

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

February 2021 BEACON

LIVESTREAM WORSHIP is available on the Bethel Facebook page.

From Pastor Kent's Desk

Throughout my career, my guitar skills and youth ministry focus have caused me to be branded as "non-traditional." However, it should be obvious, to anyone who knows me, that my love of History would also include a reverence for Tradition! My biggest problem with traditionalism is that it perpetuates practices while losing touch with the history behind those practices!!

The month of February 2021 has two BIG traditional dates in the weeks ahead. February 14 is Saint Valentine's Day and February 17 is Ash Wednesday. Following that, we have the TRADITIONAL observation of the "40 days" of Lent! All three of these February events are BIG DEALS to me!

St. Valentinian was a 3rd Century (200-299 A.D.) Christian priest who defied an imperial decree by continuing to perform marriages for Christian soldiers in the Roman army. He was martyred for his faith by being first beaten with clubs and then beheaded! Did you know that? Will you remember this while you are card shopping for your loved ones?

Ash Wednesday begins a solemn period of 40 days, reminiscent of the 40 days that Jesus spent in the Wilderness being tempted by the Devil, the 40 years that Israel wandered in the wilderness before being allowed to cross the Jordan River into the Promised Land, and the 40 days and nights of rain in the time of Noah through which the earth was purged of its accumulated wickedness and given a chance at a new beginning!

Likewise, we come together to receive the imposition of Ashes, to remind us of our mortality and frailty, and to dedicate ourselves to 40 days of reflection, repentance, and renewal! For my entire life, Lutheran Christians have set aside Wednesday nights in Lent for worship and the study of God's word.

So, as we stand at the threshold of this "tradition rich" period of the Church Year, I find myself wondering if anyone will show up??!! Over the last 20 years I have served small-town/rural congregations with average Sunday attendance in the 75-100 realm. Over those same 20 years the Wednesday Lenten service attendance was less than 25! Can we do better than that?? Are you willing to try?

I know that Jesus said, "Wherever 2 or 3 are gathered in my name there I am in the midst of them..." but what about the rest of the congregation??

So, can we try an adjustment? With no choir rehearsals and only 2 confirmation students, let's meet for Lenten services at 6:00 pm. (There would be REQUIRED ATTENDANCE AT ALL LENTEN SERVICES for Confirmation students.)

I would like to make this change because over the years, older church members have often told me that they are not comfortable going to church after it gets dark. A 5:30 pm start is too early for working folks...perhaps 6:00 pm will be the magic number!!

The Bottom Line is that I am willing to try ANYTHING to bring us together for worship!! We will certainly livestream on our Facebook page for all who cannot come, but I continue to assert that we need to come together.

Traditions die when people no longer participate in them...Churches die for the same reason!

January 10, 2021 Church Council Minutes

(to be reviewed at the February Council meeting)

Present: Allen Redman, JoAnne Schwarz, Jeff Jacobson, Greg Carolus, Sherry Brouwer, Marilyn Ingalls, and Pastor Wallace

Call to order by President Redman, "In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen."

Devotions: None

Approval of the Agenda: Additional New Business Agenda item. 1. Bibles for the 4th graders. Motion to approve the revised agenda, seconded and approved.

Approval of the December Minutes: Motion to approve the December minutes, seconded & approved.

Approval of the Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Dudley presented the Treasurer's Report. Advised that payments were made to Amy Truax for playing the organ on December 24th, Pastor Craig for officiating the service on January 3rd and Jackie Craig for playing the piano that same date. Motion to approve the Treasurer's Report, seconded & approved. Treasurer Dudley also had a question about paying CCLI for Copyright coverage. Secretary Jacobson agreed to call CCLI for clarification.

Pastors Report: Pastor Wallace reported that he had a good vacation. He advised that before Christmas he visited Bill and Irene Senne in their home. Others were contacted but preferred no visit due to COVID-19.

Ministry Team Reports:

1. Children & Youth: No meeting
2. Outreach & Fellowship: No meeting – Marilyn reported that she purchased 38 Christmas cards and sent them to members.
3. Property Committee: No meeting. Greg Carolus advised that he contacted Harken Lumber and they need to paint the new door that goes to the parsonage.
4. Worship & Music Ministry Team: No meeting
5. Social Concerns: No meeting
6. Mission/Benevolence Ministry Team: No meeting

Old Business:

1. A letter from Jim Schwarz referencing the diminishing number of acolytes. Jim offered suggestions: #1. Continue as we are. #2. Work with the two acolytes that we have, and they serve every other Sunday or serve Communion Sundays and the ushers are responsible for the other two or three Sundays. #3. The ushers assume the candle lighting responsibility. It was decided that Pastor Wallace will talk to the confirmation students.
2. Annual Meeting Agenda – There was a discussion about adding to the annual meeting agenda a need for hiring a part-time secretary that could work 2-3 days a week. It was agreed that this item would be added for discussion and a decision made by members.

New Business:

1. Bibles for 4th graders. A discussion about presenting the 4th graders and other eligible youth a Bible that have not yet received a Bible. Pastor Wallace advised that he would take care of identifying the eligible youth, purchasing the Bibles, and presenting them.

Motion to adjourn, seconded & approved.

Closing Prayers/The Lord's Prayer

Submitted by Jeff Jacobson, Recording Secretary

Hey Bethel Lutheran Kids – BIG or Little!

Kid's Sunday School reconvened at Bethel Lutheran Church on January 10, 2021.

In this new year, we continue to study Heroes of the Bible, but are moving out of the Old Testament into the New. Our first hero is John, Fisherman, Apostle of Jesus and writer of five books of the Bible: The Gospel of John, First John, Second John, Third John, and The Book of Revelation. John is remembered as the youngest apostle, only apostle not martyred for his faith, Son of Zebedee and Salome, and brother of James, (who was another of the Twelve Apostles). Most of our information about John comes from all four gospels.

John (in The Gospel of John), writes of seven miracles:

- 1) Turning water into wine in Cana. (John 2: 1-11)
~Shows He came to take us from the stone cold and empty way of man's religion into a living and joyful relationship with Him.
- 2) Healing an official's son in Capernaum. (John 4: 46-54)
~Shows we are saved by grace through faith.
- 3) Healing an invalid at the Pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem. (John 5: 1-18)
~Shows our own futile works are insufficient to save ourselves. We need Him to save us.
- 4) Feeding the 5,000 near the Sea of Galilee. (John 6: 5-14)
~Is a demonstration of His supernatural care and provision for those who seek Him.
- 5) Walking on the water of the Sea of Galilee. (John 6: 16-21)
~Shows that because of His miraculous power, we can easily accomplish things through Him that would be all but impossible on our own.
- 6) Healing a blind man in Jerusalem. (John 9: 1-7)
~Reveals that if we'll allow it, He can cause even the spiritually blind to see and believe.
- 7) Raising dead Lazarus in Bethany. (John 11: 1-45)
~Is a promise that all who believe in Him will live even though they die, and those who live and believe will never die.

So rather than studying John The Apostle and moving on to the next hero, we are expanding our study of John, by learning about these miracles. What's the point?...

John answered that question near the end of his gospel account, when he said, "Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and that by believing you may have life in his Name." John 20: 30-31

Amen!

Kids are a very **important** part of The Body of Christ! Please pray for their spiritual growth, and that we may add to our number!

Rebecca Wallace

Organized Prayer for Bethel Families

Week of February 7 – Dennis & Bonnie Gerloff, Dale & Jenny Hansmann, Terry & Janet Mennen

Week of February 14 – Jim & Eileen Lupkes, Dan & Nancy Hemann, Henry & Janice Gerloff

Week of February 21 – George Miller, Perry & Adrian Bernard & family, Jeff & Pam Jacobson

Week of February 28 – Bill & Jackie Hager, Vern & Marilyn Ingalls, Kyle & Mary Rice & family

Worship Assistant Schedule for February--Worship Service 9:00 am

	February 7	February 14	Ash Wednesday, February 17 6:00 pm	February 21	February 28
USHERS					
ORGANISTS/PIANISTS	Janet Mennen/Sharleen Hubbard/Jill Pliner				
ALTAR GUILD	Sharleen Hubbard/Janet Mennen				
ACOLYTES	Evan Palmer	Ava Mann		Gavin Bernard	Corryn Mann
COMMUNION ASSISTANTS	Greg Carolus Jeff Johnson		Greg Carolus Jeff Johnson	Greg Carolus Jeff Johnson	

January Summary of Attendance and Financial Contributions

	Attendance	Bene./Mission	Current	Parsonage Improvements	Operation Cornerstone - Tuckpointing
Sunday, January 3	29	\$107.83	\$1,452.47	\$0.00	\$0.00
Sunday, January 10	45	\$156.83	\$2,397.47	\$0.00	\$0.00
Sunday, January 17	43	\$121.50	\$1,780.50	\$0.00	\$0.00
Sunday, January 24	55	\$94.00	\$1,323.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
January 1-January 24, 2021		\$480.16	\$6,953.44	\$0.00	\$0.00

February Birthdays

1 – Terry Drewelow	16 – Erica Marlette
1 – Lee Van Hauen	19 – Eliza Buss
1 – Arlo Williams	20 – Brittany Buss
3 – Janelle Gorter	21 – Karol Ellermann
8 – Carol Warneka	23 – Joel Buss
9 – Deb Walters	23 – Doralene Renken
10 – Jeremy Buss	27 – Peggy Miller
12 – Klint Knock	28 – Mitchell Olson
13 – Blake Carolus	29 – Brooke Paulson
14 – Dennis Muller	

February Anniversaries

14 – Jeremy & Jennifer Buss (26)
14 – Kent & Rebecca Wallace (22)

February 2021 Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 6:00-7:00 pm Confirmation 7:30 pm Adult Bible Class	4	5	6
7 9:00 am Worship/Holy Communion/ World Hunger Sunday	8	9	10 6:00-7:00 pm Confirmation 7:30 pm Adult Bible Class	11	12	13
14 9:00 am Worship 10:15 am Sunday School 10:45 am Church Council	15	16	17 6:00 pm Ash Wednesday Communion Service (attendance required for Confirmation students) 7:30 pm Adult Bible Class	18	19	20
21 9:00 am Worship/Holy Communion/ Noisy Nickels 10:15 am Sunday School & Adult Bible Class	22	23	24 6:00 pm Lenten Service (attendance required for Confirmation students) 7:30 pm Adult Bible Class	25	26	27
28 9:00 am Worship 10:15 am Sunday School						

BLCW: The Thank Offering boxes are in your box in the narthex. We will have our Thank Offering Sunday in November.

Beth Van Lengen, Treasurer

Email: bethelparkersburg@gmail.com
 Website: www.bethelparkersburg.org
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Please check your mailbox in the Narthex for your:

- **2020 Annual Statement of Contributions**
- **2021 offering envelopes**