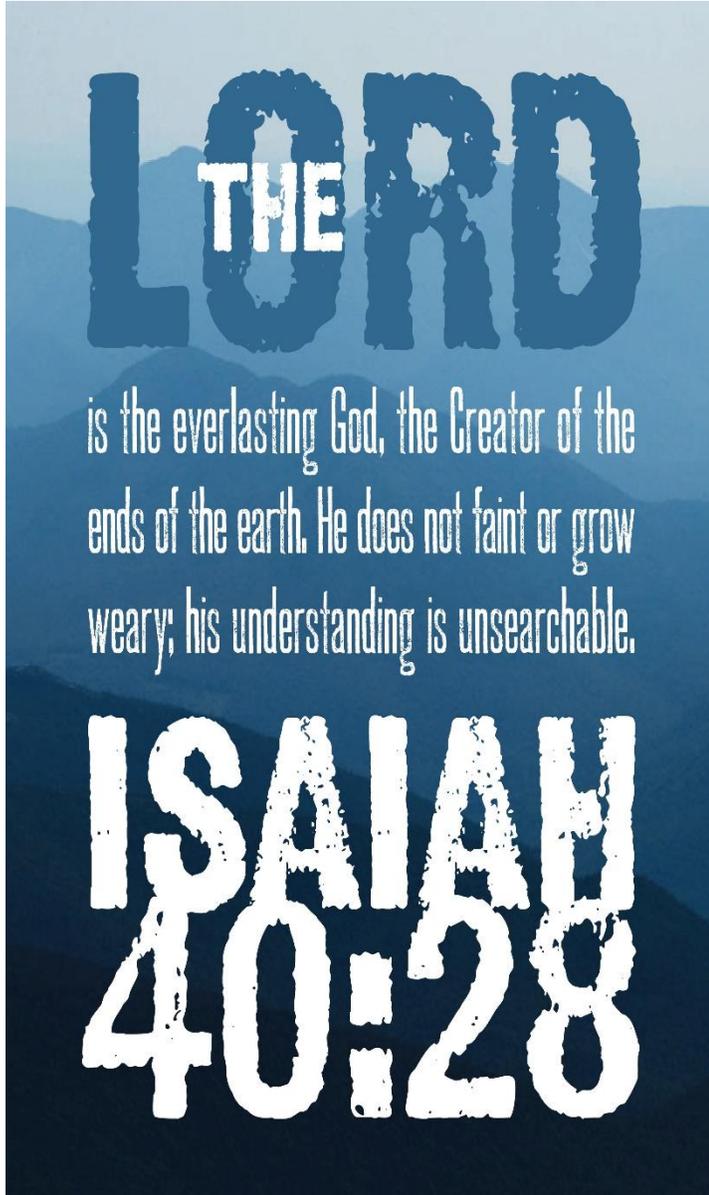


The Bethesda Beacon

Monthly Newsletter of Bethesda Evangelical Lutheran Church, Carlton MN
February 2021



In This Month's Beacon:

*Pastor Jim's Beacon Article

*Financial Update

*Member News

*Committee Updates

*Faith on the Go!

*And More!



Greetings! I remember a saying from my past. “Do not ask the Lord to guide your footsteps, if you are not willing to move your feet.” This may have been a professor, it may have been my Grandma, it may have been my wife. But it reminded me that I have some responsibility in bringing an outcome. If I am going to be a servant of the Lord, I had better be open to re-examining some of my deepest assumptions.

You may figure that God favors the same people you do, and despises the same people you do. But don't be so sure. There is something called mercy and something else called grace. By God's Grace, you get to reconsider your most rigid opinions.

Somewhere along the way we Christians picked up the notion that to change one's mind is a spiritual weakness. How much better, we reason, to stay absolutely consistent and to convince ourselves that we know perfect truth. If one knows the truth, there is no need to admit error or misjudgment. Why alter a perspective when we have all things figured out?

This is when we need to pay attention to the example of God. We think of God as unmovable. We like the steadiness of a fortress mentality governing the mind of God. We equate

the constancy of God with divine inflexibility. Yet throughout Hebrew scripture, God appears ready and willing to change God's mind (Exodus 32:14, Amos 7:3, Jeremiah 18:10, Jonah 3:10).

Why the divine change of mind?

There can only be one reason—love. Love has a way of breaking the chains of dogged certainty. It can soften the most calcified heart. It can loosen the concrete in which we have planted the feet of our own agenda. If God is love, it stands to reason that God is going to retain the privilege of changing God's mind, especially when mercy is at stake.

Who says we are meant to remain always just as we are? What if a shift of heart and mind can help us develop into the people we have yet to become?

Re-examining old assumptions requires some humility. It asks us to be open to new possibilities. It may even get our feet moving in new directions. On the best days, it will open up whole new worlds of love.

As we enter in to Lent this year, as we begin to heal after a long pandemic, this may be a good time to look into our belief systems and see what needs some work. These words, this advice,

still haunt me. "Do not ask the Lord to guide your footsteps, if you are not willing to move your feet."



The office will be closed
February 23rd-March 5th.

A Note from The Council

A potential buyer has asked if Bethesda would consider selling 1-1/2 Lots of the wooded area of our parking lot. Using the Plat map and with help from Larry Beckstrom we marked off the six lots that make up the parking lot. Each of the six lots are 40 ft x 150 ft. Lots #1 through #4 make up the open areas where we park. Lots #5 & #6 are the wooded area on the east end of the parking lot. We are looking at selling half of Lot #5 and all of Lot #6. We would keep the west half of lot #5 adjoined to lot #4 which is used in the summer when the picnic table/campfire are in use and where the snow is pushed when Harold plows in the winter.

The council discussed this proposal in November and at our December meeting voted unanimously to sell 1/2 of lot #5 and all of lot #6 (total of 60' x 150') for \$25,000 pending

congregation approval. The buyer would have the property surveyed to find exact property lines as we only paced them off and also to put up a privacy fence.

In trying to find the value of the property and a fair sale price we spoke to the Assessor's Office, to the City, a realtor and a Property Management Company. With land being scarce in Carlton right now we feel \$25,000 is a fair price and still enables us to be good stewards of the church's property.

It has been decided that there will be no in person Ash Wednesday service. Pastor Jim & Joel will be doing an online service.

With the help of a donation from the endowment committee we now have a brand new printer/copier! I am so grateful that this purchase was able to be made for the office! The old machine certainly held up and did a great job for many years, but it was time to update. The previous copier is now in the Vicar's office for anyone needing to make personal copies.

Bethesda Staff

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Synod's Site: www.nemnsynod.org



***“LIVE SIMPLY....SO
OTHERS MAY SIMPLY
LIVE.”***

Please continue to donate to the Salvation Army, our local food shelf, on Carlton Ave. in Cloquet. For the month of February our collection focus will be on rice. If you would prefer to give a monetary donation, this is also **greatly** appreciated as a donation like this can purchase much more with the resources the Salvation Army has access to. Thank you.

We will continue to have in house worship services on Sunday's at 9 a.m. Pastor Jim will be leading worship on 2 Sunday's each month. On the Sundays that he is not leading it will be led by the worship team with a recorded sermon from Pastor Jim and Joel will live stream all services on Facebook. Services can also be viewed on our website and YouTube.

**Office Hours Monday, Thursday
from 9 a.m.-11 a.m.**

If you need to get into the church and these times don't work for you, please call or email and we can set up a different time that will work.

Thank you!

Thrivent action cards have been used to buy items to fill ditty bags to give out to the homeless. These bags are currently by the coat rack inside the fifth street entrance to the church. If you encounter homeless as you're traveling about town or on trips out of the area please stop by the church and pick up as many bags as you think you would use.

Christmas –

A number of Thrivent Action cards were used to buy items for gift bags that were given to the residents of Interfaith Care Center and to the entire staff.

The Carlton Greenhouse also donated poinsettias to all the residents and the entire staff.

We pray that the residents and staff have a healthier and less stressful 2021.

Member News



Celebrating January Baptismal Birthdays

Carol Beckstrom, Johanna Bernu

Karter Davis, Kenzie Davis, Kenley Olson, Anna Kiehl, Lori Bunge, Alena Wallin, Cora Ostby, Gregory Emerson, Randy Schmitz, Amber Despot, Virginia Erikson, Brock House, Brianna Despot, Aurora Graves, Jaxon Graves, Madison Graves, Alice Kloepfer, Jennifer Redowl, Deborah Johnson, Carol Chalberg, & Rebecca House.

Christmas Baskets and we purchased \$2000 worth of SuperOne Gift cards with WELCA giving the additional \$220. In the past we have never received anywhere close to the \$1780 in donations for Christmas! Serving hearts know joy, and we also pray, our gratitude for their good work! Thank You!!!!



On January 31st we welcomed into the family of faith through the sacrament of Holy Baptism Nicole Kutzler.



Our deepest sympathy & prayers to Christy Wolvert, Amy Schwoch & Ben Talarico, Rod & Deb Davis & Gordy & Lil Davis & Renae House & all of their families. God's promises of resurrection bring comfort and hope in Christ the risen savior.

Thank you to the many hands who helped make this season a blessing with all of the preparations inside and out & for the donations for the Thanksgiving and Christmas gift cards. We received \$700 in donations for Thanksgiving Baskets and purchased \$800 worth of SuperOne Gift cards with WELCA giving the additional \$100 needed. We received \$1780 in donations for

Financial Update			
Year-to-date ending 12/31/2020			
	Actual	Budget	Over/(Under) Budget
Envelope giving	103052.82	103000.00	52.82
Non-pledged income	22123.04	10500.00	11623.04
TOTAL INCOME	125175.86	113500.00	11675.86
Salaries/Compensation	54824.01	93646.00	(38821.99)
General Office Expenses	8793.10	8974.00	(180.90)
Utilities	9933.69	10381.00	(447.31)
Other Expenses	1207.19	1305.00	(97.81)
Benevolence Expenses	1030.53	1030.00	0.53
Evangelism Expenses	0.00	0.00	0.00
Property Expenses	1269.16	1470.00	(200.84)
Social Ministry	324.00	350.00	(26.00)
Worship Expenses	7729.09	2040.00	5689.09
CYFM Expenses	1533.13	3435.00	(1901.87)
TOTAL EXPENSES	86643.90	122631.00	(35987.10)
Net Income	38531.96	(9131.00)	47662.96
Non-pledged income includes Loose offering, Special Services, Meatball supper, Sunday School, Interest Income, etc.			
Memorial money is not included in any of the figures above.			

Children, Youth, Family & Education

During the holidays, 37 gift kits went out to Bethesda teens. These kits included a zip lock baggy filled with

assorted goodies and a letter explaining the contents' significance. The teens were challenged to utilize their "gifts" to create something beautiful that represented who they were.

Copy of the letter that went out with the gift kits:

Dear Bethesda teen,

We wanted to send you a small gift to remind you that even during these difficult times you have your own personal tool kit to get through. The contents of this gift kit includes symbols of your own internal gifts. Hold these close as a gentle reminder that you are strong and resilient even on the worst of days.

- Clear plastic baggie- don't be afraid to be "transparent" and honest when you are having a hard time and need help.
- Ornament hanger- be proud of who you are and "hang up" your true self for others to see.
- Button- even the smallest piece of a shirt holds the outfit together, in the same sense even when you feel small you are significant.
- Cotton ball- you never stop learning, don't be afraid to step back and "absorb" the world around you.

- Sticker- when you set your mind to something, have determination, "stick" with it!
- Ribbon- it's okay to celebrate your victories, even if it's only a participation ribbon.
- Candy cane- don't be afraid of change, new beginnings can bring a "minty fresh" feeling.
- Create- By putting together your gifts, you can create something beautiful. Use the materials from this kit (some or all, you choose) and items in your home to create an ornament that you feel best represents you. Then share a picture of your creation with our team!

We miss seeing all of your faces in church and look forward to the days ahead when we all can meet in person again! You remain in our prayers during these tough times. Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Sincerely the CYFED team,
Wendy, Linda, JoAnn, Pastor Jim, and Robbi



Alex Despot took the Stewardship Challenge! He doubled \$40 by choosing to support a Salvation Army kettle at a Super One location and used \$120 to buy Christmas gifts for a family who is rebuilding their lives after losing their home to a fire.



Three of Bethesda's confirmed youth took up the Stewardship Challenge this Advent Season to take \$100 and spread some joy or necessities around in our communities. They increased their monies or utilized a local business which increased Bethesda's contribution to their cause/causes of choice by an additional \$50. Super proud of these youth who reflected God's love back onto our communities!

Noah Olsen: I was asked if I would be interested in participating in a Stewardship Challenge of giving to a cause that I believed in. With the first money I purchased cat and dog food, cat litter, and some treats and donated to the Cloquet Fire Department's Pet Food Drive. I chose this because I thought it could help families who are struggling at this time. Since I bought the food from a local store I was given additional funds to donate to another cause. With these funds I decided to give the to the B&B Food Train for the same reason.





Hi!! My name is Haley Ableiter & I was very proud to take up the Stewardship Challenge. I chose a family who needed a little extra Christmas help & joy this year. I was able to raise extra money from what the church gave me & ended up getting over 16 presents for this family. I was proud to be able to put a smile on this family's face for the holidays!! Thank you to all who donated!

CYFED would like to thank everyone for the cards, homemade cards, colored pictures and door decorations created for Inter-Faith. We were able to send 111 Christmas cards and 54 pictures, decorations and homemade cards for the residents. With your support and kindness we were able to make their Christmas a little brighter.
Thank you!
CYFED Committee

Call Committee

The call committee has received five applications since posting our Ministry Site Profile last April. One application is currently in review by the committee, three were rejected due to qualifications, and one had progressed through the interview stage but the candidate accepted a position at another church. We have recently asked the synod office to expand our search criteria to try to get a larger applicant pool. That, combined with the next batch of spring seminary graduates, we hope to find more opportunities in the near future.

Faith on the Go!

Season of Epiphany - Let Your Light so Shine!

Community Lights

This week go randomly be a light in your community! Here are some ideas:

- leave change in a Ziploc baggie on a pop or candy machine for someone else to buy a treat
- volunteer at a new place

- take books to a hospital or other place where they could be used
- take small gifts to a little kids park for whoever is there
- go to a big parking lot and bring all the carts back for others
- leave diapers and wipes on a changing table in a restroom for someone else

Pray

Spirit of God, teach us to be gracious, loving and forgiving everyone we meet. Teach us to be grateful, giving thanks for the good gifts in our lives. Teach us to be generous, giving to others out of our own wants and needs. Amen.

Connect

Talk about your highs and lows for the day!

Bible

Matthew 5:13-20 – Salt and Light/The Law and the Prophets

Day 1

Matthew 5:13

Make a list of your favorite salty foods. What would they be like without salt? What does it mean for us to be the salt of the world? What happens when your food is too salty? Can we be too salty in the world?

Day 2

Matthew 5:14-15

Re-write verse 15 in your own words. Why do you think the idea of a light being covered or placed on a stand is such a powerful image for us?

Day 3

Matthew 5:16

Try to describe light to each other. Is it easy or difficult? In the same way, is it easier to show someone your faith through your actions or to try to describe it?

Day 4

Matthew 5:17-18

What are laws and why are they important? Scribes and Pharisees accused Jesus of wanting to abolish the law. Why would life without laws be difficult or even dangerous?

Day 5

Matthew 5:19:20

Read Matthew 7:12. What do you think Jesus is encouraging us to do?

Bless

May the Holy Spirit descend upon you.

For additional weekly devotionals go to:

<http://faithformationjourneys.org/>



VLM Events:

Summer Camp Registration is now OPEN!

This coming summer we will be soaking in WILD GRACE as we gather together around the campfire at Camp Hiawatha and Camp Vermilion. With new Covid protocols in place, all of our usual summer camp programs are scheduled but our capacity will be reduced which means space is limited- sign up today by calling 1-800-331-5148 or vlmcamps.org.

Paddle Building Workshop

Participants can create a bent shaft canoe paddle or a stand up paddle board paddle.

The next paddle building retreat is April 16-18, 2021 at Camp Vermilion

This weekend long class includes four sessions during which you will complete your own **bent shaft canoe or stand-up paddle board paddle.**

You will craft your own paddle, from gluing the wood blanks to a finished work of art.

Bring your partner, friends, or family and spend a weekend in the northwoods, with a **beautiful piece to take home at the end.** Parent/child or grandparent/grandchild participants can build a family heirloom together!

Cost: \$250/person. A \$50 *non-refundable deposit is due with your registration. If two people work on the same paddle, it is an additional \$50 for the second person to cover meals and lodging.*

Includes: All materials and tools needed, instruction, lodging, and Friday dinner through Sunday brunch.

Space is limited! To register, please call the camp office at (800) 331-5148 or vlmcamps.org to fill out and send a **retreat registration form.**



February 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2 9am Making Mats for the Homeless	3 5:45pm 7 th -10 th Grade Confirmation	4 1pm Jam Group 2pm Children, Youth, Family & Ed. Meeting	5 11am Men's Bible Study	6
7 5 th Sunday after Epiphany 9am Worship	8	9 9am Making Mats for the Homeless 4:30pm Worship Committee Meeting 5:30pm Council Meeting	10 5:45pm 7 th -10 th Grade Confirmation	11	12 11am Men's Bible Study	13
14 Valentine's Day Transfiguration of Our Lord 9am Worship	15 President's Day Beacon Deadline 1pm Book Club Basement in Use ~ Jane Joki	16 9am Making Mats for the Homeless	17 Ash Wednesday 5:45pm 6 th -10 th Grade Mentorship	18 1pm Jam Group	19 11am Men's Bible Study	20
21 1 st Sunday in Lent 9am Worship	22	23 9am Making Mats for the Homeless	24 5:45pm 6 th -10 th Grade Mentorship	25	26 11am Men's Bible Study	27
28 2 nd Sunday in Lent 9am Worship						

Bethesda Lutheran Church
204 5th Street
P.O. Box 210
Carlton, MN 55718

Sunday Worship

9:00am

In House

And Online

*You can also view the Beacon
on our website at*

bethesdacarlton.org or if you

would like to have a copy

mailed or emailed to you please

contact the office.

