

BETHANY LUTHERAN

Newsletter

March 2023

A Note from the Pastor:

As I am writing this to you we are about to start the season of Lent.

It has been a traditional practice among many faithful people to take on a discipline for the season of Lent. It seems that when many people think about what Lent is about they think about what they are 'going to give up.' I often hear people tell me that they have given something up for Lent: coffee/candy/chocolate/eating out.

This practice is not 'bad' and I support you in your choice if you do choose the spiritual discipline of fasting this Lent. Sometimes Lenten disciplines take on the taint of New Year's Resolutions. Very few studies have been conducted about the success rates of people abstaining from something 'bad' for them for six weeks during Lent. However, many studies have been conducted into the success rates of those year's resolutions. It is merely March... does that thing you resolved about still seem possible? The likelihood of a person completing a New Year's resolution that is based in giving up something 'bad' for them is unfortunately very low.

I would like to make a suggestion for you this Lent. I would recommend that you do take on a Lenten discipline. But that you set yourself up for success. I suggest that this discipline not be based in giving something up but instead taking something on. Do not underestimate the difference that taking on something small can make.

Do not worry... I have some ideas. Prayer. Perhaps pausing every night or morning in the driveway of your home and praying for 30 seconds to a minute asking God to bless your family with love. I have seen many pictures of prayer chains children have constructed making loops of paper strung together representing their prayers for others.

Prayer not your thing? Maybe intentionally picking up one of those daily devotional books would work for you. We have a small supply of such books available at the church. Or you could consider signing up for one of those text message apps that sends a bible verse every day.

Reading not your thing? How about picking a Christian radio station or Pandora channel and giving it a listen? Perhaps not exclusively but during one of the times you would have consumed something else.

Artistic? Maybe this is a season to allow space to be inspired or take on a project that you know will take several weeks. Do you knit? I know that I have seen a pattern floating around for making prayer shawls.

What about connecting to other Christians? Lots of extra things are happening at the church this season like church dinners, bible study and Wednesday night services. Maybe you could consider coming to one.

Need something more challenging? How about intentionally seeking a way to be kind or bless someone else, perhaps a stranger, at least once every day. How about reading a chapter from the Bible every day? The gospels of Mark and Luke total 40 chapters together.

Allow yourself forgiveness if you miss a day or two. It is part of the experience to have life get in the way sometimes.

God Bless,
Pastor Joan

FEBRUARY 2023 COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

The lounge and youth room were given a facelift with a paint job, some new furniture and decorations, and a really good cleaning. There are a couple things yet to be done. The new furniture was bought and cost donated. Thanks to Elley and Mark Dahlke and Sheri and Tim Benson for their leading this project. Fundraising is planned to cover any additional costs.

The Council approved a long list of people who wish to become members. We are looking at a specific way to annually recognize new members. We will be accepting a group of new members soon.

The Mission Committee is collecting items for health and baby kits for Lutheran World Relief.

Sunday School continues to go well with 7 children consistently showing up. Recently, two new kindergarten girls joined us.

The couches from the youth room were moved to the nursery, making it cozier and more welcoming. The Sunday School staff is planning on rearranging/reorganizing of the other end of the nursery as well as make it more welcoming to the 3 to 5-year-olds.

The air hockey and foosball tables from the youth room were moved downstairs.

For the month of January, we had offerings of \$9720 and expenses of \$14,750.

The Confirmation students hosted on February 12th a Souper Bowl lunch with soup and sandwiches. The \$475 earned is being given to the Sunday school.

The Stewardship Team has plans for four drive-thru meals and Trunk-or-Treat. They have obtained a Thrivent grant for the first community meal.

The tablets that the congregation owns that are not being used have gotten kid-friendly cases and headphones. Pastor Joan will find appropriate games/software and they will be available on the usher table for young children to use during the church service.

Pastor Joan is leading a multigenerational Bible study during the four Sundays in March. All are welcome to attend from 8:15 a.m. to 9:15 a.m.

There will be a sermon series for Lent which will be a series of reflections of what our faith truly means. Kathy Marose will assist with the Holden Evening Service. Following the survey results we will **not** have afternoon Lenten Services.

Pastor Joan is offering First Communion classes leading up to Maundy Thursday. She is also considering an adult communion class in the future.

There will be a Maundy Thursday Last Supper reenactment.

Ash Wednesday there will not be communion because it does not agree with the purpose of Ash Wednesday.

Palm Sunday will have a two chapter Gospel reading in place of the sermon. There will **not** be a **Good Friday** service. **Easter Service** will be at 9:30 a.m.

Pastor Joan is hosting a Model Seder Meal on Palm Sunday for 30 people. There will be a sign-up poster on the kiosk.

**Summary
Finance and Property Meeting
February 7, 2023**

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The F & P Committee met on February 7th. Gary Gray, Tim Benson, Dave Kidd, Mike Borreson, and Jon Williams were present. Elley Dahlke was also present. The Committee approved mission support of \$500 to the LaCrosse Synod/ELCA, \$85 to Lutheran Social Services and \$85 to the Mauston Food Pantry.

Gary welcomed new committee members Dave Kidd, and Mike Borreson to the committee. We reviewed financial reports and answered questions regarding the committee for the new members.

Mike Borreson informed the committee that he will help with the snow removal in the unplowed areas of the Church. He said sometimes his work schedule may prevent him from taking care of it, but he would do what he could. He also stated that after the last snow, the walks had already been cleared by the time he had gotten to the Church. Thank you to everyone that assists with the snow removal.

Elley requested a budget of \$3,300 for improving the décor of the youth room and lounge. She has started purchasing items and supplies for the project and it is looking very nice. She will place a wish list/donation sheet on the kiosk for those willing to make monetary donations for furniture. We do not want used furniture for these rooms. The committee approved taking \$2,000 from the Building fund and \$1,200 from undesignated memorials to cover purchases for this project. Any monetary donations received will go directly toward a purchase or into the building fund.

The next F & P Meeting will be on Thursday, March 2nd at 5:30 pm.

HOW ARE YOU CULTIVATING LIFE-GIVING RELATIONSHIPS ROOTED IN GOD'S LOVE?

Rev. Dione Stefanik asked that question when she visited Council:

- “How are you cultivating life-giving relationships rooted in God’s love?” How would you answer that for yourself?
- What are life-giving relationships? Does how we relate with others make them feel better or worse? Do we affirm others or criticize them? How do we treat them when we disagree?
- In your relationships with others, do they make you feel better or worse? Do they affirm you or criticize you? Do you feel loved?
- How do we root our life-giving relationships in God’s love? We treat those around us like we want to be treated. We consciously act so they experience God’s love through us.

Life-giving relationships – Rooted in God’s love

Dick

Sunday School News

In February we had a youth fellowship activity – the theme was God’s love – we had crafts, games, and snacks! Thank you for everyone that attended – the kids and adults had a great time.

Sunday school in February included a favorite lesson of Zacchaeus! “Zacchaeus, you come down here, for I’m going to your house today”.

Stayed tuned for more information on when the Sunday school kids will sing next in church and when they will host another fellowship time.

Hospitality Committee

Volunteers needed - grab a friend or family member and join us for Fellowship:

Updated sign up sheets on kiosk for Fellowship on Sundays after services and also for Soup suppers before Lenten services on Wednesdays.

New item signing up for food donation only if time or unable to be involved with serving would be greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Community Drive Thru Spaghetti Supper

The first community drive-thru meal of the year will be held on **Sunday, March 19th** from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. We will serve spaghetti and meatballs, bread stick, water, and a treat to anyone that would like a meal. Members who would like a meal delivered to them may request this by calling the church office. Volunteers to help prepare, serve, deliver meals and clean up are needed. Please contact Kathy Marose at 608-343-4381 or the church office if you are interested in volunteering to help.

Scholarship Applications

Scholarship applications are due on April 1 for the 2023-2024 school year. The Bethany Lutheran Scholarship is open to any member of our congregation who is pursuing post secondary education. Students are eligible for any year they are enrolled and may only receive the scholarship once.

Applications are available in the church office or at your high school. More information is attached to the scholarship application. Submit it to the church office secretary by April 1.

Maynard Miller

Lounge and "Youth Room"

As part of an ongoing goal to continue Bethany's mission as a welcoming place, the Properties and Finance Committee have approved the remodeling of the Youth Room and Lounge.

These rooms were built in the early 1990's as part of Bethany's major addition.

A \$250 Thrivent grant was secured, and its monies have been used to kickstart the project. The walls have been repainted and the rooms went through a thorough cleaning. Additionally, tables and chairs were purchased through a silent auction from the school district for a very reasonable price.

However, the bulk of the cost for the project is yet to come in the form of new furniture, lamps, and wall decor. This is where the project needs your help.

There is a Dream Board display in the Narthex that shows pictures of individual items needed for the rooms. There are several ways to contribute:

Write a check with "Update" on the memo line and return it to the church office, offering plate, or mail to Bethany Lutheran Church. Your contribution will be added to the project's fund.

OR

Cash placed in a designated envelope available at the Dream Board display.

OR

Notify Elley Dahlke (608-547-4484), Sheri Benson (608-547-8493), or the church office of an item you want us to purchase for you or in memory of a loved one.

OR

Provide your email at the Dream Board display. Within a few days, you will receive an email from "thingstogetme.com".

You then can purchase an item yourself from the website or get a group of friends to go together to buy an item.

We have also built an Amazon wishlist for smaller items that are needed. This will be posted on our Facebook page.

Projects such as this take prayerful consideration. We ask that you do so as you consider donating to this worthwhile project that will help make our rooms more welcoming, comfortable, and functional.

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

Hannah Tourdot, Steven Potter, William (Bill) Potter, the family and friends of Alex Coggins, David Delamuth, Duane Weisenhaus, Elwood Syverson, Larry Purvis, John Benson, the Rizzio family, Leo, Marti, Lois Olson, Vera, Cecile, Ron Engevold, Matt Leverage, Louie Voltz, Chris Bradley, Raina Nava, Rod Pink, Angela Bollig, Randy Mullenberg, Dianne Peterson, Ken Plants, 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

March 5 Worship Service 9:30 a.m.

Lector: Mary Pirwitz

Communion Assistant: Pat Dutzle

Usher Captain: Roger Dutzle

March 12 Worship Service 9:30 a.m.

Lector: Brian McGuire

Communion Assistant: Brian McGuire

Usher Captain: David Kidd

March 19 Worship Service 9:30 a.m.

Lector: Molly Shultis

Communion Assistant: Molly Shultis

Usher Captain: Bill Potter

March 26 Worship Service 9:30 a.m.

Lector: Jon Williams

Communion Assistant: Maynard Miller

Usher Captain: Jeri Shultis and Harold Seebecker

March Altar Guild: Stacey Klein and Aubrey McCluskey



*** Giving	Cash/Check
January 1, 2023	\$2,452.00
January 8, 2023	\$1,604.00
January 15, 2023	\$1,286.00
January 22, 2023	\$1,521.00
January 29, 2023	\$1,288.70
** Online Giving Total for January 2023	\$2,389.40

*** 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	January 2023 Actual	January 2023	January YTD Actual	January YTD Budget
* Receipts	\$9,720.76	\$13,083.00	\$9,720.76	\$13,083.00
Disbursements	\$14,751.75	\$15,894.00	\$14,751.75	\$15,894.00

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