

Bethany Lutheran Church

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



In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? John 14:2

Important Dates

3-4 Lenten Dinner 6:15 PM
Worship around the cross 7:00 PM
3-7 Women's Retreat @ Bethany
3-11 Women's Circle 9:00 AM
Lenten Dinner 6:15 PM
Worship around the cross 7:00 PM
3-18 Lenten Dinner 6:15 PM
Worship around the cross 7:00 PM
3-22 Community Meal 5:00 PM
3-25 Lenten Dinner 6:15 PM
Worship around the cross 7:00 PM

Contact Information

Bethany Lutheran Church
235 South Second Street
West Branch, Iowa 52358
(319) 643-5998

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.

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



Wonderful and awesome people of God,

The season of Lent is upon us. We talk a lot about Lent being a season of repentance and preparation. In fact, as early as the mid fourth-century Christians have observed Lent as a season of preparation prior to the Easter celebration. The church, individually and communally, prepares for the cross of Good Friday and the empty tomb of Easter morning. We prepare communally when we gather on Wednesdays to eat together, worship, and pray together and we prepare individually in our own ways. Perhaps, you give something up or do a Lenten devotional. You can sign up for a devotion to be emailed daily from the South-eastern Iowa Synod at <https://seiasynod.org/lent/> But what is all this preparation about?

We prepare because the One sent by His Father has gone ahead of us to prepare a place for us in His Father's house. We prepare not because we have to but because God has first prepared a place for us. Our preparation is not a duty but a gift. Our preparation this season of Lent is an opportunity to humbly recognize before God our broken and sinful nature. It is an opportunity to return to the relationship God desires to have with each of us. It is a season to prepare our hearts, minds, bodies, and souls for the ultimate sacrifice of love revealed in God's Son, Jesus Christ.

We also prepare through repentance; but, what in the world is that? Literally, the Greek word used for repentance in the New Testament is defined as, "a change of mind" or a "turning about." The Holy Spirit works through our repentance to turn us back and into a fuller, richer relationship with our Lord. Like our preparations, repentance is not an obligation or work but rather is a gift. When we repent, we are assured of the promise of forgiveness and restoration to a right relationship with God. All those things that compete for our attention suddenly take a back seat to the overwhelming love of God in Jesus Christ.

I pray this day for each of you as you journey through these 40 days of Lent and I would be appreciative of your prayers for me as well. They truly do sustain, comfort, and strengthen me. Whatever preparations you undertake may they lead you to the presence of God during your journey! Grace and peace to each of you this Lenten season!

Pastor Chad





Birthdays

March 01 - Ellie Holstad
 March 06 - Travis Kaufman
 March 08 - Cheryl Fischer
 March 09 - Alan Beyer, Abbey Fryauf
 March 11 - Johnathan Holstad,
 Mike Fryauf
 March 13 - Dylan Schiele
 March 15 - Kris Sweat
 March 16 - Marisa Terry
 March 19 - Sienna McElhinney
 March 20 - Kevin Olson
 March 21 - Mark Anderson
 March 22 - Brett Schiele
 March 25 - Bradley Arp
 March 28 - Ellen Gunderson
 March 29 - Toni Dodds, Justin Roth

**If you don't see your birthday listed, please contact Paula so we can update our database.*

Don't forget Daylight Savings time!
 Set your clocks forward
 March 8th!



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Bethany Books



Books For Adults

The featured author for this month is Adam Hamilton. He is the senior pastor of a large church in the Kansas City area. These two books are being studied both by the Wednesday morning men's Bible study group and also the Sundry morning discussion class. In *Confronting The Controversies: Biblical Perspectives On Tough Issues* he explores some of the most controversial and divisive issues of our time. He looks at them from a biblical perspective and from each point of view. The issues include: the separation of church and state, creation and evolution in the public schools, the death penalty, euthanasia, prayer in public schools, abortion, and homosexuality.

The second book *Christianity And World Religions: questions we ask about other faiths (Revised Edition)* also is by Adam Hamilton. Jesus said to love our neighbor. About 1 in 3 people on the earth are Christian. How do we understand the rest? Today most people in the United States identify as Christian but in the years to come it will be a lower percentage. In order to love one's neighbor it is helpful to understand him/her. Hamilton, in this book, seeks to help us understand our neighbor by providing a background in each of the world's major religions. They are: Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, and Christianity. He begins each section by describing the beginning and main ideas of each religion, then he shows similarities between it and Christianity, and then the differences between each religion and Christianity. Why are there so many different religions? How should we view their beliefs? What is the fate of those who follow or pursue God through other religions? We need to understand other peoples' beliefs in order to be able to build bridges with others and truly be a good neighbor to all. I find that when I study other societies and cultures I am able to better to question and understand my own. This is also true of one's religion.

Book For Children

Maybe I Can Love My Neighbor Too was written by Jennifer Grant and illustrated by Benjamin Schipper. A young girl learns from her mother that everyone is her neighbor and that if she is observant, she can find ways to show love to neighbors near and far.

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.

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

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
All Women are Welcome

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

Men's Gathering
See More Information on Page 6

Bishop Visits Bethany

Bishop Michael Burk of the Southeastern Iowa Synod visited Bethany on February 2nd. He preached during worship, shared fellowship with those gathered and answered questions from the audience.

Bishop Burk will be retiring this year and a cake and small goodie bag were presented to him.



Bishop Burk and wife Dianne



Save the Dates!

When: June 08- 11

Where: Bethany Lutheran Church
Who: Children Kindergarten - 5th Grade

Look for More Information to Come!
Questions: See Kristin McElhinney

VBS VOLUNTEER SIGN UP
June 8th - 12th

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
GREETER/ SIGN IN 8:45-9:15 a.m.	1) Sun. Helper?	1) Sun. Helper?	1) Sun. Helper?	1) Sun. Helper?
A.M. HELPER 9-12 a.m.	1) [blank]	2) [blank]	2) [blank]	2) [blank]
SNACK/ LUNCH PREP 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.	1) [blank]	2) [blank]	2) [blank]	2) [blank]
P.M. HELPER 12-3 p.m.	1) [blank]	2) [blank]	2) [blank]	2) [blank]
Counselor Supper Host or Provide	1) [blank]	1) [blank]	1) [blank]	1) [blank]

Much help is needed throughout the week. A signup is located outside the kitchen. Your help is greatly appreciated to make VBS 2020 another successful year for the children in attendance. Thank you!

Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI) News

March is National Professional Social Workers Month

March is National Professional Social Workers Month, a time to recognize social workers and thank them for all they do. At Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI), we're grateful for the many social workers who have dedicated their lives to serving our communities across the state!

Maybe you've never had a social worker involved in your life. Yet, whether you realize it or not, you've had the benefit of their behind-the-scenes work in your community. Social workers help people help themselves in overcoming life's most difficult circumstances or managing challenges of everyday living: poverty, abuse, mental illness, depression, addiction, disability, and many other situations.

Iowa wouldn't be the same without the patience, guidance, and empowerment that social workers provide. Happy National Professional Social Work Month!

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.LSIowa.org and www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa.

Caring for Christopher

When Christopher struggled with crippling anxiety at a young age, his mom, Cheyenne, didn't know where to turn. Even going on a simple trip to the grocery store was almost impossible. She knew something needed to change.

That change came in the form of LSI's Behavioral Health Intervention Services. Each week, Christopher's BHIS worker, Jose, visited the family in their home or met with them at the local library. He brought activities to engage Christopher and help him develop the coping skills he needed to feel better when he left the house. And at the same time, he provided words of encouragement and helpful parenting tips Cheyenne could use to help her child.

Christopher recently celebrated his seventh birthday, and his confidence continues to grow. He feels more comfortable going out in public. He has graduated out of LSI services, and he recently made a new friend all on his own.

Cheyenne feels confident that even on the tough days, she has the knowledge she needs to help her child thrive, thanks to Jose.

"LSI gave us the tools we needed to help him succeed, and the reassurance that we were doing the right thing, even when it was hard," she says.



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New Candle Lighters

After many years of service by our Ministers of Christ's Light (aka Acolytes), our candle lighters were in need of replacement. New candle lighters were purchased in part with Elsa Boedeker memorial funds. We give thanks for the old and new candle lighters; the many youth who have acolyted in the past, who currently acolyte, and those to come; and the financial gifts to purchase new ones.

125th Anniversary

On October 29, 1895 a little congregation was organized by a lay missionary, N. P. Olsen and a number of Danish Lutheran immigrants who had settled in the vicinity of West Branch. The congregation was formed in the home of C.P. Christiansen. It wasn't until 1940 that the church's name was changed to Bethany Lutheran.

As we celebrate 125 years we are beginning to plan how we might do that. If you have any ideas or are interested in helping, please see Del Hughes or Alan Beyer.

Why Do We Worship?

The top ten reasons why we worship is found in the book, *Worship Matters An Introduction to Worship* (Augsburg Fortress, 2012). This month, we share number seven.

Because God calls and leads us there.

We can (and do) decide not to go to worship. Sometimes we don't worship for weeks or years. But when we do come to worship, week after week, or even sporadically, is it entirely our own willpower that gets us there? Lutheran Christians believe that God acts in our lives—even getting us out of bed and through the church doors. Coming to worship is a sign that God is acting in your life! Lutheran Christians believe it is God who calls the assembly together through the Holy Spirit.

Men's Event Food Packaging

For I was hungry
and you gave me something to eat...

Matthew 25:35

Physically, spiritually, and mentally we all experience hunger. Men of Trinity and Bethany are invited to come together April 26th for a time of worship and devotion as God fills our spiritual hunger. Then, sent by the Spirit, we will respond to God's abundant grace in helping to meet physical hunger needs of people around the world as we package meals. After that, we will gather for dinner at Mexico Lindo Restaurant in West Branch.

TAKE AWAY HUNGER



When: April 26th

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Where: Bethany Lutheran Church
235 S 2nd St., West Branch

Cost: \$27 per person (see note below)
plus meal to follow

**One case of supplies, which will make 216 meals cost \$54. We are asking each man to contribute \$27. This will provide 108 meals.

If you want to contribute more than \$27 that is great. If you want to fundraise on your own that is fine as well.

Please RSVP by April 8 so supplies can be ordered at: <https://tinyurl.com/w4lmha4>



**BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH
COUNCIL MINUTES—January 2020**

President Hughes called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

Members present were Nancy Bruns, Alan Beyer, Del Hughes, Dave Bahnsen, Pastor Whaley, and Tonya Samuelson.

Members absent were Linda Black, Curt Casper, and Wayne Frauenholtz.

Pastor Chad led opening devotions with a reading from Matthew 2. Reflection and prayer followed.

Pastor's Report: Report to Council – January 13, 2020
Grace and peace in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

Today I am grateful for:

2019 and the opportunities God will present to us in 2020

Tonya, Wayne, and Cheryl as this will be their last council meeting – Thanks for all you have done!

Daily reminders God is with us such as the flickering flame of a candle shining through the darkness, a soothing song reminding us of God's love, a phone call from a dear friend, a Bible verse that is just what you needed and speaks to what's going on in your life.

Pastor Hougen leading worship December 29 so I could have some time away

Some happenings in the last month.

Fabulous Christmas Eve worship services

Crestview Worship Service

Women's Circle (December and January)

WBARC Meeting

Pre-Marital Counseling for April Wedding

Attend Community Meal

Wednesday Night Faith Formation

Men's Bible Study

Adult Discussion Hour

Worked on updating Constitution and preparing Annual Report

8 pastoral visits

Upcoming Happenings:

Turning Point Meeting at Christ the King, Iowa City
– Saturday, January 18

Annual Meeting – January 19

Preach and lead worship at Anamosa State Penitentiary with Free*Indeed* Congregation during pastoral vacancy – February 1

Bishop Burk at Bethany to preach and worship with us – February 2

Secretary's Report:

Dave moved to approve the secretary's report with a correction. Nancy seconded. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report:

December offerings totaled \$16,727 and expenses were \$17,332, which included \$3,803 sent to local missions (2.5% of offering) and \$295 for Jack and Jill gift certificates for DVIP (10% of Christmas Eve offering).

The December fund balance report reflects \$2,284 (1.5% of offering) transferred from the General Fund to the Internal Ministries fund and \$10,000 transferred from the Mission Investment fund to the General Fund.

Dave moved and Alan seconded to accept the Treasurer's Report. Motion passed.

Committee Reports:

Building and Grounds: No report.

Education: Tonya plans to meet with the new Education Committee chair in February to discuss VBS. She will have a poster at the Annual Meeting showing the volunteers needed for VBS.

Evangelism and Outreach: The Designated Shelter Committee met in December to finalize preparedness plans.

Fellowship: No report.

Stewardship: No report.

Youth: No report.

Worship and Music: No report.

Business Agenda:

Al moved to place the fair market rental value of the parsonage at \$11,800 per year. Nancy seconded. Motion passed.

Annual meeting preparations: Simply Giving forms will be available at the meeting. Budget was quickly reviewed. New council members are still being recruited. The revised Constitution will be presented.

A Local Missions Proposal 2020 written by Pastor Chad was handed out for review.

Dave moved to adjourn. Al seconded. Motion passed.

Meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.



Faith at Home

These short Bible passages and reflection starters are one more way we are trying to spur conversation about faith at home and also absorb ourselves in the word of God. We hope you find them beneficial.

Psalm 1:1-2

Happy are those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or take the path that sinners tread, or sit in the seat of scoffers; but their delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law they meditate day and night.

- Some bad advice given to me...
- Scoffers criticize, mock, and make fun of others, which I...
- God's laws are...



Romans 8:26

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.

- Prayer...
- It is hard for me to find words to pray...
- I pray when...

Psalm 2:7

I will tell of the decree of the Lord: He said to me, "You are my son; today I have begotten you."

- Claimed by God...
- As part of God's family...
- Responsibility to God as my parent...



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, March 1	Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7 Romans 5:12-19 Matthew 4:1-11	Tuesday, March 17	Psalm 81 Genesis 29:1-14 1 Corinthians 10:1-4
Monday, March 2	Psalm 32 1 Kings 19:1-8 Hebrews 2:10-18	Wednesday, March 1	Psalm 81 Jeremiah 2:4-13 John 7:14-31, 37-39
Tuesday, March 3	Psalm 32 Genesis 4:1-16 Hebrews 4:14-5:10	Thursday, March 19	Psalm 23 1 Samuel 15:10-21 Ephesians 4:25-32
Wednesday, March 4	Psalm 32 Exodus 34:1-9, 27-28 Matthew 18:10-14	Friday, March 20	Psalm 23 1 Samuel 15:22-31 Ephesians 5:1-9
Thursday, March 5	Psalm 121 Isaiah 51:1-3 2 Timothy 1:3-7	Saturday, March 21	Psalm 23 1 Samuel 15:32-34 John 1:1-9
Friday, March 6	Psalm 121 Micah 7:18-20 Romans 3:21-31	Sunday, March 22	1 Samuel 16:1-13 Ephesians 5:8-14 John 9:1-41
Saturday, March 7	Psalm 121 Isaiah 51:4-8 Luke 7:1-10	Monday, March 23	Psalm 146 Isaiah 59:9-19 Acts 9:1-20
Sunday, March 8	Genesis 12:1-4a Romans 4:1-5, 13-17 John 3:1-17	Tuesday, March 24	Psalm 146 Isaiah 42:14-21 Colossians 1:9-14
Monday, March 9	Psalm 128 Numbers 21:4-9 Hebrews 3:1-6	Wednesday, March 25	Psalm 146 Isaiah 60:17-22 Matthew 9:27-34
Tuesday, March 10	Psalm 128 Isaiah 65:17-25 Romans 4:6-13	Thursday, March 26	Psalm 130 Ezekiel 1:1-3; 2:8-3:3 Revelation 10:1-11
Wednesday, March 11	Psalm 128 Ezekiel 36:22-32 John 7:53-8:11	Friday, March 27	Psalm 130 Ezekiel 33:10-16 Revelation 11:15-19
Thursday, March 12	Psalm 95 Exodus 16:1-8 Colossians 1:15-23	Saturday, March 28	Psalm 130 Ezekiel 36:8-15 Luke 24:44-53
Friday, March 13	Psalm 95 Exodus 16:9-21 Ephesians 2:11-22	Sunday, March 29	Ezekiel 37:1-14 Romans 8:6-11 John 11:1-45
Saturday, March 14	Psalm 95 Exodus 16:27-35 John 4:1-6	Monday, March 30	Psalm 143 1 Kings 17:17-24 Acts 20:7-12
Sunday, March 15	Exodus 17:1-7 Romans 5:1-11 John 4:5-42	Tuesday, March 31	Psalm 143 2 Kings 4:18-37 Ephesians 2:1-10
Monday, March 16	Psalm 81 Genesis 24:1-27 2 John 1-13		



Lent Schedule



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 songs, offer prayers together and be invited to pray around the cross for whatever it is that lays heavily upon our hearts.

Wednesday, March 4

6:15 p.m. Lent Supper

7:00 pm Prayer Around the Cross Worship Service

Wednesday, March 11

6:15 p.m. Lent Supper

7:00 pm Prayer Around the Cross Worship Service

Wednesday, March 18

6:15 p.m. Lent Supper

7:00 pm Prayer Around the Cross Worship Service

Wednesday, March 25

6:15 p.m. Lent Supper

7:00 pm Prayer Around the Cross Worship Service

Wednesday, April 1

6:15 p.m. Lent Supper

7:00 pm Prayer Around the Cross Worship Service

Holy Week Schedule



Once again this year we will be partnering with our brothers and sisters in Christ of Springdale United Methodist Church and West Branch United Methodist Church in worshipping together for the services of Ash Wednesday (which was at Bethany), Maundy Thursday, and Good Friday. Over the years these have been some wonderful worship opportunities and if you haven't attended at one of the other congregations please consider doing so this year. Your presence is so appreciated as we truly come together as the body of Christ.

Maundy Thursday Service - Thursday, April 9

7:00 pm at Springdale United Methodist Church

Good Friday Service - Friday, April 10

7:00 pm at WB United Methodist Church

*Each congregation will have its own Easter services.

Easter Service

We will celebrate the glorious resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ Sunday, April 12th at 9:00 a.m. Come and join us as we lift our voices high and sing of this great news!



March 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:00 AM Worship 10:20 AM Adult Bible Study	2	3 1:00 PM Hope Chest Open 1:00 PM Quilters	4 6:00 AM Men's Breakfast and Bible Study 6:15 PM Choir Practice 6:15 PM Lenten Dinner 7:00 PM Prayer Around the Cross Worship	5 6:00 AM Women's Bible study	6	7 9:00 AM Women's Event
8 9:00 AM Worship 10:20 AM Adult Bible Study	9 6:30 PM Council Meeting	10 1:00 PM Hope Chest Open 1:00 PM Quilters	11 6:00 AM Men's Breakfast and Bible Study 9:00 AM Women's Circle Bible Study 6:15 PM Choir Practice 6:15 PM Lenten Dinner 7:00 PM Prayer Around the Cross Worship	12 6:00 AM Women's Bible study	13	14
15 9:00 AM Worship 10:20 AM Adult Bible Study	16	17 1:00 PM Hope Chest Open 1:00 PM Quilters	18 6:00 AM Men's Breakfast and Bible Study 6:15 PM Choir Practice 6:15 PM Lenten Dinner 7:00 PM Prayer Around the Cross Worship	19 6:00 AM Women's Bible study	20	21
22 9:00 AM Worship 10:20 AM Adult Bible Study 5:00 PM West Branch Community Meal @ Bethany	23	24 1:00 PM Hope Chest Open 1:00 PM Quilters	25 6:00 AM Men's Breakfast and Bible Study 6:15 PM Choir Practice 6:15 PM Lenten Dinner 7:00 PM Prayer Around the Cross Worship	26 6:00 AM Women's Bible study	27	28
29 9:00 AM Worship 10:20 AM Adult Bible Study	30	31 1:00 PM Hope Chest Open 1:00 PM Quilters				

Monetary Gifts Report

Submitted by Nancy Bruns

Saints in Worship

1-05 40
1-12 39
1-19 52
1-26 67

Total 198

	January 2020		YTD	
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
Total Receipts	12,692	12,984	12,692	12,984
Total Expenses	12,116	13,521	12,116	13,521

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.

