

E-Weekly

February 20, 2026
Volume 10 Number 09

PUBLICATION OF BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH
GRAND MARAIS, MINNESOTA
PRODUCED BY DENISE MURRAY



WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD

MATTHEW 4:10

Livestream link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9SPI_nw6_rg

1st Sunday in Lent February 22, 2026

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

*Eating of the tree of the knowledge
of good and evil*

Psalm 32

Mercy embraces those who trust in the LORD.

Romans 5:12-19

Death came through one; life comes through one

Matthew 4:1-11

*The temptation of Jesus in the
wilderness for forty days*



Bethlehem Lutheran Church

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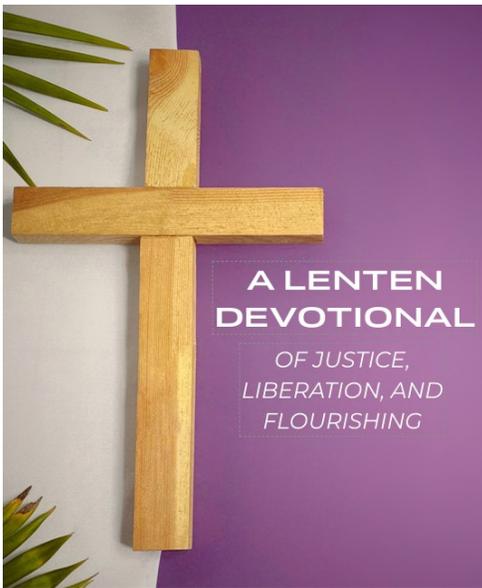
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This Sunday we have the pleasure of hosting guest preacher, Will Mowchan, a “somewhat retired” ELCA Pastor. His churches include congregations around Lake Superior in Ashland, Superior, Bayfield and Cornucopia. His wife, Carolyn, is also an ELCA pastor. One of their daughters and husband live in Grand Marais. Their other daughter, husband and son live in Duluth. All of them love Lake Superior.

Adult Education following this service will be led by Pastor Will and is titled “Family Separation.” The Soviet dictator Stalin once said that a million deaths are a statistic, and one death is a tragedy. The countless family separations now going on in our country are a statistic. Will’s talk is about one person’s separation from family. His father’s experience of being separated is one tragedy that can help us begin to understand the horrible impact that is happening to so many families in America right now.



Turning Stones to Bread Economic Control

The first temptation targets hunger — one of the oldest tools of empire.

Today, governments still manipulate survival through:

- * food & housing insecurity
- * poverty wages
- * denial of healthcare
- * bans on gender-affirming care
- * restrictions on reproductive healthcare
- * denial of disability benefits

Those in power often ask:
“Why don’t they just comply?”

But Jesus teaches that survival must never come at the expense of dignity. We do not exist merely to feed the economic systems that claim authority over us.

Oppressed communities are too often asked to justify their right to exist, to marry, to transition, to worship freely, or to live without harassment.

Jesus refuses to perform worthiness to gain legitimacy.

Belovedness never needs to be proven.

Lent as Wilderness Discipleship

The wilderness teaches the church three things:

Solidarity — We do not abandon those under attack.

Clarity — We do not confuse empire for God.

Resistance — We refuse the bargains that harm our neighbor.

This is the discipleship Lent demands.

Journaling & Reflection Questions

1. What temptations do I see the church facing today?
2. Who is being asked to prove their worthiness in our society?
3. What systems weaponize economic survival?
4. Where do I see faith communities trading justice for political influence?
5. What allegiances do I need to release in order to follow Jesus more freely?
6. How is God calling us into solidarity with those harmed by current legislation?

Prayer

Christ who meets us in the wilderness, Give us courage to reject the bargains of empire. Strengthen those whose survival is threatened by unjust laws. Guard the vulnerable from those who weaponize religion. Root out the temptations that lead us to silence, neutrality, or complicity. May your church choose solidarity over safety, liberation over comfort, and beloved community over domination. Amen.

Beloved of God, may the wilderness clarify your calling, sharpen your resistance, and anchor you in the fierce love that refuses to bow to oppression. May we follow Jesus not into influence, but into liberation.

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

Reading:

Matthew 4:1–11

“Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness... and afterward he was famished.”

Opening Reflection

Before Jesus heals the sick, feeds the hungry, or proclaims liberation, he is driven into the wilderness to confront temptation.

This temptation is not trivial. It is not about dessert or small personal vices.

Jesus is tested at the level of **survival, identity, and allegiance** — the very pressures that shape our political, economic, and spiritual lives today.

Each temptation corresponds to a form of state power—power still used today to discipline, punish, or control marginalized communities.

Lord, teach me to love in action today. “Let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth” (1 John 3:18)

ATTENTION FAMILIES & YOUTH IN GRADES 6-12 COME TO OUR LOCK IN!

Owl Night Lock In

It's going to be a hoot!

February 21st @ 8pm -
February 22nd @ 11am

For 6th - 12th students.

All are welcome!

→ Register Now! ←

Contact Jess with any questions,
comments or concerns!

blcyouth@boreal.org

507-530-2763



We need chaperones!
Sign up in the Narthex.



FRIENDS ARE WELCOME

PRAYER list

Healing prayers are requested:

Gene & Barbara Erickson; Martha Rosbacka; Mary Sanders; Kristin Lindholm; Rolf Morck; Linda Zenk; Clayton Koss; Kamryn Johnson; Lois Johnson; Sarah Coe; Luke Gulstrand; Lynn Schulte; Christy Buetow; Annalisa Winje; Joan Bieber; Char Anderson; Bruce & Stacey Johnson; Rhonda & Butch Schulte; Stacey Schulte; Paulina Backstrom; Shae Lindholm; Hank Ferland; Margaret Dahl; Katrina Crouse; Tom Christiansen; Karen Shannon;

This week we lift up these members: Debbie Bieber & Kitt Bjornson; Kyler, Kelly, Ruby, Max, Jamie & Kade Hawsen; David & Carol Berg; Peter & Susan Dixon; and Nancy Dalbec. *May God walk with these faithful friends in their Lenten journey.*

Mark your calendars:

Saturday April 11th at 7pm

Bethlehem will host a rare chance to hear a nearly forgotten instrument, Baryton in a concert by Spanish trio Valencia Baryton Project Sponsored by the North Shore Music Association

https://youtu.be/Kjm4L7JBeWs?si=9Toyymm7NPAS_50iR

This Week at Bethlehem:

- Sun Feb 22 8:40 AM Choir Practice
10:00AM Worship Service
& Sunday School
11:15 AM Adult Ed
- Mon Feb 23 3:30 PM Girl Scouts
- Tues Feb 24 8:30 AM Staff meeting
- Wed Feb 25 12:30 PM Text Study
5:30 PM Community Meal
6:00 PM Lent Worship
- Thurs Feb 26 8:00 AM Bible Study
9:00 AM Quilting
6:30 PM Table Tennis
- Sun Mar 1 8:40 AM Choir practice
10:00 AM Worship Service
& Sunday School



*To the family of Jason Hill,
who lost his battle with multiple sclerosis
this past week.*



A FEW QUICK NOTES

An update from the Koss'

"Thank you for the card for Clayton

He has moved to ViewCrest Long Term Care at 3111 Church Place, Duluth. It's quite nice and he likes it there. If anyone coming down would like to see him, just have them come to Gramercy Park where I am and I will take them over - it's less than ten minutes from our home. Once there they will find their way easy back to the Mall or to the freeway and back to 61.

He has so much appreciated having you keep in touch.

*God Bless.
Nancy Koss"*

Gene & Barbara Erickson:

Gene called the church office just a bit ago. (Friday Feb. 20)

Barbara fell out of bed last night and fractured a bone in her neck. She was taken by ambulance last night to Duluth.

The doctors are not hopeful for a recovery, and have given Gene a few days left to be with his loving wife.

They are at St. Luke's with their son Mike and daughter Christie.

Please keep them all in your prayers.

Join us for Bethlehem Builders Club!

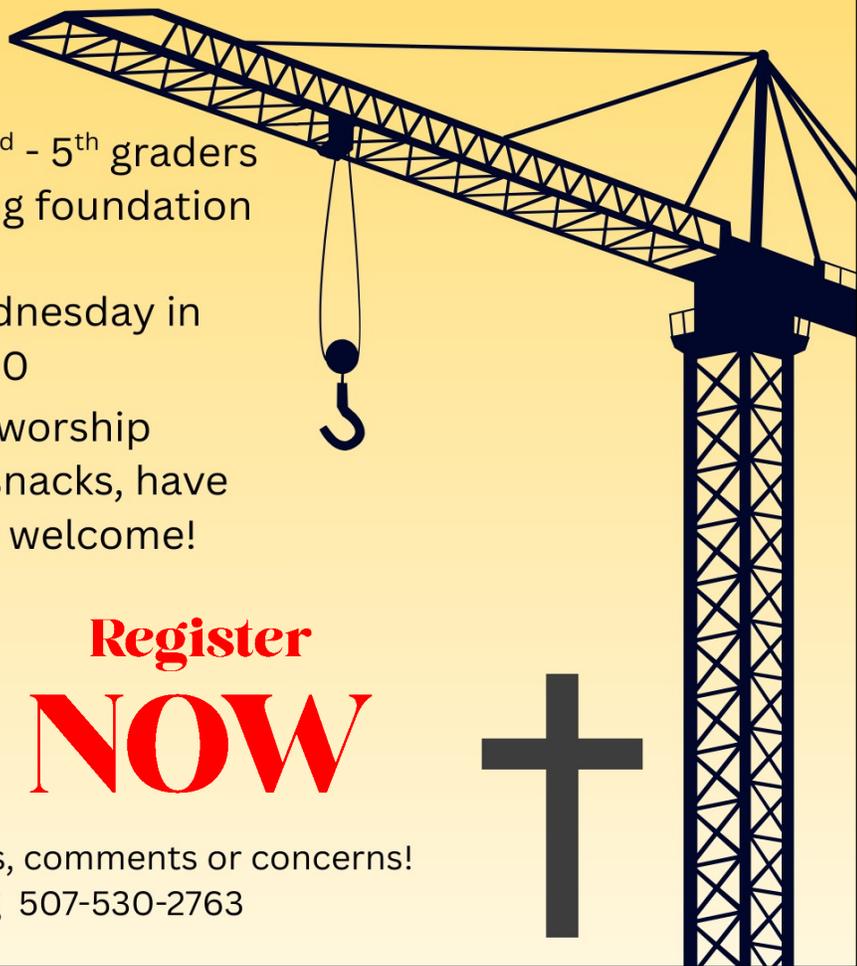
An afterschool program for 3rd - 5th graders where we are building a strong foundation of faith!

We will be meeting every Wednesday in March from 3:30-5:30

During this time we will worship together, play games, have snacks, have Bible study & more. All are welcome!



Register
NOW



Contact Jess with any questions, comments or concerns!
blcyouth@boreal.org 507-530-2763

Communion Class at Bethlehem

Come and learn about Communion! For 3rd - 5th graders **and anyone who missed this class.**

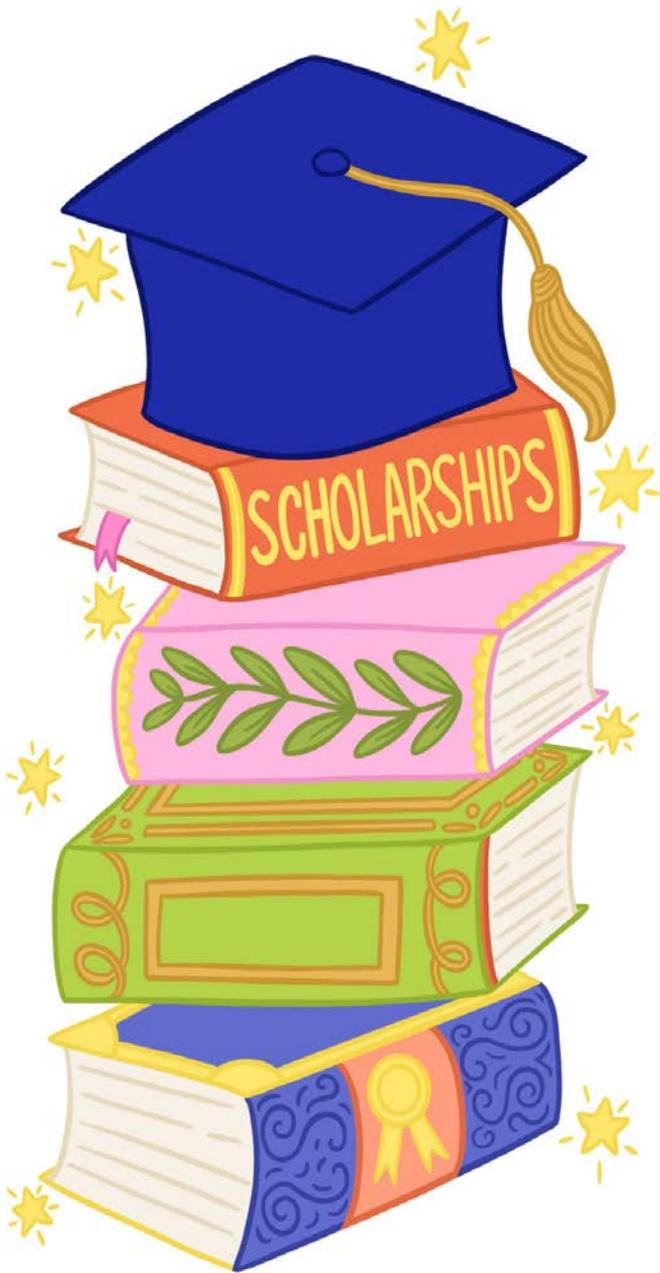
March 15th, 22nd & 29th @11am after Worship.



Register online now or contact Jess!

Contact Jess with any questions, comments or concerns!
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Attention High School Seniors or first-time post secondary students



Bethlehem's Mission Endowment Committee is pleased to announce scholarships for members:

- 1) Mission Endowment Scholarship \$1000 one-time award.*
- 2) Concordia College Congregational Scholarship, \$5000/year, renewable for 4 years*

Both forms are found in file folder on the Youth Bulletin Board, and at:

<https://www.sharingchrist.org/forms>

Application Deadline is Friday March 27, 2026

PLEASE JOIN US FOR A

A FEAST OF

Céad míle fáilte

A HUNDRED THOUSAND WELCOMES



ALL PROCEEDS GO TO HELPING OUR IMMIGRANT SIBLINGS

Saturday, March 14

**Seating times:
4:30 & 6:00 PM**

**Corned Beef and Cabbage
Vegan Irish Stew
Potatoes
Irish Soda Bread
Irish Cream Chocolate Cake**

**Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Grand Marais, MN
417 1st Ave W - Across from the YMCA**

Tickets - \$20 Adult - \$10 Child
Purchase tickets at church office or by phone
Advanced Ticket Sales Only

218-387-2227

blc@boreal.org

**WE ARE LOOKING FOR
THRIVENT ACTION
CARDS FOR THIS EVENT.**

**Can you
help?**

Looking to go to camp this summer?

Camps are a great way to meet new people, grow closer to God and spend time outdoors.

Here at Bethlehem, we want every student to be able to experience camp! Bethlehem offers a \$250 scholarship to any Christian camp, they would like to go to!

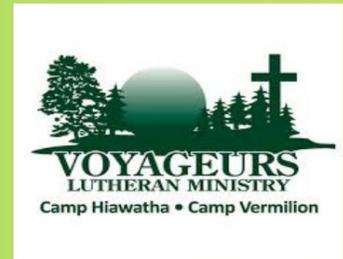
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Here are some camps that we love, if you are looking for an amazing camp experience!



**Wilderness
Canoe Base**



Application forms may be found at: <https://www.sharingchrist.org/forms>



Bethlehem Lutheran Church Camper Scholarship Application



Camper Name: _____

Grade entering _____

Church Camp attending: _____ Dates: _____

It is Bethlehem's intent to make Church Camp affordable so every child gets to go to camp.

How much money are you requesting? _____

How would you like to receive your campership?

Please reimburse me. (Please attach payment receipt)

Please mail the scholarship directly to camp



Camp Mailing Address: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____ Phone: _____

CONFIDENT. CARING. CERTIFIED.



FREE BABYSITTING TRAINING

Head of the Lakes United Way is proud to offer free babysitter training to youth 11 years of age and older.



Training will be provided by FirstAidMN and will follow the American Red Cross curriculum.

TRAINING CLASSES:

HERE IN GRAND MARAIS

April 25, 2026

8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Grand Marais Community Center

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN:

- How to care for infants and children.
- What to do in an emergency and how to stay safe.
- Choosing activities that are age appropriate.
- Recognizing, understanding and handling certain behaviors.
- Starting your babysitting business.
- Receive certification of babysitting training and Pediatric CPR after completion of class.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

- This is a one-day training; class starts at 8 AM and concludes at 4 PM.
- Space is limited to 24 participants
- Lunch and snacks will be provided.
- Parent/caregiver must provide transportation and accompany child to building for drop-off and pick-up. Parent/caregiver does not need to stay during the training.

Register here:



hlunitedway.org/babysitting
or scan qr code

For more information contact:

Jaci Christiansen
jchristiansen@hlunitedway.org
218-726-4889

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