

Bethlehem Star

A PUBLICATION OF BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH, GRAND MARAIS, MN

April 2023

Volume 42 Number 4

The Beginning of the Good News

But he said to them, 'Do not be alarmed; you are looking' for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going' ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.'

Mark 16: 6-7

I love the abrupt way St. Mark shares the resurrection story because the women who come to the tomb on Easter morning are told that the reason Jesus isn't there is because he has better things to do than wait around. *'You're looking' for Jesus of Nazareth? Sorry... you just missed him.'*

According to this gospel, the risen Christ isn't interested in waiting around while we ponder whether or not we believe in something as unexpected as resurrection. Instead, the women are instructed to go tell the disciples that they'd better get a move on. If it's Jesus they're looking for, they'll need to hit the road.

Being summoned to follow Jesus back to Galilee is an invitation for us to reimagine everything we think we know about him. It's our opportunity to reappraise the whole gospel narrative in light of this unexpected ending.

Living the resurrection means entering into an entirely new kind of life that refuses to acknowledge death as the last word. It means entering into a life in which God is always at work within us; redeeming all of creation and transforming the church into a place where all are welcome. Living the resurrection means loving others as we are loved; not just the 'others' whom we have something to gain by loving, but also those who've been marginalized by this world. We are to love the unlovable and touch the untouchable. We are to lift up those who are spat upon because of their addiction, poverty, infirmity, gender expression, politics, or failed relationships.

Following Jesus from the empty tomb to Galilee requires us to feed the hungry without asking why. It requires us to proclaim peace when all we can see around us is conflict. It requires us to be voices of compassion in a world that reflexively kicks the weak to the curb. It requires us to forgive and to love others just as we are forgiven and loved.

St. Mark shares a different kind of Easter joy than what we're perhaps used to hearing. It's a joy that calls us to go out and live the great commission despite our misgivings, despite our fears, despite our uncertainties, and despite our lack of perfect faith so that others will experience God's relentless love for this world alongside us.

The story of what God is doing in and through Jesus doesn't end at the empty tomb. That's where the real story begins. Remember, this is the gospel that begins with the words, *'The beginning' of the good news of Jesus Christ the son of God.* Every word of Mark's gospel looks ahead to what lies beyond that empty tomb so that we can follow Jesus to Galilee, and through our own resurrected lives, transform this broken world.

Pastor Tom Murray,
Lutsen Evangelical Lutheran Church





NORTHERN
LIGHTS
OVER
BETHLEHEM

MARCH 23, 2023

It was a beautiful night to watch the dancing of the amazing colors.

Thanks to our neighbor Matt Conlan for the picture!

Palm Sunday

April 2, 2023

Faith Walk

and

Worship

at 10:00 am

Jonathan Ruva, Presiding



Holy Week
Maundy Thursday

Worship Service

& Stripping of the Altar

April 6 @ 6:00 pm

Rev. Carol Mork, Presiding

Good Friday Tenebrae

Service April 7 @

6:00pm



Easter
Sunday

April 9th

8:00 am &

10:00 am



Brunch
Between
Services
9-10 am



Sunday of the Passion: Palm Sunday

On April 2nd, Palm Sunday, we encounter the paradox that defines our faith: **Jesus Christ is glorified king and humiliated servant.** We too are full of paradox: like Peter, we fervently desire to follow Christ, but find ourselves afraid, denying God. We wave palms in celebration as Christ comes into our midst, and we follow with trepidation as his path leads to death on the cross. Amid it all, we are invited into this paradoxical promise of life through Christ's broken body and outpoured love in a meal of bread and wine. We begin this week that stands at the center of the church year, anticipating the completion of God's astounding work.



Our Palm/Passion Sunday service will be led by Jonathan Rova. The Confirmation Students will set up the **Faith Walk** for parishioners, so they can walk through the **Stations of the Cross.** This will be up in the sanctuary through Good Friday and you are invited to come during the week for private time of meditation in the sanctuary.



Maundy Thursday

The evening of April 6th our Lenten observance comes to an end, and we gather with Christians around the world to **celebrate the Three Days of Jesus' death and resurrection.** This night we remember Christ's last meal with his disciples, but the central focus is his commandment that we live out the promise embodied in this meal. As Jesus washed his disciples' feet, so we are called to give and receive love in humble service to one another. Formed into a new body in Christ through this holy meal, we are transformed by the mercy we have received and carry it into the world. Departing worship in solemn silence, after the stripping of the altar, we anticipate the coming days.



Traditionally, this is the time when 3rd–4th graders participate in Communion classes, partake in a Sader meal with their families, and take their First Communion in the service. This year we have postponed this until we have a new pastor.

The youth of the church (Sunday school through Confirmation classes) are asked to help with the stripping of the altar at the end of the service.



Good Friday

Life and death stand side by side as we enter into **Good Friday.** In John's passion account, Jesus reveals the power and glory of God, even as he is put on trial and sentenced to death. Standing with the disciples at

the foot of the cross, we pray for the whole world in the ancient bidding prayer, as Christ's death offers life to all. We gather in solemn devotion, but always with the promise that the tree around which we assemble is indeed a tree of life.

We depart silently, and we anticipate the culmination of the Three Days in the Easter Vigil.



This service will be at 6:00 pm and lay members will read the traditional lessons and prayers associated with the passion and death of Christ.

Resurrection of Our Lord: Easter Day



This is the day the Lord has made! Christ is risen, and through him all creation is made new! Indeed, "God shows no partiality" (Acts 10:34): Christ's resurrection truly brings life to everyone. We sing hymns of praise, gather around sacred words, and proclaim God's faithfulness, power, and love in the feast of holy communion. With the women at the tomb, we are astonished, elated, and grateful. We depart with joy to proclaim the good news of God's endless love.

Again this year we will celebrate **Easter during two services: 8:00 am and 10:00 am** and will be led by the Reverend John Bragstad.





Library Words

When was the last time you were in the Church Library? Bethlehem is blessed with a vast array of books in our library and I encourage you to come in, take a look and check out a book once in a while.

Of course books in the library include *Bibles, Interpretations, Commentaries, Church History, Education, Our Faith* and the *Church Year*. There are other books that include *Life Issues, Inspirations, Biographies, People in Society, Missions, Social Justice*, as well as *Art and Poetry*.

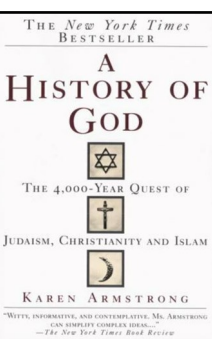
Our library also has Confirmation picture scrapbooks from each year at Bethlehem. You will find that our library is well organized and is easy to find what you are looking for. Please feel free to browse through the books and take one out on loan for a bit.

Recently, Susan Scherer read a book from the library and enjoyed it so much that I asked her to write up a little review on it.

"Karen Armstrong's book, *"A History of God"* is, in her own words, " ... a history of the way men and women have perceived him from Abraham to the present day." The cover describes it as "The 4,000 Year Quest of Judaism, Christianity and Islam".

The author, in a complex but very readable study, discusses how early cultures experienced a sense of something more powerful than humans. Gradually, the stories and beliefs in gods evolved to an un-

derstanding of the concept of one God. Three major religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam developed from this concept.



Karen Armstrong then goes on to explore the ways these three religions grew, frequently from numinous experiences by individuals we all are familiar with, such as Isaiah, Moses, and Abraham. She describes the development through the centuries of these three major religions as they evolved in their specific cultures, and how their ideas of worship and living were greatly influenced by philosophy, science and mystical experiences.

In her conclusion, she stresses the need to keep our faith alive saying, "Human beings cannot endure emptiness and desolation ..."

I greatly enjoyed reading this book. Luckily it has a glossary in the back, as there were words quite new to me, but don't we all need to challenge our brains a bit?"

--- Susan Scherer

STEWARDSHIP REPORT

Time & Talents Survey



We are anticipating your response to the annual Time & Talent Survey. We all have different kinds of gifts, but the same Holy Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of 'service' but the same Lord. - the same God at work. (1st Corinthians 12)

Thank you for sharing the 'gifts' God has entrusted to you! Please return the Time and Talent Survey as soon as possible.

Enclosed is another copy of the survey. (*Hint, hint*)



BLCWomen

Esther Circle members and other Bethlehem members have again outdone themselves hosting events, with grace and efficiency, that are important to our Church community.

At a recent meeting our members voted on 'donations' to various groups that we support. Our Treasurer keeps us up-to-date on these matters. Thanks, Phyllis Parker.

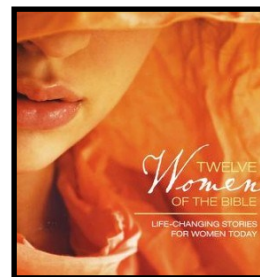
The recent 'National Quilting Day' event did not happen as planned, due to an anticipated snowstorm. Please keep a look out for more details on a "Re-do." Making mission quilts is important to our World neighbors, near and far.

BLCW continues to meet monthly, for Bible Studies and business meetings. Esther Circle meets on the second Thursday of the month at 9:30 am in library. Rebecca and Ruth Circles meet on the second Friday of the month at 1:00 pm in the social room. Quilters meet every Thursday from 9am-12pm, and coffee is at 10am. New people are welcome to any/all of these get together, whatever works best for your schedule.

Come join the fun!

Submitted by Gwen Lenz

Twelve Women of the Bible



The Esther Circle just began a 12 session Bible study, *Twelve Women of the Bible*. The authors look at the spiritual lessons learned from twelve

biblical women and their implications in life today. It is a deeper study of the Bible's most empowered and iconic women.

The members of the circle use the provided discussion questions, and background information on each character as their study.

All are welcome to participate. Esther Circle meets on the Second Thursday of each month at 9:30 am in the Church Library.

Book information: **Title:** Twelve Women of the Bible: Life-Changing Stories for Women Today, Study Guide **By:** Lysa TerKeurst, Elisa Morgan, Amena Brown



Call Committee

2 Timothy 1:9 "... who has saved us and called us with a holy calling "

Greetings from the Call Committee! My name is Nathan Kristenson. I'm the chair of the Call Committee and we would like to let you know where we are in the call process.

We have been meeting to prepare to interview potential candidates. This is a confidential process so we won't be able to give you the names of any candidates or any information that would potentially identify a candidate. We will be able to let you know when we are interviewing.

Where do the names of candidates come from?

The first place is the ELCA and our NE MN Synod. Pastors seeking a call can look at these websites and find congregations that are seeking a pastor. From there they will see the church Ministry Site Profile that we created in the last few months.

Another place pastors can see that

we are in the call process is our own website. The first thing you see now when you go to our website is a box saying that we are in the process of calling a pastor.

Since we are a vacation destination it is very possible a pastor visiting our area might look at our website to get some idea of who we are. They may become interested and seek more information. Lay people visiting our website will also see this message and may know of a pastor who could be interested.

If you haven't seen our new website, I'd encourage you to take a look. It is new as of a few weeks ago and it has been receiving good reviews.

One more source of candidates is our own congregation. It may be that someone here knows of a pastor they think will be a good fit. If you do know of someone, let myself or another committee know and we can talk about it.

Essentially all candidates, no matter how they hear about our opening or how they become interested will go through the synod to contact us. I think pastors know this, but if I, or another committee member is contacted directly we will encourage them to contact the synod.

Please remember to keep us in your prayers as we embark on this journey. Thank You!

Your Call Committee Members:

Nathan Kristenson (chairperson)	
Kati Stieler	John Bragstad
Annie DeBevec	Eric Anderson
Mindy Jacobsen	Mike Chmelik
Jessica Markusen	

YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY

It is time to highlight Summer Church Camps. In the past most of our students have gone to Covenant Pines. However, there are camp options at Cathedral of the Pines, Wilderness Canoe Base, Camp Vermilion and Camp Hiawatha. Potential campers will receive a letter from Bethlehem noting these options and a scholarship towards attendance at a church camp of their choice. **Camp Sunday will be April 16th. Come and learn about the camps!**



The **Quilt Sunday**, a special church service for **graduating seniors is set for May 14th**. We will have the blessing of the quilts, additional gifts from Bethlehem, and cake and coffee after the service.

Vacation BIBLE SCHOOL

Vacation Bible School has been scheduled for **June 12-16**. A letter will go out to parents requesting volunteer help and notice of potential attendance.

In God's Care, Kris Hedstrom

I hope you can always
Forget the things
That matter least
And remember the things
That are close to God's heart
-Lance Wubbels



Mission Endowment Scholarships

Bethlehem offers Mission Endowment Fund Scholarships to members of the congregation who are pursuing their post-secondary education. Any member who is attending a post-secondary education for the first time are eligible for this scholarship. Applicants provide information regarding their faith journey as well as their church, school, and community activities and the committee carefully review all applications.

Application deadline is Sunday April 23. Applications are available on the Youth bulletin board in the lower level at church or on our website.

Camper Scholarship and Mission Endowment Scholarship Forms can be found on our website:

<https://www.sharingchrist.org>

Contact Us > Forms



Heart to Heart

A thought for the month of April . . .

Sometimes we unfortunately feel slighted by others. While it's easy to let ourselves feel down about it, it's much better to try to understand why others are who they are. It's also an opportune time to look deep within, remember grace and forgive.

*It's easy to be brave
when there is no danger.*

*It's easy to be kind
when there is no hardship.*

*It's not the moments of tranquility
that define us.*

*It's the challenging times,
and how we react to them.*

Mission Of the Month Lutherans Restoring Creation



In honor of Earth Day on April 22nd, our Mission of the Month for April is **Lutherans Restoring Creation (LRC)**. lutheransrestoringcreation.org

Lutherans Restoring Creation is a grassroots movement promoting care for creation in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. As our committee discussed possible creation care organizations to support for April, we were drawn to Lutherans Restoring Creation, in part, because of the many resources they offer individuals, congregations, & church leaders. We encourage you to visit their website, (above) to find book recommendations, worship resources, devotional material, webinar links, etc.

We also invite you to consider joining Lutherans Restoring Creation for their **2023 Earth Day Virtual Worship**. The Rev. Dr. R. Guy Erwin, president of United Lutheran Seminary and former bishop of the Southwest California Synod, will provide the sermon.

The service will be published on the YouTube channel for Lutherans Restoring Creation on April 22nd.

If you would like to contribute a financial gift to Lutherans Restoring Creation, please note "April Mission of the Month" or "Lutherans Restoring Creation" on your special offering.

In peace, Jessica Markusen, on behalf of the Church in Society Committee



April Member Activity Creation Care Challenge

Will you commit to practicing 3 (new-to-you) ways to better care for creation? For some, that might mean that they bring a reusable coffee thermos when they make a stop at Java Moose. Others might start walking to work. Others might try reducing their use of plastic by switching to shampoo bars or laundry soap sheets instead of buying products that comes in plastic bottles. Other ideas: shop at thrift stores instead of buying new, eat less meat, plant trees, stop use of single use Keurig cups, don't use plastic straws at restaurants, bring your own container when eating out so you don't need to ask for a to-go, etc.. The ideas are endless. Challenge yourself/family to try a few creation care tips.

Holy Cow 2022

We received a certificate from the NE MN Synod for our giving to the **ELCA Hunger Program** throughout 2022. Bethlehem's donations were **\$4.96 per Confirmed Member!** It represents money received in the Synod Office and designated for ELCA Hunger gifts, including the ELCA Hunger Appeal, ELCA Good Gifts, Global Barnyard, Lutheran World Relief, and ELCA Disaster Responses, both domestic and international. Thank you for your gifts to the ELCA Hunger ministries! *Could you increase your gift to \$5 to the Holy Cow collection for 2023?*





Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>Order Easter Lilies: Forms may be found in the Narthex or on our website: www.sharingchrist.org > Contact Us > Forms. Drop completed forms in church office.</p>						1
<p>2</p> <p>Jonathan Rova, Presiding</p> <p>Palm Sunday</p> <p>Worship in-person at 10:00 AM with Live stream / Choir sings</p> <p>8:40am Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>10:00am Sunday School</p> <p>11:15am Holy Moly Class</p> <p>11:15am Confirmation Class</p>	<p>3</p> <p>3:30pm Girl Scouts - 1st graders</p> <p>Holy Week</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p> <p>8:00am Church In Society meeting</p> <p>6:30pm Average Worship Band Practice</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Maundy Thursday</p> <p>Rev. Carol Mork, Presiding</p> <p>7:45am Bible Study</p> <p>9:00am Quilting</p> <p>6:00pm Worship Service</p> <p>7:00pm Executive Committee</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Clarity Hearing Appts.</p> <p>Good Friday</p> <p>6:00pm Tenebrae Service</p>	<p>8</p>
<p>9</p> <p><i>alleluia</i></p> <p>Easter Sunday</p> <p>Rev. John Bragstad, Presiding</p> <p>8:00am Early Easter Morning Service</p> <p>9:00am Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>10:00am Sunday School</p> <p>10:00am Worship Service - Live streamed / Choir sings at 10</p> <p>11:15am NO Confirmation Class</p> <p>11:15am NO Holy Moly class</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p> <p>5:30pm Soup Supper</p> <p>6:30pm Contemporary Worship Service</p>	<p>13</p> <p>7:45am Bible Study</p> <p>9:00am Quilting</p> <p>9:30am Esther Circle</p> <p>7:00pm Council meeting</p>	<p>14</p> <p>10:00am Rebecca & Ruth Circles</p>	<p>15</p>
<p>16</p> <p>Camp Sunday</p> <p>Worship in-person at 10:00 AM with Live stream / Choir sings</p> <p>8:40am Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>10:00am Sunday School</p> <p>11:15am Holy Moly Class</p> <p>11:15am Confirmation Class</p>	<p>17</p> <p>3:30pm Girl Scouts - 1st grade</p>	<p>18</p> <p>6:00pm Worship Planning Committee</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p> <p>7:45am Bible Study</p> <p>9:00am Quilting</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Clarity Hearing Appts.</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Earth Day Memorial Service for Anna Speck</p> <p>Newsletter articles due for next edition</p>
<p>23</p> <p>Rev. Kris Garey, Presiding</p> <p>Scholarship Application Deadline</p> <p>8:40am Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>10:00am Christian Contemporary Worship Service</p> <p>10:00am Sunday School</p> <p>11:15am Holy Moly Class</p> <p>11:15am Confirmation Class</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p> <p>7:45am Bible Study</p> <p>9:00am Quilting</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>
<p>30</p> <p>8:40am Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>10:00am Sunday School</p> <p>10:00am Worship Service - Live streamed</p> <p>11:15am Holy Moly Class</p> <p>11:15am Confirmation Class</p>	<p>1</p> <p>3:30pm Girl Scouts - 1st graders</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p> <p>8:00am Church In Society meeting</p> <p>6:30pm Average Worship Band Practice</p>	<p>4</p> <p>7:45am Bible Study</p> <p>9:00am Quilting</p> <p>7:00pm Executive Committee</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Clarity Hearing Appts.</p>	<p>6</p>

A note from 1st and 2nd! We hope to be ready to open in May! We will be needing volunteers for the coming year! Both in store and donation center. We can use men too!!!! It is best contact us at 1stand2nd@boreal.org. Great way to make money for our church or any other 501c3 in Cook County. You can divide your hours up to 4 different non-profits in Cook County. We were unable to store much merchandise, so please hang on to your donations! We will advertise when we will be accepting! Thanks for your help!!!

- Lois Johnson

Member Activity: In March we did a "member activity" **Puzzle Exchange**. Although there wasn't much participation, we thought it was a promising idea and we will keep it going through April. (Next year we may try it again in January or February when the nights are long.) We would like to continue a small member activity of some sort every month. (See page 6 for the April Challenge.) The idea is that these would not be much of a time commitment, just a fun little activity or member challenge, something to bring us together again. Game night? Potluck? We would like your input to see if we can develop something each month. Let us know your ideas!

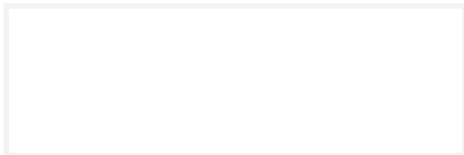
- Denise Murray & Kathy J.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

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*Belonging to Christ,
Sharing Christ on the
North Shore and beyond.*



Denise Murray, Office Manager & Editor

Holy Week

- Palm Sunday: April 2 @ 10:00_{am}
- Maundy Thursday: April 6 @ 6:00_{pm}
- Good Friday: April 7 @ 6:00_{pm}

Easter Brunch



The Confirmation students will host a light brunch in between the services on Easter morning. Come and enjoy celebratory fellowship by supporting the Youth fund raising for retreats and trips.



April 9th

Services at 8:00 & 10:00 am