

BETHANY LUTHERAN

Newsletter

February 2024

A NOTE FROM PASTOR:

The month of February brings with it a secular celebration of romantic love. The red and green displays at stores have been replaced with pinks and reds with an occasional purple. Children are encouraged to give each other cards and perhaps exchange trinkets. I have some thoughts that I would like to share with you about all of this.

Valentine's day and Valentine's celebrations can be difficult for people who have experienced the loss of their life partner, do not have a healthy loving relationship with their significant other, or who have yet to find someone to share their time with. Our congregation has historically had a tradition of hosting a Valentine's party. In the past, this party has focused on married couples.

The Faith Development Committee is bringing a Valentine's celebration back this year. Instead of just focusing on the romantic love between couples, the committee has decided to expand this party to make it a celebration of love in general. People attending are being asked to bring with them a picture of someone/people whom they love. This could be a friend, child, grandparent, or even a spouse. I hope that everyone feels welcome to attend and that this change is positive for our congregation.

Why shouldn't the church be celebrating love? After all, we hear a lot about God's love in the teaching and preaching. It is God's love that is perfect in every way (patient and kind/never rude or envious/bears all things/is perfectly hopeful/endures forever). God loves us first and in a perfect way that a human being can barely imagine.

I invite you not only to our congregation's Valentine party but to experience God's love here among God's people at Bethany Lutheran Church. God Bless, Pastor Joan

From the Congregation President

I recently watched the movie "A Man Called Otto" starring Tom Hanks. Definitely worth a watch. Otto, at the start of the movie, is a self-centered man who throughout his whole life was very rigid. After his compassionate teacher wife dies, he becomes a grumpy, angry old man.

A new neighbor, an old neighbor and a teen his wife once had as a student show him that people need close relationships with other people. He becomes involved in their lives, and finds happiness and meaning.

A recent survey by the Barna Group revealed that the public generally believes that the Church cannot solve most problems in our society, but it does have the ability to make a difference in two major problems – Loneliness and lack of hope.

At Bethany, our mission is to make a difference in other people's lives, bringing hope and friendship. Two Facts:

- You are making a difference in people's lives when you are involved at Bethany.
- We could easily be making even a bigger difference in other people's lives.
- Making a difference in other people's lives leads to joy in our lives (I know I said two facts – Just checking to see if you were paying attention).

SAVE THE DATE

The Faith Development Committee is planning an outing to the Elroy Theater on Saturday, March 2nd. Time and movie selection details coming soon.

Celebrate Love at our Bethany Valentine's Gathering

All adult members of Bethany are invited to celebrate **Love** on Sunday, February 18th at 5:30 p.m. When we think of Valentine's Day, we usually think of **Romantic Love**—a combination of physical attraction and emotional connection. But love is so much more than that. There is **Affectionate Love**—a powerful kind of love we feel for our friends when we see and accept each other for whom we are, appreciating their strengths and supporting each other. There is **Self-Love**—showing love, compassion and gentleness to ourselves is the foundation of a positive life. And finally, there is **Unconditional Love**, the love that God has shown to us. The Bible tells us that God's love is perfect, steadfast, and unchanging, and in His love, we can have strength as we face the challenges of the world as well as hope for eternity. All of these types of **Love** are worthy of being celebrated on Valentine's Day.

We will celebrate **Love** with our Bethany family with Gary Gray providing us with music at 5:30 p.m., with a meal of salad, pizza, and dessert beginning at 6:00 p.m. Following the meal we will have trivia about **Love**, games, and more. We ask each person attending to bring a picture of someone in their life that they love. Please sign up on the kiosk so we know how many to plan food for. It's sure to be a fun filled night!

January Finance and Property Meeting

Finance and Properties did not meet this month due to the inclement weather.

January 2024 Council Highlights

- Pastor Joan talked about how we can help Michael Pechman with his involvement in his future plans of service within the ELCA.
- Gary Gray commended all the Finance and Properties Committee members for their hard work in 2023 completing a long list of projects. Many repairs and improvements were made by them, saving Bethany considerable money.
- Faith Development reported that a group of four people gathered for the Christmas Game Day.
- Information on Sugar Creek Bible Camp will be sent to families as soon as we get the brochures.
- The next Lunch & Learn with Pastor is in April.
- The Valentine's Celebration is February 18th at 5:30 pm.
- The Faith Development Committee will explore renting the Elroy theater for a movie during Lent.
- There will be a Purim event on Sunday, March 24th at Bethany.
- There will be Lent services on Wednesdays at 6:00pm.
- We may invite the Methodist congregation to come to Bethany for Maundy Thursday reenactment and go to their church for Good Friday. Still coordinating.



Happy February birthday to...

Twyla Pufahl	02/01
Danica Flint	02/04
Jason Madsen	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
Alan 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



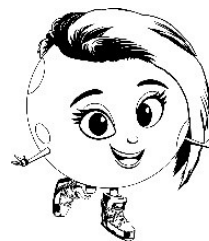
Happy February anniversary to...

Tom & Hazel Reigard	02/01
Alan & Margaret Abrahamson Sr	02/04
Ken & Julianne Sanford	02/10
Bryce & Noah Hollis	02/22

Sunday School News

A reminder that all children ages 3 to 6th grade are welcome to attend Sunday School. On any given Sunday, you could find us doing an art project, science project, playing games, or listening to a story.

In January, our students made Valentine's book marks for our Beacons to distribute. We learned about the planets in our solar system. In February, we will be meeting a new friend named Luna (the moon)! "When good things happen, shine Jesus' light!"



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

~~~ The family and friends of Sharie Randall, Larry Purvis, the family and friends of Paul Pfeifer, Mark Behling, Bridget Wells, Michael Voltz, Duane Weisenhaus, Jim Henry, Ken Plants, Elwood Syverson, RJ Rogers, and those who suffer with war and disaster.

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 at 9:30 a.m. and streamed on  
Facebook with the recording available later.\*\*\***

### **February 4 Worship Service**

Lector & Communion Assistant: Mike Borreson  
Usher Captain: Roger Dutzle

### **February 11 Worship Service**

Lector & Communion Assistant: Teresa Ellerman  
Usher Captain: David Kidd

### **February 14 Ash Wednesday Worship Service**

Lector: Karen Fritz  
Usher Captain: TBD

### **February 18 Worship Service**

Lector: Jon Williams  
Communion Assistant: Karen Fritz  
Usher Captain: Bill Potter

### **February 25 Worship Service**

Lector & Communion Assistant: Marie McDonough  
Usher Captains: Jeri Shultis and Harold Seebecker

**February Altar Guild:** Karen Fritz and Joanne Stark



| <b>*** Giving</b>                               | <b>Cash/Check</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>December 3, 2023</b>                         | \$2,924.00        |
| <b>December 10, 2023</b>                        | \$3,498.00        |
| <b>December 17, 2023</b>                        | \$2,452.00        |
| <b>December 24, 2023</b>                        | \$8,818.00        |
| <b>December 31, 2023</b>                        | \$1,241.00        |
| <b>** Online Giving Total for December 2023</b> | \$2,683.58        |

\*\*\* 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.

| <b>Gen Fund</b>      | <b>December 2023 Actual</b> | <b>December 2023 Budget</b> | <b>December YTD Actual</b> | <b>December YTD Budget</b> |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>* Receipts</b>    | \$19,644.34                 | \$13,087.00                 | \$164,921.54               | \$157,000.00               |
| <b>Disbursements</b> | \$12,668.93                 | \$15,897.00                 | \$157,092.38               | \$184,526.00               |

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.

**Church Office Hours**

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 608-548-3561. 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**  
**bethanymaustonelca@gmail.com**

Bethany Lutheran Church  
 701 Grove Street Mauston, WI 53948  
 Phone: (608) 847-6690  
 Office Email: bethanymaustonelca@gmail.com  
 Web address: www.bethanymauston.com

Office Hours:  
 9:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.  
 Mon.—Thurs.  
 or by appointment

**FEBRUARY**

**Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat**

|                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                        |                               |                                                                                                    |                                                                       |    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <b>***Unless otherwise noted, all worship services will be in-person and streamed.***</b>                      |                                                                                                                        |                               |                                                                                                    |                                                                       |    | We will be live-streaming our worship services on our Facebook page: <a href="http://www.facebook.com/Bethany.Lutheran.Mauston/">http://www.facebook.com/Bethany.Lutheran.Mauston/</a> at 9:30 a.m. Sunday mornings. A video of the service is available on Facebook after the live event. |  |
|                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                        |                               |                                                                                                    | 1 Faith Development 10:00a.m.<br>Faith Circle 7:00p.m.                | 2  | 3                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |  |
| 4 Worship 9:30 a.m.<br>Confirmation Class 8:15a.m.<br>Sunday School 8:15a.m.<br>Bethany Band performs          | 5 Bible Study & Coffee 8:30a.m.                                                                                        | 6 Property & Finance 5:30p.m. | 7 Worship Team 6:00p.m.                                                                            | 8 Women's Breakfast at the Oasis 9:00a.m.<br>Council Mtg 6:30p.m.     | 9  | 10                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |  |
| 11 Worship 9:30 a.m.<br>Confirmation Class 8:15a.m.<br>Sunday School 8:15a.m.                                  | 12 Bible Study & Coffee 8:30a.m.                                                                                       | 13                            | 14 Ash Wednesday Service 6:00 p.m.<br>Chili Supper 5:00-5:45 p.m.                                  | 15                                                                    | 16 | 17                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |  |
| 18 Worship 9:30 a.m.<br>Confirmation Class 8:15a.m.<br>Sunday School 8:15a.m.<br>Valentine Gathering 5:30 p.m. | 19  Bible Study & Coffee 8:30a.m. | 20                            | 21  6:00 p.m. | 22                                                                    | 23 | 24                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |  |
| 25 Worship 9:30 a.m.<br>Confirmation Class 8:15a.m.<br>Sunday School 8:15a.m.                                  | 26 Bible Study & Coffee 8:30a.m.                                                                                       | 27                            | 28  6:00 p.m. | 29 Mauston Sharing Supper at Mauston High School 5:00 p.m. - 6:00p.m. |    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |  |