

FOOTPRINTS

Bethel Lutheran Church

Believe—Belong—Become

“Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.” Psalm 119:105

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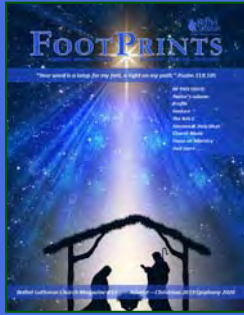
Seasons & Holy Days

Church Music

Focus on Ministry

And more

FOOTPRINTS



ON THE COVER:
Nativity Scene—Pixabay

FOOTPRINTS

Issue #10

With the name **FOOTPRINTS**, we honor our commitment to walk in the steps of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ leaving a legacy for others to follow. At the same time, we look back and acknowledge the Bethel believers and our own personal *cloud of witnesses* who have gone before us leaving their footprints of faith for us to follow. We hope our humble efforts give Glory to God and provide enlightenment, entertainment, and knowledge to our readers. God bless you all!



Bethel's **vision** is to be a dynamic, life-changing church of fully devoted disciples of Jesus Christ.



Bethel's **mission** is to engage the curious, encourage the convinced, and empower the committed to be fully devoted disciples of Jesus Christ.



PoWeR SuRge

- Pray daily
- Worship regularly
- Read Scripture daily
- Serve others
- Relate to other Christians in Faith
- Give of your financial resources



Editorial Board:

Gay Hanson (Editor in Chief), Pam Dodane, Pastor Doug Gast, Carole Kuhn, Sarah Manro, Debbie Nielsen, John Patterson, and Pastor Al Schoonover.

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ADVENT

PASTOR'S COLUMN

PASTOR AL SCHOONOVER



Immanuel, Come!

*Oh, come, oh, come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.*

“Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel” is probably my favorite of all the Advent carols in our hymnal. For me, the perfect combination of text and minor-key tune beautifully communicates the longing of this season as we await our dear Savior’s coming in all its fullness – the first time at Bethlehem, and at the end of time “when he shall come again to judge the living and the dead.” No matter how often we hear the story of God coming in the flesh, something fresh comes to light; something new captures my attention, causing renewed awe and appreciation to bubble up inside of me despite all the hustle and bustle of the season. I pray this is true for you this year as well.

Our theme this year is “Immanuel, Come!” Each weekend, we’ll let the lectionary readings draw us deeper into the story of Jesus’ coming. He is the “Son of Man” who will restore the entire world at the end of time (Advent 1). He is the spiritual house cleaner of whom John the Baptizer spoke, separating wheat from chaff with his winnowing shovel (Advent 2). He is the Coming One who restores sight to the blind, heals the sick, raises the dead, and preaches the gospel to the poor (Advent 3). He is the babe of Bethlehem, born under unusual circumstances to an unusual couple, who comes to save every human heart from sin (Advent 4).

Our three midweek services will take a slightly different tack this year. We will start with dinner at 6p as in the past. Our devotions will follow at 7p; Haugen Evening Prayer and a selection of Advent Carols will serve as the substance of the service. Our focus this year will be the five women who appear in Matthew’s genealogy (1:1-17). To our

modern ears, there wouldn’t be anything unexpected about listing both parents, if known, in our Ancestry.com family tree. But in ancient days, family lineage was usually traced through the father’s family line, while the child adopted the mother’s faith traditions. Therefore, it would only matter that the men appeared in a listing of ancestors. What might we learn, then, about God and / or Jesus when our eyes trip on names like Tamar (1:3), Rahab (1:5), Ruth (1:5), “the wife of Uriah” (1:7), and Mary (1.16)? What does it mean that these five women appear in Matthew’s genealogy? What does it mean that, by faith, we, too, are part of Jesus’ family tree? Immanuel, Come!

Pastor Al

Did you notice that both Immanuel and Emmanuel are used here? They are the same word and have the same meaning, “God with us.” So why “I” or “E”?

What it comes down to is: Immanuel is the English translation of the Hebrew עִמָּנוּאֵל (immanū’ēl) and Emmanuel is the English translation of the Greek “Ἐμμανουήλ” (Emmanouē’l) which is a translation of the Hebrew עִמָּנוּאֵל So, the difference is Old Testament Hebrew vs. New Testament Greek. Both are correct and either may be used, but the important point is “God with us!”



PROFILE: *Dennis & Tanya Clary*

By Carole Kuhn

They met in second grade....



...”and she is still putting up with me!” is the way Dennis Clary puts it! Tanya and Dennis Clary grew up in Bellbrook, Ohio, a small farm community. If you’ve ever read stories of when small towns might have only a grocery, barbershop, a couple churches and maybe a hardware store,

you would know that the men often met at the hardware store to sit and trade stories! There were 2 churches in Bellbrook, a Presbyterian and a Methodist. But when Tanya was 8 years old, a Lutheran pastor came to the community and going door-to-door gathered a new congregation. The name of the church was Bethel Lutheran! Tanya’s grandmother lived with them at that point and had been a Lutheran during the Depression...so all joined the new church.

Today, if you stop by our church office on a Thursday, you might get to see and visit with Tanya as she volunteers her Thursday hours there. If you attended the craft fair in November, you might have visited Dennis’ craft table where he featured beautiful bowls, trays and other works of art created from dead logs he gathers from the woods. But, getting to Indiana and to our Bethel Lutheran Church has been a life-changing story for the Clarys. Everyone goes through changes in their lives but some seem to do it with a more positive attitude...the Clarys are a great example of that positive attitude.



They did meet in the second grade in the Bellbrook Elementary School which was almost in the same building as the middle and high schools. They



began dating in high school and at that time they began to notice Dennis was extremely hard of hearing. When very young, he had suffered several severe head traumas and as a teenager was in a serious auto accident. He also worked on “muscle cars” during those teen years and was at a race track a lot which may have contributed to the hearing loss in both ears. But his speech patterns were always clear throughout childhood so teachers and family members never noticed the hearing loss. Even negative events can bring on semi-humorous ones. One day while in elementary school, as recess ended, the teacher blew the whistle to return to class. Dennis, out in the back field, didn’t hear the whistle and as he looked around and saw no one else around, he thought school was over and walked home. He arrived there at noon, and an unhappy mother spanked him and he walked back to school!

After graduating from high school, Dennis and Tanya were married in Alexandria, Virginia. They had gone there to be married after the Lutheran pastor from Bellbrook had left, and the church had closed. Back to Bellbrook and Dennis worked with his dad building bridges for a time, then on to working with a heating and air-conditioning business. They did residential and commercial sheet-metal installation there and in Dayton and surrounding areas. Tanya attended Wright State University to garner a BSN in nursing and then their family expanded to include their daughter Jennifer. After Jenni’s birth, Tanya entered an accelerated program with the daughter right at her side! Tanya says as “they” worked their way through classes, “Jenni had much better questions for the professors than me and most of the class!” Tanya worked at Grandview Hospital in Dayton as a

surgical intensive care nurse but returned to Wright State to get her graduate degree, entered Enterostomal Therapy School to earn her advanced practice nursing degree and worked at Miami Valley Hospital in Dayton.

But the daughter grew up, married, and moved to Indiana. She too wanted family and in 2006 she and her husband Don were blessed with a little boy, Connor. At this point, Dennis and Tanya did not enjoy being a state away from their young family and sat down to discuss the entire situation. A potential plan developed. If Dennis retired from the sheet-metal work, and Tanya could get enough work to support them as well as sell their current home and find another near work for Tanya, well then! They could move to Indiana and enjoy being near the children and grandson. They even came up with the idea of Dennis helping to take care of Connor as his “Manny” (not the “Nanny”!) so Jenni could return to work. Dennis’ father had been a very stoic personality and Dennis’ grandparents were deceased before his birth. So he thought he could offer Connor advice and words of wisdom....he had missed a lot of that in his own youth. In their family they have a saying that there are “God Incidents.” The house went up for sale at 5 p.m. one day; by 8 p.m., they had an offer. The same day, IU Health called and offered Tanya a position that would be everything they needed. This was definitely their “God Incident”!

Once in Indiana, Tanya missed being at church and one day she found a listing for...Bethel Lutheran Church...OUR Bethel Lutheran. “A God Incident”? Dennis had never belonged to a church and he agreed to attend. He was baptized and is now a card-carrying Lutheran. They both are very involved with Jenni, Don and Connor. They enjoy encouraging Connor (now 13) in his nightly training for his black belt in Taekwondo. And they are proud of Connor’s academic accomplishments as well. One of the fun times “Manny” Dennis had with Connor was going fishing. Jenni is also a published writer, writing being her passion. Don is CEO of TZ Indy, an automation company.

A year ago, Tanya retired from the nursing field and enjoys cooking, sewing, quilting, gardening and listening and singing



along with her favorites such as Elvis, John Denver, The Monkees and Colin Ray. Thinking back to her wedding vows when the pastor joined them for better or worse, Tanya says her singing has to be the worst part for Dennis! Dennis says he now has an admiration and deep respect for stay-at-home moms after his years of being a “Manny.” He now



has a booth at a store called “Upscale Junk” in Cicero where you can further admire his artistic work with dead trees!



Dennis and Tanya “feel strongly that every child deserves a chance at a good, stable household, and a solid education.” They are very supportive of teachers in any way they can to “create that nurturing environment to promote positive outcomes in education for children.” They attend our Saturday evening service and are also very positive in their feelings toward Bethel saying they “learn something every service and enjoy the relaxed, loving, nurturing and forgiving family-based services.” Also they like that we have so many outreach missions within our church. “God Incident” or not, we are blessed to have them as members here at Bethel in Noblesville.



THE BETHEL



My late wife Karyn and I donated the handbells to the church.

The story goes something like this: Back in Summer of 1991, Karyn and I were living in Noblesville and were members at Bethel

Lutheran at its Cicero location. Like most growing churches, Bethel was going through the process of change and one of the moving parts of that change was the decision to call a new pastor. Although we had only met the new guy (Pastor Doug) briefly, we were still not sure if we were going to continue to be members of Bethel or find another church home. After all, we had two young sons, Evan, age 4 and Sean, just 21 months old. Our hands were full and we weren't sure we wanted to be that involved in a church going through change and getting accustomed to someone new at the pulpit.

But on June 9th, that all changed. Our son Sean died as a result of an accident in our new house. We were beyond devastated. We were truly in shock. But seemingly immediately, certainly within hours of our son's passing, our doorbell rang, and there stood Pastor Doug Gast. I don't remember exactly what he said, but it was probably something like "this sucks," and "there is nothing I can say or do to ease your pain, except you have to know we will go through this together....as a family, as friends, as brothers and sisters in Christ."

So, we were hooked. Not only was Doug the *God Send* we needed, Bethel became the sanctuary to help shield us from our grief...a place for solace and reprieve from our

sorrows. Pastor Doug, of course, provided the thoughtful words at Sean's wake and burial. We both agreed that without him and Bethel, we are not sure how we would have endured it all.

Fast forward to 1996, and the decision was made that Bethel needed room to grow. Land was purchased and new construction began on the building we are all blessed with at 206th and Cumberland Road. Karyn and I were happy to be on the leadership team that raised the funds for the project, and Karyn also became a church council member during that time. We were growing in our walk with Christ and doing it arm in arm with our Bethel family.

Less than five short years later, in 2001, notably just months before 9-11, Karyn made the decision to sell her long-standing specialty advertising business, *Ideas at Work*. She also was feeling God's nudge that we were needed elsewhere. So in just a few weeks time, we sold our home in Carmel and made the decision to move to Bradenton, Florida, where we promptly bought a new home and joined a new Lutheran church (plant) where we took leadership roles. No rest for the weary, some might say.



And now to the Bells. Just before we moved to Florida, Karyn and I wanted to leave Bethel with a gift that would provide lasting memories for both the Heckmans and those at Bethel who might be touched by the beautiful

HANDBELLS

By Mark Heckman



music our bell ringers make each time they are used in a praise service. Rightly or wrongly, we saw this gift to be in some small way, repayment for priceless support and love we received from Bethel during our grieving process for young Sean. For us, we believed that Sean would be listening each time bells would ring.

So today, as we discuss the histrionics of the Bells of Bethel, I am now confident that Sean and now Karyn, (who passed away in 2015 from a long battle with thyroid cancer), both take a break from their busy schedule in heaven and listen with joy as the bells are rung. For me, I am gratified to be back at Bethel, perhaps picking up where Karyn and I left off back in 2001 and knowing that the Bells of Bethel are still ringing and playing a role in touching others as they worship and extend their journey with Christ.

Mark

Bells....

By Carole Kuhn

Bells are used for church celebrations in many ways...weddings, special services and holidays including Christmas. Christmas songs include the word "bells"...*I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day* and *Jingle Bells* being only a couple. One article states that it was about the 4th century A.D. that bells were first used to express Christmas joy. A bishop in Italy supposedly came up with the idea of church bells. There is a bell in Ireland called the bell of St. Patrick. He was a missionary to Ireland in the 5th Century and used it to gather people for teaching God's word. In Victorian times, many of the carolers walked the streets with hand bells ringing to the tune of the carols being sung. Sometimes only the bells were being rung.

Always, bells ringing at Christmas have been to express the joy of the season...from the Emperor Bell in Moscow, the Great Bell of China, Big Ben in London, and the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia. Quite the tradition!



STEWARDSHIP

Coming in January . . . Financial Peace University

Are you ready to take control of your money?

Financial Peace University (FPU) is a nine-lesson course designed to help you build a budget, dump debt, grow your wealth, and leave money stress behind! Each lesson, taught by Dave Ramsey and his team of financial experts, is based on biblical wisdom and common sense. In your FPU group, you'll be motivated and encouraged by others just like you! When you sign up for FPU, you'll get your member workbook and one free year of Financial Peace

Membership, with access to exclusive online tools to help you on your journey.

The class will start on 1/5 during the Sunday School hour – we will have 10 positions “sponsored,” first come, first served. After those are filled, the cost per person/couple is \$100.

For more information, contact Tom Foreman at tom.foreman@beckshybrids.com.

Impact Overview

THE AVERAGE AMERICAN

The U.S. is a wealthy country by comparison; however, you may be shocked to see the stats on the amount of debt the average American carries in relation to their income. For many Americans, the financial future is uncertain.

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD INCOME

\$59,039

US Census Bureau 2017

AVERAGE CONSUMER DEBT*

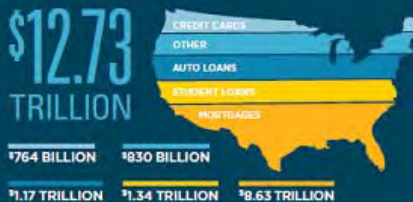
- \$180,018 Mortgages
- \$50,868 Student Loans
- \$29,058 Auto Loans
- \$16,425 Credit Cards

*Averages of those who have this type of debt.



Newsweek 2017

TOTAL CONSUMER DEBT IN U.S.



Newsweek 2017, Federal Reserve Q1 data



InvestmentBuilder 2017

**Debt is normal.
Be weird!**

AVERAGE CREDIT CARD

16.14% APR

CreditCards.com 2017



couples do not budget consistently

FPU New Member Survey 2017

Approximately



of Americans would struggle to pay for an **\$1,000 EMERGENCY**

Associated Press 2016



Take control of your money with *Financial Peace University* (FPU)! This nine-lesson course uses biblical wisdom and common sense to help you tackle budgeting, pay off debt, and make your money work for you!

Impact Overview

FINANCIAL PEACE MEMBERS

Almost five million people have taken control of their money with the easy-to-follow lessons they learned in *Financial Peace University*. They learned practical ways to create a budget, pay off debt, make wise spending choices, save for the future, and so much more.

The following statistics contain original data from our FPU Postgraduate Survey. Our results are statistically significant with a sample of approximately 3,200 respondents.

DEBT PAID IN 90 DAYS



SAVINGS IN 90 DAYS



NEARLY
5 MILLION
PEOPLE HAVE TAKEN FPU



of married couples do a monthly
ZERO-BASED BUDGET AFTER FPU

ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME



“Personal finance is 80 percent behavior and only 20 percent head knowledge.”

—Dave Ramsey

THE ART OF MISSION PARTNERSHIP



At Bethel Lutheran Church, Mission is about relationships and partnerships. We try to build Christian relationships with those we support in mission partnership as we make disciples for Christ. There can be an art to it, and this summer some of Bethel's mission partnerships produced art in fact!

Pastor Tom Curry of Living Faith Lutheran Church in Wabash, IN, a Mission Partner, contacted Bethel Missions to see if anyone at Bethel had the painting skills to paint a picture of Moses and the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai on cloth of some kind. He was making a mission trip to Malawi, and he wanted to be able to use the painting in his teaching and give it to the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Malawi, (ELCM) a Mission Partner of the North American Lutheran Church (NALC).



Kris' finished painting

Gay Hanson, Missions Chair at the time, asked around at Bethel and was told Kris Byerley was a painter and might be willing to do the painting. Kris was indeed willing to paint the picture, and a discussion was held on what material to paint it on since Pastor Tom had to be able to fold it up to take it in his suitcase. It was decided to try cotton duck material as it could be painted on, folded easily, and holds up well. In fact, cotton duck is what the banners at the front of Bethel are made of.

Kris went to work on the painting and completed it

in time to have it blessed at Bethel by Pastor Al Schoonover and Pastor Doug Gast. Unfortunately, there wasn't time to have the blessing during regular services, but a number of people including the artist Kris Byerley gathered in the Chapel for the blessing. From there, the painting was taken to a Via de Cristo meeting and given to one of the members of Living Faith Lutheran Church to pass on to Pastor Tom.



Pastor Al, Kris, and Pastor Doug after blessing the painting

Pastor Tom left for Malawi on Tuesday, September 17. On Sunday, September 22, Pastor Tom presented the painting to Bishop J.P. Bvumbwe of the ELCM. Along with the picture, he presented a letter of greeting from NALC Bishop John Bradosky.



Pastor Tom presenting the painting to Bishop Bvumbwe

Pastor Tom's congregation of Living Faith Lutheran also contributed their artistic talents to produce a world map on a sheet which he could use to teach about how the believers in Malawi are linked to Christians all over the world. Like Bethel, Living Faith Lutheran sent their pastor and their artwork out with blessings!

Using God-given talents and with our mission partners, we are helping to teach, spread the word, and make disciples for Jesus Christ! Thanks be to God!

PRODUCING THE PAINTING

1.



Blank Canvas

2.



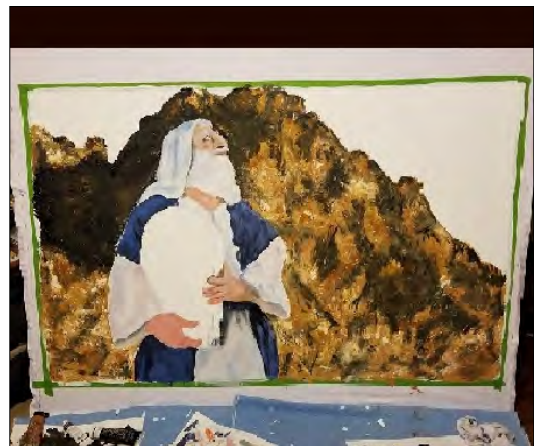
Sketch

3.



Background Painted

4.



Moses with blank tablets

5.



Finishing Touches & Signature

6.



Finished Painting



Painter Kris Byerley with Painting in Progress

2019 Convocation

From NALC website



The Rev. Dan Selbo was elected bishop of the North American Lutheran Church by the 2019 NALC Convocation on Friday, August 9, in Indianapolis, Indiana.



Bishop Selbo currently serves as pastor of St. Timothy's Lutheran Church in San Jose, California. He holds Masters of Divinity and Doctor of Ministry degrees from Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Bishop Selbo was elected on the fourth ballot over the Rev. Dr. Eric Riesen, pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Ashland, Ohio. The Convocation narrowed the list of candidates from 14 nominees to four on the first ballot on Thursday. The four finalists were Pastor Riesen, the Rev. Dr. David Wendel of Jacksonville, Florida, assistant to the bishop for ministry and ecumenism, and the Rev. Dr. Amy Schiffrin, president of the North American Lutheran Seminary in Ambridge, Pennsylvania.

More than 800 delegates and visitors gathered August 7-9 for the 2019 Convocation and Mission Festival around the theme, "Walking by the Spirit with the Fruit of the Spirit."

A Thursday night banquet honored Bishop John Bradosky for his service to the Church. Bishop Bradosky is retiring and did not seek reelection. The banquet featured the Rev. Dr. Malcolm Guite, a poet, priest and singer from Cambridge, England.

Bishop Selbo was installed as bishop during the closing worship of the Convocation, but his four-year term officially begins October 1.

The Mission Festival that preceded the Convocation highlighted the NALC's relationship with Lutherans in Ethiopia and Tanzania. The Rev. Dr. Alex Mkumbo, bishop of the Central Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, and the Rev. Yonas Yigezu, president of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane

Yesus, were featured speakers for the Mission Festival. They also brought greetings to the Convocation and took part in the installation service for Bishop Selbo.

The Mission Festival also featured a variety of breakout sessions to equip members for mission.

Other Elections: The Rev. Bassam Abdallah of Prospect, Kentucky, and Scott Kramer of Boerne, Texas, were elected to four-year terms on the Executive Council. The Rev. Jennifer Gold of Helotes, Texas, and the Rev. Leslie Haines of Fort Wayne, Indiana, were elected to the Court of Adjudication.

2020 budgets were approved. The Convocation approved a \$2.2 million Operating Budget for the NALC. Budgets were also approved for the church's designated funds: \$723,000 for the Theological Education Fund (which includes the North American Lutheran Seminary); \$197,500 for the Great Commission Fund; and \$123,500 for the Disaster Response Fund. Most of the budgets anticipate spending some cash reserves.

A new NALC Global Worker, the Rev. Heidi Punt of Christ United Lutheran Church in Granite Falls, North Carolina, was commissioned for service in Haiti with Sundouloi Ministries (SMI Haiti).

Reports of the work of the NALC's staff, teams, task forces, ministries and ministry partners were warmly received.

Events preceding the Convocation were the Mission Festival, Braaten-Benne Lectures in Theology, Women of the NALC Annual Gathering and the Ventures in Youth Ministry Symposium. The Convocation and the events preceding it comprise the NALC's annual Lutheran Week.

Documents, photos and videos from the Convocation and other events of Lutheran Week will be posted at lutheranweek.com.

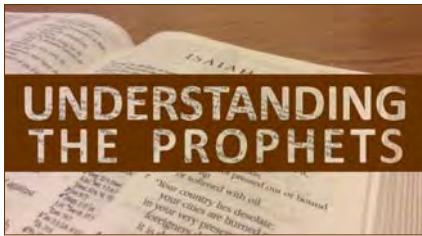


ASK THE PASTOR



IS THERE SOMETHING YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO ASK?

By Pastor Doug Gast



Why do we study the prophets?

As I write this article, we are about half way through our Sunday morning Bible Study on the book of Jeremiah. It is the longest book of the Bible, less chapters than Psalms, but more words, and the chapters are much longer. This is the first time I have ever taught a class on Jeremiah or any of the Major Prophets. And if you are waiting to hear a scripture reading from Jeremiah in church, you may hear a Jeremiah reference four or five times a year. But there are huge sections that are omitted and never mentioned. The prophet Isaiah gets more press time, but the other two Major Prophets, Ezekiel and Daniel get a lot less. And I know I have never done a sermon series on any of the prophets. We have done series on David, Moses, Joshua, and Joseph. And a few times I have tried to tell a minor prophet's life and message into a 20 minute sermon presentation. It sort of works . . . sort of. Prophets are part preacher . . . part visionary . . . part whistle-blower when the whole Israelite family was on the brink of self-destruction. Prophets stand alone, "as a voice crying out in the wilderness," proclaiming an unpopular word to a people who were hell-bent on going their own way. Their sermons are direct and hard hitting, they often use poetic form, their imagery is masterful word pictures, and often their message comes as an object lesson that says it all without speaking a word.

First and foremost we study the prophets because they are part of God's Word. Prophets were spokesmen for the Lord. They spoke to the people on behalf of God. The prophets said what the Lord said to them. Our Old Testament prophets take up the same space as does the New Testament. God thought these texts were important, and He had them written down, recorded, and preserved for us. God called each of them, gave them a word to proclaim, and gave them the courage and perseverance to declare that word in spite of a great deal of opposition and personal jeopardy. The prophets give us a tremendous opportunity to see what God thinks, what God feels, how He expresses Himself, why He is angry, and shows us the depth of God's love and concern and God's willingness to extend grace and forgiveness. The more I get into the prophets, the more I see them as exciting. They're interesting, they're unique . . . utterly unique, and so it's fascinating to study them.

But I would be less than honest if I said I don't struggle with the prophets. I struggle with a lot of the prophets' message because they are so repetitive. They say the same thing over and over again. Some of the prophetic books, like Daniel and Jonah tell a story. And I love a good story. But as is the case with Jeremiah, so much of his book is made up of oracles that have no chronological order. When you read the prophets, you sometimes wonder whether it is the prophet speaking or is it God. The answer is generally "Yes!"

I think we also struggle with the prophets because we have a misunderstanding of what true prophesy really is. Often we think of the prophets as fortune tellers or psychics. And yes, part of the prophets' job was to tell something about the impending future. However, their first and most important job was to be a forth teller. The difference between a true prophet of God and the various false prophets of the day is that the words of the true prophets' word came true. They spoke a radical word of truth. As Jesus would later say, "the truth will set you free," but before it does it will probably tick you off big time.

And I think we struggle with the prophets because they held up a mirror in front of people that exposed sin, idolatry, self-centeredness, a lack of care for the poor and hurting, the immorality and evil that existed and was tolerated by the vast majority of the people.

We study the prophets because if we want to understand the New Testament we have to be fully grounded in the Old. When Jesus came on the scene, many people thought he might be a reincarnation of Jeremiah or one of the other prophets. The very first sermon Jesus preached was prophetic in every way. "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand." And when Jesus nears the cross, his messages and imagery of the end of times is also prophetic. And Jesus himself quoted Isaiah and said he was the fulfillment of the prophet's words. If you want to understand Christ and understand the Bible as a whole, then it's critical that you spend time with the prophets and that you get a good solid understanding of what the prophets are saying.

We study the prophets because we really do struggle with the same sins that the people in their day struggled with. In the times of the prophets, the people disregarded God's law. So do we. They practiced rampant idolatry. So do we. How many American idols can you name? They practiced an empty religiosity. So do we. The Israelites thought their status and history as God's chosen protected them from anything bad happening to them. So do we. They forgot to use their blessings to be a blessing in the world. So do we. They had grown self-centered,

Continued on Page 26

SEASONS & HOLY DAYS

ADVENT-CHRISTMAS-EPIPHANY

by Carole Kuhn

Advent—A season when Christians celebrate the birth of Christ (the “first” Advent) as well as look forward to the “second” Advent when Christ returns. The official definition of the word is “coming,” or “arrival.” The celebration begins on the 4th Sunday before Christmas Eve; this year, it will begin on December 1. In Old Testament times, the focus of the season was on penitence, for all the sins one might regret as well as prayers for help from the tyrannical rulers. Today, we focus on the joy of knowing Jesus will return. As written in Isaiah, God promised redemption when he would send the Messiah. The song “Oh Come, Oh Come Emmanuel” is often sung during this time. Our church decorations will include the round green wreath with five candles, set in the area of the altar. We think of the “round” wreath depicting God’s endless mercy. The four outer candles are the 4 weeks of Advent, lighting one new (and previous) one each week. Three candles will be blue, the color of hope and the royalty of Christ. The fourth is pink indicating “joy”...this candle will be lighted on the third week as we anticipate the joy of Christmas. In the center of the wreath is a white candle often called the Christ Candle. It may be lighted on Christmas Eve or the Sunday preceding Christmas. All the “light” of the candles are referred to as the light of God coming into the world through the birth of his son, Jesus. (Isaiah 42:6) Many homes will have similar wreaths on their tables to light at the evening meal while sharing scripture readings.

Then we arrive at the day anticipated for four weeks...

Christmas. From beautiful songs to wonderful sharing of what the Bible proclaims, we celebrate Christ’s birth. There have been many debates over the years as to how December 25 was chosen as the date of Jesus’ birth. However, we probably shall never know the actual reason. In the first century, there was no real consistent way of keeping time or dates, as well as no real historical facts. There were many pagan rites and the Romans celebrating the winter solstice was one of those celebrations. Supposedly that was on December 25 and the Christians in the 4th century chose to celebrate Jesus’ birth on that date as a way around the pagan rites.

Then we celebrate **Epiphany**...referring to the travel of the Wise Men following the star to Bethlehem to worship the newborn baby Jesus. “Epiphany” is defined as “manifestation”—declaring the birth of Christ. The celebration begins at sundown the day before January 6. Color for this time of the season is green.

The altar table cloth at this time may show the Alpha and Omega symbols...the first and last letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The Bible book of Isaiah contains many stories of God’s prophesies of the coming of the Messiah and the books of Matthew and Luke tell many stories of Jesus’ birth.

But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.

Luke 2:10-11

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. “In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written:

“But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.”

Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.”

After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

Matthew 2:1-12

LUTHERAN CHRISTIANS

WHO WE ARE - WHAT WE BELIEVE

The Colors & Symbols of Advent

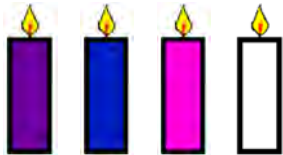
Advent is the season of expectation and hope! “Advent” means “coming” or “arrival,” and the colors and symbols of Advent are ways to help remind us what, or rather who, we are “waiting for” and why He is coming!

The first reference to Advent occurred in the 300’s A.D. at the meeting of church leaders called the Council of Sargossa. Advent gradually developed into a season of the four weeks preceding Christmas.

Traditions vary from place to place and include Advent calendars, wreaths, and candles.

The Colors of Advent

Advent candles may have slightly different meanings in each faith because the colors of the candles can be different and the overall meaning of the event varies.



- **Purple** or **violet**: This traditional color symbolizes penitence, or regret for sins, and penance, or self-imposed punishment for a sin. As the color of royalty, purple also speaks to the birth of the new King, Jesus and serves as a reminder of his suffering. (Lutherans did use purple but have moved to using blue as the primary color of Advent and leaving purple as the color for Lent.)
- **Blue**: Resembling the night sky or the waters in Genesis, blue can also symbolize royalty. This color represents hope.
- **Pink** or **rose**: Most often used on the third or fourth week, pink represents rejoicing or joy. As many people see the end to their fasting approaching, they prepare to celebrate.
- **White**: A large white pillar candle in the center of the wreath represents Christ and the peace he brings.

The following colors may also be used for candles, but Bethel does not use them during Advent.



- **Gold**: This opulent color represents love and kingship and symbolizes the Christmas holiday season in some religions.
- **Red**: As a symbol for communion and a prominent Christmas color, red candles have German roots or can be used to promote religious unity.
- **Green**: When used in Advent, green represents faith or the spiritual life.

Advent Candle Names

Each candle has a specific meaning related to the birth of Christ.

- The **Prophecy** or **Hope** Candle: The first blue candle. It symbolizes hope and God's forgiveness toward man. It also can symbolize the expectation of the coming of the Messiah.
- The **Bethlehem** or **Love** Candle: The second blue candle symbolizes faith and love. It also reminds us about the experience of Joseph and Mary in the city of Bethlehem.
- The **Shepherd's** or **Joy** Candle: The third candle is pink or rose. It represents Gaudette Sunday and the joy that the birth of Christ brought to the world. Traditionally, on Gaudette Sunday one takes a break from Advent fasting to experience the joy of the day.
- The **Angel's** or **Peace** Candle: The last blue candle is the Angel's Candle and represents the peace and justice that the angels and Christ brings to the world. It also can represent purity.
- The **Christ Candle**: If a white candle in the middle of the wreath is included, this candle is lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day and represents Christ and purity. Christ as the Light of the World has come into the world. The Christ Candle is lit at worship until the Feast of the Epiphany, which is twelve days from Christmas.



CHURCH HISTORY

BETHEL IN THE 1990s

By Gay Hanson

In August of 1990, Pastor Doug Gast, his wife Terri and their four children paid the congregation a visit during the annual “Church in the Park” Sunday. This surprise visit led to a formal call going out to Pastor Doug and Terri on December 31, 1990, and he began his pastorate at Bethel on May 1, 1991.



Pastor Doug “hit the ground running” and in addition to his duties as pastor began to meet with members to express his vision and where he believed God was calling Bethel. His work and vision became contagious to not only the congregation but the entire Cicero/Noblesville community. Soon Bethel began to see growth at record levels.

One of Pastor Doug’s focal points was youth, and in 1993, Bethel’s youth participated in the first canoe trip to the Boundary Waters of northern Minnesota. This tradition continues today with Youth Director Joe Rudy leading the trip, which occurs every other year.

With the rapid growth in the early 1990’s, the Congregation began to look at the needs for space. In early to mid-1993, the Church Council held a series of “Crossroads” meetings to discuss Bethel’s facility, parking, and program needs. These meetings led to a formal Congregational Meeting held on September 26, 1993, where a motion was made to begin discussions on relocating the congregation from 220 West Jackson Street to an area north of Noblesville. The motion also called for the formation of three ministry teams: Architectural Design, Capital Fundraising, and Site Selection & Acquisition. While controversial, the motion passed 73 to 19, and the relocation of Bethel had begun.

After looking at various parcels of land, it was decided to buy at the corner of 206th and Cumberland. Ironically, this land was across the street from where Olive Branch Church (one of three churches that merged in the 1930s) had been. With the help of a capital campaign that included Bethel members of all ages, 10 acres of land was purchased in 1994.

Fundraising continued and discussions were held on the design of the church building. There was no consensus on this until the architectural design committee and Pastor Doug traveled to Chicago to meet with ELCA’s Architectural Services. Their architect was able to take the desires of the various people and groups and blend them into the design that was accepted and built. Pastor Doug recalls the trip back from that meeting as being full of joy and excitement.

In 1997, the land was dedicated and ground was broken to begin building the new church building. A Group of Mission Builders arrived and headed up the construction with the help of many members of the congregation.



In October of 1997, the congregation was able to sell the Cicero church building, but that meant the congregation needed somewhere to worship. From October to March of 1998, they met at the 7th Day Adventist Church in Cicero. Once the Fellowship Hall was complete enough, worship services and Sunday school were held there, and it was used until the sanctuary was ready.

The new Bethel Lutheran Church building was dedicated on Reformation Day of 1998.

Following the opening of the new church building, Bethel began to grow significantly in numbers. Some people even came because they had watched the new church being built!



Bethel began the new millennium with a new building and a growing, vital congregation!



CHURCH MUSIC

HYMNS

By Gay Hanson

“O Come, O Come Emmanuel”

In the Lutheran church, we sing the hymn “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” most often during the season of Advent. The hymn was originally written and sung in Latin. Called “*Veni, Veni, Emmanuel*,” it dates back to monastic life in the 8th- or 9th-century. The origins of the tune used now date from 15th-century France.

In monasteries, on the seven days before Christmas Eve, monks would sing the “O antiphons” in anticipation of Christmas Eve when the eighth antiphon, “O Virgo virginum” (“O Virgin of virgins”) would be sung before and after the Magnificat or Song of Mary (Luke 1:46-55).

An antiphon is a short chant sung as a refrain. The most common antiphons are the Psalms. British hymnologist J.R. Watson has provided some context for the “O” antiphons. He said, “The antiphons, sometimes called the ‘O antiphons’ or ‘The Great O’s’, were designated to concentrate the mind on the coming Christmas, enriching the meaning of the Incarnation with a complex series of references from the Old and New Testaments.”

Each antiphon begins as follows:

O Sapientia (Wisdom)
O Adonai (Hebrew word for God)
O Radix Jesse (Stem or root of Jesse)
O Clavis David (Key of David)
O Oriens (Dayspring)
O Rex genitium (King of the Gentiles)
O Emmanuel (God with us)

Put together, the first letter of the second word of each antiphon spells SARCORE. If read backwards, the letters form a two-word acrostic, “Ero cras,” meaning “I will be present tomorrow.”

We do not usually sing all the verses, but through them, we see the story of Jesus’ first coming – His birth and that He would be the ransom paid to set Israel and all the nations free. However, if you look at the seven verses again with an eye to Jesus’ return, you will see that they also tell of His Second Coming. Jesus is coming back! When we sing this hymn, we are not only celebrating the coming birth of our savior Jesus, we are singing and preparing for His return in anticipation and hope!

The most commonly used English version of “O Come, O Come Emmanuel” was translated by John Mason Neale (1818-1866). Neale was an Anglican priest and hymn writer. He was also very active with social welfare organizations that provided care for orphans and young women, founded a nursing order of Anglican nuns, was a warden (president or governor) of Sackville College, and translated early and medieval Greek and Latin hymns. He focused particularly on hymns written for the feasts and fasts of the Christian year.

The book *Hymns Ancient and Modern* (1861) used Neale’s revised translation, which continues to be used in many hymnals. The block chords of the original music were replaced over time with more free-flowing plain-song settings and some of the words were modernized.

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Hymn # 31 from Lutheran Worship
Translated John M Neale, French Tune

1. Oh, come, oh, come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.
- Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to you, O Israel!
2. Oh, come, our Wisdom from on high,
Who ordered all things mightily;
To us the path of knowledge show,
and teach us in her ways to go. *Refrain*
3. Oh, come, oh, come, our Lord of might,
Who to your tribes on Sinai's height
In ancient times gave holy law,
In cloud and majesty and awe. *Refrain*
4. Oh, come O Rod of Jesse's stem,
From ev'ry foe deliver them
That trust your mighty pow'r to save;
Bring them in vict'ry through the grave. *Refrain*
5. Oh, come, O Key of David, come,
And open wide our heav'nly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery. *Refrain*
6. Oh, come, our Dayspring from on high,
And cheer us by your drawing nigh,
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight. *Refrain*
7. Oh, come, Desire of nations, bind
In one the hearts of all mankind;
Oh, bid our sad divisions cease,
And be yourself our King of Peace. *Refrain*

The first music used with the translation was credited to “A French Missal in the National Library, Lisbon,” but scholars have not been able to locate it. Sister Thomas More (Dr. Mary Berry) located the tune in Paris at the Bibliotheque Nationale (National Library), identifying it as a 15th-Century “Processional” for French Franciscan nuns.

A number of different translations and variations through time have given us the form of the hymn we now sing. In “O Come, O Come Emmanuel,” the essence of the original Latin text remains. If you sing all the antiphons, you are participating in an Advent ritual more than 11 centuries old!

NEW DISCIPLES AT BETHEL



**Christopher & Elizabeth
Camperelli
Cash & Sophie**

Chris and Liz along with their children Cash and Sophie reside in Anderson. Chris is a Team Leader with The Elite Realty Pros.



**Merri Beth
(Pallatin) Everett
James**

Merri Beth and her son James reside in Noblesville. Merri Beth is a nurse at IUHealth-BSL. James attends first grade at North Elementary.



**Linda
Frownfelter**

Linda is from Auburn, IN but now resides in Fishers. She is the mother of Michelle Whitehead, Bethel's organist/music director, grandmother of Leah Whitehead, and mother-in-law to Neil Whitehead! She works at the Circle City Post Office in Indianapolis.



**Carol
Hansen**

Carol has joined her husband Kevin (already a member) as a member here at Bethel. She is a bus driver for Noblesville schools. The Hansens reside in Noblesville.



**Carol
Jacobs**

Carol and her husband, David, are both retired and reside in Noblesville. The Jacobs moved from Eagan, MN, three years ago to be closer to their youngest daughter, husband and five children. Carol, a retired Navy officer and teacher, has several hobbies including Bible study, sewing, and gardening.



**Brenda
Kintz**

Brenda lives in Cicero. Though now retired from the business world, she has an avid interest in the music of the bells. She has played bells with a former church.



**Neil
Whitehead**

Neil is the husband of Michelle Whitehead, Bethel's organist/music director. Neil and Michelle were married at Bethel 11 years ago. Their daughter, Leah, age 9, attends Washington Woods Elementary School in Westfield. Neil serves as maintenance foreman for Carmel Clay Parks and Recreation. The family resides in Sheridan.

We welcome these new members and ask that you "meet and greet" them as the opportunity presents itself.



Please make it easier for them to know who you are by wearing your name badges!



EPIPHANY

Epiphany is a holy day that occurs twelve days after Christmas on January 6 and celebrates the revelation of God incarnate in Jesus Christ. It also commemorates the visit of the Kings/Magi/Wise Men to the Christ Child, and thus it is Jesus' physical manifestation to the Gentiles.

According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, the word "epiphany" means "an appearance or manifestation especially of a divine being." In Christianity, Epiphany commemorates the appearance or birth of Jesus, Son of God. Epiphany is also when we hear the story of how the Kings/Magi/Wise Men followed a star to come and see the newborn "king of the Jews" as related in Matthew 2.

The Second Chapter of the Gospel of Matthew tells of these men who followed a star that appeared to them and came to find and worship the one "born king of the Jews." They brought him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh and bowed down in worship. The Bible isn't exact about how many men there were. They are called Kings/Magi/Wise Men depending on the translation. We don't know which they were for sure. Did they visit on the actual night of Jesus' birth or later? Who knows, but the Bible does relate how King Herod had all the baby boys under the age of two killed (Matthew 2:16-18), which had been foretold in the Old Testament (Jeremiah 31:15). So it could be that the visitors came any time from Jesus' birth to when he was almost two years old. We do know that God protected His Son and sent the family into Egypt to be safe and to fulfill the prophesy, "out of Egypt I called my son." (Hosea 11:1)



Over the centuries, Christians have come to accept that there were three Kings/Magi/Wise Men, who rode on camels, following a star to arrive in Bethlehem to worship the newborn baby Jesus. Epiphany became a feast of the church in the second century, so it is one of the old celebrations in the church!

The Magi Visit the Messiah

Matthew 2: 1-18 (NIV)

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ² and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."

³ When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:

⁶ "But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel."

⁷ Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

⁹ After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹ On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

¹² And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

The Escape to Egypt

¹³ When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him."

¹⁴ So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, ¹⁵ where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Out of Egypt I called my son."

¹⁶ When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. ¹⁷ Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

¹⁸ "A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more."

Why gold, frankincense and myrrh?

These gifts were valuable in and of themselves, but they also had a spiritual meaning.

Gold – a valuable metal that is a symbol of kingship on earth. Jesus is King of kings.

Frankincense – a perfume that is a symbol of deity. Jesus is God.

Myrrh – an embalming oil that is a symbol of death. Jesus will die on the cross and rise again to save His people.

CHRISTIAN

YOUTH & SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT



Sunday School — Children ages Kindergarten through 5th grade begins at 10:00 a.m. Children go directly to their rooms where they will meet their teachers). They are dismissed to parents at 10:55 a.m.

Nursery — Infants and toddlers under 3 are welcomed into our staffed nursery between 8:45 a.m.-12:15 p.m. on Sundays. Our Nursery Attendant Brenna Taitano will read Bible stories, play, and love on our youngest members while their parents attend Adult Education classes or worship.

Preschool — Children who turn 3 years old before December 31st are invited to join our Preschool Sunday School Class at 10:00. Gospel Light Curriculum teaches children Bible lessons in a fun, age-appropriate way, with engaging songs, stories, videos and puppets!

K-5th Grade — Children are grouped into Sunday School classes by age/grade. Over a three-year cycle, students learn the basic stories and Lutheran concepts in preparation for Confirmation during middle school.

High School—We explore various topics of mutual interest, seeking to apply our faith to real-life situations and challenges; to move beyond the accumulation of more head knowledge, into the arena of faith application and growing as disciples. We begin class each week sharing at least one good thing from the past week. We encourage conversation and discussion in a respectful manner. We encourage active serving while reminding them of the little eyes looking up to them here at church. We end each class with prayer requests and prayer.



Confirmation

Confirmation class for Middle School students (grades 6-8) strives to move faith from the head to the heart through a highly interactive experience that includes both large group presentation and small group discussion. Following class, we attend the 11:11 a.m. service to worship together. Once a month we will continue our time together after worship with a large group fellowship activity. Our goal is to develop a sticky, life-long faith through a combination of engaging learning events, regular fellowship activities, and frequent service opportunities in and beyond the congregation. Join us upstairs in the Student Center. For registration information, contact Youth and Family Minister Joe Rudy joerudy@bethellutheranchurch.com.



MIDWEEK: High School Youth Ministry—Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.

Our High School (grades 9-12) youth ministry meets upstairs in the Student Center. A typical night involves hanging out, eating Oreos or something awesome, listening to music, playing games, watching a video, discussing the important and the not-so-important things and wrapping up the evening with HI's and Low's. We welcome all (members and friends alike), and we encourage each other throughout the week. We have been known to go on trips, mission work, summer camp and Boundary Water Adventure journeys. High School life is too hard to do it alone so we try and do it together.



Baptism Class

This class is for parents who wish to have their child(ren) baptized. During this session, we explore what happens when we come to the font and what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. We review the expectations placed on parents and the support they can expect to receive from the church. Contact Pastor Al Schoonover for more information. Call the church at 317-773-4315 or email him at: pastoral@bethellutheranchurch.com.



First Communion Class

Children in 4th grade and up learn about God's promises and the importance of Holy Communion. Classes are held during Lent after the Sunday School hour, and culminate with the Rite of First Communion on Maundy Thursday. For more information, speak with Kris Lingenfelter or email her at: kris@bethellutheranchurch.com.



Discovery: Becoming a Disciple of Jesus

Sundays — Nov. 3 to Nov. 24, 2019

Participants will grow deeper into the life of discipleship During this interactive and engaging "new disciple" orientation as we explore key aspects of our Lutheran Christian faith, including how God has wired each of us to be ministers rather than simply members of the Church. Contact the church office (773-4315) or one of the pastors to register.

ADULTS — Fall 2019 - Winter 2020

Nov/Dec TBD

Adult Forum

Led by Jim Herr



This last summer, Jim was part of a joint US-Jamaican teaching team that spent a week in Jamaica with approximately 40 men in a *Via de Cristo*-type spiritual retreat. Come and hear his thought and reactions to his time there and the incredible work the Holy Spirit is doing in the hearts and lives of the men who participated. Watch the weekly Bethel News and Bethel Happenings email for the date.

Starts Nov 17

The Journey: Walking the Road to Bethlehem

Go on a journey with Adam Hamilton as he travels on video from Nazareth to Bethlehem in this fascinating look at the birth of Jesus Christ. This five-session DVD was filmed on location in the Holy Land and is a companion resource to the book, *The Journey: Walking the Road to Bethlehem*. Each exciting and informative session contains 10-15 minute video vignettes of pastor and author Adam Hamilton retracing the actual path of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem.



Jan 5 – Feb 23, 2020

Letters of Paul

Led by Greg Marshall

You've Got Mail! They say that letter writing has become a lost art. What with emails, texting, Facebook and Snapchat, who takes the time to handwrite a long letter anymore? Back in Apostle Paul's time, letters were even more rare. Few people could read and write, "paper" was very expensive, and with no



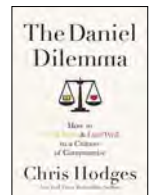
postal service, delivery of letters depended on hitching a ride with travelers. So if you received a letter from someone, you can bet it was important, and it was likely something you would keep and treasure... forever... Though Paul's letters were not written **to us**, clearly the messages were preserved **for us**. Join us as we explore several of the Letters of Paul.

Jan 5 – Feb 23, 2020

The Daniel Dilemma

Led by Pastor Doug Gast & Pastor Joe Freeman

Christians today face a dilemma: in a world that seems to reject everything we believe, how do we walk closely with God without caving to pressure *or* alienating those we hope to reach? In this eye-opening book, Chris Hodges provides a solution by examining the life of the prophet Daniel, who persevered in a corrupt culture that closely resembles our own—and emerged as an influential force in God's redemptive plan.



Jan 5 – Mar 1, 2020

Financial Peace University

Take control of your money with *Financial Peace University* (FPU)!

This nine-lesson course uses biblical wisdom and common sense to help you tackle budgeting, pay off debt, and make your money work for you! FPU includes your member workbook and a year of free online resources through Financial Peace Membership. We will have 10 positions "sponsored," "first come, first served." After those are filled, the cost per person/couple is \$100. Contact [Tom Foreman](mailto:tom.foreman@beckshybrids.com) at tom.foreman@beckshybrids.com for more information.



Ongoing Sunday Adult Classes

Ask the Question — Chapel
Led by Jason Pearson & Lu Olp



The Church ought to be a safe place where we can bring our faith questions. In fact, a healthy faith questions and pushes for greater understanding, and a healthy church embraces those questions without feeling threatened or attacked. Join us with your cup of coffee and sweet treat as we discuss the questions you bring to the table.

Loose Links—Library

Led by Suzy Patterson & Tree Rudy



A group of Christian friends who discuss, question, and banter around day-to-day life situations and use the Bible, their own "common sense," and humor to help each other out. New participants welcome!

During the Week

Sausage and Scripture - Fellowship Hall

Men's Breakfast and Bible Study meets Saturdays at 7:30 a.m. For more information, please contact Jason Pearson (317-289-3986).

Women on Wednesdays - First upstairs classroom in the education building. Meets on Wednesday mornings at 9:15 a.m. for Bible study. Contact Mary Jo Mikulski with questions (260-403-5525).

Bible Study Fellowship -Tuesdays for Women. For more information contact: Cynthia Jesudason (317-626-5867) cynthiajesudason1@comcast.net

Monthly Bethel Book Clubs for Women

One group meets the **first Tuesday** of the month at 7 p.m. in various homes for fellowship and discussion. For more information, including that month's meeting location, contact Rise Helgemo (317-877-8416).

The second group meets **Saturdays** at 11:00 a.m. at Harbour Trees Golf Club. Each month's study includes lunch. For more information, contact Linda Crist (317-758-6748).



Early in 2019, Bethel Missions began a new project to raise funds to purchase clergy shirts for pastors in Ethiopia and Malawi who could not afford them.

The idea for the project called **IN-VEST IN MISSION** began when Pastor Doug Gast had visited Ethiopia in September of 2018. In talking to some of the leadership of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY), he discovered that clergy shirts were not only expensive but hard to get. Many pastors in these countries cannot afford extras such as clergy shirts. They often can't afford to attend seminary or even buy their own Bible, but they love God and want to make disciples so we try to help them!

Pastor Doug decided to do something to help with the clergy shirts, and the Missions Committee came up with the idea of collecting change (and cash) using the Mission Well to **IN-VEST IN MISSION**.

Many of the Sunday school classes got involved, and by May, enough money had been raised to purchase 50 shirts. Rev. Mulugeta Melaku, who was visiting Bethel and is from Ethiopia, took the shirts back with him.

In August, another 20 shirts were purchased and sent to Ethiopia with Rev. Gemechis Buba, NALC Assistant to the Bishop for Missions. Recently, Pastor Doug received a thank you and pictures of some of the shirts being handed out to pastors. They are obviously happy to receive this gift from you, the Mission-Driven members of Bethel!



BOOKS OF INTEREST

Reviews by Debbie Nielsen

Reading level:
Ages 2 and up



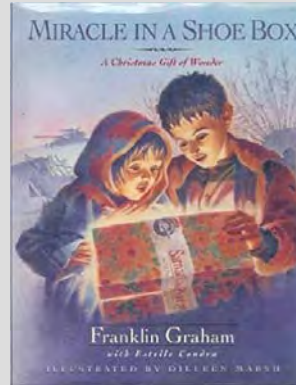
RED AND LULU

by Matt Tavares

A beautiful evergreen tree is home to two cardinals, Red and Lulu. Year after year, the tree provides shelter and comfort, and during the Christmas season, the townspeople decorate the tree and gather round to sing carols. But one winter day, their tree is removed, and Red and Lulu are separated. It will take a miracle to reunite the cardinals and enable them to find a new home. But then, what better time of year than Christmas to witness a miracle? Kids (and nature enthusiasts) of all ages will love this lost-and-found story.



Reading level:
Ages 4 and up



MIRACLE IN A SHOEBOX: A CHRISTMAS GIFT OF WONDER

by Franklin Graham

Nine year old Jay's enthusiasm inspires his entire community to participate in Operation Christmas Child's shoebox ministry. Soon shoeboxes filled with items for children in war-torn countries are on their way to those who otherwise might have forgotten Christmas—and might never have heard the salvation story. Who will receive those shoeboxes? And how will the simple efforts of a small American town change lives halfway around the world? Jay's story—and the story of his shoebox's recipient—inspires kids and families to consider ways to make a difference. *Miracle in a Shoebox* reminds us that whether we participate in Operation Christmas Child, Project Angel Tree, or simply extend a kindness to our neighbor next door, we are called to be the hands and feet of Christ.

Reading level:
High School/Adult



THE JOURNEY: WALKING THE ROAD TO BETHLEHEM

by Adam Hamilton

Who hasn't taken an unexpected--maybe unwanted--physical or emotional journey? Key figures in the Christmas story certainly did: a young girl, full of hope and expectation of how her future would typically unfold. Her fiancé, compelled--by a message in a dream--to abandon convention and tradition. Yet God planned each step of their way: each hardship, each disappointment. More importantly, He used each of those challenges to accomplish His purpose. Author Adam Hamilton offers not only keen historical and scriptural insight into the unfolding of the Christmas story but encourages us to reflect upon the literal and figurative path of Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, and others. *The Journey* will give readers pause to reflect on God's continued work in each of our journeys.





WORD

Christmas Carol Challenge

According to the lyrics of...

1. *Angels From the Realms of Glory*: Angels should wing their way over all the earth?
2. *Angels We Have Heard On High*: Who/what is echoing the Angels joyous strains?
3. *Away in the Manger*: The cattle are doing what?
4. *Do You Yearn What I Hear?*: What is the star doing in the night?
5. *The First Noel*: The angel found the shepherds in fields doing what?
6. *Go Tell It On the Mountain*: Throughout the heavens shone what?
7. *God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen*: Christ was born to save us from what?
8. *Hark the Herald Angels Sing*: What happens to God and sinners?
9. *It Came Upon a Midnight Clear*: Who was bending near the earth?
10. *Joy to the World*: What should prepare Him room?
11. *Mary, Did You Know?*: Mary's baby boy will one day walk on what?
12. *O Come, O Come Emmanuel*: Who is captive that needs ransom?
13. *O Little Town of Bethlehem*: What do the morning stars proclaim?
14. *Silent Night*: What two words describe the Holy Infant?
15. *We Three Kings*: What were the kings bearing?
16. *What Child Is This?*: What does the King of Kings bring?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____

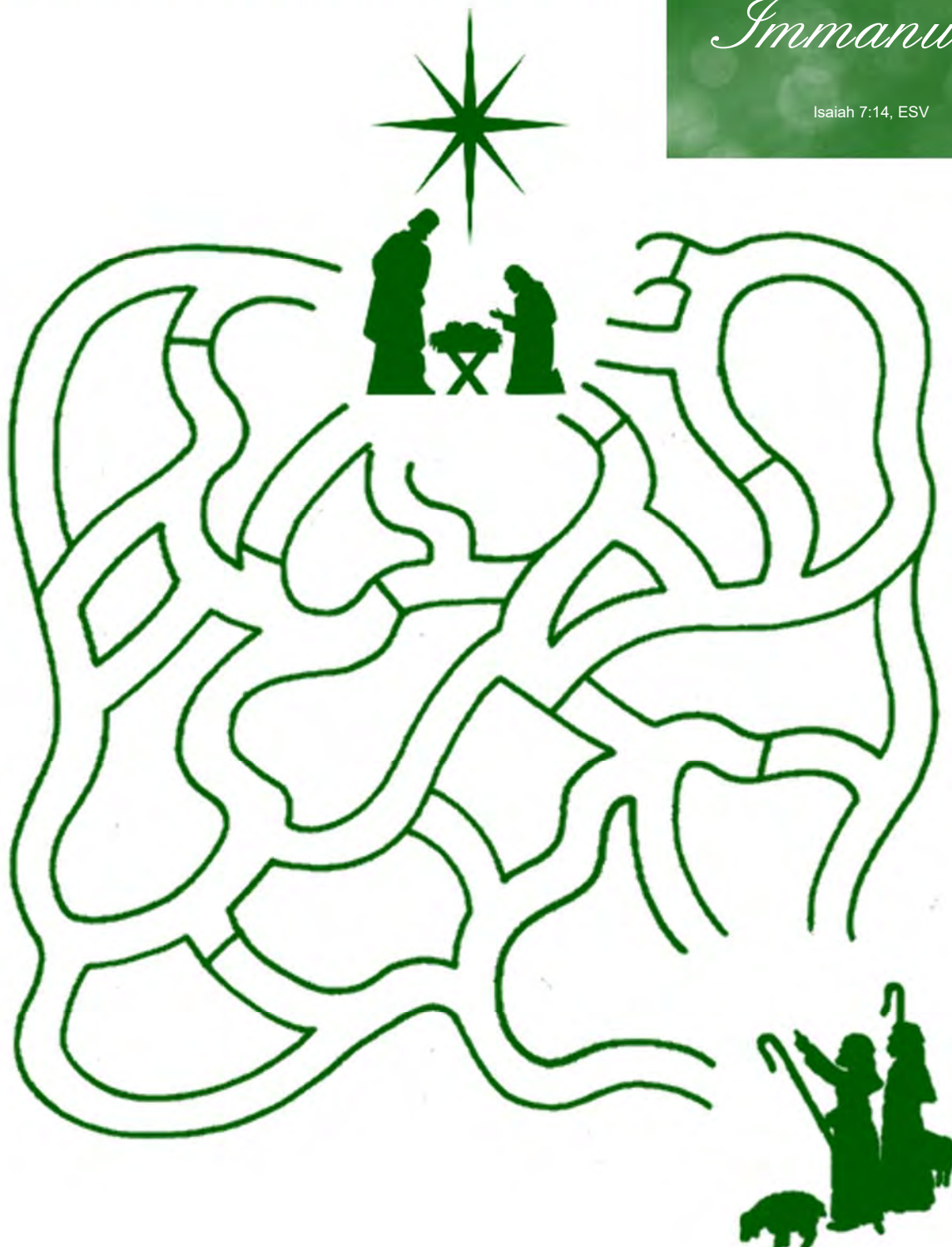
Answers may be found on page 26.

Help the Shepherds Find Jesus

**BEHOLD,
THE VIRGIN**
shall conceive and
bear a son, and
shall call his name

Immanuel

Isaiah 7:14, ESV



CALENDAR

LITURGICAL CALENDAR

Bethel Lutheran Church functions on a liturgical calendar with seasons and holy days. There are colors associated with each of the seasons and holy days. These are shown on this calendar and are reflected in the paraments in the sanctuary.

DAY	DATE	CHURCH CALENDAR
Sunday	11/3/19	All Saints Sunday
Sunday	11/10/19	23rd Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday	11/17/19	24th Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday	11/24/19	Christ the King Sunday
Wednesday	11/27/19	Thanksgiving Eve Service
Sunday	12/1/19	1st Sunday of Advent
Sunday	12/8/19	2nd Sunday of Advent
Sunday	12/15/19	3rd Sunday of Advent
Sunday	12/22/19	4th Sunday of Advent
Tuesday	12/24/19	Nativity of Our Lord
Wednesday	12/25/19	Nativity of Our Lord
Sunday	12/29/19	First Sunday after Christmas
2020		
Sunday	1/5/20	2nd Sunday after Christmas
Monday	1/6/20	Feast of the Epiphany
Sunday	1/12/20	Baptism of Our Lord
Sunday	1/19/20	2nd Sunday of Epiphany
Sunday	1/26/20	3rd Sunday of Epiphany
Sunday	2/2/20	4th Sunday of Epiphany
Sunday	2/9/20	5th Sunday of Epiphany
Sunday	2/16/20	6th Sunday of Epiphany
Sunday	2/23/20	Transfiguration of Our Lord



Christmas Carol Challenge Answers:

1. Flight, 2. The Mountains, 3. Lowing, 4. Dancing,
5. Lay, keeping their sheep, 6. A Holy Light,
7. Satan's Power, 8. Reconciled, 9. Angels,
10. Every Heart, 11. Water, 12. Israel,
13. The Holy Birth, 14. Tender and Mild, 15. Gifts,
16. Salvation

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

2019

- Nov 2-3 Budget Forums-Sat. after service, Sun.10:00 a.m.
- Nov 3 Chili Cook-Off 12 noon
- Nov 6 Healing Service 7 p.m.
- Nov 9-10 Congregational Meeting
- Nov 16-17 Circle of Sisters Craft Sale—
Sat. 10 a.m.—5:30 p.m. and Sun 8 a.m.—1:30 p.m.
- Nov 17 Holiday Grief Workshop 2-4 p.m.
- Nov 23 Thanksgiving Food Basket Distribution
- Nov 27 Thanksgiving Eve Service 7 p.m.
- Nov 30 Hanging of the Greens
- Dec 4 Midweek: Meal 6-7 p.m. Worship 7-8 p.m.
- Dec 5 Healing Service 7 p.m. *(date change due to Midweek)*
- Dec 14 Christmas Food Basket Distribution
- Dec 11 Midweek: Meal 6-7 p.m. Worship 7-8 p.m.
- Dec 14 Preschool Christmas Program 7-8 p.m.
- Dec 18 Midweek: Meal 6-7 p.m. Worship 7-8 p.m.
- Dec 22 Sunday School Christmas Program 10 a.m.
- Dec 24 Christmas Eve Services: Family 4 p.m.,
Carols & Candlelight 7 p.m. and 10:30 p.m.

2020

- Jan 2 Healing Service 7 p.m. *(date change due to New Year's Day)*
- Jan 6 Feast of the Epiphany

Continued from Page 13 — Ask the Pastor

hard-hearted, had little regard for the poor and marginalized of their society. Need I go on? The prophets spoke an unrelenting, uncompromisingly, unapologetic call to repent, to return to the Lord, and to take advantage of the grace and forgiveness God wanted so much to give.

Yes, the prophets pronounced God's judgment that was surely coming that would be harsh and over the edge. But the prophets also spoke a word of hope. And who of us doesn't need the same vision of hope . . . hope for restoration, for renewal and for rest. And oh, our world longs for an unshakable hope.

In the prophets we read that "the word of the Lord came to" his prophets. The Old Testament prophets continued until John the Baptist . . . he was the last prophet of the old era. Jesus Christ brought in a new age of prophetic truth. You and I know that word became flesh . . . and that Word was from God and that Word was God . . . even Jesus Christ our Lord. It is that Word that embodied the very light and life of God. It was that Word that was full of grace and truth. It was that Word that the prophets pointed to then. And it is that Word of God that is still the hope of our world.

Events & Activities



CHILI COOK-OFF

ANNUAL CRAFT SALE

Thanksgiving Worship

Christmas Food Baskets

Children's Christmas Programs

Joy to the World
Christmas Eve Services

All Saints' Day

SERVICE OF HEALING

Bethel Lutheran
Believe † Belong † Become
Congregational Meeting

Thanksgiving Food Baskets

Advent
Sundays & Midweek

Bethel Angel Tree

EPIPHANY



WEEKEND WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

SATURDAY

5:30 p.m. – Casual Worship

SUNDAY

8:45 a.m. – Classic Worship

10:00 a.m. – Christian Education Hour

11:11 a.m. – Praise Worship

Communion will be celebrated at all services.

OTHER WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

FIRST WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH

Healing Service—7:00 p.m.

(1st Thursday in December & January due to Advent & New Year's Day)

THANKSGIVING EVE

November 27th—Worship Service 7:00 p.m.

ADVENT MIDWEEK MEAL/WORSHIP SERVICES

Wednesday, December 4, 11, 18

Meal 6:00 p.m./Worship Service 7:00 p.m.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22

Sunday School Christmas Program 10:00 a.m.

CHRISTMAS EVE

December 24th—Family Worship Service 4:00 p.m.

Carols & Candlelight Services 7:00 p.m. and 10:30 p.m.

Bethel Lutheran Church

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317.773.4315

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NALC

North American Lutheran Church