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St. Philip's Lutheran Church

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- Companion Congregation: Bille Lutheran in Nigeria**
- Ministers: All members of the Parish**

Friend deadline:

1st Tuesday of March (3/3) for April Friend
E-mail typed copy to: meganb@splcmn.org (250 word max)



The Friend

March 2015

Come as you are to Worship, Wonder, and Work in Jesus' name!

Exclusive Allegiance

by Pastor Joel Wight Hoogheem

“Because Jesus is the Christ, he has authority to call and to demand obedience to his word. Jesus calls to discipleship, not as a teacher and a role model, but as the Christ, the Son of God.” The words of Dietrich Bonhoeffer in Discipleship stake a specific claim about Jesus, his authority, and his followers. There is no watering-down or half-heartedness that comes with the costly grace of God made known in Jesus Christ.

Jesus makes an exclusive and unwavering claim upon those called to be his followers. He does not need to explain his vision quest and strategic plan. He does not need to show off his resume or C.V. He does not have to say, “Look at all that I’ve been doing, it’s a good idea to follow me.” Instead, Jesus simply calls and that call has authority because he is the Christ, the Anointed One, the Messiah.

Bonhoeffer elaborates, “So the call to discipleship is a commitment solely to the person of Jesus Christ, a breaking through of all legalisms by the grace of him who calls... Christ calls; the disciple follows.”

This may raise some questions: What about all the other good stuff in my life? Aren’t I supposed to take care

of my family? And what about my other responsibilities, too? Is Jesus telling me to be irresponsible?

Jesus’ call seems to be a hard word if we

imagine him as a teacher or a role model. Then he has something to prove and he has to earn our trust. And if Jesus were simply a teacher or role model, we could hedge and say, “I’ll make a little space for you, Jesus, but I have to keep everything else balanced, too.”

Jesus’ call to discipleship, however, makes perfect sense when he is seen as the Christ: the one with the authority from God to call us to follow. This makes his call to follow a First Commandment issue: “You shall have no other gods before me” (Exodus 20:3). There is incredible freedom in this commandment because, when we let God be our only God and when we place our exclusive allegiance with Jesus, all the other parts and roles and responsibilities of our lives make different – and better – sense.



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“With our exclusive allegiance to Christ, everything we do becomes imbued with God’s purposes and we do not have to worry over those things that are in competition with or opposition to the call of Jesus Christ and the will of God.”

~ Pastor Joel Wight Hoogheem

This is even more than “keeping Christ first.” This is about “keeping Christ only” and trusting that God will, indeed, take care of the rest: the family responsibilities, the work, the leisure, the enjoyment, the money, the health concerns, and everything else. With our exclusive allegiance to Christ, everything we do becomes imbued with God’s purposes and we do not have to worry over those things that are in competition with or opposition to the call of Jesus Christ and the will of God.

Martin Luther famously said that there is no such thing as an atheist; that whatever a person loves the most is his or her god. And the one true God does not allow for any competing claims to this identity.

Yet what we see when we are obedient to Christ’s call to follow is that life comes into focus. Things do not necessarily get easier or more understandable, but things become more meaningful and filled with hope. And that’s why it’s such good news that Jesus chooses, calls, and claims us and not the other way around. Instead of having to figure everything out and trying to save ourselves, we simply offer our obedience and we follow him. There is incredible freedom with an exclusive allegiance to Jesus Christ. ♦

In Christ,



Letters from Sekenwa & Namsy Briska in Nigeria

Sekenwa wrote,

“Your prayers are sustaining always. We are fine. Yes, we lost extended family members; even during our convention, two were called to glory.

I am busy with teaching, preaching, counseling individuals and families, and attending conferences. ... The demand is high, time is always limited, it is overwhelming ... People are suffering, even those you see [as] healthy are suffering.

Namsy is attending Federal University of Technology in Yola, Adamawa State. She is doing accounting, doing well, at the top of the department. She lives on campus. Her classes have not been disrupted for now. Sikama, Martin and Namkama’s classes were disrupted for some weeks, but now they are back in school.

Nawayina’s job and travels were disrupted by the conflict. It has been four weeks now that they have not been


able to go out.

We thank God for His grace. God is sustaining us always. The Boko Haram want to take over the whole region and establish Islamic state or kingdom, but it is not going to be easy for them.

“Keep praying for us. We are grateful.” ♦

Namsy wrote,

“... I am really excited to let you know about my 1st semester in school. It was really fun and I love accounting. ... I want to thank you for everything, especially your prayers because I personally need it in school and so does Nigeria. Majority of the staff in our school are Muslims, and they could sometimes be religiously discriminate, cheating on our real scores. Overall my trust is in God because he alone can fight for me. I also thank God for what he has been doing in Nigeria, believing peace will reign. Thank you very much for your care.” ♦

 March 2015						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 8:30 am Worship 9:35 am Adult Forum Sunday School 10:30 am Worship	2 1:00 pm Joy Circle Prayer Group Genealogy Chair Yoga 6:00 pm Boy Scouts Worship Band Yoga 6:30 pm End of Life Wishes	3 Friend Deadline 10:00 am Staff Meeting 1:00 pm Tuesdays Together	4 8:30 am Work Crew, WOW 9:00 am Quilters 12:00 pm Lent Worship 12:30 pm Soup Lunch 6:30 pm Gr. 6-8 Confirmation Family Lenten Service Projects 7:00 pm Worship 8:30 pm Choir	5 7:00 am Men's Book Discussion 1:00 pm Lunch Bunch 6:30 pm Bells of Praise	6 6:00 pm Women's GA	7 11:00 am Boy Scouts Pack 20 5:00 pm Saturday Evening Worship
8 8:30 am Worship 9:35 am Adult Forum Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 11:30 am Comm. Chairperson Orientation 7:00 pm 9th grade Confirmation	9 9:00 am Glory Circle Prayer Group 6:00 pm Worship Band Boy Scouts Girl Scouts 6:30 pm End of Life Wishes Benevolence 7:00 pm All Comm. Meeting 7:30 pm Parish Fellowship Meeting	10 10:00 am Staff Meeting 1:00 pm Tuesdays Together 6:30 pm P & G Meeting	11 8:30 am Work Crew, WOW 10:00 am Women's Book Club 12:00 pm Lent Worship 12:30 pm Soup Lunch 6:30 pm Gr. 6-8 Confirmation Family Lenten Service Projects 7:00 pm Worship Evangelism Comm. 8:30 pm Choir	12 11:00 am 55+ "DayTrippers" 6:30 pm Bells of Praise	13 6:00 pm Women's GA	14 5:00 pm Saturday Evening Worship 6:00 pm Saturday Supper
15 President's Day 8:30 am Worship 9:35 am Adult Forum Sunday School Equal Exchange Coffee 10:30 am Worship 11:30 am Global Health Kits Assembly	16 10:00 am Columbarium Committee Meeting 1:00 pm Prayer Group 1:30 pm Genealogy 6:00 pm Boy Scouts Worship Band 6:30 pm End of Life Wishes	17 9:00 am Library Committee 10:00 am Staff Meeting 1:00 pm Tuesdays Together 6:30 pm P & G Meeting Apple iOS Group Youth Comm. Meeting	18 8:30 am Work Crew, WOW 9:00 am Quilters 12:00 pm Lent Worship 12:30 pm Soup Lunch 6:30 pm Gr. 6-8 Confirmation Family Lenten Service Projects 7:00 pm Worship 8:30 pm Choir	19 7:00 am Men's Book Discussion 6:30 pm Bells of Praise North Metro Photo 7:00 pm Winter Warm-Up Readers	20	21 5:00 pm Saturday Evening Worship
22 8:30 am Worship 9:30 am Adult Forum Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 11:30 am First Communion Class	23 1:00 pm Prayer Group 1:30 pm Knitters & Crocheters 6:00 pm Worship Band Boy Scouts Girl Scouts 6:30 pm End of Life Wishes Boy Scouts Pack 20	24 9:00 am Assemble <i>Friend</i> 10:00 am Staff Meeting 1:00 pm Tuesdays Together 3:00 pm Global Missions Mtg. 6:45 pm Board Meeting	25 8:30 am Work Crew, WOW 12:00 pm Lent Worship 12:30 pm Soup Lunch 6:30 pm Gr. 6-8 Confirmation Family Lenten Service Projects 7:00 pm Worship 8:30 pm Choir	26 6:30 pm Bells of Praise	27 6:00 pm Women's GA	28 10:00 am Family Easter Egg Hunt 5:00 pm Saturday Evening Worship
29 8:30 am Worship 9:30 am Adult Forum Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 11:30 am First Communion Class	30 1:00 pm Prayer Group 1:30 pm Knitters & Crocheters 6:00 pm Worship Band Boy Scouts 6:30 pm End of Life Wishes	31 10:00 am Staff Meeting 1:00 pm Tuesdays Together				



St. Philip's Disaster Relief

Adult Forum

A huge thank you to everyone that was involved in the St. Philip's Disaster Relief lasagna dinner and silent auction earlier this month. Through the efforts of many SPDR team and family members more dinner guests than ever were served a delicious meal, more auction items than ever were sold, and many monetary donations were received which made for a very successful event. This will enable the SPDR team members to continue to help many, many disaster victims as the journey continues.

As in the past, the funds will be used to cover fuel and lodging fees for trips, supplies, tools, upkeep on the trailers, donations to disaster victims and recovery agencies, etc. In addition, 10% of the proceeds will go directly to Lutheran Disaster Response - the disaster response ministry of the ELCA in the United States and around the world.

A note about the auction items: Thank you to everyone that donated or bid on an auction item. All auction item winners have been notified. Auction items donated or won will not show up on St. Philip's members' giving statements.

Spring trip

We are returning to Colorado this spring to continue helping with the flood recovery efforts in Boulder, Larimer and Weld Counties after the heavy rainfall in September, 2013. The trip is scheduled for May 2-10, 2015 and current plans are to stay at Heart of Longmont Methodist Church. Watch for more information regarding this trip via email or in St. Philip's publications. Contact Mike Anderson at flooddog97@gmail.com or 763-784-7977 with any questions. ♦

55 + Retirees April Event~ Church Tours & Lunch

Meet at St. Philip's on Thursday, April 9 at 9:15 am. We will travel by school bus to tour The Basilica of Saint Mary, then bus a short distance to Westminster Presbyterian Church. Both churches have an impressive sanctuary, beautiful stained glass windows, statues, and many other unique features. We will be making a donation from our group for these tours. However, feel free to bring an additional donation the day of the tour. If either church has a funeral on this date; we will try to schedule a tour at an alternate church in that area. Please wear comfortable shoes since we will be doing a lot of walking.

Due to limited seating on the bus, St. Philip's members sign up prior to non-members. Following the tours we will bus to The Holy Land restaurant, in Minneapolis, for a buffet lunch consisting of: Greek Salad, Mixed Greens Salad, Falafel, Hummus, Yellow Rice, Gyros, Chicken Kabobs, Flat Bread, Dessert, and Beverages. The all inclusive cost is \$19.00/per person. Sign up in the church office by Sunday, April 5. Please make a (non-refundable) check payable to St. Philip's Church. For questions, contact Retzers at 763-574-9559 or Schonebaums at 763-786-2483 or Kruses at 612-251-3908. ♦

Letter from the President

Ron Ackerman, Congregation President

We have just passed the torch from last year's president, Jerry Jensen, to me. I would like to thank Jerry for all his work and leadership this past year at St. Philip's. I will try and uphold his high standards.

My wife, Karla, and I have been members at St. Philip's for about 40 years. During most of that time I would classify myself as "Passively Involved". By that I meant that I was involved; some committees, ushering, garage sale and church attendance, but not actively involved in the operations and key committees of the church. Once I retired 5 years ago, I started helping with the Wednesday Men's Workcrew. I did all kinds of things I never did before, some not too good, but as you know it is hard to fire a volunteer. I consider myself a "laborer". I immediately recognized all the many talented volunteers we have, including the Women On Wednesday group. Unless you are there on Wednesdays, you don't realize how much work both these groups do and how much money it saves St. Philip's!

Two years ago, our daughter, Gina Paton, who was also a past St. Philip's president, gently encouraged me to serve as church treasurer on the board. I thought it was about time to get more involved and help with an area I was familiar with in my work life. During the past two years, I gained a real understanding of the day to day operations of the church and its financial health. As I said in my January Financial Forum, St. Philip's is very stable and 2014 "Was a Very Good Year!"

During the past two years, we have had a large turnover in staffing, both pastoral as well as office staff. I was involved in many of the exit and hiring interviews. So when Jerry's term as president was up, I thought that I could help the board and the congregation by adding continuity to

make the year run smoothly.

One of the key factors in helping me make the decision was the energy that has been generated the past few months. Every since the "Building For the Future" appeal was presented in August, the congregation's response was fantastic. The amount of money raised in such a short period of time is incredible. This was the start of the positive feelings. You can feel the energy in the air at different church functions, the conversations between services, and the very positive attitude of the members! People are happy and St. Philip's has taken on new life.

This past weekend, I attended the Disaster Relief Silent Auction and Lasagna Dinner. The number of members who volunteered many hours to put on the event and make it successful was impressive. Also there were over 340 people who attended the dinner. Again Sunday, when people were looking at the auction items and during the dinner, there was electricity in the air! I am looking forward to a very exciting and positive year at St. Philip's. ♦

January 2015		
	Budget YTD	Actual YTD
Income	\$59,905	\$64,320
Expense	(\$71,384)	(\$67,299)
TOTALS	(\$11,479)	(\$2,979)

"In our deepest longings we hear echoes of God's longing for us. And the more we can follow these deep-down desires, those that God places within us for our happiness, the more joyful we will find ourselves."

~ James Martin

"I live my life in widening circles that reach out across the world. I may not complete this last one but I give myself to it. I circle around God, around the primordial tower. I've been circling for thousands of years and I still don't know: am I a falcon, a storm, or a great song?"

~ Rainer Maria Rilke

Personalized Medicine

From Double Helix to Health Care

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During the Adult Ed session between services on Sunday, March 22, Dr. Jerry Jensen will provide an overview of how advances in the understanding of genes and their function can lead to specific individualized health care. Learn how the new advances in Genomics can lead to better healthcare for people of any age including you. ♦

## Global Missions

### *Mission Trip Opportunity*

**After prayerful consideration** the Global Mission ministry team has decided to join with the Global Missions ministry team from Faith Lutheran in Coon Rapids for mission trip to Costa Rica planned for this coming July (16-25).

Faith has had a long relationship with the National Lutheran Church of Costa Rica (ILCO). By partnering with them, and utilizing their contacts, we can make travel and have a global ministry identity sooner than later. This does not mean that we are no longer supporting our companion congregation Billie Lutheran. Quite the opposite, our financial and prayerful response to Nigeria and Billie remains as dedicated as always. Due to the growing distress and turmoil in Nigeria any travel to the area is out of the question.

On April 12th there will be an adult forum led by the global mission team and pastor Tim about this opportunity. Pastor Tim has been to Costa Rica twice and will going and possibly leading the July team as well. This event is informational only. Hopefully by April 12th more details will be available to share. i.e. projected costs and other details. If you have any questions feel free to contact Pastor Tim. ♦

## Call Committee

### *February Updates*

#### February 16

**On Monday February 16** the Call Committee met to fine tune the final copy of the Ministry Site Profile. Final revisions were made to the document after the congregational conversation with Pastor John Hulden on Sunday Feb 15. Two sections needed to be adapted for the narrative version of the document which will be available on the St. Philip's website soon. The final document will be forwarded to the Bishop's Office on Thursday. They will then put together a list of prospective candidates. Pastor Hulden is scheduled to meet with the committee on Tuesday, March 10 to give us the candidate list. Once we have the list in hand, we will do our own job of sorting and vetting and then schedule interviews. If any member or friend of St. Philip's has a prospective candidate to recommend, soon is the time to do it, since the Bishop's Office needs time to vet candidates and do background checks. The committee wants to thank all those who have provided input both formal and informal. For those who missed the meeting and would like to see the power point slide presentation, click on "Slide Presentation ..." on the Pages menu on the right side of this page. ♦

#### February 9

**The Call Committee** focused on fine-tuning its draft of the Ministry Site Profile in preparation for the upcoming congregational conversation with Bishop Svennungsen. Plan to join the conversation following second service this Sunday, February 15.

As its follow-up to Sunday's conversation, the Call Committee will meet on Monday evening, February 16. Taking Sunday's experience into consideration, final adjustments will be made to the Ministry Site Profile before the document is submitted to the synod office. At that point, the synod will begin compiling a list of possible candidates for our consideration.

Committee members look forward to these exciting next steps. We hope you will participate in Sunday's congregational conversation. You are always invited to talk directly with one of us or contact us by email. ♦

## Life Events

### March Anniversaries:

*Timothy & Deborah Kidder on 3/2 for 30 years*  
*Donald & Joyce Olson on 3/11 for 48 years*  
*Ralph & Kathryn Petersen on 3/11 for 49 years*  
*Mark & Michelle Nicklow on 3/14 for 6 years*  
*Dean & Jeanne Enrooth on 3/15 for 47 years*  
*Jonathan & Heather Rice on 3/17 for 14 years*  
*Richard & Leora Carlson on 3/18 for 65 years*  
*Ken & Carol Kidder on 3/20 for 44 years*  
*Rodney & Prisana Nelson on 3/20 for 33 years*  
*Richard & Joan Kruse on 3/22 for 40 years*  
*Joseph & Georgene Capra on 3/23 for 25 years*  
*Clem & Eva Coverston on 3/23 for 63 years*  
*Steve & Brenda Malark on 3/25 for 9 years*  
*Howard & Shirley Mosman on 3/26 for 60 years*  
*Don & Ruth Ann Allard on 3/30 for 11 years*  
*Wesley & Jeanine Grandstrand on 3/31 for 42 years*

### Baptisms:

*Lily Genette Manick on 2/1*  
*Hunter Steven Swanson on 2/1*  
*Noah Ryan Bernal on 2/8*  
*Shelby Lou Shimanski on 2/15*

## Library Committee Update

**The Library Committee** has been busy since the fall Holiday Book Fair adding many new volumes to St. Philip's Church Library. Look for the "New Books" display for exciting reading material. Many thanks go to congregation members who supported the Library by purchasing books at the Book Fair. Here are five new titles to look for.

Callaghan, Garth. *Napkin Notes*. (362/CAL) HarperOne, 2014. The author has found a new purpose to inspire parents to connect more with their children. His diagnosis of cancer prods him to slip a note into his daughter's lunch every day.

Halpern, Sue. *A Dog Walks Into a Nursing Home*. (636.7/HAL) Riverhead Books, 2013. A mutt turned therapy dog leads her owner to a new understanding of the good life.

LaMott, Anne. *Small Victories*. (248/LAM) Riverhead Books, 2014. Selected essays on hope, joy, and grace.

Landvick, Lorna. *Best to Laugh*. (FIC/LAN) University of Minnesota Press, 2014. This Minnesota author serves up another poignant but humorous story of an irresistible character Candy Pellala who says good-bye to Minnesota and hello to California.

Robinson, Marilynne. *Lila*. (FIC/ROB) Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2014. This novel is part of the author's trilogy set in Iowa. Lila abandons her homeless hardscrabble life to become a minister's wife. She struggles to reconcile her painful past to her husband's gentle Christian beliefs. St. Philip's also has *Gilead* and *Home*, Robinson's other two books in the trilogy. ♦

## Endowment Fund

YOU, too, can work for Christ now and in the future through the Endowment Fund!

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Apply for grants by April 15, 2015, to enhance the current ministry of St. Philip's. Grants will be awarded in May.

\$4,228.18 is available for grants in 2015!

Celebrate the growth of the fund through the generosity of St. Philip's members and friends carefully invested. By the end of last year, the fund had reached \$141,370!

Participate by making gifts in memory of friends and loved ones, to celebrate special occasions, and by including the Endowment Fund in your Will or as a designated beneficiary on life insurance or investments. Gifts should specify "The St. Philip's Endowment Fund."

Join the legacy circle by making gifts which cumulatively equal \$1,000 during your lifetime, or by including the Endowment Fund in your estate plan. Notify the Endowment Fund Committee when you add the gift to your estate plan.

Attend the Adult Forum April 19, 2015, and learn how the fund operates, how funds are invested and used, the goals and objectives for the Endowment Fund, and anything else you want to know. Members of the Endowment Fund committee will provide special treats.

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MEMORIALS were received in January in memory of Doris Thomasson, and a bequest was received from the estate of Anna Mae Feigal.

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Thank you!

## Greetings from Sara

Sara Quarberg

Director of Youth & Young Adult Ministries

*“How are you seeing God creating around you? Is it in nature? In families? In neighborhoods? In yourself?”*

~ Sara Quarberg

**It's almost Spring!** Maybe? I'm remaining hopeful for what is to come! I love how God works through the changing season to remind us that God constantly is creating. There's something about the anticipation of the first flowers blooming and the budding of the trees; new, fresh and beautiful. So, here we are, already into March. As we continue to journey in God's ministry together, we are becoming more and more comfortable in sharing our discontent with the world and wrestling with our questions about God, faith and life together. I wish you could all hear the questions that our young people are asking and wrestling with! God is working immensely through the passions and discontentment of our young people.

In February, we partnered with two other local congregations in our efforts to raise money and awareness to hunger. We engaged in a session with Feed My Starving Children, the Dignity Center, simulations with ELCA World Hunger and through worship and prayer. Again, our young people are passionate about serving God's creation and children! Looking forward, we will be doing some more fundraising in the coming months to support our youth as they attend Bible camp this summer and other various service/outreach events. Thank you for your continued support of our young people and their answering God's call to serve, to love and to learn deepen their faith in God.



Don't forget about Bible camp this summer! We will be attending Green Lake Bible Camp from July 19-24. More information is available at church. St. Philip's will be investing \$100 in each camper that chooses to attend. Registration is due by March 10th to Sara! Also on the horizon is our annual plant sale and Palm Sunday Breakfast. Thank you, again and in advance, for your support of our youth!

As we look towards spring, I will leave you with this one question. How are you seeing God creating around you? Is it in nature? In families? In neighborhoods? In yourself? ♦

## Children & Family Ministry

Carly Tappe, Director

### Sunday School Happenings

Our Sunday School students have been busy learning about the life of Jesus here on Earth. In February we heard stories of Jesus healing, the Transfiguration, and the Greatest Commandment. In March we will continue to read stories about Jesus and start learning more about Holy Week. We will also prepare to sing in worship on Palm Sunday, March 29 at the 10:30am worship service.

### Lenten Family Service Opportunities

This year during Lent families will have a chance to participate in weekly service projects during February and March. Service Opportunities will be Wednesday Evenings during Lent from 6:15-7:00 pm followed by Lenten Worship at 7:00 pm. Here are the Service Projects we will be working on.

#### March 4

Filling Birthday Bags (Please RSVP by Monday, March 2)

#### March 11

Making Tie Blankets (Please RSVP by Monday, March 9)

#### March 18

Feed My Starving Children (6:00-7:30 pm off site at the Coon Rapids Location) Please RSVP by Sunday, March 15.

You can RSVP each week with Carly so we know how much materials we will need for the projects. Watch your weekly email and the bulletin announcements for more information.

### First Communion Preparation

At St. Philip's we ask that parents decide when their children are ready for first communion (around 7-9 is an age that parents often choose). A sign your child is ready may be their questions about what is happening during communion in worship, or why we do it.

Classes will meet on Sundays, March 15, 22, and 29 at 11:45 am, after the second service. Parents attend with their children and we'd like you attend all three meetings if possible. First communion will be celebrated on Maundy Thursday, April 2, at 7:00 pm worship. Please contact Carly to sign-up or if you have questions.

### Family Easter Egg Hunt

Our Annual Family Easter Egg Hunt will take place Saturday, March 28 from 10:00 am - 11:30am. It will include a short worship, egg hunt, and an Easter movie for the whole family. Families of all shapes and sizes are welcome!

### Candy Needed

Candy is needed to fill our eggs. You can donate bags of "fun size" candy in the main office anytime before Sunday, March 22.

### Vacation Bible School 2015

This summer's VBS theme is Everest: Conquering Challenges with God's Mighty Power! Mark your calendar NOW for June 22-26 for an amazing week of VBS! Registration materials will be mailed out the beginning of April. ♦

