

# 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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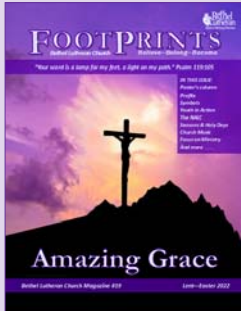
*Focus on Ministry*

*And more . . .*



# Amazing Grace

# FOOTPRINTS



ON THE COVER:  
I Corinthians 15:50  
*Pixabay*

# FOOTPRINTS

## Issue # 19

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**: We are a prevailing church that engages the curious, encourages the convinced, and empowers the committed to be fully devoted disciples of Jesus who make disciples.

† † †

### 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), 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 OF LENT 2022

## PASTOR'S COLUMN

### SPREAD JESUS' LOVE!

Where did the tradition of giving notes of love and affection every February 14<sup>th</sup> come from? Saint Valentine was a physician and priest living in Rome during the rule of the Emperor Claudius, and became one of the noted martyrs of the third century. The commemoration of his death in the year 270 AD became part of the calendar of remembrance in the early church. Tradition suggests that on the day of his execution for his Christian faith, he left a note of encouragement for a child of his jailer written on an irregularly-shaped piece of paper. This greeting, the first Valentine, became a pattern for the many written expressions of love and caring that we are familiar with today.

Our Lord Jesus knows a little something about love. In fact, we read in 1 John 4:7-11:  
***"7 Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9 God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent His only Son into the world so that we might live through Him. 10 In this is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. 11 Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another."***



During the season of Lent we see that God is all about love and that He showed it by sending Jesus to live and die for all who didn't love Him. In fact,

for all who despised and rejected Him. He didn't love us because we loved Him first. No, we couldn't and can't ever love Him on our own because we're sinners. No, He loved us first because He alone *is* love! And since God lovingly sent His Son to us, He has graciously made us truly alive in Him. That is, those who are connected to Him and His love by grace through faith. We are those who are to reflect God's love and image to those around us.

So, we are to love others. Yet, we're often selfish and do evil. Indeed, sin clings to us and breathes hatred and self-centeredness into us and through us. But sin finds itself at war with a new and loving nature born in us through the gracious waters of baptism. So, we have the love of God in Christ flowing into us, causing us to respond with fruits of the Spirit in acts of love and godliness to those around us. To refresh your memory about what constitutes an act of love, break out your Small Catechism and study the section on the Commandments. Especially focus on the positive side of those Commandments, the things that we do for our Lord and our neighbor. These loving acts come from God to us and bear witness to His love and the faith and life which He has re-created within us. These loving acts didn't *make* us alive! No, they're the evidence of that life, indeed, the natural result of that life that is ours through faith.

Family and friends of Bethel, as the 14<sup>th</sup> of February draws ever closer, as well as the season of Lent, may our God who *is* love make us ever mindful of the Valentine of all valentines – His dear Son who was nailed to a cross for us, buried in a tomb for us, and raised from the dead for us. And He makes us mindful of that love that made us alive by His work of grace, that we would be so moved to love not only Him, but those who are around us so that they, too, might see the Love of God for them lived out before them. Yes, so that they might know you are Jesus' disciples by your love for them.

In HIS love,  
 Pastor Dave



# PROFILE: *Lincoln Schneider - His Music Builds His Faith*



By Carole Kuhn

If you come to a Saturday evening service here at Bethel, you might be there one of the evenings Lincoln Schneider is playing the piano. He is Worship Music Leader for Saturday night services. And this year he is also on our Bethel Council as Representative for Worship & Music. When asked what his goal on Council might be, he answered as follows:

“My goal on council is to share through music and the worship experience, the light and love of Christ to all who attend Bethel services. So much so, they will invite others who may not know Jesus Christ as their Savior for Jesus to enter their heart. My other goal on council is to be a part of a team that can inspire and support our Pastors and lead our congregation to do Christ’s work.”

He was born in Columbus, Ohio, but the family moved early to Ft. Wayne, IN. His father had worked in a position that meant they would have to move a lot. So, he switched jobs and they remained in Ft. Wayne. There were four boys, Linc (as we know him at Bethel) being



number 3. He states the family was competitive and fun...and all enjoyed sports. The boys graduated from Ft. Wayne High School and all went on to complete college educations. Linc enjoyed basketball, baseball and golf the most.

It was in 5<sup>th</sup> grade that his interest in music took hold...he began playing the trombone. His Mother had encouraged keeping busy doing things...he chose music over art. He says the

trombone taught him to listen as notes developed through the “slide.” His relative pitch in his ears was there. His Mom was a professionally trained pianist and went to IU for education and music. So he probably inherited that gene. His Mom loved to play the piano, and his Dad loved to sing along and also was a great poet. Linc went on with a partial scholarship at Millikin University, still playing the trombone and playing golf. Though he had taken some lessons in chords on an organ, he never had any real training on piano and organ. His favorite music is Classical and Jazz.



In his 30s, he began to write music as a way to get through some negatives in life...and express his feelings. He says “God was working through me in ways I never expected.” He began sitting at the piano and typing out notes he dreamed about. He states that “God and I were composing, and it was such a cool way of speaking to me. The relationship became very vertical.” He has now written over 200 songs, mostly Christian, and other churches have used them.

His daily work schedule does not involve piano playing...though he does play piano or trombone and sing at weddings, funerals or special events. He has worked positions that revolve around trucking and logistics, even

owning his own company (had a CDL license). Currently, he is a Supply Chain Analyst at a feed company in Sheridan, IN.

His Mom is a member here at Bethel, as was his father who passed away in recent years. Linc and his wife Lori and son Grant have lived in Noblesville 6 years after 20 years in Fishers.



“My family and my faith by far have been the biggest positives in my life....Music has been my biggest joy as it has been a way to express how God loves us. My hope for Saturday Evening’s music is that people will know that God is present....invite others to get to know Him as well.” In retirement someday, he hopes to work with other musicians in things other than

performance such as music writing and lyric writing... music arranging and drama.

The following lyrics were written by Linc...he says one of his favorites...

### **Carry the Banner of Christ**

*Walking down a path all alone.  
Being brave when it's easy to run.  
Takes faith in the Lord when the world doubts His coming.  
I'll carry the banner. Show what He gives.  
Carry the banner. Claim He lives.  
Carry the banner of Christ.*

*Having hope when days become so long.  
Owning up to an error when you're wrong.  
Takes faith in the Lord when the world doubts His coming.  
I'll carry the banner. Show what He gives.  
Carry the banner. Claim He lives.  
Carry the banner of Christ.*

*He is filled with mercy and grace.  
All my sins will be erased. My fears will be gone as I near the end.  
I'll see His glory. Know He loves me. I'll carry the banner to Him.*

Linc also has a good sense of humor and tries to share positives and negatives in life using that humor...even on the piano. And he says “By the way, God laughs as well!”

### Saturday Night Music Makers



Ernie Schamber

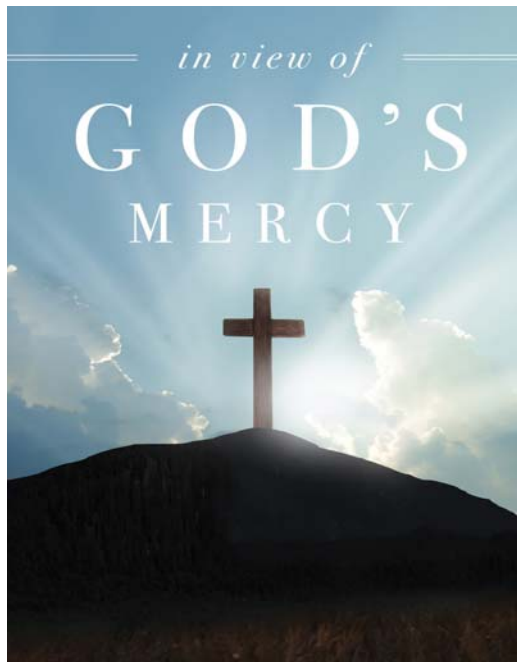
Linc Schneider

Jean Holmes/Mark Guyer/Suzy Patterson

# in view of GOD'S MERCY

Lent & Holy Week @Bethel

By Pastor Al



*"But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ — by grace you have been saved!" Ephesians 2:4–5*

Lent is a time when we reflect on our lives in view of God's mercy toward us in the sacrifice of his Son, Jesus, for us on the cross. This mercy comes to us freely, without our merit or accomplishment, as a sign of God's grace. In response, God calls us, especially during this time of repentance and reflection, to be living sacrifices for him, displaying our commitment to him in word and deed. The traditional Lenten disciplines of prayer, fasting, and service are merely outward expressions of our inner devotion. Whatever we do, we do not for ourselves or for recognition, but to draw closer to Christ, to better understand his suffering and service for us, and to become more like him in attitude and perspective. Jesus helps us to see the richness of God's mercy in his life, death, and resurrection.

Each week, we'll explore a different aspect of how we might experience God's mercy. Our midweek services (except on 4/6) will feature Bethel members sharing from their faith stories on how they have encountered God's mercy in that area. Our last midweek service will feature a presentation from Jews for Jesus titled "Christ in Passover." From it, we will discover the many connections between the traditional Passover meal and Jesus' saving work for us through his passion and resurrection.



# Our weekly worship themes during Lent

Date	Title/Theme	Readings
<b>Mar 2</b> Ash Wed	<b>Mercy in Ashes</b> <i>In this service, we consider the ashes placed on our foreheads as a sign of our sins and remember that God lifts us from our ashes to new life in Christ.</i>	Joel 2.12-18 Matt 6.16-18
<b>Mar 6</b> Lent 1	<b>Mercy in Temptation</b> <i>In this service, we recall that amid temptation, our merciful God provides us with a way out through Christ, who was tempted just as we are, yet without sin.</i>	1 Cor 10.1-5,11-14 Luke 4.1-11
<b>Mar 13</b> Lent 2	<b>Mercy in Suffering</b> <i>No life is without suffering, but our sufferings are not worth comparing to the glory to be revealed to us in Jesus by God's great mercy.</i>	1 Peter 2.21-25 Luke 13.31-35
<b>Mar 20</b> Lent 3	<b>Mercy in Betrayal</b> <i>We ponder the truth that though we may turn away from our God again and again, our Lord continues to call us back into his merciful arms for Jesus' sake.</i>	1 Peter 3.8-12 Luke 13.1-9
<b>Mar 27</b> Lent 4	<b>Mercy in Relationships</b> <i>Within the communities God has placed us, we are given the grace to treat one another as Christ has cared for us in his love and mercy.</i>	Eph 4.25-5.2 Luke 15.1-3,11-32
<b>Apr 3</b> Lent 5	<b>Mercy in Service</b> <i>We are called to serve in mercy the needs of those around us by Christ's example.</i>	Heb 6.10-12 Luke 20.9-20
<b>Apr 10</b> Palm Sunday	<b>Mercy in Palms</b> <i>Today we wave palm branches to welcome Jesus into Jerusalem, and we witness Jesus beginning his mission of mercy for all people for the salvation of our souls.</i>	Phil 2.5-11 John 12.12-19
<b>Apr 14</b> Maundy Thursday	<b>Mercy in Bread and Wine</b> <i>As the bread is broken and the cup is poured in this service, Christ's body and blood serve as agents of mercy to all who are broken by sin and thirsting for righteousness. Our fourth graders will receive their First Communion today.</i>	1 Cor 11.23-26 John 13.1-17,31-35
<b>Apr 15</b> Good Friday	12:15p Stations of the Cross (Peace Trail, weather permitting)	
	7p <b>Mercy in the Cross</b> <i>Today we ponder how Jesus mercifully removed the sentence of sin against us by going to the cross to declare us not guilty.</i>	Col 2.8-15 John 19.17-30
<b>Apr 16</b> Holy Saturday	<b>Mercy in Judgment</b> <i>During his time in the grave, Jesus descends into hell and preaches the gospel to those who had died without knowing the grace revealed through his earthly ministry. No one escapes God's judgment, neither the living nor the dead. However, no one is denied access to God's mercy, either, for the Lord has become our salvation!</i>	1 Peter 4:1-8 Matt 27.57-66 Isaiah 12.2-6 Luke 24.1-12
<b>Apr 17</b> Easter	7a Sunrise Service	1 Cor 15.51-57 John 20.1-10
	8a <b>Mercy in the Open Tomb</b> <i>Today we celebrate that Christ rose from the dead, so that we might have a new beginning that mirrors the mercy of our Lord and Savior.</i>	Heb 13.20-21 Luke 24.1-12
	9:30a 11:11a	

70's Theme



Bethel Lutheran

# STAND UP COMEDY

Headliner:

*Dwight Simmons*

Feature:

*Rick Garrett*

Host Comic:

*Jeremy Brown*



February 12

food at 6p  
show at 7p!

Tickets

\$25/person.

Proceeds benefit youth Camps and other projects for Bethel Lutheran Church

For Tickets contact Holly at the office or Sarah Manro



# UPDATE ON BUILDING AND FLOOD RELIEF EFFORTS AT SEMINARY IN ETHIOPIA

*From NALC News —December 2021*

The North American Lutheran Church has been focusing on the Mekane Yesus Seminary in Ethiopia in recent months. Much has happened and continues to happen. The NALC is committed to the work of the seminary.

The Mekane Yesus Seminary is located in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It is the largest seminary of the largest Lutheran body in the world, the Ethiopian Evangelical Lutheran Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY). The EECMY has more than 10 million members. The NALC is in a full communion relationship with the EECMY.

Some NALC pastors have been working with the seminary and Lutheran Bible Translators to raise funds for a new six-floor building on campus. That building is almost completed.

The plan was to create a building that would generate revenue as well as provide educational space for the seminary and space for Lutheran Bible Translators. Two floors of the building will be rented to generate an income of at least \$225,000 a year.



*Artist rendering of new building at Mekane Yesus Seminary*

By the grace of God, we now believe that sufficient funds will be in place to complete that project by spring. Several pastors in the NALC have been hard at work on this for several years.

There is still great need at the seminary. The seminary was devastated by an unprecedented flash flood in August. Although the new building was untouched, damage on campus is in the millions of dollars. Eight people lost their lives. Much of the seminary will remain incapacitated until funds are raised to rebuild.

The NALC is trying to help. Congregations and members are encouraged to be in prayer for the seminary.

The Rev. Dr. Gemechis Buba, NALC Assistant to the Bishop for Missions, has been to Ethiopia to see the damage and to discuss with EECMY leaders the best ways for the NALC to help. Dr. Buba is a native of Ethiopia and a graduate of the seminary.

The NALC has already given a financial gift. NALC leaders are encouraging our congregations and members to donate. The NALC will keep this work in front of us as we move forward with our brothers and sisters in Ethiopia.

You will be hearing much more about the flood relief and rebuilding in the days and months ahead.

Those who would like to help with building and rebuilding efforts at the EECMY seminary may send monetary gifts to North American Lutheran Church; P.O. Box 860565; Minneapolis, MN 55486-0565. Indicate EECMY on the memo line of your check.

This is also a difficult time for all of the people of Ethiopia. The country is caught up in a horrible civil war. Please pray also for peace and safety and healing for the land. The fighting is in the northern parts of the country and has not come to Addis Ababa. The worries, concerns and risks are high. By the grace of God, the Lutheran-Christian movement continues to grow and spread, even in the context of the war.

Please keep praying! Thank God for the miracle He is doing with the new building, and continue to offer prayers for the work of rebuilding the seminary. The challenges have been and are many, but our God is greater than all the challenges.



*Flash flooding at the Mekane Yesus Seminary*

# ASK THE PASTOR



## IS THERE SOMETHING YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO ASK?

By Doug Gast, Pastor Emeritus



### So what is a Mission District? What does it do?

**Our Mission:** "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."  
(Matthew 28:19-20)

**Our Core Values:** We are Christ-Centered, Mission-Driven, Traditionally-Grounded and Congregationally-Focused.



### Heartland Mission District

I was elected to the role of Dean in the Heartland Mission District this past October. You can only say no so many times. But I am excited about this new role and leadership position that God has placed before me. Right now I am on a steep learning curve learning what my responsibilities and expectations are.

What I have come to realize is that being a dean is a sacred trust extending the work of the Bishop.

As you may know we have begun our 12<sup>th</sup> year as a denomination called the North American Lutheran Church (NALC). At the present time, there are approximately 480 churches all across the United States, Canada, and the Caribbean. The NALC has been experiencing rapid growth since its inception in August 2010. We pray that the priority of our mission will keep the church growing both in numbers and in spirit. Last year there were 19 new churches added to the NALC. Right now there is one new pastor joining the ranks every two weeks. Unfortunately, that is nowhere near enough to fill the need for pastoral leadership. Our pastors are getting older and retiring at an increasing rate as well. In fact, the average age of a NALC pastor is 62.8 years. That is why a major priority of our Bishop Dan Selbo is raising up new pastors from within our church.

Right now across the NALC, there are 35 mission districts. Most of the mission districts are geographical. Ours, as you can tell from our logo, includes Indiana and Kentucky. Most districts comprise approximately 12 to 15 congregations. At the present time our district is made up of 13 congregations and three specialized ministries. In this coming year, I am fairly confident that we will be adding three new churches. Each district is led by a district council whose main responsibility is to plan and organize a district convocation each year.

The Mission District is a connection point for the various churches in a district. It reminds us that the church is bigger than just our congregation. And though our ministries, our styles of worship, and the makeup of our congregations may vary widely, we are united by the Great Commission of Jesus to go and make disciples, baptizing and teaching the Word and sharing the good news that Jesus brought and continues to bring. And we are united by the four core values that are mentioned above.

As dean, I am finding that part of what a mission district does is establish and grow healthy trusting relationships with the pastors within the district. My job is to be a pastor to the pastors. You might find it hard to believe that pastors need pastoral care, but they do. The deans are expected to make regular contact with the pastors and their congregations through phone calls, emails, texts and personal visits when possible. As a pastor, it is good to know that there is someone who cares and understands the challenges and issues that a pastor wrestles with on a regular basis, and who will take the time to listen and share the burdens we as pastors so often try to carry all on our own.

The mission district is also there to help congregations during pastoral vacancies. We work hard at finding supply and interim pastors to bridge the gap between one pastor leaving and another one coming on board. In order for a congregation to prepare to call for a new pastor, the district dean leads a pre-call workshop to help a congregation assess strengths and weaknesses and also to get a clear picture of what exactly a church is looking for in a new pastor.

Another aspect of the work of the district is to help churches deal with conflict if and when that arises. Conflict has been a part of church life ever since the time of Paul. It is not a matter of IF there will be conflict but how do you handle it in a Christ-like and Christ-honoring manner. We all know that whenever there is conflict the mission and the ministry of the church suffers the most.

Where churches are in close proximity to one another, there is an opportunity for pastors to gather regularly for support and friendship, for

Bible study and prayer. I know there is an active group that meets in the Fort Wayne area. Bethel and St James have been growing stronger in our mutual ministries by sharing online services during Advent and Lent as well as making the healing services available online. In fact, the term “sister churches” has been suggested as congregations share ideas, services and education opportunities.

Finding ways of sharing ministry is going to be increasingly important. None of us can do all that needs to be done alone. Some ministries are just too big and demand too many resources for one congregation to handle by itself. Right now the pad has been poured and Peace Lutheran in Connersville is ready to organize work days for the Disaster Relief Warehouse that is being constructed on their property. And our district will, working together, help keep that warehouse stocked so that we will be ready to respond when “Kentucky Tornadoes” happen. At our district council meeting in January, one of the members said that our district is looking to pull together confirmation camp for our youth this summer.

One of the values of the NALC is to have each district focus on a new mission start within each district. Heartland has a team that has been meeting with that very focus and purpose in mind. I would love to see each of our district churches help give birth to a new mission start somewhere within the district. What a blessing that would be for the people who would come, and what joy and satisfaction it would be to us as we grow our discipleship by going beyond our walls.

I am sure I have missed something but hopefully this does give you a clearer understanding of who we are and what we do as the Heartland Mission District.



# SEASONS & HOLY DAYS

## PALM SUNDAY

By Jill Dietz

We all know the story of Palm Sunday – the Sunday that starts Holy Week with Jesus riding into Jerusalem, palm branches waving, to the shouts of Hosanna!, on the back of a donkey. This event is recorded in all 4 Gospels: Matthew 21:1-11, Mark 11: 1-11, Luke 19:28-44 and John 12:12-19. But let's look at 6 things we may not know about Palm Sunday.

*Palms were a symbol of goodness and victory.* Palm branches represent goodness, well-being and victory. They were depicted on coins of the time and carved into architecture of buildings. 1 Kings 6:29 tells us that King Solomon had palm branches carved into walls and doors of a temple. People waved them at the beginning of the end of Jesus' life, and also we read, at the end of the Bible, that they raised them again to honor Jesus: "After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing robes and were holding palm branches in their hands" (Revelation 7:9).

*Jesus fulfilled Old Testament Prophecy on Palm Sunday.* "Rejoice greatly, daughter Zion! Shout, daughter Jerusalem! See your King comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey." (Zechariah 9:9). The donkey symbolizes peace, so kings of the time used the donkey to show they were coming with a peaceful intent, and Jesus reminds us that He is indeed the Prince of Peace. The word Hosanna!, which the crowd was shouting as hailing Christ as King, actually means "save now." God plans to save us all, if we trust in Him. Palm Sunday was written about before Jesus was even born, yet He fulfilled scripture when He rode into Jerusalem on that donkey.

*Palm Sunday is about Peace and Salvation.* Pontius Pilate came into Jerusalem with his soldiers for Passover, showing his power and might through the arms that his soldiers carried. Jesus came on a donkey with His disciples unarmed to demonstrate the Kingdom of God and His peace. Kings would ride into a town on a donkey during times of peace and would ride a white horse after a victory. "And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer." (Revelations 6:2).

*Jesus wept for Jerusalem.* In the midst of the praise, Jesus knew in His heart that it wouldn't be long before these same people turned their backs on Him. Luke 19:41-42 says, "As He approached Jerusalem and saw the city, He wept over it, and said, 'If you, even you had only known on this day what would bring you peace – but now it is hidden from your eyes.' " He knew how much the city needed a Savior.

*Many churches celebrate Palm Sunday with interesting traditions.* Many use palm branches in some form, as we do the crosses that we're given when we enter church. A few other traditions: In Latvia, Palm Sunday is called Pussy Willow Sunday, as those are readily available and children are often woken with a swipe of the willow. In the Netherlands, people decorate crosses with candy and bake bread in the shape of a rooster. In Poland, competitions for the largest or most beautiful palm branches are common.

*Palm branches are not thrown out.* After people leave church with their palm crosses or branches, many take them home and tuck them behind a religious painting, cross or make them into a palm rose. Any that are left over at the church cannot be thrown out, as they have been blessed prior to the service. Pastor Al has last year's palms, which he'll burn on Shrove Tuesday and grind into the ashes to be used the next day on Ash Wednesday.

Palm Sunday marks the beginning of Holy Week. It is a day to reflect on the final week of Jesus' life. It's time for Christians to prepare their hearts for the agony of His Passion and the joy of His Resurrection.

**"Rejoice greatly,  
daughter Zion! Shout,  
daughter Jerusalem!  
See your King comes  
to you, righteous and  
victorious, lowly and  
riding on a donkey, on  
a colt, the foal of a  
donkey."  
Zechariah 9:9**

**They took palm  
branches and went out  
to meet him, shouting,  
"Hosanna"  
"Blessed is he who  
comes in the name of  
the Lord!"  
"Blessed is the King of  
Israel!"  
John 12:13**

# LUTHERAN CHRISTIANS

## WHO WE ARE - WHAT WE BELIEVE

By Carol Jacobs

### HOW WE GOT THE NEW TESTAMENT

Have you ever heard that in the Fourth Century the Emperor Constantine shaped Christianity by deciding what books were in the Canon and purposefully left out other gospels? Is that really how the New Testament came into being? Let's look at how the New Testament became what we have today.

First of all, we need a definition of Canon. One way to view the understanding of Canon is when you see the books of the New Testament being used as Scripture by the church though there was no early *fixed* list of authoritative books. This was far before the Fourth Century. Revelation, as the last written book of Scripture, was written around 98 A.D. Yet it was not long before there was a *functional* list of books that were used in the early church. In 100 A.D., Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, refers to at least seven of the largest Pauline letters. Papias in 125 A.D. spoke of the four-fold gospels. Justin Martyr in 150 A.D. said the four gospels and "the memoirs of the Apostles" (by which he meant the epistles) should be read and used in worship along with the Old Testament. In other words, they were considered on the same level of authority as the Old Testament. In 180 A.D., Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, gave some of the clearest statements on books of the New Testament. He lists the four Gospels, the thirteen letters attributed to Paul, Acts, Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 1 & 2 John, and Revelation. Also he quotes from these Scripture over 1000 times. Did Irenaeus "authorize" the books in the Canon? No, the books were the ones being used by the church over a long period. By 200 A.D., twenty-two of the twenty-seven books were firmly established. The point is that there was a very early functional canonical collection. Additionally, there was not one mention of the gnostic or lost gospels (Gospel of Thomas, Gospel of Philip, Gospel of Truth and so on).

A second understanding of Canon is a final closed list of authorized books. This was in the Fourth to Fifth Centuries. Why was a list developed when the early churches were using a functional canonical list? This was because of heresies that were circulating throughout Christendom. Marcion was an early Christian theologian who preached a

benevolent creator God who sent Jesus and a second malevolent god of the Old Testament. He published his own Canon of ten Pauline epistles and a shorter version of Luke with no Old Testament. The Marcion heresy and other heresies forced the early church to adopt a Canon all could agree on. At the Council of Nicea (325 A.D.), the Emperor Constantine asked Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea, to send out fifty Bibles throughout the Empire. The Emperor had nothing to do with the contents. These fifty Bibles were based on a canonical list that had been in use for decades if not centuries by the early church and agreed upon by over 300 bishops who attended the Council.

Unfortunately, there was a myth in the Seventeenth Century that at the Council a few elite bishops with Emperor Constantine's authority conspired to create a Canon and forced gnostic gospels to be suppressed. This was popularized by Dan Brown's book *Da Vinci Code*. There is no evidence that the Canon was established by a few elite bishops at the Council. Not until the Council of Hippo (393 A.D.) and the Council of Carthage (397 A.D.) were all twenty-seven books affirmed to be authoritative, and the Canon was closed.

What criteria were used to include a book in the Canon? There appears to be three criteria. First, it must have apostolic origins. There must be historical evidence to trace each book back to an apostle. The apostle must have written the book, or it must have been written by a companion or friend of an apostle. This separates the twenty-seven books from all others. Secondly, It must have divine qualities in its content. In other words, most people would have been convinced each book was the word of God by its beauty and excellency, by the power and authority, and by the coherence of its message. From Genesis to Revelation, it told the one story of God's redemptive acts. Thirdly, each book had consensus throughout the church. No other books have met all three criteria.

Dr. Michael J. Kruger who received his PhD. in the study of the Canon says, "We can be sure what books God has given us are in the Bible."



# CHURCH HISTORY

## *William Wilberforce — Christian, Politician, Social Reformer, Abolitionist*

By Gay Hanson



William Wilberforce was born on 24 August 1759 in Hull, Yorkshire, England. He was the son of a wealthy merchant. He studied at Cambridge University where he met and began a long-lasting friendship with the future Prime Minister, William Pitt the Younger. In 1780, he became the Member of Parliament (MP) for Hull.

Later he would represent Yorkshire in Parliament.

As a young and wealthy man, he got involved in many of the dissolute practices of his time – drinking, cards, and gambling. That changed when in 1785, he became an evangelical Christian, resulting in major changes to his lifestyle as well as a lifelong concern for reform. In 1790, he joined a group that was later to be known as the Clapham Sect. It was made up of a number of people living in the area of Clapham (now part of London) interested in social reform such as individual rights, improvement of factory conditions, reform of the prison system, and the abolition of slavery. Wilberforce's Christian faith prompted him to get involved in the group as he shared many of their concerns and goals.

The abolitionist Thomas Clarkson had an immense influence on Wilberforce. Clarkson and others were campaigning for an end to the slave trade in which British ships carried black slaves from Africa, in horrible conditions, to the West Indies as goods to be bought and sold. Through Clarkson and others, Wilberforce was persuaded to lobby for the abolition of the slave trade through his position as an MP. For 18 years, he regularly introduced anti-slavery motions in Parliament. Many members of the Clapham Sect and other abolitionists supported the effort by raising public awareness of the cause with pamphlets, books, rallies and petitions. In 1807, the slave trade was finally abolished. Unfortunately, it took many more years to free those who were already slaves. In 1833, an act was passed in Parliament giving freedom to all slaves in the British Empire.

Wilberforce was involved in much more than the

movement to abolish slavery. Other efforts to “renew society” included forming the *Organization of the Society for the Suppression of Vice* in 1802 as a remedy for the rising tide of immorality in society. He worked with the reformer, Hannah More, in the *Association for the Better Observance of Sunday*. Their goal was to provide all children with education in reading, personal hygiene, and religion. He was instrumental in encouraging Christian missionaries to go to India. Wilberforce was even involved in the *Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals* founded in 1824.

As a young man, Wilberforce had shown little interest in women, but when he was in his late thirties a friend introduced him to twenty-year-old Barbara Ann Spooner. After meeting her, Wilberforce was immediately smitten, and following an eight-day whirlwind romance, he proposed. They married in 1797, and it was said they were devoted to each other. Although she showed little interest in his political activities, Barbara was very attentive and supportive, especially as Wilberforce's health deteriorated in his later years. They had six children, and Wilberforce was an indulgent and adoring father who loved his time at home and at play with his children.

William Wilberforce retired from politics in 1825 and died on 29 July 1833, just shortly after the act to free slaves in the British Empire passed through the House of Commons and a month before it passed the House of Lords. As a mark of honor, he was buried in Westminster Abbey near his lifelong friend William Pitt the Younger.

His funeral was attended by many members of Parliament as well as members of the public, and as a mark of respect, both houses of Parliament suspended their business during the funeral.

In 2006, the film “Amazing Grace” told the story of the fight to abolish slavery in the British Empire based on the story of William Wilberforce.



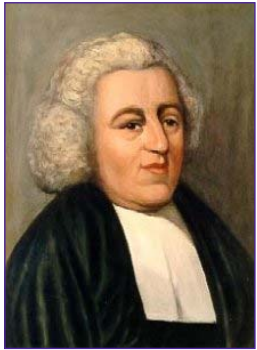
*Wilberforce tomb*



# CHURCH MUSIC

## AMAZING GRACE (MY CHAINS ARE GONE)

By Carole Kuhn



This hymn is considered one of the most popular hymns of all time, one writer having commented that it is performed about 10 million times a year! But that popularity is attributed to when it came to the United States in later years. John Newton, poet and Anglican clergyman (London, 1725-1807), wrote the original verses (6) in 1772

and the hymn was published in 1779.

Newton had a life full of ups and downs...parents were Christians but not active in their faith. He was known as a child to have bad behavior. His father was a shipping merchant, and Newton joined on the ship at age 11. He developed further bad habits on other ships, slave ships, the Navy, mocking captains and creating obscene poems and songs about them. He was punished by being starved, near death, and then imprisoned while at sea and chained, just as the slaves on board. He denounced his faith.

In 1748, his ship was in a terrible storm off the coast of Ireland. It is said he suddenly shouted to God for mercy, and perhaps his spiritual conversion began as he wondered if the storm had been God's message to him. But he continued slave trading a few years. He married, but suddenly had a serious illness, so sailing was done. He and his wife settled down, and they became involved in their church community. He went on to study Christian theology and eventually was ordained in the Church of England. He also became an abolitionist.

He served in a small community, and many were poor. Another poet, William Cowper, worked with him and they used the poems/hymns to illustrate the sermons. They published a book, *Olney Hymns*, but it probably had no music. It's said the congregation may have chanted the verses. *Amazing Grace* has been shown to have many lyrics referring to New Testament stories.

Early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century religious movements swept through the United States, and at many camp meetings you would hear *Amazing Grace* being sung. Later the Civil Rights movements used the song remembering Newton had been a slave trader and later an abolitionist. Then, in 2006, a movie was produced regarding another English

abolitionist, William Wilberforce. Chris Tomlin was asked to add a verse to *Amazing Grace*. At first he wasn't sure he should. But he discovered others had added verses over the years. Suddenly, the verse about "my chains are gone," came to him...thinking back to the slaves and even Newton in chains. The movie was "Amazing Grace."

It is said that many of the hymns by Newton were written in first person to associate more closely with Bible verses used in the prayer meetings, words of messages of forgiveness, redemption and mercy. Today, perhaps this hymn's popularity is because many associate some of the lyrics with their own lives.

### *Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)*

Amazing Grace by John Newton

This version by: Chris Tomlin / Louie Giglio

Amazing grace how sweet the sound  
That saved a wretch like me  
I once was lost, but now I'm found  
Was blind, but now I see

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear  
And grace my fears relieved  
How precious did that grace appear  
The hour I first believed

My chains are gone, I've been set free  
My God, my Savior has ransomed me  
And like a flood His mercy reigns  
Unending love  
Amazing grace

The Lord has promised good to me  
His word my hope secures  
He will my shield and portion be  
As long as life endures

My chains are gone, I've been set free  
My God, my Savior has ransomed me  
And like a flood His mercy reigns  
Unending love  
Amazing grace

My chains are gone, I've been set free  
My God, my Savior has ransomed me  
And like a flood His mercy reigns  
Unending love  
Amazing grace

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow  
The sun forbear to shine  
But God who called me here below  
Will be forever mine, will be forever mine  
You are forever mine

# CHRISTIAN CHILDREN AND YOUTH



## SUNDAY MORNING

**Sunday School** — Sunday School for children ages Kindergarten through 12th grade begins at 10:00 a.m. Students in all classes go to their assigned classrooms. Parents may pick up their children from the classroom at 10:55 a.m.

**Preschool-Kindergarten** — Children who turn 3 years old before December 31st and those in Kindergarten are invited to join our Preschool-Kindergarten Sunday School Class at 10:00 a.m. Gospel Light Curriculum 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.

**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 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 in the Fellowship Hall. Contact Pastor Al for more registration information.

## LIVE @ 5:17

## Youth Ministry

1st & 3rd Sundays, 5:17-7:00 p.m.

Our Middle (grades 6-8) and High School (grades 9-12) youth ministry meets at church on Sunday nights. We begin with worship, and then Middle Schoolers go upstairs to the Student Center for Fellowship & Fun while High Schoolers do a devotion. Then, the groups switch. We welcome everyone (members and friends alike), and we encourage each other throughout the week.

For more information, please contact Youth & Family Ministries Director Eddie Burks at [eddie@bethellutheranchurch.com](mailto: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. First Communion class will begin March 13 and meet in March and April with First Communion scheduled for Maundy Thursday. For more information, speak with Pastor Al.

## Discovery Class

Next class: April 24, 6 p.m.

Are you a newcomer to the faith or our church and curious about what God is doing here?



Join us for an introduction we call "Discovery" to go deeper! 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. Childcare can be provided. Speak with one of the pastors if you are interested.



## Faith Stepping Stones

Bethel offers several "faith stepping stones" at significant points in a person's faith journey. These stones are intentional opportunities to grow deeper in faith and, as a person matures, to accept for oneself the faith she or he has received from parents and godparents.



# EDUCATION

**No Classes**  
April 3 — Spring Break & Easter

## CURRENT ADULT CLASSES

### MEN CALLED BY GOD

**Sundays at 10a**—led by David Jacobs

God called a diverse and imperfect group of shepherds, kings, prophets, fishermen and other men in the Bible to fulfill His plan and purpose to change and restore the world. Sign-up in the narthex!



### WOW—WOMEN ON WEDNESDAY

**Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m.** — led by Mary Jo Mikulski



We welcome all women of Bethel to our Women's Bible Study. We are studying 1 and 2 Timothy. The books are \$15, please sign your name and pick one up on the window ledge by the office. Contact [mj.mikulski@reagan.com](mailto:mj.mikulski@reagan.com).

### TEN WOMEN OF THE BIBLE

**Thursdays at 6:30p**—led by Carol Jacobs

Their actions stood out to the writers of Scripture, even though society overlooked their contributions. In this 10 session workbook, Max Lucado tells the stories of 10 pivotal Biblical women.



### SAUSAGE AND SCRIPTURE

**Saturdays: Breakfast at 7:30a**, our book study **is from 8-9a.** — led by Jason Pearson

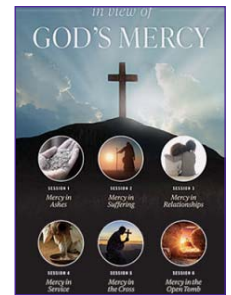


We are reading **Kingdom Men Rising**, by Tony Evans. To get the book (\$17), contact Jason at 317-289-3986.

## COMING DURING LENT

### IN VIEW OF GOD'S MERCY — **Sundays at 10a**

View the life, death and resurrection of Christ through the lens of God's mercy in this scripture-based bible study for Lent by Carol Geisler. Study and discussion questions, prayers and reflections remind us that we are called to be living sacrifices for God, displaying our devotion to him in word and deed.



## OCCASIONAL MINISTRY PRESENTATIONS

Throughout the year our Care Ministry and Missions Committee offer occasional presentations. Through its **Missions Committee** Bethel supports 30 various local, national, and international missions. In 2022, we plan to welcome several guest preachers and speakers.

We will welcome **Jews for Jesus** on April 6 as they offer their "**Christ in Passover**" presentation. From it, we will discover the many connections between the traditional Passover meal and Jesus' saving work for us through his passion and resurrection.



### **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).



# Pretzels & Lent

Did you know that there was a time when pretzels were only eaten during Lent? Pretzels would appear on Ash Wednesday and disappear on Good Friday!



Some stories say the origin of the pretzel goes back to the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> Century. Another legend says that a young monk in the early 7<sup>th</sup> Century was preparing unleavened bread for Lent, the period of fasting and penitence

before Easter. Since Christians of that time prayed with their arms folded across their chests, each hand on the opposite shoulder, it occurred to this monk that he could twist the leftover dough from the bread into this shape and use it as a treat for the children to recite their prayers. He named his creation *pretiola*, Latin for “little reward.” The three holes represented the Holy Trinity.

The word pretzel is derived from the Latin *bracellae* and German *bretzel* or *pretzel* and means “little arms.” As with the story of the monk, the twisted shape of the pretzel was meant to resemble two arms crossed in prayer. It became another way to remember Lent as a season of prayer.

Whatever the origins, pretzels became popular because of their simple and inexpensive ingredients. The first pretzels were made with just flour, salt, and water. In the 7<sup>th</sup> Century, Christians followed strict rules about what they could eat during the season of Lent. Foods such as meat, dairy, fats, and eggs were all prohibited from Ash Wednesday through Easter. Pretzels could be made with ingredients that followed the Lent fasting practices of the time. This made them very popular. It was also customary to give pretzels to the poor on certain days of Lent as a way of providing them with both spiritual and literal nourishment.

In the centuries following, the pretzel made its way into the culture. By 1440, the form of the pretzel was a symbol of good luck, long life, prosperity, and spiritual fulfillment. By 1450, Germans were eating pretzels and hard-boiled eggs for dinner on Good Friday – the day of fasting. The large puffy pretzel symbolized everlasting life, and the two hard-boiled eggs, nestled in each of the large round curves of the pretzel, represented Easter’s rebirth.

There is some evidence that there were pretzel street vendors in or around 1483. Portable ovens on wheels allowed the bakers to peddle pretzels door-to-door.

It is speculated that the expression “tying the knot” may even have a pretzel origin. In 1614 in Switzerland, Royal couples would wish for happiness with a pretzel forming the nuptial knot. The bride and groom would pull at the pretzel, and the larger piece would assure fulfillment of their wishes.

Historians suspect, but cannot prove, that the pretzel came to America by way of the Mayflower in 1620. There are stories of early settlers selling them to natives. It is known that the Pennsylvania Dutch, or Palantine Germans, brought pretzels to America in 1710. The first commercial pretzel bakery in America was started in the town of Lititz, PA by Julius Sturgis in 1861.

Hard pretzels also had their beginnings in Pennsylvania. One legend tells of a baker’s apprentice who dozed off while baking soft pretzels. He inadvertently baked them twice. The master baker was outraged until he tried them and discovered he liked the crisp, crunchy treat. He was also pleased to discover that they retained their freshness much longer than the soft variety. Another legend has it that the recipe came from a tramp passing through town who exchanged it for a meal.

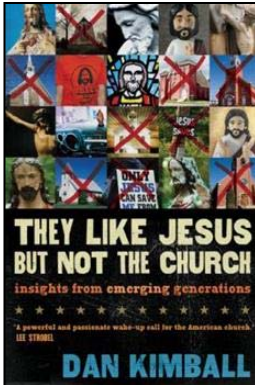


Whatever the origin, an entire industry developed from these humble beginnings. Pretzels were still manufactured by hand until the early 1930’s. In 1935, the Reading Pretzel Machinery Company introduced the first automated pretzel maker. Bakers could now put out some 245 pretzels per minute, compared to 40 per minute that a worker could make by hand. Pennsylvania remains the American pretzel-making capital with a full 80 percent of U.S.-made pretzels coming from the Keystone State.

Next time you see a pretzel, think about those “little arms” crossed in Lenten prayer over the centuries and how a simple little treat was used to call people to God.

# BOOKS OF INTEREST

Reading level:  
Adult



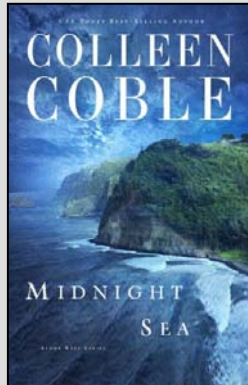
## THEY LIKE JESUS BUT NOT THE CHURCH

*Insights from emerging  
generations*  
by Dan Kimball

Dan Kimball has given us an invigorating and challenging book. When he became aware that 18-35 year old young adults who can't stand the established churches are really quite interested in Jesus Christ, he set out to get to know them better.

Because he met them in coffeehouses and clubs where they naturally hang-out, he was able to become friends with them. Those conversational friendships became comfortable talks about Jesus, the church, Christianity, spirituality. He quotes them throughout the book, which helps to make this serious book a fun read. He makes a compelling case for Christians to go out into the surrounding culture, be fully informed about their beliefs, and to intentionally broaden their circle of friends to include non-Christians.

Reading level:  
Adult



## MIDNIGHT SEA

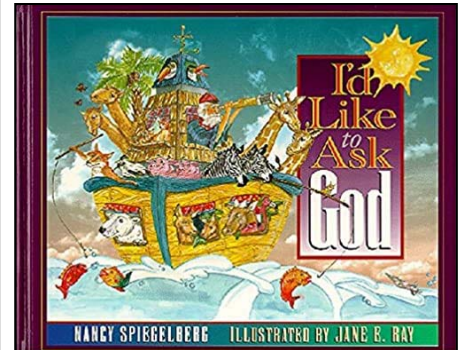
*By Colleen Coble*

A random shooting has left Lani Tagami blind, but she learns to navigate her world with the help of a disillusioned ex-cop and his partly trained guide dog. Subsequent events at her aunt's coffee farm and orchid collection suggest that the shooting was not random and that Lani is a target. Suspicion grows that there is a connection to a hippie commune burned decades ago. Before the shooting Lani was a new Christian, and she begins to see that the events are a test of her faith.

Throughout, Colleen's descriptions of the Hawaiian landscape and seaside make you feel the beauty of the setting. She weaves a mystery that is hard to put down.

# Lifelong Learners

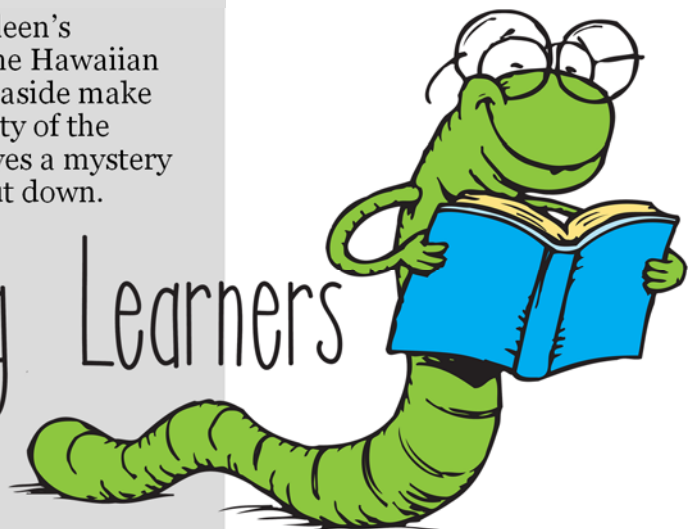
Reading level:  
Children



## I'D LIKE TO ASK GOD

*By Nancy Spiegelberg  
Illustrated by Jane E. Ray*

A beautifully illustrated book of poems that ask questions of God about some of the people in the Bible: specifically, Adam, Eve, Noah, Isaac, David, Mary, Lazarus, and Jesus. The questions are thoughtful and imaginative; they can help to deepen our understanding of the people and their histories.



## CROSS-SHAPED BIBLE CROSSWORD

Across							Down			
1				2			3			
4		5		6			7			
8				9			10		11	
12				13			14			
15				16			17			
18				19			20			
21				22			23	24		
25				26		27		28		29
30				31				32	33	
34				35		36		37		38
39				40	41			42	43	
44				45						

1 Donkey (3)  
2 Jesus' Father (3)  
4 One of the twelve (9)

1 One of God's messengers (5,2,3,4)  
3 1940s archaeological find (4,3,7)

8 Didn't believe in resurrection (9)  
12 One of David's warriors (5)  
13 First word of the Lord's Prayer (3)  
14 New Testament name for Noah (3)  
15 Wish harm upon (5)  
16 Hole in the ground (3)  
17 Adversary (5)  
18 Savour (5)  
19 First woman (3)  
20 Mother of John the Baptist (9)  
21 Family of priests (9)  
22 Third son of Jacob (4)  
23 Hates (8)  
26 Assurances (8)  
30 Endured pain (8)  
31 Return from the dead (4)  
32 Intercessor (8)  
35 Decorating (8)  
39 Old Testament book of the Bible (4)  
40 The prince of Rosh, Mesech and Tubal (3)  
42 A wise insect (3)  
44 Dwelling place of kings (6)  
45 Make bigger (8)

4 Tread down (7)  
5 Father of Jonah (7)  
6 Very salty water bordering Israel (4,3)  
7 Defensive structures (11)  
8 Refuges (11)  
9 Dirty (7)  
10 Devout (7)  
11 Pieces of money (7)  
24 Used to listen (3)  
25 Used to see (3)  
26 Positions (5)  
27 Made available (7)  
28 Snake (7)  
29 Destroyed along with Gomorrah (5)  
33 Finish (3)  
34 Possess (3)  
35 King of the Amalekites (4)  
36 Last letter of the Greek alphabet (5)  
37 Almost sacrificed by Abraham (5)  
38 Present (4)  
41 Unfasten (4)  
43 Fish traps (4)

by Philologus © BiblePuzzles.org.uk

Answers may be found on Page 22.

# PLAY

## THE LIFE OF CHRIST WORD SEARCH



BiblePuzzles.org.uk

- |                      |                 |                     |
|----------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| ARRESTED             | JEW             | RIGHTEOUS           |
| ASCENSION            | JOSEPH          | SACRIFICE           |
| BAPTISM              | LAST SUPPER     | SAVIOUR             |
| BETHLEHEM            | LORD            | SERMON ON THE MOUNT |
| BETRAYED             | MARY            | SHEPHERD            |
| BREAD                | MASTER          | SINLESS             |
| CROSS                | MESSIAH         | SON OF GOD          |
| CROWN OF THORNS      | NAZARITE        | SON OF MAN          |
| CRUCIFIXION          | PARABLES        | TEMPTATIONS         |
| DISCIPLES            | PASSOVER        | THREE DAYS          |
| FLOGGING             | PHARISEES       | TOMB                |
| GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE | PONTIUS PILATE  | WALKED ON WATER     |
| GOSPEL               | PROPHECY        | WILDERNESS          |
| HEALED THE SICK      | RABBI           | WINE                |
| IMMANUEL             | RAISED THE DEAD |                     |
| JESUS CHRIST         | RESURRECTION    |                     |

Answers may be found on Page 22.

# CALENDAR

## LITURGICAL CALENDAR

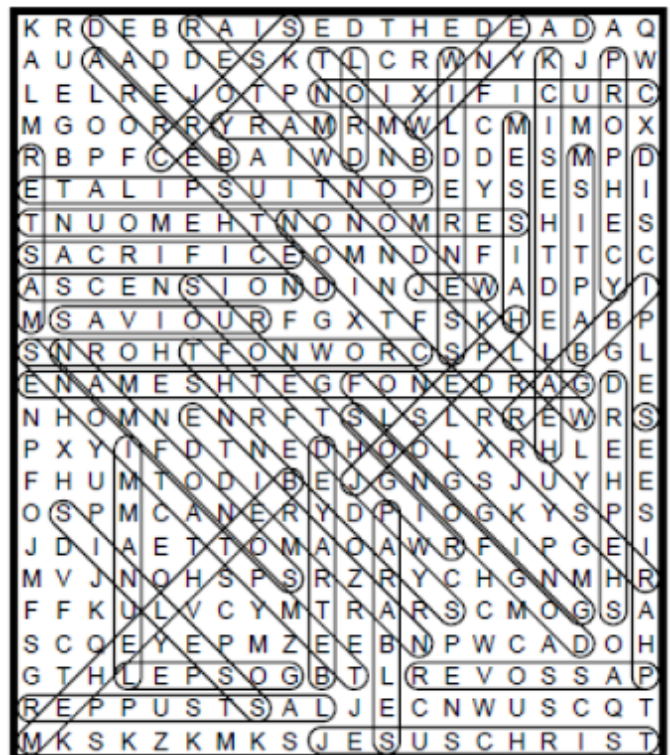
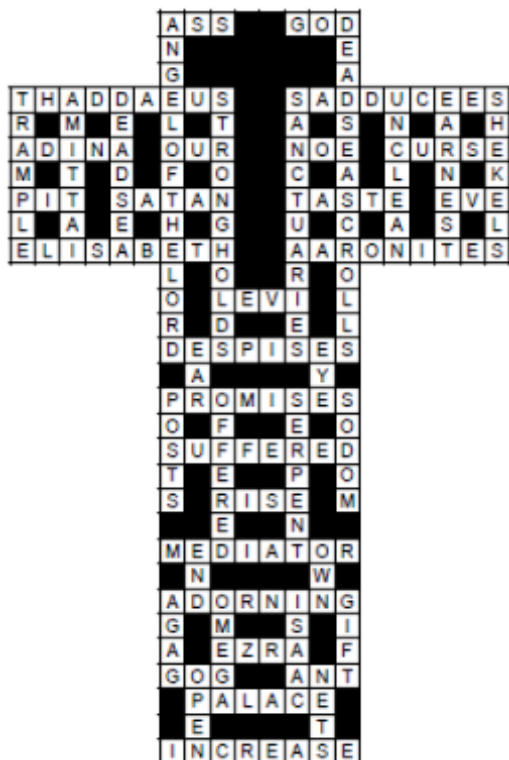
Bethel Lutheran Church functions on a liturgical calendar with seasons and holy days. There are colors associated with each of the seasons and holy days. These are shown on this calendar and are reflected in the paraments in the sanctuary.

DAY	DATE	CHURCH CALENDAR
Sunday	2/6/22	5th Sunday after Epiphany
Sunday	2/13/22	6th Sunday after Epiphany
Sunday	2/20/22	7th Sunday after Epiphany
Sunday	2/27/22	Transfiguration Sunday
Wednesday	3/2/22	Ash Wednesday
Sunday	3/6/22	1st Sunday of Lent
Sunday	3/13/22	2nd Sunday of Lent
Sunday	3/20/22	3rd Sunday of Lent
Sunday	3/27/22	4th Sunday of Lent
Sunday	4/3/22	5th Sunday of Lent
Sunday	4/10/22	Palm Sunday
Thursday	4/14/22	Maundy Thursday
Friday	4/15/22	Good Friday
Saturday	4/16/22	Holy Saturday
Sunday	4/17/22	Easter
Sunday	4/24/22	2nd Sunday of Easter

## EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

February 1, 2022 — April 30, 2022

- Feb 1 Preschool Registration opens to Bethel members & current families
- Feb 2 Healing Service 7 p.m.
- Feb 12 Comedy Night (70s theme)
- Feb 20 NALC Disaster Response Stuff the Truck event
- Feb 27 **Transfiguration of Our Lord**
- Mar 1 Shrove Tuesday 6 p.m. dinner
- Mar 2 Ash Wednesday Service 12:15 p.m. & 7 p.m.
- Mar 3 Healing Service 7 p.m. (Thursday due to Lent)
- Mar 9 Midweek - Dinner 6 p.m. & Worship 7 p.m.
- Mar 13 Daylight Savings Time - Spring Forward
- Mar 16 Midweek - Dinner 6 p.m. & Worship 7 p.m.
- Mar 23 Midweek - Dinner 6 p.m. & Worship 7 p.m.
- Mar 30 Midweek - Dinner 6 p.m. & Worship 7 p.m.
- Apr 6 Midweek - Dinner 6 p.m. & Worship 7 p.m.
- Apr 7 Healing Service 7 p.m. (Thursday due to Lent)
- Apr 10 Palm Sunday
- Apr 14 Maundy Thursday Service 7 p.m.
- Apr 15 Good Friday: Services @ 12:15 p.m. and 7 p.m.
- Apr 16 Easter Egg Hunt 10 a.m.
- Apr 16 Holy Saturday Service 5:30 p.m.
- Apr 17 **EASTER**—7, 8, 9:30, & 11:11 a.m. services
- Apr 23-24 Preschool Silent Auction
- May 1 Blood Drive 8:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m.



# WHAT'S NEXT?

## Being the Body of Christ



Gentlepeople of Bethel,

The past two years at Bethel have been quite a roller coaster. Like the entire world, the congregation has been shaken by the effects of COVID. The lives of our families and the activities of our ministry have been disrupted on every level, leaving no one unaffected by the stress of this long, long season. More recently, we have been navigating the rapids of conflict within our church family that emerged last summer.

In response, we asked the experienced team from the North American Lutheran Conference for help. The report from the NALC team detailed their observations based on their interviews with members and staff during their two-day visit last August. Our Council's 90-day Plan was created to address those shortcomings in leadership, organization, and ministry structure in ways that have created a helpful path forward.

Through the process, I have learned a great deal. First, about myself and my ability to grow, adapt and lead in a rapidly changing environment. Additionally, how critical two-way communication among all of us at Bethel is to ensure that our church family is informed, included, and heard – not only during the recent tough times, but going forward.

Most importantly, this process has affirmed my belief that God has called me to be here at this place and at this time, as we embark together on an exciting next phase for fulfilling God's purpose for Bethel. I am truly blessed to be your pastor.

So what's next? At least three things, it seems to me:

**We continue listening to each other.** Bethel is a congregation that strives to live out the "one anothers" of Scripture as well as we can. We want to bear one another's burdens, to pray for each other, to support one another, and to listen to each other. Both Pastors and Council also recognize that there remain those in our church family who have concerns about the direction and leadership of our church. We take that very seriously. We are committed to continue listening to all feedback and adjusting our activities and our leadership capabilities as needed to help Bethel be as healthy and effective as possible.

**We continue healing.** With the conclusion of the 90-day plan period, the Council doesn't believe that everything is fixed and that we've turned the page. The plan we are implanting is a long-term approach meant to create new ways of accountability and renewed ministry practice. But we have much more to

accomplish, and that includes healing the divisions that may remain. Our continued listening to each other will help. Seeing the fruits of our renewed ministry practices will help. Focusing on our renewed mission as a "prevailing church" will help. Listening to the Holy Spirit's guidance on other things we can do or pinch points we need to address will help.

**We continue moving forward, together.** In Driver's Education, my instructor pointed out the difference in size between the rearview mirror and the front windshield. You don't need a large mirror to be mindful of the vehicles behind you. However, you can't drive very long only looking in that mirror. On the other hand, having a large front windshield gives you optimal visibility to see where you are going and any obstacles or dangers in front of you. And that's how it should be when you're behind the wheel. As a church, we give thanks for our past for it has made us the congregation we are today. But our future isn't found by looking backward. Bethel will move forward, looking ahead at the ministry God has given to us and those opportunities coming to serve our community.

We are a "prevailing church." We began ministry in the years leading up to the Civil War, and we thrived during that tumultuous season. We built our second church building in Cicero during the depths of the Great Depression, and we served our community faithfully during those difficult years. We built our current facility (in 1995 and 2006) through a significant investment of volunteer labor, coupled with the support of Mission Builders. We know a thing or two about hard work and perseverance, and we're not reluctant to roll up our sleeves when challenges come. Now is a time to roll up our sleeves, for each of us to ask ourselves "What is God calling me to do at this time to renew and extend Bethel's ministry?" Each of us has gifts and talents to bring to the table, regardless of our age or life circumstance. God called a teenager named David to stand up to Goliath, and another named Esther to deliver her people from certain disaster. Jesus called all sorts of people – the educated and uneducated, the insider and outsider, rich women and the poor – to be the first disciples of his ministry. As one deep thinker put it once, "If you have a pulse, you have a purpose in God's kingdom." There's no ministry too small to be insignificant or unimportant. As He has done for me, God has placed you at Bethel "for such a time as this." And I am glad this is true.

Serving Jesus with you!  
*Pastor Al*



## 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

### 1st WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH

7:00 p.m. – Healing Service—ONLINE ONLY

### ASH WEDNESDAY— MARCH 2

12:15 p.m. & 7:00 p.m. – Worship Service

### MARCH 9, 16, 23, & 30 and APRIL 6

6:00 p.m.— Dinner & 7:00 p.m. – Worship Service

### HOLY WEEK

Palm Sunday, April 10 - 8:45 a.m. & 11:11 a.m.

Maundy Thursday, April 14 - 7 p.m.

Good Friday, April 15 - 12:15 p.m. & 7 p.m.

Holy Saturday, April 16 - 5:30 p.m.

### EASTER SUNDAY—APRIL 17

7 a.m. (Sunrise), 8 a.m., 9:30 a.m. & 11:11 a.m.

### **Bethel Lutheran Church**

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**NALC**  
North American Lutheran Church