



**Bethany Lutheran Outlook**  
**February 2021**

Serving God, Community, and Individuals

**TO YOU, O LORD,  
I LIFT UP  
MY SOUL.**



**PSALM 25:1**



## PASTOR'S REFLECTIONS

It was during the third week of Lent last year that the effects of the coronavirus really started to be felt in this country. College students were sent home, public schools started to go online, sports leagues began cancelling games, the size of public gatherings was limited until finally, many states, including Michigan, introduced formal stay at home orders. Those orders pretty much shut everything down, including church; no in person Sunday services, no mid-week services, eventually no Holy Week or Easter services.

This month, on February 17<sup>th</sup>, another Lenten season begins and eleven months later, things are still not close to anything resembling normal; COVID continues to have a pretty firm hold on things. A year ago, I remember there were a few voices saying that this was something that would not resolve itself quickly, that it would take more than a few weeks, more even than a few months. I dare say though, that most of us would not have wanted to believe that when Lent began in 2021, many restrictions would still be in place. In particular, few would have thought that for most churches, some form of remote would still be the primary mode of worship, in fact, in many cases it continues to be the only mode of worship.

Here at Bethany, things are a little different as Lent begins this year; we continue to take small, cautious steps toward a semblance of normal. While remote is still the best means of worship for many of you, along with those pre-recorded Sunday services we have been and continue to offer in person worship for a limited number of people following social distance and masking protocols. So far, our in-person numbers have been safe and manageable. Still, until significantly larger gatherings are allowed, I would encourage many of you to continue with our online offerings.

In addition to the Sunday services, we will have an in-person Ash Wednesday service at 6:30 on February 17<sup>th</sup> with mid-week Evening Prayer services at the same time on the following Wednesdays during Lent, all with limited attendance. These services will not be pre-recorded and posted. However, during Lent, we will also be experimenting with live streaming and depending on how that progresses, it's possible that some of the Evening Prayer services will also be available that way. Stay tuned for news on that. Decisions on Holy Week services will be made later as everything is contingent on the virus and on what the health department and the governor allow.

As I write this, despite an awful beginning to 2021 with the attack on the Capitol, there are signs of hope that this will be a better year. Distribution of the vaccine has begun and while it will take a while, as more people are vaccinated one would hope that the spread of the virus will be controlled and restrictions will gradually ease. In addition to hope for improvement in the coronavirus situation, one would also hope for an end, or at least a change in what President Biden called an “uncivil war” in this country. One would hope that there are enough reasonable people across the political spectrum, both elected officials and ordinary citizens, who can set aside partisan priorities and bickering and work for the common good. One would hope.

As Christians we continue to say and to trust that God has been at work in all that has gone on and that new life will come out of brokenness. We continue to say that, even though what we sometimes really want to say are words resembling those of Psalm 13, “How long, O Lord? Will you forget us forever?” It is OK to express that kind of lament as we move into a second year of living in a pandemic, remembering that, properly understood, such lament is an act of faith expressing hope and trust that God is able to change things.

Maybe it’s just me imposing my own feeling on to others, but I sense that many people, maybe most people are or have been experiencing varying degrees of depression and discouragement. Because of that, it’s important that we continue to be mindful of others and to provide comfort and encouragement however we can. Sometimes it’s a struggle, but together, with the help of God, we’ll make it. Despite discouragement, we are always people of hope.

Pastor Geier



HOPE

**Creator, I rest in your strength that never wearies;**

**I trust in your understanding that reaches beyond all my searching.**

(Based on Isaiah 40:28.)

## DAILY LECTIONARY



*The foundational premise of this set of daily readings is their relationship to the Sunday lectionary. The readings are chosen so that the days leading up to Sunday (Thursday through Saturday) prepare for the Sunday readings. The days flowing out from Sunday (Monday through Wednesday) reflect upon the Sunday readings.*

“The Bible is the cradle wherein Christ is laid.”  
—Martin Luther

### February 2021

1 Psalm 35:1-10                      Numbers 22:1-21                      Acts 21:17-26  
2 Psalm 35:1-10                      Numbers 22:22-28                      1 Corinthians 7:32-40

#### Readings for Presentation of Our Lord

Malachi 3:1-4    Psalm 84    Hebrews 2:14-18    Luke 2:22-40

3 Psalm 35:1-10                      Jeremiah 29:1-4                      Mark 5:1-20  
4 Psalm 147:1-11, 20c                      Proverbs 12:10-21                      Galatians 5:2-15  
5 Psalm 147:1-11, 20c                      Job 36:1-23                      1 Corinthians 9:1-16  
6 Psalm 147:1-11, 20c                      Isaiah 46:1-13                      Matthew 12:9-14

#### 7 Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 40:21-31    Psalm 147:1-11, 20c    1 Corinthians 9:16-23    Mark 1:29-39

8 Psalm 102:12-28                      2 Kings 4:8-17, 32-37                      Acts 14:1-7  
9 Psalm 102:12-28                      2 Kings 8:1-6                      Acts 15:36-41  
10 Psalm 102:12-28                      Job 6:1-13                      Mark 3:7-12  
11 Psalm 50:1-6                      1 Kings 11:26-40                      2 Corinthians 2:12-17  
12 Psalm 50:1-6                      1 Kings 14:1-18                      1 Timothy 1:12-20  
13 Psalm 50:1-6                      1 Kings 16:1-7                      Luke 19:41-44

#### 14 Transfiguration of Our Lord

2 Kings 2:1-12    Psalm 50:1-6    2 Corinthians 4:3-6    Mark 9:2-9

15 Psalm 110:1-4                      Exodus 19:7-25                      Hebrews 2:1-4  
16 Psalm 110:1-4 Job 19:23-27 1 Timothy 3:14-16

**17 Ash Wednesday**

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17    Psalm 51:1-17    2 Corinthians 5:20-b — 6:10  
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

18 Psalm 25:1-10                      Daniel 9:1-14                      1 John 1:3-10  
19 Psalm 25:1-10                      Daniel 9:15-25a                      2 Timothy 4:1-5  
20 Psalm 25:1-10                      Psalm 32                      Matthew 9:2-13

**21 First Sunday in Lent**

Genesis 9:8-17    Psalm 25:1-10    1 Peter 3:18-22    Mark 1:9-15

22 Psalm 77                      Job 4:1-21                      Ephesians 2:1-10  
23 Psalm 77                      Job 5:8-27                      1 Peter 3:8-18a  
24 Psalm 77                      Proverbs 30:1-9                      Matthew 4:1-11  
25 Psalm 22:23-31                      Genesis 15:1-6, 12-18                      Romans 3:21-31  
26 Psalm 22:23-31                      Genesis 16:1-6                      Romans 4:1-12  
27 Psalm 22:23-31                      Genesis 16:7-15                      Mark 8:27-30

**28 Second Sunday in Lent**

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16    Psalm 22:23-31    Romans 4:13-25    Mark 8:31-38

**Lenten Hope**



Lent is an occasion for us to journey with Christ ... into tomorrow. For you never walk with Christ long but what the dawn breaks, the sun shines and hope breaks through.

—C. Neil Straight



Lent has begun: a time for both walking with Jesus toward the cross and being strengthened in our faith and knowledge of God. Welcome to your Lenten journey.

**Ash Wednesday Worship Service February 17 6:30pm**

This year's service which includes Communion and the imposition of ashes will be done safely following COVID guidelines. The imposition of ashes will be done safely with a Q-tip.



**Midweek Lenten Services Wednesdays 6:30pm**

These Evening Prayer services will include Pastor Geier's reflection on the Psalm of the day as designated by the Daily Lectionary.

**Repent – a Worthy Word for Lent**

What pops into your mind when you hear the word “repent”? Is it a dark and somber word for you, perhaps reminding you of John the Baptist's shouting for people to repent and be baptized?

What does the word “repent” mean anyway? Literally, it means to stop the way one is going, turn around, and then walk in the opposite direction. It refers to turning away from sin and shallow living and to begin walking through life following God's direction.

Lent, which begins on Ash Wednesday (March 1, 2006), is an opportunity to check our spiritual condition, to repent (if needed) and to walk more faithfully with our Lord.

If we take Lent seriously, we can begin to discover a new vision for life – a more joyous way to live. Lent can enable us to discover the immeasurable benefits of living the Christian life passionately.

**Return**

*A poem for Ash Wednesday*

Remember.

You were built for this,  
the ancient path  
inscribed upon your bones,  
the persistent pattern  
echoing in your heartbeat.

Let this be the season  
you turn your face  
toward the One  
who calls to you:

*Return, return.*

Let this be the day  
you open wide your arms  
to the wind that knows  
how to bear you  
home.

—Jan Richardson, *Circle of Grace; a book of blessings for the Seasons*



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

Joel 2:13

**From the Bishop...**



*“May the God of hope  
fill you with all joy and peace  
in believing,  
so that you may abound in hope  
by the power of the Holy Spirit.”  
~Romans 15:13*

Dear Northern Great Lakes Synod,

There is a scene from the movie, *The Shawshank Redemption* where the protagonist, Andy, is convicted of a crime he did not commit. He spends some 30 years in a dreadful prison until finally he escapes to begin a new life in a little oceanside village in Mexico. He sends a letter to his inmate friend, Red, and invites him to join him after Red is paroled from his own lifetime sentence for a regrettable crime he committed in his youth.

As we watch Red ride a bus towards Mexico, we hear his voice say, “I find I am so excited I can hardly keep a thought in my head. I hope I can make it across the border. I hope to see my friend and shake his hand. I hope the Pacific is as blue as it has been in my dreams. I hope.”

Hope is a powerful force. It pulls us forward through the present as we reach for a different future. It was hope that made Andy’s and Red’s prison time more bearable. And it is hope for so much that pulls us forward from our present circumstances toward a future that promises:

- an end to the pandemic.
- gathering around tables with coffee-filled cups and bakery in hand.
- laughter and conversation once again filling fellowship halls, restaurants, and living rooms.
- voices raised in songs of praise, in harmony, with great gusto.
- ministry without masks.

I can hardly wait!

I Corinthians 13:13 proclaims, “And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.”

The greatest of these IS love. But this year, in the year of our Lord 2021, our theme will focus on HOPE. Make no mistake, we need love and faith too. But right now, we *really* need HOPE.

As I write this, the inauguration looms large. Plans for armed and potentially violent demonstrations outside each state’s capitol building are being reported, and the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff has issued a public reminder to all military branches of their oath to defend the Constitution. It is more than a little unsettling that they felt such a reminder was necessary.

By the time you read this, whatever happens next week and before the end of January will be in the past. We all will have watched the news, heard the reports, and prayed over what right now has not happened yet.

And still, whatever is going to happen, does not change what we have always proclaimed to be true, that our hope is in the Lord Jesus Christ. What that means for our present circumstances has taken on more urgency. The more we feel the chaos and uncertainty of our present, the more we reach for that which is true and solid and constant.

I hope we find a way towards healing, in our congregations and in our nation. I hope as people of faith we have a witness that is authentic to the gospel message of Jesus. I hope our congregations and pastoral leaders can hold on a little longer. I hope. I hope.

*“O God our help in ages past  
Our hope for years to come  
Our shelter from the stormy blast  
And our eternal home.”*

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing.

Yours in Christ,  
Bishop Katherine Finegan



# Enjoy the Poetry of Hymns

## Give to the Winds Thy Fears

Give to the winds thy fears,  
Hope and be undismayed.  
God hears thy sighs and counts thy tears,  
God shall lift up thy head.

Through waves and clouds and storms,  
He gently clears thy way;  
Wait thou His time; so shall this night  
Soon end in joyous day.

Leave to His sovereign sway  
To choose and to command;  
So shalt thou, wondering, own that way,  
How wise, how strong this hand.

Far, far above thy thought,  
His counsel shall appear,  
When fully He the work hath wrought,  
That caused thy needless fear.

Let us in life, in death,  
Thy steadfast truth declare,  
And publish with our latest breath  
Thy love and guardian care.

- Paul Gerhardt, trans. by John Wesley



Fellowship Hall Floor original 1962 Will patch asbestos floor and put down carpet squares which are replaceable if ruined.

Sanctuary original 1970 Carpet

Church Pews and Choir Chairs 1970 reupholster both

**The Story behind the Hymn: *Give to the winds thy Fears***

*I sought the Lord, and He heard me, And delivered me from all my fears.*

Psalm 34:4

It's hard to imagine two brothers making a larger impact on the Christian world than John and Charles Wesley. They were among the nineteen children born to Samuel and Susanna Wesley of little Epworth, England. John was four years older, and because he went off to school at an early age, the two didn't spend extended time together until they found themselves together at Oxford University. There they began praying in small groups, and both began planning for the ministry. Both were ordained in the Church of England. Both went to Georgia as missionaries and returned to England as failures. Both had a transforming experience with Christ the week of May 21, 1738. And both became powerful evangelists, accomplished hymnists, and the founders of the Methodist Movement.

But the two brothers often clashed when it came to personal issues or organizational matters within Methodism. Two examples stand out.

Once, during an illness, John fell in love with his nurse, Grace Murray. He more or less proposed to her saying, "If I ever marry, I think you will be the person." She more or less accepted. But when Charles heard of it, he flew to Grace's house shouting, "Grace Murray! You have broken my heart," and fainted. When he recovered, he pelted her with objections, saying she would destroy his brother's ministry. She broke the engagement, leaving John to scribble painfully, "We were torn asunder by a whirlwind."

Another painful dispute involved the prospect of Methodism detaching itself from the Anglican Church. Charles spent his sunset years trying to prevent the split, prompting John, eighty-two, to write him, saying, "I do nothing rashly. It is not likely I should....if you will go hand in hand with me, do. But do not hinder me if you will not help... With or without help, I creep on."

Despite their differences, however, these two brothers became a dynamic duo for revival, and they changed the world.

They also set the world to singing. Charles wrote most of their hymns, but John often edited Charles's hymns and wrote several of his own.

John also liked to translate German hymns for use by his English Methodists. “Give to the Winds Thy Fears” was originally written by the great German hymnist Paul Gerhardt. John translated it in 1737, and it became a Methodist favorite, proclaiming the spirit of faith by which they lived.

— Robert J. Morgan, *Then Sings My Soul; 300 of the World's Greatest Hymn Stories*

**“Love is our true destiny.  
We do not find the meaning of life by ourselves alone;  
we find it with another.”**

—Thomas Merton



### **Why We Lament**

In 2020, the coronavirus pandemic struck America during the middle of Lent, a season associated with deprivation. Some people made light of the shutdowns, joking, “I didn’t mean to give up *this* much for Lent!” Others asked why the suffering was occurring in the first place.

Professor N.T. Wright, in an essay for *Time*, explains that asking “why?” but receiving no answer is key to biblical lamenting. Adding to the mystery, he says, is that God also laments — grieving at the wickedness of humans, despairing over Israel’s unfaithfulness. Jesus cries at a friend’s tomb; the Holy Spirit groans in anguish. “Part of the Christian vocation,” Wright concludes, is not being able to explain why but lamenting instead. “As the Spirit laments within us,” he says, “so we become, even in our self-isolation, small shrines where the presence and healing love of God can dwell. And out of that there can emerge new possibilities ... new hope.”

## *Happy Birthday!*

- 2 William Heavyside
- 2 Joshua Niemela
- 2 Aili Toivonen
- 3 Sharon Argall
- 3 Megan Barton
- 3 Cliff Heliste
- 4 Eric Beinlich
- 4 Victoria Rankin
- 6 Zoe Argall
- 7 Rachel Argall
- 8 Kelly Anderson
- 8 Kayla Koski
- 9 Carrie Goldsworthy
- 9 Kenneth Carlson
- 11 Abigail Bruhnke
- 11 Renee Rankin
- 11 Diana Sandstrom
- 11 Roy Koski
- 13 Linda Bertucci
- 13 Harriet Maki
- 13 Debbie Snell
- 14 Thomas Varda
- 15 Rae Elliot
- 16 Kenneth Johnson
- 18 John Beerling
- 18 Michael Flynn
- 18 Lindsey Drebenstedt
- 19 Marvin Toivonen
- 21 Jacob Bivins
- 23 Seth Bjorne
- 23 Denise Kaukola
- 23 Victoria Mattson
- 24 Ethan Argall
- 26 Linda Hurrell
- 26 Karen Kasper
- 27 John Carlson
- 27 Garrett Frustaglio



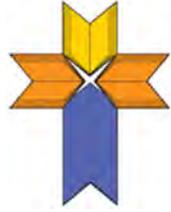
## *Happy Anniversary!*

George & Barb Holmgren  
2/12/65      56 years

Jerry & Roberta Luokkala  
2/13/1971      50 years

James & Holly Bjorne  
2/14/1981      40 years





# February

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i> 9:00 Quilters	<i>3</i>
<i>7</i> 10:30 Worship- Online Worship	<i>8</i>	<i>9</i> 9:00 Quilters 10:30 Social Ministry	<i>10</i>
<i>14</i> 10:30 Worship Online Worship 6:30 Confirmation	<i>15</i>	<i>16</i> 9:00 Quilters	<i>17</i> <b>ASH WEDNESDAY</b> <b>6:30 Ash Wednesday Worship Service</b>
<i>21</i> 10:30 Worship- Online Worship	<i>22</i>	<i>23</i> 9:00 Quilters 6:30 Council	<i>24</i> 6:30 Midweek Lenten Service—Evening Prayer
<i>28</i> 10:30 Worship- Online Worship 6:30 Confirmation	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p>“I’ve long since stopped feeling guilty about taking ‘being’ time for our spiritual health, and often we don’t take —Madeleine L’Engle</p> </div>		

# y 2021



Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>4 6:30 Bible Study (Zoom available)</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p>
<p>11 6:30 Bible Study (Zoom available)</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p>
<p>18 6:30 Bible Study (Zoom available)</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p>
<p>25 6:30 Bible Study (Zoom available)</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>
<p>ne; it's something we all need enough of it."</p>		<p><b>Deadline for March Outlook is Tuesday, February 23.</b></p>

Dear Bethany People,

These are really tough times we are in. And yet, God. God finds ways to work healing and wholeness, even through times like these and in very unexpected ways.

Recently here in Munising, we lost one of our sisters in Christ. Her name is Carrie Peters and Munising aches in her absence. Her family was at a loss of what to do for music at her funeral service. We cannot sing together right now. They wanted tried and true hymns ... Children of the Heavenly Father, How Great Thou Art and Joy to the World. They listened to recordings of those hymns, but they were all too polished, not familiar or comforting. They longed to hear a congregation singing the hymns. They told me they didn't know what to do.

And then I thought of Gary Sunblad and the congregation of Bethany and the lovely congregation song and Spirit you brought to our TV Christmas Eve Service. And so I reached out to Pastor Geier, and Gary was Johnny on the spot with music to use for the service.

Bethany friends, if you could have seen the family's eyes well up *and* smile when they heard you singing it would be so much easier on me, because I cannot begin to tell you how much the gift of your song meant to them.

So thank you ... for your voices, for sharing recordings. for being Christ's Church with Eden as we accompany this family. And thanks be to God for unexpected avenues of ministry, even in tough times.

I miss you all! Please keep us in your prayers, as we keep you in ours.

Peace, Pastor Ann



**Saints and Notables for February**  
(from the ELW)

Feb 1 **Brigid of Kildare** 1523 One of the three patrons of Ireland.

Feb 5 **The Martyrs of Japan** 1597 There was sporadic persecution from this initial crucifixion of 26 Franciscan missionaries and Japanese converts until the opening of Japan to the west in 1854.

Feb 14 **Cyril and Methodius** 869 Missionaries to the Slavs; precursor of the Cyrillic alphabet.

Feb 18 **Martin Luther** 1546 Reformer, virtual founder of Protestantism.

Feb 23 **Polycarp 156 Bishop of Smyrna** (Izmir, Turkey). Student of St. John the Apostle. Martyr at age 86...faithful follower of Christ and example to all Christians.

Early sources report that Polycarp was converted to Christianity by apostles, was a student of the Apostle St. John, consecrated a presbyter, appointed Bishop of Smyrna (in modern day Turkey), and communicated with many who had seen Jesus. Polycarp occupies an important place in the history of the early Christian Church. He is among the earliest Christians whose writings survived. He was an elder of an important congregation that was a large contributor to the founding of the Christian Church. He is from an era whose orthodoxy is widely accepted. The sole surviving work attributed to him is the *Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians*. According to the *Martyrdom of Polycarp*, he died a martyr, bound and burned at the stake, then stabbed when the fire miraculously failed to consume his body. His death marked the end of persecution of Christians in Smyrna and he has been regarded as a saint from that day. His name means "much fruit" in Greek and it is indeed his martyrdom that bore the fruit of strengthening the persecuted Christians of Smyrna. He is regarded as one of three chief Apostolic Fathers, along with Clement of Rome and Ignatius of Antioch and today he is regarded as a saint in the Eastern Orthodox, Orthodox, Catholic, Anglican and Lutheran churches. NOTE: *See the film Polycarp (2015) on YouTube*



ST. POLYCARP

## **Bishop Eaton's Christmas Message**

### **We are never alone**

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton  
Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

The room was spare and dimly lit. We sat on folding chairs in a circle—young Honduran women and some of us from the ELCA. We had come to Honduras to observe the work of AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities). This is the ELCA's strategy to help youth who have been forced to flee their home countries because of violence, abuse, extortion by gangs and extreme poverty. Amparo is the Spanish word for shelter or refuge.

In this case, AMMPARO partnered with the Lutheran World Federation and the Mennonites to resettle returned migrants— those who had tried to seek asylum in the United States but had failed or had been denied and deported back to Honduras.

One by one they told us their stories of fear and desperation. Not a one undertook the long and dangerous trek north on a whim. They told us about the abuse they had suffered, about family members who had been killed by gangs, about the inability to make a living because of the extortion by organized crime. They talked about the bitter sadness of leaving home and family, and the uncertainty of the future.

I remember one young woman in particular. She was pregnant when she tried to migrate to the United States. She had the baby somewhere along the way. She was far from home, mostly alone and desperately wanted her mother to be with her. None of this is what she had hoped for when she was growing up. Circumstances beyond her control had forced her into this new and strange existence. She and her baby were now back in Honduras—but not at home. Home was too dangerous.

Remember last Christmas? Remember all of the preparations, the travel to be with family? Remember the holy beauty of the Christmas Eve liturgy and receiving Christ's grace and forgiveness at his table? The shopping and Christmas caroling? The in-person gatherings? All that has changed.

The pandemic hasn't forced us from our homes but into our homes, sheltering in place, isolated. Not together, but physically distanced. Not gathered with family and friends, but forced apart because of the threat of infection. Forced by circumstances beyond our control into this strange existence. Oh, there will be Christmas carols piped into grocery stores and other essential services, but they will be painful reminders of how life used to be.

We are reminded of the experience of the exiles in Babylon: "By the rivers of Babylon—there we sat down and there we wept when we remembered Zion. On the willows there we hung up our harps. For there our captives asked us for songs, and our tormentors asked for mirth, saying, 'Sing us one of the songs of Zion!' How could we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land" (Psalm 137)?

I told the young Honduran woman about another young woman who was forced to leave home because of a government decree. She, too, was pregnant and made a long and difficult journey. She, too, was far from home and without her mother when the baby came. She had to find shelter wherever she could. This wasn't what she had hoped for when she was growing up. Circumstances beyond her control had forced her into this new existence.

That young woman was Mary and the child was Jesus. Precisely in our distress, in our dislocation, the Lord shows up. Emmanuel—God with us—makes his home in the very places we find foreign or isolating. The young Honduran woman, and all of us, can find hope because of the birth of Mary's child. There is no God-forsaken place and we are never alone— not in hospital rooms, or sheltering in place, or Zoom calls or on dangerous roads.

Many of us will not be physically home for Christmas, but we are truly home in Christ.



## **LENTEN RACIAL EQUITY CHALLENGE**

The Northern Great Lakes Synod has issued a Lenten Racial Equity Challenge. It's described as "A personal commitment to devote time during Lent to engage in provided resources. Each day of the challenge will be a new opportunity to consider different voices and perspectives—a time to read, watch, listen, and learn."

I know that the initial reaction of many of us who live in places like the UP is that this has nothing to do with us. "I'm not a racist," we say. My involvement in things like anti-racism and inter-cultural sensitivity training has been very limited, but what you quickly find out is that pretty much everyone harbors some form of prejudice. We can't always change that, but being aware of the ways we are prejudiced can help. I believe that becoming more aware is the goal of this challenge.

There are a number of ways one can be involved in this. If you're interested, check the information on the synod's web page [www.nglsynod.org](http://www.nglsynod.org). I would suggest that here at Bethany we use this as the basis of our Thursday night (6:30) Bible Study. We've been meeting in-person but with a Zoom link option as well. If you would like access to the link, please let me know.

I would encourage you to make this part of your Lenten journey this year.

Pastor Geier



**The February Noisy Offering will be given to the Warming Center.**

**Thanks for your generosity.**

## The Power of Love



By comparing love to everything from oxygen and fire to wind and war, songs and poetry emphasize its immense power — for good or for ill. Christian author Patrick Morley uses metaphors that focus on love’s practicality in everyday life: “Love is the glue that holds us together and the oil that keeps us from rubbing each other the wrong way.” He also calls love “the WD-40 of relationships” because it “can seep into tight places where logic, threats and even promises just can’t seem to penetrate.”

St. Augustine, who predated WD-40 by centuries, knew that love not only eases friction in personal interactions but, with God’s help, can change hearts and lives. “Love all [people], even your enemies,” he advises. “Love them, not because they are your brothers, but that they may become your brothers. Thus you will ever burn with fraternal love, both for him who is already your brother and for your enemy, that he may by loving become your brother.”

### The Parable of the Lost Ring

Only three years after Paula and Joe Walter married, her wedding ring was lost as she played catch with their son. Naturally, she was heartbroken. Over the years, whenever family and friends gathered in the back yard, she urged everyone to look for the ring — but to no avail. Because the yard borders on woods, Paula feared the ring had flown into the trees, never to be seen again.



But just before the couple’s 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, landscapers hired to do work in the yard brought her a surprise: They’d found the ring — right where Paula had been playing with her child so long ago! Like the woman in Jesus’ parable who finally found her lost coin (Luke 15:8-10), Paula rejoiced. God too searches until every person who has strayed or been flung away from the faith is found.

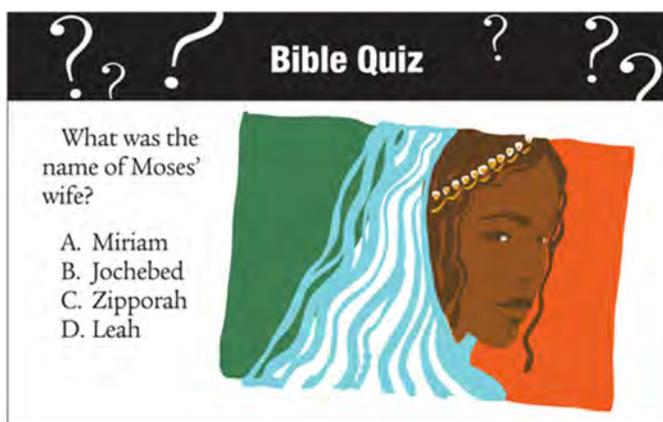
Sometimes the place we rediscover faith is right where we’ve looked before. What makes the difference? A different person helping us search? Light shining in a different way? We may never know. We simply rejoice — and so does God.



Dear Friends of Bethany,

The weekly services on Facebook have sustained me during the past months. Lots of work goes into each service – the music, lector preparation, and Gary’s set up and flashbacks to other services. I don’t know how Pastor Geier can reach me with his message each and every week. Many, many thanks to all.

Love in Christ,  
Karen Merckx



Answer: C (See Exodus 2:21.)

### Food for

### our Neighbors



Every week the food table in the narthex is filled with items for our neighbors who are experiencing difficulties maneuvering through the unprecedented situations we're in right now. Even though we're all pretty weary of the pandemic by this time, Galatians 6:9 tells us never to become weary doing good. Of course this ministry is just one of many available to us as a church and as individuals, but it's wonderful to see that we are keeping this one going even though most of us can't gather in church.

Thank you for everything you are doing to help others, even as you live through your own challenges - may God bless, help and comfort you in these efforts



## Ripples of Kindness

“I drop kindness pebbles in still water every day, and I watch the effect they have on other people’s lives. My favorite kindness pebbles are compliments. Drop a compliment and watch the ripple effect that it has in your life.”



Remarkably, these cheery words come from a father who has faced many dark, difficult days. In *6 Minutes Wrestling With Life*, John Passaro tells of his daughter’s heart-wrenching battle with meningitis. The struggles didn’t make him bitter; rather, he frequently offers uplifting words on social media.

What if we followed Passaro’s example and complimented people regularly? Philippians 4:8 (NIV) instructs us to think about things that are noble, lovely, admirable, excellent and praiseworthy. By extension, turning those positive thoughts into words causes “kindness pebbles” to spread God’s light in ripples throughout someone’s day — and, doubtless, through ours.

### My Morning Prayer

What guidance is God giving  
For my living of this day?  
Will I help someone who’s needy?  
Will I have kind words to say?

Will outrageous acts of kindness  
Be the gifts that I can share?  
Let YOUR will, God, be mine today,  
Help me to love and care!

—Peggy Ferrell, *Poems, Prayers and Hymns*

**“Always show kindness and love to others.  
Your words might be filling the empty places in someone's heart.”**

—Mandy Hale



**Lenten Coin Folders**—This year the Lenten coin folders will not be mailed. They are, however, available on the library cabinet where copies of *The Lutheran* and devotional magazines are also available.

**Answer to “A Famous Friendship” puzzle:** “Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God.” Ruth 1:16, NIV



### **Love and Laughter Go Hand in Hand!**

Share these jokes with your beloved on February 14 — or whenever some humor can brighten a day!

Q: What valentine did the French chef give his wife?

A: A hug and a quiche

Q: What did the paper clip say to the magnet?

A: “I find you very attractive.”

Q: What did the pencil say to the paper?

A: “I dot my i’s on you!”

Q: How did the phone propose to his girlfriend?

A: He gave her a ring.

Q: What do you call a very small valentine?

A: A valentiny



## The New Free Store

The New Free Store is an interfaith non-profit group supporting people who express a need for free clothing, linens, hygiene and cleaning supplies. Anyone in need is welcome. Free things are offered as "in God's economy there is always enough." The Free Store is located at 1420 East M28 next to Lakestate Industries. It is open Wednesdays Noon-4PM (1st, 2nd 3rd weeks of month) and the fourth Monday of the month 6:00-8:00 pm. Facebook@thenewfreestore.

There is a collection box in our church entry. Donation requests rotate on a monthly basis.

### February: Toilet Paper (Packages of 4 rolls or 6 rolls)



Worship

Options



In person worship at Bethany begins at 10:30 am each Sunday. (will resume December 13 if restrictions are lifted)

A worship service is also available on line each Sunday.



**Bethany's Website**  
[www.bethanyishpeming.org](http://www.bethanyishpeming.org)

To view the latest edition of the Outlook in color, please visit Bethany's website.



## Keep In Your Prayers

Remember our home-bound and nursing home residents:

**Valente:** Roy Koski

**Jacobetti:** Carol Waters

**Teal Lake Senior Living Community:** Jean Johns, Annette Larson,  
Ray Leverton (recuperating)

**Mill Creek:** Marilyn Pontti, Betty Geier



- Amanda Bivins
- Loreth Johnson
- Jerry Plaisier
- Pauli Kniivila
- Paul Kish
- Garrett Frustaglio, D.J. Bivins, & Blake Forbes who are serving in the military
- Those who have contracted COVID-19
- Those who have lost loved ones to COVID-19
- Those who are on the front lines caring for the sick
- Those sheltering in place
- Roy & LaVerne Koski
- Marilyn Pontti
- Sandee Sundquist
- Cindy Warner
- Loreth Johnson
- Emilie Brown
- Mark, Kathleen, and Karmen Slown
- Ray Chartre
- Roger & Ruth Solberg
- Judy Hogan
- Mark
- Zander Atkins
- Jim Bjorne
- Angie Kempainen
- Those in the military that they may remain safe



Please **PRAY** for those  
affected by **COVID-19**

If you would like to make a submission, contact **Linda Dahl** by phone, e-mail, or by dropping a note in the newsletter mailbox at church.

**485-1625**  
**linkarzig@gmail.com**

Bethany Lutheran Church  
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Ishpeming, MI 49849

## CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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Parish Planning Council:  
Exec. Director, Tom Perry  
Asst. Exec. Director, Mark Slown  
Christian Education, Amanda Bivins  
Finance, David Leverton  
Personnel, Jim Bjerne  
Property, Robert Bruhnke  
Social Ministry, Jill Carter  
Stewardship, Ann Sundblad  
Worship & Music, Keenan Tunnell



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
Northern Great Lakes Synod

