

Bethany Lutheran Church

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



February
2016



(Note: This article was my report in the Annual Report so my apologies to those of you who have already read it. However, I realize not everyone gets an Annual Report; hence, its inclusion here.)

Dear wonderful, awesome, amazing, faithful people of God!

As we head into a new year as the called people of God here at Bethany I have been praying, reflecting, and hoping for the Holy Spirit's guidance in revealing God's mission and purpose for us here at Bethany. That is not to say God has not been at work here this past year because unequivocally without a doubt God has done some wonderful things through all of us, which are highlighted in various other reports found within this document. However, what I am getting at in the coming year and our future together is are we truly listening to God, discerning what God is telling us and calling us to do? Or, are we trying too much to keep up with other faith communities who God may be using in a totally different way? What is God's dream for Bethany Lutheran? How is God using all of us to accomplish that dream?

I have been reading the book, *Living Lutheran Renewing Your Congregation*, by Dave Daubert. (Augsburg Fortress, 2007). Time and time again the author lifts up the fact God doesn't need our help to accomplish God's dreams and mission in the world. God is God and certainly could do all this without us; however, God being who God is and creating us out of God's goodness and the desire to be in relationship with God's people invites us to partner with God in doing kingdom work. Isn't that exciting? This is the relationship Jesus shares with His disciples and the church while also reminding us there is a mission tied to that relationship as He states in John 15:14, "You are my friends if you do what I command you." Moving forward as we dream about God's dream for our community of faith a question each and every one of us continually need to ask is, "Do we want to be part of what God is dreaming and doing or not?" Let us remember God's reasoning in creating the church. According to Daubert, it is a community of allies in which, "people like you and me gather regularly to remind one another of what God has done for us in Jesus." He goes on to state, "We teach each other what we've learned, pray for each other, and then God sends us back out into the world remembering that although God is present when we gather, God is loose in the world. Most of what God is up to is out there!" (p.38)

This is not easy work God calls us to be a part of. In fact, God's work is often very complex and causes us great discomfort. Yet, in order to grow more fully into the people God has created us to be we often have to take a chance and will ourselves to step away from the trunk of the tree and carefully crawl out along the branches. With each step the branch gets a bit narrower, flimsy, and our anxiety level increases as we fear the branch might snap at any second. Yet once we get there we find the new growth of the leaves and we find we are still safe and secure in the everlasting arms of God.

Continued on page 2

Important Dates

- 2-07 Council Installation during worship
- 2-08 6:30 pm Council meeting
- 2-10 9:00 am Women's Circle
7:00 pm Ash Wednesday @
West Branch UMC
- 2-17 Lutheran Day on the hill
(see pg. 3 for details)
- 2-28 5:00 pm Community Meal

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

FIND US ON FACEBOOK!

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

ALSO FIND US ON TWITTER!

Search @blewestbranch



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From the pastor continued...

People of God, as we pray together, reflect individually, and discern where God is leading us one of the very simple things we can do is continually work to build one another up in how we communicate and act toward one another. We have all made mistakes, gotten upset with one another, been hurt or let down by one another, and said or done things we wish we hadn't. If we are going to be part of God's dream together we must be very intentional about being a community that builds one another up through words and actions. It is true sometimes that love and compassion must come through in the form of what we might deem "tough" love; but, each of also needs to be "all-in" on being a community of love. One of the simplest and easiest ways I know how to do that is to tell each of you how awesome, wonderful, valuable, faithful, gifted, supportive, and important you are to me, each other, and to God and what God is doing through us. I need each of you! The Council and other leaders in our community need each of you! We need each other! God has proven that God desires to partner with all of us and be an active part of what God is doing!

Thank you for all you do! Grace and peace to each of you in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

Pastor Chad

Vacation Bible School
is coming earlier this year!

Please save the date.
June 13-17

Watch for more information in your
March newsletter.





Birthdays

02/02 Becky Paulsen
 02/04 Del Hughes
 02/06 Herman Boedecker, Jamie Fetzer
 02/10 Dave Bahnsen, Paul Friis,
 Kristin McElhinney
 02/12 Katherine White
 02/15 Becky Blaalid, Kyle Colvin,
 Dave Poppen
 02/20 Joshua Snyder, Jamie Zimmerman
 02/21 Tina Webb
 02/23 Arik Marsh
 02/24 Lynn Lovetinsky
 02/26 Isaac Kimpe
 02/27 Dorothy Holmes
 02/28 Brad Kinsinger



Bethany Books

by Frank Frostestad

Books for Adults

The books in this issue are by Karen Kingsbury. The first three are from her September 11 series. *One Tuesday Morning* commemorates the tragedy and heroism of that day and its impact on two families. Despite the horrifying events of that day, this is a love story. It portrays the power of God's faithfulness and a good man's love.

Beyond Tuesday Morning is the sequel. It is the way the rest of the story might play out for all those touched or changed by tragedy. Like the characters, all of us have a chance to choose life. It can be in your family life, at work, time with children or the people you love. Many of us are in different stages of trials in our lives. The examples of working through them in this novel can be an example to us.

Remember Tuesday Morning (originally published as *Every Now & Then*) is the third book of the series. The main character is the son of a firefighter who was killed in the collapse of the twin towers of September 11th. The help of people from prior books and a high school sweetheart enable him return from a state where he shut out all the people who cared about him.

Shades of Blue introduces us to Brad Cutler, 28, a rising star at his New York ad agency. He is about to marry the girl of his dreams. His career and fiancée would indicate a fairy-tale life ahead of him. It begins to unravel when memories of a high school girlfriend begin to torment him. Lost innocence and one difficult choice flood his conscience, and he is no longer sure of what the future will bring. He needs to go back in search of his first love. Read to find out what happens. This book is a good example of the need for forgiveness in our lives today.

This Side Of Heaven says the publisher is "a story of family secrets, broken relationships, and a love strong enough to span a nation."

Life Dandelion Dust introduces the reader to Jack and Molly Campbell. They are enjoying life with their four-year-old adopted son, Joey. Everything changes when Joey's biological father is released from prison. He is ready to start life over but not without getting custody of his son. A judge's quick decision deals a devastating blow to the family when it is determined that Joey must return to his biological parents. This book is about a couple's love for their son and the lengths to which they will go to keep their family together.

Book for Children

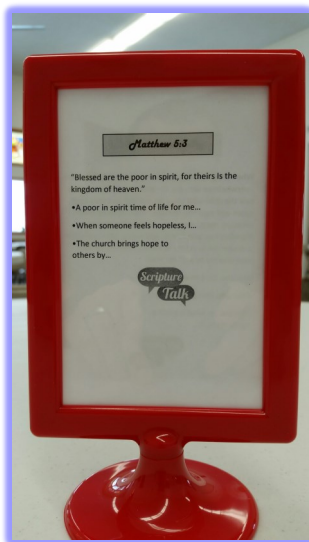
Jesus Feeds 5,000 and other Bible stories is the retelling of several Bible stories for children ages 5-8. Besides Jesus feeding the 5,000, stories include: Jesus walks on water, the ten outcasts, a man through the roof, and Lazarus.

DVD for Children

The DVD *Jesus feeds 5,000, Mary and Martha, and other Bible stories* contain 10 episodes of animated Bible stories. Besides the five mentioned in the above book, stories included are: teach us to pray, Jesus and the children, the widow's offering, Mary and Martha, and Zacchaeus the tax collector.

NOW AVAILABLE ON YOUR FELLOWSHIP TABLE

Fellowship is integral to our life together and now we are all invited to take a few minutes and discuss a short Bible passage and reflect on a few questions. One more way we can enter the Bible, share our faith, and get to know one another better. Scripture Talk is from Peer Ministry Leadership. (www.peerministry.org)





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

Communication at Bethany

Communication is vital to any organization whether it be a church, business, or other entity. We do our best to keep everyone posted on happenings here at Bethany. Our main avenues of communication are via the monthly newsletter, our website (www.wbbethany.org), our Facebook and Twitter pages, emails, and through weekly worship bulletins. If you have not bookmarked our website please do so. There is a wealth of information on it including but not limited to: photos of events at Bethany, schedules and calendars, links to devotions, sermons, and other resources related to Bethany such as our Constitution and By-Laws. Communication is vital to our relationship with one another and we hope these various avenues help strengthen that connection and our ministry efforts here at Bethany and in the world.



**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

Women's Circle
Second Wednesday of Month
9:00 a.m. in Great Hall unless
stated otherwise

Adult Discussion
10:20 a.m. in the Small Hall
All are Welcome

YOUR VOICE MATTERS

Lutheran Day on the Hill-Save the Date

Join Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI) and members of the Southeastern Iowa Synod as we gather on Wednesday February 17 for Lutheran Day on the Hill in Des Moines. This day is essential in giving a voice to those who are not heard, for seeking social justice and for empowering people to exercise their right and responsibility to be part of the legislative process.

Wednesday February 17

9:30 a.m. - 2:15 p.m.

(Transportation to Des Moines and lunch at Capitol provided)

Must register by January 28 at lsiowa.org
(search Lutheran Day on the Hill)



BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH
COUNCIL MINUTES December 2015

Members present: Candy Madsen, John Black, Carol Roghair, Courtney Heid, Pastor Chad, Jill Taylor, Paula Casper, Greg Lipes, Kevin Olson, Laura Twing
Guests: Neil Korsmo, Frank Frostestad

Called to Order: 6:30 pm

Opening discussion, thankfulness, prayer.

Pastor's Report: 27 Pastoral visits, 3 continuing education events. Funeral for Jack Shaw. Now on Synod committee for Commission of Rostered Leadership Training.

WBARC is considering a community group service in January, rather than Pulpit Exchange. Bethany will host a Prayer Service of Peace on January 24th 2016. Pastor also attended Tipton Consortium meeting hosted by Iowa State Extension. This is a group of clergy, social service agencies and non-profits. Positives include a successful children's program and 6 members interested in serving on council next term. Christmas services will be at 5 pm and 8 pm. Bethany will do a Christmas Eve service at Crestview at 2 pm. Holy Week ecumenical schedule has been decided.

Secretary's Report: Moved by Greg Lipes, and seconded by John Black to approve the minutes from October 12 2015. There was no meeting in November. All ayes.

Treasurer's Report: 2 months worth of mileage paid. Long distance phone cards have been purchased. Quilters are in need of more funds. Some discussion on category changes. Approval moved by Kevin Olson, seconded by Carol Roghair. All ayes.

Building and Grounds: Great Hall bathrooms have had minor repairs. Range hood needs to be fixed in kitchen.

Education: Pleased with the child-sized round tables that were purchased. There are currently 2 Sunday School classes, which is working better than 1 group. WBUMC will be contacted about possible joint Vacation Bible School this year.

Missions: no report

Fellowship: 20 weighted blankets were made. Directories arrived and have been dispersed. There will be a group caroling at Crestview next Sunday, meeting for dinner after.

We had good attendance at Cookie Walk. Beyer's will do the December 4th Sunday Supper. 18 poinsettias have been ordered. Discussion regarding the nice tablecloths for the long tables, no longer needed?

Stewardship: That committee will continue to meet and present ideas all year.

Youth: no report

Worship: We have organists lined up for all services in December except for the 27th. There have been 2 responses to the ad for hiring a new organist. The committee recommends hiring one of the applicants. Laura Twing moved, and Courtney Heid seconded hiring the recommended person, Seth Butler. All ayes.

Old Business:

* Neil Korsmo (guest) presents thoughts regarding distribution of the amounts built up in our Cookie Walk and Bus Tour funds. Emphasis wanted on mission activity, and distributing the current amounts available.

New Business:

* A new prison ministry is being started in Anamosa, through the ELCA. Pastor asks to add this to the list of charities that receive our 2% local missions funds.

* Final decision on dispersement of accumulated funds, plus this year's budgeted 2% local missions fund is as follows: moved by John Black, and seconded by Kevin Olson, to distribute the accumulated funds (\$8700.70), to the following groups, \$1000.00 each and a balance of \$700.70 left in the Cookie Walk fund.

Hope Chest
Quilters
Lutheran Campus Ministry
Lutheran Chaplaincy Organization
Camp Ewalu
Lutheran Services of Iowa
Free Indeed Prison Ministry
DVIP of Iowa City

The 2% budgeted for local missions will be evenly split between:

Wartburg Seminary
Lutheran Services of Iowa
Shelter House of Iowa City
DVIP
Lutheran Campus Ministry
Lutheran Chaplaincy
WBARC

The names on both lists will receive the \$1000.00 plus the 2%.

Voice vote, all ayes.

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BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH
 COUNCIL MINUTES December 2015
 Continued

Meeting was adjourned and continued on Sunday, 12/20/2015 @ 10:15am

Paul Bruns, John Hierseman and Kami Poppen will be asked to be on the Audit committee again.

Greg Lipes moved for approval moving \$20,000 to the Mission Fund Investment account. Laura Twing seconded. Voice vote, all ayes.

John Black moved to approved the amended budget, including increasing the amount to \$900 for the choir director, and setting local missions percentage at 3%.

Adjourned
 at 11:00 am



We invite you to join us for worship this Lent as we gather together for Prayer Around the Cross. This will be a short contemplative and meditative prayer service to assist us in centering ourselves during the season of Lent. We will sing short, simple songs, offer prayers together and be invited to pray around the cross for whatever it is that lays heavily upon our hearts.

Wednesday, February 17

6:00 pm Lent Supper
 7:00 pm Prayer Around the Cross Worship Service

Wednesday, February 24

6:00 pm Lent Supper
 7:00 pm Prayer Around the Cross Worship Service

Wednesday, March 2

6:00 pm Lent Supper
 7:00 pm Prayer Around the Cross Worship Service

Wednesday, March 9

6:00 pm Lent Supper
 7:00 pm Prayer Around the Cross Worship Service

Wednesday, March 16

6:00 pm Lent Supper
 7:00 pm Prayer Around the Cross Worship Service

Special Worship Services during Lent and Easter

Ash Wednesday Service

7:00 p.m. at West Branch United Methodist Church

Maundy Thursday Service

7:00 p.m. at Springdale United Methodist Church

Good Friday Service

7:00 p.m. at Bethany Lutheran Church

Easter Sunday Services at Bethany

8:00 A.M. and 10:00 A.M.



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*.

Mon – Feb 1	1 Kings 17:8-16 1 Corinthians 2:6-16 Psalm 56	Tue – Feb. 16	Zechariah 3:1-10 2 Peter 2:4-21 Psalm 17
Tue – Feb 2	2 Kings 5:1-14 1 Corinthians 14:13-25 Psalm 56	Wed – Feb. 17	Job 1:1-22 Luke 21:34 –22:6 Psalm 17
Wed – Feb 3	Jeremiah 1:11-19 Luke 19:41-44 Psalm 56	Thu – Feb. 18	Genesis 13:1-7, 14-18 Philippians 3:2-12 Psalm 27
Thu – Feb 4	Deuteronomy 9:1-5 Acts 3:11-16 Psalm 99	Fri – Feb. 19	Genesis 14:17-24 Philippians 3:17-20 Psalm 27
Fri – Feb 5	Deuteronomy 9:6-14 Acts 10:1-8 Psalm 99	Sat – Feb. 20	Psalm 118:26-29 Matthew 23:37-39 Psalm 27
Sat – Feb 6	Deuteronomy 9:15-24 Luke 10:21-24 Psalm 99	Sun - Feb. 21	Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18 Philippians 3:17--4:1 Luke 13:31-35
Sun - Feb. 7	Exodus 34:29-35 2 Corinthians 3:12—4:2 Luke 9:28-36 [37-43a]	Mon – Feb. 22	Exodus 33:1-6 Romans 4:1-12 Psalm 105:1-15 [16-41] 42
Mon – Feb 8	Exodus 35:1-29 Acts 10:9-23a Psalm 35:11-28	Tue – Feb. 23	Numbers 14:10b-24 1 Corinthians 10:1-13 Psalm 105:1-15 [16-41] 42
Tue – Feb 9	Ezekiel 1:1—2:1 Acts 10:23b-33 Psalm 35:11-28	Wed – Feb. 24	2 Chronicles 20:1-22 Luke 13:22-31 Psalm 105:1-15 [16-41] 42
Wed - Feb 10	Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 Psalm 51:1-17 (1) 2 Corinthians 5:20b—6:10	Thu – Feb. 25	Daniel 3:19-30 Revelation 2:8-11 Psalm 63:1-8
Thu – Feb. 11	Exodus 5:10-23 Acts 7:30-34 Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16	Fri – Feb. 26	Daniel 12:1-4 Revelation 3:1-6 Psalm 63:1-8
Fri – Feb. 12	Exodus 6:1-13 Acts 7:35-42 Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16	Sat – Feb. 27	Isaiah 5:1-7 Luke 6:43-45 Psalm 63:1-8
Sat – Feb. 13	Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 John 12:27-36 John 12:27-36 Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16	Sun - Feb. 28	Isaiah 55:1-9 1 Corinthians 10:1-13 Luke 13:1-9
Sun - Feb. 14	Deuteronomy 26:1-11 Romans 10:8b-13 Luke 4:1-13	Mon – Feb. 29	Jeremiah 11:1-17 Romans 2:1-11 Psalm 39
Mon – Feb. 15	1 Chronicles 21:1-17 1 John 2:1-6 Psalm 17		



February 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 1:00 PM Quilters 1:30 PM Hope Chest Open	3 6:00 AM Men's Breakfast and Bible Study 6:30 PM Confirmation dinner and study	4 6:00 AM Women's Bible study	5	6
7 9:00 AM Worship followed by fellowship 10:20 AM Sunday school & Adult Discussion	8 6:30 PM Council Meeting	9 1:00 PM Quilters 1:30 PM Hope Chest Open	10 6:00 AM Men's Breakfast and Bible Study 9:00 AM Women's Circle 7:00 PM Ash Wednesday Worship @WBUMC	11 6:00 AM Women's Bible study	12	13
14 9:00 AM Worship followed by fellowship 10:20 AM Sunday school & Adult Discussion	15	16 1:00 PM Quilters 1:30 PM Hope Chest Open	17 6:00 AM Men's Breakfast and Bible Study 6:00 PM Wednesday Lent Dinner 7:00 PM Wednesday Lent Prayer Around Cross Worship	18 6:00 AM Women's Bible study	19	20
21 9:00 AM Worship followed by fellowship 10:20 AM Sunday school & Adult Discussion	22	23 1:00 PM Quilters 1:30 PM Hope Chest Open	24 6:00 AM Men's Breakfast and Bible Study 6:00 PM Wednesday Lent Dinner 7:00 PM Wednesday Lent Prayer Around Cross Worship	25 6:00 AM Women's Bible study	26	27
28 9:00 AM Worship followed by fellowship 10:20 AM Sunday school & Adult Discussion 5:00 PM West Branch Community Meal @ Betha- ny	29					

Monetary Gifts Report

Submitted by Jill Taylor

Saints in Worship:

12-06	55
12-13	82
12-20	70
12-27	61
12-24	112
12-24	46
Total	426

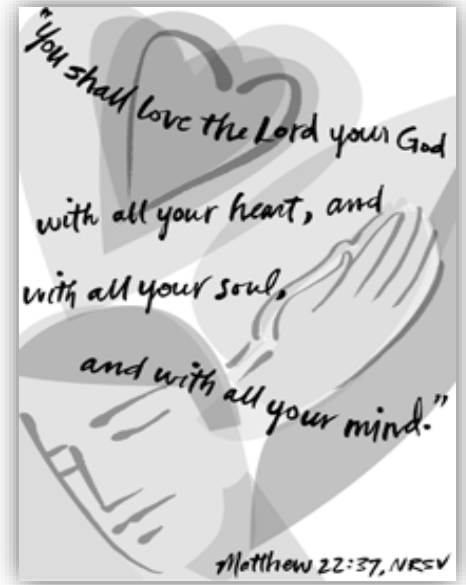
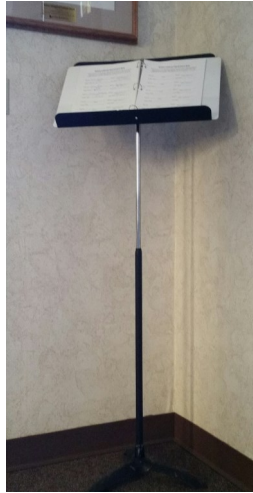
	December 2015		YTD	
Total Receipts	Actual 17,070	Budget 12,333	Actual 162,178	Budget 148,000
Total Expenses	Actual 15,915	Budget 12,975	Actual 152,429	Budget 156,057

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.



Community Prayer Book

A reminder if you have a prayer request you are invited to list it in the Bethany Community Prayer Book located at the top of the stairs just outside of the sanctuary. You don't have to fill in all the information and can supply whatever you are comfortable with. We will occasionally lift up those listed in prayer during worship. Additionally, Pastor Chad will pray for those listed during the week. If you have a confidential prayer request you are invited to give that to Pastor Chad.



West Branch Area Religious Council (WBARC)

Bethany Lutheran, Springdale United Methodist, St. Bernadette's Catholic,
West Branch Friends, West Branch Friends Meeting, West Branch United Methodist



January 4, 2016

To: WBARC Representatives and Congregations

Re: 2015 WBARC Financial Recap

Greetings Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As the acting Treasurer of the West Branch Area Religious Council (WBARC) I want to once again thank all of you for your faithful partnership and support of our shared ministry together. Through your faithful stewardship and monetary donations to our joint account we were able to continue our shared mission in assisting those in need in our community.

During 2015 WBARC received \$4,160 in monetary gifts. Thank you all so much! We had mission expenditures of \$2,261.97. All of these expenditures went directly to financial assistance except a minimal amount (\$55.78) going to cover costs for pizza and drinks for a meeting on childhood poverty held at the City Council Chambers. This meeting consisted of WBARC members, school counselors and administration, City Manger Matt Muckler, and other community leaders. Ultimately, the work of our time together will help provide awareness and resources to those in need. One item already implemented is a comprehensive brochure listing a wide variety of local and state agencies and other organizations individuals can turn to for assistance. This guide is available at each of our congregations, city offices, the library, and through the school counselors. Additionally, over the course of the year we assisted approximately 15 individuals and/or families with needs such as a room at the Presidential Inn (we had instances of a family being homeless and a domestic violence situation), food vouchers to Jack and Jill, fuel assistance, and a few other needs. Additionally, WBARC continued its strong support of the Weekend Backpack Program by allocating \$1,600 to fund this valuable ministry and I have already issued payment of \$750 to help fund this through the end of this academic year. This program is coordinated by the West Branch School District and currently sends home a backpack full of food each Friday to approximately 15 students.

Once again, on behalf of my colleagues, let me express our gratitude and thankfulness for your commitment and faithfulness to our shared ministry. We do our best to faithfully steward these gifts and see they are making a difference and extending God's care and love to all. We look forward to 2016, our partnership together, and have some new and exciting things planned and on the table for discussion of how we can better further our joint efforts in doing God's work in our community.

In peace,

Chad Whaley
Pastor, Bethany Lutheran Church
WBARC Treasurer

