



sharing the bread of life with the hungry world

bethlehem lutheran church *newsletter*

Volume 50, Issue 4 · April 2018



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

I am excited that Easter falls on April Fools Day this year. The last time this happened was in 1945, so we are talking about a rare, once-in-a-lifetime event. April Fools Day was an opportunity to play harmless tricks on people or say outrageously funny things and when people looked annoyed or shocked we got to shout "April Fools!" I enjoyed April Fools Day. I usually tried to catch Linda or our children early in the morning before they had remembered that it was April Fools Day and say, "We are moving to Delaware" or "Wow, we just won the lottery" or something like that. Unfortunately, after years of catching them off guard, they became wise to me and I haven't done any of that recently. Maybe, they won't be expecting it now and I can get back into it.

Easter falling on April Fools Day seems very appropriate to me. The joke, of course, is at the expense of sin, death, and the power of the devil. They were so sure that they had killed off the Son of God. They were so sure that they had exercised their powers to defeat the will of God to bring grace and mercy to a broken world. They were so sure that they were in charge of what people would think and believe. They were so sure that the death of Jesus erased him from competing with their rule and their control. Now, these three could secure their positions and create havoc and chaos everywhere they went, and they could make the lives of every living thing miserable.

Well, April Fools! Jesus is risen! He is risen indeed! The joke is on anything that hopes to defy or deny God's presence in the world. Jesus' resurrection is the announcement that sin is forgiven, death is swallowed up in the gift of eternal life, and the power of the devil is broken on the wood of the cross and the empty tomb. They could not, and will not, keep the Son of God from those he loves. Not even death can do that, for God has placed life in Jesus and that life is presented to us in Word and Sacrament.

The world calls God an "imaginary friend" that we should outgrow. April Fools! God is more real than any other friend, and beyond any imagination that we might have. Through the Holy Spirit, we grow into God, and trust

in a God who gives up God's own life for us is more mature than trying to imagine that we are the center of our lives. This April Fools Day joke is the best one ever, for it means our lives have meaning and purpose and honor as children of God that brings peace and grace and power to the rest of the world in the name of the risen Lord Jesus. Happy Easter! Merry April Fools Day.



Pastor Gary



Pot Luck

Sunday, April 8, following 11:00am worship. Ovens available at 10:00am. Everyone is welcome!

QUARTERLY MEETING

Sunday, April 22, 9:50am



ÆBLESKIVER DINNER

Bethlehem's annual Æbleskiver Dinner will be **Sunday, April 22, 5:00-7:00pm.** (Seniors will be served at 4:30pm.) The cost is \$7 for adults, \$3 for children (ages 5-10) and free for those

younger than 5. This event needs many volunteers to make it work. Please consider sharing your gifts (we need cooks, mixers, dining room help, and clean-up help), donating a pan of dessert bars or Jell-O, or letting us use your Æbleskiver pan. Sign-up sheets are in the Fellowship Hall. Proceeds will go to the Youth Trip Fund. ??? Contact Vicki Newgard, 240-3905 or vnewgard@cfu.net.

LSC

LUTHERAN STUDENT CENTER

A Big Thank you to everyone from Bethlehem for supporting our Spring Break Trip! We raised \$327 during the Lenten Meal!

The week on the East Coast was amazing! We took a group of 6 students and focused on a theme of "How did we get Here?" using historical learning to influence current political discussions. We started in Gettysburg learning about the Civil War and learning about Vocation from the seminary students. We then spent two days in Washington D.C. checking out the Holocaust Museum, Museum of the American Indian, and touring the Capitol Building (running into Bill Nye The Science Guy) with Senator Grassley's office. We wrapped up the trip in Baltimore talking with local activists about the current racial tension in Baltimore City and going to the African American Museum. It was an eye opening experience for some of the students, and a great way for us to talk about how our faith can be lived out in the world. Thank you for making this trip possible and your continued support of the Lutheran Student Center.
- Jon Fry, UNI Campus Minister

Thank you!

Wednesday Night Meals

APRIL

4-Sloppy Joes, 11-Volunteer Needed, 18-TBA, 25-Volunteer Needed

We are in need of volunteers to serve a meal for Wednesday night meals on April 11, 25, and May 9. If you are able to help with a meal, please contact Heather 266-3541 or heather@bethlehemcf.net



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

May is Bethlehem's month to send volunteers to enable residents to attend worship at NewAldaya Lifescapes on Sunday mornings. Requirements: Kind hearts and good walking shoes! It helps to have 4 or more people. Plan to arrive around 9:50am by the Chaplain's office for instructions. The residents very much appreciate the kind help!

BUILDING REKEY Bethlehem has recently rekeyed the building and office doors at the church. You will need a new key to have access to the building. If you currently have a building or master key please see Rachel and we will issue a new key if you continue to need it.



A questionnaire will soon be available concerning the use of our library. We would like to determine how we use our library spaces, topics, and books. Member input will be very useful in establishing how we utilize these resources in the future. Let us know your thoughts!

BLC ANNUAL GARAGE SALE

Please start saving clean, gently used items for the Church garage sale which will be June 2. Note: We do not take holiday items or exercise equipment.



The Service Council will be pricing all sale items. ??? Contact Becky Anderson, 830-7440.



Gathering for Advocacy: April 2018

St. Paul reminded the community of the Ephesians: **“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God.”**

This changes everything!

Advocacy seeks to ensure that all people, particularly those who live at the margins or are vulnerable in our culture have their voices heard. Advocacy is not done on behalf of another group but calls us into partnership with those whose voices we wish to amplify. Each of us is called to be an advocate, to lend our voices to a cause that sparks passion in our hearts. Advocacy is a particular kind of leadership that each of us can engage in daily.

Beginning Prayer:

In your eyes, God, all life has dignity. All people are worthy of your love and care. None are left alone, none left behind: those who have no livelihood; the sick, the elderly and those with mental health challenges; the imprisoned and the migrant. All are your children, equally worthy of your blessings, and, in turn, equally worthy of the advocacy of the people of God.

Christ is our voice in the world. Show us, Lord, how to love our neighbor and care for the ones lost to the flock. Jesus spoke so that we might understand. He taught, so that we might learn. He acted, so that we might effect change in our lives and the lives of others. And he gave his life so that we might live in the grace of God. Jesus’ Spirit remains with us moving us to look with different eyes, hear with the ears of one who loves their brother and sisters and act to ensure that life is protected in every way.

As your church, we stand as one, asking for the protection of those who cannot protect themselves. We pray for justice for those who have no voice. In your name, we pray. Amen.

God’s Story – Scripture

Read Isaiah 1:17. Take a few minutes to reflect on the verse.

Next, read this quote: “Don’t ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive and go do it. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive.” – Howard Thurman, theologian and civil rights activist

Discussion:

What is God calling us to do in the Isaiah verse? What are some ways you can live that out? What makes YOU come alive? What are your passions in life?

Are there places where God’s calling and your passion overlap? What ways can you use your passions to live out God’s call to care for the oppressed?

Connect:

When people attend the ELCA Youth Gathering, they become a part of one of the largest servant organizations in the country, a movement calling people to use their passions to service alongside others. For those going to Houston the movement doesn’t end after your day of service! We are called to continue and invite others into this movement in our own neighborhoods by using the skill of advocacy.

Engage:

Use the ELCA Advocacy toolkit as a jumping point for advocacy work found here: elca.org/en/Resources/Advocacy#Toolkit. Choose a cause and write that organization a letter asking how you can be part of that group’s work.

Sending Prayer: (Portions attributed to Martin Luther King Jr.)

God of compassion, “We need leaders not in love with money but in love with justice. Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about the things that matter.” Let our voices not be silent but used to speak up for those who cannot be heard. Guide our actions and our voices to bring justice for all into this world. In your name, we pray. Amen.

Excerpts from the ELCA 2018 Youth Gathering Bible Study

In addition to sharing in the Bible study as young people prepare for the ELCA Youth Gathering, one of the ways that Bethlehem is an A++ congregation is the financial support we offer. The Æbleskiver Dinner offers a chance for our junior and senior high youth to serve people as they dine, show their gratitude for the congregation’s support, and receive some financial support for this faith forming trip.

Thank you – Keep Calm and Eat Æbleskiver.



B.L.Y.M.P. & FM4000 NEWS!

Bethlehem Lutheran Youth Ministry Programs
& Family Ministry at 4000 Hudson Road



Elementary Youth Group
Sunday, April 8
12:30-1:30pm

Following potluck, friends, Kindergarten-5th grade, are invited to join Debbie for continued Easter jubilee through devotions, activities, and games. ??? Contact Debbie Burroughs, 239-7498.



Sr. High Youth Group
Sunday, April 8
Noon-2:00pm

Join Theresa during the church potluck with games and fellowship time following. ??? Contact Theresa Elverum, 277-3306.



Church Softball League

A team meeting and practice dates will be set soon for all female and male team members 16 and older. Games will be Monday nights May-August at the Birdsall Softball Complex, Cedar Falls. ??? Call Butch Naber, 239-0286.



Æbleskiver Dinner

Jr. and Sr. High Youth, please plan to help with the **Æbleskiver Dinner Sunday, April 22** as a service to our congregation and fundraising for the Youth Trip Fund which supports the coming Youth Gathering. **Sign up** on the Æbleskiver Dinner poster in the Fellowship Hall to volunteer for the shift that works best for your family. ??? Contact Sue Jorgensen, 404-3942 or Theresa Elverum, 277-3306.

Jr. High Youth Group Service Opportunity



We will be helping our Bethlehem crew serve Community Meals on **Tuesday, April 17, 4:30-6:00pm** at First United Methodist Church. **(Arrival around 4:15 would be best.)** It is very *important* that we know who is coming, so we can plan for appropriate tasks such as carrying trays, serving food or drinks, or light clean up. Parents may drop their kiddos off, but they are also welcome to stay and help; we just need to know they will be doing so. Helping with Community Meals is a great way to learn about serving others in our community. ??? Contact Sue Jorgensen, 404-3942.



It's time to sign up for summer church camp! Currently the Bethlehem Youth Trip Fund provides camperships for half of the cost for a full-week program up to \$300. If you need help finding a specific camp, have questions, and/or need to set up a campership payment, contact Robin, robin@bethlehemcf.net or 266.3541. See Robin about camp volunteer and staff opportunities as well.



Bidding begins Sunday, April 22 for the Silent Auction hosted by our Youth Gathering group with profits going toward their trip. Auction items still are welcome and should be dropped off in the Church Office by April 15. ??? Contact Ellen Hermanson, 573-0719 or Dorothy Heine, 290-1290.

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April 2018

Upcoming Events

Easter & Easter Breakfast fundraiser	April 1
Gathering Parent mtg.	April 4
Gathering families serve Fellowship Hour	April 8
Elementary Youth Group	April 8
Sr. High Youth Group	April 8
Gathering Youth & Leader mtg.	April 15
Y&F Min. mtg.	April 16
Jr. High Youth Group	April 17
Silent Auction	April 22
Æbleskiver Dinner	April 22



ELCA 2018 Youth Gathering

Meetings: Parents will meet April 4, 6:30pm.

Youth and Leaders will meet April 15, 12:15-1:45pm. Lunch will be provided.

Fundraising: Easter Breakfast, Fellowship Hour, Silent Auction, Æbleskiver Dinner, Cookbook



Thank you to all those who shared recipes for the new

Bethlehem Cookbook! It is being printed now, and will be available for purchase, \$15 each, soon. Profits will go to the Youth Trip Fund.



A++ Congregation This month we thought our Gathering group would share some thoughts on why the monthly Gathering Bible Studies have been meaningful in our faith formation as we prepare for Houston.

We hope that you are finding these Bible Studies useful in your home life, mission council, and/or small groups as well.

The preparation for the Youth Gathering has really helped me figure out what kind of need there is in Houston.

Our Bible studies taught me that self-image is the best protection from harm. I also learned from the last Gathering and in preparing for this one that some people aren't as fortunate and need help to stay on par with the rest.

The Bible studies have made me learn more about what I need to watch out for like human trafficking. It also helps me understand more about the Bible and other things dealing with the church.

It's nice to have these Bible studies and to learn these lessons with my friends so that we can all be better prepared for this fun trip!

Coming to the Bible study helps me when I go home or to school to think about God - knowing God is with me and that I can help in the world.

These Bible studies have allowed me to get a deeper understanding of hardships that people have in my city and far away from me. It has also been a great way to connect with other people that are going on the trip!

The Bible studies have helped open my eyes to some of the problems people face in Houston.

The Bible studies show and guides me to become a better person for me and for others.

The Bible studies help me learn more about people in the world and make me a better person.

The Bible studies help me connect with the group that is going to Houston while learning about real issues going on in the world.

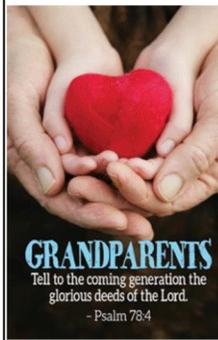
When I come to Bible study it gets me out of the house. And my friends here along with Pastor make me feel special.

Bethlehem has a ministry of Blessings and Milestones that helps us mark life transitions, important parts of our daily lives and recognize the presence of God in our lives. This month we celebrate two.

Blessing of Snowbirds



In the spring, we like to recognize the return of those who have been wintering elsewhere. We hope this time of blessing during the Sunday, April 22 worship hours will be one of celebration as we welcome our friends and family back to our community.



Grandparents Milestone

Sunday, April 29, we will celebrate grandparents, as they have been a blessing to so many. Grandparents have often helped form faith in many by the power of the Holy Spirit through personal, trusted relationships.

Wednesday Night Ministries

Resume Wednesday, April 4

Supper 5:45pm

Celestial Choir 6:15-7pm

Cherub Choir 6:30-7pm

Confirmation Class 6:30-7:30pm

Chancel Choir 7-8pm

Worship at the LSC 8:30pm

Faith & Learning Mission Council



Adult Bible Studies

We offer several opportunities for adults to engage the Bible and talk about God's continuing work in our lives.

Sunday Morning Bible Study takes place between morning worship services. Meet at 10:00am in the Church Library. We will be looking at the new ELCA Draft of the Social Statement on Women and Justice. ??? Contact Pastor Gary, 266-3541.

Friends in Faith meets Sunday, **April 15**, 6:30pm in the Church Library. We will discuss "Fierce: Women of the Bible and Their Stories of Violence, Mercy, Bravery, Wisdom, Sex, and Salvation," by Alice Connor. Bring a snack to share and a beverage. ??? Contact Linda Hedding, 464-7279.

Adult Bible Study will meet, Tuesday, **April 24**, 7:00pm in the Church Library. We will have conversations on a Rob Bell Bible Study. ??? Contact Pastor Gary, 266-3541.

Men's Bible Study Breakfast meets Saturday, **April 28**, 7:30am in the Church Fellowship Hall to study the gospel reading appointed for worship the next Sunday. Join us for bagels, orange juice, and coffee

QUILT 'N CRAFT Will **NOT** meet in April.



JOYFUL TIMES GROUP



What is Joyful Times? It is a social get-together for members of Bethlehem Church who are of AARP age or empty nesters. You don't have to be retired to join in the social times, as some things are scheduled in the evening or on weekends.

UPCOMING OUTINGS:

- Saturday, April 21, 4:00pm, 52nd annual "Spring Fling" presented by the Shellrock Music Association. ??? Contact Jody Elliott, 268-1758.
- Friday, May 4, Inge Schminke will serve a European lunch and give a talk on the war and occupation and modern-day Austria. The cost is \$20 per person. ??? Contact Kathy Timmer, 610-2241.

**NEVER A DULL MOMENT FOR
THE JOYFUL TIMES GANG!**

Confirmation resumes Wednesday, April 4.



BookBeat

April 2018...In the Season of Easter... For children there is *An Easter Hunt*, a hide-and-seek story. Each page contains a picture to hunt, as the Mom in the story teaches the meaning of Easter to the children. Also for children, is a DVD of *The Three Trees*. It is about three trees who each have dreams of their own about what they are to become. Disappointed at not becoming what they want, each eventually have their own unique way of interacting in Jesus' life and ministry. For teenagers to adults, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* is a passport into magical lands and enchanted happenings, which mirror Easter in many ways. Also for adults is *Martin Luther's Easter Book*, a book of passages from Martin Luther's Easter sermons. The sermons explore events from Holy Week through the Resurrection. Finally, families will find *Before and After Easter, activities and ideas from Lent to Pentecost*, a fun-filled book with many things to do, sing, and read. Find all of these books and many others in the library or on the bookshelves by the classrooms.



Young Adult & Campus Ministry

Lutheran Student Center
2616 College St., CF

February Ministry Schedule



Pints of Grace: Tuesdays, 7:00pm
at Pepper's, 620 East 18th, Cedar Falls
Pints of Grace is a ministry with young adults, 18-30 years old, where fellowship and conversations of faith are enjoyed. Come relax, enjoy a soda or beer, and gather together as brothers and sisters in Christ.

LSC Worship: Wednesdays, 8:30pm

LSC Coffee House: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8:00pm.

Enjoy free coffee, smoothies, cookies, music, and fellowship at the LSC.

Contact Jon Fry, UNI LSC Campus Minister, Iscuni@uni.edu, or visit www.lutheranstudentcenter.org

The Lutheran Student Center is an ELCA partner in ministry with Bethlehem and St. John Lutheran churches.



WHAT ARE THRIVENT CHOICE DOLLARS?

THRIVENT FINANCIAL Let's start with the basics: what is Thrivent? Thrivent Financial is a financial institution serving Christians, whose tag line is "Connecting faith and finances for good."

One of the ways that Thrivent tries to support Christian congregations and other organizations is through Thrivent Choice Dollars. The way they do that is by having individuals who have financial contracts with Thrivent designate where they want Choice Dollars to go. Choice Dollars are allotted to individuals on the basis of the value of the contracts they own. You can go on line or contact your Thrivent agent and select Christians organizations to receive your allotted Choice Dollars. Bethlehem Lutheran Church is a registered recipient of Choice Dollars. The congregation council of Bethlehem has designated all Thrivent Choice Dollars for the first half of 2018 to support youth attending the ELCA Youth Gathering in Houston, Texas. If you haven't selected a recipient for your Choice Dollars, please consider designating Bethlehem as your recipient.



DONATE NOW

Use your smartphone to scan the QR code or go to bethlehemcf.org and click on "Give Online" underneath the Worship tab.



319-226-3541

office@bethlehemcf.net

CHURCH OFFICE STAFF

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INQUIRER'S CLASS

Each spring we hold an Inquirer's Class for people who want to learn more about the life and ministries of Bethlehem Lutheran Church. This year the class will begin at 10:00 am, Sunday, April 8 and continue April 15 and 22.

We talk about our understandings of the Christian faith and how it affects our daily life. We talk about the Lutheran understandings of the faith. We talk about the mission of Bethlehem and the way we bring that our mission to life through our organization and the various ministries. We talk about the way in which the Vibrant Faith Framework guides our ministries for the sake of proclaiming Jesus as Lord and serving the neighbor in his name.

Some people who take the class may decide to become members of Bethlehem on Sunday, April 29.

If you are interested in this spring's Inquirer's Class, please let Pastor Gary know in person or contact him at 319-266-3541 or pastorgary@bethlehemcf.net. We would love to share the Bread of Life with you.

Sunday worship with Holy Communion
8:30am & 11:00am
Nursery available 8:15am-12:15pm
Pastor: Rev. Gary Hedding
Church office phone: 319-266-3541
Office hours: Monday-Thursday, 8:00am-3:00pm
Friday, 8:00am-Noon
Email: office@bethlehemcf.net
Website: www.bethlehemcf.org
****Newsletter deadline: April 15****
Bulletin deadline: 9:00am Thursdays

EASTER SUNDAY

APRIL 1

Sunrise Worship 6:30am

Traditional Worship 8:30am

Contemporary Worship 11:00am

Easter Breakfast 7:15-8:15am

ÆBLESKIVER DINNER

Sunday, April 22

5:00-7:00pm

Adults \$7, Children \$3, Under 5-Free
(Seniors will be served at 4:30pm)

