

CROSSINGS



FEBRUARY 2020

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
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Doing the right thing even when it's the hard thing is a strong theme in *"Just Mercy"*. Following an internship on death row in Alabama, Brian chooses, as a newly graduated Harvard lawyer, to return to Alabama to work among the poor, mostly black, condemned inmates awaiting execution.

I won't say anything more about the movie because I hope you'll see it. Though emotionally painful and not for children, it was one of the most compelling and hopeful movies that I have seen - ever.

Mr. Stevenson, who I was fortunate to hear speak at a Willow Creek Leadership Summit, has also advocated against mass incarceration, offering that in 1972, 48 years ago, the U.S. had 300,000 people in the criminal justice system. Today, there are over 2.3 million, the highest rate of incarceration in the world. The reason, he explains is largely due to changes in legal policy, for example, the war on drugs of the 70's and the decision to punish by incarceration. "There is a despair, a lack of hope, that is being shaped by this reality according to Brian, particularly in non-white communities and among the poor, both of which are disproportionately represented in those 2.3 million."

Why is this important to us as a church? Because, as Brian says, we need to be in hopeless places and be a witness for hope. Jesus said as much in the Gospel of Matthew, "When I was in prison, you visited me." Jesus chose to eat with sinners, reach out to the untouchable, and to include the excluded.



Dear Bethlehem,

Brian Stevenson, whose experiences as a lawyer representing the poor on death row in Alabama

have been made into the recently released movie *"Just Mercy"*, tells this story about his grandmother.

When I was eight or nine, my grandmother pulled me aside and said, Brian, I have been watching you. I see that there is something very special about you, and you are going to do great things in your life. But I want you to promise me three things. "Ok, Grandma", I said. 1. Always take care of your mama. 2. Always do the right thing even though it's the hard thing. 3. Never drink alcohol. When I was 15, I was hanging out with my brothers and they offered me sip of beer. Remembering my promises; I said, "No thanks." After several more attempts, my brother finally said, "I hope you're not still hung up on that talk of Grandma's, telling us how special we are!"

Dr. Martin Luther King reminded us that an injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. As a solution he offered the “beloved community”, not as an ideal that could only be achieved in heaven, something to work toward in this life.

In the King’s Beloved Community, poverty, hunger and homelessness will not be tolerated because international standards of human decency will not allow it. Racism and all forms of discrimination, bigotry and prejudice will be replaced by an all-inclusive spirit of sisterhood and brotherhood. Love and trust will triumph over fear and hatred.

Brian Stevenson wanted to return to Alabama to help people wrongly convicted. He believed that the right thing to do was to seek justice. You’ll have to see the movie to learn how he did with that. What he learned along the way was that “we are all so much more than the worst thing we’ve ever done.” I think his grandmother was right, it takes one very special person to know that.

Peace
Pastor Carol

**BETHLEHEM’S GENERAL
OPERATING FUND**

Below is the action report of our giving with dollar amounts for December and YTD.

| 2019 | December | YTD Actual | YTD Budget |
|------------------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| Receipts to Gen. Oper. Fund | \$24,023.94 | \$196,593.18 | \$194,975.00 |
| Expenses | \$22,762.85 | \$196,593.18 | \$194,975.00 |
| Total Receipts less Expenses | \$ 1,261.09 | | \$ 0.00 |

Thank you for your contributions to our church to help us move strongly into 2020. Extra income to the GOF was applied to our March commercial insurance payment and this will lower the insurance amount for 2020 helping to balance the budget.

Property Trust Fund

| 2019 | December | YTD |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Contributions to Renovation | \$ 506.50 | \$ 5,774.00 |
| Contributions to Property Trust | \$ 100.00 | \$ 3,415.00 |

Our current Renovation loan balance is \$58,600 which includes our recent fire code improvements to the building. Gifts to the Renovation Fund will help lower this debt.

Chery Peacock, Treasurer

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS



- 02 Judy Drommerhausen
- 03 Elizabeth Canham
- Jordy Eberdt
- 04 Jennifer Haring
- 05 David Shroder
- 07 Robert Gordon
- 08 Eric Samuelson
- 09 Kaitlyn Anderson
- Brian Sullivan
- 12 Char Carey
- Catherine Lichtenberg
- 14 Domanik Malave
- 16 Alex Sorton
- 19 Sylvia Hergert
- 21 Scott Fiorito
- Rebecca Jindra
- Joyce Ross
- Diana O’Connor
- 25 Matthew Hergert
- 26 Amalia Marquez
- 28 Joseph Quick

WORSHIP SCHEDULE
Sunday Morning Schedule

9:00 a.m. Traditional Worship
Sunday School
Youth Group
10:00 a.m. Hospitality Hour
10:30 a.m. Contemporary Service

Holy Communion is offered at each service.

Children worship with their families February 2.

Ash Wednesday is February 26. We will offer a service at 12:00 noon and 7:00 p.m. Both will have the imposition of ashes and Holy Communion.

Sing with the Choir! You are invited to join us, even if only for a few months. We practice Wednesdays from 7:15 - 8:15 p.m. and meet in the sanctuary. Beginning February 26, we practice on Wednesdays from 6:20 - 6:50 p.m. If you would like to know more, contact Peg at 847-337-9805.

Praise God with the Praise Group! We welcome singers and instrumentalists such as guitar, percussion, flute and violin. Your involvement can be occasional or regular. We practice Wednesdays from 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. Beginning February 26, our practice begins at 5:00 p.m. Contact Peg if interested.

Other worship opportunities: lector, assisting minister, communion steward, acolyte, usher, greeter, drama and welcome center. All are welcome.

The deadline for February's Crossing articles is Wednesday, February 19. Please send to Shirley Harnish at smharnish@comcast.net

**SUMMARY OF BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN
CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

January 13, 2020

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Margaret Drafall, President | 847-695-4721 |
| Mike Murschel, Vice-President | 847-741-4221 |
| Karin Jones, Secretary | 224-558-9504 |
| Heather Thomas | 847-977-1371 |
| Ronnie Malave | 847-873-9940 |
| Rachel Campbell | 847-695-9024 |
| Jill Olson | 847-741-8918 |
| Tom Ayres | 847-697-1248 |

The council approved the proposed 2020 budget that Chery has thoughtfully put together for our congregation based on her many years of experience. We are happy to be able to present a balanced budget to the congregation at the Annual Meeting this month for their vote.

The 2020 Strategic Plan for BLC is also ready to be presented to the congregation. We hope to see thriving events and spiritual growth again this year at BLC!

The council also received two letters of resignation this month. Mike Murschel is not able to continue in his role as the vice president of the council, and Tom Ayres has resigned from the Memorials Committee so that he can serve on the church council. We are thankful to them both for sharing their gifts of leadership, wisdom, thoughtfulness, and service.

The council approved adult education expenses for three of our members to attend a training workshop to learn more about the Reconciling in Christ process that we are completing here at BLC. We are excited to see progress and learning happening. We also continue to follow the procedures other ELCA churches are making as they navigate this process as well.

The council also discussed the necessary replacement of the five air-conditioning units in the sanctuary and replacement of the draperies in the front of the sanctuary that filter the light through the stained glass windows. Both items will need congregational approval.

Margaret Drafall is working on the creation of a committee to work together on planning the 150th anniversary of Bethlehem Lutheran Church! Let Margaret know if you are interested or would like additional information.

Our next meeting is scheduled for February 10, 2020, at 7 p.m., and all are welcome to attend.

Sincerely,
Karin Jones
BLC Secretary

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. CELEBRATION FOOD DRIVE



As part of Elgin's Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration, the MLK Committee hosted the annual community-wide food drive. Food collected was distributed to local food pantries to provide much needed food through the winter months, when the pantries frequently have severe shortages.

Grocery bags were available to take home to fill with food and return by Sunday 1/19. Yea! God! for your generous support! The donations were delivered to the Brethren warehouse. Our own youth group members
Lindsey Anderson, Brenden Canham, Giselle Luna,



Amalia Marquez, Eva Marquez, and Gayle Chiarugi volunteered at the warehouse on Martin Luther King Day to help in the sorting of the food donations.

If you didn't get a chance to fill your grocery bag, save your bag and fill it up for the Lenten food drive in March and April. Thanks for your support!

CHURCH WORLD SERVICE BLANKET PROGRAM

They are also filled with abundant joy, which has overflowed in rich generosity. 2 Corinthians 8:2

In 2019, congregational gifts provided over 118,000 CWS Blankets and Kits to families impacted by hurricanes, tornadoes, flooding and other crises (including homelessness and poverty). Share blankets, warmth and comfort with your neighbors. Continue to spread the joy.



The Service Team has designated the month of February for the annual Blanket Program. Special envelopes will be available for your donations. A gift of just \$10 provides a sturdy, comforting blanket to children, men and women who are struggling. Thanks for your support which provides warmth, hope, and care during cold and trying times.

Service Team

A grandfather was walking through his yard when he heard his granddaughter repeating the alphabet in a tone of voice that sounded like prayer.

He asked her what she was doing. The little girl explained, "I'm praying, but can't think of exactly the right words, so I'm just saying all the letters, and God will put them together for me because he knows what I'm thinking."

SCOUT SUNDAY

Sunday, February 9 is Scout Sunday. Bethlehem’s scouts (members of our Troop 111 for Girls and other scouts who are BLC members and belong to other units) will be serving in various positions at the 9:00 service. The 2020 Charter for the troop will also be presented. This is a great opportunity to meet our scouts.



If there are scouts from other units that have not been contacted about helping, they can call Marti Jernberg (847-337-0903).

SOUPER BOWL of CARING



The youth have been involved with Souper Bowl of Caring since 2001. Last year we gave the food pantry \$249 and food items that

you provided for the pantry.

The youth will be collecting for the SOUPER BOWL on Sunday, February 2 at both services. The money collected will go directly to the Interfaith Food Pantry. If you would like to write a check, please make it payable to the **All People’s Interfaith Food Pantry.**

Thanks for your help in fight hunger in our community.

FIRST COMMUNION PREPARATION

First Communion preparation for children age 7 or in grade 2 or older are invited to attend. Classes will be held on Saturdays



beginning February 29. Parent and child should plan to attend the classes. All classes are 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Please contact the church office at 847-741-8434 or churchoffice@blcelgin.org to enroll.

MISSION TRIP 2020

Fifteen youth and four leaders will be serving on another Mission Trip this summer! They have committed to serving at the YouthWorks site in Lake Traverse, South Dakota, June 6-13. Thank you to those who contributed to the Savers Clothing Drive and the Lou Malnati’s Pizza coupons fundraiser.

The youth will be sending their prayer partner letters at the end of January. Everything hinges on prayers. The letters tell of the how the youth/leaders will serve the community of Lake Traverse and why the youth want to serve.

Be watching for the announcement of the date for the Annual Pasta Dinner. It will be later than the usual time.

**BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH
FEBRUARY 2020**

| <i>SUNDAY</i> | <i>MONDAY</i> | <i>TUESDAY</i> | <i>WEDNESDAY</i> | <i>THURSDAY</i> | <i>FRIDAY</i> | <i>SATURDAY</i> |
|--|---|--|--|--|---|---|
| | | | | | | 1 *Sean Edwards 10:00 – 9:00 Youth Retreat At Living Lord Lutheran Church |
| 2 *Linda Fagan Souper Bowl Sunday 9:00 Traditional Service Children worship with parents 9:00 Youth Group 10:00 Hospitality Hour 10:30 Contemporary Service | 3 *Craig Field 12:00 Craft Circle- Red Room 7:00 Worship Meeting 7:00 Learning Meeting 7:00 Witness Meeting | 4 *M/M Scott Fiorito 10:00 Bible Study at the Sheridan 7:00 Scout Troop Meeting | 5 *Denise Gilbert-Collins 5:30 Praise Him 6:00 Women’s Bible Study 7:15 Confirmation Class 7:15 Adult Choir | 6 *Mark Goers 3:00 Bible Study at The Vines No Finance Meeting | 7 *Gail Gilliland | 8 *M/M Robert Gordon 4:00 Rental of Wittenstrom Hall |
| 9 *M/M Robert Graham Scout Sunday 9:00 Traditional Service 9:00 Sunday School/Youth Group 10:00 Hospitality Hour 10:30 Contemporary Service | 10 *Yolando Granados & Marco Villagomez family 7:00 Church Council | 11* Matthew Hadley family 10:00 Bible Study in the Red Room 7:00 Scout Troop Meeting | 12 *Jennifer Haring 5:30 Praise Him 6:00 Women’s Bible Study 7:15 Confirmation Class 7:15 Adult Choir | 13 *M/M Fred Harnish 3:00 Bible Study at The Vines | 14 *M/M Richard Heimburg | 15 * Matthew Hergert family |
| 16 *Edward Hernandez 9:00 Traditional Service 9:00 Sunday School/Youth Group 10:00 Hospitality Hour 10:30 Contemporary Service | 17 *Kayla Hernandez 7:00 Rebecca Circle in the Red Room | 18 *Libby Hoeft 10:00 Bible Study in the Red Room 7:00 Scout Troop Meeting | 19 *Marilyn House Crossing articles due to Shirley Harnish 5:30 Praise Him 6:00 Women’s Bible Study 7:15 Confirmation 7:15 Adult Choir | 20 *M/M Dave Jernberg 3:00 Bible Study at the Vines 7:00 CDC Board Meeting | 21 *Stephen Jernberg family | 22 *Sue Johnson |
| 23 *M/M Bill Jones 9:00 Traditional Service 9:00 Sunday School/Youth Group 10:00 Hospitality Hour 10:45 Annual Meeting | 24 *Gentry Jones family 7:00 Strategic Plan Committee | 25 *Jeffrey Kellogg 10:00 Bible Study in the Red Room 7:00 Scout Troop Meeting | 26 *Jerry Kile 9:00 Prayer Shawl Ministry 12:00 Ash Wednesday Service 5:00 Praise Him Practice 6:15 Adult Choir 7:00 Ash Wednesday Service | 27 *M/M Larry Klemm 3:00 Bible Study at the Vines | 28 *Zachary Kohen family 4:00 – 7:00 Soup Kitchen Holy Trinity Church | 29 *Jennifer Korp, Robert Luna and Gizelle 10:00 First Communion Preparation |

*Members to be prayed for.

** Holy Communion served at all services