

Bethany Lutheran Church

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



*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not
your own doing; it is the gift of God.*

Ephesians 2:8

IMPORTANT DATES

- January 08– 9:00 am **Women's circle**
- January 19– **Annual meeting**
following the service
- January 26– **Bishop Burk** will be
preaching.
- January 26–5:30 pm **Community
Dinner** and fellowship



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Grace and peace to you! During Affirmation of Baptism (aka Confirmation) the last couple weeks we have been focusing on the word *grace*. As Lutheran's we hear that word quite a bit. It was at the very heart of Martin Luther's theology during the reformation. But do we fully understand what grace is? According to my *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms* (Donald K. McKim; Westminster John Know Press, 1996) grace is defined as: "Unmerited favor. God's grace is extended to sinful humanity in providing salvation and forgiveness through Jesus Christ that is not deserved, and withholding the judgment that is deserved."

We have all experienced God's grace in our daily lives and through that free gift of grace we are called to respond with grace to our neighbor. The grace of God is truly amazing and I often find myself thinking I really don't deserve it. I have made my share of mistakes in life, continually turn from God and place my trust elsewhere. Yet, I continue to be surrounded by God's grace and feel the burden of sin lifted from my shoulders by the gift of forgiveness. At times God's grace is hard to comprehend, explain, or put into words but those 13 youth gathered Wednesday evenings are doing a pretty good job of comprehending it. They use words to describe God's grace or how it makes them feel like: reassuring, love, trust, happy, good, relieving, gift, life, and unconditional. This past week they made posters centered on God's grace and their understanding of it. I think they are awesome and I hope you will too. They are located in the Great Hall and I invite you to spend some time looking at them and talk to those 13 youth about what God's grace means to them and what it means to you in your journey of faith.

We are precious children of God and as such we get to immerse ourselves daily in the richness of God's grace given freely through the birth, death, and resurrection of God's Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. God's grace is part of our DNA. It is marked on our heads in the sign of a cross in Baptism. It runs through our body each time we partake of the Lord's Supper. As we move into a new year may we live in the surpassing goodness of God's grace!

In peace,

Pastor Chad

Contact Information

Bethany Lutheran Church
235 South Second Street
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(319) 643-5998

Pastor Chad Whaley
pastor@wbbethany.org

Office Hours
Monday & Thursday
9:00 am - Noon

*Pastor Chad is also available by
appointment.

Admin. Assistant: Paula Casper
blcsecretary@lcom.net

Office Hours
Tuesday & Thursday 7:30-11:30 AM

FIND US ON FACEBOOK!

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



BIRTHDAYS

- 01/02 Lori Marshall
- 01/05 Camden Lynch
- 01/11 Tonya Lovetinsky
- 01/14 Deanna Pedersen
- 01/15 Paula Villhauer
- 01/20 Maggie Pickett
Tonya Samuelson
- 01/24 Robbie Boaz
Paul Bruns
- 01/25 Lisa Zimmerman
- 01/26 Niles Hunter
- 01/29 Lance Schiele
- 01/30 Jenny Blaalid
- 01/31 Pat Cassabaum



Bethany Books

by Frank Frostestad

Books For Adults

This month's article will focus on sequels by author's that have been featured in the last year. For all you Jackson fans, Neta and Dave have started a new series. Book #1 in the new Windy City Neighbors series is *Grounded*. Grace Meredith is a beloved Christian recording artist whose career – and personal life – hits unexpected turbulence. She feels grounded in more ways than one. Grace's fiancé, bothered by her near constant travel, has broken off their relationship. Exhausted and unable to continue her current concert schedule, Grace returns home to Chicago, where she is soon stranded in a major snowstorm. Facing new questions about her future and her faith, Grace finds herself connecting for the first time with the residents of her neighborhood. What she discovers in these unexpected relationships could change everything. *The Guardian* by Beverly Lewis is the third novel in the *Home To Hickory Hollow* series. Many of you have read #1 *The Fiddler* and #2 *The Bridesmaid*. In *The Guardian* Jodi Winfield comes to Lancaster to house-sit. The last thing she expects to find is a little girl alone on the side of the road. The young teacher is mystified when she learns there have been no reports of a missing child, and the girl herself is no help, since she can't speak English. It is as if the child appeared out of nowhere. She then turns her attention to Hickory Hollow, and the world of the Old order Amish – in search of answers.

The Tattered Quilt by Wanda E. Brunstetter is a return to *The Half-Stitched Amish Quilting Club*. Amish widow turned newlywed Emma Yoder Miller begins another quilting class with a new group of unlikely students, all with tattered pieces of their lives that need mending. Members of this new patchwork group find friendship, faith, healing, and restoration while gathered around their quilts.

Books For Children

Gramps and Gran go on a picnic with Mama and Papa Bear and the cubs in *The Berenstain Bears Show Some Respect*. As the family searches high and low for the perfect spot, they end up learning a few things about respect.

DVD

In *Game Time: Tackling The Past* Pro football star Jake Walker is just one season away from setting an all-time receiving record that will guarantee him a spot in the Hall of Fame. But when he gets news that his father has suffered a serious heart attack, Jake leaves training camp and returns to

Riverton, the small hometown he's avoided for nearly 15 years. Past memories of glory and regret resurface as Jake is forced to reconnect with family and community he abandoned in pursuit of his career. A call from his agent delivers another blow – his contract is not being renewed. Stripped from the one thing he cares about most, the real Jake begins to emerge from behind his armor to see that life is more than the accumulation of personal stats. But when he is offered a lucrative new contract with another team he must decide whether to go back to the career he thought he loved, or stay in Riverton and embrace the people who have always been there for him.

Thank You!!

Thanks to all who made the 2013 cookie walk such a success! At 10:55 we had 4 ½ cookies left. The number and assortment were amazing and the community turnout was huge. West Branch loves our cookies. The quilters sold ten quilts, the Dansk Cafe was packed and funds raised for ministry were a little over \$990. Again—thank you.
Candy Madsen



Adult Education Opportunities

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 "Sermons" when it pops up. Additionally, some people have requested an email with the sermon attached. If you prefer that method please contact Pastor Chad.

Women's Bible Study
Thursdays at 6:00 pm
in the Small Hall
All are Welcome

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

Updates/Reminders

Reminder

If you or a loved one is in the hospital and desire a pastoral visit, please have someone contact the church at 643-5998.



In the event we need to cancel worship at Bethany due to inclement weather notification will be done in the following formats. There will be a post on the church website(www.wbbethany.org/westbranch/)

and on Bethany's Facebook page. There will be an email sent out to all Bethany members who have provided an email address.

Notification will also be provided to KCRG television stations. These will be the primary means of notification. If none of the above means work for you please contact Paula so we can make other arrangements
Thank you.

CTIM: Called Together in Mission

March 8, 2014 @ 8:30 am - 3:00 pm
First Lutheran Church, Cedar Rapids

We are "Called Together in Mission"! Each of us is an **everyday evangelist called by God to boldly live out our faith and share Jesus' love**. This year, CTIM welcomes Peggy Hahn, Executive Director of LEAD: Living every day as disciples, Gulf Coast Synod. Peggy will inspire, share ideas and provide resources that will expand your thinking and deepen your spiritual life. This is an event for everyone in your congregation – bring your entire evangelism team and council to participate!



4th Sunday Community Dinner and Fellowship

Join us on the fourth Sunday of the month for an evening of food, fun, and fellowship. Hours are from 5:30-7:00 p.m. with a light supper served at 5:30. This is a time to visit, play Scrabble, Monopoly, cards, etc. This is open not only to members of Bethany but anyone in the community who needs companionship and food. Bring your family and friends.



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Stewardship Spotlight

The following is an excerpt from the book, “Exodus from Hunger” by David Beckman (Westminster John Knox Press, 2010), which was studied by the adult Sunday School class this fall. It seems to be an appropriate story for January when we remember and honor Martin Luther King Jr.

“It was not obvious that the young Martin Luther King Jr. would be an exceptional religious and political leader. When he decided to go to seminary, ministry was one of the most likely ways an African American man could make a good living. He was serving his first church in Birmingham when Rosa Parks refused to move to the back of a bus. According to historian Taylor Branch, King arrived late to a community meeting that night. When the group decided on a bus boycott, this young Baptist pastor was elected to lead it because the group was sharply divided between two more obvious candidates.

Leading the boycott put huge pressures on King. His telephone rang all day and all night – calls from fellow organizers, calls from cleaning ladies who needed a ride to work so they wouldn’t lose their jobs during the bus boycott, and anonymous calls that threatened violence against King and his family.

In the middle of one sleepless night, he had a conversion experience: King buried his face in his hands at the kitchen table. He admitted to himself that he was afraid, that he had nothing left, that the people would falter if they looked to him for strength. Then he said as much out loud. He spoke the name of no deity, but his doubts spilled out as a prayer, ending, “I’ve come to the point where I can’t face it alone.” As he spoke these words, the fears suddenly began to melt away. He became intensely aware of what he called an “inner voice” telling him to do what he thought was right. It was for King the first transcendent religious experience of his life. (Taylor Branch, “Parting the Waters”, New York Simon and Schuster)

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s powerful challenge to our nation emerged from God’s presence with him that night. “

“Brothers and sisters, do not be weary in doing what is right.”
-2 Thessalonians 3:13

WORSHIP CORNER

Have you ever noticed that permanently lit candle in the chancel almost directly above the lectern and wondered what it is for? It is called a sanctuary lamp and is derived from an old Jewish custom in which a candle burned continuously to symbolize God’s living presence among us. This is not the only symbol of God’s presence among us and according to S. Anita Stauffer, “The altar itself ... is a more powerful symbol of God’s presence.” (Stauffer, *Altar Guild and Sacristy Handbook*: Augsburg, 2000) The next time you look at the sanctuary lamp focus on the promise that the living God is present with you and with the gathered community during worship.



BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH
COUNCIL MINUTES

Members present: Pastor Chad, Claudia Beyer, Nancy Bruns, Bonnie Conner, Courtney Heid, Del Hughes, Kent Kaufman, Candy Madsen, Laura Twing

Members Absent: Toni Dodds

Special Guest: Paula Casper

Meeting Called to Order: 6:35 p.m. by President Del Hughes

Opening Prayer/Devotions: Pastor Chad opened with a video from the Synod and prayer.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Chad reported on his activities for the month which included acolyte training class, first communion class, presiding over a funeral, hosting the synod visioning event, and handling social concerns and requests for assistance from 5 people.

Secretary's Report: Minutes from the October regular meeting to be approved: Candy Madsen moved to accept the minutes. Bonnie Conner seconded. Approved.

Treasurer's Report: Claudia presented the October financials. Laura Twing moved to accept the Treasurer's Report. Courtney Heid seconded. Approved.

Committee Reports:

Building & Grounds: Kent reported that the paved parking lot extension is complete and the parsonage driveway is in progress. The carpet in the large hall, small hall, hallway, stairs and landing have been cleaned. Del is looking into getting extra outdoor lighting that will provide lighting for the new parking lot and repairing some of the lighting for the cross in the large hall.

Education: Nothing new to report.

Youth: Courtney reported that the "Trunk or Treat" event went well and that the EPIC group did a great job leading activities.

Evangelism & Missions: Nothing new to report.

Music and Worship: Bonnie Conner reported that the Hanging of the Greens service will be December 1 and the Sunday School Christmas program will be December 15.

Fellowship: Candy gave thanks to those who contributed to the Trunk or Treat event. She reported that the funeral luncheon went well. She is working on the annual Cookie Walk and will be calling people to help out.

Stewardship: Nancy reported that 28 financial pledges and 13 time and talent sheets have been returned following the fall stewardship emphasis.

OLD BUSINESS:

- * Book Study follow-up – A couple more council members will read "Unbinding Your Heart" and then the council will look at leading another group discussion in the summer.

- * Congregation membership committee – Paul Friis, Frank Frostestad, Dorothy Holmes, Paula Casper and Pastor Chad have met once to review the membership records and have another meeting scheduled.

- * Committee reports for annual meeting – the annual meeting is scheduled for January 19 and Del requested that committee reports be turned in by the next Council meeting on December 9.

- * Budget Committee – need to get volunteers to help prepare a 2014 budget. Council members should turn in their requests to Del within the next week.

- * Audit Committee – new constitution requires this committee to have 3 members serving 3 year terms with one member to be rotated off each year. Brian Roth and John Hierseman performed the audit last year. Del Hughes and Nancy Bruns to recruit members for this next year.

- * Annual synod assembly – the congregation needs to elect one male and one female at the annual congregational meeting to represent Bethany at the annual synod assembly which will be held at the Coralville Marriott on May 30th and 31st. Will make an announcement in the December newsletter.

NEW BUSINESS:

- * A pew recovering project, to be funded by Linda Black's winnings from the Hoover Hometown Days' prize drawing, is being pursued and tentatively scheduled for January.
- * Pastor Chad reported that Alice Allen has requested to be a member at Bethany.
- * Church Council calendar – Paula Casper presented a "reminder" calendar that would keep track of the tasks that need to be done and when. She asked that council members provide dates for important tasks for their groups. This should be a helpful tool for her and Pastor Chad and council members.
- * Newsletter deadline – Courtney led a discussion about setting a deadline for newsletter items at two weeks before the end of the month. This would allow enough time to get it put together and available before the first of the month. The council agreed that this should be reasonable.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:00 pm by President Del Hughes

Next Meeting: Monday, December 9, 2013 @ 6:30 p.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*

Jan. 1 Wednesday	Numbers 6:22-27 Galatians 4:4-7 Psalm 8	Jan. 17 Friday	Genesis 27:30-38 Acts 1:1-5 Psalm 40:1-11
Jan. 2 Thursday	Genesis 12:1-7 Hebrews 11:1-12 Psalm 72	Jan. 18 Saturday	1 Kings 19:19-21 Luke 5:1-11 Psalm 40:1-11
Jan. 3 Friday	Genesis 28:10-22 Hebrews 11:13-22 Psalm 72	Jan. 19 Sunday	Isaiah 49:1-7 1 Corinthians 1:1-9 John 1:29-42
Jan. 4 Saturday	Exodus 3:1-5 Hebrews 11:23-31 Psalm 72	Jan. 20 Monday	Ex. 12:1-13,21-28 Acts 8:26-40 Psalm 40:6-17
Jan. 5 Sunday	Jeremiah 31:7-14 Ephesians 1:3-14 John 1:1-18	Jan. 21 Tuesday	Isaiah 53:1-12 Hebrews 10:1-4 Psalm 40:6-17
Jan. 6 Monday	Isaiah 60:1-6 Ephesians 3:1-12 Matthew 2:1-12	Jan. 22 Wednesday	Isaiah 48:12-21 Matthew 9:14-17 Psalm 40:6-17
Jan. 7 Tuesday	1 Kings 10:1-13 Ephesians 3:14-21 Psalm 72	Jan. 23 Thursday	1 Samuel 1:1-20 Galatians 1:11-24 Psalm 27:1-6
Jan. 8 Wednesday	1 Kings 10:14-25 Ephes. 4:7, 11-16 Psalm 72	Jan. 24 Friday	1 Samuel 9:27-10:8 Galatians 2:1-10 Psalm 27:1-6
Jan. 9 Thursday	1 Samuel 3:1-9 Acts 9:1-9 Psalm 29	Jan. 25 Saturday	1 Sam. 14:34-16:13 Luke 27-32 Psalm 27:1-6
Jan. 10 Friday	1 Samuel 3:10-4:1a Acts 9:10-19a Psalm 29	Jan. 26 Sunday	Isaiah 9:1-4 1 Corinth. 1:10-18 Matthew 4:12-23
Jan. 11 Saturday	Samuel 7:3-17 Acts 19:19b-31 Psalm 29	Jan. 27 Monday	Judges 6:11-24 Ephesians 5:6-14 Psalm 27:7-14
Jan. 12 Sunday	Isaiah 42:1-9 Acts 10:34-43 Matthew 3:13-17	Jan. 28 Tuesday	Judges 7:12-22 Philippians 2:12-18 Psalm 27:7-14
Jan. 13 Monday	Genesis 35:1-15 Acts 10:44-48 Psalm 89:5-37	Jan. 29 Wednesday	Genesis. 49:1-2, 8-13, 21-26 Luke 1:67-79 Psalm 27:7-14
Jan. 14 Tuesday	Jeremiah 1:4-10 Acts 8:4-13 Psalm 89:5-37	Jan. 30 Thursday	Deut. 16:18-20 1 Peter 3:8-12 Psalm 15
Jan. 15 Wednesday	Isaiah 51:1-16 Matthew 12:15-21 Psalm 89:5-37	Jan 31 Friday	Deut. 24:17-25:4 1 Tim. 5:17-24 Psalm 15
Jan. 16 Thursday	Isaiah 22:15-25 Galatians 1:6-12 Psalm 40:1-11		



January 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5 9:00 AM Worship followed by fellowship 10:15 AM Adult Study 10:15 AM Sunday School all ages	6 6:00 PM Worship Meeting	7 1:00 PM Quilters 1:30 PM Hope Chest Open 5:30 PM Yoga class	8 6:00 AM Men's Breakfast and Bible Study 9:00 AM Women's Circle 6:30 PM Confirmation dinner and study	9 7:00 PM Women's Bible study	10	11
12 9:00 AM Worship followed by fellowship 10:15 AM Adult Study 10:15 AM Sunday School all ages	13 6:30 PM Council Meeting	14 1:00 PM Quilters 1:30 PM Hope Chest Open 5:30 PM Yoga class	15 6:00 AM Men's Breakfast and Bible Study 6:30 PM Confirmation dinner and study	16 7:00 PM Women's Bible study	17	18
19 Annual Meeting following Worship 9:00 AM Worship followed by fellowship 10:15 AM Adult Study 10:15 AM Sunday School all ages 5:00 pm EPIC	20	21 1:00 PM Quilters 1:30 PM Hope Chest Open 5:30 PM Yoga class	22 6:00 AM Men's Breakfast and Bible Study 6:30 PM Confirmation dinner and study	23 7:00 PM Women's Bible study	24	25
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Financial Report				
Submitted by Claudia Beyer				
October			YTD thru October	
Total Receipts	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
	11,975	10,750	125,535	118,250
Total Expenses	9,990	12,008	115,422	132,414

Attendance:

October 06	96
October 13	64
October 20	75
October 27	65

