



The Good News Break

Evangelical News of Bethany Lutheran Church

We INVITE all; We GROW in faith; We GO to share God's love and

Vol. 24 Issue 23

www.bethanyricelake.org

715-234-9028

March 2024

Bethany Spot Light "Into the Light"



A young man stands on a deserted road and contemplates his life. Even as he stares into the unknown, there appears over his head, a Light which illuminates his path. He realizes that this is the Light of God...and suddenly he is not alone. This is the motivation of an inspiring watercolor painted by Bethany Lutheran Church member Leni Sovacool. It is being featured as the cover of the 2024 Lenten Devotional Booklet with entries written exclusively by

parish members of every age.

Leni and her husband, Dave, live in Chetek. She taught painting classes locally and also displayed her artwork in as many as 12-14 shows annually when she was a member of Art Guilds in both the Ashland, WI, and International Falls, MN, communities. She adds that creating watercolor paintings have been a passion since childhood, when she was living in Muskegan, Michigan.

"I had rheumatic fever when I was 5 -years-old," Leni said. "During my recovery, I had lots of time on my hands, and found I was very attracted to crayons. I was motivated by various shades of color." From that point, it was a natural jump to watercolors. She was impressed by those who created stained glass and ceramic pieces, but spent most of her time becoming a self-taught artist by painting with watercolors. "I didn't know what was going to come out of my paintbrush," Leni said, "but it certainly was exciting." She painted "Into the Light" over eight years ago when a Bethany member requested that she put one of her works on display in the church alcove. It took weeks to create the image of the young man poised on a wooded path, contemplating his future. "He is walking toward the Light," Leni said, "as it brightens his path. I decided to title it: 'Into the Light.' Leni said she also loves to paint animals, mostly dogs. She believes that by peering into the eyes of beloved pets she is given a portal into their souls, where she often discovers loyalty, companionship and joy. In the same way, she paints lake homes and cabins in the woods, complete with windows, which symbolize an entry into the heart of the owners, and a variety of flowers, which symbolize the center of the soul.



Lent Services Wednesdays Feb 21—Mar 20
Noon (meal-12:30pm)
6:30PM (meal-5:15pm)

be the change

**Palm Sunday/
Passion
Sunday**



Experience the joy of
“Hosannas” to the sorrow of
“Crucify Him” as a cast of
members brings the story to
life through the reading of the
Passion Story according to
St. Mark

Sunday, March 24
8 & 10am

Congregation Breakfast
Served 8:30—9:45am

Maundy Thursday

Join in Holy Communion as
we experience the Last
Supper through scripture,
meditation, and prayer.

Thursday, March 28
Noon and 7pm



Easter Weekend

Saturday, March 30 5:30pm
Experience our Risen Lord!

Sunday, March 31 8 & 10am
Pr. Arthur will deliver the Easter
message. Easter music will
include Organ, Brass, Bells,
Tympani, Choir and the
“Hallelujah Chorus”.

Congregation Breakfast
Served 8:30—9:45am



Good Friday

Experience the
sorrow of Good
Friday with the
“Gathering at
Golgotha”,

a dialogue between Mary,
the mother of Jesus, Mary
Magdalene, Peter & John.

Friday, March 29
Noon and 7pm

Stations of the Cross
Gathering Room
Noon—3:30pm

**Christ is risen!
He is risen indeed!**



“Believing and Seeing”

Augustine is arguably one of the most important figures in early Christianity. He was a priest, bishop and theologian who served the North African community of Hippo Regius in the 4th and 5th century. Two of his works, *City of God* and *Confessions*, are still read and taught in our own day and age. His insights on grace influenced the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century. In fact, Martin Luther was spiritually formed and exposed to Augustine’s writings when he became a part of the Augustinian Order as a monk. There are many insights from Augustine’s writings that have blessed me in my journey of faith. Here is an example. Augustine once wrote, “faith is to believe what you do not see; the reward of this faith is to see what you believe.” As you can read for yourself, he says more in one sentence that many people can write in a book!

Faith in the Christian tradition teaches us that God brings life where there is death. For Christ followers, we exclusively center ourselves upon this truth in Holy Week. How Jesus was betrayed by one of his own, suffered at the order of Pontius Pilate and died upon a cross at Golgotha outside of Jerusalem’s city gates. Once he died, he was buried in Joseph of Arimathea’s tomb. On the third day, some of his followers came to the tomb and found it empty – only then to be greeted by the resurrected Jesus. We believe in the events of Good Friday and Easter. To be sure, we remember Jesus’ death and resurrection. We believe in Jesus’ death and resurrection. We structure our religion and life around Jesus’ death and resurrection. But the truth is that none of us were an eyewitness to the events of Holy Week. We did not see Jesus’ death or his resurrection. But as Augustine rightly points out, we are rewarded for what we believe but cannot see. In the end, we will see exactly what we believe. Christians believe that God brings life where there is death. This teaching is at the core of the events of Good Friday and Easter.

While we will never see the original Good Friday and Easter morning, we will see reflections of it. We see this gift every year. Consider the power of winter. Everything lies dormant as the earth in a state of death. But then comes the warmth of spring. (*next page*)

Life returns – animals awake from hibernation, birds return to build their nests, green returns to the vegetation and warmth fills the land. As a reflection of Good Friday and Easter, we see life where there is death in the changing of seasons.

We also experience Good Friday and Easter in the course of our earthly lives. Over the course of our lives we will experience many Good Fridays and many deaths. These include job loss, illness, broken relationships and the loss of loved ones. Inevitably after such a time, Easter and new life emerges for us. When we find the new position, heal from our illness and move through our grief, we see the pattern of God – God brings life where there is death. All of this is a foretaste of the feast to come. Sooner or later, we will all face the hour of our own death. When that moment occurs, we do not know what new life of resurrection will look or feel like but we know we will see it in all its glory! Augustine is right. Faith is to believe what you do not see; the reward of this faith is to see what you believe. Join with your Bethany family as we remember Jesus' journey from Good Friday to Easter this Holy Week. Don't forget as you faithfully remember God's pattern of bringing life where there is death, you will see and experience that pattern for yourself. Easter is so much more than a day on a calendar. It is how God works. Believe and you will see what God is doing all around you. Jennifer and I wish you all a blessed Easter. ~ Pr. Arthur
But I trust in you, O LORD; I say, "You are my God." Psalm 31:14

Church Council News

Happy St. Patrick's Day! I am sure that there are many of Bethany's Members that can't wait to celebrate the Holiday of the O'Green. Well as a young lad, I cut myself and all the Irish bled out. I would like to thank the Church Council for electing me as President for this year. Audrey Kusilek turned over the meeting on the 11th, and the Council elected Tammy Roberg as Vice President, and Jodi Babineau as Secretary. Wendy Markgren and Joe Erickson were elected to serve again as Co-Treasurers. While we have the "titles" we are only a small part of the leadership of Bethany. Council members picked what committees they would prefer to be assigned. Organization tasks are done and now we are ready to take on the work of our Church. Please feel free to reach out to one of us if you have questions, we work for you. ~ Mike Diercks, Council President

A Message from the Stewardship Committee

The Stewardship Committee would like to thank each of you for your prayerful consideration to Grow 10% in your Giving for 2024! We also want to offer our thanks to those of you who utilize Simply Giving to contribute your gifts to the church and have either updated your increase online or contacted the office to assist with this. With the start of the new year sometimes this update is missed and if you find your gift contribution does not match your pledge, please reach out to the office to assist with this update or access Simply Giving online to check your contribution amounts and make sure that 2024 is selected.

As we continue our journey through Lent, we are reminded that Lent is the season that the church has set aside for us to intentionally reflect on our relationship with God, others, and ourselves. It is a time to reflect on those things that bring us closer to God and others as well as those things that may alienate us from God and others. Lent is a great stewardship season as well. It's a season of prayer, restraint, and self-giving. Lent invites us to reflect on what it means to be a follower of Jesus and how we can live that mission every day.

Some people choose to "give up or sacrifice" something for Lent as a way to reflect on the sacrifice Jesus gave to us by giving his life to save us from our sins. Have you ever thought about adding something to your life during Lent like a new spiritual discipline? Some of these disciplines may include: a special daily reading, a centering prayer daily, volunteering for the less fortunate, performing random acts of kindness, visiting our homebound members, helping a neighbor, giving generously of time, talents, and treasures, and so much more. By adding these disciplines to your life, you may find that you have begun to take away or give up other things in your life. By being stewards to our communities, congregation, families, and ourselves it also allows us to grow our spiritual relationship with God.

We wish you all a blessed Lenten season and may it lead you on a path of spiritual growth as you reflect on what it means to be a follower of Jesus.

~The Stewardship Committee~



“Many hands make light work”

– I am not sure who said this but over and over again at Bethany we see amazing results when we come together to serve others. Our **“Reaching Out Team”** brings members together to prepare and serve a meal after a funeral service. This tradition has been part of the celebration of life for many years, and Bethany continues to offer this tradition of caring for our loved ones while they grieve.

Bringing people together to share a meal is more than a way to nourish the body. It offers an opportunity to express comfort and care to those who have lost a loved one. In 2023 there were eleven funerals that also brought people together over a meal. And each time family members expressed how important and comforting this time was for them. Breaking bread together often times provides an opportunity for family members to receive support and care from others.

Each meal served has twenty volunteers who work in the background to set up tables, prepare a meal, contribute salads and desserts, serve the meal, and clean up. Help with this ministry within the church is welcomed whenever you have the time. Announcements for upcoming funerals are sent out via email and contain a link to an online sign-up. If you can meet any one of the needs at anytime throughout the year – you will have helped to make a difficult time for someone a bit less difficult. Thank you to Gail Weber, Annette Messner, Sue Finstad, and Brenda Myre for coordinating and managing this important ministry. When you see the sign-up come to your email – consider signing up.



Hannah Circle
assembling
41 Hospice Kits
that will be given to
Global Health
Ministries

Join a special congregational project during Lent!

The members of Naomi Circle are asking for some help with the collection of items that will become “Personal Care Kits” for Lutheran World Relief. Personal Care Kits helps those impacted by poverty, natural disasters, conflict, and more to maintain their personal hygiene. They provide dignity and hope to those who are in dire need. A description of the value of personal care kits from the Lutheran World Relief says it best: “Cleanliness may not actually be next to godliness, but it certainly helps a person feel more human. When families find their homes destroyed, or must flee for their safety, soap and a towel rarely make the cut for what they can carry. Arriving in a refugee camp or other place of safety, they are scared, vulnerable and dirty from the travel. The simple items included in a Personal Care Kit provide much-needed self care, critical germ-fighting supplies and the chance for our neighbors in need to regain dignity amidst fear and uncertainty.”

The following items can be placed in the collection box in the Narthex through Palm Sunday: Lightweight bath towels (between 20”x40” and 52”x27”, dark color recommended), metal nail clippers, sturdy combs, and bath size bars of soap (8-9 oz). Please donate NEW items only that are free of any religious, military, or patriotic words and/or symbols.

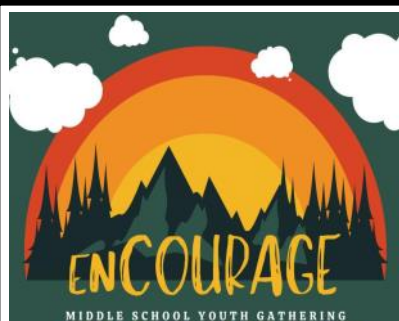


The simple items of a **PERSONAL CARE KIT** can bring both hygiene and dignity to those suffering trying times.



Founded in 1945 by Lutherans in the U.S., Lutheran World Relief is an international aid and development organization that partners with communities to help them develop productive and stable economies, improve resilience in the face of a changing climate, and respond to natural disasters and humanitarian crises.

Youth Happenings



Middle School Youth Gathering

Who: 5th –8th Graders
When: Saturday, April 13
8:00am-4:30pm
Where: Bethany Lutheran
Cost: \$25/person

Registration Info was emailed out in February. Contact Angie Buchli with any questions.

First Communion Classes

Sunday, March 24, 2024
11am-1pm (lunch provided)

These special classes are designed to support on- going learning by exploring the stories, rituals and images of this meal. We request a parent or another adult to attend class with each child. Students will receive their first communion milestone on Maundy Thursday, March 28, 2024 at the 7:00pm worship service.

The classes are open to all children 3 years and older. We highly encourage students to attend a First Communion class sometime between age 3 and 3rd grade. However, please

know that you, as parents and guardians, have the primary responsibility to determine when your child should begin receiving Holy Communion.

TO REGISTER, CONTACT
ANGIE BUCHLI BY
SUNDAY, MARCH 10.

If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Arthur or Angie Buchli.



Club 9

March 3* --"To strive for justice and peace in all the earth." (Movie Day)

*Date/time may change if we go to movie theater.

KWIK TRIP CARD SALES

The NOLA group will be selling Kwik Trip cards between services on Sundays. You can also purchase them from Angie during the week. We purchase Kwik Trip gift cards at a 5% discount. You buy the cards at face value. The cards can be used for fuel and groceries.



Youth Happenings



Club 9 Community Service Scavenger Hunt

On February 11, Club 9 students and mentors participated in a Community Service Scavenger Hunt, where instead of going out and finding things, they had to go out into the community and do a variety of service activities. Some of the things they did were handing out flowers, left positive uplifting notes on vehicles and in restrooms, helped people carry groceries, put quarters in carts at Aldi, gave people \$5 Kwik Trip gift cards, and more. They had a great time spreading kindness in the community!

Committee Spotlight ~ Caring Community



Caring committees can be the heart of our congregations. Bethany's Caring Community committee provides innovative services that let our congregation members and friends know they are valued. We are called to serve one another. Bethany's Caring Community meets once a month. We have "care teams" that are ready to respond to specific needs and requests from our

congregation that include:

Meal Team: Make a meal for special need – new baby, death, illness...

Respite Care: Help for the caregiver – a chance for the caregiver to get away for a short period of time.

Household Help: Yard work, light repairs.

Grief: Follow up companions – letters are sent out to a family member on the one-year anniversary of a death.

Card Writing: To write and send cards to homebound and people in need. Cards are sent out weekly.

Hauling and Moving: Trucks to help haul and move items and people to help with moving.

Homebound Communion: Volunteers visit and bring communion to homes, assisted living facilities or nursing homes. This is for members when temporary or permanent limitations prevent them from attending worship services.

Reaching Out Funeral Luncheons: Organizes and serves funeral luncheons.

Prayer Ministry: Prayer requests are emailed to Bethany's prayer warriors.

Prayer Shawls: Hand knit shawls are given to injured, grieving, sick and those in need of comfort.—Knitters needed!

The Caring Community coordinators have done the work to put the lists together. Bethany members— We need your eyes and ears open to let us know who could use our help. Listen and watch for those among us who need us. We will make the connections and put a team into action. Please let Pastor Arthur, Pastor Sue, the office, or a Caring Community member know if you know of someone who could use our help. Caring Community Team: Gail Weber, Pastor Sue, Monica Berkseth, Paulette Hanson, Kathy Swenson, Shirley Peterson and Pauli Storm. If you would like to be added to a team list to help, please contact the office or Gail Weber.

Gifts ~ Thank You ~ Reminders

Altar Guild

In memory of Alice Johnson

- By: Adrian & Kathleen Hendrickson
- By: Donna Sockness
- By: DeWayne & Sue Finstad
- By: Don & Karen Brown
- By: Gwendolyn Paulson
- By: Karen Brohaugh
- By: Hokey & Carolyn West
- By: John & Nancy Mommsen
- By: Ray & Gloria Vaughn

General Fund

In memory of Alice Johnson

- By: William & Nancy Wright
- By: Hugh & Karen Mommsen
- By: Ruth Gerland

In memory of John Mongerson

- By: John & Nancy Gerber

Hannah Circle

In memory of Loraine Calkins

- By: Jan Poetke
- By: Bob & Carol Stanonik
- By: Barb McCarty Conley

Memorial Fund

In memory of Loraine Calkins

- By: Steven & Pamela Heiden

In memory of John Mongerson

- By: Theresa Rahn

In memory of Alice Johnson

- By: Shirley Berghold
- By: Dan & Alice Helgeson

Radio Fund

In memory of Alice Johnson

- By: Carol Barfknecht

Reaching Out

In memory of Pr. Leila "Lee" Haight

- By: Lee Haight Family

Quilting Fund

In memory of Loraine Calkins

- By: Lloyd & Sylvia Leitz

Stained Glass Fund

In memory of John Mongerson

- By: Norm & Margaret Engstrom

In memory of Pr. Leila "Lee" Haight

- By: Robert & Deb Aaron

Women of Bethany

In memory of Alice Johnson

- By: Dwight Johnson
- By: Tom & Patty Shervey
- By: Roxie Olsen
- By: Sandy Bonneville
- By: William & Lynn Musser
- By: John & Ronda Haley
- By: Lisa Hoeft
- By: Phil & Paula Klacan
- By: Dave & Sonja Wilson
- By: Gary & Susan Schettle
- By: Polly Tabbert
- By: Steven & Barbara Gaynor
- By: Jill Holtegard
- By: Don & Pauli Storm
- By: Joan Pajula
- By: Shawn & Kimberly Hanson
- By: Rick & Patti Gaynor
- By: Linda Norby Simpson & Dean Simpson

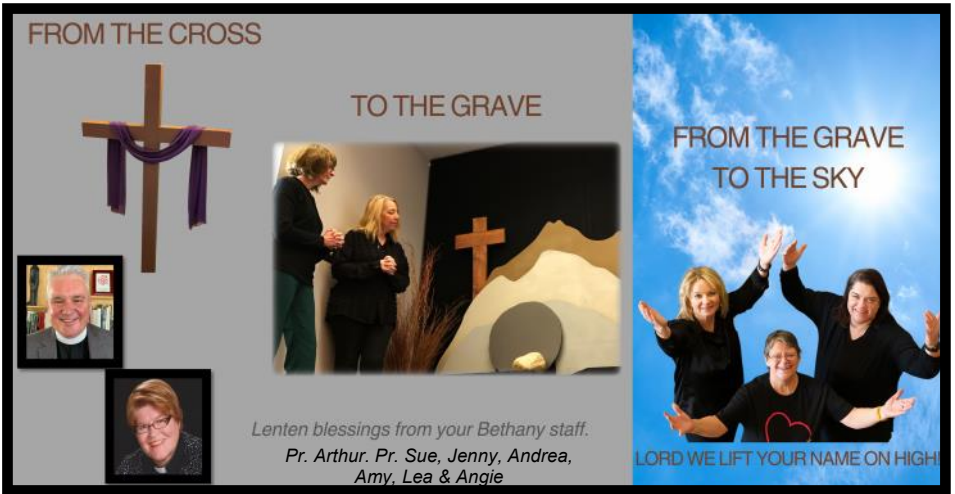


Thank you for your prayers and cards since I broke my right ankle on April 25th.

You've prayed for me during my surgeries, which have all been successful. After all these months I am now wearing shoes on both feet instead of my boot and am walking on it. Thanks again for being there for me. ~ Lynn Sulackow

Articles and information for the April Newsbreak are due by Monday, March 18





Lenten blessings from your Bethany staff.
 Pr. Arthur, Pr. Sue, Jenny, Andrea,
 Amy, Lea & Angie

Pastoral Acts

Funerals: none
Baptisms: Susan Rae Walker

Committee & Council

Altar Guild

Audrey Kusilek, Chair 715-205-8843

Caring Community

Gail Weber, Chair 715-736-0887

Education

Angie Buchli, Chair 715-205-2009

Finance

Wendy Markgren, Chair 715-651-0905

Mission Outreach

Amy Brekke, Chair 715-651-6991

Personnel

Tom Lundquist, Chair 715-234-4270

Stewardship

Kevin Jacobson, Chair 715-822-2966

Trust Fund

Dave Hildebrand, Chair 715-651-4812

Welcome Team

Kayelon Campbell Murphy,
 Chair 715-651-7843

Worship & Music

Paul Hanson, Chair 715-234-6530

Property Management

Eric Roethel, Chair 608-475-0441

Council

Mike Diercks, President
 mikediercks80@gmail.com

Tammy Roberg, Vice President
 robergtam@gmail.com

Jodi Babineau, Secretary
 jodibabineau@gmail.com

Audrey Kusilek ajkusi@yahoo.com
 Bill Evans willevans2870@gmail.com

Brenda Kretzschar
 brenkretz@yahoo.com

Dave Myre myre73@gmail.com
 Ed Skaw erskaw@gmail.com

Jack Berkseth jackberk@hotmail.com
 Keith Moffatt

kmoffatt1528@outlook.com
 Pat McCann

2patbirchwood@gmail.com
 Ted Hakala hakala.ted@gmail.com

Wanda Bockbockwanda5@gmail.com

Pastoral Staff

Pastor Arthur Bergren 309-230-5212
 pastorarthur@bethanyricelake.org

Pastor Sue Eidahl 715-506-0012
 pastorsue@bethanyricelake.org

be the change