

Bethany Lutheran Church

"To grow so deep in Christ through worship, education,
and fellowship that we celebrate by reaching out to others."

August
2016

"But now thus says the Lord...who created you...who formed you...I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you." - Isaiah 43:1-2

Important Dates

- 8-11 Prayer book meeting 7:00 pm
- 8-18 Prayer book meeting 7:00 pm
- 8-21 Blessing of Backpacks Sunday during worship
- 8-25 Prayer book meeting 7:00 pm
- 8-28 Community meal 5:00 pm

Contact Information

Bethany Lutheran Church
235 South Second Street
West Branch, Iowa 52358

Pastor Chad Whaley
pastor@wbbethany.org

Office Hours
Monday & Thursday
9:00 a.m. - Noon

*Pastor Chad is also available by
appointment.

Admin. Assistant: Paula Casper
blcsecretary@lcom.net

Office Hours
Tuesday & Thursday 8:00-11:30 a.m.
Office Phone: (319) 643-5998

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Simply search "Bethany Lutheran Church (ELCA) West Branch, Iowa" on facebook and "like" our page!

ALSO FIND US ON TWITTER!

Search @blcwestbranch



Dear wonderful and faithful people of God,

Recently I attended a continuing education event at Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque. The focus of this event was how we live out our faith as a follower of Jesus and not simply within the walls of the church building; but, into those places God sends us such as our families, communities, places of employment, schools, and the world. The Spirit calls us to worship where God meets us, nourishes us with God's grace, equips us through God's word and then sends us out.

We live out our faith in so many ways beyond these doors that we may not even always realize. We live out that faith in our homes by reading the Bible or a daily devotion, saying a prayer at a meal or with our children at bedtime, or even giving our kids a blessing on their way to school. We live out our faith in how we steward our money and other gifts God has entrusted us with. As we gratefully respond to God's grace by returning a portion back to God we make a statement of faith to the world we put our trust in God above all things, that all we have is from God, and that we join together as the church to carry out God's mission. We live out our faith through simple words and actions that extend the love and light of Christ to those we encounter. We live out our faith through service to our neighbor. We live out our faith by a simple invitation to join us for worship, attend a fourth Sunday supper, come to VBS, etc. We live out our faith in so many ways and it all starts knowing who we are. Knowing God has called us as God's own and nothing we do or the world throws at us can take that away. Knowing our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, has rescued and redeemed us. Knowing how much we are loved by the One who created us.

I leave you with something that stuck with me from that event I attended and I am trying to do frequently to ground me in the identity and new birth God bestows on us in the life-giving waters of baptism. It was a simple blessing former ELCA presiding Bishop Mark Hanson had us all do. Simply hold a hand upon your forehead and say these words:

*I am baptized
I am a child of God
I belong to Jesus Christ*

Upon saying these last words one can mark themselves with the sign of the cross as a reminder of the fact we are forever and always claimed by God. Keep living out your faith people of God and know everything you do God is at work in you and making a difference and carrying out God's mission in the world! - Pastor Chad



August Birthdays

08-01 Aiden Shields
 08-02 Mia Olson
 08-04 Chris Korsmo, Jennifer Olson
 08-06 Jenna Helms
 08-08 Shawn Samuelson
 08-09 Karen Brick, Kay Yanecek
 08-11 Jane Frauenholtz
 08-16 Jason Friis
 08-18 Jordan Arp, Courtney Heid
 08-19 Anna Friis
 08-21 Dana Arp, Conner Paulsen
 08-23 Allison Arp, Sam McCrory
 08-25 Paige Roth
 08-27 Miley Shields
 08-28 Jacob Langley
 08-29 Sam Hartman, Kaylea Zimmerman
 08-31 John Grimm



"The LORD is
 my shepherd,
 I shall not want."
 Psalm 23:1, NRSV

THANK YOU!
 THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!
THANK YOU!

With sincere gratitude and appreciation we extend words of thanksgiving for the new blinds in the parsonage. We love them and it is so nice not having to fight with the old ones any longer. Thank you faithful people of God! You are a blessing.

The Whaley Family

Bethany Books

by Frank Frostestad



Books For Adults

The theme for this month is biography. Eric Metaxas is known for his biography *Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy*. The first book by him this month is *7 Men And The Secret Of Their Greatness*. It is important to have role models. He selected these seven since they had the courage to give of themselves and do the right thing when all else tells you not to do it. Each gave themselves to a higher purpose when they could have kept it to themselves. I first wrote several sentences about each person but the one book took the whole page. This then is a shortened edited version.

The first man discussed is *George Washington*. He does not need any introduction to us. His exploits as the military leader during the Revolutionary War and then the first president of the United States is well known. *William Wilberforce* is the second man. While Washington is well known, you might say William who? His story became better known with the 2007 movie *Amazing Grace*. He could have become prime minister of England but he dedicated his life to the end of the slave trade. The third is *Eric Liddell*. In the 1980's many heard of him as a result of the popular movie *Chariots Of Fire*. He was the Scottish runner who won the 400 meter race during the 1924 Paris Olympics. This article gives both background to this remarkable man but also what happened to him after the Olympics. *Dietrich Bonhoeffer* is next. I will not spend much time telling about him since many of you have read one of the biographies of him that we have in the library. Here is the example of a person who stood up against evil even at the cost of his own life. Growing up in Brooklyn and attending games at Ebbets Field, you knew who number 42 was. *Jackie Robinson* was not only a famous baseball player but he was the one who broke the color barrier in major league baseball. *Pope John Paul II* was the first non-Italian pope in 456 years. His style of leadership and charisma gained increased the stature and the attention given to the Catholic Church. He exercised moral leadership beyond what was usual for the papacy. *Chuck Colson* is the last person mentioned. He is somewhat of a hero of the author's but I would not put him in the company of the other men discussed in this book. Since he wrote it, he gets to make the choice.

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FOURTH SUNDAY MEAL

This is a ministry the Council moved to support and we have been doing for almost two years. In that time, hundreds of people have come through our doors, received a meal, and had a wonderful time of fellowship. We thank all who have attended, all who have volunteered to serve these meals and we invite all who have not attended or volunteered to consider doing so. If preparing a meal for 20-30 people seems overwhelming then consider simply coming to help out.

Please see Paula with any questions.

Our next meal is Sunday, August 28th at 5:00 p.m.



PRAYER THOUGHTS

In the last newsletter Pastor invited some thoughts on how prayer is important in your life. While no responses were placed in the box, here are a few comments made by Council members.

- Helps to calm in rough situations and remember what's important
- Helps feel better and while don't feel all prayers are answered just sitting and talking are important
- Sometimes there is no answer
- Helps to verbalize out loud or silently to God the emotions I am experiencing
- Nothing common about my prayer life; in fact, causes some anxiety
- Have a fear of praying out loud
- Have a fear of the answer I may get; it may push me out of my comfort zone

Bethany Books

Continued

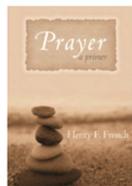


The second book by Eric Metaxas is *7 Women And The Secret Of Their Greatness*. *Joan Of Arc* is first. Her remarkable story of helping to save France from the English and being burned at the stake as a heretic is well known. *Susanna Wesley* is not as well known. She was the mother of John and Charles Wesley, the founders of the Methodist church. *Hannah More* is also not well known. She was a contemporary of William Wilberforce, worked with him on the abolition of the slave trade and also on the improvement of society at that time. *Saint Maria Of Paris* is someone that I had never heard of before this book. She was an Orthodox nun who died in a concentration camp during World War II. Her life story is one of contradictions that makes for interesting reading. *Corrie Ten Boom* is known to many for risking her life hiding Jews during World War II in the Netherlands. We have her book *The Hiding Place* in our library. *Rosa Parks* is well known for refusing to give up her seat on a bus and how this act was important in the beginning of the civil rights movement. Finally, *Mother Teresa* is known the world over for her work among the poor in India.

The third book by Eric Metaxas is *Amazing Grace: William Wilberforce and the heroic campaign to end slavery*. Read the book for a more detailed narrative of his life and his role in ending slavery in the British Empire.

Book For Children

Mary And Martha And Other Bible Stories is by Rebecca Glaser and illustrated by Bill Ferenc and Emma Trithart. In this book, children will learn how Jesus taught the disciples to pray. Follow Jesus as he visits his friends Mary and Martha, and see him befriend a tax collector named Zacchaeus.



Prayer A Primer, by Henry F. French Book Study

(Augsburg Fortress, 2009)

New Small Group Opportunity

Prayer is something we do individually but it is also something we do together and why not talk about prayer together. That is the intent of this opportunity. This short book is a helpful introduction into the journey we call prayer.

This will be a six-week study beginning Thursday August 11th at 7:00 p.m. We will also meet on the following Thursday evenings: August 18th and 25th, September 1st, 15th and 22nd.

The book can be purchased from Augsburg Fortress or Amazon for \$13.99. You can find it used on Amazon for even cheaper.



Adult Education Opportunities



Sermons Are Online

Pastor Chad's sermons can now be found on Bethany's website (www.wbbethany.org) by placing your cursor over the "Resource" tab found on the home page and then selecting

Bethany Men's Breakfast Bible Study Group
Wednesdays at 6:00 a.m.
in the Great Hall

Thursday Women's Bible Study
6:00 a.m. in the Small Hall
All are Welcome



CALLING ALL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Everyone is integral to God's mission here at Bethany. The Worship Team invites all people to be involved in worship. God is the primary actor in worship and we are the participants being filled with the word of God as revealed through the reading of scripture, celebration of the sacraments, proclamation of the message, singing of the hymns, and through one another.

Specifically, we invite all high school students to consider your place as we gather to worship our God. We invite you to participate in any number of ways perhaps you have never thought of. Some of those ways are:

- Minister of Proclamation
 - ◊ You can read all the texts for the day or we invite you just to read the selected Psalm of the day.
- Minister of Hospitality
 - ◊ This is welcoming people into worship, distributing bulletins, collecting our gifts to God, and simply being that first face members and visitors see. You can do it with a parent, grandparent, or even with a friend. Or if you are by yourself, let us know and we will pair you up with another adult.
- Communion Assistant
 - ◊ Traditionally, the Ministers of Proclamation assist with the distribution of Holy Communion; however, we invite our high school students to serve in this capacity if interested. You will simply come forward during this sacrament and help serve in the celebration of our Lord's Supper.
- Sacristan
 - ◊ A sacristan is essential for worship to run smoothly. They prepare the altar prior to worship making sure the proper paraments (i.e., the colored banners) are in place, set up for Holy Communion, fill the candles with oil, and then put things away following worship. We won't make you do this alone; but, rather pair you up with someone who has done it before and will assist and guide you on the way.
- Other Ways
 - ◊ Perhaps, you would like to lead a prayer or perhaps you would like to play an instrument or sing or even bake bread for Holy Communion or perhaps you would like to join the Worship Team.

The bottom line is you are important to us. You are loved and you have wonderful gifts to share. Please consider where God might be calling you to serve. If interested, have questions, or anything else please see Beth Kaufman or Pastor Chad.



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Southeastern Iowa Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

As was indicated in our May newsletter we are trying to lift up the fact Bethany is part of something much bigger than just ourselves. We are a part of the Southeastern Iowa Synod, which of course is part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We are a part of Christ's church on earth. We truly are in this together and our connection to one another through Christ matters. These articles are an attempt to communicate this fact, celebrate our partnership, and see how God is at work through the church.

Do you know what percentage of Bethany's budget is dedicated toward Synod benevolence? For 2016 we have pledged 10% of financial giving to be directed to the Southeastern Iowa Synod. Now that you know this, you may be wondering where all that money is going. Well, that is a great question and we have the answer.

53.5% of our financial gifts to the Synod immediately go straight to Churchwide ministries. What this means will be lifted up in next months newsletter. So, what happened to the other 46.5%? Well, here is where it goes:

- 34.5% (of the 46.5%) go to support our Synod Ministry Partners which include Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI), Lutheran Campus Ministry at Iowa, Iowa State, and UNI, and the two ELCA seminaries in our Region which are Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque and Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago.
- 52.6% (of the 46.5%) go to support for congregations, pastors, rostered leaders, and our global companions.
- 12.9% (of the 46.5%) go to stewardship of resources and administrative responsibilities within the Synod.

We will also unpack some of those ministry partners in further newsletters but for now know that our gifts to the Synod and ultimately to Churchwide go to do God's work in a variety of different settings and make a difference in the lives of many people. Together we are God's hands doing God's work.



From time to time we will try to highlight various websites that can help us grow in our journey of faith and draw us closer to God. One of those sites is Bible Gateway (www.biblegateway.com). This site is an excellent tool to engage in the Bible. Don't like to read, well then you can listen. Select the "Bible" tab and then look for "Audio Bibles". You also have the ability to read the Bible in many different translations. The translation we read during worship is the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV); however, search around and try another translation that may open up God's word in a new way. One Pastor Chad often turns to is [The Message](#).



VBS REFLECTION

Again this year I was able to volunteer to help for part of this special week.

The EWALU teachers helped to keep things running smoothly. Integration of the two congregations was great.

Although I wasn't up with the lyrics of some of the music, I was able to get the beat and participate. The craft and recreation activities were naturally well received.

I was impressed with the specific teacher to whom I was assigned. Her message went over real well with the students. She was able to apply the Bible teaching to present day for our upper elementary group.

I enjoyed participating in the Christian learning. Interacting with the youth was a good experience. Perhaps I can do more next year.

Thanks to those that helped in all of the various areas. I encourage you to consider volunteering next year.

Bruce Jefferies



QUILTS OF LOVE

Do you know how many quilts have been made over the years by the faithful women who show up weekly? Maybe 1,000 or 2,000 or 3,000. Try 4,737. Yes, that's a lot of time, energy, and love that go into so many quilts, which have helped so many people over the years. The photo below was taken recently showing 53 quilts that were prayed over, blessed, and will be delivered to the Ronald McDonald House at the University of Iowa. Many thanks to all the hands that have helped assemble these quilts and continue this wonderful ministry. Thanks also to the faithful people of Bethany who steward their financial gifts, which help provided the materials to make these quilts.





Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI) August Article and Story

Back to School Month

School is right around the corner! As children and teens adjust to a new classroom routine, the transition can often bring to light behavioral issues that may stem from a mental health diagnosis, such as ADHD, anxiety, depression, or oppositional defiant disorder.

Did you know Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI) partners with schools across the state to provide mental health services right in their schools? This makes it easier to collaborate with educators and reduce the transportation barrier that sometimes makes it hard for families to attend appointments.

We thank you for your support of LSI's mission as we respond together to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service!

LSI is proud to be an affiliated social ministry organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Learn more at www.LSIowa.org and www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa.

Becoming a kid again

At 8 years old, Sofia was often the only one caring for her younger siblings. She worried constantly they didn't have enough food. She helped them hide in a closet when their mother's boyfriend began drinking and hitting their mother.

That all began to change when Mitch came into the children's lives. Mitch is a family care coordinator for LSI. His job is to keep Iowa kids and families safe. He made sure Sofia and her siblings had clothes for school. He helped transport them to doctor's appointments. He remembered their birthdays.

And when it became clear that living with their biological parents wasn't a safe option, Mitch was by the siblings' side and advocated to keep them together. Kate and Mark, a couple who had provided foster care for two of Sofia's younger siblings, decided to adopt all five kids.

"We had faith. We knew it was the right thing to do. Why? Because they are worth it," Kate says.

Sofia is now 12 and thriving. Kate has photos of Mitch visiting the kids on Halloween and dropping off presents from LSI on Christmas Eve.

"Now Sofia gets to be a kid again," says Kate. "Every child deserves that



BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH
COUNCIL MINUTES - May 2016

Members present: Greg Lipes, Jill Taylor, Beth Kaufman, John Black, Paula Casper, Pastor Chad, Jamie Zimmerman, Tonya Samuelson, Kevin Olson, Jon Twing

Members absent: None

Called to order: 6:32 PM by President John Black.

Opening devotional and prayer: Pastor Chad led a combination devotional/bible study/prayer using “sticky notes”. Pastor Chad discussed the importance of prayer and the value he has gotten from more devotion to prayer. Prayer is vital to the faith community. As such, the Council went to pray for five minutes on our own and with reflection—where is God leading us and what is our mission as council members both within and outside the Church doors

Table Dedication: Pastor Chad pointed out the new meeting table and chairs were secured by Jamie and mentioned that the old chairs were donated to Jack & Jill. Jamie secured this when inquiring about donations to the Food Pantry. Support from Jack & Jill for both the food pantry and the donation were appreciated. Pastor Chad blessed the table and meeting space.

Pastor’s report :

- The Pastor provided an update on the WBARC activities including that the Baccalaureate would be held at Bethany.
- The Summer Lunch Program will continue but will not be able to provide meals 15Aug-19Aug. Bethany will provide lunch on one of those days.
- The Middle School and High School Food Pantry project is working well. This was similar to the Weekends Backpack program in providing food for students who are otherwise food insecure. There is a small pantry at the Middle and High Schools where youth can select food and hygiene items.
- Confirmation was validated for 22May
- Pastor is out on 05Jun-08Jun for professional development
- Brief report on the Synod Assembly meeting. Jamie Zimmerman said it was a “blessing in disguise” to participate and engage. Thanks to all who volunteered
- Prayer is the current focus or theme for the Pastor.

President’s Report: John Black reported that the Council Retreat was very good and well worth the time and effort. PDF of the slides will be made available to all Council regardless of participation.

Secretary’s report: As submitted. Jill Taylor took the notes in Twing’s absence. Moved for approval by Kevin Olson, seconded by Jamie Zimmerman. All approved.

Treasurer’s report: Jill Taylor led us through a review of the report. Standard reporting with no anomalies reported. Discussion about accounting of the paint expense ensued with no action needed. Moved for approval by Greg Lipes, seconded by Paula Casper. All approved.

Building and Grounds:

- Jamie reported that a decision was made that the Council would hang the new blinds at the Parsonage due to expense savings.
- Pastor and family installed a new fire pit and they are enjoying the summer season around a fire.
- No workday to achieve Church “odds and ends” maintenance has yet been scheduled and might not be.
- It has been reported that the Kitchen floor needs a real good scrubbing and Jamie is looking into this.
- Great hall has been connected to the speaker system via wireless with success and appreciation.
- A complaint was filed regarding the lack of garbage removal from the Church after functions. More diligence is needed in reminding those using the hall that they must remove their own garbage.

Education: Tonya reported that much progress for Vacation Bible School with the Methodists has been made. The Methodists were keen to combine this year and have pledged kids, volunteers and money in support and will support functions for two days of the VBS.

- A discussion about what to do with preschoolers. The Methodists would take preschoolers for a couple of hours each day but not for the entire day. Grades 6-8 have no plans. Tonya will work to resolve this with support from others
- There might be as many as 50 kids at VBS this year so closing ceremonies have been moved to the Methodist Church to use the screen and accommodate the seating.
- Jamie Zimmerman agreed to house five of the counselors at his and Lisa’s house 12Jun-16Jun

Evangelism: Greg reported that over \$34,000 was generated via the special donation at the Synod Assembly.

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Fellowship: Paula reported that Jill Taylor would lead May's fourth Sunday meal. The June / July newsletter will focus on LSI and the Synod Assembly meeting. Twing volunteered to write something but needed a prompting with an idea and/or due date.

Stewardship: Twing offered no report.

Youth: Kevin commented that Confirmation class included 4. Also, the Youth group is once again seeking summer Church camp reimbursement. Finally, Kevin is trying to organize a Kernels game trip up to Cedar Rapids so watch for an announcement in the newsletter.

Worship & Music: Beth reported that all is well. Baccalaureate is all set as is graduation. Choir director discussion continues.

Old Business: None.

New Business:

- Pastor reported that there would be four confirmands.
- Pastor reported that "White Dove Electronics" donated the equipment to wirelessly connect his laptop to the Great Hall speakers and is advising on obtaining a projector and screen quote for functions in the Great Hall. Council agreed to get a gift card for \$50 to thank him for his donation.
- The meeting table will be paid for with funds moved from the Memorial Fund.
- It was reported and discussed that the Synod Assembly was really fun. Jamie had to cover for Lisa who was out sick but discovered it all to be a blessing in the end. Bethany volunteers helped with registration starting at 7:30 a.m. Some of the common challenges faced by all congregations were the declining enrollment numbers, the lack of youth activities and the lack of general growth. The Synod fiscals were off again this year. 450 voting members were present. Bethany volunteers included Jamie and Lisa Zimmerman, Paula Casper, Jill Taylor and Dave Bahnsen.

Meeting adjourned by the President at 7:49 p.m. and closed with the Lord's Prayer.





FAITH AT HOME

For some time now we have had short Bible passages and reflections pertaining to that text on the tables in the Great Hall. We have decided to also place those in the Newsletter. The passages and questions will match up with those found on the tables. Therefore if you want to continue the discussion at home you can. This is one more way we are trying to spur conversation about faith and also absorb ourselves in the word of God.



Matthew 6:12

“And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.”

- When someone forgives me...
- I find it most difficult to forgive...
- I ask God to forgive me for...

Jeremiah 1:5-6

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.” Then I said, “Ah, Lord God! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a boy.”

- Being consecrated, chosen, set aside by God makes me wonder...
- God’s present purpose for me...
- I sometimes say to God, “But, I am only...”

Isaiah 53:4-6

Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

- Struck, afflicted, wounded, crushed, punished, bruised for me...
- Just like a wandering sheep, I stray off on my own ways...
- Someone today who sacrifices for me...

Matthew 6:13

“And do not bring us to the time of trial,”

- I worry most about...
- Things that most tempt me...
- I ask God to keep me safe from...



CONFIRMATION 2016

On May 22nd we celebrated with four amazing youth as they affirmed their baptisms during worship. It was a great day and we look forward to how the Holy Spirit will be active in the lives of these young people. Congratulations Matt, Matt, Jaylen, and Mia.



Kudos to Our Confirmands

2016 SYNOD ASSEMBLY RECAP

Dear Bethany Members,

On Friday, May 6th and Saturday, May 7th, Lisa and I had the honor and privilege to represent you at the 2016 SE Iowa Synod Assembly held at the Coralville Marriott Hotel and Convention Center. The title of the meeting was “Drawn to the Light of God”.

I had not attended a Synod Assembly in over 20 years and this was Lisa’s first time. We both went into the weekend with some trepidation as to what we should expect and whether the meeting would be nothing more than a bunch of administrative type things with votes for new members of obscure committees we had never heard of or votes for the implementation of policies that wouldn’t really affect us at the local level. However, we were both impressed with how well organized the meetings were, how clearly things were explained, and how forthcoming the Synod leadership was on explaining things and sharing challenges our Synod and the ELCA faces going forward. There were approximately 350 people in attendance to include voting members and non-voting attendees.

Some of the challenges we face at Bethany are the changing make-up of our congregation in terms of age, making Sunday services attractive to millennials, and the declining attendance in our youth programs. While we sometimes think these issues are unique to Bethany and not the larger church, I can tell you they are not. All congregations are struggling with these exact same issues, and all congregations are searching for answers, particularly the rural congregations. For the more urban areas such as Des Moines, they also are struggling with some of these issues although a declining population base is not one of them, rather they are focused on “alternative” services and service times, and how to keep millennials “engaged”.

Bishop Burk commented on this and how it is starting to affect the Synod’s and ELCA’s finances. In particular, communities and congregations in the western part of our Synod (west of Des Moines) have seen significant changes in population which affects membership and attendance, which then affects their giving, and then impacts individual church budgets, the amount of money they are able to give the Synod, and finally what programs the Synod is able to fund at previous levels. In 2016 the Synod has had to decrease giving to Campus Ministry and Lutheran Services in Iowa by 16% with an additional 7% decrease proposed for 2017. While this may sound like a lot, and it isn’t insignificant, the Synod still continues to help fund these and many other programs at very high levels. In addition, if you remember, we had a special offering a number of Sundays ago designed to help the Synod address these funding shortages, and the Synod received in excess of \$34,000 from all the congregations, which eliminated about 65% of the 2016 shortfall. This will continue to be a challenge for the Synod going forward, but it is one they are aware of and working diligently to address. I am very confident that we have a strong leadership group in place at the Synod level and in each respective congregation who are daily working and thinking about ways to help each congregation adapt to the changing societal issues we all face and grow memberships respectively.

We also had a number of fantastic speakers to include the Reverend Jason Chesnut from Baltimore, Maryland who is a Biblical Storyteller, and over the course of 2 days presented to us approximately 5 times in roughly 5 minute snippets an ongoing Bible Story which kept the entire audience engaged. Another presentation was given by the Churchwide Representative, Reverend Ruben Duran, who was very engaging and funny and was able to incorporate race and its challenges into his presentation in an appropriate and enlightening manner.

Our favorite speaker of the 2 day event was A.J. Houseman on Leadership. A.J. is a young lady who has been a leader of Campus Ministry at UNI for a number of years and will be attending Seminary on a full-ride scholarship this fall at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Gettysburg, PA. Two things A.J. said which had a profound impact on us were:

“In order to walk on water you must first get out of the boat”

“Sometimes you have to be uncomfortable in order to be in the right place”



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2016 SYNOD ASSEMBLY RECAP

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I think these are important points to keep in mind as we examine our own faith, our place in this world, and how we daily try to live our faith in the world and as an example for others.

Procedurally, there were no earth shattering votes on any large societal or church issues, with the exception of Resolution # 4 which concerned “Churchwide Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine” and was originally adopted in 2005 by the ELCA and concerns building “a movement that will strengthen the resolve of our political leaders to find a peaceful and just solution in the Holy Land” by a way of a “cessation of all settlement activities”. Essentially, the Resolution was an affirmation of what was passed in 2005 and asking our ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton and ELCA members to more forcefully urge our country’s political leadership to take stronger action against Israel and get it to stop its ongoing illegal settlement building in East Jerusalem and the West Bank and comply with international human rights laws in the occupied territory. Israeli settlements are illegal under international law because they violate Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention. There was some very spirited debate and a wide ranging view of opinions regarding this issue, but in the end the Resolution was passed by the Synod Assembly.

Lisa and I would like to thank you for electing us as your representatives and we would encourage everyone to at some point attend a Synod Assembly whether that be as a voting member or simply as an observer as it is a very enlightening and reassuring experience.

Peace Be With You,

Jamie Zimmerman

BLESSING OF BACKPACKS

All students are invited to join us in worship on Sunday August 21 as we will pray over and bless their backpacks prior to the beginning of another school year. We hope you plan to attend and each student will receive something to assure them they are never alone.



GOD'S WORK. OUR HANDS. SUNDAY

September 11, 2016

Please plan to attend the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America’s annual day of service as we partner with thousands of other Lutherans across America in doing God’s work. We will gather for worship service at 9:00 a.m. and then go forth in mission. If you don’t have a yellow shirt, please see the order forms in the hallway to the large hall or go to our website.

**God's work.
Our hands.**



Daily Bible Readings

The foundational premise of this set of daily readings is their relationship to the Sunday lectionary. The readings are chosen so that the days leading up to Sunday (Thursday through Saturday) prepare for the Sunday readings. The days flowing out from Sunday (Monday through Wednesday) reflect upon the Sunday readings. The complete Daily Lectionary is also found on pages 1121-1153 of our hymnal, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*.

Monday, August 1	Psalm 127 Ecclesiastes 2:1-17 Colossians 3:18-4:1	Thursday, August 18	Psalm 103:1-8 Numbers 15:32-41 Hebrews 12:3-17
Tuesday, August 2	Psalm 127 Ecclesiastes 3:16-4:8 Colossians 4:2-6	Friday, August 19	Psalm 103:1-8 2 Chronicles 8:12-15 Acts 17:1-9
Wednesday, August 3	Psalm 127 Ecclesiastes 12:1-8,13-14 Luke 12:22-31	Saturday, August 20	Psalm 103:1-8 Nehemiah 13:15-22 Luke 6:1-5
Thursday, August 4	Psalm 33:12-22 Job 21:1-16 Romans 9:1-9	Sunday, August 21	Isaiah 58:9b-14 Hebrews 12:18-29 Luke 13:10-17
Friday, August 5	Psalm 33:12-22 Ecclesiastes 6:1-6 Acts 7:1-8	Monday, August 22	Psalm 109:21-31 Ezekiel 20:1-17 Hebrews 3:7-4:11
Saturday, August 6	Psalm 33:12-22 Genesis 11:27-32 Matthew 6:19-24	Tuesday, August 23	Psalm 109:21-31 Ezekiel 20:18-32 Revelation 3:7-13
Sunday, August 7	Genesis 15:1-6 Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16 Luke 12:32-40	Wednesday, August 24	Psalm 109:21-31 Ezekiel 20:33-44 Luke 6:6-11
Monday, August 8	Psalm 89:1-18 2 Chronicles 33:1-17 Hebrews 11:1-7	Thursday, August 25	Psalm 112 Proverbs 15:13-17 1 Peter 3:8-12
Tuesday, August 9	Psalm 89:1-18 2 Chronicles 34:22-33 Hebrews 11:17-28	Friday, August 26	Psalm 112 Proverbs 18:6-12 1 Peter 4:7-11
Wednesday, August 10	Psalm 89:1-18 Jeremiah 33:14-26 Luke 12:41-48	Saturday, August 27	Psalm 112 Proverbs 21:1-4, 24-26 Matthew 20:20-28
Thursday, August 11	Psalm 82 Joshua 7:1, 10-26 Hebrews 10:26-31	Sunday, August 28	Proverbs 25:6-7 Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16 Luke 14:1, 7-14
Friday, August 12	Psalm 82 1 Samuel 5:1-12 Hebrews 10:32-39	Monday, August 29	Psalm 119:65-72 2 Chronicles 12:1-12 Hebrews 13:7-21
Saturday, August 13	Psalm 82 1 Samuel 6:1-16 Matthew 24:15-27	Tuesday, August 30	Psalm 119:65-72 Isaiah 2:12-17 Titus 1:1-9
Sunday, August 14	Jeremiah 23:23-29 Hebrews 11:29-12:2 Luke 12:49-56	Wednesday, August 31	Psalm 119:65-72 Isaiah 57:14-21 Luke 14:15-24
Monday, August 15	Psalm 32 Jeremiah 23:30-40 1 John 4:1-6		
Tuesday, August 16	Psalm 32 Jeremiah 25:15-29 Acts 7:44-53		
Wednesday, August 17	Psalm 32 Jeremiah 25:30-38 Luke 19:45-48		





August 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 9:00 AM Worship followed by fellowship	1 Pastor Chad on Vacation	2 Pastor Chad on Vacation 1:00 PM Quilters 1:30 PM Hope Chest Open	3 Pastor Chad on Vacation 6:00 AM Men's Breakfast and Bible Study	4 Pastor Chad on Vacation 6:00 AM Women's Bible study	5 Pastor Chad on Vacation	6 Pastor Chad on Vacation
7 Pastor Chad on Vacation 9:00 AM Worship followed by fellowship	8 Pastor Chad on Vacation 6:30 PM Council Meeting	9 Pastor Chad on Vacation 1:00 PM Quilters 1:30 PM Hope Chest Open	10 Pastor Chad on Vacation 6:00 AM Men's Breakfast and Bible Study	11 6:00 AM Women's Bible study 7:00 PM Prayer book meeting	12	13
14 9:00 AM Worship followed by fellowship	15 11:30 AM Bethany Serve Summer Lunch Program @ Hoover Elementary	16 1:00 PM Quilters 1:30 PM Hope Chest Open	17 6:00 AM Men's Breakfast and Bible Study	18 6:00 AM Women's Bible study 7:00 PM Prayer book meeting	19	20
21 9:00 AM Worship followed by fellowship (Blessing of backpacks Sunday)	22	23 1:00 PM Quilters 1:30 PM Hope Chest Open	24 6:00 AM Men's Breakfast and Bible Study	25 6:00 AM Women's Bible study 7:00 PM Prayer book meeting	26	27
28 9:00 AM Worship followed by fellowship 5:00 PM West Branch Community Meal @ Bethany	29	30 1:00 PM Quilters 1:30 PM Hope Chest Open	31 6:00 AM Men's Breakfast and Bible Study	1 6:00 AM Women's Bible study 7:00 PM Prayer book meeting	2	3



SMALL CATECHISM APP

Augsburg Fortress, the publishing house of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, recently introduced their first mobile app featuring *Luther's Small Catechism*. This short resource is Luther's guide to the basics of the Christian faith. This app can be downloaded for free via the Apple IOS App Store and on Google Play. Simply search "Luther's Small Catechism" and then look for the one by Augsburg Fortress.



Monetary Gifts Report

Submitted by Jill Taylor

Saints in Worship:

05-01 54
 05-08 52
 05-15 74
 05-22 103
 05-29 52
 Total: 335

	May 2016		YTD	
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
Total Receipts	13,040	13,083	66,284	65,419
Total Expenses	12,956	13,651	77,499	68,344



Monetary Gifts Report

Submitted by Jill Taylor

Saints in Worship:

06-05 58
 06-12 57
 06-19 56
 06-26 60
 Total: 231

	June 2016		YTD	
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
Total Receipts	12,347	13,083	78,631	78,502
Total Expenses	11,805	13,650	89,304	81,994

Thank you all for faithfully stewarding the gifts God has entrusted us with in fulfilling the ministry and mission of God here at Bethany Lutheran Church! In so many ways, not just monetarily, God is abundantly providing for our needs.

