

Bethany Lutheran Church

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



May
2016

Important Dates

05-06 Synod Assembly
05-07 Synod Assembly
05-08 Senior Recognition
05-09 Council meeting
05-22 Confirmation Sunday
05-25 Baccalaureate @
Bethany 7:00 pm
05-26 Crestview Worship 2 pm
05-30 Memorial Day

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

**"IT IS INDEED RIGHT, OUR DUTY AND OUR JOY, THAT WE SHOULD AT ALL
TIMES AND IN ALL PLACES GIVE THANKS AND PRAISE TO YOU, ALMIGHTY AND
MERCIFUL GOD, THROUGH OUR SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST..."**

(From Evangelical Lutheran Worship Leaders Desk Edition: Augsburg Fortress, 2006.
Used by permission license #SB102700.)



Dear Faithful People of God,

Christ is risen! Alleluia! Indeed, this miracle is at the very heart of our thanksgiving. The words above are taken directly out of the liturgy found in the Sacrament of Holy Communion. This is also known as the Eucharist. We don't use that word very often and perhaps we ought to. The word *eucharist* is from a Greek word meaning "to give thanks." The meal we partake of in the Eucharist is many things but first and foremost it is a means of God's grace in which Jesus promises to meet us there reminding us of the promise of forgiveness and eternal life through His incarnation, death, and resurrection. Thanksgiving is our natural response to this grace-filled meal.

We hear the above words each and every time we gather for the Eucharist. We hear the words; however, do our lives reflect those words? Do we as a community of faith put those words into practice even within the confines of this building the Lord has blessed us with? The Bible speaks often to the importance of giving thanks in our lives. God calls us into a life of thanksgiving and it is one more way our hearts and minds are set on God. We draw nearer to God in our thanksgiving and subsequently we are transformed by the Holy Spirit to be grateful and thankful in a world that often seems to skip to a different tune.

You will see a giant wall of paper in the Great Hall (see photo on page 3). One section is titled "Wall of Thanksgiving" and the other is titled "Wall of Prayers." Both of these practices are vital to our faith lives and through both God draws us closer into a relationship with God. You are invited to write something you are thankful for or draw a picture or maybe even bring a picture and post it up. Additionally, you are invited to list a prayer request or spend some time praying for the requests on the wall. Let's fill up this wall. Let's watch as we are transformed into people who give thanks and praise to God always and constantly devote ourselves to prayer. This is part of God's mission for us as people of God.

Personally, I have many days I get frustrated for a variety of reasons and it's easy to fall into the trap of letting that bog me down. That is when I need to stop and give thanks. Because truthfully we have so much to be thankful for here. My door is always open to constructive criticism; however, don't be surprised if I don't ask you also to list three things you are grateful and thankful for here at Bethany. Here are my three things as I write this letter: the daily remembrance I am a child of God and loved by God unconditionally, the beautiful parsonage we are able to live in and how this community of faith maintains it so well, and as Amanda and I celebrate 20 years of marriage I am thankful to God for her love and support all those years. Blessings people of God!

Pastor Chad



Birthdays

- 05-01 Olivia Poppen, Cozette Sexton
- 05-01 Rick Paulsen
- 05-06 Deb Anderson
- 05-09 Tyler Haub, Curt Friis
- 05-10 Jenna Sexton
- 05-12 Elijah Fetzer
- 05-15 Claire Kaufman, Matt Whaley, Bonnie Conner
- 05-16 Kody Crow
- 05-17 Candy Madsen, Cadence Heid, Maggie Paulsen, Jamie Pickett
- 05-19 Carla Friis
- 05-21 Jayden Roth, Linda Black, Wayne Frauenholtz
- 05-22 Audrey Hartman, Andrew Niles
- 05-26 Bill Holmes
- 05-30 Jim Paulsen



Baccalaureate 2016



BACCALAUREATE SERVICE

The West Branch Area Religious Council (WBARC) invites all to attend the Baccalaureate worship service on Wednesday, May 25 at 7:00 p.m. This year the service will be at Bethany and all are invited to attend as we give thanks and pray for the West Branch High School graduating class of 2016.

Bethany Books

by Frank Frostestad



Books For Adults

This month will feature books of mercy and justice. *The Name Of God Is Mercy* by Pope Francis is billed as his first book written while pope. It actually is a question/answer conversation between the pope and Andrea Tornielli, a Vatican reporter. He is attempting to reach all people “who are looking for meaning in life, a road to peace and reconciliation, and the healing of physical and spiritual wounds”. He seeks to find his way into people’s consciousness that they assume responsibility for, and move away from, the bad things they have done. We all need the mercy of God (even the pope).

Change Of Heart: Justice, Mercy, And Making Peace With My Sister’s Killer by Jeanne Bishop is a powerful book advocating for mercy for people convicted of serious crimes. She begins by describing the murder of her sister, husband, and unborn child. This is the story of her uneven journey over many years leading her to confront and reconcile with the man who did this tragic act. She also deals with the question of life sentences for juveniles and our criminal justice system.

Dead Man Walking by Sister Helen Prejean has become a classic work in the area of capital punishment. It has become a movie, stage play, and even an opera. It recounts how she became the spiritual advisor to a convicted killer of two teenagers who was sentenced to die in the electric chair of Louisiana’s Angola State Prison. Out of that relationship came a moving spiritual journey through our system of capital punishment. It is a look at the human consequences of the death penalty. Earlier this year, the men’s bible study group on Wednesday mornings studied the Old Testament book of Job. In it the righteous Job has all types of suffering. The book brings up the question of why there is suffering in the world. This brought to mind the book *When Bad Things Happen To Good People* by Harold S. Kushner. People in ancient times thought that misfortune was directly caused by something bad that you did. You needed to repent for it quickly. Many people today still see God as an Old Testament figure that is punishing people for their wrong doing or a father figure that is administering guidance to His children. Kushner wrote this book in response to the loss of his son at an early age. He seeks not to defend or explain God but to give comfort and strength to a person hurt by loss.

I featured two books by Nadia Boles-Weber in March. A number of years prior to that she wrote *Salvation On The Small Screen*. She and several friends watched 24 hours of “Christian Television”. To say that Christian Television is “not her thing” is an understatement. To her it is something that should be addressed by the Geneva Convention. She looks at each program and measures how much is quoted from the Bible, and how God is viewed.

Continued on page 3



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

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

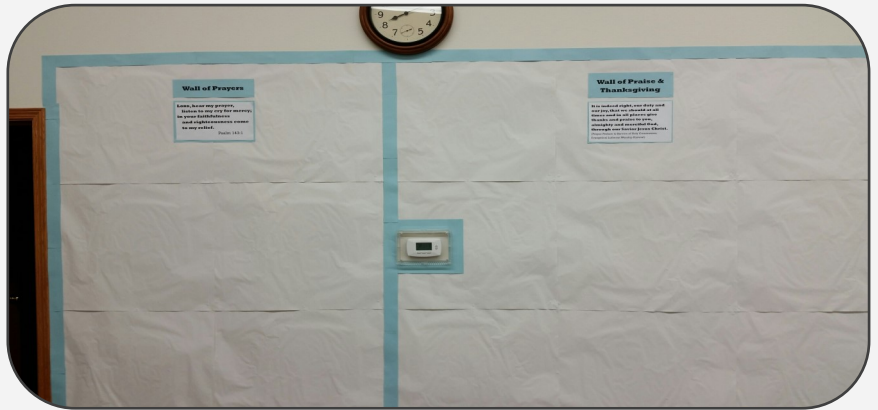
Adult Discussion
10:20 a.m. in the Small Hall
All are Welcome

Bethany Books Continued...

Books For Children

Jonah And The Big Fish And Other Bible Stories by Rebecca Glaser is one of the Holy Moly storybooks. Here children will follow Jonah into the belly of the big fish, be with David when he is anointed by Samuel, stand alongside David as he bravely fights Goliath, and enter the lion's den with Daniel.

Wall of Prayer s Wall of Praise & Thanksgiving



Wall of Prayers

**LORD, hear my prayer,
listen to my cry for mercy;
in your faithfulness
and righteousness come
to my relief.**

Psalm 143:1

Wall of Praise & Thanksgiving

**It is indeed right, our duty and
our joy, that we should at all
times and in all places give
thanks and praise to you,
almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.**

(Proper Preface to Service of Holy Communion,
Evangelical Lutheran Worship Hymnal)



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

In case you didn't know Bethany is part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Within the ELCA there are 65 synods and each synod has its own Bishop. Bethany is part of the Southeastern Iowa Synod. The Synod Center for Ministry is located in Iowa City. Our synod spans from just west of Des Moines and then basically runs along Highway 30 east to the Mississippi and all the way south to Missouri. Along the Mississippi our synod stretches nearly to Dubuque. The Bishop of our Synod is Michael Burk. Working alongside Bishop Burk are three Assistants: Pastor Paul Ostrem, Pastor Eric Carlson, and Pastor Erika Uthe along with a talented staff of others. We partner together in living out God's mission in the world. On April 23, the Bethany Council along with Financial Secretary Claudia Beyer gathered for a council retreat and were joined by Pastor Ostrem who highlighted some of the work we together. In upcoming months, look for additional articles about our relationship together.



This month we highlight a website that may be helpful in growing your faith and understanding of God's living word, the Bible. Enter the Bible, from Luther Seminary, provides a wealth of resources and may be used as a guide and helpful reference tool to accompany an individual in his or her reading of the Bible. You can find it at the following web address:

www.enterthebible.org



Volunteers are needed for the 4th Sunday meals.

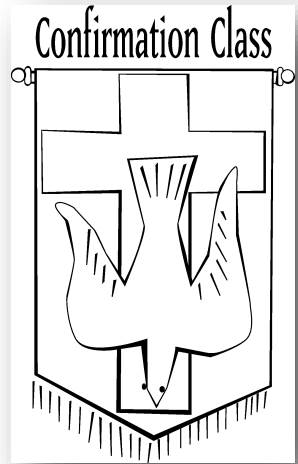
If you would be interested in helping to organize this meal or just want to come in and help during the meal please talk to Paula Casper 319-331-9456 or send me an email to: blcsecretary@lcom.net

We have a great group of people that come each month and would like to see this ministry expand to more people from the community.

Please consider helping. It only takes 2 hours from start to finish!

Upcoming dates to consider:

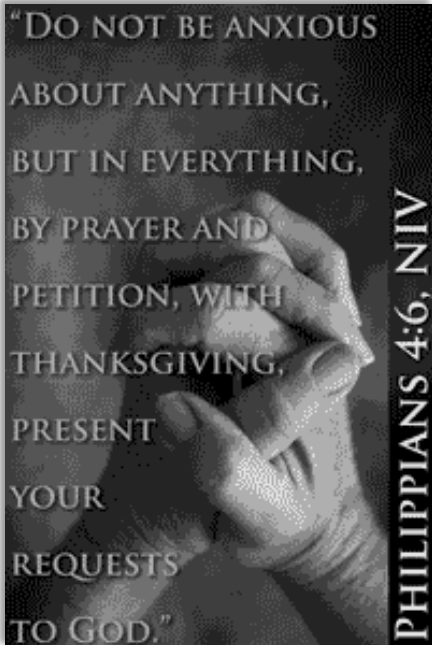
- May 22
- June 26
- July 24



Sunday May 22, 2016

We will be celebrating with the youth below as they affirm their Baptism.

- Mia Olson
- Jaylen Votroubek
- Matt Paulsen
- Matt Whaley



**BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH
COUNCIL MINUTES FROM MARCH 14, 2016**

Members present: Greg Lipas, Jill Taylor, Beth Kaufman, John Black, Paula Casper, Pastor Chad, Tonya Samuelson, Jon Twing

Members absent: Jamie Zimmerman, Kevin Olson

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

Opening devotional and prayer: Pastor Chad led a combination devotional/bible study/prayer using the text from new council member installation, reflecting on how this text impacted or spoke to each council member.

Review of Council Binders: Pastor led Council through a review of the Council binders as assisted by Paula Casper.

1. Letter of Call was reviewed
2. Discussed the talents of each council member
3. Reviewed the Calendar
 - a. **ACTION: Newsletter articles are needed from everyone.**
4. Reviewed the Constitution emphasizing that each council member should review and know the constitution and should keep it ready for use and discussion as needed.
 - a. Emphasis was on page 22, Chapter 12 on the congregational council
 - b. Emphasis was on Section 12.04 and 13.06 on Mission, Goals and Priorities
5. Reviewed the Bylaws
 - a. Emphasis was on C 13.04.01 as it defines the ministry
 - i. Constitution begets operational definitions that are then trickled down to the congregation which are then operationalized as congregational definitions
 - ii. The Bylaws govern this process.
6. All expense forms go to Jill Taylor
 - a. These only need to be completed when we fail to have a receipt for a reimbursement

Pastor's report (printed report provided): Pastor reported that he is succeeding on his goal to get out more and see more people. Pastor discussed the school backpack project, looking to extend the current elementary school project to both middle school and high school. This is essentially a weekend food pantry project run through the West Branch School District and organized by two ladies in the community (The West Branch Area Religious Council supports). Pastor discussed his understanding of HACAP and what they were doing at the elementary school and why that could not be moved to middle and high school. Currently this project supports 16 elementary school students at a cost of about \$1,600 per year. **ACTION: Pastor Chad will get more information about HACAP and details about the project.** Pastor Chad confirmed the

new custodian was in place (Kat Korsmo), mentioned friendly faces back in worship and reminded everyone about the upcoming pulpit exchange. **ACTION: Council Retreat for Saturday, April 23. Breakfast will be 8:30-9:00 and the program will be 9:00-11:30**
Secretary's report: As submitted. Moved for approval by Paula Casper, seconded by Beth Kaufman. All approved.

Treasurer's report: Jill Taylor led us through a review of the report. Apparent discrepancies were identified in the "transfer in and transfer out" accounts. **ACTION: Jill will resolve.** Moved for approval by Greg Lipas, seconded by Jon Twing. All approved.

Building and Grounds: Cyber protection has been verified as part of our insurance plan. Tonya Samuelson reported questions from the congregation about lighting in the Sanctuary citing that people think it too dark. John Black reported that all available outlets are being used with the largest LED wattage available without special order. Each bulb costs \$15 dollars so we want to evaluate it more before we take any action is his advice.

Education: Tonya reported that she is already coordinating advertising for Vacation Bible School with the West Branch United Methodist Church. The Methodists were keen to combine this year and have pledged kids, volunteers and money in support. Kudos to Tonya and Courtney!

Evangelism: No report.

Fellowship: Fourth Sunday meal falls on Easter so a feast is planned. Lenten meals went well. May's fourth Sunday meal will be led by Jill Taylor.

Stewardship: No report.

Youth: No report.

Worship: All is well. Discussed the Choir. Choir is not likely until a conductor can be found. Conducting is a big job and not casual.

Old Business: No action on the Jamaica travel as discussed by WBARC. Randy Pullman was identified as the person we will use to help when computer issues arise.

New Business: Jill Taylor raised a concern that our process for the audit committee needs to be shored up if we are to be fully compliant with our Bylaws. Bylaws state we need three for the committee who are not on the Council with one new person each year. In 2015 it was Nancy Bruns, John Hi-





Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI) May Article and Story

In Celebration of Graduation

May's graduation season is often a celebration of what it takes to accomplish something. We celebrate dreams, determination, hard work and support, and we celebrate the pride and joy of parents, grandparents, friends and other family members who help along the way.

We celebrate "graduations" at Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI) all year round. We celebrate when a mom or dad has completed a parenting program. We celebrate when a child has completed all his goals in a skill-building program. We celebrate when an elder refugee attends a citizenship ceremony to take the oath of U.S. citizenship or when a refugee woman completes child care training. We celebrate when teenagers graduate from LSI's Bremwood Residential Treatment Center and begin young adulthood, often with help from churches who have donated furniture or other supplies to help them set up their first apartment.

Graduation is a celebration of community. We don't get where we are in life on our own. We get there with support. With encouragement. With a mentor. With family.

You're the family standing alongside so many people served through LSI as they achieve life-changing milestones. Thank you.

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.

Daring to Dream

Every day Taw Kaw Htoo pursues her dreams as a farmer, a child care provider and an English student. After fleeing violence and persecution in her native Burma, Taw Kaw Htoo lived in refugee camps in Thailand before being resettled to the U.S. She may have lost her home, but not her hope. With LSI's support, this strong, courageous woman is daring to dream.

Her day begins at dawn at LSI's Global Greens Farm where she farms a small plot, growing produce to sell to her community. "I like farming because I grew vegetables back in my home country," she said.

After tending her crops, she moves on to her second business of the day: caring for children. LSI's child care business development program helps former refugees become state-licensed child care providers. Along with providing a small income, the program increases the availability of culturally appropriate child care for the refugee community, enabling more parents to enter the workforce.

"I didn't have any professional training on how to install a car seat or do CPR," said Taw Kaw Htoo. "LSI has helped with that. It's great that I am able to care for the children in my community."

Caring for children helps her pursue her third dream: learning English.

"My language is really important to me," she said. "I try to teach children my language every day, and they help me learn English. I really want to speak English. That's my biggest dream."



Volunteers Needed!

Please consider volunteering for VBS June 13th-17th!

Helpers, food donations and housing for the EWALU counselors are needed!

Please contact Courtney Heid @ 319-400-7227 or cheid88@gmail.com with questions or to sign up. Find the Facebook event - VBS Day Camp - and leave a comment, we will get back to you in the next few weeks!

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*.

Sunday, May 1	Acts 16:9-15 Revelation 21:10, 22-22:5 John 14:23-29	Monday, May 16	Psalm 48 Joel 2:18-29 1 Corinthians 2:1-11
Monday, May 2	Psalm 93 1 Chronicles 12:16-22 Revelation 2:5-14	Tuesday, May 17	Psalm 48 Ezekiel 11:14-25 1 Corinthians 2:12-16
Tuesday, May 3	Psalm 93 2 Chronicles 15:1-15 Revelation 21:15-22	Wednesday, May 18	Psalm 48 Numbers 24:1-14 Luke 1:26-38
Wednesday, May 4	Psalm 93 2 Chronicles 34:20-33 Luke 2:25-38	Thursday, May 19	Psalm 8 Proverbs 3:13-18 Ephesians 1:17-19
Thursday, May 5	Acts 1:1-11 Psalm 47 Ephesians 1:15-23 Luke 24:44-53	Friday, May 20	Psalm 8 Proverbs 3:19-26 Ephesians 4:1-6
Friday, May 6	Psalm 97 Exodus 33:12-17 Revelation 22:6-9	Saturday, May 21	Psalm 8 Proverbs 4:1-9 Luke 2:41-52
Saturday, May 7	Psalm 97 Exodus 33:18-23 John 1:14-18	Sunday, May 22	Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31 Romans 5:1-5 John 16:12-15
Sunday, May 8	Acts 16:16-34 Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20-21 John 17:20-26	Monday, May 23	Psalm 124 Proverbs 7:1-4 Ephesians 4:7-16
Monday, May 9	Psalm 29 Exodus 40:16-38 Acts 16:35-40	Tuesday, May 24	Psalm 124 Proverbs 8:4-21 Ephesians 5:15-20
Tuesday, May 10	Psalm 29 2 Chronicles 5:2-14 Acts 26:19-29	Wednesday, May 25	Psalm 124 Daniel 1:1-21 Luke 1:46b-55
Wednesday, May 11	Psalm 29 Ezekiel 3:12-21 Luke 9:18-27	Thursday, May 26	Psalm 96:1-9 1 Kings 6:23-38 2 Corinthians 5:11-17
Thursday, May 12	Psalm 104:24-34, 35b Isaiah 32:11-17 Galatians 5:16-25	Friday, May 27	Psalm 96:1-9 1 Kings 8:14-21 2 Corinthians 11:1-6
Friday, May 13	Psalm 104:24-34, 35b Isaiah 44:1-4 Galatians 6:7-10	Saturday, May 28	Psalm 96:1-9 1 Kings 8:31-40 Luke 4:31-37
Saturday, May 14	Psalm 104:24-34, 35b 2 Kings 2:1-15a Luke 1:5-17	Sunday, May 29	1 Kings 8:22-23, 41-43 Galatians 1:1-12 Luke 7:1-10
Sunday, May 15	Acts 2:1-21 Romans 8:14-17 or Acts 2:1-21 John 14:8-17 [25-27]	Monday, May 30	Psalm 5 Jonah 4:1-11 Acts 8:26-40
		Tuesday, May 31	Psalm 5 Nehemiah 1:1-11 Acts 3:1-10



May 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:00 AM Worship followed by fellowship 10:20 AM Sunday school & Adult Discussion	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 Confirmation dinner and study	5 6:00 AM Women's Bible study	6	7
8 9:00 AM Worship followed by fellowship (Senior Recognition Sunday) 10:20 AM Sunday school & Adult Discussion	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 Confirmation dinner and study	12 6:00 AM Women's Bible study	13	14
15 9:00 AM Worship followed by fellowship	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 Confirmation dinner and study	19 6:00 AM Women's Bible study	20	21
22 9:00 AM Worship followed by fellowship (Confirmation Sunday) 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 7:00 PM Baccalaureate	26 6:00 AM Women's Bible study	27	28
29 9:00 AM Worship followed by fellowship	30	31 1:00 PM Quilters 1:30 PM Hope Chest Open				

Monetary Gifts Report

Submitted by Jill Taylor

Saints in Worship:	
03-06	52
03-13	38
03-20	70
03-27 8:00	62
10:00	80
Total	302

	March 2016		YTD	
Total Receipts	Actual 12,736	Budget 13,084	Actual 40,083	Budget 39,252
Total Expenses	Actual 13,294	Budget 13,672	Actual 52,162	Budget 41,023

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.

