



sharing the bread of life with the hungry world

bethlehem lutheran church *newsletter*

Volume 48, Issue 3 · March 2019



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



Finding Light in Darkness

We begin our Lenten journey on Ash Wednesday, March 6. Bethlehem's Lenten theme this year is *Finding Light in Darkness*. Our ritual on this day includes the placing of ashes in the form of a cross on our foreheads as we hear the words spoken

"Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return." Not only does this ritual remind us of our mortality, but more importantly, the promise given to us by the risen Christ on Easter-nothing separates us from the love of God, not even death. The 40 days of Lent invites us to walk closer with Jesus while deepening our faith.

Over the years, I have had different responses to Lent. As a child growing up, I was surprised to learn that not all protestant faith traditions incorporate Lent as part of their faith practices. I remember Catholics ate only fish on Fridays, which meant fish sticks were served at the school cafeteria every Friday. I tried different Lenten practices, including giving up certain foods like soda or chocolate. Then I found out Sundays did not count during Lent, so I gave myself permission to eat some chocolate after church. I really missed the point about giving up something during Lent.

Lent is a time for us to pause, take inventory on our own life and ask, "Are there some things I need to

change in my life in order to live the full life God wants for me?" Lent is a time we can "repent," turn around, face a new direction, and make things right again with God's help. My friend Allan Storey says, "Repent believes we can change even when we think we are stuck forever in our ways. Repent is an encouraging whisper, inviting us to: 'begin ... begin again ... just begin ... just take one step ... you can start again ... you can start again.'"

One Lenten season, when I was looking for new Lenten disciplines, I discovered the following words of Pope Francis.

Do you want to fast this Lent?

- Fast from hurting words and say kind words.*
- Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude.*
- Fast from anger and be filled with patience.*
- Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope.*
- Fast from worries and trust in God.*
- Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity.*
- Fast from pressures and be prayerful.*
- Fast from bitterness and fill your heart with joy.*
- Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others.*
- Fast from grudges and be reconciled.*
- Fast from words and be silent so you can listen.*

Blessings to you on your Lenten journey. I look forward to our midweek Lenten services as we will hear the reflections members have written about the time they found God's light in darkness.

Pastor Audrey

Lenten Resources

Thank you to the members who contributed reflections for the Lenten Journal. Unfortunately, we were unable to secure 46 writings to complete the journal. However, the writings will be read at the Wednesday evening services. Pick up other Lenten devotional booklets in the gathering area by the Welcome Table.



CHURCH POTLUCK

Sunday, March 3
following 11:00am worship

Ovens available
at 10:00am.

Everyone is welcome!



Ash Wednesday Worship

Wednesday, March 6
7:00pm

Finding Light In Darkness

**Mid-Week
Lenten Services**



Join us for our mid-week Lenten Services. Our liturgy and music will include Holden Evening Prayer and Taize worship. Join us for a potluck* meal at 6:00pm with 7:00pm Lenten Worship following.

March 13

Potluck Meal

Finding Light through an Illness

March 20

Potluck Meal

Finding Light through Difficult Relationships

March 27

Potluck Meal

Finding Light through Job Challenges

April 3

Lasagna Dinner Fundraiser

Finding Light through a Faith Community

April 10

Potluck Meal

Finding Light through Death

Nursery Volunteers



Nursery Volunteers are needed:

- 1st service (8:15-9:30)
- Education Hour (9:30-10:45)
- 2nd Service (10:45-12:00)

We need qualified volunteers to cover the nursery on Sunday mornings. Bethlehem's Safeguarding God's People Policy must be completed and approved to be a qualified volunteer. Please contact Heather Schneider, heather@bethlehemcf.net, to fill out appropriate paperwork and/or to volunteer your time. Screened volunteers may use the sign-up sheet in the Nursery to schedule a time to help.

We continue to seek candidates for the office assistant staff position. In the meantime, we appreciate office volunteers to assist with answering the phone and small tasks. Please call the office if you are able to volunteer.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED March is

Bethlehem's month to help the residents of NewAldaya Lifescapes each Sunday morning pushing wheelchairs for residents to attend the 10:30am worship.

Four or more people to help each Sunday morning would be greatly appreciated! If you are able to volunteer, plan to arrive outside the Chaplain's office by 9:50am. A sign-up sheet is available on the Welcome Table in the Church Lobby. ??? Contact Marie Gregersen, 296-6875 or June Belz, 859-4258.



CALLING ALL ACTORS & ACTRESSES



"Objects of the Cross", a drama that portrays different witnesses around the cross, will be included in our Good Friday Worship Service, April 19, 7:00pm. We are seeking people to fill the following parts: 4 women, 5 men, 1 narrator, and 1 drummer. Lines do not need to be memorized. One rehearsal will take place during Holy Week. Please let Pastor Audrey know if you can participate, pastor@bethlehemcf.net or 266-3541.

THANK YOU for your kind words and cards following the loss of my sister, Joyce. It was very much appreciated. -June Belz



THANK YOU to our Key Volunteers Julie Alexander, Stephen Becker, Barb Davison, Karen Dowell, Sue Jorgensen, Connie Liljegren, John Liljegren, and Anna Rogers, who continue to help in the church office during this time of office staff transition.



EASTER FLOWERS

We would like to continue the tradition of remembering loved ones at Easter. You are welcome to donate *any amount of money* in memory or honor of family and friends. All donations will be used to purchase flowers for our Easter worship. Using the envelopes provided, place your memorial/honorarium in the clear locked box on the Welcome Table by April 7. Names of those honored or remembered will be included in the Easter bulletin. Please make checks payable to Bethlehem, with "Easter flowers" clearly marked in the memo. ??? Contact Kathy Timmer, gustimmer@cfu.net.

LASAGNA SUPPER FUNDRAISER

**Wednesday, April 3
6:00pm**



Members of Bethlehem's Service Mission Council will serve a Lasagna meal. Proceeds will go to the Job Foundation. This local organization for youth is committed to ending financial disadvantage, especially repeat financial poverty. Students earn money for their school grades, behaviors and attendance in school. A free will offering is encouraged. All are welcome!

WEDNESDAY NIGHT MEALS

It is appreciated and helpful for planning to have volunteers sign up early to help serve pizza for our Wednesday night meals during the months of April and May. Sign up on the bulletin board near the kitchen. ??? Contact Heather, heather@bethlehemcf.net.



SAVE THE DATE!

EBLESKIVER DINNER

Sunday, April 28, 5:00-7:00pm

MISSION FORWARD TEAM

The Mission Forward Team is continuing its listening tour of church groups and individuals. Join us in preparing to call a new pastor through prayerful reflection, bible studies, cottage meetings, phone calls, and thoughtful conversations about the most meaningful dimensions of your church life and hopes for the future of our congregation. These conversations will provide the basis for the team's revision of the mission and vision of the congregation as we head into the call process with our priorities identified. Thank you for the many caring conversations we have already had. If you haven't had the chance to participate yet or have more input to provide, please join an upcoming cottage meeting or talk with a mission forward team member.

MFT plans and dates to take note of:

March

- Continue cottage meetings
- Conduct phone calls to congregants who have not participated in cottage meetings
- Conduct survey of the congregation
- Draft mission, vision, core values statements
- Draft any structural changes
- **Key dates:** Education hour forum and Bible study - see page 6 for more details.
→MFT meeting dates: March 3, 10, 31, at noon

April

- Host 1-2 forums
- Finish any data collection
- Write reports
- Present to congregation at quarterly meeting
- **Key dates:** April 7: Education hour forum
→MFT meeting dates: April 7, 28, at noon

May

- Host forum on May 5 during Education hour

June

- Report to council
- Hand off to call committee

Please contact any member of the MFT at any time with questions, concerns, dreams, or ideas. You can provide us your thoughts through the forums, cottage meetings, surveys, in person, over email, via written documents available in the narthex, via the website, or by phone. We are: Becky Chittenden, Theresa Elverum, Zach Engbrecht, Carissa Froyum Roise, Reg Green, Jack Gregersen, Ellen Hermanson, Terry Kestner, Linda Mixdorf, Erica Nelson, Adam Reilly.



BURNING PALMS
Sunday, March 3
9:45am

Ash Wednesday's ritual of marking ashes on the forehead as a reminder that we are dust and to dust we shall return is a solemn beginning to the Lenten season. One of Bethlehem's traditions is preparing for this ritual through the burning of palms, which in the past was lead and guided by Freda Lovejoy. To honor her gift of service and continue this meaningful tradition, we will burn palms Sunday, March 3, during the education hour. Join the Sunday School students in the Church Lobby near the south entrance at 9:45am as Kathy Timmer and Pastor Audrey Lukasak carry on this tradition.



First Communion Class

Saturday, March 30
9:30-11:30am

Parents (grandparent, godparent, aunt, uncle) and children are invited to attend our First Communion Class at the church. At Bethlehem, we believe Holy Communion may be taken when parents feel their child is ready to receive Holy Communion. Pastor Audrey Lukasak and liturgical artist, Dawn Deines-Christensen will co-teach this class. Along with Pastor Audrey's theology, ritual, and practices training, Dawn will lead participants in an experiential learning

time by helping each individual make their own paten and chalice for Holy Communion. Older members of the congregation who have not yet participated in this class may also sign up. Please sign up by March 13 on the Milestones and Blessings Ministry bulletin board in the southeast corner of the Fellowship Hall or contact Pastor Audrey, 266-3541 or pastor@bethlehemcf.net.

Our First Communion Milestone will be celebrated on Maundy Thursday, April 18, 7:00pm during Maundy Thursday worship.

Class participants of 2018 pictured.





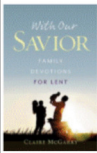
B.L.Y.M.P. & FM4000 NEWS!

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

LENTEN RESOURCES

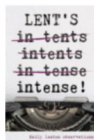


Each side of this cube offers a Lenten prayer and an offering suggestion. When Easter arrives, the colorful box is now ready for prayers and offerings throughout the Easter season.



Put your faith into action and have fun while doing it as you celebrate your Lenten tradition individually or together with family and friends.

Take an intentional moment each day to look at the effect Lenten observance is intended to have in our present lives.



BEER & HYMNS

**Sunday, March 31
3:00pm**



Join us to sing some favorite hymns, have a beer or soda, and enjoy fellowship with Bethlehem members and friends at Second State Brewery, 2nd and State Streets, Cedar Falls. Snacks also will be served. ??? Contact Karen Dowell, dowell.family@cfu.net or Vicki Newgard, vnewgard@cfu.net.

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Upcoming Events

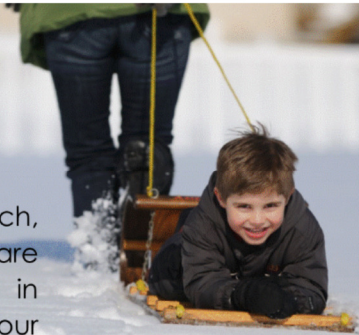
Elementary Youth Group	March 3
Y&F Council Mtg.	March 18
Beer & Hymns	March 31
Pints of Grace 7:00pm	Tuesdays
LSC Worship 8:30pm Wednesdays	March 6, 13, & 20
LSC Coffee House 8:00pm	March 5, 7, 12, 14, 26, & 28

ELEMENTARY YOUTH GROUP

**Sunday, March 3
12:30pm-1:30pm**

Following Potluck lunch, kids and their parents are invited to go sledding in the church yard. Bring your snow clothes and sleds.

Hot cocoa and marshmallows will be served following. ??? Contact Debbie Burroughs, 239-7498.



THANK YOU!

Bethlehem Lutheran Church's 2019 Collection

raised:

\$1,080

Thanks to your efforts this year, more dollars have been raised, more lives have been changed and the nation has seen the impact of people working together to help those in need. Thank you for working to transform the time around the Super Bowl into the nation's largest celebration of giving and serving.



February 3, 2019

Summer Church Camp

Bethlehem recognizes camping ministry as a partner in ministry that brings opportunities for life in Christ that are different from congregational and home church. Many youth have been nurtured in faith through camping ministry, some becoming church leaders and pastors.

Bethlehem supports camping ministry through our annual Endowment gift, through our

Unified fund, sending youth to Confirmation Camp, and through fundraising efforts for the Youth Trip Fund.

Camp isn't just for youth!

Opportunities for adults and families also are available: camp nurse, camp grandparent, family camp, day camp, and more.

Early bird discounts for some camps go through the end of February. The average cost for a week of church camp is more than

\$475. Currently the Youth Trip Fund provides half of the cost for summer church camp up to \$300. See Robin about campership payments to camps.

Follow the path to Church Camp:

- Choose a camp and program.
- Sign up early for registration discounts.
- Arrange campership payment with Robin, 266-3541 or robin@bethlehemcf.net.





WEATHER ALERT As a reminder, if the Cedar Falls schools are closed or dismissed early on a Wednesday due to weather, all Wednesday night activities at the church will be cancelled.

BETHLEHEM KNITTERS & FRIENDS

All those able or wishing to knit or crochet prayer shawls and scarves are welcome to join Bethlehem members and friends in the Church Library Wednesdays, 12:30pm. ??? Contact Judy Hill or Nancy Tibbetts.



The Joyful Times group for BLC members and friends of the AARP or "empty nester" ages, meets 9:30am on the 3rd Wednesday of each month for coffee fellowship and to plan activities for future months. The next meeting is Wednesday, March 20. Contact Jerry Mohling, 240-7571.

We are planning ahead for the new performance at the Spring Fling in Shell Rock, 2:00pm, April 7. Use the sign-up sheet on the Church Welcome Table and pre-pay for tickets, \$15 each, by March 1. ??? Contact Jody Elliott, 231-7023. All are welcome.



DO DAY

If you can tie a knot, you are qualified to help at Do Day. Tuesday, March 12, 9:00am. All are welcome to meet in the Church Fellowship Hall to tie quilts for Lutheran World Relief. ??? Contact Barb Davison, sbdavison@cfu.net.

FOOD BANK

Bethlehem continues to support food insecure people through the Northeast Iowa Food Bank (NIFB). Non-perishable food items and personal care products are welcome. All items may be placed in the big green NIFB can in the Fellowship Hall. Bethlehem's January contribution was 83 pounds which they can turn into 59 meals. Thank you! ??? Contact Becky Anderson or Theresa Elverum.



CONFIRMATION CLASS



Sunday, March 3, 10, & 31

5:30pm

??? Contact

Pastor Audrey, 266-3541.



***No children's**

Sunday School

March 17

Adult Bible Studies

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

Mission Forward Bible Study, Part 3: *A View from the Mountain Top: What might God's vision be for us here at Bethlehem?* This study ties into the conversations we are encouraging on who we are as a congregation, where we have been, and where we want to go. Part of the dreaming will be about creating a place for those needing a nursery on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings. This is one of several studies we have been doing and will continue in the months ahead. This study will be offered in the Church Library: **Sunday, March 3, 9:45am** and **Tuesday, March 5, 6:00pm.**

Sunday Morning Mission Forward Forum During Lent we will focus on "Finding Light in Darkness" and guide the work of the Mission Forward Team. We have invited different members of the community and various missions we support financially to lead us in discussion. This forum will take place in the Church Library, **Sundays, March 10, 17, 24, and 31, 9:45am.** Speakers and mission themes include: a police officer, a college campus minister, faith traditions, addiction/mental health, and financial insecurity.

Friends in Faith meets Sunday, **March 17, 6:30pm**, bring a snack to share and a beverage. We will be reading through chapters 1-2 of the book *Shepherds of Souls: Faith Formation Through Trusted Relationships* by David W. Anderson. Order a book at www.milestonesministry.org. ??? Contact Diane Kestner, 277-2469 or tdk325@hotmail.com.

Men's Bible Study Breakfast meets Saturday, **March 23, 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 while we study. ??? Contact Scott Davison, 486-6914.

NEW OFFICE STAFF

We welcome Diane Bowman

to our Bethlehem Staff. Diane is our new Business Assistant and will share some of the Administrative Assistant duties, too. Diane lives in Cedar Falls with her husband. They have two grown children and a grandchild as well. Diane also works part-time as secretary at First Christian Church in Cedar Falls. In her free time, Diane enjoys theater and teaching scrapbooking and cardmaking. Stop by the office to say hello.



CONTACT INFORMATION If you are moving, or if you have changed your phone number or email address, please contact the church, 266-3541, or office@bethlehemcf.net, so we can stay in touch with you.

Freda Lovejoy's new address is: 2751 Salem Circle, Marion, Iowa 52302.



UNIFIED ACTIVITY JANUARY 2019



Income: \$29,790 YTD

Expenses: \$24,597 YTD

\$5,193 YTD

2019 Mission Plan Total: \$363,893



OFFERING Some BLC members choose to share their offering directly through financial institutions. If you have elected to give through this means, please double check and contact the church office so we may appropriately enter your contribution.



GIVING MADE EASY

Scan the QR code or go to bethlehemcf.org and click on "Give Online" underneath the Worship tab.



YOUNG ADULT & CAMPUS MINISTRY

Lutheran Student Center
2616 College Street, Cedar Falls

March Ministry Schedule

Pints of Grace

Tuesdays, 7:00pm

Pepper's, 620 East 18th, CF

Pints of Grace is a ministry with young adults, over 18 years old, where fellowship and conversations of faith are enjoyed. You're welcome to have dinner, an appetizer, a drink, or just hang out.

LSC Worship

Wednesday, 8:30pm

*No LSC Worship Spring Break, March 20.

Supper preceding, 7:30pm

LSC Coffee House

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8:00pm

*No LSC Coffee House Spring Break, March 19 & 21.

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

The LSC is a partner in ministry with Bethlehem and St. John Lutheran churches. ??? Contact Jon Fry, UNI LSC Campus Minister, Iscuni@uni.edu or www.lutheranstudentcenter.org.



319-226-3541

office@bethlehemcf.net

CHURCH OFFICE STAFF

Audrey Lukasak - Interim Pastor

507-358-6924, pastor@bethlehemcf.net

Robin Souhrada - Director of Faith Formation

robin@bethlehemcf.net

Heather Schneider - Ministry Coordinator

heather@bethlehemcf.net

Diane Bowman - Business Assistant

office@bethlehemcf.net

STAY CONNECTED

www.bethlehemcf.org

#blcsharing

[www.facebook.com/pages/](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Bethlehem-Lutheran-Church-ELCA/)

Bethlehem-Lutheran-Church-ELCA/

451552121584266?ref=hl

Sunday worship with Holy Communion
8:30am & 11:00am
Nursery available 8:15am-12:15pm
Pastor: Rev. Audrey Lukasak
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: March 15****
Bulletin deadline: 9:00am Thursdays



**Mission
Forward
Team**

Cottage meetings continue. Sign up at the church to participate as you are able.

Call Committee nomination forms are due.

MFT Bible Studies: Sundays, 9:45am

*Mid***WEEK**
Programming
Beginning March 13

Supper
6:00pm

Cherub Choir
6:15pm

Celestial Choir
6:15pm

Lenten Worship
7:00pm

Chancel Choir
Following worship

*Finding Light
In Darkness*

**Ash Wednesday
& Wednesday Lenten services
begin March 6, 7:00pm**



**Potluck Suppers
begin March 13, 6:00pm
All are Welcome!**