19:17). The second was the reminder that Elijah was not as alone as he thought. This encouragement still stands.

There are times when we wonder as the Lord's prophet did, "how long will you tolerate injustice?" Honestly, we would like to see the Lord punish those who really deserve it. It would make us feel good for the moment, but it would also be tremendously dangerous. What if God would punish ALL who deserve his punishment? We need to be careful for what we ask. God assures us he will judge when the time is right. We do not have to presuppose or preempt God's divine will. He will take care of everything.

We can also find great comfort in the promise we are not on our own. Read through the Book of Revelation. Read through any Epistle or Gospel. We are never alone. We can even recall the promise made by our Savior when he ascended into heaven. Because we are not the only ones who are serving, we find great comfort in our faithful service. We are part of our Savior's church militant, united with a countless host to accomplish everything he has set us apart to do. This was an incredible and much needed encouragement for Elijah, and it is for us.

When you read the rest of 1 Kings, you will see Elijah was reinvigorated to serve. He came to understand his frailty and his flight were actually a lack of trust in the Lord. It is lesson we need to learn as well. We are subject to frailties. We fear failure. We run away from service. All this happens when we forget the Lord and his promises. This is why we want to be like Elijah. He came to find everything he lacked in his God and Lord. It is not surprising we find the same things in our Lord.

Because the Lord is faithful, listen to his Word. Trust in his promises. Rely on his power, and rejoice because the Lord never forgets or forsakes his people.



## Ministry Budget & Funding Plan

by Al Todd

The approved congregation's 2020 Ministry Budget and Funding Plan is broken out into nine (9) categories as shown below:

	2019 Actual	2020 Budget	DIFF	% Inc/ Dec
Income				
General Fund Income	138,634	143,500	4,867	3.5%
Expense				
Total Advertising/Outreach	1,026	2,000	974	95%
Total Church Operations	15,310	15,872	562	4%
Total Church Utilities	6,749	7,117	368	5%
Total Education Expenses	883	850	-33	-4%
Total Fellowship	759	625	-134	-18%
Total Pastor Expenses	104,884	101,226	-3,658	-3.5%
Synod Missions	13,860	14,350	490	3.5%
Total Worship Expenses	404	2,400	1,996	500%
Total Expense	143,876	144,440	563	.4%

In 2019 we saw a monthly decline in the General Fund. We ended 2019 with a balance of \$36,784 which is a 12% decline in the General Fund from the previous year. If offerings are not increased to cover this decline, we will continue to see deterioration in our General Fund balance which will have a long term adverse impact on the financial health of Our Redeemer.

To begin to reverse this decline, the voters at the Annual Voter's meeting approved a budget which proposes a **3.5% increase in offerings** over the 2019 actual offerings.

As a reminder, here are just a few services that Our Redeemer provides for our members and guests:

Provide members with weekly services focused on Christ and His sacrifice on our behalf.

Provide monthly opportunities to partake of the Lord's Supper for the strengthening of our faith.

Welcoming children into the family of God through Baptism.

Conduct weekly Sunday services at Wood Glen Hall; and weekly Bible reading on Wednesdays by Greg Grunewald.

Visit homebound members by Pastor.

Conduct mid-week Bible Classes.

Offer Sunday School classes for two (2) groups of children: pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten through grade 6.

The handbell choir serves the congregation on several Sundays and for special services (Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, etc.)

The mixed voice choir serves the congregation on several Sundays and for special services (Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, etc.)

Newsletters have been published monthly with encouraging words from Pastor and articles of interest to the congregation.

Provide the devotional booklet Meditations for every member.

The Outreach committee sponsors several events for congregation members and guests including:

*Continued on page 4*

*Ministry Plan, from page 3*

President's Day Remembrance, Easter Service meal, Independence Day celebration, Ice Cream Social, Goleta Beach BBQ, Circuit Reformation post-service meal, Reformation celebration at ORLC, Thanksgiving Dinner, Christmas decoration and caroling, Christmas Eve post service fellowship.

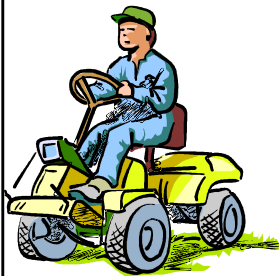
Maintain the church property (Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall, Parsonage, out buildings, playground, and landscape) in good condition.

Let's also never forget that Our Redeemer carries out the Great Commission both locally and world-wide by joining together as a Synod to reach "all nations" by training, equipping, sending, and supporting workers in the U.S. and 50 other countries via our Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO). These CMOs are the main source for funding Synodical ministry. Accordingly, Our Redeemer sends 10% of all General Fund offerings to the Synod. So, the more we give, the more the Synod also uses to carry out Christ's great commission.

Please prayerfully consider the financial gifts God has entrusted to your stewardship and then help us meet the approved budget by increasing your offerings by 3.5% (or more!) in 2020. Though offerings did not meet our approved budget in 2019, God graciously reminds us that he's given us his very best in Jesus. And it's our humble privilege to serve and thank the King with our very best gifts - gifts which first came from his hands to ours (1 Chronicles 29:14).

If you have any questions regarding the 2020 budget, please don't hesitate to contact me or any member of the ORLC council.

## Property Mowing & Care



Starting with the new year, a mowing calendar has been established. The goal is two-fold. The first is to afford people a meaningful way to be good stewards of the gifts the Lord has given to our congregation. The second is to have as many men participate in the mowing of the property as possible. The schedule is set up beginning on Sunday so you have the entire week to serve. You may cut an hour or two on several days to make the work less time consuming. You may also do it in one sitting—about 5 hours.

If there is nothing to mow, you could spend a little time during your scheduled week to pull weeds, clean up some beds, or just do a little extra maintenance.

If you have any questions, please speak to Jim Brown or Pastor Proeber.

Most tools and equipment are in the storage building and are easily accessible. Thank you in advance for your service to the Lord and to the congregation.

## Think about it!

Hell is not real to moderns. It would imply the undeniable, authoritative judgment of a just God above, which is inconceivable to the modern who aims to be a critic of all things. Like capital punishment for government, hell is the ultimate divine exercise of authority over sin. The mere existence of hell is not an indicator of God's attitude towards man, since it was prepared for the Devil and his angels (Mt. 25). But it does tell us about the seriousness of sin and satanic rebellion against God. Our God is no easy pushover, but is truly just. To say He is unfair, or hell should not exist, is to try to be a bigger god than He is . . . Where hell is denied, Satan is doing his work well. Where the crime (sin) is minimized, so will the punishment (eternal wrath in hell). But Christ died and rose to free us from eternal wrath, so we are all the more grateful for our present release from the prison of hell and its master.

*Selected editorial,  
Christian News, vol. 58, February 3, 2020*



“**A** farmer went out to sow his seed.”

## Outreach Opportunities

The Outreach Committee continues to organize and sponsor events to provide opportunities for our members to invite friends and relatives to Our Redeemer. Some events are conducted outside the formal worship service. There are also special worship services with food and fellowship afterwards. We hope these events will encourage you to invite people you know to learn more about our church and to hear the message of undeserved love in Jesus we joyfully and faithfully proclaim. Plan to participate, support, and to serve!

Beginning in February we will have a number of opportunities to invite people to come to know their Savior.

**February 26th** is the start of our Wednesday evening Lenten worship. The six services will strengthen us in the confession of our faith regarding the Life and Work of Jesus Christ. The words of the Apostles Creed will serve as our week to week service themes:

### **I Believe in Jesus Christ—**

- ✘ God's Only Son, Our Lord
- ✘ Conceived by the Holy Spirit
- ✘ Born of the virgin Mary
- ✘ Suffered under Pontius Pilate
- ✘ Crucified
- ✘ Died and Buried

**April 5th** is the beginning of Holy Week. This is a special time when we focus on all our Savior did for us with his entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday; the blessing of his Body and Blood on Maundy Thursday, and his sinless sacrifice to take away our sin on Good Friday.

**April 12th** is Easter Sunday and the culmination of this most precious week. In this festival service all will have the opportunity to hear that glorious message—Jesus lives!



## February Birthdays

We rejoice in the many blessings God has given the members of our family of faith. May the Lord continue to bless them richly.

- 1<sup>st</sup> - Jameson S.
- 7<sup>th</sup> - Joel D.
- 8<sup>th</sup> - Kathy T.
- 11<sup>th</sup> - Janelle Y.  
Michael J.
- 17<sup>th</sup> - Debbie A.

Please share any corrections—spellings, addresses, or birthdays with Pastor Proeber. We would like to have all our information as correct as possible. Thank You!

## Notes & News

### Handbell Choir

Practices for the Spring—Lent, Holy Week and Easter—continue every Monday evening at 7:00 pm. We are thankful for those who generously give of their time and efforts to make practices and ring for our worship services.

There is also an invitation—if you are curious, or if you would like to try ringing—to speak with Debbie.

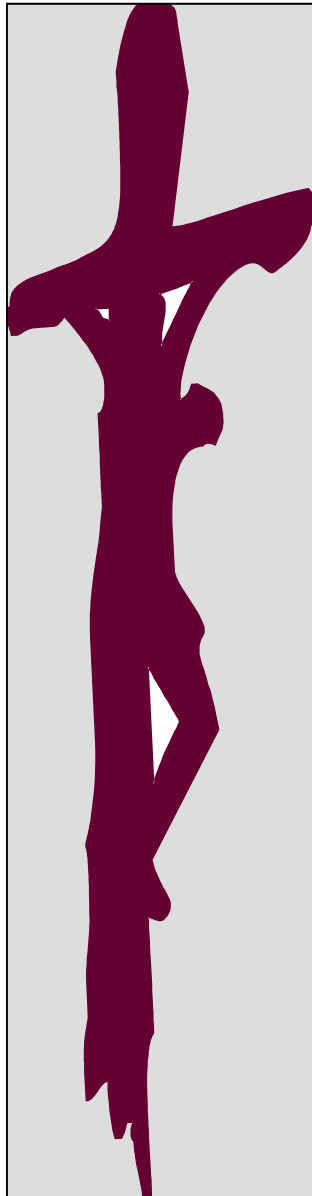
New ringers are always welcome, and can be worked into the future playing schedule.



### Choir

After a shaky start to the New Year, practices will continue throughout the Spring with preparations for Lent, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday.

The choir will draw from a wide range of styles this year—spiritual, modern, and traditional. All will encourage us to sing for joy to the Lord in our worship services.



### Opportunities

We are always looking for new opportunities for service, outreach, study and encouragement. Please share your ideas with a Board member or with Pastor Proeber.

### Wednesday Evening Bible Class

The Wednesday class has met since the beginning of new year. This coming Wednesday we will complete the study on 1st Kings. It has been an interesting and thought-provoking study which reminds us of how faithful God is, even when we are unfaithful.

On Wednesday, February 26th we will take a break for our mid-week Lent worship. Following Easter Sunday, we will resume our weekly study with the book of 2nd Kings.



### Sunday School

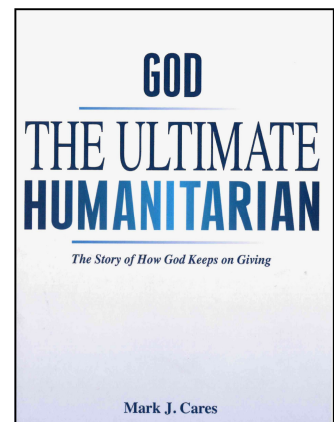
After a short break, Christian Education for children will resume. Sunday School is always held on the first and third Sundays of the month, during the worship service.

If you have any questions, regarding the program or possibly helping, please speak to John Favuzzi, or one of the teachers—Sonja Todd, or Sue Proeber.

The goal of our Sunday School is to help parents train their children in the Way of the Lord. Make sure you take advantage of this precious opportunity.

### Sunday Morning Bible Class

The regular 11:00 am class just completed a study based on “Martin Luther’s Christmas Book.” It was a series of lessons from the annunciation of Jesus’ birth through his presentation in the temple. Throughout each of the lessons, it was interesting to see Luther’s “take” on each of the Gospel accounts. Through each of them, we came to understand, many of the same lessons still apply.



The next series will follow the book, “God: the Ultimate Humanitarian.” It is the Scriptural account of how God keeps on giving us the best in spite of our sinful rebellion. This includes the gift of his Son, the gift of the Gospel, the gift of a wonderful life now, and the gift of eternal life in heaven.

## Serve the Lord with Gladness

### Reporters Wanted

Book review? Personal Story of Faith?  
Event report? Potluck–gathering? Party? Field Trip?

Half-page to three pages  
Reviewed for scriptural consistency  
Due by 25th of month to appear in next issue

Please submit a hard copy or email Pastor Proeber  
(pastor@orlcsb.net / james.proeber@gmail.com)

***A simple and rewarding way to serve!***

Thanks to Alan Todd for his article on the 2020 Ministry Funding Plan.

There is a standing invitation to provide material for the *Reporter*. Throughout the past volumes, articles authored by members have really made every issue more interesting. We pray that every member will provide an article for 2020. If you have an idea, and you are not sure whether to act on it, please don't hesitate to speak to Pastor Proeber for advice. Thanks!

### Meetings for February

Church Council	February 4 <sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm
Committees	February 4 <sup>th</sup> at 8:00 pm
Outreach Committee	February 18 <sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm



### Seminary Touring Choir

On Tuesday, April 14th at 7:00 pm, we will host the Seminary Touring Choir. This is a very special and rare treat. The all male choir has 48 voices under the direction of Professor James Tiefel. The choir has distinguished itself under his leadership, and the concert will be excellent. It will also be Professor Tiefel's last concert tour since he is

retiring after the 2020 school year.

To date we have commitments to accommodate 27 students. Please speak to Pastor Proeber if you are able to host some of the students.

If you plan to give an offering to defray some of the expenses, please indicate it is for the Seminary Choir.

While the choir is here we will provide

them with dinner on Tuesday early evening, and breakfast on Wednesday morning before they depart. Please watch for more information regarding what to bring and how you can help.

Most important, start inviting people now. It would be exciting to see a full sanctuary for their concert.

## Devotional Corner

### "The Devil Shrieked"

"Be quiet!" said Jesus sternly. "Come out of him!" The evil spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek. *Mark 1:25-26*

Following the first sin in the Garden of Eden, God promised to send "the seed of the woman to crush the serpent's head" (Genesis 3:15). It was that promise which guided and strengthened all who put their faith into what God had said. When the time was right, God the Father sent his Son into the world to fulfill his long-standing promise (Galatians 4:4-5).

Jesus' ministry was clear from the start. He did not come to make people feel better about themselves. Nor did he come to make life easier. He came to destroy the devil's power and release people from his tyranny. It is a ministry for which I am eternally grateful.

In an early account of Jesus' ministry, Mark provides a glimpse of the precious work Jesus came to accomplish. Jesus had gone to Capernaum and into a synagogue to teach. While he was there an evil spirit revealed himself and challenged him. Sternly Jesus silenced him and commanded him to come out of the man. The evil spirit left with a shriek. It was that display of power which offered a preview of what Jesus would later do for me and for all people.

Through the authority of his teaching, and later through his death on the cross, Jesus took the battle to the devil. No matter how hard he tried, he could not overcome Jesus with his temptations or defeat him with his power. Whatever authority the devil had came to an end when Jesus descended into hell. There Jesus proclaimed his complete and ultimate victory. The head of the serpent was crushed. All the devil could do was shriek in defeat.

It is because of Jesus' overwhelming victory that I am able to say "No to sin and all ungodliness" (Titus 2:12). This means I can stand "toe to toe" with the devil in the good fight of faith. I am no longer a hapless victim. I am no longer hopeless or helpless in the battle. I can draw on the victory Jesus has secured for me, as well as the strength he provides in his Word.

When I rely on Jesus and depend on the power of his victory, the devil will flee from me with a shriek.

#### Prayer

O blessed Redeemer, you have freed me from the devil's control. You have also enabled me to fight and win the good fight of faith. Help me draw on the victory and the strength you offer, and keep me faithful until the end.

Daily devotions can be accessed through [www.whataboutjesus.com](http://www.whataboutjesus.com) or [www.wels.net](http://www.wels.net). Please follow the instructions to view daily devotions and to subscribe to them. They are also available as "podcasts."