

Bethany Lutheran Church

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



**"This congregation agrees to be responsible for its life
as a Christian community."**

From Bethany's Constitution C6.03.a

Important Dates

- 01-05 Prayer Group @ 7:00 pm
- 01-15 Annual meeting following
worship.
- 01-19 Small group study 7:00 p.m.
- 01-22 Community meal 5:00 p.m.
- 01-26 Small group study 7:00 p.m.
- 01-29 Community Prayer Service
5:30 pm @ Bethany

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 @blcwestbranch



Dear faithful ministers of Christ and precious saints of God,

Happy New Year! Each new year brings with it many things
such as those resolutions we all set. You know ... lose
weight, start an exercise program, or save more money. We
begin looking ahead to what this year might bring us. Per-

haps, we are grateful to move beyond the last year and have hope this year will
be better. Or, perhaps we are not looking forward to the upcoming year. Maybe
you foresee changes with your job, are facing health issues, or are watching a
loved one age and decline in health.

Within the church we too have things to look forward to. Some more exciting
than others. One of those fast approaching items is the Annual Meeting. Yes, I
suppose many of you may wish to tune out now that I just mentioned those two
words. Boring stuff. Let someone else do it. You may even ask yourself, why
in the world should I go to an annual meeting? I realize many of you have con-
flicts that won't allow you to attend; however, if you are available I challenge
you to attend worship and the meeting that follows. Is it as exciting as watching
a ball game? No, probably not. Is it as fun as going to a movie? Again, no prob-
ably not. Is it as comfortable as staying cuddled up in bed? No, I can say with
certainty the aluminum chairs most likely are not as comfortable as your bed. If
they are then it is probably time for a new mattress. But I urge you to attend be-
cause it is part of our calling as God's faithful people in Christ's church.

As our Constitution states and is found above each of us has a responsibility for
the life of this Christian community. We are in this together. Everything we do
is ministry. Even the mundane things such as annual meetings. Yet, God has
revealed that God is present when two or three gather in His name. God has re-
vealed God works even in the midst of the mundane. God has proven that the
Holy Spirit is at work, growing us, transforming us, opening us up to God's love
and will for our lives, and fostering relationships within Christ's church when we
gather for the fun and exciting stuff but also for the not-so-thrilling stuff. Yes,
annual meetings might not be the most exciting thing we do; yet, they are still an
encounter with the living God as we gather together. They are still a necessary
part of our life together and our call to be part of God's mission in spreading the
joy of the Christmas miracle and responding to God's grace as we do God's work
together here at Bethany and beyond our doors in the world.

Peace,

Pastor Chad



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

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

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

Monthly Prayer Group
First Thursday of Month
7:00 p.m. in Small Hall
All are Welcome

Video Discussion
January 19 and 26
7:00 p.m. in Small Hall

SMALL GROUP OPPORTUNITY

You are invited to join us for a three-week opportunity centered on some questions more than likely we have all asked at some point in our faith journey. We will watch short videos as teachers from Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN take on some of the most troublesome questions of believers and then share in discussing their responses and our own challenges and thoughts on these questions. The dates and topics are found below. All classes will begin at 7:00 p.m. and last approximately 45-60 minutes.

- Thursday, January 19
 - ◊ *If I am forgiven, why will I be judged?*
- Thursday, January 26
 - ◊ *What do we do with disturbing Biblical passages?*
- Thursday, February 16th
 - ◊ *How do I know the Holy Spirit is active in my life?*

MONTHLY PRAYER GROUP

A small group gathers the first Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the Small Hall and we invite others to attend as well. This is very informal and you are not asked to pray aloud. You can simply come and be present. We would love that. We often spend a bit of time in meditative prayer as we sit quietly and reflect on a Bible passage. This is a time to center ourselves and allow a bit of space, silence, and stillness into our often busy lives. Then we may share briefly about prayer in our lives, read a short article, watch a video, etc. and then close with prayer for our members, local concerns, and other issues in the world.

If you have any people or concerns you would like the group to pray for please write them in our Community Prayer Book found near the mailboxes as you enter the worship space or give them personally to Pastor Chad on a piece of paper or via email.





Birthdays

01/02 Lori Marshall
 01/09 Hallie Fitzgerald
 01/11 Tonya Lovetinsky
 01/14 Deanna Pedersen
 01/15 Paula Villhauer, Alberta Sweat
 01/17 Herb Hinkhouse
 01/20 Maggie Pickett, Tonya Samuelson
 01/23 Deb Lund
 01/24 Robbie Boaz, Paul Bruns
 01/25 Lisa Zimmerman
 01/26 Hunter Niles, Dianna Fuhrmeister
 01/29 Lance Schiele, Kay Davisson
 01/30 Jenny Blaaid, Kent Pedersen
 01/31 Pat Cassabaum

Bethany Books

by Frank Frostestad



Books for Adults

This month will feature not an author but several books on current issues or concerns. The first has been mentioned in the recent election. *The World Is Flat: A Brief History of The Twenty-First Century* by Thomas L. Friedman is several years old but it points out the reality and impact of globalization. The convergence of technology and events have allowed China and India and many other countries to become part of the global supply chain for services and manufacturing. The author explain how the flattening of the world happened at the beginning of the twenty-first century, and what it means to countries, companies, communities, and individuals. Governments and societies can, and must, adapt. This book is a primer to understanding the process of globalization with its successes and discontents.

It cannot be turned back or ignored. (donated)

Mayo Clinic: Guide To Self-Care was donated to us by Thrivent. It provides many answers to everyday health problems. Besides globalization and health issues another issue facing many today is jobs. *What Color Is Your Parachute?* by Richard N. Boles is a classic in this field. It is a practical manual for job hunters and career changers. (donated)

Change is the one factor that we are all facing today. There is no avoiding it. *The 7 Habits Of Highly Effective People* by Stephen R. Covey offers some powerful lessons in personal change.

The book reveals principles that give us the security to adapt to change and the wisdom to take advantage of the opportunities that change creates. (donated)

The Art Of Possibility by Rosamund Stone Zander and Benjamin Zander provide a deep sense of the powerful role that the idea of possibility can play in every aspect of life. Through stories, parables, and personal anecdotes the authors invite the reader to become passionate communicators, leaders, and performers whose lives show possibility into the world. (donated)

Books For Children

Sparkhouse Family Bibles engage children with God's Word using age appropriate retellings and colorful illustrations. For ages 0-3 we have *The Bedtime Bible* and *Frolic First Bible*. For ages 3-8 we have *The Holy Moly Story Bible*, *The Spark Story Bible*, and *The Whirl Story Bible*.



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Connecting faith & finances for good.®

The Simply Giving Program is a convenient, consistent, and safe way to steward your financial gifts to Bethany Lutheran. By contributing electronically you will no longer need to write out checks and prepare envelopes every week.

Get started today! Ask for an authorization form from our Financial Secretary, Claudia Beyer, or visit the "Resource" tab on our church website for a flier and registration form. Please see Claudia with any questions.





MISSION AND OUTREACH

Church Staff

Pastor - Chad Whaley
(319) 643-5998 or (319) 643-7257
pastor@wbbethany.org

Admin. Assistant - Paula Casper
(319) 331-9456
blcsecretary@lcom.net

Custodian – Jerry Dodds

Organist – Seth Butler

Church Council

John Black
(319) 631-5622
johnblack@lcom.net

Greg Lipes
(319) 643-3211
Greg.lipes@gmail.com

Jon Twing
(319) 331-6547
jon.s.twing@pearson.com

Jill Taylor
(319) 643-5865
jtmetmrt@gmail.com

Beth Kaufman
(319) 643-5734
bkkaufman@lcom.net

Tonya Samuelson
(319) 643-5915
3sams@aol.com

Kevin Olson
(319) 330-7650
kevinolsonlaw@gmail.com

Paula Casper
(319) 331-9456
blcsecretary@lcom.net

Jamie Zimmerman
(319) 325-4322
jazzim1@lcom.net

Financial Secretary

Claudia Beyer
(319) 643-2136
iabeyers@aol.com

Angel Tree

Once again Bethany responded to God’s amazing grace by giving back to others, spreading the love of God, and loving our neighbor. The annual Angel tree will provide much needed gifts to many children and youth in our community. We had over \$1000 in monetary donations plus gifts people purchased on their own to help six families in our community. It is important to remember the vast majority of gifts were items such as: socks, gloves, hats, underwear, clothes, boots and shoes. Many thanks to all for your generosity and faithfulness. Thank you to Jeni Schiele for coordinating this project and Traci Fryauf for her help at the school level. Also, thanks to those who came and helped wrapped gifts on December 14. God is good!





LUTHERAN SERVICES IN IOWA (LSI) NEWS

Giving Voice for Iowa Children and Families – Lutheran Day on the Hill

Families living in poverty. Iowa children who go hungry. Former refugees building new lives. These kinds of issues are rarely the center of attention at the Iowa State Capitol. Let's change that!

Please consider joining Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI) and the three Iowa synods of the ELCA for Lutheran Day on the Hill, an annual day of advocacy in Des Moines to uplift the needs of our neighbors. The event will be held on Tuesday, February 21. Visit www.LS Iowa.org/advocacy next month for event details, online registration and an online toolkit for your congregation, including how to participate in this year's congregational letter-writing campaign.

If you are new to advocacy, come learn more about the legislative process and your role as a citizen. If you've attended before, join us again. We hope this year's schedule will also allow you more opportunities to connect with legislators.

Our Mission: Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at www.LS Iowa.org and www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa.

A New Harmony

Zach has always had a love of the outdoors. In his free time, he can usually be found in his back yard, mowing the lawn or making sure his snow blower is working properly before the first snow. But when Zach began working with his hourly support staff, Shane, he found a new love: music. Shane is an hourly support staff with LSI's Services for People with Disabilities. Each week, the duo works together to help Zach stay active in the community, practice his coping skills, and achieve his personal goals. Music therapy has become a major part of their time together. "We play guitar quite a bit," Shane says. "I think music therapy is very important. It just helps calm the soul down." During each session, Shane teaches Zach a few new chords or strumming patterns that Zach can practice on his own. "I know when I've had a long, bad day at work, I get kind of angry rather quickly," Zach says. "If I can, I go to my room and grab my guitar and start strumming some chords. I'm not much of a singer, but I've started putting some words with some of the jamming out I do." Seeing Zach's new appreciation for guitar is just one way Shane is constantly inspired to come to work. "A lot of motivation for hourly work is you only have a short amount of time with the individual, and it has to change their life," he says. "When we can use our time to utilize music like Zach has, it can be a great coping skill, and it's working for him."





Council Minutes—November 2016

Meeting called to order at 6:31 PM by President Black

Members Present: John Black, Greg Lipes, Jill Taylor, Paula Casper, Beth Kaufman, Jamie Zimmerman, Tonya Samuelson, Pastor Chad

Members Absent: Jon Twing, Kevin Olson

Opening Prayer and Devotional:

-Pastor opened with a prayer and led a group discussion on how God is at work in our church and community on a daily basis and observations or experiences we have made or had that confirms this

Pastor's Report:

-Pastor had a very busy month with twice the normal Pastoral visits. Some highlights were: attended the Conference 7 Annual Meeting in Muscatine where more details were shared on the new Prison Ministry which will be starting at the Anamosa Men's Prison in 2017; had 6 people in attendance at the Prayer of Peace and Healing Service at Bethany which is sponsored by WBARC (this takes place on the 5th Sunday of the month and there will be 5 such services held in 2017); confirmation attendance and participation continues to go well; met with local police chief and city administrator on needs they are seeing in the community and how Bethany might be able to continue our efforts in combating those needs together. Pastor will be gone on Sunday, November 20 and Pastor Mark Holmes will preside and preach. On Sunday, December 4th Pastor Erika Uthe, Asst to the Bishop of the Southeastern Iowa Synod will be worshipping with us and preaching.

Secretary's Report: (Jon Twing)

-Jamie moved and Beth seconded to accept the September 11 minutes with corrections noted.
-Jill moved and Paula seconded to accept the October 17 minutes.

Treasurer's Report: (Jill Taylor)

-Income for the month was on budget with expenses below budgeted amount. Greg moved and Jamie seconded to accept the report as presented.

Committee Reports:

-Building and Grounds: (Jamie Zimmerman) Curt Casper edged the sidewalks on the east side of the property and also sprayed the church and parsonage yards for weeds and they look great. Bat mitigation steps are now

off the parsonage roof. Will be checking at Sam's Club for 3 rectangular tables as Costco does not have the size we want. Also getting quotes for a metal roof for the church as we have lost a large number of shingles this spring and summer due to wind, John Black is working on this.

-Education: (Tonya Samuelson) We have 6-10 attendees in the 4th – 6th Grade group which meets on Wednesdays and it is going very well. The Christmas Program will be Sunday, Dec 11 and Amber Marsh is organizing the parts for the children.

-Evangelism: (Greg Lipes) No Report

-Fellowship: (Paula Casper) 4th Sunday meal is Nov 27th at 5 PM with games and bingo beforehand starting at 4 PM. No one has volunteered for this yet.

-Stewardship: (Jon Twing) There was some discussion concerning the time and talent worksheets and their value to future committees. John Black and Pastor Chad will talk to Jon Twing about this.

-Youth: (Kevin Olson) No Report

-Worship and Music: (Beth Kaufman) On All Saints Sunday we honored Bethany members over 80 years of age of which we have 13. We had 5 who were actually able to make it for the service and celebration. Advent is coming up and decorating will take place over several weekends.

Old Business:

-Budget committee members have been contacted and have agreed to serve. Meeting date has not been set yet. Jill will let everyone know of meeting date and time.

New Business:

-Annual Meeting date has been set for Sunday, January 15.

-Jill made the motion and Paula seconded to buy a new smart TV from Costco for the church. The money will come from the Temporary Memorial Fund and will not exceed \$300. Motion passed. Pastor will pick it up and get it hooked up.

Meeting adjourned at 8:11 PM 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.

Song of Solomon 8:7

Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it. If one offered for love all the wealth of one's house, it would be utterly scorned.

- Genuine love between two people...
- When wealth and money is used to try and buy love...
- Love that lasts requires...



Mark 1:14-15

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news."

- The good news of God, for me...
- Repenting and believing...
- What Jesus asks of me...

Ecclesiastes 1:2

Vanity of vanities, says the Teacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity.

- All is vanity, or worthless, pointless, without meaning...
- In the long run, life is...
- Meaning, purpose and my life

Mark 15:37-39

Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. Now when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"

- Because Jesus died...
- Barriers separating people from God that need to be torn in two...
- If I had watched Jesus die...



ANNUAL MEETING

Bethany's annual meeting will be held January 15, 2017.

Please plan to attend as your presence is vital and very much appreciated.

Also, this is a reminder of who is a voting member, according to our Constitution. Visitors, inactive and lapsed members are always welcome to attend; however, they can't vote.

C8.02.c Voting members are confirmed members. Such confirmed members, during the current or preceding calendar year, shall have communed in this congregation and shall have made a contribution of record to this congregation. Members of this congregation who have satisfied these basic standards shall have the privilege of voice and vote at every regular and special meeting of the congregation.

FAITH RESOURCES



As a partner in God's mission, *Living Lutheran* shares with the ELCA's diverse membership the stories of God's people living their faith. Inspiring stories, news and information, theological insights and more.

Living Lutheran also has a new corresponding website, www.livinglutheran.org. Our new name, *Living Lutheran*, signifies this church's living, daring confidence in God's grace.

Bethany has copies of this magazine available each month for you to take home. They are located on the Faith Resources table in the hallway to the Great Hall.



Christ in Our Home is a quarterly devotional resource that encourages readers to live out their faith daily. Each reflective reading is accompanied by a daily scripture reference and prayer for the day.

These can be found on the Faith Resources table and on the stair banister going up to the sanctuary.

COOKIE WALK

Hats off to all the Bethany bakers! The 26th annual Cookie Walk was a huge success. You helped decorate the Great Hall (thanks Chris for the snowflakes), furnished hundreds of beautiful cookies, and welcomed dozens of people to kick off the Christmas season. Everyone working together and watching the joy of our community makes this event so much fun. Again - THANK YOU!.



Community Prayer Service

January 29, 2017

5:30 PM @

Bethany Lutheran Church

Sponsored by West Branch Area
Religious Council

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*.

Sun Jan 1	Isaiah 63:7-9 Hebrews 2:10-18 Matthew 2:13-23	Thurs Jan 19	Psalm 27:1-6 1 Samuel 1:1-20 Galatians 1:11-24
Mon Jan 2	Psalm 72 1 Kings 3:5-14 John 8:12-19	Fri Jan 20	Psalm 27:1-6 1 Samuel 9:27-10:8 Galatians 2:1-10
Tues Jan 3	Psalm 72 Genesis 28:10-22 Hebrews 11:13-22	Sat Jan 21	Psalm 27:1-6 1 Samuel 15:34-16:13 Luke 5:27-32
Wed Jan 4	Psalm 72 Exodus 3:1-5 Hebrews 11:23-31	Sun Jan 22	Isaiah 9:1-4 1 Corinthians 1:10-18 Matthew 4:12-23
Thurs Jan 5	Psalm 72 Joshua 1:1-9 Hebrews 11:32-12:2	Mon Jan 23	Psalm 27:7-14 Judges 6:11-24 Ephesians 5:6-14
Fri Jan 6	Isaiah 60:1-6 Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14 Ephesians 3:1-12 Matthew 2:1-12	Tues Jan 24	Psalm 27:7-14 Judges 7:12-22 Philippians 2:12-18
Sat Jan 7	Psalm 29 1 Samuel 7:3-17 Acts 9:19b-31	Wed Jan 25	Psalm 27:7-14 Genesis 49:1-2, 8-13, 21-26 Luke 1:67-79
Sun Jan 8	Isaiah 42:1-9 Acts 10:34-43 Matthew 3:13-17	Thurs Jan 26	Psalm 15 Deuteronomy 16:18-20 1 Peter 3:8-12
Mon Jan 9	Psalm 89:5-37 Genesis 35:1-15 Acts 10:44-48	Fri Jan 27	Psalm 15 Deuteronomy 24:17-25:4 1 Timothy 5:17-24
Tues Jan 10	Psalm 89:5-37 Jeremiah 1:4-10 Acts 8:4-13	Sat Jan 28	Psalm 15 Micah 3:1-4 John 13:31-35
Wed Jan 11	Psalm 89:5-37 Isaiah 51:1-16 Matthew 12:15-21	Sun Jan 29	Micah 6:1-8 1 Corinthians 1:18-31 Matthew 5:1-12
Thurs Jan 12	Psalm 40:1-11 Isaiah 22:15-25 Galatians 1:6-12	Mon Jan 30	Psalm 37:1-17 Ruth 1:1-18 Philemon 1-25
Fri Jan 13	Psalm 40:1-11 Genesis 27:30-38 Acts 1:1-5	Tues Jan 31	Psalm 37:1-17 Ruth 2:1-16 James 5:1-6
Sat Jan 14	Psalm 40:1-11 1 Kings 19:19-21 Luke 5:1-11		
Sun Jan 15	Isaiah 49:1-7 1 Corinthians 1:1-9 John 1:29-42		
Mon Jan 16	Psalm 40:6-17 Exodus 12:1-13, 21-28 Acts 8:26-40		
Tues Jan 17	Psalm 40:6-17 Isaiah 53:1-12 Hebrews 10:1-4		
Wed Jan 18	Psalm 40:6-17 Isaiah 48:12-21 Matthew 9:14-17		



January 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:00 AM Worship followed by fellowship	2	3 1:00 PM Quilters 1:30 PM Hope Chest Open	4 6:00 AM Men's Breakfast and Bible Study 6:30 PM 4-6 grade Education 6:30 PM Confirmation	5 6:00 AM Women's Bible study 7:00 PM Prayer Group Meeting	6	7
8 9:00 AM Worship followed by fellowship 10:20 AM Sunday School Pre-K through 3rd grade	9 6:30 PM Council Meeting	10 1:00 PM Quilters 1:30 PM Hope Chest Open	11 6:00 AM Men's Breakfast and Bible Study 9:00 AM Women's Circle 6:30 PM 4-6 grade Education 6:30 PM Confirmation	12 6:00 AM Women's Bible study	13	14
15 9:00 AM Worship followed by fellowship 10:00 AM Annual Meeting 10:20 AM Sunday School Pre-K through 3rd grade	16	17 1:00 PM Quilters 1:30 PM Hope Chest Open	18 6:00 AM Men's Breakfast and Bible Study 6:30 PM 4-6 grade Education 6:30 PM Confirmation	19 6:00 AM Women's Bible study 7:00 PM Small Group Opportunity - If I am forgiven, why will I be judged?	20	21
22 9:00 AM Worship followed by fellowship 10:20 AM Sunday School Pre-K through 3rd grade 4:00 PM Bingo for fun 5:00 PM West Branch Community Meal @ Bethany	23	24 1:00 PM Quilters 1:30 PM Hope Chest Open	25 6:00 AM Men's Breakfast and Bible Study 6:30 PM 4-6 grade Education 6:30 PM Confirmation	26 6:00 AM Women's Bible study 7:00 PM Small Group Opportunity - What do we do with disturbing Biblical passages?	27	28
29 9:00 AM Worship followed by fellowship 10:20 AM Sunday School Pre-K through 3rd grade	30	31 1:00 PM Quilters 1:30 PM Hope Chest Open	1	2	3	4

Monetary Gifts Report

Submitted by Jill Taylor

Saints in Worship:

11-06	71
11-13	50
11-20	55
11-27	61
Total	237

	November 2016		YTD	
Total Receipts	Actual 12,739	Budget 13,083	Actual 140,350	Budget 143,917
Total Expenses	Actual 11,086	Budget 13,833	Actual 149,354	Budget 152,404

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.

