



THE BETHLEHEM STAR
FEBRUARY 2012



Lent begins

Sunday Worship: 8:15 and 10:45 a.m.

Wednesday worship at 6:00 p.m. in the Chapel (see pg. 12 for Lenten svc. details)
The 8:15 Sunday service is broadcast at 11 a.m. on KTOE 1420 AM / KTOE 102.7 FM.

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A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR JAY DAHLVANG

Sharing Our Spiritual Gifts

Nicky Gumbal, the leader of the worldwide Alpha movement, tells the story of a letter that was received by a Vicar in the Church of England. It read: "Dear Vicar, there are 566 people in our church. 100 are frail and elderly—that leaves 466 to do all the work. But 80 are young people at school or at college, and that leaves 386 to do all the work. But 150 of these are tired businesspeople—that leaves 236 to do all the work. 150 of these are busy with children, which leaves 86 to do all the work. But 15 live too far away to come here regularly, and that leaves 71 to do all the work. And 69 say they've already done their bit for the church. And that leaves you and me. But I'm exhausted, so good luck to you." I'm afraid that the sharing of our gifts has been seen as an exhausting work, or a dreadful burden, rather than a joyful opportunity to live into the life God puts before us. Frederic Buechner says that God calls us to the place where our deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet. And so perhaps the questions we should ask ourselves are: What is the world hungry for? And what do I like to do?

Do you like to sing? To sew? To read? To visit those wise with age? To play with children? To work with your hands? Do you like to be in front of people shining your light? Do you like to get things done behind the scenes? Are you a leader? A follower? What brings you joy? We want your joy to be the difference in God's world. Our Stewardship Team, along with our administrative assistant, Debbie Leiferman, is putting together a spiritual gifts survey as the first step in

better helping match the talents and joy God gives us with the hungry world around us. We anticipate the first incarnation being online in coming days. Look for more information on the E-news, Facebook, and in coming Star articles.

Financial Peace University Classes Begin February 19

Financial Peace University (FPU) is a 13-week curriculum designed to help you and your family make the most of the resources God has given to you. The mission of FPU is to empower and give hope to everyone from the financially secure to the financially distressed. Over one million families have worked through FPU, and using the skills acquired in the course, the average family has eliminated \$5,300 in debt and saved \$2,700 during those 13 weeks. Taught by Dave Ramsey, we gather in the Heritage Room to watch his DVD presentation, and then discuss together our challenges and hopes. A new series begins on Sunday, February 19, at 6:30 p.m. The cost of the course is \$99 per family, and it is a lifetime membership to FPU. Child care is available at no charge. A special offer is being made for Bethlehem member families. The first five Bethlehem families/individuals who enroll in FPU and attend a minimum of ten of the thirteen classes will have their tuition cost refunded by the church. You may contact the office for details. **Deadline to sign up is February 12.** To enroll, sign up on the office counter across from the library, or email pastorjay@hickorytech.net.

Lent Begins February 22

Our forty-day journey with Jesus to his cross and resurrection begins on Ash Wednesday, February 22.

That day we worship at two different times, both in the sanctuary, at noon and at 6 p.m. We will share our pulpit with area pastors throughout Lent, and plans are being formulated as the Star goes to press. Look for more information in the bulletin, coming newsletter, and E-news.

John Bible Study Begins February 29

Our next Book of Faith Bible Study is on the Gospel of John. We gather on Wednesday mornings from 10:30-11:30 in the Heritage Room to look at the historical, literary, Lutheran, and devotional aspects of eight passages from John's gospel. The cost of the materials is \$11. To sign up, see the form on the office counter across from the library, or e-mail pastorjay@hickorytech.net by February 22.

New Members Are Welcome!

If you or someone you know are interested in joining the Body of Christ at Bethlehem, the next series of New Member Orientation will begin Sunday, March 4. To become a member, please see Pastor Jay.

Building Committees Formed

Members of Bethlehem convened for the first time on January 18 to begin the process of remodeling and renovating our church building. Three committees were formed to shepherd the project, and we thank our members who have volunteered to serve in this way. The Magi Fund continues to receive gifts to match an initial \$20,000 donation to begin the building renovation. If you would like to make an offering to the fund, mark your gift, "Magi Fund."

(continued on page 2)

DEADLINE for the March Star is February 15.



PASTOR COLLETTE; NEW MEMBERS; FEBRUARY SERVING GROUP

A Time for Everything

"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven." Ecclesiastes 3:1

At the end of December, I met with representatives from both Bethlehem and Redeemer to talk about the first six months of our partnership together. We talked a lot about the demands on my time from both congregations, and how I can better manage that to give what is needed and also leave time for my family and personal life.

As I continue to process that conversation, I want to share with you something you may already know, but perhaps (like me) need a reminder of. Though the teacher writes in Ecclesiastes that there is a time for everything, I am reminded that that is not the same as saying there is time for everything. The reality of most of our

lives is that there is not enough time to do all that we want or are asked to do. It comes down to setting our priorities and sticking to them, so that we have time for the most important things.

So, here are my priorities for the next 6 months (in order of importance):

--To attend to the worship life, first of Redeemer and then of Bethlehem, meaning that my time will continue to be limited at Bethlehem on Sunday mornings. I do hope to use worship and activities on Wednesday evenings to connect with congregation members more deeply than I can on Sundays.

--To care for those in special need, especially the ill and homebound. This has been a priority from the beginning at Redeemer, and now it will take a larger part of my time at Bethlehem.

--To assist the boards and committees to which I am assigned, which

includes Community and Global Missions, Earth Stewards, and the Bethlehem Child Care Center.

This is a pretty short list, really, and what it realistically means is that there is not much time left for other participation in the life of Bethlehem. There is so much good going on here that I would love to be part of, but I know that I just can't if I want to have time for family, friends, and self-care. I hope you will help me to focus on these priorities, and understand when I have to say no.

Also, if you have any helpful ideas or input about these priorities, you can find me at church Monday through Wednesday mornings, and most Tuesday and Wednesday evenings.



A Message from Pastor Jay *(continued from page 1)*

Via De Cristo Weekend Coming

Via De Cristo means "the way of Christ" and is a weekend away to be drawn nearer to the Christ who invites us on his way. The next Via De Cristo weekend will be at Bethel Lutheran in Northfield on March 8-11 for men, and March 15-18 for women. If you are interested in attending, please contact Pastor Jay.

Politics and Religion: Sorting Things Out -- Exploring Religious Questions Series

You are invited to a Five-Week Adult Education mini-course at Gustavus with Dr. Darrell Jodock and Dr. Sarah Johnson Ruble (who was with us at Bethlehem in December). The topic will be "Politics and Religion" and will meet for five consecutive Monday nights starting February 20. Cost is \$35, and information is available in the literature rack in the narthex, as well as on their web site — gustavus.edu.



We rejoice in the addition of the following new members who joined in November:

Roger & Joyce Kamrath; Mike & Janelle Lafrentz; Bob & Kelly Salfer and Mara; Doug Wilkins and Edwin; Josh & Marni Blickem, Gwyneth and Walter; Kris Doering and Mackenzie, Seth, Jozie, and Jada; Amy Haigh, Elizabeth and Dani; and Kristin (Paul) Johnson. Please take the time to check out their photos on the bulletin board in the narthex, seek them out, and introduce yourselves to them.

FEBRUARY SERVING GROUP ~ Co-Chairs: Mary Hall (387-3503) and Aileen Eick (625-3549)



**Monthly
Serving
Group**

Bruce & Sandra Abild
Betty Anderson
Becky Beadell
Wally & Brenda Boyer
Leonard Braun
Charles Crandall
Kris Doering
Jeffrey & Kari Edwards
Yevonne Flatgard

Pat Fralish
Richard Hanson
Ronald & Sharon Hawker
Harvey & Alice Kollos
Marian Kvam
Joan Langlie
Frank & Ardie Larsen
Greg & Maria Larson
Dale & Gere Larvick

Don Miller
Newt Moen
Kevin & Holly Nevills
Bruce & Mary Beth Royer
Shirley Ruby
Randy & Pam Schindle
Clayton & Helen Schwanke



**Monthly
Serving
Group**

BETHLEHEM FELLOWSHIP



On Sunday, December 18, Bethlehem provided and served a ham dinner to 103 guests and 15 workers at the Salvation Army. Many are grateful to these generous people who made this holiday meal possible: Tom & DeeAnn

Nelson; Gary Morphew; Lavon & Sally Burdick; Brad & Betty Groth; Deloris Guenther; Bill & Barb Manske; Alice Haugen; Selma Braun; Aileen Eick; Darlene Hines; Carl & Rita Schoenstedt; Scott & Kris MacLean; Jeff & Kari Edwards; Tom & Linda Engstrom; Bob & Susan Brown; Amy, Danielle, & Elizabeth Haigh; Jay Backstrom; Rae Allan; Rocky & Ruth Schoenrock; Elaine Kunz; Randy & Rachel Wood; Roger & Joyce Kamrath; Roger Pipes; and Pastor Jay Dahlvang. **Thank you, everyone!** The menu was ham, potato casseroles, corn with peas, fruit salads, French bread, dill pickles, cookies & bars, milk & coffee.

New team leaders are needed for one of Bethlehem's four teams - each team provides and serves only one meal during the year. Please call Bethlehem's coordinators, Bob & Susan Brown (387-2976), if you are able to do this. A local church provides and serves a noon meal every Saturday and Sunday at the Salvation Army.

The four Sundays assigned to Bethlehem in 2012 are:
*February 26, June 10,
 September 2, and November 25.*



LIBRARY NEWS...

Did you know that there is a **gold mine** here at Bethlehem? Its gold nuggets stand neatly on shelves in your Bethlehem library! Some nuggets are called "fiction". Here you will find adventure, remote cultures, and romance. Other nuggets are labeled "biography", where a variety of heroes and those who are admired and respected can be found. There are other nuggets found in "non-fiction" that give help with most of life's many perplexing problems. And where better to find the real gold of Christian writers of Bible studies and commentaries, devotions, and the wisdom to be found in the complete works of Martin Luther. Stop in and choose your nugget -- it's your gold mine!

WEDNESDAY NIGHT SUPPERS (in the Dining Room) SERVED FROM 5:00-6:30 (5:00-5:50 during Lent)

February Menus:

- February 1** Meat loaf, baked potato & gravy, lettuce salad
- February 8** Chili & grilled cheese sandwich, carrot sticks
- February 15** Bone-in chicken, potato salad, & baked beans
- February 22** Sandwich & salad bar
- February 29** Hamburger/rice hot dish, chow mein noodles, & a fruit cup



Grace and peace to you, Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus! In the spirit of Christian love and joy, we invite you to celebrate with us the birthday of one of your former pastors, Norman P. Olsen. As we rejoice in the ministry he has provided, we also give thanks for you in the many ways your witness has touched him over the years. Pastor Olsen will celebrate 80 years on **Wednesday, February 15, 2012**. We invite you to remember him and Ramona in your thoughts and prayers. If you would like to send him a greeting through e-mail or regular mail, the information is below. Thank you. ~ *Stephanie Olsen Freund (daughter)*

**Pastor Norm Olsen - 34705 - 190th Street
 Starbuck, MN 56381 e-mail: normolsen@hcinet.net**



2012 Couples Retreat! **When:** Friday, March 2 - Saturday, March 3. **Where:** Holy Spirit Retreat Center, Janesville, MN. **Time:** Start arriving at 4 p.m. Friday; leave at 3-4 p.m. Saturday. **Meals as follows:** Friday night: potluck - everyone bring a dish to pass. Saturday a.m.: egg bakes, muffins provided. Saturday lunch: Sloppy Joes and fixin's. *Everyone please bring a snack and a dessert to share, and BYOB.* We are very excited to once again have Greg and Carol Nelson join us as our presenters. On Friday night, we will meet as a group, have introductions, and enjoy a great meal together. Greg and Carol will do a little "mini-session" with us, followed by music, games, fun, and laughter. On Saturday, we all arise (usually at different times!), have breakfast, and meet in a group led by Greg and Carol. It is a great way to meet others! A list of items that you will need to bring with you is located in the church office, along with more information. If you have any questions, please contact Lance/Donna Quick (388-2216), Gene/Laurie Bentdahl (345-1593), or Tim/Amy Heiser (380-0999). We would really like to have you join us for a fun and relaxing time!

WITH

Dear Bethlehem Friends,



Thank you for the love and support you've shown us as we grieve Jim's sudden and unexpected death. Thanks to those of you who attended his memorial service; your presence was especially reassuring for our out-of-town extended family. Thank you for your prayers, your cards, your visits, your gifts of food for the family, and your memorial checks to the ECHO Food Shelf. Your kindness is truly appreciated. We are all missing Jim incredibly, but finding peace and gratitude for the time we had together.

"To everything, there is a season..."

~ **Mary Slack, Jason & Meghan Slack,
 Ryan Slack & Alex Gillett**

Thank you for your generous donations to Bethlehem's monthly missions in 2011. The total amount donated was **\$35,900!** Local mission projects were Lutheran Social Services, ECHO, Bethlehem Child Care Center, ACANA Community, Lutheran Campus Ministry, and Theresa House. Global mission projects were Global Health Ministries, the Jacobsons in Tanzania, Iambi School Scholarships in Tanzania, Lutheran World Relief, ELCA World Hunger, and ELCA God's Global Barnyard.

~ *Community and Global Missions Board*

February Mission Project: **The ELCA Malaria Campaign**

Bethlehem's mission project for the month of February is the ELCA Malaria Campaign. This is a new opportunity for our Bethlehem congregation that enables us to join with the ELCA and the African companion churches in the global effort to prevent, treat, and contain malaria by 2015. The overall goal of the campaign is to collectively raise \$15 million by 2015.

Malaria has been a destructive global disease for nearly half a million years, but due to a new global movement, there is a coordinated effort supported by the United Nations in its Millennium Development Goal #6 to combat malaria as one of the global diseases to eradicate.

Facts:

- * One in five childhood deaths in sub-Saharan Africa is due to malaria.
- * The disease claims more than 800,000 lives each year.
- * A child dies of malaria every 45 seconds.
- * Malaria is preventable and treatable.
- * The impoverished in Africa, especially children under five and pregnant women, are particularly vulnerable.
- * An infected mother can pass malaria on to her unborn child before or during birth.
- * There is currently no effective vaccine for malaria, but various research projects are underway.

What is Malaria?

Malaria is a disease caused by the Plasmodium parasite and contracted from the bite of an infected mosquito. Malaria results in symptoms similar to the flu: fever, nausea, achiness, and fatigue. If malaria is contracted by an older child or adult, it is possible (though not easy) to survive. But when the immune system is compromised, such as in infants and pregnant women, the likelihood of death from malaria rises. Problems with access to medications for treatment -- and the ability to pay for them -- keep many malaria patients from receiving life-saving treatment and care. Lack of access to common methods of prevention, such as insecticide-treated mosquito nets, indoor residual spraying, or water drainage also contribute to malaria's continuing death toll, especially in Africa.

Prevention through mosquito nets:

The female *Anopheles* mosquito, which spreads malaria by transmitting the Plasmodium parasite to humans, is nocturnal, and she generally bites at night. Therefore, an insecticide-treated bed net can be an extremely effective tool in the prevention of malaria. A mosquito net is hung up over the middle of a bed so that it completely covers one or more sleeping persons. Not only do the mosquito nets create a barrier to mosquitoes, but the insecticide kills mosquitoes on contact as well. The ELCA Malaria Campaign partners use long-lasting insecticidal mosquito nets, which retain their insecticidal properties for up to five years or 20 washes. Mosquito nets treated with a parathroid insecticide both repel and kill mosquitoes, offering twice as much protection as untreated nets.

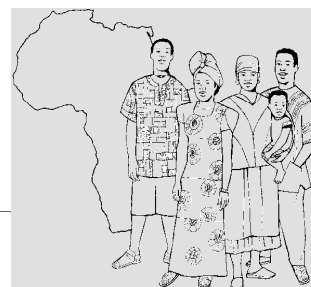
How Can We Help?

When we contribute to this effort, the ELCA Malaria Campaign helps to:

- * provide mosquito nets to Africa, where nearly 90% of malaria deaths occur.
- * develop *malaria prevention programs* which focus on individual and community malaria education.
- * advocate for access to health care, access to sanitation equipment, and mobilization of resources such as insecticide-treated mosquito nets and residual spraying.
- * support *malaria education programs* to train and equip leaders to teach others how to recognize and seek treatment for malaria, and how to prevent malaria in their households.

On behalf of the Community and Global Mission Board, we ask you to support the ELCA Malaria Campaign, which is now uniquely positioned to provide mosquito nets, insecticides, medication, health care, and education to help eliminate deaths from this disease for good.

~ *Bethlehem Community & Global Missions Board*





CALENDAR

Wednesday Evening Schedule

- 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. Child care available (infant to age 5, nursery area located in basement)
- 5:00 – 5:55 Chancel Choir (adults, meets in Choir Room - basement)
- 5:00 – 6:30 Supper served (all are welcome – dining room) -- NOTE: 5:00-5:50 during Lent
- 5:15 – 6:00 Junior Gospbells (practice held in Sanctuary)
- 6:00 – 6:30 Worship in the Chapel (beginning on February 22, services will be in the Sanctuary)
- 6:00 – 6:40 Kids' Club (meets in the "Moved by the Spirit" room downstairs, for kids in kindergarten through 6th grade) NOTE: NO Kids' Club from February 22-April 4
- 6:00 – 7:45 TIMES (Teens In Mission Enthusiastically Serving) in Grounds for Joy
- 6:00 – 7:45 Confirmation classes (grades 7 – 9, Youth Room on 3rd floor)
- 6:30 – 7:30 Bethlehem Gospbells (practice held in Sanctuary)
- 6:45 – 7:40 Gather Choir (adults, meets in Choir Room – basement)
- 7:45 – 8:30 The Messengers (music & drama group for Youth grades 7 – 12, meets in the Chapel)



FEBRUARY 2012



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 9 am - TOPS 1 pm- Staff mtg. Wed. Evening Activities 7:30 pm - Adult Ed. Board	2 	3 Office closes at 3:30	4
5 8:15 & 10:45 - Worship 9:30 - Ed. Hour, coffee	6 5-9 pm - Mankato Children's Chorus 5:45 pm - TOPS 7 pm-Youth Band	7 7 am -Café Ambrosia Bible Study 8:30 am - Quilters Noon-Men's Bible Study 1 pm - Library Comm. 1 pm - Comm. at OMV 6 pm- Music & Worship, Children's Board 6:15 pm - Earth Stewards 7 pm- C&G Missions, Evangelism, Facilities, Task Force	8 9 am - TOPS 1 pm- Staff mtg. 3:30 pm - Women's Bible Study - GFJ Wed. Evening Activities	9 5:30 pm - Youth Board	10 Office closes at 3:30	11 Senior High Retreat (through tomorrow)
12 8:15 & 10:45 - Worship 9:30 - Ed. Hour, coffee, cookie sale in narthex 5-7 pm - Valentine party in Youth Room	13 5-7 pm - McEducator Night at McDonald's 5-9 pm - Mankato Children's Chorus 5:45 pm - TOPS 7 pm-Youth Band	14 7 am - Café Ambrosia Bible Study 10:15 am - Communion at Pathstone Noon-Men's Bible Study 1 pm - Library Comm.	15 7:45 - Finance Comm. 9 am - TOPS 9-11 am - Women's Circles Bible Study - GFJ 1 pm - Staff mtg. Wed. Evening Activities	16 6-8 pm-BCCC - Heritage Rm.	17 3 pm - Book Club - Library Office closes at 3:30 7 pm - House of Bread talent show - Dining Rm.	18
19 8:15 & 10:45 - Worship 9:30 - Ed. Hour, coffee 9:15 & 11:45 am - Prayer Team in sanctuary 2-5 pm - Ben Rorem Eagle Scout reception 6:30 - FPU - Heritage Rm.	20 PRESIDENTS' DAY 5-9 pm - Mankato Children's Chorus 5:45 pm - TOPS 6:30 - Mom's Circle 7 pm-Youth Band	21 7 am - Café Ambrosia Bible Study 8:30 am - Quilters Noon - Men's Bible Study 1 pm - Library Comm. 4 pm - Website Comm. 7 pm - Council meeting Youth Fat Tuesday event	22 ASH WEDNESDAY 9 am - TOPS Noon & 6 pm - Worship 1 pm - Staff mtg. 3:30 pm - Women's Bible Study - GFJ Wed. Evening Activities	23 10:30 a.m. - Care Ministry meeting in Grounds for Joy - coffee and fellowship	24 Office closes at 3:30	25
26 8:15 & 10:45 - Worship 9:30 - Ed. Hour, coffee Noon - serve meal at Salvation Army 6:30 - FPU - Heritage Rm.	27 5:45 pm - TOPS 5-9 pm - Mankato Children's Chorus 7 pm-Youth Band	28 7 am - Café Ambrosia Bible Study Noon - Men's Bible Study 1 pm - Library Comm.	29 9 am - TOPS 10:30 - Book of Faith study Noon & 6 pm - Worship 1 pm - Staff mtg. Wed. Evening Activities			

CHILDREN & FAMILY MINISTRY

February LIGHT News

The 5th Rotation will begin on **Sunday, February 5**. We will be studying "Ten Men Healed". Save the date: The children will sing in church on **Sunday, February 26, at the 10:45 service**.

LIGHT is in need of YOUR help!! We are always looking for Light Keepers and

Facilitators. It takes 25 volunteers each Rotation to make the program run successfully! We need YOU! Please consider donating your time for either a 3-5 week period or the whole year! Contact Leah Garry at 507-382-2205 or lgarry@hickorytech.net to volunteer or just to learn more about the exciting LIGHT program.



Save the dates for the following opportunities provided through Green Lake Lutheran Ministries:

* **April 20-21** -- an overnight retreat for the 2nd-5th graders of Bethlehem.

* **June 10-14** -- Day Camp at BLC. Registration will begin in May.

And, of course, it's never too early to think about a week-long summer camp adventure for your child! Camp is one of the best feeder systems the church has, helping to provide future leaders for ministry. We are corporate members of Green Lake Lutheran Ministries in Spicer, MN. This will get our members special rates to attend camp.



CHILDREN'S MILESTONES

On **February 12** during LIGHT, the kindergartners and their parent(s) or grandparent(s) will meet in Classroom E by the nursery to learn a prayer. There will be different learning stations set up to explain that prayer is not just at bedtime or at meals. **At the 10:45 a.m. service**, prayer quilts that have a blue jean pocket on each one will be presented to these children. The pocket will be used for the child to hold their prayer cards. Each year until 6th grade, the child will receive a different set of prayer cards. As a child grows, the cards will become more in-depth to aid in their spiritual growth.

On **February 19** during the 10:45 a.m. service, the two-year-olds and their parents will be given a picture book about Bethlehem Lutheran Church. It is laminated so that it can be drawn on and wiped off. The purpose of this book is for the child to feel more comfortable here in their church. All children love to be read to.

On **February 26** during the LIGHT hour, there are two Milestones. The 5th graders and their parent(s) or grandparent(s) will meet in the chapel at 9:45 with Pastor Jay. This will be their introduction to the study of the sacrament of Communion. This is the beginning of a five-week study of communion. These students and their families will be having communion together on **April 15**.

Also on February 26 during LIGHT, the 6th graders will be meeting with Betty Sanger for two weeks to discuss the importance of prayer in our daily lives. They will have another class session on **March 4** to write a class prayer. Their prayer will be presented as the "Prayer of the Day" on **March 11** at the 10:45 service. The congregation will say their class prayer at the 8:15 service.

On **March 4** during the education hour, Bethlehem member and police officer Chad Mills will be showing a DVD to all of our youth in the Attic. He will be talking about driving safely, current laws, and the dangers of using cell phones and texting while driving. He also has a canine partner. At the **10:45 a.m. service**, the 11th graders and their parents will participate in the "Keys of Responsibility" blessing. In this blessing, we are recognizing that our 11th graders have become mature enough to take on added responsibilities.

Letters will be sent to each grade level as the dates get closer. Any questions should be addressed to Vee M.G. Williams at 387-5154 or fiveboys@chartermi.net.

Wednesday Night Kids' Club is here at Bethlehem!



Bethlehem Kids' Club is a group of students (kindergarten through 6th grade) who meet in the "Moved by the Spirit" room on

Wednesday nights from 6:00-6:40. During this time, we grow in our relationship with Jesus. We praise God through music, and we take time to learn from our Bibles.

Kids' Club will be CANCELLED during Lent from February 22-April 4 to allow children the opportunity to worship with their families.

If you have questions about Kids' Club, please see Leah Garry or Laurie Rossow.

Valentine's Day Party

Join us on **February 12 at 5:00 p.m. in the Youth Room at Bethlehem**. We will be making

crafts and homemade chocolates! We will also be playing Valentine Bingo as a group. This is a GREAT way to meet other families while having fun! Friends are welcome! Pizza and beverages will be provided for a free-will offering.



YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY



I am really excited about this year's coming events. We have a **Senior High Retreat** coming up on **February 11 and 12**. This retreat invites the 9th-12th grade youth to come to Minneapolis/St. Paul and dig deeper into their faith and do a major fellowship experience. We will do a servant event and a couple of unique worship experiences. This year, we will partner with Amazing Grace Lutheran Church in Inver Grove Heights for at least one of the fellowship events. We are going to a new thing called SKYZONE: Trampoline Park. Merri Guggisberg, youth director, said it is really a lot of fun and our youth will have a blast. (No, I will not jump in the trampoline park--my track record with trying to be younger than my age is not that good, but I must admit it is tempting!) We are also going to see a play performed by

youth called "And a Child Shall Lead". The youth really like this trip, and so do I. Yes, we will go back to Spirit Garage! The **House of Bread** is scheduled for **February 17**. We are bringing out the big guns this year! Plan to attend, as we have a "really Big Show" planned for you. Yes, there is room to sign up and get on stage. I have a couple of spots left. As in the past, we will request munchies to share from all attendees, and we will supply the pop.

The **Junior High Retreat** is planned as well and will be **March 16 and 17**. We will have a youth lock-in at the church, do Kids Against Hunger as a servant project, and do the WOW Zone for fellowship. This is for 6th-9th grades and is a great outing. Leah and I will stay awake until midnight AGAIN. (They all want to go to bed earlier, but we won't let them!) Yes, 9th graders, that is not a misprint -YOU get to go twice! I will

put the sign-up sheet in the office (it has been up in the confirmation area until now). (Parents, all you have to do to be my favorite parents is to volunteer for any of these events as chaperones.) We have other things planned, but we ran out of time. Take a close look at Fat Tuesday and some other fundraising events we are promoting to go to New Orleans in the summer. (I really like this job!!) See you in church. ~ Lance

House of Bread 2012

Friday, February 17, from 7-9 p.m.
What more can you ask for?? Entertainment, good friends, lots of laughs, and good wholesome fun! Don't be on the outside missing the best of 2012. Bring the best munchies in your recipe box and prepare yourself for a good time. Do you have an act?? Call Lance and get on the schedule.

Who: 6th-8th Graders **What:** Jr. High Retreat
Where: Kids Against Hunger, WOW Zone, & Bethlehem Church
When: Friday, March 16-Saturday, March 17
Cost: \$10.00 -- **Sign up in the church office now!!**

Activity Line-Up:

We will be heading over to Kids Against Hunger to pack meals for those in need. Afterwards, we will enjoy some FUN at the WOW Zone! Enjoy a meal of pizza and do some bowling! We will finish the day off by coming back to the Attic (Youth Room) for a LOCK-IN! It will be an evening filled with munchies, fun, and fellowship.

FAT TUESDAY IS COMING TO BETHLEHEM - TUESDAY, FEB. 21!

Traditional New Orleans "Fat Tuesday" food, games, face painting, a silent auction, jazz music, & lots of FUN!!! You won't want to miss this! All funds raised will go towards the youth trip to the ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans in July. Help support our youth and have some Mardi Gras Fun! Dinner service will be from 5:00-7:30 p.m. in the dining room. Cost for adults is \$8; children under 5 eat for free.

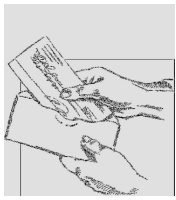


Valentine Cookie Sale and "Love Potion" Tea
Sunday, February 12, in the Narthex between services
Be good to your sweeties and buy them some sweets!
All proceeds go for the Youth Gathering in New Orleans.



Worship	Education	Faith
Christian Fellowship	Leadership	
Creative Expression	Welcoming New and Different Faces	
Local Stewardship-Serving Our Community	Trip Ministry	

Bethlehem Lutheran can provide you with a solid Christian foundation and Spiritual resources so you can share the good news of God's love... just by being you!



**FROM THE
ENDOWMENT
BOARD**

What is the *Endowment Board*? How does it work? We invite you to attend the Educational Forum on **Sunday, February 19**, in the Heritage Room. This will be an informative session so that everyone understands the rules and regulations of our Endowment Fund. The Board members will be present for you to meet them, and you will have a chance to get answers to any questions you may have.

Also, a reminder to any potential college students for fall, 2012: **All applications for scholarships must be turned in by May 1.** The number of applicants determines the amount we are able to award, so late applicants cannot be considered. Forms are in the office (in the clear bins on the wall by the library). Return them to the Endowment Board mailbox. Meanwhile, should you have a question, please contact Mavis Saxton, Chair; Robert Qualset, Treasurer; Susan Brown, Secretary; Barb Girtz, PR; or Audrey Gatchell.



**Abraham Lincoln's
Spirituality:
Faith versus Religion**

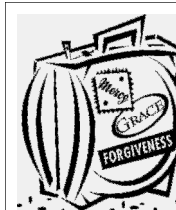
Abraham Lincoln was born on Sunday, February 12, 1809, in Hodgenville, Kentucky. Although Lincoln was exposed to religion early in his life (the first book he ever read was likely the Bible) on the Kentucky and Indiana frontiers, he never formally joined a church. For this, he was severely criticized by his political opponents, many of whom wore their religion on their sleeves. These critics branded Lincoln as an atheist and even an infidel for his refusal to endorse a particular Christian denomination. In reality, Lincoln possessed a strong faith in God, as demonstrated in his major speeches; he argued that the Almighty was too omnipotent to be contained in a human-made, religious construct. He also believed that too often religion was used to justify some of man's most brutal behavior—namely slavery. Lincoln's evolution from a religious skeptic to a man of faith during the course of his presidency is the subject of an Adult Forum being taught by Bethlehem member and Lincoln historian, Bryce Stenzel. It will be held on **Sunday, February 12**, during the education hour in the Heritage Room. The presentation will include video excerpts from the PBS acclaimed documentary, *God In America*. Please join us in the Heritage Room for this compelling and timely presentation.



A note about cancellations... In case of inclement weather on Sunday mornings, listen to KTOE 1420 AM/KTOE 102.7 FM for cancellation announcements for worship and church activities. In case of inclement weather on Wednesdays, our evening events will follow the cancellation decision of the Mankato Public Schools.



Starting on February 3, the office will be closed at 3:30 on Friday afternoons. Both pastors will be available by phone should there be an emergency requiring immediate pastoral care.



During Lent, as we focus on Christ's journey to the cross, let's also examine the journey of our lives. The first task when leaving on any adventure is packing. What have you placed in your bag? Are you weighed down with temptations, self-doubt, money worries, or relationship troubles? Have you overlooked any important items? Maybe your bag feels too empty for the challenges ahead. Remember to pack mercy, grace, and forgiveness. Thanks to Easter, we know that our journey in Christ continues, even when the road becomes difficult. So as you prepare for Lent, carry with you the hope made possible by Jesus' sacrifice on our behalf. — *Based on the "Journey to Hope" sermon series, www.rethinkchurch.org/lent.*



**Bethlehem
Women's Circles
Bible Study**

Pastor Jay will lead a Bible study for **all circles** on **Wednesday, February 15, 2012**, at 9:00 a.m. in Grounds for Joy. Invite your friends! Also save the date of **March 21**.

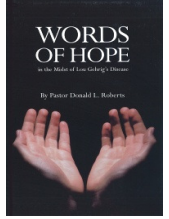


ECHO FOOD SHELF
In February, we'll be collecting personal care items.

DEVOTION/ADULT FORUMS/BIBLE STUDIES

A Devotional from Pastor Don Roberts

Pastor Don Roberts served as pastor at Bethlehem from 1989-1996. He was diagnosed with ALS/Lou Gehrig's Disease in 1995 and continues to be an inspiration of life and faith to our congregation. His devotionals are written with the aid of a letterboard and an assistant. Pastor Don's book is available in the church office ~ \$15 each.



“So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift.” ~ Matthew 5:23-24

Jesus deems reconciliation with others of the highest priority. Often when someone makes us angry, we either take revenge or snub them. What I often do is keep it inside while my blood pressure rises. I am wrong, as all of those responses are. Jesus says to reconcile with others. Here are a couple of things we can do to reconcile. First, give notice, as Walter Wangren said. We give notice, not to kick the person in the shins, but to pave the way for forgiveness. Second, forgive the

person. There are many ways to describe forgiveness. My favorite is giving up your right to get even. What if we have made someone else angry? Jesus is clear on this, too -- seek reconciliation with that person. Say you are sorry. Jesus will forgive us when we do something to others, but we don't have the peace of forgiveness until we reconcile. Jesus is clear -- seek reconciliation with everyone, but it is especially important to seek reconciliation within the church. We are brothers

and sisters in Christ. Jesus has brought us together because we need each other. We need each other to maintain our belief in Christ and to live our Christian faith. As a personal example, when I am able to attend worship instead of listening on the radio, I feel so much better. There is something about being with other believers in Christ. Seek reconciliation with everyone, especially within the church.

ADULT FORUMS -- 9:30 a.m. in the HERITAGE ROOM



- February 5** Health Ministry -- “Healthy Heart”
- February 12** Lincoln’s Spirituality: Faith vs. Religion -- presentation by Bryce Stenzel
- February 19** Endowment Committee update
- February 26** Issues at the State Capitol with local legislators

Prayers Wanted! Our Bethlehem prayer team invites you to join us twice a month for a time of prayer, learning, and ministry to God’s people at Bethlehem. The Prayer Team meets on the first Sunday of each month for a time of conversation, learning, and prayer. **We will meet after the services on the third Sunday of each month to pray with those who long for healing.** All are welcome -- tell Pastor Jay if you are interested.



Mom's Circle Bible Study

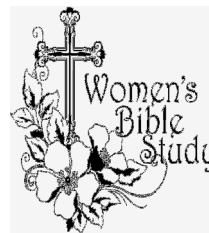
Mom's Circle is a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Our callings are to engage in ministry and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society, and the world. A group of moms with young children meets on the third Monday of every month during the year. **We will meet on Monday, February 20, at 6:30 p.m. at Amanda Klanderman's home.**



Men's Tuesday Noon Bible Study meets at 101 Main in the downtown City Center Hotel.

Wednesday Women's Bible Discussion Group

will meet on **Feb. 8 & 22 at 3:30 p.m.** in Grounds for Joy.



Come to Café Ambrosia!

Join us every Tuesday morning at 7:00 a.m. at Café Ambrosia, which is located at 1720 Commerce Drive in North Mankato.

Men & women are welcome.

Come and join us -- we have room for more!



A Musical Note from Laurie Rossow, Coordinator of Music

As I gaze out my window, snow is lightly falling onto the frozen lake. The brown grass is only sparsely covered with snow. Snow is one of God’s most amazing and beautiful creations. Did you know that no two snowflakes are alike? Each delicate snowflake is a work of art fashioned by God, the artist and creator. As a child, I remember folding page after page of white paper and carefully cutting on the folds to create my own snowflakes.

I am sure there are some of you missing a good old Minnesota winter. Christmas just didn’t seem the same without it being a white Christmas! The 50-degree temperatures in January were truly amazing. Now as the brown is gone and everything is covered with the bright white of snow, the

view out my window looks so fresh and clean. I find myself humming the refrain to a very old hymn, “Whiter Than Snow”. Unfortunately, that hymn is not in any of the hymnals we use in worship today, so I have decided to highlight this hymn in the article below, “Hymn History”.

Scripture has a lot to say about snow. There are 23 occurrences of the word “snow” in the Bible – 21 in the Old Testament and only two in the New Testament. These references speak of whiteness and purity and are used as descriptions of leprosy, the color of garments, prophecy, and the promises of forgiveness, to name a few. Snow teaches us about God and our relationship with Him.

Are you discouraged by something you have done or left undone? Are you worried that God will not forgive you? The Lord tells us that if we come to Him in confession, with repentance, He will take away our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. He washes away our sins, leaving us pure and white as the freshly fallen snow.

As we begin the season of Lent this month with Ash Wednesday on February 22, I pray that you will come to worship and start fresh. Read and reflect on this Bible passage from our lectionary for Ash Wednesday:

“Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.”

Psalm 51:7

Hymn History

“Whiter Than Snow”

James Nicholson, author of “Whiter Than Snow”, was a dedicated Christian who lived in Washington D.C., where he worked for the post office. Born in Ireland in the 1820s, he immigrated to America in the 1850s, originally settling in Philadelphia. His hymn, “Whiter Than Snow”, was published in 1872 and is based on Psalm 51:7, the prayer of repentance offered by King David after his sin with Bathsheba: “Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.”

William Gustavus Fischer, a Philadelphia musician, composed the music to the hymn “Whiter Than Snow”. He composed over two hundred hymn tunes, including the melody for “I Love to Tell the Story.” The splendor of snowfall is one of the beautiful pictures used in Scripture to

illustrate God’s forgiveness of sin. If you are suffering with guilt and regret, come and worship, request a fresh start, and experience God’s love and forgiveness this Lenten season.

*Pray or sing the words of
“Whiter Than Snow”:*

Verse 1: Dear Jesus, I long to be perfectly whole; I want Thee forever to live in my soul. Break down every idol, cast out every foe. Now wash me and I shall be whiter than snow. Whiter than snow, yes, whiter than snow, now wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.

Verse 2: Dear Jesus, look down from Thy throne in the skies and help me to make a complete sacrifice. I give up myself and whatever I know. Now wash me and I shall be whiter than snow. Whiter than snow, yes, whiter

than snow, now wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.

Verse 3: Dear Jesus, before You I patiently wait; Come now and within me a new heart create. To those who sought Thee, Thou never saidst “No”. Now wash me and I shall be whiter than snow. Whiter than snow, yes, whiter than snow, now wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.



SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES, LECTIONARY, & PARTICIPANTS

<u>Date</u>	<u>8:15 a.m.</u>	<u>10:45 a.m.</u>	<u>Special Events</u>
2/5	WOV #5 Chancel Choir	WOV #5 WOV Ensemble, Gather Choir	
2/12	ELW #8 Bethlehem Gospbells	Contemporary Bethlehem Gospbells	
2/19	ELW #1 Chancel Choir	ELW #1 Gather Choir	The Prayer Team invites you to pray with them in the sanctuary after both services.
2/26	ELW #10 Junior Gospbells	Contemporary Junior Gospbells	

Special Music for Wednesday Lenten Services in February ~ 6 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Wednesday, February 22 - Combined Adult Choirs Wednesday, February 29 - Junior Gospbells

LECTIONARY FOR FEBRUARY

<u>Date</u>	<u>First Reading</u>	<u>Psalm</u>	<u>Second Reading</u>	<u>Gospel</u>
2/5	Isaiah 40:21-31	147:1-11, 20	I Corinthians 9:16-23	Mark 1:29-39
2/12	2 Kings 5:1-14	30	I Corinthians 9:24-27	Mark 1:40-45
2/19	2 Kings 2:1-12	50:1-6	2 Corinthians 4:3-6	Mark 9:2-9
2/26	Genesis 9:8-17	25:1-10	I Peter 3:18-22	Mark 1:9-15

SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS FOR FEBRUARY

DATE	TIME	READER	USHER	COMMUNION ASSISTANTS				GREETERS	COMM. SET-UP	COFFEE
2/5	8:15 a.m.	James Erdman	5	Bruce Royer	Shirley Ruby	Betty Groth	Chuck Piehl	Kay Hubbard & Bob Ihrig	Eunice & Florence Sassenberg	Bruce & Sandy Abild
2/5	10:45 a.m.	Tom Sanger	6	Melissa Matthies	Wally Boyer	Brenda Boyer	Barb Girtz	Holly McCarron & Verona Roberts		
2/12	8:15 a.m.	Lan Evenson	7	Sandy Kuper	Frank Larsen	Melissa Matthies	Linda Engstrom	Gordy & Marilyn Larson	Bob & Ginger Erlandson	Paul & Lisa Hagen
2/12	10:45 a.m.	James Erdman	8					Jim & Marcia Nagel		
2/19	8:15 a.m.	Brad Groth	1	Lorraine Carpenter	Lowell Carpenter	Need Volunteer	Sally Burdick	Lavon & Les Mutch	Lavon & Sally Burdick	Jack Halvorson & Tim Heiser
2/19	10:45 a.m.	David Hageman	2	Kathryn Hanson	James Erdman	Jessica Trautman	Gordy Larson	Lori Ruthenbeck & Margaret Ryan		
2/26	8:15 a.m.	Shirley Ruby	3	Brad Groth	Betty Groth	Bruce Royer	Chuck Piehl	Lavon & Sally Burdick	Brad & Betty Groth	Brad & Betty Groth
2/26	10:45 a.m.	Betty Sanger	4			11		Lori Steen & Joan Stoffel		

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

720 South Second Street
Mankato, MN 56001

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Return Service Requested



Our Wednesday Lenten services will begin on **Ash Wednesday, February 22**. Service times are **noon and 6:00 p.m.**, and both Ash Wednesday services will be in the sanctuary. Starting on **February 29**, the noon services will be held in the chapel and the 6 p.m. services will be in the sanctuary. Suppers during Lent will be served from 5:00 - 5:50 p.m.

*“Return to the Lord, your God,
for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger,
and abounding in steadfast love.”*

