

BETHANY LUTHERAN

Newsletter

February 2023

A Note from the Pastor:

A long time ago when I was a confirmation student at St. Andrew Lutheran Church in Sheboygan, I was required to travel with my class to Chicago to learn about the greater church and our part in it. We made several stops to an ELCA college, seminary, and church wide offices.

If you were to go to those offices at Higgins Road today you would still find the most memorable thing to my teenaged self. In the lobby of the offices is a large tile mosaic of the ELCA emblem (see right). If we had the benefit of color printing you would find the upper right hand corner of this emblem to be purple, upper left is red, lower left is green, the lower right is yellow. Our tour of the headquarters of the ELCA began with an explanation of what the emblem means.



According to the ELCA website, "The emblem is a graphic representation of the ELCA mission statement: marked by the cross of Christ forever, we are claimed, gathered, and sent for the sake of the world. This context reflects both the good news of Christ's incarnation and the church as the body of Christ in the world. The visual motion within the cross and the surrounding orb reminds us of the spreading light of the Gospel of Christ. Within the spheres of the orb are smaller crosses (a design sometimes known as the "Jerusalem Cross"), a traditional symbol for the commission to spread the Gospel to the whole world."

I wish I remembered more clearly our tour guide's eloquent explanation. The official website explanation that is available today is not what the teenage me understood and is not as good. I walked away thinking that day, and find myself thinking about still when I see this emblem, that the ELCA is a group of Lutherans that came together despite our differences, remaining in some ways different from one another (like the quadrants are different and have distinct religious meaning in the different colors) but united strongly in the idea that Christ is at the center of all of our activities (the cross is in the center and is present in the whole emblem in the sense in the Jerusalem Cross) and we are to be open to one another and the whole world (the emblem as a whole is sphere shaped).

I think that it is true that a picture can be worth a thousand words and I am pleased that this graphic says so much about us. My hope in sharing this understanding with you is that you also might look at this picture as not just a graphic but a bold statement about who we are as ELCA Lutheran people of God.

God Bless,

Rev. Joan Marie Wittrock

2022 – WHAT A SPECTACULAR YEAR - BUT WE CANNOT GET COMPLACENT

It is so amazing the difference in Bethany between January 2022 and December 2022. We now have a pastor, we are doing the drive-thru community dinners, we are looking at renovating the lounge and youth room, and taking a serious look at our future.

I need to say thank you to all the people who made 2022 such a success and continue to make a difference. Each day I am so thankful for all of you.

But here are some storm clouds on our horizon:

- Our giving has to increase this year if we wish to keep Pastor Joan.
- Our child and youth ministries have fewer participants.
- The average age of our congregation members is getting higher and higher. This will eventually lead to less members able to volunteer and less giving after they pass on.

I invite you to sit down with me during February, maybe over a cup of coffee, and let's talk about what direction we should be going and what actions should we be taking.

Dick

JANUARY 2023 COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

Finance Committee approved \$500 for the La Crosse Area Synod, \$85 for Lutheran Social Services and \$85 for the Mauston Food Pantry.

Pastor Joan met with Mark Dahlke and they scheduled her 6th-Monday-Off schedule. Mark will fill-in for her those dates.

Pastor has been trying to visit all shut-ins who want a visit each month. In some cases, a call is enough.

The Sunday School is hoping to have another Saturday afternoon youth gathering in February. Confirmation students are sponsoring Souper Sunday lunch after worship on February 12th. Finance Committee is looking for someone to volunteer to clear the snow around the front entrance of the church and front the church to the garage.

Finance has created a task force to look at options for updating the Lounge and Youth Room.

The Worship Committee discussed having an afternoon service and 7 pm service on Ash Wednesday. Palm Sunday was planned. A re-enactment of the Last Supper is planned on Maundy Thursday. Afternoon services for Lent, in addition to evening services, will be added if enough people will attend the afternoon service. There will be a survey in the bulletins to determine if there is enough interest in the afternoon services. The survey will also determine whether enough people want a sunrise (6:28 am) service and a 9:30 am service.

Summary
Finance and Property Meeting
January 10, 2023

The F & P Committee met on January 10th. Gary Gray, Tim Benson, Ed Rogers, and Jon Williams were present. Elley Dahlke was also present. The Committee approved mission support of \$500 to the La-Crosse Synod/ELCA, \$85 to Lutheran Social Services and \$85 to the Mauston Food Pantry.

The committee is looking for individuals to assist with snow removal around the front entrance of the Church. We have someone that will plow the driveway and parking lot and also the sidewalk along the street. However, we depend on volunteers to shovel or use the snow blower in areas that can't be reached with the truck. If anyone is willing to help out please contact the Church office or one of the Property committee members.

A request was made to the committee to look in to updating the furniture and décor for the lounge area and youth room. A committee will be formed to look into options available for furniture, painting, etc. for these rooms. Elley Dahlke will chair this committee. Anyone who is willing to be on this committee or make donations or contributions to this project should contact Elley.

The Finance and Property Committee continues to look at all options available to improve/upgrade our sound system. It is important for the membership to realize that the sound system may be operating properly and that there could be other factors that make it difficult for them to hear or understand the service.

The next F & P Meeting will be on Tuesday, February 7th.

February 12th 10:30 am



Enjoy a hot bowl of soup and a sandwich after worship at Bethany in the Fellowship Hall on Super Bowl Sunday.

Tomato Soup or Cheesy Broccoli Soup

Ham Sandwich or Chicken Sandwich (make-your-own sandwich and put on all you want)

Free Will Offering. 100% of all donated money will go towards improving the Sunday School rooms.

Please sign-up on the poster on the kiosk or call the office at 608-847-6690 so we can ensure there will be plenty of food. Take outs are available and we can deliver to homebound members.



We are busy planning for the Lenten and Easter Season and we need your help. There is currently a survey in the Sunday bulletin about how you can help with these services. Our traditional Ash Wednesday service will be February 22nd at 7:00 p.m. We are thinking of adding a daytime Wednesday service on March 1st, March 8th, March 15th, March 22nd, and March 29th if enough people would attend. We would

like to have our Maundy Thursday Last Supper Reenactment service again and have an evening Tenebrae Good Friday service. Lastly, we are thinking of offering an Easter Sunday Sunrise service at 6:28 a.m. All of these services can only happen with your help and participation. Please fill out the survey in the church bulletin - together we can make all the services a reality.

We are looking for new members on worship committee, please contact Linda Bohnert, Karen Fritz or RJ Rogers if you would be interested.

There will a Chili Supper on Ash Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. The Ash Wednesday service will be at 7:00 p.m.

We will be having a soup supper every Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. during Lent.

GIFTS FOR LUTERAN WORLD RELIEF KITS

Bath Towels

Hand Towels

Soap Bars

Receiving Blankets

Baby Shirts or Pants 9 months to 24 months

ALL items must be new

Also, Cash donations to buy other needed items

Mary Pirwitz



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

In Our Prayers

Marti, Leo, Lois Olson, Vera, Cecile, Ron Engevold, Louie Voltz, Matt Leverage, the family and friends of Laurie Jensen, the family and friends of Tricia Demmin, the family and friends of Gary Jensen, Larry Purvis, Chris Bradley, Raina Nava, Rod Pink, Angela Bollig, Randy Mullenberg, Dianne Peterson, Ken Plants, Terry Prescott, Donna Christensen, Dennis Stark, Bill Voltz, the Dillin family, and the people of Ukraine.

Please call the church office, 608-847-6690, if you know of someone who needs to be added to our prayer list or with any Pastoral Care needs/requests. This list is different than our prayer chain.

Bethany's Prayer Chain Coordinator is Audrey Gierhart (608-847-4106).
If you have an urgent prayer request, call her to share the request.

*****Unless otherwise noted, all worship services will be in-person and streamed on Facebook with the recording available later.*****

Worship Reminders

February 5 Worship Service 9:30 a.m.

Lector: Alan Abrahamson
Communion Assistant: Teresa Ellerman
Usher Captain: Roger Dutzle

February 12 Worship Service 9:30 a.m.

Lector: Karen Fritz
Communion Assistant: Karen Fritz
Usher Captain: David Kidd

February 19 Worship Service 9:30 a.m.

Lector: Rosemary Dellamuth
Communion Assistant: Rosemary Dellamuth
Usher Captain: Bill Potter

February 22 Ash Wednesday Service 7:00 p.m.

Lector: RJ Rogers
Usher Captain: TBD

February 26 Worship Service 9:30 a.m.

Lector: Marjo Staehling
Communion Assistant: Marjo Staehling
Usher Captain: Jeri Shultis and Harold Seebecker

February Altar Guild: Karen Fritz and Joanne Stark



*** Giving	Cash/Check
December 4, 2022	\$5,564.00
December 11, 2022	\$1,262.00
December 18, 2022	\$4,801.50
December 25, 2022	\$6,355.00
December 30, 2022	\$1,910.00
** Online Giving Total for December 2022	\$2,254.06

*** The chart above reflects the financial counts each week from the offering and money that's been sent in and online donations to include: designated funds (Building, Memorial, flowers, etc) and special projects (Ukraine, Mercy Ships, Farm, Toys for Joy, etc).

** Online donations will be reported once a month due to posting issues. Near the end/beginning of the month the weekly amounts were not always accurate.

* The below receipts reflect money available for operating budget AFTER deducting designated giving.

Gen Fund	December 2022 Actual	December 2022 Budget	December YTD Actual	December YTD Budget
* Receipts	\$21,378.54	\$12,500.00	\$173,163.33	\$150,000.00
Disbursements	\$11,411.50	\$16,537.00	\$108,096.43	\$198,400.00

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 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.** Messages left on the church voicemail are only checked during office hours. For urgent messages and emergencies, contact Pastor Joan at 920-226-0453 or Dick Pirwitz, council president, at 608-548-5982. If not immediately available, they will answer as soon as possible.

Has your contact information changed? Be sure to let us know!
(608) 847-6690