

Bethany Lutheran Church

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



BUT YOU are a CHOSEN PEOPLE, a ROYAL PRIESTHOOD,
GOD'S SPECIAL POSSESSION, THAT YOU MAY DECLARE THE PRAISES OF HIM WHO CALLED YOU
OUT OF DARKNESS INTO HIS WONDERFUL LIGHT.
1 PETER 2:9 (NIV)

Important Dates

5/13 Council meeting 6:30 PM
5/19 Senior recognition Sunday
5/26 4th Sunday meal 5-6 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 X!

Search @blcwestbranch

Dear People of God,

The faithful men who gather Wednesday mornings at 7:00 AM just finished a study from the book of 1 Peter. This book was written to early Gentile converts to Christianity in the Roman province of Asia Minor (modern day Turkey). It was most likely written in the late first century CE, although like many biblical texts that is debatable. These early converts were learning how to live their new life in Christ. How does one live within a family unit in which some still worship pagan deities? How does one live as a follower of Christ under Roman occupation and government? How does one live, when attempting to lead a good and godly life may bring with it struggle and suffering?

Repeatedly in the Old Testament we find God reminding the people of Israel who they are in times of struggle and suffering. They are God's people. They are a "priestly kingdom and a holy nation" (Exodus 19:6); they are "sheep of God's pasture" (Psalm 100:3); they are God's servant whom God has chosen and not rejected (Isaiah 41:9).

In similar manner, the author of 1 Peter is doing the exact same thing. He is instilling in these new converts their identity as called, chosen, and holy people through the saving work of God in Christ Jesus. Never forget, the author seems to proclaim, who you are in the face of peril, opposition and suffering as you try to do good and follow Christ's example.

We have just watched one of the best collegiate basketball careers come to an end. Caitlin Clark will now wear a new jersey that identifies her as a member of the Indiana Fever. I have seen many a social media post lifting up the fact that she will forever be a Hawkeye. Even though the University of Iowa will retire her jersey, it will forever be part of who she is.

As Christians, we don many "jerseys" throughout our lifetimes. Some we place upon ourselves. Some are placed upon us by others. Each says something about who we are: right or wrong, good or bad. But we are always clothed in the "jersey" that reminds us we are "a chosen people, a royal priesthood, God's special possession." As such, we have a mission "to declare the praises of him who called you out of the darkness and into his wonderful light." At times, doing just that may bring with it struggle and suffering. When it does, remember whose you are. Remember the hope we have in Christ Jesus. Remember, we are never alone. The risen Christ is with us! Peace be with you blessed saints! - Pastor Chad

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



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

<https://www.elca.org/>



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

<https://seiasynod.org/>

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 Dlhly,
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.



Bethany Books

by Frank Frostestad

The adult book this month is *Faith Begins At Home: The Family Makeover With Christ At The Center* by Mark Holman. In the past, faith was a central part of the family's home life. It was passed on from one generation to the next. Today, the reality for many families is that faith is no more than a one hour, drop-off Christianity. That is, if it is present at all. The question becomes "What does this mean for the faith of our children?" The question is not are we passing things on to our children, but what are we passing on to our children. If we want our children to have a faith that influences the way they live their lives, then we need to be modeling this faith. The home needs to be the primary place where faith is nurtured.

Book For Teens

The teen book for this month is *Unscheduled Grace: 40 Reflections And Prayers For College Students* by Katherine Fick and Matthew Marohl. The authors are campus pastors at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota. They deal with college students on a daily basis as a part of their vocation. This book can accompany students through the changes, challenges, and joys of college living, including homework, relationships, stress, vocation, and more. Through all its entries, the authors assure readers that no matter what they face, their lives are blessed by the unscheduled grace of God. (highly recommended in the *Living Lutheran* magazine)

Book For Children

This month's children's book is *All Because You Matter* by Tami Charles and illustrated by Bryan Collier. "They say that matter is all things that make up the universe: energy, stars, space... if that's the case, then you dear child, matter." That begins a lyrical tribute filled with heart, hope, and affirmation. This book reaffirms that all children matter regardless of their backgrounds or the circumstances that they find themselves in at the moment.



Mother's Day is Sunday, May 12. Did you know LSI brings hope and healing to mothers in each of our service lines? Here are just a few examples:

The Child Care Business Development program in our Immigrant and Refugee Community Services prepares women, often mothers, to run an in-home childcare business. This small business opportunity allows them to provide for their family and ensure their children receive culturally appropriate care.

Many mothers benefit from our Foster Care and Adoption services, whether they be mothers who are blessed with a child through adoption or foster mothers who provide love and guidance to children from all paths of life.

Early Childhood Services prepares mothers-to-be for birth and raising a child. Additionally, home visitation programs help ensure a strong support system for young parents across the state.

These are just three examples of how LSI serves mothers in Iowa. This Mother's Day, we encourage you to give a gift in honor of your mother or motherly figure to ensure mothers around the state receive the care and support they deserve.

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—Pat Cassabaum

Pianist—Jill Barnhart

Church Council

Kent Kaufman—President
(319)643-5734
bkkaufman@lcom.net

Howard Moss—Building & Grounds
(319)643-7190
hntmoss@lcom.net

Dale Swenson—Stewardship
(319)594-2219
Dale-Swenson@uiowa.edu

Kristen Van Scoyoc—Education
(515)240-0584
kandresen21@gmail.com

Jon Twing—Treasurer
(319)331-6547
jon.s.twing@icloud.com

Jessica Fonseca—Evangelism & Missions
(319)331-1098
Paulsen.jess@gmail.com

Courtney Heid—Youth/Secretary
(319)400-7227
cheid88@gmail.com

Pat Cassabaum—Fellowship
(319)541-4708
pcass44@yahoo.com

**Cindy Knoop—Worship & Music/
Vice President**
(319)643-5484
cindy.knoop@gmail.com

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



+

PUZZLE

A SPECIAL GIFT

Give thanks to God for this amazing planet, which he filled with people, animals and plants.

Directions: Following the code below, fill in the blanks to complete the Bible verse. Then color the earth.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

The _____ is _____, _____, and _____, the _____, and _____ 24:1, NIV

$\frac{5}{1} \frac{18}{20} \frac{8}{8}$ is $\frac{20}{8} \frac{5}{5} \frac{12}{15} \frac{18}{4} \frac{4}{19}$, and
 $\frac{5}{22} \frac{5}{18} \frac{25}{20} \frac{8}{9} \frac{14}{7} \frac{9}{14} \frac{9}{20}$, the
 $\frac{23}{15} \frac{18}{12} \frac{4}{4}$, and $\frac{1}{12} \frac{12}{23} \frac{8}{15} \frac{12}{9} \frac{22}{5}$
 $\frac{9}{14} \frac{9}{20}$ $\frac{16}{19} \frac{1}{12} \frac{13}{13}$

Answer: The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it. Psalm 24:1, NIV

**4th Sunday
Community Meal**

May 26th

Join us for the
community meal.

5:00-6:00PM in the Great Hall!

Everyone is welcome.



Children & Youth News

Wednesday FAITH FORMATION

Grades 3-8

May 1, 8, 15

Wednesday Faith Formation resumes in April. As a reminder we begin at 6:30 PM and conclude at 7:30 PM. May 15th will be our final session this spring.



sunday school with Bethany Lutheran Church

Preschool - Grade 3

May 5 & 19

8:30 - 9:15 AM

LAST CLASS UNTIL FALL

SAVE THE DATE

VBS AT BETHANY

Monday July 15-
Thursday July 18

5:30-8pm
Dinner served

Children entering preschool
through 6th grade welcome!



Graduation Recognition and Blessing

DURING WORSHIP ON MAY 19 (9:30 AM)

Come celebrate with our graduates:
Chloe Klabo and Auron Marsh

An illustration of two graduates, a girl and a boy, wearing black graduation caps and gowns. They are smiling and raising their hands in celebration, with confetti falling around them.

Many thanks to everyone who donated toward the mission project of the confirmation students. The group delivered the supplies to the Paw Pantry April 10th and were able to learn more about the pantry and what a valuable resource this is to many students and their families.

Jesus loves you!



6 Reasons TO CHOOSE eGIVING.

The stewardship committee would like to promote the Vanco automated electronic giving program. This is a program where you can sign up to have your offering withdrawn directly from your bank account.

The following are 6 great Benefits of using this service!

[Click here & Sign-up Now](#)



It Makes Giving Easy

eGiving makes it simple for you to give exactly how and when you want. You can make a one-time donation or set up recurring gifts right from your computer, tablet, or phone.



It's Safe and Secure

You never need to worry about your donation making it into our account. Unlike with checks and cash, which can be misplaced, gifts made via eGiving are directly sent to our church's bank account. Our payment solutions provider ensures your personal information remains secure.



You Can Choose Where Your Gift Goes

We know our members feel passionately about supporting many causes. Our church uses donations to fund everything from mission trips to building maintenance. When you make a gift using our eGiving tools, you can direct the funds toward the cause you wish to support.



It Gives Our Church Stability

Your generous donations support our mission, operations, and many ministries. By setting up recurring donations online, you enable us to maintain financial stability. You have the flexibility to choose the dates and frequency (weekly, monthly, or Quarterly) of when the gift is processed.



You Can Give on the Go

With eGiving, you don't have to physically be at church to contribute. Use our church's convenient eGiving tools to donate from the beach, on the road, or right at home.



You Can Easily Track Your Giving History

From your eGiving account, you can view past donations, update bank account or credit and debit card information, and set up or adjust recurring gifts.

[Click here](#)

To view an instructional video showing the sign-up process

Thank you for your generous support!

The links in the above image do not work. Please use this link (<https://tinyurl.com/yc7v78zy>) or the QR code to sign-up for electronic giving.

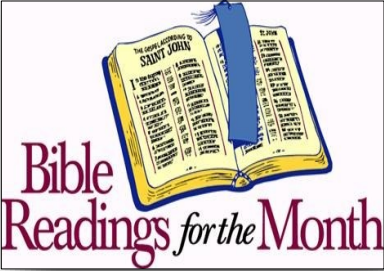




Sunday Bible Readings

The passages below are the assigned readings. 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 5
[Acts 10:44-48](#)
[Psalm 98](#)
[1 John 5:1-6](#)



May 12
[Acts 1:15-17, 21-26](#)
[Psalm 1](#)
[1 John 5:9-13](#)

May 19
[Acts 2:1-21](#)
[Psalm 104:24-34, 35b](#)
[Romans 8:22-27](#)



May 26
[Isaiah 6:1-8](#)
[Psalm 29](#)
[Romans 8:12-17](#)

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.

Matthew 22:36-40

"Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" He said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

- Loving God...
- Loving others...
- Loving myself...



Isaiah 11:1-3

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear;

- Hopes I have from God's leaders...
- Today the quality from the spirit of the Lord that I need is...
- To not be influenced by appearances and rumors, I...



Council Minutes—March 2024

Call to Order at 6:30pm by President Kent Kaufman

Members Present: Jon Twing (acting as secretary), Pastor Chad, Cindy Knoop, Kent Kaufman, Kristen Van Scoyoc, Howard Moss, Dale Swensen, Pat Cassabaum

Members absent: Jessica Fonseca, Courtney Heid

Presentation by George McCrory from the American Red Cross (ARC)

Request from ARC to make Bethany a Red Cross shelter

Bethany has already provided temporary shelter services but this would be a formal agreement with the ARC to staff and run the shelter if the Cedar County EMS declared a need to open the shelter. George would serve as the shelter coordinator if such an event transpires.

Documents were exchanged, reviewed, questions were answered and discussion ensued.

Kristen Van Scoyoc moved to “Enter into the agreement from the American Red Cross to allow Bethany to be designated an American Red Cross shelter under the leadership of Pastor Chad with George McCrory serving as coordinator.” Howard Moss second. Motion Approved.

Pastor’s Report

Joys and Thanksgivings

Solar up and working!

Thanks to Howard and his team!

Thanks to all who donated!

God provided!

Wednesday evenings in Lent

Thanks to all who have provided meals!

Thanks to all who have joined us!

Wednesday morning men’s group

Great discussions and a few more participating!

The word of God and good food have fed us!

Ministry Happenings

20 pastoral visits

Worship

Ash Wednesday

Prayer around the cross

Insurance

Meet with new agent.

Conversations/emails with current agent

Review of policies – thankful we finally found a company willing to underwrite us!

Attend 4th Sunday dinner.

Attend Sunday school.

Crestview worship

Meeting with copy sales rep

Attend a basketball game for confirmation youth.

Attend Bishop Lent renewal worship and gathering.

Bulletin prep

Work on Paula’s computer and research the purchase of a new one (current one is 5+ years old)

Men’s group (attend and prepare to lead)

Assist Paula in preparing bulletins, newsletter, and other communications.

Sermon preparation including children’s sermons.

Confirmation – assist youth with Paw Pantry mission project.

Upcoming

Vacation scheduled this week has been cancelled due to potential funeral.

March 20 – final Wednesday in Lent (Confirmation families serving walking tacos)

Prayer around the cross is a healing service with laying on of hands and anointing.

Palm/Passion Sunday (March 24)

Holy Week (Maundy Thursday 3/28; Good Friday 3/29; Easter 3/31)

WBARC Pulpit Exchange 4/7 – Pastor Christine Humrichouse (WB Friends Church) coming to Bethany (no communion that Sunday); Pastor Chad goes to WB Friends Conservative Meeting House

Secretary’s Report - Courtney

February Council Meeting Minutes Edits

Change “...parsonage furnace replaced” to “parsonage furnace repaired”.

February Council Meeting Minutes

Kent Kaufman moved to approve as amended; Howard Moss seconded. Motion approved.

Treasurer’s Report - Jon

February Treasurer’s Report

Change in assets comparable to January with the exception of special solar fund notations.

Rabe has been paid for solar work.

General fund comparisons showed revenues down by \$500 but this is not much of a variance for this time of year.

Most variances are within range and/or due to timing.

(Continued on page 9)

Council Minutes continued

(Continued from page 7)

Parsonage and church gas bill was much higher—might be due to extremely cold weather but Jon is investigating with Alliant.

Operating deficit improved slightly compared with January.

Status of solar fund was presented, discussed. Further discussion and a revisit in April is pending.

Committee Reports

Building and Grounds – Howard

The solar app was shown to council and Howard discussed some observations.

Solar banking is done by Alliant on a 01Apr to 31Mar calendar

Bethany was the 18th church in Iowa to install solar.

It was suggested a screen shot of the monthly solar report from the App be included in the monthly newsletter.

Pastor will assist Paula in doing this.

Education & Youth - Kristen

Choir on Palm Sunday – one youth has been practicing so far, looking to get more

Need to plan a function for graduates.

Planning a “Youth Day” in May

Fellowship – Pat

Paul & Nancy Bruns have agreed to sponsor the 4th Sunday meal.

Working the sign-up sheet for after church fellowship.

Volunteers are always welcome.

Lent meals are going well with one left:

3/30 – Faith Formation

Stewardship – Dale

Dale convened a Stewardship Committee Meeting to start planning.

Dave Poppen, Wayne Frauenholtz, Stacy Beyer, and Kent Kaufman are members.

Dave Poppen will give a “Temple Talk” on Simply Giving.

Stacy Beyer is managing the online Time and Talent forms.

Desire is to focus on Stewardship being more than financial giving. Opportunities include the Solar Project and Earth Day.

Evangelism & Missions – Jessica

No report.

Worship and Music – Cindy

Preparation for a busy end of month with Lenten/ Easter season coming to a close:

Maundy Thursday services

Good Friday services

Easter Services

The success of the introductions of new songs was briefly discussed with most pleased with the quality and value.

Old Business

Capital Improvement Fund update:

Financial status-Jon

Ongoing discussion about amount of money left over from the Solar Fund.

Rebate in 2025 pending.

Decision was made to rename the Solar Fund to Capital Improvement Fund.

Potential Projects-Howard

Accessible Ramp on the south side of the Church needs to be repaired. This includes maintenance and new carpeting.

Parsonage flooring in kitchen and bathroom needs to be replaced.

Carpeting in the Great Hall needs to be replaced.

Furnace replacement for both the church and the parsonage (probably the parsonage first) needs to be planned for.

City will also be conducting a “vibration study” in case the church or parsonage suffers impact from the new city water main being laid.

Insurance

Jon needs to pay the new insurance before March 27th, 2024

Some additional amenities will come from the new insurance once it is paid.

New Business

None

Jon moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:04pm, Howard seconded. Motion approved.

Closed with the Lord’s Prayer

Next Regular Meeting April 8th, 2024



May 2024

View Calendar on our [website](#).

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



Monetary Gifts Report Submitted by Jon Twing

	March 2024		YTD	
Total Gifts	Actual 23,027	Budget 14,339	Actual 47,113	Budget 43,017
Total Expenses	Actual 19,995	Budget 14,702	Actual 48,086	Budget 44,109
Net Revenue	3,032		(972)	

To give an offering visit our website wbbethany.org and click on the  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.

Ministry Assistants

Ministers of Proclamation (Lectors)

5-5 Bruce Jeffries
5-12 Beth Kaufman
5-19 Al Beyer
5-26 Dave Bahnsen

Ministers of Technology

5-5 Dave Poppen
5-12 Paula Casper
5-19 Jill Taylor
5-26 Cole C. & Tate F.

Ministers of Altar Care:

John & Linda Black



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Facebook

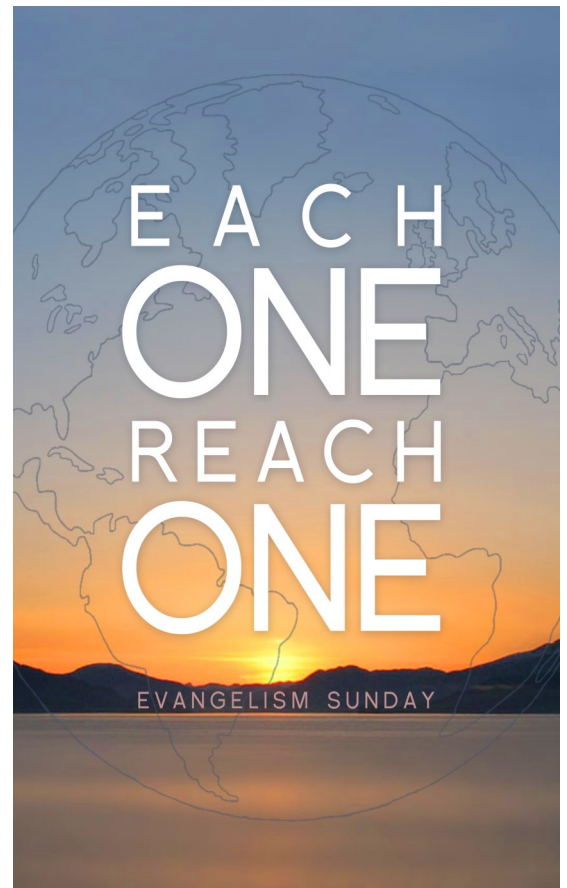
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Bethany Branches

May 2024

Bethany Lutheran Church
235 South Second Street
PO BOX 236
West Branch, Iowa 52358
www.wbethany.org