

# FOOTPRINTS

Bethel Lutheran Church Believe—Belong—Become

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

**IN THIS ISSUE:**  
*Pastor’s Column  
Profile  
Youth in Action  
The NALC  
Books and Music  
And more . . .*



# FOOTPRINTS



ON THE COVER:  
BETHEL CROSS

# FOOTPRINTS

## Issue # 17

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

















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Gay Hanson (Editor in Chief), Ros Demaree, Jill Dietz, Pastor Doug Gast, Pastor Dave Hill, Carol Jacobs, Carole Kuhn, Trudy Kussow, John Patterson, and Pastor Al Schoonover.

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# SEASON AFTER PENTECOST 2021

## PASTOR'S COLUMN



*Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise. Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.*  
Hebrews 10:23–25

Gentlepeople of Bethel,

Unprecedented. Extraordinary. Unparalleled. After nearly 20 months, we are beginning to run low on the adjectives we can use to describe the season from which we are . . . ever . . . so . . . slowly emerging. What a joy it has been to see so many returning – for worship, or to serve in the Rummage Sale or with VBS (in June), or to celebrate Pastor Doug’s retirement or to support Respite Ranch (in July). During this long season we have missed being together in the usual ways and resuming these typical summer activities gives us a glimmer of normalcy in an otherwise abnormal time.

Our theme this summer has been Re+Connect because we have been reconnecting with each other these past few months. While that has been happening for many, some inertia remains to be overcome to bring us back to our pre-COVID ministry. For some, that resistance involves a reluctance to rejoin large group activities because of legitimate health concerns. Whether from concern over COVID or other health challenges, we will always have some portion of our congregation who are homebound. Unfortunately, those ranks have swelled some this past year. We will remain connected with you through visits from the pastors, our Care Ministers and our Eucharistic Ministers, and our weekly livestreamed worship services. (If you need help accessing any of these resources, please call the church office and we will gladly assist you.)

For others, that resistance may take the form of disappointment in something we did or didn’t do during this season. We didn’t follow COVID precautions closely or consistently enough. Or we were too slow to open back up for more normal ministry. Or the focus of our ministry has shifted, and church seems different now. Or one of the staff said something or did something that caused hurt. Or we missed a significant event in your life, and it seemed as if no one cared. Or Pastor Doug’s retirement has left you wondering whether Bethel is a place you want to attend any more. Or we failed you in some way causing a break in our relationship or a loss of confidence in our ministry.

It is said that “perception is reality.” If any of the above perceptions (or any others I didn’t think to mention) describe your reality, know that the Council and I wish to find a way through the disappointment to reconnect with you. We are committed to listen

and, to the best of our ability, to resolve any inertia that may exist in our relationship. Living together in a community of faith can be messy. Feelings can become hurt. Expectations occasionally remain unmet. There is an understandable dislocation when one long-time leader leaves and a new chapter of ministry begins. It can be a normal opportunity for one’s participation to change.

One thing that will help us to find a way through this turbulence is to remain focused on who we are as Bethel and what we are to be about. Those identity points don’t change – not because of COVID, or new Council leadership, or even a transition in pastoral leadership. Our mission remains the same: “to engage the curious, encourage the convinced, and empower the committed to be fully devoted disciples of Jesus.” We are blessed to be a blessing (Genesis 12.2) and to share that blessing beyond Bethel.

It will also help us to continue talking with one another, sharing the hurts and hopes and thanksgivings that are all a part of living life and doing ministry together. This is how we can know to offer and receive forgiveness from each other when we fall short in our relationship. And we will fall short, there is no doubt about that. The question for us is what do we do when that happens? How do we model the forgiveness that Jesus offers us so freely and graciously?

Lastly, it will help to remember why we are called to be the church, to be connected with one another. We don’t come together for our own sake, so Bethel can grow and become a megachurch. We come together each weekend so we can die to ourselves and be reborn in the image of Jesus. In this way, he sends us out to be his hands and feet and heart, serving others. We need to re+connect at church so that the gifts of God can be showered over us, and we can be restored and renewed by his word and his sacraments for us. These are how we are engaged, encouraged, and empowered to be disciples of Jesus Christ. The gifts of God in Christ will restore all of us with a Holy Spirit power that will change the world.

Serving Jesus with you!  
Pastor Al





# PROFILE:

## Meet the Houser Crew



By Laura Houser

### Meet the Houser Crew: Jason, Laura, Jenn, Ben & Jon



Jason and Laura both have grown up as lifelong Lutherans, baptized, confirmed and married. They met their Senior year of high school when they both attended a Lutheran Youth Organization conference, the day after Thanksgiving in southern Indiana. They were in the same small group and prayer partners.

Jason and Laura attended college at Manchester College where they attended Zion Lutheran Church. "Being asked to teach High School Sunday School & lead the Youth Group for the 1997-1998 year was honestly a life changing event for us. It helped us focus and be centered on Him." Having been blessed to get to meet each other because adults took them to a LYO Youth Gathering, Jason and Laura decided to tithe their time to support the Youth at their church.

During summers between college years, Laura was able to work for Lutheran Outdoor Ministries as a camp counselor & Assistant Director at Lake Luther. After graduating from college with an Elementary Education degree and a minor in Special Education, Laura moved to Michigan City and taught in a Kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classroom for students who had special needs of moderate, severe and profound disabilities. Jason finished a degree from Purdue University as part of a 3-2 program ending with a degree from Manchester College in Engineering Science & a minor in Physics, as well as an Electrical Engineering degree from Purdue University. Zion had asked them to come chaperone the Youth at a Congress in Ohio. "The Zion Lions (Youth group) asked us to come home, teach Sunday School and lead the Youth group again. That weekend was a game changer for us. Over fries & a soda at a Dairy Queen in Syracuse, prayers and a phone call to Zion's Pastor, we decided to step out in faith: 'The Lord will provide'. Within a week, I had a new job for the coming year at Huntington North H.S., we had an apartment arranged in Warsaw, Jason was set to attend Valparaiso University for Law

School; all putting us in a great place to attend Zion & teach Sunday School and lead Youth Group again. The Lord has blessed us greatly. We married at Zion Lutheran Church in North Manchester June 30, 2001 with Pastor Jeff Hawkins (Zion Lutheran Church), Pastor Jim Engle (Trinity Lutheran Church: Laura's pastor of her childhood congregation) & Pastor Ralph Easterhaus (St. John's Lutheran Church Lake Township: Pastor of Jason's childhood church) officiating our wedding. The homily was "The Lord will provide"; a motto we have tried to live our life by." After commuting to jobs, school & church, Jason and Laura bought their first home in North Manchester, a beautiful Victorian built in 1881 just 2 ½ blocks from Zion Lutheran Church. The Houser's were blessed on March 1, 2004 with their first child, Jennavee. She was a bit early and spent just over a week in the NIC Unit. The couple was blessed by visits of Pastor Koch while in the hospital. He later baptized Jennavee at Zion. Jason and Laura continued to teach Sunday School and lead Youth Group. Being so close to church, Zion Lions Youth visits were a frequent occurrence. On March 7, 2006, by induction at 38.5 weeks, the Houser's were blessed with the addition of Benjamin & Jonathan to the family. They too were baptized at Zion.

The Houser Crew moved to Metamora, IL in 2007. Jason worked for Caterpillar. "The move placed us roughly 7.5 hours from family, an unusual place to be after having family and friends within minutes and at the most 45 minutes away. The move to Illinois made Jason and I closer as we relied on each other & God more. We found a great little church in Washington, IL named Faith Lutheran." After living in Metamora, Jason and Laura realized living closer to family was something they wanted for their children. Just over a year of living in Illinois, they packed up and moved just outside of Warsaw, off a dirt road with Amish neighbors, where Jason worked for Zimmer. After searching for a new church home, the Houser's found Redeemer Lutheran where Jason & Laura taught HS Sunday School and did Youth Group as well as





helping with VBS. When the opportunity to work for Firestone/Bridgestone came up for Jason, the Crew's first questions were: How far away from Gram & Papaw will we be? Where are we going to church? And how far of a trip is it? They wanted to help find their new church home & at entering 2<sup>nd</sup> grade & Kindergarten, they were old enough to voice their thoughts.

Jason and Laura were able to find a great home in the country where their children would be able to go to a good school system. They attended a few churches but still hadn't found the right home. After some prompting of Tom Ogan, a member of Trinity/Living Faith as well as some info searching, a phone conversation with Pastor Doug & prayers, the Houser Crew attended Bethel for the first time in early 2012. Pastor Doug had arranged for Tree Rudy to meet the kids & take them to Sunday School. After attending a couple times & enjoying Bethel, Pastor E. Dean showed up one week night evening while Laura was making dinner and helping the Crew with homework. He sat down and helped with homework & waited for Jason to get home. Pastor E. Dean and his gentle presence in their home was a huge part of the reason the Houser Crew settled on Bethel. Joe Rudy and Nick Hunter asked Jason and Laura to be chaperones for the National Conference in New Orleans in the summer of 2012. After that trip south, Joe Rudy asked Jason and Laura to teach High School Sunday School, roughly 8+ years later, they are still teaching & enjoying it. All 3 Houser kids have gone through the 3 years of Confirmation required at Bethel and were each confirmed at Bethel.



The Houser's currently have all 3 of their crew in the High School Sunday School class. Jason and Laura have a tradition they have brought to every church they have taught Sunday School in... the High School Senior Blessing Blanket. "It has taken on a different feel at each church. Those blessing blankets of our kids have literally traveled the world. We are thankful beyond words for the opportunity to get to be part of their lives. We have watched them grow not only in their spiritual life, their physical growth but also in their humanity. Being part of their journeys and seeing them live on their own, get married and having children, all while knowing we played a small role in their growth, is one of our greatest gifts."

This year, Jenn is a Senior at Hamilton Heights HS. She plays soccer, is involved in 4-H, Robotics, BPA, Kindness Club, Spanish Club, plays the tenor saxophone and violin & loves to read. Ben is a

Sophomore at Hamilton Heights HS. He is an Athletic Trainers Aide. He is in BPA, band, jazz band and plays the piano, trombone and trumpet. Jon is a Sophomore at Hamilton Heights HS. He is on the Tennis Team. He is in BPA, band, jazz band and plays the baritone, trumpet and dabbles in guitar.

While at Bethel, Laura has served on council for 2 terms, the Preschool Committee, teaching the Preschool Junior Class & serving as the Preschool Director. Jason served on the Long Range Planning Committee. We have helped with VBS in various ways since 2013. It has been fun to watch our kids enjoy VBS and help as soon as they were able to. Jenn has been the VBS Kitchen Leader since entering her 7<sup>th</sup> grade year. We would encourage anyone and everyone to consider helping with VBS. There are plenty of ways to help from donating items, giving your time and praying for all. Our family has been blessed to help with Respite Ranch as well.



Laura's first class at Bethel's Preschool was the Junior Class of '15. She has worked at the preschool for the past 7 years and has been the Director for the past 4 years. "Getting to be entrusted with the job of teaching little minds and hearts is a gift & responsibility. I enjoy planting little seeds of God's love, watching how excited the kids get over the activities and to see them and their families grow over the course of the year." The Preschool is always open to being blessed by prayers or more.

#### **Some ways to bless the Preschool:**

- \*Prayers: there is a Prayer Corner in the Preschool hallway to leave prayer concerns for our Preschool families and church members to use
- \*Wishing Tree: located in the Preschool hallway with wishes from Preschool, teachers & classes.







# CELEBRATING WITH

## CELEBRATING & THANKING GOD FOR PASTOR DOUG'S 30 YEARS OF SERVICE TO BETHEL



Doug & Terri 5/91





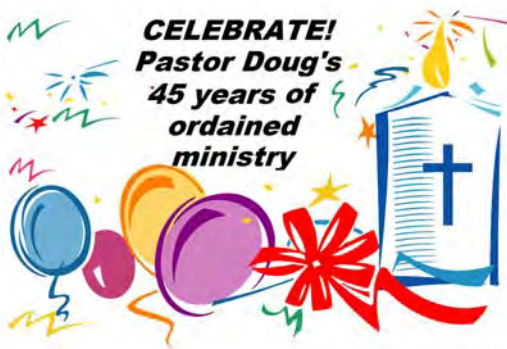
# PASTOR DOUG GAST



ORDINATION – JULY 18, 1976 – FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH, HARVEY, ILLINOIS



Pastor Doug, Uncle Bud (Marvin), Grandpa Martin, Father Elvis, Great Uncle John, Brother Rick, Brother Jon, Great Grandma Emma, Sister Nancee



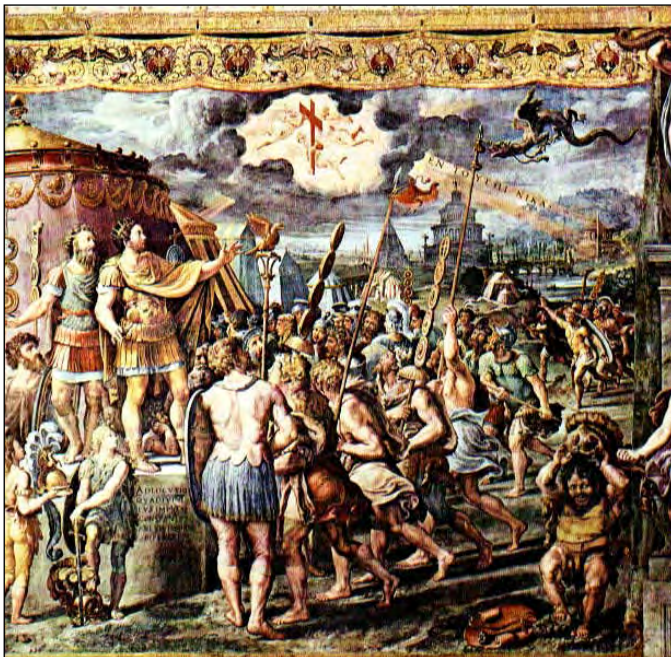


# CHURCH HISTORY

## COUNCIL OF NICEA

By Carol Jacobs

There were signs the Roman empire was crumbling. Thirty emperors claimed the throne in the Third Century, although the empire world continue in the West for another two centuries and in the East much longer. The beginning of the Fourth Century was the time of vicious persecutions of the Christians by Emperors Diocletian and Galarius. Following a dream in which Constantine saw a cross in the sky and the words, "In this sign conquer," he defeated Galarius's successor to become the Roman emperor in 312. He saw this victory as proof of the superiority of Christianity. Consequently, Constantine favored Christianity openly, abolished crucifixions, made Sunday a public holiday, and his generosity resulted in magnificent church buildings. Suddenly, Christians went from being persecuted to being favored. New opportunities for preaching and development provided a new mission of outreach for the church.



*Detail from The Vision of the Cross by assistants of Raphael, depicting the vision of the cross in the sky, before the Battle of the Milvian Bridge. (picture in the public domain)*

Yet Christians were divided. While united under the persecutions of previous decades, Christians called for the banishment or suppression of fellow Christians over differences in doctrine. While Christians attempted to work out their theology, many theories were proposed: subordinationism including Gnosticism, modalism, Docetism, Monarchianism, adoptionism. Gnostics believed in one supreme God who dwells alone and lesser beings or demigods who do God's work. This

theology appealed to former pagans. It was easier to understand Christ as a divine hero but greater than a human being rather than a person of the Trinity. The issue of Jesus and His unique identity was a major issue of contention among Christians.

Enter Arius. Arius was the priest and leader of the prestigious Baucalis church (traditional site of the martyrdom of St. Mark in 68 AD) in Alexandria. He was a cultured, intelligent ascetic and charismatic leader. He used songs to promote his theological views that became popular among the dock workers, school children, and women of influence in the city. He believed that the Father and Son were not the same person and were not unified in being or in substance.

In opposition to Arius, Alexander, the Bishop of Alexandria, and arch-deacon Athanasius (later Bishop succeeding Alexander) stood for Trinitarianism against Arius. Accusations went back and forth on both sides until Alexander excommunicated Arius. Arius turned to Eusebius, Bishop of Nicomedia and pastor to Constantine, (not the Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea and church historian) who supported him. After hearing Arius had gone to Nicomedia, Alexander called a synod in 320 that condemned Arius's teaching and excommunicated him and all bishops and priests who supported him. Arius responded with a letter sent throughout the Eastern Empire calling for restoration of himself and his followers. Thus the struggle was between the two most important churches, Nicomedia, the political capital, and Alexandria, the intellectual capital. When Arius returned to Alexandria, riots broke out in the streets. Clearly something had to be done. Since Emperor Constantine counted on the church to bring new life into the empire, a quarreling and divided church could not bring unity. He turned to his theological advisor, Bishop Hosius of Cordova. After several unsuccessful attempts to heal the schism, Bishop Hosius recommended a church council, and in 325 Constantine called for all the bishops in the Empire to a council in Nicea in Asia Minor for the council. Of the 1500 bishops, 318 attended with only five from the West. Constantine attended the first session stating everyone should be allowed to speak freely; but, in the end, there must be agreement among all with the threat of being deposed and exiled for those who did not agree. He then allowed the church leaders to come to a resolution.



The main question was whether the excommunication of Arias would stand. Arias stated his views that the Son of God was a created being, made from nothing; there was a time when he did not exist, and he was capable of alternating between good and evil. He was denounced by the assembly. Eusebius of Caesarea, a half-hearted supporter of Arius, proposed a creed based on the Rule of Faith used at baptism in his diocese. However, the phrase describing Jesus as “begotten of all creation” was rejected as it appeared to support Arias. Something more was needed to exclude the Arian heresy. In order to resolve the issue of the relationship between the Father and the Son, Athanasius proposed using the Greek word *homoousios*, meaning “of like substance.” Finally, after a lengthy discussion, a Nicene Creed was agreed upon with only seventeen dissenters, seven of whom were exiled and eleven who signed the creed even though they did not agree. The Creed not only made a statement against Arianism but also against Gnosticism, adoptionism, and Docetism.

Though other issues such as the timing of the observance of Easter, requirements for clergy, readmission to the church, the statement of belief and doctrinal orthodoxy on the divine nature of God, the Son, and their relationship was the most important decision. Although the debate over Arianism continued for 50 more years, the Nicene Creed emerged as the standard of orthodoxy in Roman, Eastern, Anglican, and other churches.



Icon depicting the Emperor Constantine and the bishops of the First Council of Nicaea (325) holding the Niceno–Constantinopolitan Creed of 381. (picture in the public domain)

## Nicene Creed

LBW p. 65

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.



The view and term of “Trinity” was articulated in the third century by theologian Tertullian who said God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit should be thought of as a unity of being, one in “essence,” but not one in person.

**Subordinationism:** Jesus was a lesser being and subordinate to God

**Modalism:** One God who is manifested in three forms or modes, Father in OT, Christ in NT, Holy Spirit in the Church age. Same person, not three.

**Docetism:** form of Gnosticism; denied the humanity of Christ, Christ only seemed human but was spirit, the Incarnation was an illusion

**Monarchianism:** Christ was empowered by *Christ Spirit* at baptism but left the man Jesus at the Cross who was merely a man not the Son of God

**Adoptionism:** Jesus was “adopted” by God at baptism or at the Resurrection; man became God, not God became man



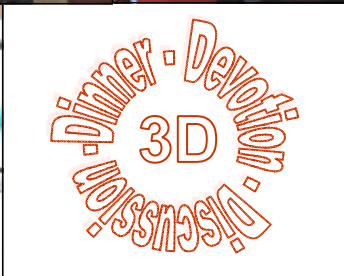
# in **YOUTH** Action



## RUMMAGE SALE









# SEASONS & HOLY DAYS

## “Ordinary time” The Season after Pentecost

The longest “season” in the Christian church year begins the Monday after Pentecost Sunday. It ends the evening before Advent, lasting between 33 and 34 weeks depending on when Easter is celebrated. It is considered the last half of the church year with the new church year beginning with Advent.

The season begins the day after the apostles and other followers of Christ were filled with the Holy Spirit and were able to go proclaim God’s word in the surrounding nations in every language necessary. The church began to grow. The color of the season noted in vestments and altar cloths is mostly green, focusing on this growth, new life and hope in the resurrection of Christ. One symbol of Ordinary Time is two fish and a basket of bread...reminders of one of the miracles Jesus performed.

There are a variety of explanations for the term “Ordinary Time.” One most used seems to be because the Sundays have “ordinal” numbers-- first Sunday after Pentecost, second Sunday, etc. Ordinary may have been derived from the Latin word “ordinalis” which refers to numbers in a series, not meaning “common” Sundays, but numbered while remembering Pentecost.

There are four major festivals celebrated during this season. The first Sunday after Pentecost is **Holy Trinity**. This is in remembrance of how God is revealed, Father, Son and Holy spirit. That Sunday will feature the color white.

The last Sunday in October is to remember Martin Luther, **Reformation Sunday**. The beliefs we hold as Lutherans stem from his nailing the 95 Theses to the church door in Germany, The color for that Sunday is red. **All Saints Sunday** refers to the communion of saints extending to all times and places and includes Christians who have lived in the past. Color of the day is white.

**Christ the King Sunday** is the last Sunday of the church year remembering Christ’s rule over all creation through love and service...white is the color of the day.

Then we can say that “Ordinary Time” is certainly not ordinary. It is a time of contemplation of what God did for us by sending Christ who shared his final time with the apostles and other followers and then those same followers went on to share the message of salvation, a reminder to us.

**For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.**

*Jeremiah 29:11*

**For he says, “In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you.” I tell you, now is the time of God’s favor, now is the day of salvation.**

*2 Corinthians 6:2*

**They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.**

*Acts 2:42 (NIV)*



# LUTHERAN CHRISTIANS

## WHO WE ARE - WHAT WE BELIEVE

By Gay Hanson

### THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS

The **Priesthood of All Believers** is a concept that means each and every Christian believer has a responsibility to take on the priestly roles of sharing the burdens of others and the church as a whole, renewing and caring for the church and its members, and giving of their time, their concern, their talents, and their wealth for the betterment of God's people. Martin Luther challenged members of the church not to live for themselves but for the community of saints.

So, why do Lutherans consider all Christians to be priests?

*Christians are priests because they have direct access to God.* In the Old Testament, only the high priest could enter the Holy of Holies. Through Christ, we have the privilege of direct access to God. Ephesians 3:12 says that "In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence."

*Christians are priests because they offer sacrifices to God.* Old Testament priests were to offer sacrifices, such as lambs, bulls, goats, etc. The Christian is still to offer sacrifices, but they are now the sacrifices of prayer, praise, repentance, thanksgiving, kindness, care, and love. 1 Peter 2:5 says, "You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." Hebrews 13:15 says, "Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that openly profess his name." Because of Jesus, the believer can be confident that God will hear and accept these sacrifices.

*Christians are priests because they proclaim, preach, and teach the Word of God.* 1 Peter 2:9 says, "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light." There are many terms used in

the New Testament to describe how we should "declare the praises" – announce, explain, say, testify, persuade, confess, charge, rebuke, admonish, exhort, etc. Everyone can and should bear witness to Christ in some way—according to their gifts. Yes, it is sometimes a great challenge to speak publicly about Jesus, righteousness, sin, or judgment, but we can ask for the Spirit's help.

*Christians are priests because they are meant to help reconcile people to God and each other.* Believers are to bring Christ's love into a dark and troubled world, and just as priests are agents of reconciliation to God and others, so believers should be such agents. God is the one who initiates this process. 2 Corinthians 5:18 says, "All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation." 1 Timothy 2:1 says that, "Believers are to offer petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people."

As Christians, we share in the priesthood of Christ, receiving a share of His priestly office: we stand before God, intercede with and sacrifice ourselves to God, pray for others, and proclaim God's word to one another. Public preaching and the administration of the sacraments are generally limited to the ordained clergy, but Christians are otherwise authorized and expected to speak to one another words of Christian comfort and the assurance of God's love, grace, power, and forgiveness.







# 2021 Heartland Mission District Convocation & Youth Gathering

Saturday, October 2, 2021 9:30a—3:00p

St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church  
16933 Thiele Rd, Fort Wayne, IN 46819

Cost: \$15/Adults or \$45/church Youth - free



*I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.* John 15:5 (NIV)

## Guest Speaker



Rev. Dr. Eric M. Riesen  
North American Lutheran Seminary President



### *Tentative Breakout Sessions*

Healing Ministry  
for the Local Church

Seeing Our Congregational Reality:  
Moving Forward

Life-to-Life Discipleship

### *Business Meeting*

Elections of 2 clergy and  
1 lay Council Members &  
the Dean of the Mission District

### *Mission Projects*

Restaurant/fast food gift cards  
for NALS Seminarians.  
School supplies – elementary  
and/or high school – for  
NALC Disaster Response.  
See <https://thenalc.org/nalc-disaster-response/> for a list  
of items needed.

The offering taken during wor-  
ship will go to the semi-  
nary's "Areas of Greatest  
Need" Fund.

### *Youth Gathering*

**Serve:** Assemble School Kits

**Gather:** Ice breakers, Games

**Study:** Don't Lose Your  
Connection!  
(John 15:5)

Attend **Forum** with  
Guest Speaker





# ASK THE PASTOR



By Pastor Dave Hill

***“Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”*** Proverbs 3:5-6

It’s simple! It’s short! And it’s incredibly powerful! These verses are, among others, some of the most familiar in the Bible – and with good reason. *Why?* Because they express a life-changing truth that is worthy of our attention. Please allow me to continue, then let’s see if you agree.

Let’s break down this life-changing truth to make sure that we understand it.

## ***Trust in the Lord...***

Yup! It starts with *trust*. Any real relationship has to start with *some* level of trust, doesn’t it? It’s the only way that a true friendship will endure. It’s the only way that a marriage will work out. It’s the simple reason why an employer hires workers, or why the workers stay employed. *It’s all about trust!*

But, trust in the Lord takes on an entirely new dimension. It’s all about our trust in an eternal, all-powerful, all-wise, all-loving God. He *is* worthy of our trust! That trust is important *not* just because of who God is but because of the way in which we must trust Him – *with all your heart*. Now that involves every fiber of your being. *That’s* the kind of trust that we *can* and *should* have in God—a complete, unshakable, deep, and abiding trust.

So, if you’re a Christian, then you *can* and *must* trust in God for your salvation. And you *can* and *must* also trust in Him with the rest of your life – every detail!

## ***Don’t Lean on Your Understanding...***

This verse involves something positive – something that you *must* do! But it also involves something negative – something you must *not* do! *Don’t* lean on your *own* understanding! Basically, we’re being told that we shouldn’t rely *only* on ourselves. We cannot pursue a course of action, make a financial decision or a business move, cannot have a relationship, or make an educational choice simply based on our own understanding. It *must* be founded in our trust in God.

Self-reliance is such a deceptive trap! We begin to pride ourselves in something: our savvy, our looks, our intellect, our spirituality, or our family – whatever. And when we do, it takes away our trust in the Lord. It becomes a trust in ourselves. The result is a dangerous compromise that will lead to destruction.

## ***Instead, acknowledge God. In Everything...***

The antidote to this self-reliance is found in the first command of the verse: ***“Trust in the Lord with all your heart...”*** And it’s developed in these words: ***“In all your ways acknowledge him.”*** The word “acknowledge” isn’t merely a polite “tip of the hat” to the “Man Upstairs,” or a few words of prayer over your meal, or even dutiful attendance at church to let Him know we’re still cool with what He’s doing. It’s way more! It’s allowing Him access, control, command, and involvement in *all* of your life.

What’s the result of this? Will God ruin your life? Will He be a Sovereign Killjoy? Will He rob you of fun? The verse ends on a promise. *What is it?* Please read on!

## ***He will make your paths straight.***

This promise is offered in the form of a metaphor. What does it mean to have *straight paths*? Well, it can mean several things. *First*, paths lead toward an end, a destination, or a goal. So, trusting in God wholeheartedly in every area of your life will give your life a sense of purpose and priority. *Second*, it indicates that there will be a clear understanding of where you are going and what you are doing. So, it makes daily decision-making an easier and less painful task. As you trust solely in Him, He, in turn, makes your paths straight. So, the way ahead is more obvious. *Third*, “straight paths” suggest moral purity. It suggests a life that has *less* sinful compromise and *more* wholesome attitudes, actions, and behavior.

My friends, that’s the kind of life that God promises. It’s the kind of life that you can have! It begins with trust. It involves acknowledging God in every way.

## ***So, trust in the Lord in all you do!***



# ALTAR GUILD MINISTRY

## THE PARAMENTS



Michelle Whitehead noticed one Sunday that the altar cloth had a tear in it. She offered to repair it and brought it back to church the next day. Later, she and Jill Duncan were discussing the paraments and that the Altar Guild had decided that new ones were in the near future and they were looking for someone to make them, if interested. Michelle said she'd be happy to make some. The new green paraments that adorn the altar and the pulpit and the banner, were made by Michelle. The emblems on the altar cloth and the pulpit cloth were ordered out of a catalog, while the fish on the banner was hand drawn by Michelle. She sewed the emblems on using very slow, steady stitches, on a machine, very close to the edges of them to hold them in place. Then she sewed on the decorative ribbon near the bottom. Michelle used a machine called a serger to put the two pieces of fabric together to finish each cloth, so the end product is a professional looking cloth, with the stitches that are usually seen on the back side being hidden between the layers.

These paraments are beautiful from afar but are even more appreciated when looked at closely. The time, talent and patience it takes to sew the emblems on - sewing that close to



by Jill Dietz with contributions by Michelle Whitehead

the edge of them, with straight, even stitches, is amazing. Thank you, Michelle for doing such a beautiful job on this gift! The memorials that were given in memory of Corky Kaiser were specifically set aside for green paraments, so that's why Michelle made these green ones first.

The paraments follow the church calendar year in color and these include the vestments the pastors may choose to wear. The color for each season and the meaning of the color is as follows:

**Blue** or **purple** is used for Advent. Blue signifies hope, while purple signifies royalty. This is the start of our church year.

**White** is used for all major festivals that relate to God including Christmas, Easter, Ascension and sometimes Epiphany. White symbolizes purity and glory.

**Purple** is for Lent leading up to Holy Week. Purple represents royalty, fasting and penitence.

**Red** is for festivals that relate to the Holy Spirit. Pentecost Sunday is red.

**Green** is for the season following Pentecost, when there are no major festivals. Green symbolizes growth in a Christian's faith.

The altar is left empty during Holy Week, showing the sacrifice that Jesus made for us.

Purple can be used on Ash Wednesday and black on Good Friday, if the altar is not left empty.



*The basic information for this article was found in an article on line written by Kimberly Turtenwald on September 29, 2017.*





# CHURCH MUSIC

## HYMNS & SONGS

By Jill Dietz

### The History of the Prayer/Song Lamb of God (Agnus Dei)

**Lamb of God**, which is sung after the lay assistants have taken communion, right before the congregants go forward, comes from the **Agnus Dei**, a Latin prayer, and means **Lamb of God**. It is based on John 1:29, in which John the Baptist sees Jesus and proclaims "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

Many composers have included an **Agnus Dei** in the masses they have composed including Bach, Beethoven and Schubert.

Mozart and Verdi included an **Agnus Dei** in their Requiem Masses for the Dead.

American contemporary composer Samuel Barber used the Latin words of the **Agnus Dei** in his work "Adagio for Strings" in 1938. Jesus as the "Lamb of God" is referenced in the Bible in John 1:29 and 34, 29 times as a lion-like lamb, which shows victory in the face of death, in Revelation, and is referred to in Psalm 23 when God is shown as a shepherd leading his flock, and in 1 Peter 1:18-19.

The **Agnus Dei** was introduced to Catholic churches around 700 A.D. by Pope Sergius. Christ, the Lamb of God, was present with John the Baptist almost 2,000 years ago, but He is present with us today in the bread and wine at communion. He comes as a Lamb to sacrifice himself for us, and we recognize that in the bread and wine. We sing: have mercy on us, which He assuredly does as we receive the elements of communion.

As we sing this song, we are proclaiming Jesus who gave His life for us and yet we are also praying for His mercy. In the Sacrament, the sacrificed body and blood of the Lamb of God takes away our sins, providing us with forgiveness, mercy, and peace. In singing **The Lamb of God**, we publicly acknowledge this and look forward to it.

### *Lamb of God (Agnus Dei)*

#### Version 1

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
grant us peace, grant us peace.

#### Version 2

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
Have mercy on us, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
Have mercy on us, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
Grant us peace, grant us peace.





# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

## CHILDREN AND ADULT



10:00 a.m. Sunday Mornings

### SUNDAY YOUTH CLASSES

**Sunday School** — Sunday School for children ages Kindergarten through 12th grade. Students for all classes go to their assigned classrooms. Parents can pick up their children from the classroom at 10:55 a.m.

**Nursery** — staffed on Sundays by volunteers from Kidz City. Please bring your little ones to the nursery at the time children are dismissed for Kidz City. It would be great if you could help every once in a while.

**Preschool-Kindergarten** — Children who turn 3 years old before December 31st through Kindergarten age are invited to join our Preschool-Kindergarten. “Gospel Light” teaches children Bible lessons in a fun, age-appropriate way, with engaging songs, stories, videos and puppets!

**1st-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. The curriculum used is “Sunday Schoolhouse” from Sola Publishing.

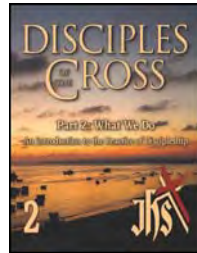
### **Confirmation**

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. We attend worship together and once a month, we have a large group fellowship activity.

**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 encourage conversation and discussion in a respectful manner, active serving, and prayer.

### SUNDAY ADULT CLASS

**Aug-Oct** Fellowship Hall  
**Disciples of the Cross, Part 2**  
*Led by the Pastor Dave*



**Part 2** will tell us “What We Do” as disciples of Jesus. We’ll learn practical aspects of discipleship and about how to live as disciples in everyday life. Use of the themes found in the Lord’s Prayer will take us through key aspects of our faith life—not only to demonstrate disciplines that we are to practice as disciples, but to show how God can use us to bring the Gospel into the lives of others.

**Ask the Question** — Chapel  
*Led by 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 as we discuss the questions you bring to the table.



### OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

#### **High School Youth Ministry: 3D**

3D — Dinner-Devotions-Discussion meets on Thursdays at the home of congregation members who volunteer to host the youth for an evening of faith and fellowship. For more information or to volunteer to host the group, please contact Eddie Burks (eddie@bethellutheranchurch.com).

#### **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.



#### **First Communion Class**

Children in 4th grade and up learn about God’s promises and the importance of Holy Communion. Classes are held during the Discipleship Hour and culminate with the Rite of First Communion, usually on Maundy Thursday. For more information, speak with Pastor Al.



#### **Discovery Class**

*Next Class Dates TBD*

Are you a newcomer to faith or to Bethel and curious about what God is doing here? Join us for our Discovery Class to go deeper in your faith! The pastors and other key leaders will explore with you the basics of our Lutheran Christian faith and what it means to be a disciple here at Bethel. Talk to a pastor if you are interested.



#### **Sausage & Scripture - Fellowship Hall**

John Eldridge’s “Wild at Heart” is the book study. All men are welcome to join us Saturdays for breakfast at 7:30 a.m. and study from 8:00-9:00 a.m. For more information, please contact Jason Pearson (317-289-3986).

**Women on Wednesdays** - Meets on Wednesday mornings at 9:30 a.m. for Bible study. They are currently studying *The Letters of Paul*. Please contact Mary Jo Mikulski if you have questions (260-403-5525).

#### **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).

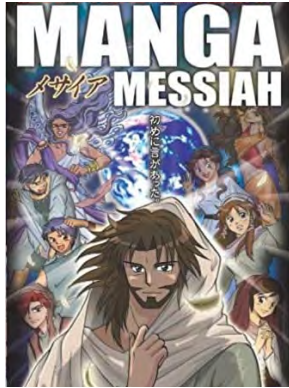
The second group meets **Saturdays** at 11:00 a.m. at Harbour Trees Golf Club. Each month’s study includes lunch. For more information, contact Linda Crist (317-758-6748).



# BOOKS OF INTEREST

By Trudy Kussov

**Reading level:  
Children – Young Adult**

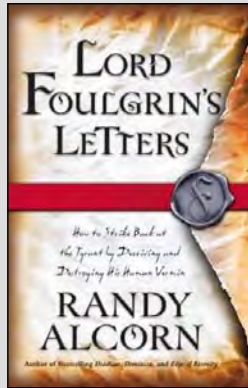


## **MANGA MESSIAH** *by Tyndale House Publishing*

This book depicts the life of Jesus, with the drawings done in the MANGA style. In our library we have MANGA books relating stories from the Old Testament, but this one tells the entire life of Jesus, from the announcement to Mary through Jesus' ascension into heaven.

Our library also has the following book, *Metamorphosis*, which depicts the events of the beginning of the Christian Church as they are reported in Acts. At the bottom of each page of the MANGA histories are the references to the reports in the Bible of the events pictured on that page. In this book, Messiah, Tyndale House has done a good job of portraying Jesus' life truthfully.

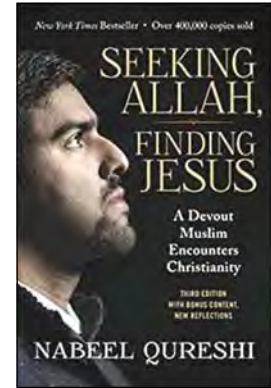
**Reading level:  
Adult**



## **LORD FOULGRIN'S LETTERS** *By Randy Alcorn*

This book is inspired by the well-known and loved *Screwtape Letters* of C.S. Lewis. The supervising demon, Lord Foulgrin, sends and receives letters from his apprentice demon, Squaltaint. Interspersed between the letters is the story of the man, Jordan Fletcher, whom the demons are targeting. At first it seems a long book to be doing what C.S. Lewis did so cleverly and succinctly, but as the book proceeds we realize that the world now is much more complicated and Christianity much more marginalized than it was decades ago. Randy gives us much food for thought as he challenges our complacency.

**Reading level:  
Adult**



## **SEEKING ALLAH, FINDING JESUS A Devout Muslim Encounters Christianity** *By Nabeel Qureshi*

This book is a compelling read. You are eager to learn what Nabeel finds out about each question that he encounters, until he comes to the only decision he could make. Nabeel was raised in one of the most devout, loving Muslim homes one could imagine. He was thoroughly taught the fundamentals of the faith, and through his teen years was deeply interested in his faith intellectually. In college, he became friends and debate partners with David Wood, a Christian who was also interested in his faith intellectually. The deep, probing dialogs they had about their faiths resulted in Nabeel's conversion to Christianity, at great emotional cost to himself and his family. This book is beautifully written and an important read for Christians who want to refresh the reasons why they know Christianity is true. The way it depicts Muslims can help us to appreciate how much devout Muslims revere their faith.





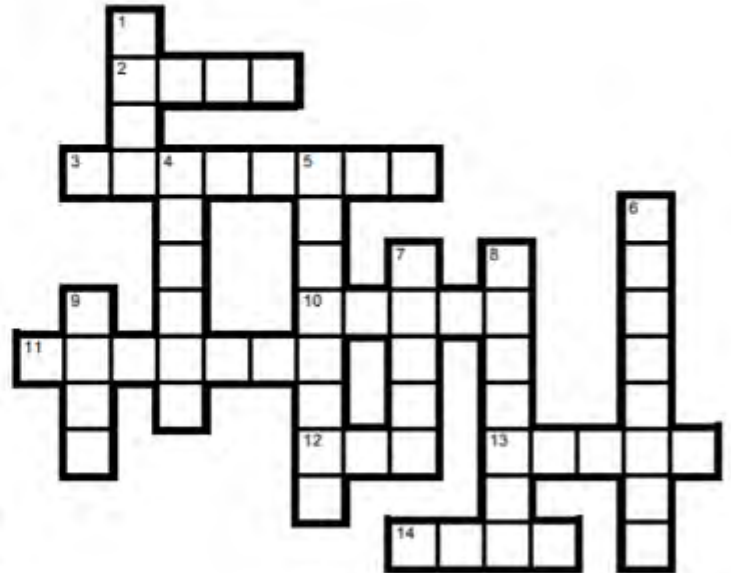
## JONAH CROSSWORD

### Across

- 2 Drawn to make a decision (4)
- 3 Turned away from sin (8)
- 10 Tempest (5)
- 11 Place God sent Jonah to (7)
- 12 Body of water (3)
- 13 Days and nights in the fish (5)
- 14 Floating transport (4)

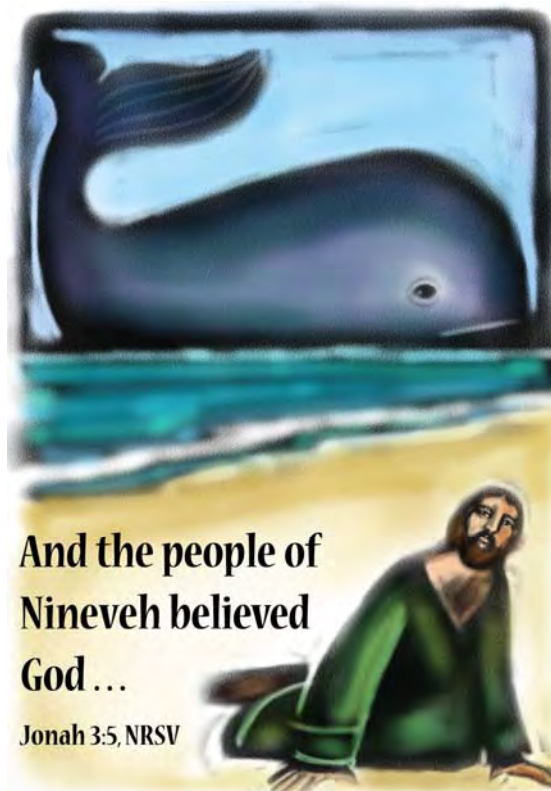
### Down

- 1 Run (4)
- 4 Pleaded (6)
- 5 Place Jonah ran to (8)
- 6 Prediction (8)
- 7 Port town (5)
- 8 Jonah's father (7)
- 9 Densely populated area (4)



BiblePuzzles.org.uk

Answers may be found on Page 22.





# PLAY

## JONAH WORD SEARCH



Created by BiblePuzzles.com

- |                |               |            |               |
|----------------|---------------|------------|---------------|
| ANGRY          | FLEE          | PRAYED     | SON OF AMITAI |
| BELLY          | FORTY DAYS    | PREACHING  | SWALLOW       |
| BOOTH          | GOURD         | PROCLAIMED | TARSHISH      |
| CAST LOTS      | JONAH         | PROPHECY   | TEMPEST       |
| CAST OVERBOARD | JOPPA         | PROPHET    | TEMPESTUOUS   |
| CORRUPTION     | JOURNEY       | REPENT     | THANKSGIVING  |
| DECREE         | MARINERS      | SACKCLOTH  | THREE DAYS    |
| DISOBEDIENCE   | MERCY         | SACRIFICE  | THREE NIGHTS  |
| DISPLEASED     | MESSENGER     | SALVATION  | VOMITED       |
| EAST WIND      | MINOR PROPHET | SEA        | WICKEDNESS    |
| EVIL           | NINEVEH       | SHADOW     | WITHERED      |
| FEAR           | OVERTHROWN    | SHIP       | WORM          |
| FISH           | PITY          | SHIPMASTER | WORSHIP       |

Answers may be found on Page 22.



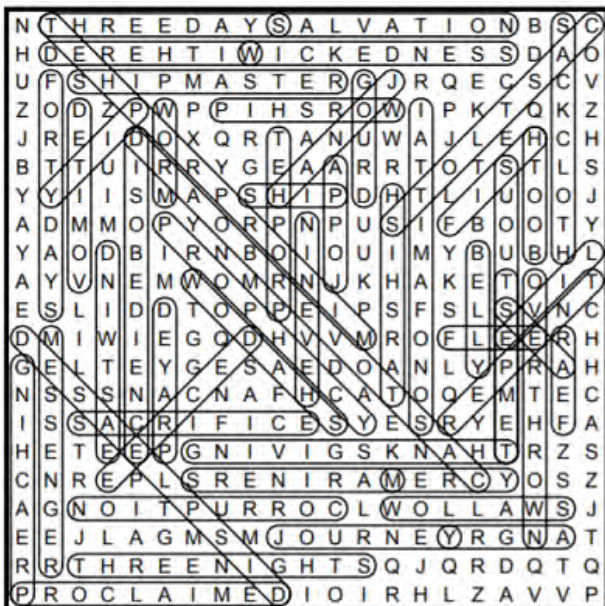
# CALENDAR

## 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	8/8/21	11th Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday	8/15/21	12th Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday	8/22/21	13th Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday	8/29/21	14th Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday	9/5/21	15th Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday	9/12/21	16th Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday	9/19/21	17th Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday	9/26/21	18th Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday	10/3/21	19th Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday	10/10/21	20th Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday	10/17/21	21st Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday	10/24/21	22nd Sunday after Pentecost
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>10/31/21</b>	<b>Reformation Sunday</b>
Sunday	11/7/21	All Saints Sunday
Sunday	11/14/21	25th Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday	11/21/21	Christ the King Sunday
Thursday	11/25/21	Thanksgiving Day

**Word Search answers from page 21**

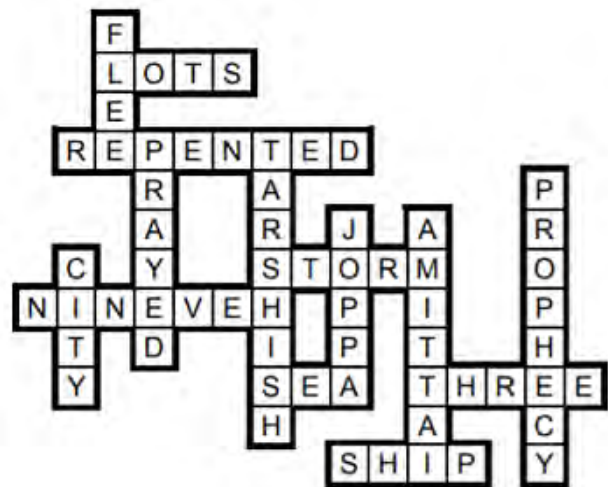


## EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

**August 7, 2021 — November 30, 2021**

Aug 7-8	Back to School Blessing
Aug 11	Healing Service 7 p.m.
Aug 28	4th Saturday Fellowship
Sep 1	Healing Service 7 p.m.
Sep 6	Labor Day
Sep 10	Fish Fry
Sep 11-12	Ministry Fair/Rally Day
Sep 19	Fall Sunday School starts
Sep 24-25	Church Campout
Sep 25	4th Saturday Fellowship
Oct 2	Heartland Mission District Convocation
Oct 6	Healing Service 7 p.m.
Oct 17	No Sunday School—Fall Break
Oct 23	Respite Ranch (tentative)
Oct 23	4th Saturday Fellowship
Oct 30	Trunk or Treat 2 p.m.
Oct 31	Reformation Sunday
Nov 3	Healing Service 7 p.m.
Nov 7	All Saints Sunday
Nov 7	Daylight Savings—set clocks back
Nov 21	Christ the King Sunday
Nov 24	Thanksgiving Eve Worship 7 p.m.
Nov 25	Thanksgiving
Nov 27	Hanging of the Greens
Nov 27	4th Saturday Fellowship
Nov 28	Advent begins

**Crossword answers from page 20**





# Events & Activities







## 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

HEALING SERVICE—7:00 p.m.

1st WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH

2nd WEDNESDAY MAY & AUGUST 1st and 1st THURSDAY DURING ADVENT & LENT

THANKSGIVING EVE—November 24

7:00 p.m.

**Bethel Lutheran Church**

20650 Cumberland Road

Noblesville, IN 46062

317.773.4315

[www.BethelLutheranChurch.com](http://www.BethelLutheranChurch.com)



**NALC**

North American Lutheran Church