

Bethany Lutheran Church

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



Important Dates

5/08 Council meeting 6:30 PM
5/14 Mother's Day
5/15 Synod Assembly (online)
5/16 Synod Assembly (online)
5/18 Hiking Ministry 6:30 PM
5/20 Synod Revival in Des Moines
5/21 Senior recognition during
worship
5/25 Crestview worship 2:00 PM

Jesus  You!

Contact Information

Bethany Lutheran Church
235 South Second Street
PO Box 236

West Branch, Iowa 52358
(319) 643-5998

www.wbbethany.org

Pastor Chad Whaley
pastor@wbbethany.org

Pastor is in the office often. Call him at
(319) 643-5998 if needed, schedule an
appointment, or just to say "Hi!"

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!

FIND US ON TWITTER!

Search @blcwestbranch

Links to websites are built into the
digital version of this newsletter.
Click on words highlighted in blue
(e.g. [wbbethany.org](http://www.wbbethany.org)) or images

[Jesus said], "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength." The second is this, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." There is no other commandment greater than these." - Mark 12:30-31 (NRSV)



Dear siblings in Christ,

That greeting says something about us. We are connected...in Christ! We are connected...to his baptism! We are connected...to his death! We are connected...to his resurrection! We are connected...to each other! We are the body of Christ, and the body of Christ has many expressions. We are young and old. We are rich and poor. We are farmers, students, nurses, administrators, educators, skilled laborers, retirees, and the list could go on and on. We are parents and grandparents, aunts and uncles. Some are married or in a committed relationship while some are single, widows or widowers. We are Republicans, Democrats, and Independents. We are of different ethnicities. We are from different communities and schools. We are each uniquely and beautifully made in the image of God. We are siblings in Christ. We are the body of Christ. We are ... children of God!

We are living in a very challenging and divisive time in our communities, state, nation, and world. Tensions are high and disagreements abound. So, how does the body of Christ live in this reality? How do we respond? How are we called to act? I believe it starts with remembering whose we are. I believe it starts with remembering even the sibling in Christ I don't agree with is ... my sibling. Part of the same body of Christ as I am. A child of God just as I am. I believe it begins remembering the two great commandments Jesus upheld, "Love the Lord your God" and "Love your neighbor as yourself." (Mark 12:30-31; Matthew 22:37-39; Luke 10:27). These are not new commandments Jesus is giving us. They are commandments God gave to Israel. Deuteronomy 6:5 states, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might." Leviticus 19:18 states, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." These commandments are central to our calling as the body of Christ. Love your neighbor...even the one you don't agree with. Love your neighbor...even the one you don't understand. Love your neighbor...even the one who seems so drastically different. Love your neighbor...even the one who dresses differently. Love your neighbor...even the one you find it hard to pray for. Love God! Love one another! Love your neighbor! What would the world look like if we could simply uphold these commandments?

Bishop Amy Current of the Southeastern Iowa Synod, our bishop, recently wrote a letter to the people of the synod that speaks to the moment we currently find ourselves in and our role in it as the church. I invite you to read it [here](#). She reminds us,

It is the call of all Christians to engage, to pay attention, and to live in the world around us. We, as Lutheran Christians, believe that in our baptism, we have been claimed, named, forgiven, promised new life, and gifted as a child of God and in this life of faith, we are called to live in the "covenant God made with us in holy baptism: to live among God's faithful people, to hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper, to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed, to serve all people, following the example of Jesus, and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth." (ELW p.236)

*Continued on
page 3.*



Birthdays

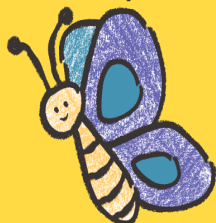
05-01 Olivia Poppen, Cozette Sexton
Rick Paulsen
05-06 Deb Anderson, Brittney Heath
05-09 Tyler Haub, Curt Friis
05-10 Jenna Sexton
05-12 Elijah Fetzer
05-14 Everett Dlh, Annabelle Burnette
05-15 Claire Kaufman, Matt Whaley,
Bonnie Conner
05-16 Kody Crow
05-17 Candy Madsen, Cadence Heid,
Maggie Paulsen
05-19 Carla Friis
05-21 Linda Black, Wayne Frauenholtz
05-22 Andrew Niles
05-26 Bill Holmes
05-29 Nicole Zimmerman
05-30 Jim Paulsen



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

Community Meal

There will be no 4th Sunday community meal in May so families may enjoy graduation and Memorial Day celebrations.



Bethany Books



Books For Adults

Our culture is at a crossroads when it comes to kindness. We view kindness as an act solely on the absence of being a jerk or we see acts of kindness as beyond the reach and capability of a normal person. In the book *In Defense Of Kindness: Why It Matters, How It Changes Our Lives, and How It Can Save The World* by Bruce Reyes-Chow we find that we each can choose kindness as a new way to experience community and wholeness. We live in a world that is marked by intolerance, indifference, and hostility. It is all around us and is what makes up much of the "news" of the day. It causes us to often feel as if that is the way to act. Being kind is a challenging endeavor. It is a way of being in the world that needs practice. Kindness challenges those people who are fed by being hurtful and who find worth by tearing others down. This is not the type of posture that we should leave in the world. Being kind is the most powerful way that we can invite positive change in the world. I know that even on the best of days being kind is more of an aspiration than an actual fact of life. It is not something that we can do by ourselves but perhaps in company with others we can make it a positive part of our journey. This book helps to give direction to us.

The second book for this month is *Prayers For Your Children* by James Banks. It contains 90 days of prayers for children of any age. Many parents believe in the power of prayer for their children but their lives are so full that finding time for prayer can be a challenge. The author offers parents the help that they need in finding scripture-based prayers to cover children in every season of life. (donated)



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Pastor's letter from page 1.

Bishop Current references the ELCA 2017 statement titled, "[Government and Civic Engagement in the United States: Discipleship in a Democracy](#)", which "holds that all residents of the United States have a responsibility to make government function well—not to abandon our democracy but to engage it in a spirit of robust civic duty. For Lutherans, this responsibility is lived out as a calling from God, expressed in the discipleship described in our baptismal promises. It is based on our understanding of how God governs human society."

We live in this calling in a variety of ways collectively as the church and individually as servants of Christ guided by "one simple but all-encompassing question: is the neighbor being served?" It is a question that has many possible answers as to how we serve. Some we may agree upon, and others we will not. Yet, through it all Bishop Current writes, "I hope that we are led to love God and love our neighbor. Advocating for justice and standing with those who are poor and vulnerable is part of our baptismal call to serve."

I appreciate Bishop Current's letter to the church. As I invite you to read it, I also invite you into a discussion on the ELCA statement "Government and Civic Engagement in the United States: Discipleship in a Democracy." This will be held following worship on June 4. May the peace of Christ be with you all!

Pastor Chad

Sources:

Bishop Amy Current Letter: https://seiasynod.org/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2023/02/BishopCurrent_AdvocacyLetter_Feb2023.pdf
ELCA Statement, "Government and Civic Engagement in the United States: Discipleship in a Democracy" 2017.
https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Government_and_Civic_Engagement_Social_Message.pdf?_ga=2.186583918.654093864.1677259457-1290446844.1667410172





Happy Mother's Day!

Mother's Day is a time to celebrate and empower all the strong, loving women in your life. At LSI, we provide mothers, and soon-to-be mothers, with the education and resources they need to build the brightest future for their children.

LSI's Foster Care and Adoption Services work to bring families together and to help them throughout the process of becoming licensed for foster care and approved for adoption. Our Family Centered Services uses a strengths-based approach to keep Iowa families together by equipping parents with skills they need to be successful, independent and healthy.

As you celebrate Mother's Day this year, remember that your support helps empower Iowa moms. If you are looking for a way to help these moms, or to honor a mother in your life this year, please consider making a gift in her name to LSI. For more information, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI's Senior Director of Philanthropy and Church Relations, at Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org or 563-676-2065.

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

Staying Connected to your Roots

LSI Foster Care and Adoption is proud to be part of the Native Families for Native Children (NF4NC) project, which is a collaborative effort between the four native tribes of Nebraska, human services agencies and private agency partners in Nebraska and Iowa. As part of the project's efforts, we recruit, train, license and support Native American families in accord with the traditions, needs and resources of their communities.

Rebecca and Kirby expanded their family when they adopted their son in January. The couple had the opportunity to work with the Omaha Tribe and were able to participate in the second Customary Adoption in the State of Iowa.

Through their Customary Adoption, the family completed a culture plan with the tribe and will be able to keep their newly adopted son connected to his cultural roots with the Omaha Tribe. The new family also was able to keep their son connected to his biological siblings, so he can continue to be involved with them.

LSI is proud to help connect families, like Rebecca and Kirby, with the resources they need to continue to grow their families and build the brightest future for Iowa children.

?? ? **Bible Quiz** ? ??

After Jesus raises Lazarus from death, what does his family do to thank Jesus?

- They host a dinner for him.
- Martha serves the meal.
- Mary anoints Jesus' feet with an extravagant amount of expensive perfume.
- All of the above.

Answer: D (See John 12:1-3.)

?? ? **Bible Quiz** ? ??

We know the name of only one of the two disciples to whom the risen Jesus appeared on the road to Emmaus. Who was he?

- John
- Paul of Tarsus
- Joseph of Arimathea
- Cleopas

Answer: D (See Luke 24:18.)

Outdoor Worship

June 11, July 9, August 13, September 10

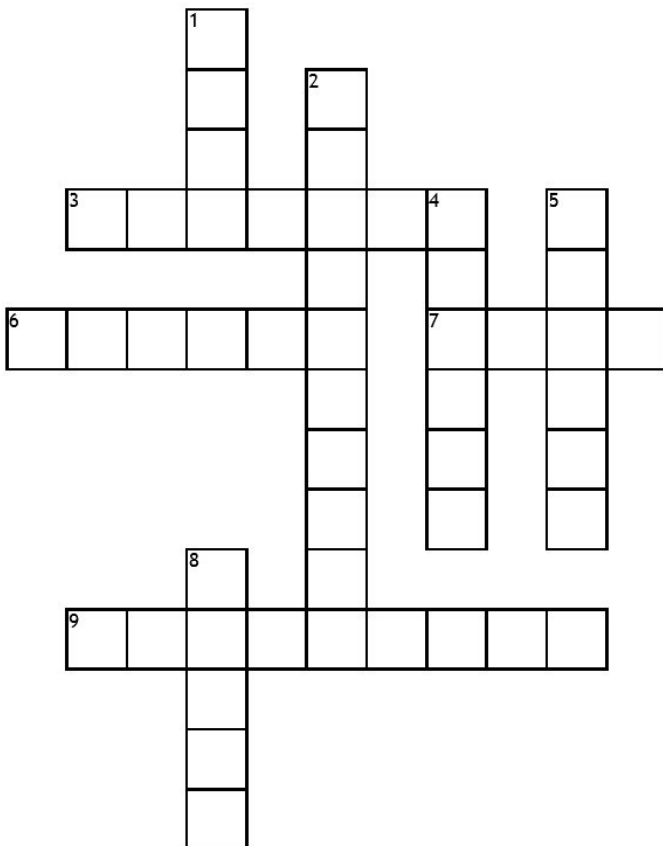
9:30 AM
Weather Permitting
Bring a Chair



God loves you!!!



Enjoy this crossword puzzle. The clues are from the gospel lessons we had in worship on Easter Sunday and the two Sunday's following Easter: Matthew 28:1-10, John 20:19-31 and Luke 24:13-35.



Graduation Recognition and Blessing

DURING WORSHIP ON MAY 21 (9:30 AM)

Come celebrate with our graduates:
Alex Poppen, Hannah Schiele, Andrew Samuelson,
Aiden Shields and Hunter Niles



To allow our high school students time to join us in worship on the 21st and also attend Baccalaureate at 11:00 AM, we will not celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion on the 21st. We will celebrate this Sacrament instead the following Sunday, May 28th. Thank you for your understanding.

Across

3. The angel indicates the risen Jesus went ahead of the women to _____.

6. The disciple that wouldn't believe until he saw the mark of the nails in Jesus' hands and side was named _____.

7. According to Matthew's account of the resurrection 2 women both named _____ went to see the tomb.

9. The first word the risen Jesus said to the women as he met them along the road was _____.

Down

1. The 2 followers finally recognized Jesus as they shared a _____ together.

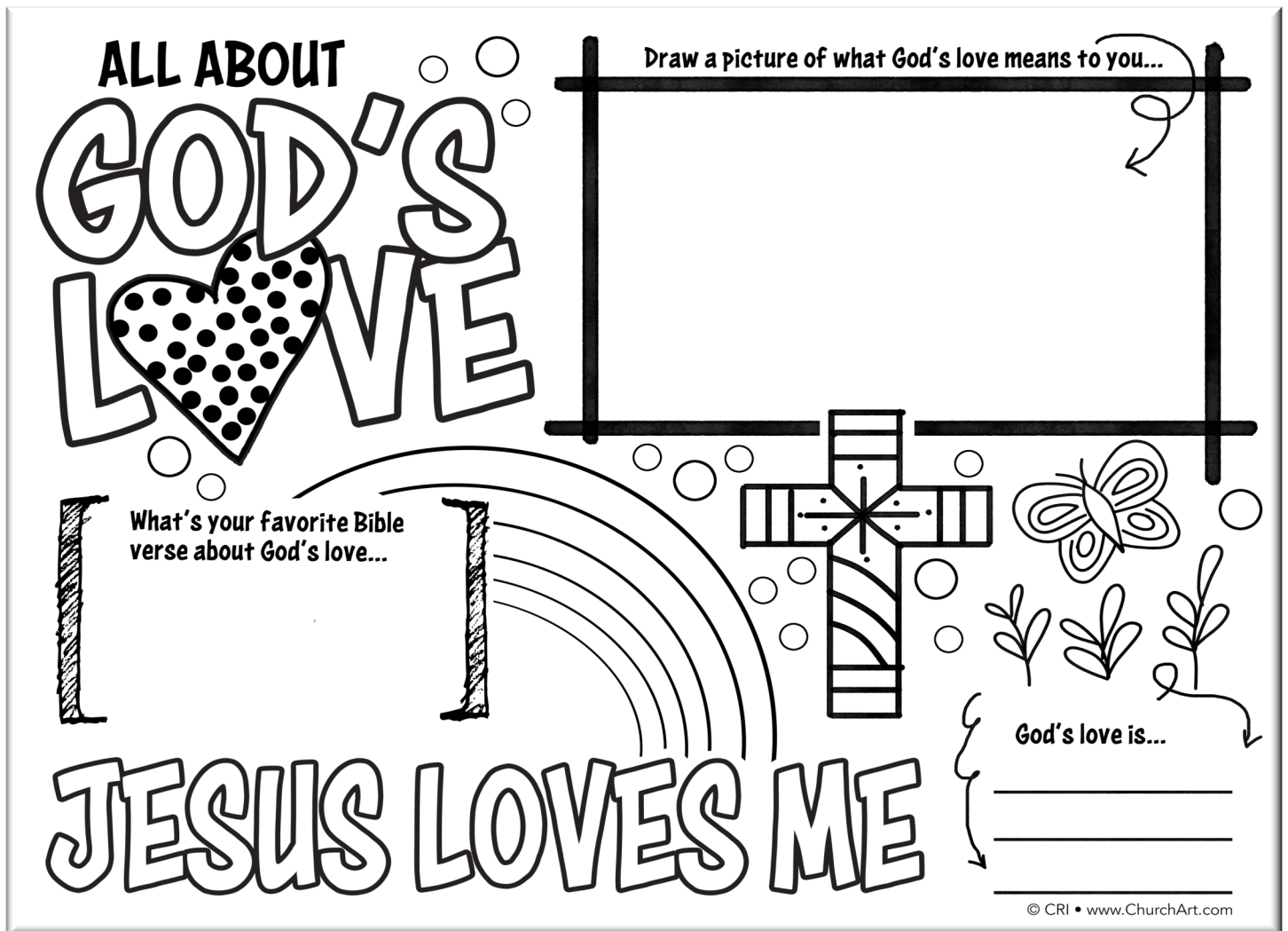
2. Jesus breathes the _____ on to the disciples in John's gospel following his resurrection. (2 words)

4. In Luke's gospel, 2 followers of Jesus were walking toward _____ when they encountered the risen Jesus.

5. The first words the angel of the Lord spoke to the women at the tomb were, "Do not be _____."

8. In the gospel of John the first words Jesus speaks to his disciples following his resurrection were, "_____ be with you."

Children's Ministry News





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

SYNOD REVIVAL

The Southeastern Iowa Synod is hosting a Synod Revival on May 20th. What is a Synod Revival? It is a one-day event presented by the Southeastern Iowa Synod designed to nourish and connect people to each other and to reimagine our relationships in and with the church. Please visit the [synod website](#) for more information or see the image below. If interested in attending, please see Pastor Chad.



Pastor Erika Uthe, Director of Evangelical Mission and Assistant to the Bishop of the Southeastern Iowa Synod, joined us in worship April 23. It was a wonderful morning of worship and fellowship. Thank you to all who joined us!



SYNOD REVIVAL IMAGINE

NOW TO GOD WHO BY THE POWER AT WORK WITHIN
US IS ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH ABUNDANTLY FAR MORE
THAN ALL WE CAN ASK OR IMAGINE...
EPHESIANS 3:21



BISHOP AMY CURRENT
SEIA SYNOD - ELCA



BISHOP YEHIEL CURRY
METRO CHICAGO SYNOD - ELCA



RACHEL KURTZ
MUSICIAN

**SATURDAY
MAY 20**

10:00 AM TO 3:00 PM

**GRAND VIEW
UNIVERSITY
DES MOINES**

SCAN ME



- WORSHIP
- INSPIRATIONAL MUSIC & SPEAKERS
- LEARN ABOUT VARIOUS MINISTRIES
- BRING A CHAIR OR BLANKET
- RAIN OR SHINE (INDOORS IF RAIN)
- FOOD AVAILABLE
- ALL AGES, ALL ARE WELCOME
- FREE! NO RSVP NEEDED

PRESENTED BY:



Southeastern Iowa Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Council Minutes — March 2023

Call to Order at 6:28pm by President Dave Poppen

Members Present: Cindy Knoop, Jill Taylor, Dave Poppen, Sue Hughes, Kristen Van Scoyoc, Kent Kaufman

Members absent: Jon Twing, Howard Moss, Courtney Heid, Pastor Chad

Opening Prayer & Discussion

Pastor's Report

Given we just met 2 weeks ago, this report will be brief. Since the last meeting much time has been devoted to Lent activities, primarily preparation for Ash Wednesday and Wednesday evening prayer around the cross worship. Even though Ash Wednesday weather posed a few hurdles, we still had around 30 people in attendance which was wonderful. There were close to 100 interactions on Facebook. The attendance last Wednesday was wonderful with probably 35 people in attendance. Again, there are close to 100 interactions on Facebook. I led worship at Crestview on the 23rd of February. Thanks to Toni Dodds for assisting me. I made 5 pastoral visits. I also attended Wednesday Men's Bible study and helped lead along with Al Beyer and Jon Twing. Of course, there are all the regular day-to-day tasks of ministry including completion of the newsletter, worship and sermon preparation, prayer and upkeep of our website, Facebook and Twitter pages. I am looking forward to some vacation time over spring break and will be gone Sunday, March 12th. Pastor Hougen will be present in my absence.

Secretary's Report - Courtney

February Council Meeting Minutes with corrections: Pastor Chad was listed as not present. Jill correcting a couple spelling errors and sending out corrections.

Kent moved to approve; Cindy seconded. Motion approved with corrections.

Treasurer's Report - Jill

February Treasurer's Report

Kent moved to approve; Sue seconded. Motion approved.

Moved Boedeker family gift to mission investment fund. You will see report of balance of \$48,929 in mission investment fund.

Cleared Angel Tree balance of \$454.06 and sent that to schools for milk money fund.

A lot of annual payments are done for the year.

Revenue higher than expected.

Expenses were down. Positive balance of

\$1,673.75.

Water will now be \$105 a month.

Committee Reports

Building and Grounds -Howard

No updates

Education & Youth – Kristen & Courtney

Palm Sunday- plan to do a scavenger hunt telling the story of Easter with the children. Kristin M. leading. Might need assistance from older kids and/or church members/families with reading clues.

Evangelism & Missions- Jon

No updates

Fellowship- Sue

All Lenten meals covered. Last week was a good turnout.

March 8th – Council members

March 15th – NONE – Spring Break

March 22nd – Men's Group – pancakes

Mark 29th – Thursday morning women's group

Need fellowship volunteer for April 2nd – Jill volunteered.

No fellowship on April 9th – Easter

Need fellowship volunteer on April 23rd for the Bishop or one of her assistants here.

Sue will talk with Pastor Chad about what he would like to have (more of a meal)

Stewardship- Kent

No updates

Worship and Music – Cindy

Ash Wednesday and first lent was very well attended.

Flowers are still going to be \$10 for Easter Lilies.

Starting to think about Holy week services. Palms have been ordered.

Old Business

Awaiting update from Pastor regarding next steps in BLC's recognition of the 2022 ELCA Synod initiative regarding Land Acknowledgement to American Indian and Alaska Native People.

New Business

None

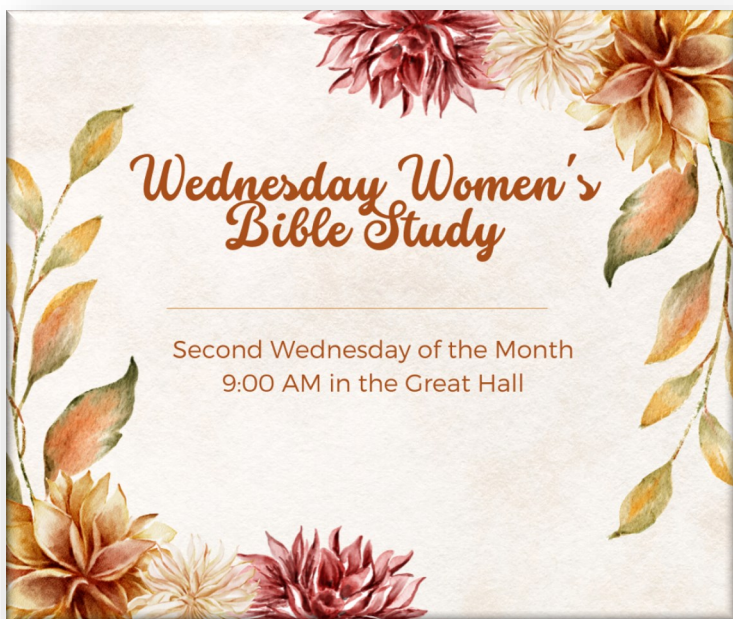
Closed with the Lord's Prayer

Kent moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:04pm, Kristen seconded. Motion approved.

Next Regular Meeting – April 10th, 2023



Adult Faith Formation Opportunities

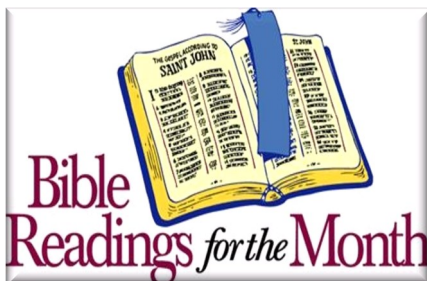




May Sunday Bible Readings

The passages below are the assigned readings for May. You can click on each reading and be taken to the passage on "[Bible Gateway](#)." May this be one more way we can hear and study the word of God.

May 7th
[Acts 7:55-60](#)
[Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16](#)
[1 Peter 2:2-10](#)
[John 14:1-14](#)



May 14
[Acts 17:22-31](#)
[Psalm 66:8-20](#)
[1 Peter 3:13-22](#)
[John 14:15-21](#)

May 21
[Acts 1:6-14](#)
[Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35](#)
[1 Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11](#)
[John 17:1-11](#)



May 28
[Acts 2:1-21](#)
[Psalm 104:24-34, 35b](#)
[1 Corinthians 12:3b-13](#)
[John 20:19-23](#)



READ THROUGH THE BIBLE

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.



Isaiah 2:4

He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

- If nations disarmed, beating swords into plow share, and spears into pruning hooks...
- War is...
- A world of peace...

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...



May 2023

View Calendar on our [website](#).

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 9:00am Prayers with Pastor & Paula	3 7:00am Men's Study Group 6:15pm Choir Practice 6:30pm Youth Faith Formation (Grade 4-8)	4 6:00am Women's Study 1:00pm Quilters	5	6
7 9:30am Worship with communion (Also streamed live on Facebook) 10:30am Fellowship Hour	8 6:30pm Council Meeting	9 9:00am Prayers with Pastor & Paula	10 7:00am Men's Study Group 9:00am Women's Circle 6:15pm Choir Practice 6:30pm Youth Faith Formation (Grade 4-8)	11 6:00am Women's Study 1:00pm Quilters	12	13
14 9:30am Worship (Also streamed live on Facebook) 10:30am Fellowship Hour	15 7:00pm WB Study Club	16 9:00am Prayers with Pastor & Paula	17 7:00am Men's Study Group 6:15pm Choir Practice 6:30pm Youth Faith Formation (Grade 4-8)	18 6:00am Women's Study 1:00pm Quilters 6:30pm Hiking Ministry at Hoover Prairie	19	20
21 9:30am Worship (Also streamed live on Facebook) High School Senior Recognition and Blessing 10:30am Fellowship Hour	22	23 9:00am Prayers with Pastor & Paula	24 7:00am Men's Study Group 6:15pm Choir Practice	25 6:00am Women's Study 1:00pm Quilters 2:00pm Crestview Worship	26	27
28 9:30am Worship with communion (Also streamed live on Facebook) 10:30am Fellowship Hour	29	30 9:00am Prayers with Pastor & Paula	31 7:00am Men's Study Group			



Monetary Gifts Report

Submitted by Jill Taylor

	March 2023		YTD	
Total Gifts	Actual 11,829	Budget 14,334	Actual 39,507	Budget 43,002
Total Expenses	Actual 13,299	Budget 14,787	Actual 43,134	Budget 44,366
Net Revenue	(1,470)		(3,627)	

To give an offering visit our website wbbethany.org and click on the [Give Now](#) button.

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.



Whoever
finds their life
will lose it,
and
Whoever
loses their life
for my sake
will find it.

MATTHEW 10:39, NIV



Find us on
Facebook

To find Bethany's main page,
search "**Bethany Lutheran
Church (ELCA) West Branch,
Iowa**"

DON'T FORGET TO LIKE US!



Follow us on Twitter!
Our Twitter Handle is:
@blcwestbranch

You Are Loved!

Ministry Assistants

Ministers of Proclamation (Lectors)

5/7 Pat Cassabaum
5/14 Patsy Ernst
5/21 Phil Hougen
5/28 Mike Fryauf

Ministers of Technology

5/7 Paula Casper
5/14 Jill Taylor
5/21 Cole Crosthwaite &
Tate Frantz
5/28 Paula Casper

Ministers of Christ's Light (Acolytes)

Opportunities available. Sign Up:

<https://tinyurl.com/nhkyxwjs>

Ministers of Altar Care

John & Linda Black

May 2023
Bethany Branches

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