Grow in Christ! Live in Love! Share the Faith!



The Tidings

Bethlehem Lutheran Church 607 N. Maguire, Warrensburg, MO 64093

PASTOR'S PAGE

Don't Forget to Reconcile!

Easter Sunday claims the last day of March this year with joy of the greatest celebration ... but all of the month beforehand is dedicated to the season of Lent! And, of course, the tone for all of Lent is set on Ash Wednesday; especially with the prayer of recognition that the Lord despises nothing that He has made and forgives the sins of all who are penitent—asking Him to "create in us new and contrite hearts, that lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness we may receive from You full pardon and forgiveness." And that desire for deep change where needed most and the accompanying gift of forgiveness can't help but take us back to this portion of the Ash Wednesday Epistle reading: We are ambassadors for Christ, God making His appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that we might become the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:20-21).

Reconcile means "to unite again, to bring back to harmony or peace once more"—implying that something was broken or divided and in need of restoration. We can't but think back to the initial harmony that existed between the Lord and His Creation in the Garden of Eden, and how that perfect unity was shattered by our first parents' going against His will ... but also how Jesus the Christ came a long time later to restore that unity through his perfect life of obedience and sacrificial serving and restoring love. Isn't it something, though, that we Christians who so readily claim and treasure that gift of forgiveness from Jesus often aren't ready or willing to live that reconciliation to those we still have broken or strained relationships with—or receive

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PASTOR'S PAGE

(Continued from page 1)

it from them, either?! But yet, we pray: "Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us." It should not be so for those who've died and risen with Christ in baptismal life and faith, so that's what Lent calls us back to— renewed Easter living!

On Ash Wednesday, we returned to the practice of "sharing the peace" following the Confession and Absolution of our sins as a sign testifying to our commitment to do just that. We did it again during our Saturday service, but I went right past it on Sunday morning—forgetting to look at the bulletin and carrying on instead according to routine. (I'll try to do better in coming weeks!) At any rate, that's how it can be for us when we forget that reconciliation is at the heart of Christianity; "lip service" is no good unless it keeps company with "life service."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote in his powerful book Life Together:

When God was merciful to us, we learned to be merciful with our brethren. When we received forgiveness instead of judgment, we, too, were made ready to forgive our brethren. What God did to us, we then owed to others. The more we received, the more we were able to give; and the more meager our brotherly love, the less we were living by God's mercy and love.... The day of the Lord's Supper is an occasion of joy for the Christian community. Reconciled in their hearts with God and the brethren, the congregation receives the gift of the body and blood of Jesus Christ, and receiving that, it receives forgiveness, new life, and salvation. It is given new fellowship with God and men. The fellowship of the Lord's Supper is the superlative fulfillment of Christian fellowship.

So, here's to *remembering* that we are reconciled—and to living that reconciliation in every way!

+Pr. Joel

LENT 2024

KinderLent begins at 4:00 p.m. (ages 10 and under)
Join us for a meal each Wednesday starting at 5:30 p.m.
Midweek Lenten Services begin at 7:00 p.m.

The Carpenter's Cross: Making, Building, Repairing		
March 6	A Carpenter's Plow	
March 13	A Carpenter's Door	
March 20	A Carpenter's Stone	

CHURCH COUNCIL

By: Jeremy VanWey

Greetings Brothers and Sisters in Christ!

Your Bethlehem Church Council recently had our first meeting of the year since we canceled in January due to the weather. We are excited to have several new faces on your BLC Council this year. Several members of BLC leadership recently attended the E2 conference in Lee's Summit. Ideas from this conference have already been discussed. We will also be reviewing many of these ideas and how they might help us in our mission at BLC during our upcoming Council Orientation and Retreat. We used to hold an annual council orientation, but since Covid it had not happened. We are excited to bring this back and help everyone be successful in their role within BLC. Something else that Council will be working on over the next several months is a review of our Constitution and Bylaws. 2017 was the last year that we reviewed them, the best we can tell. Being good stewards and leaders of BLC, it was discussed that it might be a good time to take a look and make sure it truly reflects the way we operate and will continue to serve us in the future. If you have thoughts or inputs on that review process, please communicate those to me.

You may have noticed lots of various activities happening around Bethlehem, especially work outside. Work on the main sanctuary entrance has begun with concrete poured. We are anxious for the new rails to be installed as well. Work has also begun with the Community Garden and Trail for the season. There will be lots of opportunities to help out with this as well as enjoy it throughout the growing season.

One final thought for your consideration this month. I have been helping to start a local group—Johnson County COAD (Community Organizations Active in Disaster). The COAD is a network of local churches, non-profits, and other organizations that provide services within Johnson County. I know in the past, a few members from Bethlehem have participated in the Lutheran Early Response Team training. I know many of you have additional skills and talents and that might be relevant to this type of service in our community. If you have interest in learning more about this group and potentially representing Bethlehem in this, please contact me. I would love to visit with you more about it. Pastor Joel has attended some of the meetings and I have been heavily involved since the beginning. One of the primary goals of the COAD is to be able to help provide services to our community safe and efficient manner and avoid duplication of in forts. The COAD could be providing food, temporary shelter, supply distribution, debris removal, child care, and a host of other areas that might be needed after a disaster. The group meets every other month so it isn't a huge time commitment but will be rewarding work and you will meet and work alongside some of the great people from around Johnson County. I would love to visit with you more about it!

Thank you to all of you for making Bethlehem who we are. The many and various events, activities, and services both within our "4 walls" and in our community are making a difference. I love seeing all of you live out our mission-Grow in Christ, Live in Love, Share the Faith.

In His service, Jeremy VanWey Bethlehem Council President

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE FACILITATOR

By: Rebecca Holland-VanWey

For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things he has made. So they are without excuse... Romans 1: 19-20.

COMMUNITY GARDEN WORKDAYS MARCH 9TH & 23RD





This month I'd like to entice you to take part in our community garden, a jewel in need of polishing. As I feel compelled to take on the task of increasing community involvement in our garden, I keep coming back to the verse above, which came up in both of the Bible studies I took part in last year. Paul was making the point that God's power as Creator cannot be denied; from the beginning all humanity has understood God's role in creating the world that sustains us through its perfect design. For me, gardening is a way to connect to that beautiful design that directly feeds my body, and the bodies of my family members, with food and sunshine and air (and dirt, some of which has been directly consumed by toddlers).

Like many others, I have always been drawn to growing things for beauty, for flavor, and for nourishment, and I don't remember a time when there wasn't something growing in the yard or in a pot in the summer. Our back yard currently contains a large garden, along with milk goats and chickens, and we grow food that we eat all year. Growing our food is a way, for us, to teach our children about how to responsibly care for Creation, including both our own bodies and the earth we inhabit. And this responsibility includes learning to manage the miracle that is growing food from tiny seeds with care and patience, along with some frustration and prayer over the mystery that is dying cucumber vines 3 years in a row. (Where are my PICKLES?!?) I know from experience that gardening is very much about relating to God, and I consider Bethlehem's community garden a gem of a ministry that needs to be developed.

We will kick off the garden season with our Shine event on April 13. Please stay tuned for details about that as we plan. In the meantime, there is much to do to prepare our garden for the growing season. My vision for the garden this year is to bring various community partners together, from the Chamber of Commerce to 4H, to grow and learn and build relationships with each other with dirty hands and sweaty brows, followed by a nice salad made tastier by the shared joy in producing it. What is your vision for our garden?

MARY MARTHA GUILD

A Society of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League Darlene Laubenstein, President

The Mary Martha Guild met in February and started with a Bible Study presented by Karon Harding. The group then had their regular meeting and a White Elephant gift exchange to end the meeting. There were 13 members present.

An updated copy of the bylaws was handed out to everyone that was present. If you were not there please see Darlene to get a new copy.

The March meeting will be held on the 11th at 7:00 p.m. Pr. Joel will have a program with the group about the altar and communion. Any ladies from the congregation are welcome to join.

EASTER LILIES

The Easter season is among us and that means the Flower Committee is taking orders for Easter Lilies. If you wish to purchase a lily, fill out a form (near each entrance) and return it with your money to Penny Humphrey. You can also leave the form and money in her mailbox. Please make a donation for your lily as we don't have the definite cost. All checks need to be made out to Mary Martha Guild. Deadline is March 17.

THRIVENT



Thrivent Financial "Choice Dollars"

Members with 2023 Choice Dollars available need to designate these funds before March 31st or they will expire. You may direct your Choice Dollars to Bethlehem or your choice of another organization on the Thrivent list. Choice dollars may be designated at Thrivent.com/Thrivent Choice or by calling 800-847-4836 and when prompted say "Thrivent Choice." This past year Thrivent members provided financial support for VBS food and supplies and the Christmas Store project from the Choice Dollar Account. In addition numerous Thrivent Action Team grants provided thousands of dollars to support activities and projects at Bethlehem and other area organizations. Please contact Larry Haase if you have questions about any of our Thrivent activities. The April Tidings will indicate our next group meeting date.

FAITH OPPORTUNITIES

WORSHIP SERVICES

Saturday services start at 5:30 p.m. Sunday Services are at 10:30 a.m. You can also watch Sunday's service live on Facebook, YouTube or on the webpage at *blchurch.com*.

BIBLE STUDIES

Sunday Proverbs Bible Study—Oh, to love wisdom and live wisely! How many times have you said and thought that? Join us for our Sunday Bible study—Living (& Loving) Wisdom—which explores the book of Proverbs through the lens of the Ten Commandments and Christ "the Wisdom of God" (I Cor. 1:24. Pr. Joel is drawing from David Coe's Provoking Proverbs. **We start at 9:15 a.m.** (in the conference room).

Wednesday Bible Study—Join us at **10:30 a.m.** in the conference room. We're looking at the Apocrypha and the time between the two Testaments. Come find out what it's about.

Thursday Bible Study—Pastor Bertels is starting a new Bible Study on book of Ephesians. We meet in the conference room at **7:00 p.m.** and is open to all who have the interest and time available.

Faith Night happens on the first Wednesday of every month **(March 6)** with a simple shared potluck meal from **5:30 to 6:00** (or so), followed by a faith discussion until 6:45 p.m. We will be observing the passage of time as we head toward Lent, Easter, and beyond.

YOUTH

Sunday School is at 9:15 a.m. on Sunday mornings downstairs for ages Preschool through 12th grade. We invite all children of the congregation (and outside too) to come and be a part of this time growing together in Christ!

The Third Sunday at 3:00 p.m. the youth will get together for some fellowship, food and fun times.

CREATION SCHOOL

Join us on the first Friday of each month from 10-11 am for our faith-focused version of the trendy forest school. We'll do our best to enjoy Creation in all weather, so be sure to dress appropriately. Please invite any families with young children that you know, as the hope is to welcome all in the community into our green space.

CRAFTERNOONS

Crafternoon—On the fourth Friday from 3-5 pm, let's get together to craft! A project and supplies will be waiting for you in the fellowship hall. We'll make seasonal crafts and cards that can be shared with others and conspire to deliver them with good cheer and a visit.

FRIDAY FAMILY FUN NIGHT

Our next Family Fun Night is on March 1, at 6:00 p.m. "Everybody's Irish". Sign-up sheet for individual items is on the board near the mailboxes. Bring your favorite Irish dish or dessert.

EASTER SEASON

FA

HOLY WEEK

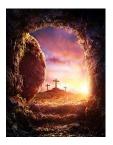
March 28-Holy Thursday (7:00 p.m.)

March 29-Good Friday Noonday Prayer (12 noon)

March 29-Good Friday Tenebrae (7:00 p.m.)

March 30-Saturday Easter Vigil (7:00 p.m.)





EASTER-HE IS RISEN March 31

6:30 am-Greet the Rising Sun/Son7:00 am-Easter Sunrise Service10:30 am-Easter Celebration Service





Altar Bread Making

Join us in the kitchen as we pray our way through the steps and make the bread to be used for the Holy Thursday Communion service. Everyone is welcome to participate on **Thursday March 28 at 5:00 p.m.**



Hot Cross Buns

The Men's Club will once again be handing out Hot Cross Buns Easter morning. The Hot Cross Buns will be made fresh from our own Green Truck Bakery here in Warrensburg. Keep your eyes open to learn more about these and their meaning for Easter Sunday.

LUNCH AND EASTER EGG HUNT



Saturday, March 30

Meet the Easter Bunny during our annual Easter Egg Hunt put on by the Fellowship Board. A light lunch will be served at 11:30 and the egg hunt will start at 12:00 p.m. Bring your Easter baskets and be ready to collect an assortment of eggs. There will also be 3 GOLDEN EGGS. The finder of those will be given a special prize.

GROUPS

EXERCISE

Join us in the Fellowship Hall for this free, low impact exercise class on **Mondays**, **Wednesdays and Fridays at 9:30 a.m.** Contact Judy Smith with any questions.

OUTDOORS

Think Spring and Another Garden Growing Season! In order to get our community gardens in readiness for spring planting, plus, make needed improvements and gear-up for an outreach event in April, we'll be having work mornings on March 9 & 23. Ron & Pr. Joel brave the cold weather while Bryce makes a groundhog.





QUILTING

The Quilting Group meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month from 9:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. (Sept-May). Anyone is welcome to help with this project. No special sewing skills needed. Bring your own lunch. If you have any questions, please contact Georgia Luker.

LUNCH BUNCH

The Lunch Bunch will meet on March 21st at the church. Join us for some fellowship and crafts. Pr. Ricky sure does love his coloring, along with the rest of the them.







MISSIONS



SPRING MISSION FESTIVAL

Our mission festival will be held the weekend of **March 9-10**. Gary Moreau, the Executive Director of Mobility Worldwide will be here as the guest speaker. There will also be a potluck dinner with the congregation after the Sunday service. **Please sign up for a potluck dish on the sheet next to the mailboxes**. After the Saturday service, we will take him to a restaurant (anyone else in the congregation is welcome to attend).

YOUTH



The church has funds available for this gathering. If you are interested, and want to attend, please let Penny or Pr. Joel know ASAP so that the registration can get in.

There will be special guest speakers Cassie Moore and Tanner Olsen. Join us for worship, main sessions together, topical break out sessions, fun recreational activities, opportunities to build relationships centered around God's Word with others in Missouri.

GROUPS

MEN'S CLUB

The Men's Club (pictured below) graciously prepared and flipped pancakes for our Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner last month.

Thank you again to Country Kitchen who provided us with their pancake mix.







SPRING CHILI AND SOUP SUPPER

Spring is just around the corner and so is the Men's Club Chili and Soup Supper. Join us on **March 9th**, beginning at **11:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.** for Chili or Vegetable Beef Soup, relishes, pies, cakes and drinks (all you can eat). If you are able to help prepare on Friday or work on Saturday please sign up on the sheet near the mailboxes.

Adult tickets are \$6 and child tickets (ages 5-12) are \$4. Tickets can be purchased at the door or from club members.



LUTHERAN HOUR MINISTRIES

LHM's Daily Devotions are currently the second result on Google when someone searches for the phrase "Daily Devotions." With the devotions continuing to increase in popularity, LHM relies on your generosity to continue to create and sustain the devotions. Our goal in expanding the reach of these devotions is that more people will hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

As part of this effort to reach more people with the Good News, we have a **challenge matching grant** that will provide **\$50,000** if generous LHM donors like you raise **\$100,000**. That means a total of **\$150,000** will be allocated towards getting these daily messages in front of new audiences.

To support this challenge grant opportunity, visit *lhm.org/devotionmatch*. Thank you for standing at the forefront with us as we continue to proclaim the Good News with a world in need.

CHURCH ACTIVITIES

FRIDAY FAMILY FUN NIGHT

















YOUTH LOCK-IN







WEDNEDAY MEALS

Join us at 5:30 p.m. each Wednesday for a meal before service











MEMBER UPDATES

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Becca Estanek Dan Lockhart Ronald Niemeyer Jerry Harding	3rd 5th	Jesse Jenkins Stacy Jenkins Penny Humphrey Galen Cobb	10th	Marion Droege Haven Smith Becky Limback Nolan Chapman	14th 16th 23rd 25th
Jimmy Smithers	5th			Melissa Tebbenkamp	30th

BAPTISMAL MILESTONES

Baptismal Milestones are published for the first year, every fifth year and all of those baptismal dates over 70 years.

Beryleen Dodson	9th
Ronald Niemeyer	16th
Judy Smith	16th
Ron Rode	29th

ANNIVERSARIES IN MARCH

Bryan & Melissa Tebbenkamp 4th

Tim & Cindy Schnell 19th

Erich & Katie Kurz 31st

ADULT CONFIRMATION

Teryn Vietor, Tom Sumpter, Juanita Holcomb, Angilia and Diana Steinmetz





















THE WANDA KREISEL FAMILY

Thank you to our church family for the kindness, support, visits, food, and prayers over the past months during Wanda's illness and death. Thank you to Pastor, for his regular visits, helping us choose Bible passages for her funeral that represented her so well, and the special funeral service and message. Cindy, thank you for coordinating with the funeral home and others, as well as putting together the bulletins and notices for the funeral home, and making copies of the service for our families. Thank you to Mary Martha Guild for providing and serving lunch after the funeral. It was great for us to have time to visit with many family and friends! Also thank you to the Bethlehem Prayer Shawl Ministry for the shawls made for each of us. They are such a kind and generous gift. God's blessings on each of you!



March 2024



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him. -Mark 1:12-13-					1 9:30a-Exercise 10:00a-Creation School 6:00p-Friday Fun	2 5:30p-Holy Com- munion
3 9:15a-Christian Education 10:30a-Holy Com- munion 1:00p-Youth Cat- echesis	9:30a-Exercise	5 11:30a-Braille in Concordia	6 9:30a-Exercise 10:30a-Bible Study 4:00p-KinderLent 5:30p-Meal Faith Night 7:00p-Lent Service	7 1:00p-Games and Card Group 7:00p-Bible Study	8 9:30a-Exercise 10:00a-Chili & Soup Supper prep- aration	9 10:00a-Garden Workday 11:00a-Chili & Soup Supper 5:30p-Worship- Mission Festival
10 9:15a-Christian Education 10:30a-Worship- Mission Festival 2:30p-Country Club and Arbors	9:30a-Exercise 7:00p-Mary Mar- tha Guild Meeting	12 9:30a-Quilting 7:00p-Church Council Meeting	13 9:30a-Exercise 10:30a-Bible Study 4:00p-KinderLent 5:30p-Meal 7:00p-Lent Service 8:00p-Choir	14 1:00p-Games and Card Group 7:00p-Bible Study	15 9:30a-Exercise	16 11:00a-Trustees' Meeting 5:30p-Holy Com- munion
17 9:15a-Christian Education 10:30a-Holy Communion 1:00p-Youth Catechesis 3:00p-Youth Get-Together	18 9:30a-Exercise	19 3:00p-Mission Board Meeting 7:00p-Elders' Meeting	20 9:30a-Exercise 10:30a-Bible Study 4:00p-KinderLent 5:30p-Meal 7:00p-Lent Service 8:00p-Choir	21 11:00a-Lunch Bunch 1:00p-Games and Card Group 5:30p-Fellowship Board Mtg 7:00p-Bible Study	9:30a-Exercise 3:00p- Crafternoons	23 10:00a-Garden Workday 5:30p-Worship
24 9:15a-Christian Education 10:30a-Worship- Palm Sunday	9:30a-Exercise 6:30p-4-H Meeting	26 9:30a-Quilting 5:15p-Education Board Meeting	9:30a-Exercise 10:30a-Bible Study 6:30p-Choir	28 1:00p-Games and Card Group 5:00p-Bread Mak- ing 7:00p-Maundy Thursday Service	29 9:30a-Exercise 12:00p-Nonday Good Friday Svs 7:00p-Good Friday Service	30 11:30a-Lunch & Egg Hunt: 7:00p-Easter Vigil Service
31 6:30a-Meeting the						

6:30a-Meeting the Rising Son 7:00a-Easter Sunrise Service 10:30a-Easter Celebration Service

He is not here, for he has risen, as he said.

Come, see the place where he lay.

-Matthew 28:6-







March

The Peace of God

Day 1 - 1 Peter 3:9-11

Day 2 – Proverbs 16:7

Day 3 – Isaiah 26:3

Day 4 - 1 Peter 5:6-7

Day 5 – Romans 12:18

Day 6 - John 16:33

Day 7 - Romans 15:13

Day 8 - Hebrews 12:14

Day 9 – Psalm 4:8

Day 10 - Isaiah 12:2

Day 11 – 1 Corinthians 14:33

Day 12 – Philippians 4:4-7

Day 13 - Colossians 3:15

Day 14 – Galatians 5:22-23

Day 15 – Romans 8:6

Day 16 – Philippians 4:8-9

Day 17 - Psalm 119:165

Day 18 - Isaiah 54:10

Day 19 - Romans 5:1

Day 20 – James 3:17-18

Day 21 - Romans 14:17

Day 22 – Isaiah 32:17

Day 23 – Matthew 6:31-33

Day 24 - Psalm 29:10-11

Day 25 - Isaiah 41:10

Day 26 – 1 Thessalonians 5:23

Day 27 – Isaiah 53:5

Day 28 - Proverbs 3:21-24

Day 29 – Isaiah 9:6

Day 30 - Matthew 5:9

Day 31 – 2 Thessalonians 3:16



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Return Service Requested



Worship Schedule:

Saturday: 5:30 p.m.

Sunday: Bible Study and Sunday School 9:15 a.m. Worship 10:30 a.m.



Near the large cross by the pulpit is basket with slips of paper, pencils, and tacks. Feel free to write down any of your burdens, worries, wrongs, and sins and tack them to the cross at any

time during this season of Lent. They will not be read but will be removed on Good Friday and burned in the Easter Vigil fire on Holy Saturday. Our Lord takes our darkness and replaces it with his light!

Mar	ch Elders	Altar Committee:
2	Jimmy Smithers	Darlene Laubenstein
3	Alan Miller	Bambi Burden
	Evan Florida	Julie Crespo
6	Rich Vanderburgh	Diana Holland
9	Jimmy Smithers	Georgia Luker
10	Willie Crespo	
		Flower Committee:
13	Evan Florida	Penny Humphrey
16	Jimmy Smithers	Lori Sloan
17	Evan Florida	
	Alan Miller	Kitchen:
		Mary Creswell
20	Alan Miller	Lynn Lowe
23	Jimmy Smithers	
24	Willie Crespo	Sound:
		Jerry Harding
28	Alan Miller	Scott Humphrey
	Rich Vanderburgh	
29	Willie Crespo	Video:
30	Jimmy Smithers	Abby Humphrey
31	Alan Miller	Zach Brown
	Willie Crespo	Gracyn VanWey
	Evan Florida	· ·