

BETHANY LUTHERAN

Connections February 2022

NOW WHY DID I DO THIS?

Why did I volunteer to be President of the Bethany congregation? I ask myself this several times a day. Look in the mirror – go ahead and do that now – and you will see the number 1 reason.

The Bethany congregation is important to so many people. The pandemic has made us feel this even more deeply. Where do we look for the love and hope we hunger for? Where does our community look? They look to us.

We are the **People of God** bringing love and hope to the world. We are the **People of Bethany** bringing love and hope to each other and our community.

We are **Called**. This is not some trendy term to be thrown out once-in-a-while by Christians. It is God, using his hand daily to mark with water a cross on our foreheads, looking straight into our eyes, and saying “You are mine. I am calling you to bring love and hope into this world in my name.”

Stop reading right here, wet your finger and draw a cross on your forehead. You are Called.

Now find ways to bring love and hope to this world. It can be as simple as a kind word or compliment. It can be calling a friend or relative to ask how they are. It can be listening to someone who needs to talk about their day. It can be giving a chocolate cookie to a friend. It can be volunteering at church or the food pantry.

What calls from God have you missed lately? Pray, keep your eyes and minds open, and find new ways to spread God’s love and hope. You are Called! - Dick

“UNRAVELED” LENTEN WORSHIP



Lent begins March 2nd with Ash Wednesday. This year we will be participating in a round-robin pulpit exchange where each Wednesday we will have a different pastor or leader from a neighboring synod congregation leading worship.

The theme for our Lenten worship is *Unraveled*. What happens when our world falls apart like it has over the last couple years? What does it look like to search for God in the gray area of our lives? How do we press onward when our tightly-knit plans unravel into loose threads? Sometimes we need to be unraveled—from shame, fear, patterns, or identities that cause harm. To unravel is to acknowledge and grieve what has fallen apart to allow God's newness to unfurl.

Our Lenten worship will explore stories of unraveled shame, identity, fear, grief, dreams, and expectations. These are stories where God meets us in the spiraling, unraveling of our plans—and us—into something new.



Mauston Area Grief Support Group

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Sunday evenings, January 23rd through February 27th
6:00 p.m.—7:00 p.m.

Mauston United Methodist Church, 420 Suszycki Dr

This is new session available to anyone that has experienced the death of a loved one within the past year. The goal is to come alongside each other as we grieve the death of our loved ones, so that together we can assist each other in this part of our life's journey. Call Pastor Wendell at 608-547-5964 to pre-register. This is required to maximize benefits for the group.

Sunday School Committee

After taking a 2 week Christmas break, Sunday school resumed on January 9. Our January lessons included: Manna & Quail, Feeding of the 5000, and Rest for the Land. We talked about how we've all experienced times of wilderness in our lives and times when we're confused, sad, angry and afraid. Like the Israelites coming out of the Sinai desert, we may feel alone in our struggles. The lesson learned is that God is ever-faithful in providing for us.



In the Feeding of the 5000, the scripture taught us how Jesus preached the gospel then turned five loaves and two fish into plentiful servings of food for the large crowd. There was even twelve baskets of leftovers! Jesus attended to both the spiritual and physical needs of his disciples and the crowd.

In Rest for the Land, God told Moses to instruct the people to work the land for six years. Then in the seventh year, the people are to let the land rest. The land needs time to be restored in order to continue serving its purpose. We, too, need rest to reflect and restore our bodies and spirits. Only then can we continue growing strong.

Greetings from the Bethany Call Committee

The Call Committee met with Bishop Felix Malpica and Assistant to the Bishop Dione Stepanek to discuss the status of available Pastors and what the likelihood was to have any names for our interview process. The answer was not optimistic to see any names in the immediate future. The Synod is currently like most businesses in that there is a real shortage of available pastors. It was great to meet these two new additions to our Synod. They promised that they would continue to keep us in their thoughts and prayers, and consider us and our needs as applicants cross their desks. Both the Bishop and the Assistant expressed that they would work to keep a better line of communication open with us.

January Finance & Property Highlights

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- Finance and Properties has set the January mission support as follows: La Crosse Synod/ELCA \$500; Lutheran Social Services \$300; Food Pantry \$350.
- Offering envelopes arrived. By changing to a monthly envelope the cost was reduced from \$700 down to \$200. Blank envelopes will be available for those still wishing to make weekly donations. Remember to put your name on the envelope to ensure proper credit.
- The new lights for the cross have shown that the wall in front of the church needs to be repainted. Tim is in discussions with Mark Dahlke.
- The bill for the new lights for the cross in front of the church was originally \$1,600, but because Ed and John assisted, the bill was reduced by \$400. Jeff and Melanie Gray donated another \$600 off the bill, so the cost to Bethany was only \$600.
- The church is on BTU's list for furnace inspections. They will check the boiler and heaters throughout the church.
- 2021 ended with positive equity on the balance sheet. Three contributing factors: The Payroll Protection Grant of \$18,424, the generous gift from Bonnie Crandall and the estate gift from Janet Fiala.

New Business: A letter was received from the city of Mauston requesting that we put a lock box on the outside of the church for emergency access by the Fire Department. In theory, these lock boxes will allow the fire department to access the building faster in the event of an emergency. The least expensive lock box is approx. \$400.

- Bulk mailing permit will need to be purchased between 1/28 and 2/28. The amount of the permit will not be available until after 1/28.
- Ed Rogers has requested that we hire someone to clean the sidewalks around the church after it snows. Ed contacted Kim Strompolis and he is willing to use his ATV and plow the sidewalks. He doesn't want to be paid but the committee all agreed that Bethany should give him a gift card or something.

January Council Highlights

Committee Reports

Executive Committee: The goal of the Executive Committee has been to lead with transparency and in good faith. Thank you to the members of the congregation who have stood by leadership with encouragement, prayers, and support.

Faith Development Committee: Sunday school took a break after the Christmas program. It went extremely well and ended with a noisy offering.

Hospitality Committee: On January 6th they helped with the undocking of the Church's Christmas trees and decorations.

Mission Committee: A great report about the Community Sharing Pantry was given by Roger. He spoke of how Kathy Green keeps it so clean and orderly. The committee will keep track of Bethany's donations so we can see how much we give for the year.

Worship Committee: Altar Guild is set up for the year. Notices have been mailed out. Lectors are set up through March. We're working on Easter (Lenten) services.



Happy February birthday to....

Twyla Pufahl	02/01
Danica Flint	02/04
Sophia Brummund	02/05
Daniel Dellamuth	02/05
Sharon Barclay	02/05
Debra Klapps	02/07
Hailey Nockerts	02/07
Bobbie Lindner	02/11
Adam Seebecker	02/12
Vanessa Klein	02/13
Mary-Corinne Cox	02/14
Harold Seebecker	02/15
Sandra Treland	02/19
Laurel Miller	02/21
Zoey Brandau	02/21
Judy Mueller	02/23
Jerry Wiese	02/23
Linda Householder	02/24
Brody McCluskey	02/24
Kalon Kustief	02/24
Mitchell Brown	02/26
Ron Paul	02/26
Al Peterson	02/26
Joshua Ellerman	02/27
Elaina Her	02/27
Margaret Abrahamson	02/28
Karolin Potter	02/28
Meagan Voltz	02/28
James Webster	02/28

Happy February anniversary to....

Tom & Hazel Reigard	02/01
Alan & Margaret Abrahamson Sr	02/04
Ken & Julianne Sanford	02/10
Bill & Donna Voltz	02/13



Please know that the office does not have every member's information. Please contact the office with corrections and updates.

Thank you for your understanding, patience, and help in keeping our records up to date!

608-847-6690

Thank you for continuing to
give generously!



Giving	Cash/Check	Online	Total
December 5, 2021	\$2,885.05	\$669.14	\$3,554.19
December 12, 2021	\$5,057.96	\$429.57	\$5,487.53
December 19, 2021	\$1,920.00	\$159.06	\$2,079.06
December 24, 2021	\$3,791.00	-	\$3,791.00
December 26, 2021	\$2,465.00	\$348.57	\$2,813.57

Gen Fund	December 2021 Actual	December YTD Actual	December 2021 Budget	December YTD Budget
Receipts	\$16,847.67	\$208,984.50	\$12,500.00	\$150,000.00
Disbursements	\$6,817.16	\$112,147.63	\$17,379.41	\$204,551.66

Church Office Hours

We at Bethany Lutheran Church, Mauston, seek to build unity by instilling hope through:

ENGAGING

all generations in the practices and teaching of Jesus,

WELCOMING

each other,

REACHING OUT

to our greater community.

The church office is open **Monday – Thursday from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.** Messages left on the church voicemail are only checked during office hours. For urgent messages and emergencies, contact Dick Pirwitz, council president, at 608-548-5982. If not immediately available, he will answer as soon as possible.

Has your contact information changed? Be sure to let us know!
(608) 847-6690
bethanymaustonelca@gmail.com