

*Our journey of faith leads us to build bridges of understanding and peace, to reach out with compassion, and to share the hope of Jesus.*

# THE ZUMBRO Current

MAY 2016

Zumbro Lutheran Church | A member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



## 5 FAITH FORMATION

Family Minister Janette Reeves' goal is to engage children in The Big Idea each and every week at Faith Formation.

## 2 RENEWAL SEASON

Take a lesson from the daffodils: Renewal comes in many unexpected ways.

## 6 SENIOR SEND OFF

Graduating high school senior Ella Napton reflects on the impact Zumbro Lutheran Church has on her life—past, present, and future.

## 10 & 11 PASTOR UPDATES

Learn the latest about Pastor Vern's health and Pastor Jason's sabbatical.

# A Season of Renewal

I'm not much of a landscaper. Which is probably why, when I was laying a weed barrier in my yard last year, I forgot that my mom had planted some daffodil bulbs a couple of years ago. Imagine my surprise a few weeks back when little yellow heads and green stems began to poke out of the ground around the edges of my yard - and, even more surprised when one particularly hardy bunch of daffodils planted a good 6" inside the edge where I'd laid the weed barrier (oops!) managed to push its way out into the open air. How did they do that?

Spring's growing season is a reminder that God is constantly bringing forth possibility, even amidst times of adversity. We hear that theme in the lovely French Easter carol "Now the Green Blade Rises:"

Now the green blade rises from the buried grain,  
Wheat that in dark earth many days has lain;  
Love lives again, like with the dead has been;  
Love is come again like wheat arising green.

This idea is central to our sermon series, *Life Reimagined*, this season. Not only do we experience the renewal of the earth, we see the ultimate expression of life from death in our resurrected Lord. The promise of Easter is that in the dark of night, in the face of certain defeat, God can and will be our light and future and hope. As Easter people who believe that God does indeed make all things new, we are invited to make the most of the possibilities God puts before us.

Unfortunately, we don't always remember that God often works behind the scenes. Before tiny green shoots appear on the landscape, the germination process has been busy bringing forth life underground. If it seems like you're in a holding pattern, God might be preparing you for something to come. This might be a season to spend more time reading scripture, walking in nature, and listening for God's voice.

And, sometimes in our lives we hit a barrier - a job loss, a health setback, a difficult parenting



stage, a relationship that feels stuck - and we can't see a way forward. If that's where you are these days, perhaps a change of perspective is in order. Remind yourself that God promises to be with you when challenges arise, and that you don't have to overcome those challenges alone. Seek out a trusted friend or prayer partner who can walk (or simply sit!) with you.

And sometimes in life we need to set a new course. If you're waiting for an opportunity to present itself, maybe you need to trust the Spirit's leading, take initiative, and make something happen. Have courage and faith! Like my hardy daffodils, God has made you to seek the Son.

As I do a little discerning in my own life this spring, I'm appreciating my little daffodils and marveling at their resilience. May you notice signs of God's creative and amazing work - and may they inspire you to reimagine your own life in Christ.

peace - pastor shelley



# Worship Details

## JOURNEY REIMAGINED

The Big Idea: God travels with us wherever we go.

Psalm 121

SUNDAY, MAY 1

Preacher: Rev. Dr. James Limburg  
Music: Alan Hansen (8:30am);  
Corey Henke, horn; Susan Henke,  
piano (8:30 and 11am); Zumbro  
Lutheran Choir (11am)

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4

Preacher: Rev. Corinne Thul

## LOVE REIMAGINED

The Big Idea: Our new life in Christ is centered in love.

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

SUNDAY, MAY 8

Preacher: Rev. Lisa Kipp  
Music: Zumbro Choristers and  
Dolce Children's Choir (8:30am);  
Zumbro Youth Band and Strings  
(8:30 and 11am); Zumbro Lutheran  
Choir (11am)

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4

Preacher: Rev. Lisa Kipp

## CHURCH REIMAGINED

The Big Idea: Each of us is gifted by the Holy Spirit in a variety of ways.

Acts 2:-4, 1 Corinthians 12:1-13

SUNDAY, MAY 15

Preacher: Rev. Dr. Phil Quanbeck  
Music: Bel Canto Handbell Choir  
(8:30am); Zumbro Brass Ensemble,  
Zumbro Lutheran Choir (8:30 and  
11am); Zumbro Choristers and Dolce  
Children's Choir, Fellowship of the  
Ring Handbell Choir (11am)

WEDNESDAY, MAY 18

Preacher: Rev. Emily Carson

## COMFORT REIMAGINED

The Big Idea: God comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others.

2 Corinthians 1:1-11

SUNDAY, MAY 22

Preacher: Rev. Lisa Kipp  
Music: Zumbro Lutheran Choir  
(8:30am), Zumbro Woodwinds  
(8:30 and 11am); Graduating Seniors  
(11am)

WEDNESDAY, MAY 25

Preacher: Rev. Lisa Kipp

## GENEROSITY REIMAGINED

The Big Idea: Our faith is reflected through our acts of generosity.

2 Corinthians 8:1-15

SUNDAY, MAY 29

Preacher: Rev. Shelley Cunningham  
Music: Krista Jacobson

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 1

Preacher: Rev. Shelley Cunningham

## WORSHIP Zumbro Youth Band and Strings

MAY 8

Zumbro young musicians will play the prelude at both worship services and accompany hymns. Music will be available as soon as sign ups have been made. Brass, woodwinds, strings, and percussion are all welcome. Kristy Giere | (507) 288-2649  
kristygiere@zumbrolutheran.org

## Celebrate Pentecost

WEAR RED MAY 15

Pentecost is a high festival Sunday in the liturgical church year, and the color of the day is red. All are encouraged to wear something red to church May 15 as we celebrate the ongoing life of the Holy Spirit.

## Summer Worship Hours

Beginning Sunday, May 29, worship service times change to 8:30am and 10am.

## Nursery Hours

The nursery will be open and staffed Sundays from 8:15-12:15pm and Wednesdays from 5:45-8pm through May 25. Beginning Sunday, May 29, the nursery times will change to 8:15-11:15am on Sundays, and 6-7:15pm on Wednesdays.

## Worship Outside

MAY 25

Wednesday worship moves to the patio on the SE corner of the Zumbro building. After worship, enjoy s'mores and games.



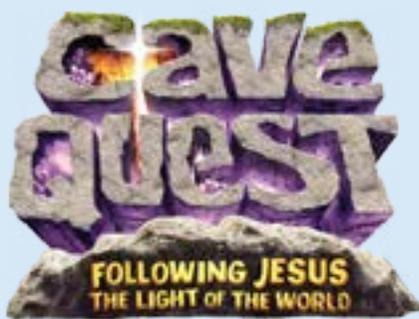
## PHOTO CAPTION

**Confirmation Class of 2016**

**Top row (L to R):** Emily Augustin, Catherine Winter, Celia Napton, Nicole Gathman, Carter Horman, Rachel Folkert, Emily Siem, Eli McGuire  
**Bottom row:** Erik Kjer, Danny Rydberg, Michael Schoenbeck, Jackson Murray, Sam Lingen, Ean Unverzagt, Taylor Badger, Blake Larson, Cort Buck  
**Not pictured:** Ben Limburg, Matt Rahman, Andrew Schneekloth

## Congratulations Confirmation Class of 2016

As 20 ninth graders affirmed their baptismal promises on Sunday, Apr. 24, they claimed their place among the great cloud of witnesses who are marked by their faith. For our confirmands, that affirmation came through discovering their gifts, finding ways they love to serve, articulating what they believe, and dreaming about where God will take them in the future. Thanks to the small group mentors, Lent mentors, parents, and congregation members who accompanied our confirmation students on their journey this year. Please continue to keep them in your prayers!



## Volunteer for VBS

Registration is open for the best week of the summer!

Visit [www.zumbrolutheran.org](http://www.zumbrolutheran.org) to register as a participant and volunteer.

## Adult Forum

SUNDAYS, MAY 1-22 | 9:45-10:45AM  
FIRESIDE ROOM

**May 1:**

Why Partnering with Iambi Hospital Matters

Rev. Lisa Kipp and the Tanzania Task Force

**May 8:**

Heaven, Hell, and the Christian Vision  
Rev. Dr. Phil Quanbeck,  
Professor, Augsburg College

**May 15:**

Is Half an Earth Enough: Wisdom from Genesis  
Rev. Dr. James Limburg,  
Professor Emeritus of Old Testament, Luther Seminary

## Planning a Baptism

SUGGESTED DATES AND TIMES  
8:30 and 10am Sunday

June 12, 26

July 10, 24, 31

August 14, 28

6pm Wednesday

June 1, 15, 29

July 13, 27

August 3, 17, 31

# Faith is Forming

Janette Reeves, Family Minister

Nine months ago we had our toes hanging over the edge, and we were prepared to take the leap. My head was spinning ... completely change the format for Sunday School and add Wednesday night ... change to the Narrative Lectionary ... write the curriculum each week to match The Big Idea ... make sure all the parents and kids understand how this will work ... communicate, communicate, communicate.

I will admit to some sleepless nights, but as I reflect back, I wouldn't change a thing. The response has been incredibly positive. Volunteers feel equipped to lead, but not overwhelmed with planning and preparation as they often were in the past.

Melanie Tschida, parent and volunteer, reflects on her experience, "As a teacher for the preschoolers, I think the new Faith Formation program has been a big improvement. I really like the fact that the kids are hearing the same story during worship and Story Time that I'm sharing with them in the small group setting. They understand The Big Idea much more easily (even with some of the more complex stories) and seem to remember them longer.

"We've also enjoyed having the flexibility to do crafts or activities that complement the story in an age-appropriate and fun way. With previous curricula, it was sometimes a challenge to tailor the activities to the preschoolers' abilities, but



PHOTO CAPTION  
Janette Reeves brings The Big Idea to Faith Formation preschoolers.

Janette's done a great job coming up with creative and easy projects for the kids to make."

The response from the kids has been terrific. They walk away each week with The Big Idea memorized and really understand what it means for their lives. Families appreciate how The Big Idea is woven through both worship and education for all ages. Parents are noticing a change in their children, and Faith Formation has shifted conversations that families are having after church and even throughout the week.

"As a parent of school-age kids, I appreciate the synchronicity for the fact that we no longer have to ask on the way home, 'so, what did you learn about in Sunday School today?' because we already know and can jump right to the discussion of the The Big Idea and what it means for us." Melanie comments.



PHOTO CAPTION  
Faith Formation students sing and dance and get their "wiggles" out before listening to a Bible story told in a child-friendly manner.

Personally, I have embraced and really grown from the opportunity to write curriculum. Digging deeper into scripture and communicating the messages to kids grades pre-kindergarten through six has really been a joyous challenge.

Change is often scary and uncertain, but it is also an opportunity to stretch and grow. Thank you for your support during this time of growth and change. I pray that each of you has been blessed by The Big Idea on some level this year.



## JOURNEY OF FAITH

# My past. My faith. My future.

Ella Napton, Century High School Senior

Zumbro has played a large role in my life from the moment I began to make memories. One of the earliest things I can remember is walking into Sunday School in the preschool room and getting my picture taken, and from then on I have made some of my best memories at Zumbro, at Good Earth Village, or on mission trips.

Growing up I felt a strong connection with God, but it hasn't always been a smooth ride. Like everyone, I have questioned why God would let bad things happen to good people, or why he would ever allow children to die so young. But having a church atmosphere like Zumbro allowed me to ask these questions and have serious conversation without any judgement, which in itself allowed my relationship with God to grow even stronger.

In this, the youth ministry at Zumbro and the various family ministers have helped create who I am today. Every Sunday School teacher I have had has shown genuine interest in how I am doing and wanted me to voice my opinion on whatever topic was being addressed. In comparison, many of my friends that attend different churches have commented that their youth ministries are lacking or non-existent compared to Zumbro's and I feel very fortunate to have this strong presence in my life.

This past year the slowly vanishing high school youth group was brought back successfully by Kris Opegard, Family Minister, (Wednesdays at 7pm, it's a great time and truly the highlight of my week) and has a solid group of students that attend. This hour and a half has become very important for me; not only does it help me make it through the school-week, but I have made friendships that will likely last a lifetime. Not only did I make strong connections at Zumbro, but at its partner camp Good Earth Village (GEV).

I attended GEV as a camper from age 5 until 16, and that week was regularly my favorite of the summer. I will forever be grateful for the summer nights spent sleeping under the stars, the Bible studies in the middle of the woods, and the days spent splashing through the creek. While exploring and strengthening my faith, I met one of my closest friends at camp whom I still talk to today. In the next few summers I hope to return to GEV, not as a camper, but as a counselor and pass on my love of worship that Good Earth Village introduced me to.

The other large component of my faith given to me by Zumbro is mission trips. From the moment I was old enough to sign up I knew I wanted to attend. I have lost count of how many I have



PHOTO CAPTION  
Ella Napton

participated in, but each and every one has had a large impact on my life and my faith. From my first experience of true volunteer work in Rapid City to working at Robin's Nest in Jamaica, I have learned to put my life into perspective and be incredibly thankful for all the amazing opportunities I have been given.

As I move on to college and attend Gustavus Adolphus College this coming fall, I know there is no chance I will lose my love for Zumbro and the important lessons it has taught me.

*(See throwback photos of some of the graduating seniors experiences at Zumbro Lutheran Church on the next page.)*





PHOTO CAPTION  
2011 Middle School Mission Trip to Kansas City: Steph and Katelin spent time working at an emergency needs pantry.



PHOTO CAPTION  
2014 Bell Ringing: Jonah and Adam have rang bells for Zumbro together for five years!



PHOTO CAPTION  
2012 Middle School Mission Trip to the Quad Cities: Mitchell, Paul, Jessica, and Kyle at the River Dogs Baseball game.



PHOTO CAPTION  
Vacation Bible School: Zac is all smiles with his friends at Zumbro.



PHOTO CAPTION  
Good Earth Village, Summer 2012: These Zumbro campers have spent many summers learning more about their faith outdoors and from each other.

## JOURNEY OF FAITH

### Graduating Senior Recognition

MAY 22

LOUNGE

Pray for, wish well, and congratulate all of the graduating high school seniors. There will be a reception in honor of the graduating seniors from 9:30-10:30am.

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### Camp Staff

Kris Opegard, Family Minister, would love to keep in touch with you. Please drop off your summer camp address in the main office. Include your name, the name of the camp, the camp address, and the dates when you will be at the camp.

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### Peer Ministry Training

WEDNESDAYS IN MAY | 6:45-8:15PM  
AND SUNDAY, MAY 15 | 12-1:30PM  
YOUTH ROOM

All newly confirmed ninth grade youth are invited to be a Peer Minister. Peer Ministry is an education of the heart that is focused on the Good Samaritan story and servant leadership.

Kris Opegard | (507) 288-2649  
krisoppegard@zumbrolutheran.org

## SENT TO SERVE

### Youth Silent Auction

MAY 1

LOUNGE

There will be a variety of baskets, baked treats, and babysitting hours to name a few of the items up for bid. All items were created by Zumbro summer youth mission trip participants.

### Volunteer Appreciation Week

MAY 15 AND 18

Join us for a small way to show appreciation to the countless ways volunteers reach out with compassion at Zumbro. Worshippers will be treated to a slideshow of photos along with a reception complete with Open Table breakfast burritos between Sunday services.

### Retirement Resources

Thinking about retirement, or recently retired? Zumbro members Paul Godtland, Dana Grimsrud, and Tim Melin offered presentations on retirement topics in 2013. Topics included: retirement perspectives, book recommendations, financial planning, and key documents. These still-pertinent presentation materials and audio recordings are available at [www.zumbrolutheran.org](http://www.zumbrolutheran.org), search "retirement."

## Action Project

Beneficiary: Lutheran World Relief Baby Care Kits

Bringing a baby into the world can be a difficult and scary thing for mothers- especially for those experiencing poverty. These kits provide the things a mother needs to care for her baby the way she hopes to. Please help by donating (one or more) of these items:

- 2 lightweight cotton T-shirts (no onesies)
- 2 long- or short-sleeved gowns or sleepers (without feet)
- 2 receiving blankets, medium weight cotton or flannel, up to 52" square
- 4 cloth diapers (flat fold preferred)
- 1 jacket, sweater, or sweatshirt with a hood, or include a baby cap
- 2 pairs of socks
- 1 hand towel, dark color recommended
- 2 bath-size bars (4-5 oz.) of gentle soap, in original wrapping
- 2 diaper pins or large safety pins

Gently used, clean items (no stains or tears) may be substituted for new ones.

All items for the above projects may be placed in the Action Box outside of the lounge.

### APRIL ACTION PROJECT UPDATE

Hiawatha Homes greatly appreciated the 48 adult bibs, fleece lap blankets, and other blankets for floor use.

Our ongoing projects: layette items for Lutheran World Relief, eyeglasses for Lions Club, beverage tabs for Ronald McDonald House, and Campbell soup labels and greeting cards for the Rainbow School. These items may be left in the drawers at the ushers' stand.

## Zumbro to Welcome Families in Need

May 22-29: Each night this week families with children from Family Promise Interfaith Hospitality Network will share a meal and spend the night at Zumbro. Volunteer to help make their stay at Zumbro warm, welcoming, and safe. Training is required for all volunteers. The next training at Zumbro is on May 9 at 6:30pm.

Vicki Erickson | [erickson.vah@gmail.com](mailto:erickson.vah@gmail.com) | (507) 990-3608

Betty Schmalz | [bpschmalz@charter.net](mailto:bpschmalz@charter.net) | (507) 285-1057

# New Members



**SCOTT NEI AND ANDREA NEW**  
They are Mayo pharmacists who are engaged to be married in May 2017.



**COLE AND TERIN SYTSMA**



**ROGER AND BETSY WILL**



**DUANE AND ROSIE MONSON**  
Duane loves old cars and Rosie enjoys crossword puzzles and reading.

## Not Pictured

JIM AND JUDY ROGERS

## April Updates

**BAPTISM**  
Esther Lucille Sandness

**DEATH**  
Eleanor "Sally" Brown

**FUNERAL/MEMORIAL SERVICES**  
Alan Calvano  
Ater D. Manyang  
Ruth E. Wilson



## Fort Bend Boys Choir of Texas Concert

JUNE 13 | 7PM

SANCTUARY

Free and open to the public. A free-will offering will be received.

## BELONGING 23rd Annual Plummer House Luncheon

THURSDAY, MAY 19 | 11:30AM-1PM  
PLUMMER HOUSE, ROCHESTER  
All women are invited. A freewill donation will be received.  
Attendees are encouraged to bring a salad to share.

## Year-End Handbell and Music Concert

MAY 15 | 4PM

SANCTUARY

Zumbro's three handbell choirs, along with other talented musicians will present their year-end concert. The choirs will be performing some of their "greatest hits" from the past year, as well as some unexpected surprises in repertoire.

## Zumbro Travelers

Zumbro members and guests are welcome on all tours. Itineraries and reservation forms are available at the ushers' stand and in the church office.

Lunch and Lock Cruise

Saturday, June 11, 2016

This historically narrated paddleboat will cruise through the Ford Lock and Dam in St. Paul and Minneapolis; a buffet lunch is included. Reservations are due soon. \$62.

# Pastor Jason's Sabbatical

I am grateful to Zumbro for granting me a sabbatical this year. I will be gone from May 1 to July 31.

About half the time I will be traveling, mostly with my family—Erica and I will spend two weeks in Scotland, and my family and I will spend about three weeks at my family's lake cabin up north. The rest of the time I will be reading, writing, and reflecting on experiences and my journey as a Christian and a pastor. I'll also be getting together with some other pastors to learn what they're doing to foster a culture of adult spiritual growth in their communities.

In order for me to focus on these things, there are a few boundaries we need to agree to for this sabbatical to be beneficial to both the congregation and to me.

1. EMAIL. I will not be responding to email and will have an auto-response directing you to people who are available to answer your questions or connect with about ministry.

2. PHONE CALLS. Call the office and Connie Saunders will point you to the right person. If it's a pastoral emergency, there is a pastor on call 24 hours a day who will help you.

3. SOCIAL MEDIA. I am also going to take a sabbatical from Facebook and other forms of social media. I will blog post occasionally at [www.jasonbryanwegner.wordpress.com](http://www.jasonbryanwegner.wordpress.com) to share some reflections and learning along the way. Feel free to check in on me this way.

4. WORSHIP. I will not be worshiping on Sundays or Wednesdays at Zumbro, but will be experiencing worship in many other places. I'm sure you will see my family from time to time because you are an important part of their lives, and they aren't on sabbatical from church. ;-)

5. WHAT IF YOU SEE ME AROUND TOWN? By all means, say "hi." I really like people, and I really like all of you! I want to know what's happening in your lives. Let's just not talk about church stuff.



Thanks again for this opportunity. I look forward to coming back refreshed and with new insights and ways for us to be on the journey of faith together.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pastor Jason".

Peace, Pastor Jason



# Pastor Vern's Health Update

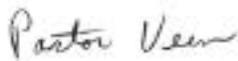
If you were in church Sunday, Apr. 10, then you heard about my recent health concerns—blurry vision, neck aches, dizziness. I had an MRI done on my brain on Wednesday, Apr. 13. It showed that I had suffered a series of mini-strokes over the past month or two.

Since then, I've been filling up my time with doctor visits, blood work, diagnostic tests, and pain meds. The main tests have been an MRI (tissue), an MRA (arteries), and a cardiac ultrasound.

They are trying to locate the source of these mini-strokes (a cardiac source is the first and biggest concern). I have no answers yet, but plenty of people are checking me out.

In my absence, Pastor Lisa will be making most of the pastoral decisions. Also, I would encourage you to pitch in and help where you can, realizing that carrying out our mission—including *reaching out with compassion*—is really the work of all the people of God.

Thanks in advance for your concern and your prayers. There is no need to keep this confidential. The more people praying for me the better. There will be more updates as they become available.



-Pastor Vern Christopherson



## Zumbro Staff

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## Newsletter Deadline

Please submit items for the June issue of the  
*Zumbro Current* by May 10, to  
zlcpublications@zumbrolutheran.org

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## Memorial Weekend

MAY 29

8AM

SOLDIERS FIELD VETERANS MEMORIAL

All are welcome as we honor and give thanks for those who have served and those who are now serving our country in military service. We will gather inside the center of the memorial for a brief reflection led by Rev. Wayne Vogt.

11:15AM

ZUMBRO COLUMBARIUM

All are welcome to gather inside the Zumbro Columbarium for a brief service in honor of loved ones who have died. We will give thanks to God for the lives of those we have lost, and be reminded of God's reassuring promise of everlasting life.

Return Service Requested  
Time Dated Material

  
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