

March 2019

Volume 81

Number 3



# The CHIMES

Monthly Newsletter of  
Bethlehem Lutheran Church

## A Message from Pastor Jen...

...Cliché for a Reason

When I meet with families to plan funerals for their loved ones who have died, one of the questions I ask pertains to scripture readings. I ask if they or their loved one have favorite passages. Sometimes people have passages in mind, but very often they do not. Either way I'm fine. If they do, then we have our scripture passages set for the service. If not, then this is the perfect opportunity to start reflecting and remembering.

The go-to Psalm passage for funerals seems to be the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm, the King James version.

*Psalm 23 King James Version (KJV)*

*23 The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.*

*2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.*

*3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.*

*4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.*

*5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.*

*6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*

In my earliest days of ordained ministry, I confess that I wished people would be more imaginative with their choice of Psalms. I would wonder to myself why not the 121<sup>st</sup> Psalm, or the 71<sup>st</sup> Psalm, or anything but the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm. I was foolish.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm is about as perfect as you can get when picking a funeral reading from the psalter. There are numerous reasons for this, and I want to touch upon the main ones as I see them.

1. People know it.

When we read or hear the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm we generally recognize it immediately, even finding ourselves able to recite from memory. Even those who don't normally go to church can find a familiar place in the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm.

**Bethlehem Lutheran Church**  
W8267 Hwy 33 East, Portage Wisconsin

**Pastor Jen Johnson**  
608-742-8502 or 608-485-3976  
bethlehemELCA.pastor@gmail.com

**Mailing Address**  
W8267 Hwy 33 East, Portage WI 53901

**Office Contact Info**  
Phone (608) 742-8502  
Email bethluch15@gmail.com  
[www.BethlehemLCportage.org](http://www.BethlehemLCportage.org)

woven into the fabric of our lives. It's an integral part of our heritage. It is. Amen, Amen, Amen.

**Pastor Jen**



2. People love it.

Seriously, how can you not love this Psalm? This is one of if not the most comforting images of God we have in the Bible. God's got our backs. God's got us covered. God feeds us. God guides us. God loves us.

3. "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?"

For those who are mourning the death of their loved one, verse 4 is the verse of hope. First, the psalmist walks *through* the valley of the shadow of death. The psalmist doesn't stop or get stuck or stay in the valley. The psalmist, with God's presence and protection walks through the valley. As do we. Second, God's rod and staff (a shepherding reference to be sure) bring comfort. A rod and staff both protect the sheep and correct the sheep. They are used to ward off dangerous animals and they are used to gently nudge a wayward sheep back on track. Third, you fill in your own reason, please. ☺

The 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm is not cliché. The 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm is comfort food for the soul. It's our go-to passage in times of need. It's a default setting in our mental library of scripture. It's part of the universal language of the People of the Book (Jews, Christians, and Muslims). It's

## Chancel Flowers

The cost is \$28 and you will be billed directly by Edgewater Greenhouse. Thank you for supporting our congregation in this way!

***Thank you to this month's sponsors!***

3/3 – Melissa Bradbury

For our season of Lent, no altar flowers will be needed from March 10<sup>th</sup> through April 20. We will be looking for sponsors starting April 21<sup>st</sup> (Easter Sunday) and for rest of the year.

## Coffee Hour

Coffee Hour Fellowship is a great time to make new friends, catch up with old friends and enjoy time together here at church.

Unless preempted by other church activities, coffee hour will follow the 9 am church service. Gather together after service for treats, coffee, milk or tea and fellowship.



***The sign-up sheet can be found in the Narthex.***



Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Special Events

For these upcoming events!

## Congregational Fellowship Event

Join-us

March 2, 2019,

6-pm-for

Snow-Tubing

at-Cascade-Mountain.



## Worship & Events



| Date | Soup-Sponsor         | Confirmation-Class-workers |
|------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| 3/6  | Confirmation         | 6 <sup>th</sup> -grade     |
| 3/13 | Quilters/Altar-Guild | 7 <sup>th</sup> -grade     |
| 3/20 | Women's-Group        | 8 <sup>th</sup> -grade     |
| 3/27 | Church-Council       | 6 <sup>th</sup> -grade     |
| 4/3  | Confirmation         | 7 <sup>th</sup> -grade     |
| 4/10 | Choir/Praise-Team    | 8 <sup>th</sup> -grade     |

## Augsburg Fortress Book Fair



Browse-books-for-sale-from-Augsburg-Fortress-Publishers Books-in-Narthex-after-services March-3-24

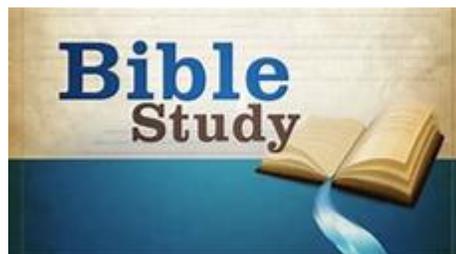
- We will be hosting an Easter breakfast at church after worship. Additional details coming soon.
- On March 10<sup>th</sup> there will be the installation of council members during the worship service.
- The Trivia Night youth fundraiser has been set for April 27th.

## Please Join Us!

On Tuesday for the Weekly Bible Study with Pastor Jen. We will meet in the Youth Group room across from the Pastor's office at 11:00, following quilting.

All are welcome to participate. No previous experience is needed—the Holy Spirit takes care of that!

Bring your Bible, a paper and pen if you wish, and your curiosity. Our times together will last somewhere around an hour.



## Who likes to have conversations?

Who enjoys spending a little time talking about things that matter most? Who thinks it is important for confirmation students to put their faith into words and action? Why, YOU do! Here's your chance to do all these things at once.

For the remainder of our Confirmation classes, we will all meet together for the Big Picture Lesson and then break off into smaller conversation groups, so we can dig deeper into the topic of the night.



The more conversation partners we have, the better we think this will be.

Talk with Pastor Jen to find out more!

- Volunteer appreciation breakfast will be May 5th before worship. Invitations will be sent out in the near future.

- We are hosting the Active Attack at BLC in March 14th I believe, 6-8pm, open to the community. For more information contact Tania Anderson

*March will pass quickly, so mark your calendars for "April Tornado Awareness" month. Make sure you check out The posted maps around the church which show the safe areas to stay during bad weather.*



## River Haven

Please check the River Haven *Wish List* posted on the bulletin board in the Narthex for a list of items that are need at the facility. It's a great, inexpensive, way to fulfill our outreach programs, by helping those in need with a simple extra item in your shopping cart, that goes a long way to helping those less fortunate.



## **Benevolence: it's a good thing!**

*Benevolence* is a term we use in the ELCA to describe money that we, as a local church designate and send to our respective synods. The money is used to finance and support the ministries carried out by and through the Synod offices. At our annual meeting last month, we voted for a line item in our Ministry Spending Plan, designating \$1000 Benevolence to our Synod.

What this means is that as a congregation we are pledging to support the ministries of the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin with our prayers and financial resources for the coming year. We will individually contribute our support together with prayer and designated offerings above and beyond our regular giving. This works out to just over \$2 per person in our congregation. That's quite a bargain! For about \$3 from each of us we can fulfill our financial pledge for the year plus a wee bit extra. Of course, some choose to give more, and some choose to give less, which is just fine!

Some may want to know, why do we send Benevolence anyway? Simply, we send because we are in this ministry together, as partners in service through Christ. Together we are Church. Together we are in mission. Together we are called, equipped, and sent.

If we don't send Benevolence to our Synod, then we are still going to be a part of the ministry community. We will still be cared for by the Synod staff and her members.

If we do send Benevolence to our Synod, then we are actively engaged in the life and ministry of this part of the Body of Christ in the world. The quality of our participation is enhanced by our giving. We are literally and figuratively invested in what's happening in the South-Central Synod and beyond.

It's easy to contribute to the Benevolence offering to the Synod. All you have to do is put your gift in the offering plate during worship and designate either on the check memo line or offering envelope that you would like the money to go toward *Benevolence*.

Thanks!!!

## Seeking Treasurer

Bethlehem Lutheran Church is looking for someone to fill the role of Treasurer at the church. We are looking for someone with a Finance/Accounting background to review the church finances monthly. Included in the duties are: auditing the balance sheets; reviewing expenditures and income assignments; issuing 1099's and W2's; IRS quarterly reporting.



## Church Vegetable Garden

Are you a gardener with time on your hands or nowhere to have a garden? Maybe you've never had a garden but would love to learn how. Would you like to learn what to do with the vegetables once they have been harvested?

We are looking into reviving the church vegetable garden if we have enough volunteers. Volunteers needed for the months of May through October to help prep the land, plant, water, weed, and harvest.

For those interested or have questions, please contact Julie Saalsaa at 429-9993 (home), 608-333-6102 (cell for text messages) or [juls32002@gmail.com](mailto:juls32002@gmail.com).

Fred Reckling and wife Char are searching for volunteers who would be interested in sitting with Fred while other family members are out of the house for various times during the week. No special skills required.

If you are interested contact Pastor Jen or the church office at 608-742-8502

## CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

January 24, 2019

Called to order by President Tania Anderson.

Attendance: Fred Reckling, Tim Kratz, Ann Ciske, Angie Chappell, Kathy Tofson, Pastor Jen Johnson.

Absent with notification: Cheri Dvorak, Robin Kvalo, Ed Rohrbacher; Tania Anderson

Guest: Mark Teslik

### PASTOR JEN'S REPORT

Introduction of Mark Teslik, they are working to set up a mutual ministry team. They have met a couple of times. A mutual ministry committee is common throughout the ELCA and is contained within the ELCA constitution. It is a committee to affirm and strengthen the congregation and ministry of the staff. Church uses this time to develop an open communication with the Pastor to get information from the members. This would be a combined effort with the Renewal committee. Pastor and Mark have identified 6 people to serve on the committee, who will be contacted upon approval: Kris Soderman, Lisa Cook, Melissa Bradbury, Hailey Marks, Marty Genrich, Mark Teslik.

Motion by Fred Reckling, Tim Kratz to establish the Mutual Renewal Ministry Team. Motion Carried.

### **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Under Property, inventory day. Alphabet Express Graduation.

Motion by Fred Reckling, second by Tim Kratz to approve the agenda with stated changes. Motion Carried.

### **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Motion by Angie Chappell, second by Fred Reckling to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. Motion Carried.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### FINANCE

A review of the Annual Report.

Dan Mael submitted his resignation as the Treasurer but will donate services as an advisor in a lessor role.

Motion by Fred Reckling, second by Tim Kratz to accept the resignation of Dan Mael. Motion Carried.

Council will revisit the roles and responsibilities at a later date.

#### STEWARDSHIP/EVANGELISM

A Closer look at School Violence. Sunday, February 17, 2019 at 10:00 am.

Motion by Tim Kratz, second by Ann Ciske to approve up to \$75 for advertising of the School Violence panel discussion. Motion Carried.

### WORSHIP & MUSIC

They revisited the Lesson/Carols. Holy week 5 sensory station. Good Friday services, first one traditional, 2<sup>nd</sup> one a showing of Jesus Christ Superstar. They will be at 1 and 5:30 pm.

### PROPERTY

February 9<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am, Inventory Day.

### CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Cheri's resignation was accepted via email. Meghan will volunteer her time.

Motion by Fred Reckling, second by Ann Ciske to approve committee reports as presented. Motion Carried.

### NEW BUSINESS

Alphabet Express would like to use the Church for their graduation May 15<sup>th</sup> setup and graduation May 16<sup>th</sup>.

Motion by Tim Kratz, second by Fred Reckling to approve Alphabet Express to hold their graduation at the church May 16, 2019. Motion Carried.

Motion by Tim Kratz, second by Ann Ciske to Adjourn. Motion Carried.  
Meeting adjourned at 7:41 pm.

Next Council Meeting: Thursday, February 21, 2019 at 6:30 pm.

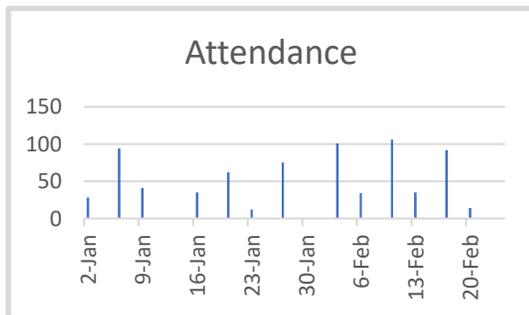


# Church Volunteers

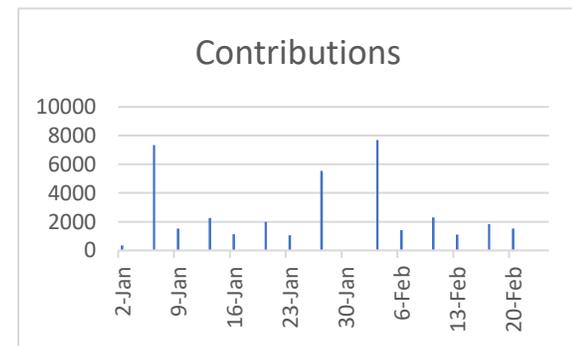
| Date     | Greeters                     | Ushers                | Reader         | Communion Assistants                                                                                 | Altar Guild      | Acolytes            |
|----------|------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Sun 3/3  | Barb Rothwell & Dick Olson   | Larry & Sandy Sween   | Cheryl Skeie   | Tim & Laurie Prochnow                                                                                | Cindy Frank      | Brianna Fisher      |
| Wed 3/6  |                              |                       |                |                                                                                                      | Diane Grueneberg |                     |
| Sun 3/10 | Halley, Emily & Maren Marcks | Margaret & Del Molden | Halley Marcks  | Brenda Larson<br> | Bobbie Goodman   | Lucas Kreuziger     |
| Wed 3/13 |                              |                       |                |                                                                                                      | Judy Donahue     |                     |
| Sun 3/17 | Cox Family                   | Don & Bonnie Bender   | Bobbie Goodman |                   | Marie Kucksdorf  | Shayna Cox          |
| Wed 3/20 |                              |                       |                |                                                                                                      | Kathy Lawrence   |                     |
| Sun 3/24 | Dianna Bush                  | Cox Family            | Brenda Larson  |                   | Cara Druckrue    | Katherine Rieckmann |
| Wed 3/27 |                              |                       |                |                                                                                                      | Cheryl Hebel     |                     |
| Sun 3/31 | Jerry & Julie Saalsaa        | Roger & Dawn Duchow   | Jeff Melby     | Kerry & Jeff Melby                                                                                   | Kari Johnson     | Griffin Garrigan    |



**Looking for volunteers!** Contact Nancy Buckley or the Church office to volunteer.



**Attendance and Contribution Information:**  
 Attendance numbers for January 10<sup>th</sup> are not available at this time.  
 Contributions for January 6, 2019 are higher due to added late Christmas Eve contributions.



# Bethlehem Lutheran Church

# March 2019

| Sunday                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Monday                                                                                                                                                | Tuesday                                                                                                                                                         | Wednesday                                                                                                                                     | Thursday                                                                    | Friday                                                                           | Saturday                                                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                               |                                                                             | <b>1</b><br>10:30 am Tai Chi                                                     | <b>2</b><br>6:00 pm Fellowship Event:<br>Tubing at Cascade Mountain |
| <b>3</b><br>9:00 am Worship<br>10:00 am Bible Study w/ Pastor Jen<br>10:15 am Blood Pressure Screening<br>10:15 am Sunday School                                                                                                   | <b>4</b><br>10:00 am Staff Meeting<br>10:30 am Tai Chi<br>6:30 pm Euchre                                                                              | <b>5</b><br>9:00 am Quilting Group<br>11:00 am Weekly Bible Study with Pastor Jen<br>5:30 pm Finance Committee<br>6:00 pm ZUMBA<br>7:15 pm Praise Team Practice | <b>6</b> <b>Ash Wednesday</b><br>10:30 am Tai Chi<br>5:30 pm Worship<br>6:30 pm Augsburg Book Sale                                            | <b>7</b>                                                                    | <b>8</b><br>10:30 am Tai Chi<br>12:00 pm Set - up for Baby shower                | <b>9</b><br>11:30 am Anna Bolgerin - Baby Shower                    |
| <b>10</b> <b>Augsburg Book Sale</b><br>9:00 am Worship<br>10:00 am Bible Study w/ Pastor Jen<br>10:15 am First Communion Class<br>10:15 am Sunday School<br>11:00 am Reservation for Fellowship hall - Portage Post Prom Committee | <b>11</b><br>10:00 am Staff Meeting<br>10:30 am Tai Chi<br>6:30 pm All Committee Meeting<br>6:30 pm Euchre                                            | <b>12</b><br>9:00 am Quilting Group<br>11:00 am Weekly Bible Study with Pastor Jen<br>6:00 pm ZUMBA                                                             | <b>13</b><br>10:30 am Tai Chi<br>5:30 pm Lenten Worship<br>6:30 pm Augsburg Book Sale<br>6:30 pm First Communion Class                        | <b>14</b><br>9:00 am Women's Group<br>6:00 pm Active Shooter Demonstration. | <b>15</b><br>10:30 am Tai Chi                                                    | <b>16</b>                                                           |
| <b>17</b> <b>Augsburg Book Sale</b><br>9:00 am Worship<br>10:00 am Bible Study w/ Pastor Jen<br>10:15 am First Communion Class<br>10:15 am Sunday School                                                                           | <b>18</b> <b>Chimes Articles Due</b><br><b>Meals on Wheels</b><br>10:00 am Staff Meeting<br>10:30 am Tai Chi<br>6:30 pm Euchre<br>6:30 pm SRA meeting | <b>19</b> <b>Meals on Wheels</b><br>9:00 am Quilting Group<br>11:00 am Weekly Bible Study with Pastor Jen<br>6:00 pm ZUMBA                                      | <b>20</b> <b>Meals on Wheels</b><br>10:30 am Tai Chi<br>5:30 pm Lenten Worship<br>6:30 pm Augsburg Book Sale<br>6:30 pm First Communion Class | <b>21</b> <b>Meals on Wheels</b><br>6:30 pm Council Meeting                 | <b>22</b> <b>Meals on Wheels</b><br>10:30 am Tai Chi<br>2:30 pm Bingo at Wyocena | <b>23</b>                                                           |
| <b>24</b> <b>Augsburg Book Sale</b><br>9:00 am Worship<br>10:00 am Bible Study w/ Pastor Jen<br>10:15 am First Communion Class<br>10:15 am Sunday School                                                                           | <b>25</b><br>10:00 am Staff Meeting<br>10:30 am Tai Chi<br>6:30 pm Euchre                                                                             | <b>26</b><br>9:00 am Quilting Group<br>11:00 am Weekly Bible Study with Pastor Jen<br>1:00 pm Knitting Group meets at Ginny Paulson house<br>6:00 pm ZUMBA      | <b>27</b><br>10:30 am Tai Chi<br>5:30 pm Lenten Worship<br>6:30 pm Confirmation Class<br>6:30 pm First Communion Class                        | <b>28</b>                                                                   | <b>29</b><br>10:30 am Tai Chi                                                    | <b>30</b>                                                           |
| <b>31</b><br>9:00 am Worship<br>10:00 am Bible Study w/ Pastor Jen<br>10:15 am First Communion Class<br>10:15 am Sunday School                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                               |                                                                             |                                                                                  |                                                                     |