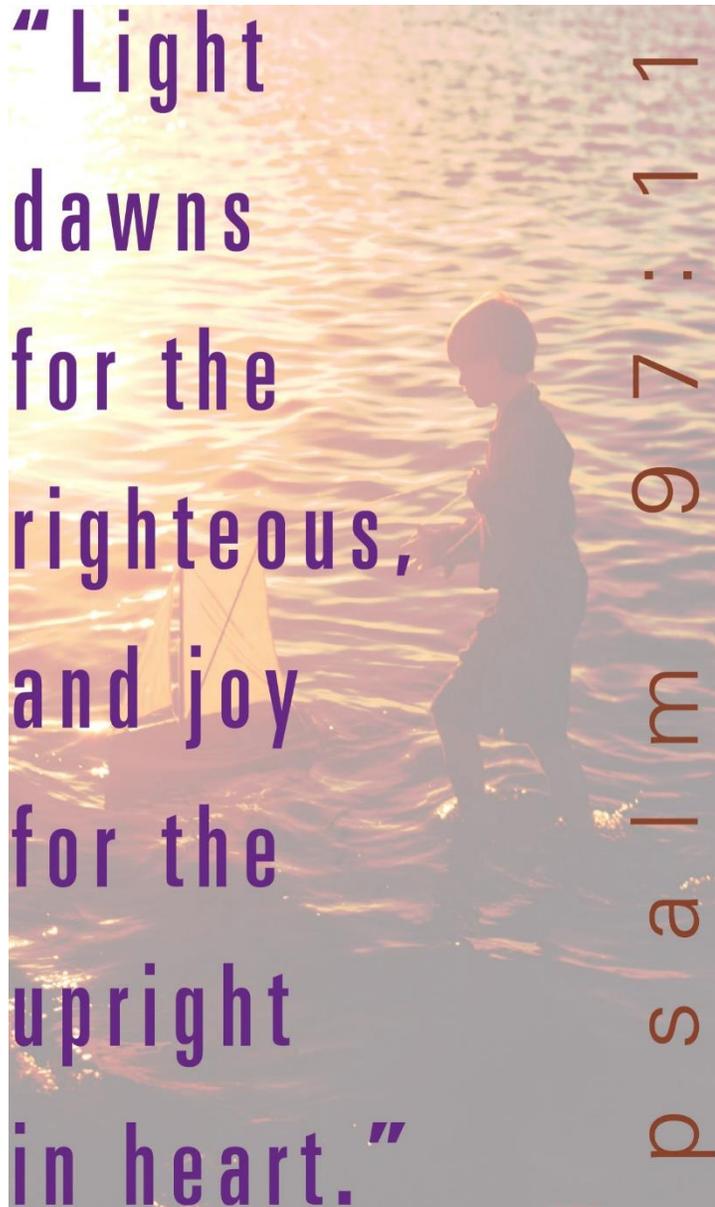


The Bethesda Beacon

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



In This Month's Beacon:

*Pastor Jim's Beacon Article

*Financial Update

*Member News

*Committee Updates

*Faith on the Go!

*And More!



Greetings in the Lord! The other night my friend Louie had a t-shirt on that was from Gettysburg. It brought back memories from when I had visited there a few summers ago. I remembered sitting on Little Round Top as the sun was about to set. I had heard the story of the bloodiest battle of the Civil War at Gettysburg, and I wondered how humankind could do things like this to each other. Go to war. Kill. Maim.

Later that night in the Town Square there was a community band preparing to give a concert. The musicians were busy tuning up their instruments or talking to one another, or waiting quietly. But when the conductor stood on the podium and rapped his directors wand for attention, everyone stopped and looked up. The leader would not begin until he had the attention of all the players. Good music requires attention.

“The eyes of all rest upon you,” says the Psalmist. That is a beautiful description of how we are to live in our relationship to our Creator—eyes forward, intent on our Conductor, our leader. It is easy to get distracted. . . easy to wander to petty and unimportant things. After all, we live in a broken world, and we aren’t perfect. Too often we Children of God spend time with petty details and bicker over minor matters. But, if one

would play in God’s symphony orchestra, the order is simple and strict; eyes to God, hands posed to follow His will. We are to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. And the result will be beautiful music.

Let us together work and play, serve and love that we can be that orchestra that brings beautiful music to our Father’s world. This Lenten season I invite and remind you—keep your eyes on Jesus.

I am on the journey with you!

Pastor Jim

Due to Covid, the Annual Meeting has been rescheduled for April 11th following the worship service. If there is a significant drop in COVID cases and restrictions are lifted there is the possibility the meeting could be moved up into March. We will continue to monitor the situation.



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

Bethesda Staff

Jim Raisanen, Interim Pastor

218-838-3690

Office 218-384-4501

Bobbie McCorison, Secretary,
Financial Secretary

Stacy Colich, Treasurer 218-393-7775

stacycolich@yahoo.com

Nita Davis, Bookkeeper/Accountant

515-890-1235

Nita@davisbooksandtax.com

Alice Kloepfer, Custodian

Cathy Dale, Accompanist

Bethesda Evangelical Lutheran Church

204 5th St – PO Box 210

Carlton MN 55718

Email: bethesda55718@msn.com

Website: www.bethesdacarlton.org

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 March our collection focus will be macaroni and cheese. 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.

Thrivent \$250.00 Action Team Money

Thank you to the four Thrivent members who applied for and received the \$250.00 seed monies for each project. The below projects used the \$1000.00 Seed monies to benefit our Community.

To purchase winter gloves and socks for the Youth Crisis Shelter in Cloquet.

To purchase fabric/thread to create school backpacks for third world countries –as part of the community Gods Works Our Hands

To purchase socks for the homeless/Chum

To purchase socks, winter hats, mittens, scarves and gloves for a local school

\$250.00 VISA CARD

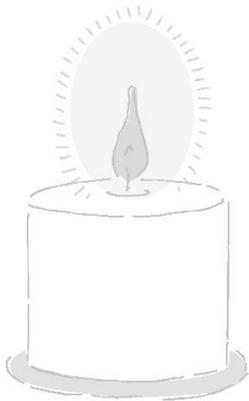
Those congregation members who have a Thrivent product can apply for 2 Thrivent Action Cards a year. Each card is worth \$250. That means that each Thrivent member is able to use \$500 a year toward an activity that will benefit the community or an individual. Your Thrivent agent will help you apply for these cards. Just give them a call and they will take the information and help with the online process. If you would like to use the computer at the church please call: Linda Newlon at 218-879-6274

Men's Bible Study has resumed on Friday's at 11 a.m. No treats will be served but you may bring your own coffee. Please wear a mask.

**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!



Dedication of our new electric Eternal candle was held on February 21, 2021.

The candle was purchased with money that was given in memory of Marv Durkee's sister Rosalie.

Marv also made the candle stand. The Bethesda congregation would like to thank Marv and his family for this beautiful gift.

Lent & Easter:

*Mid-week Lenten services are going to be online only. You can view them on our Facebook page or website. This year's theme is "*Silent Witness.*" They will be available on Wednesday's each week.

*Those who would like to bring lilies or other plants to decorate the sanctuary for Easter Sunday can bring them to the church during holy week. That week Bobbie will be in the office on Monday and Thursday from 9 to noon and Thursday evening from 3-5. It would be best to call before you come to be sure that the doors will be open.

Member News



Celebrating March Baptismal Birthdays

Tanner Anderson, Brock Peterson, Jason Goad, Bridger McCorison, Karson Davis, Kennedy Davis, Darlene Godbout, Cecelia Moench, Karen Johnson, Deanna Wallin, Audrey Lokken, Jared Kelley, Jason Peterson, Jude Holden, Paul Sell, Harlow Lekander-Karsiko, Ruth Olson, Amy Schwoch, Jayden Swanson & Rollin Martini.



Our deepest sympathy & prayers to the family of Marcie Peterson & Jordan Tribby. God's promises of resurrection bring comfort and hope in Christ the risen savior.

Children, Youth, Family & Education

Valentines have been sent to Pre-K through the 6th grade. We are trying to keep in touch with the kids until we can meet again in person.

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.			

Northeastern MN Synod News

Online Reflections

By Pastor Amy Odgren

The Very Present Moment of Lent

For some of us – especially those who have been on the hamster wheel of providing worship, youth group, and Christian education experiences in new and creative digital ways these past few months, it is hard to believe that we are entering into the season of Lent already. The word “Lent” means “long spring days.” It commemorates the forty days Jesus spent in the desert where he was led (or “driven,” “thrown” – or “hurled” as some translations put it) shortly after his baptism. Lent exists to prepare us to experience the central story of the universe and the defining story of our lives: the death and resurrection of Jesus.

We are going into Lent, as if Lent were something to fall into, a vessel. Victor Turner, the celebrated anthropologist, said that on a pilgrimage the whole of geography takes on symbolic meaning. We begin a pilgrimage on Ash Wednesday, a journey in which each step we take matches one in a story. It’s like falling into a world, in which each movement reflects a movement elsewhere; each step is matched by another in a parallel dance.

However, on Ash Wednesday, all of time collapses into the present moment as the cross is traced on our foreheads – a cross of ash which reveals our dusty sinfulness and the stark

remembrance of our future mortality. That same cross reveals the cross of salvation won for us in the death and resurrection of Christ – the very promise to us of eternal life into the future. The Dalai Lama said, “There are only two days in the year that nothing can be done. One is called yesterday and the other day is called tomorrow, so today is the right day to love, believe, do, and mostly live.” The Apostle Paul says it another way, “See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation” 2 Corinthians 6:2.

Lent is a journey toward the cross. And toward a tomb, and the mysterious, unending joy of those who found that tomb empty. The goal is to bring its geography, its story into our very selves, to bend beneath it, to allow the soul to find its narrative within its unfolding story.

On Ash Wednesday, we enter the season of Lent – and we stand at a threshold of “now.” We can boldly claim the promises of Christ already received, yet during this season, we will examine just how much we continue to need God’s love and mercy on account of our sin and brokenness. We are assured of our certain promised future, while simultaneously being release from our past. Lent is a time of the holy “now,” while we move from ashes to the burning fire of the Paschal candle brightly lighting our darkened

world and as we celebrate our Lord’s resurrection and see the light of Christ before us.

I’ve come to see Lent as a chance to rewrite our own stories. The essence of healing, perhaps the essence of what we mean by resurrection, is to take the chaotic and traumatic events of our lives and rewrite them into a new story, a new life. The resurrected Jesus offers new life and promise out of the chaos and trauma of death. But before a new story can be rewritten, the old one needs to be examined. Where is your treasure? Where is your heart? Where are you putting your time and attention? Where is God’s activity right before us and how is it that we’re responding to God’s incredible grace, mercy and love in the present? Before we can put our hearts and our treasure in right relation, we have to know where our hearts and our treasure are now. Truth chases us during Lent. Transparency is all around us in Lent.

I remember once when I signed up to help take care of a friend of mine who was dying, I had imagined sitting in a hospital room, quietly reading a book while my friend peacefully slumbered. Instead, what came to pass was that I sat in my friend’s living room, bone tired, shoveling pizza and Chinese take-out food into my mouth, my own house strewn with dirty laundry and a full cat-litter box. I had not imagined that I wanted my friend to hurry up

and die. In short, I was the same messed up woman – not the person of my imagination. But in that time, I learned that everything is God’s: my messed up self, my dirty laundry, my harrowing inability to be perfect for my friend. But the important lesson I learned through this is that everything is God’s: shame, depression, egotism, anger, pain, arrogance, betrayal...all of it! Because God is inside everything. Findable in everything. God is ever present even with a bone-tired women with dirty laundry and an overflowing cat litter box and with a friend dying slowly of cancer... and with Christ nailed in humiliation to a cross - and in the glorious plan for promised salvation through the resurrection of Jesus.

That is why, in Lent, we can examine all that is within us and bring anything to God. To see what the story is *now*. To find out where our hearts are. And that will mean some pain, yes? It’s not easy to face our own darkness, our foibles and inner most feelings and secrets...our own ashes. We are all going to come up short, believe me. As a friend said once, when she wanted to take a day off from work, “I’m just going to call in ugly.” We’re all going to have to call in ugly during Lent. That’s why we journey together within our faith communities and around people who know us and love us.

The season of Lent urges us to live in the present moment, where our sinfulness meets God’s grace in the cross of Christ – grace assured, with no fear of our past and no worry about our future. The truth that defines how we live the gift of faith is that we must live it now, in the present, before our earthly dust puts on eternal life. There is no time like now to explore and define who we are, marked by the cross of Life.

As you enter into the very present moments of the season of Lent, perhaps you will be invited into spiritual disciplines. Sharing with those in need, prayer, fasting, pausing to recall others, reaching out with compassion to those who need a visit, or any other multitude of ways that can attune focus to the present moment – the invitation of the gospel frees us from the never-ending and self-centering cycle of the past and future by pushing us into the grace we know in this present time. Here is a list of [40 Ideas For Keeping a Holy Lent \(Word\)](#) [40 Ideas for Keeping a Holy Lent \(PDF\)](#). Maybe, just maybe some of these practices might help you to see that Christ has already brought us this far by grace and releases us from our future worries. We are free to rest and serve in the present moment until we are filled to overflowing with love.

Faith on the Go!

Cleaning up the Temple and Ourselves

Jesus is upset in the story. No, Jesus is angry. It is one of the very few times that we see Jesus react in such a physical and emotional way. He chases people out of the temple with a makeshift whip! What stirred him to this level of anger? People defiling sacred space - people turning the temple into a place to make money. By extension - people limiting access to God to only those who have the money to buy their way in. That would be enough, but the story takes a turn at the end. Jesus hints at his coming death and resurrection. In this moment, Jesus makes all of us into the same kind of space as the temple. Jesus tells us that our bodies - whatever condition they are in - are sacred and should be treated as sacred. Now tie these two things together. Everyone should have access to the sacred whether they are rich or poor, happy or sad, healthy or sick, and our bodies are sacred. How can we work to create better equality of good and healthy food in our communities? How can we create more sources of clean, fresh water for people to drink? How can we work to provide access to medical care for people who need it? If you are lucky

enough to have a strong and healthy body, how can you use it to make our communities stronger and healthier? Faith on the Go God has created you for good things. John 2:13-22—Jesus Cleanses the Temple Looking Back . .

Pray

Holy God, we give you thanks for our bodies, and for the food and water that nourishes them. Keep us mindful of those who do not have enough food or safe water to keep their bodies healthy. Amen.

Connect

Where did you see God today? Where did you need God?

Bible

John 2:13-22—Jesus Cleanses the Temple

Day 1

John 2:13-14

What do you expect to find when you arrive at your church? What would offend or anger you? What would make you glad?

Day 2

John 2:15-16

What does it feel like to have your trust and faith bought? Where in our modern world do you feel like you are being bought and sold?

Day 3

John 2:17-18

They ask him, “Why are you doing this!” What would you say if someone came into your church and started telling you that everything you are doing is wrong?

Day 4

John 2:19-20

How much would you trust the person who is destroying your house if they said they would rebuild it? What in your life have you watched get ruined or destroyed? Were you able to rebuild it?

Day 5

John 2:21-22 What part of your body do you pray that God could restore?

Bless

God has created you for good things.

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.**



Family Rejuve - March 5th, 6th, and 7th. Camp Hiawatha invites you and your family to spend a day, a night or the whole weekend playing in God's great northwoods. Contact us and let us know how you want to engage - make this a weekend that provides what your family seeks. Check out our website for additional information and to register. www.vlmcamps.org/familyrejuve

Cost: \$100/adult, \$75/youth (ages 4-17) for the full retreat (pro rating available for shorter stays)

Full retreat cost includes 5 meals (Fri-Sun), 2 nights lodging, snacks, and on-site activities outdoor activities. (Does not include equipment rental, ski passes or activity fees off-site).

Camp Fun Day -

Camp Vermilion on March 13th

Duluth on March 21 (location TBA)

Join us for a two-hour program filled with sledding, broomball, campfires devotion, snacks and more. This is a free-will donation event. You can come early, stay late or just come for the two-hour program. Check out the website for more information

- www.vlmcamps.org/camp-fun-day

March 2021



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2 9am Making Mats for the Homeless	3 5:45pm 2 nd Grade Holy Communion Classes 6 th -10 th Grade Mentorship	4 2pm Children, Youth, Family & Ed. Meeting	5 11am Men's Bible Study	6
7 3 rd Sunday in Lent 9am Worship	8	9 9am Making Mats for the Homeless 4:30pm Worship Committee Meeting 5:30pm Council Meeting	10 5:45pm 2 nd Grade Holy Communion Classes 6 th -10 th Grade Mentorship	11	12 11am Men's Bible Study	13
14 4 th Sunday in Lent 9am Worship	15 Beacon Deadline	16 9am Making Mats for the Homeless	17 St. Patrick's Day 5:45pm 2 nd Grade Holy Communion Classes 6 th -10 th Grade Mentorship	18	19 11am Men's Bible Study	20
21 5 th Sunday in Lent 9am Worship	22 1pm Fellowship Hall in Use~ Book Club	23 9am Making Mats for the Homeless	24 5:45pm 2 nd Grade Holy Communion Classes 6 th -10 th Grade Mentorship	25	26 11am Men's Bible Study	27 Holy Communion Retreat
28 Palm Sunday 9am Worship First Communion	29	30 9am Making Mats for the Homeless	31			

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.*

