

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 – Pastor Doug

Malawi Mission Trip

The NALC

Seasons & Holy Days

Church Music

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And more

FOOTPRINTS



ON THE COVER:
Advent Wreath
Pixabay

FOOTPRINTS

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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ADVENT—CHRISTMAS—EPIPHANY

PASTOR AL'S COLUMN

Gentlepeople of Bethel,

We are entering an exciting season on December 3rd. With the start of Advent, we enter a three-season cycle (together with Christmas and Epiphany) of God revealing his human rescue plan to the world. God's desire to have a relationship with us is clear from nearly every story of the Old Testament. The lengths to which God will go to establish and maintain this relationship found in those pages takes our breath away.

The promises God first gave to Sarah and Abraham (Genesis 12, 15, 17, 18) and reaffirmed to David (2 Samuel 7) and again to Israel (Isaiah 7, 11, 42, 49, and 52-53) are fulfilled in the child born named Jesus ("God saves") to Mary and Joseph; the true bread of life (John 6.35) born in a humble feed trough in Bethlehem ("house of bread"); the lamb of God (John 1.29) worshipped first by shepherds responsible for the royal flocks of sheep used for sacrifice in the temple in Jerusalem.

The readings during Christmas reveal to the world the importance of this seemingly unremarkable birth. As was the custom, Mary and Joseph presented the infant Jesus at the temple (Luke 1.22-38). However, this occasion gave God the opportunity to declare through Simeon and the prophetess Anna exactly what sort of child Jesus would be:

My eyes have seen your salvation that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel. (Luke 2:30-32)

Mary and Joseph marveled at what these two prophets had to say about Jesus. God revealed Jesus' identity personally to Mary and Joseph and the shepherds the night of Jesus' birth. God revealed Jesus' identity to Israel at the Temple seven days later. During the season of Epiphany, that revelation spreads ever outward, like ripples expanding from a stone thrown into a pond: first to Jesus at his baptism and temptation, and then to the disciples whom Jesus chooses, and finally through them, to the community at large through his teachings, healings, and presence among them.

**Behold, the Name
of the Lord
comes from afar,
and His glory fills
the whole world**

Once centered around God's relationship with Israel as mediated through the covenant, God's human rescue plan now encompasses every nation and people. No longer are some people considered "outsiders" because of race or ethnicity or religious background. Now, everyone who hears about God's love revealed in Jesus can be grafted into the true vine (John 15) and bear fruit

that welcomes still others into God's amazing grace. Bethel's mission flows directly from this:

Engaging the curious, encouraging the convinced, and empowering the committed to be fully devoted disciples of Jesus Christ.

What a pleasure to be serving Jesus with you!

Pastor Al

PASTOR ALLEN SCHOONOVER
Associate Pastor



PROFILE:

PASTOR DOUGLAS C. GAST



EARLY YEARS

Doug Gast grew up in small farming towns in central Illinois. He graduated from Carthage College, Kenosha, WI in 1971 with a degree in sociology. He earned his Master of Divinity Degree in 1976 from the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago (LSTC) and was ordained at First Lutheran Church, Harvey, IL by the Illinois Synod of the Lutheran Church in America.



Seminary Graduation



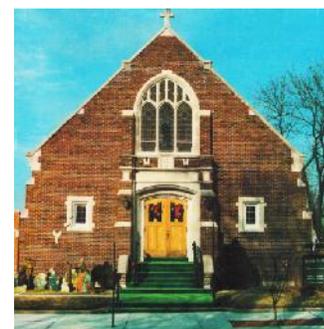
Ordination

Pastor Doug met his wife Terri at Carthage College. They have been married for more than 40 years and have 4 children and 7 grandchildren. He loves gardening, sports, and he and Terri enjoy riding his Harley Davidson, especially with the “Bethel Bikers!” In his limited free time, he restored his grandfather’s 1936 John Deere B tractor. In the community, he has served on the Wernle Boys Home Board of Directors (Richmond, IN), at the Pilgrimage Counseling Center (Indianapolis), on the Noblesville Housing Authority Board, and as a Noblesville Fire Department chaplain.

“PASTOR”

Pastor Doug’s first call was as Assistant Pastor at Tabor Lutheran Church, Pueblo, CO (1976-1979). When its Senior Pastor retired, Pastor Doug accepted a call as Assistant Pastor from Bethlehem Lutheran Church, St. Charles, IL (1979-1981). When the opportunity came to be called as a mission redeveloper at Lutheran Church of St. Philip, Glenview, IL, Pastor Doug felt God was leading him there. From December 1981 until April 1991, he enjoyed ten marvelous years of growth and Christian community with that congregation.

In 1991, he earned his Doctor of Ministry Degree in Pastoral Care and Counseling from LSTC. Feeling God’s spirit leading him, he came to Bethel Lutheran Church, in Cicero, IN in 1991.



Bethel in Cicero



Pastor Doug—1996

When Pastor Doug came to Bethel in 1991, the church had had no pastor for three years and his four children doubled the size of the Sunday school. Pastor Doug had the belief that God really wanted him to be at Bethel, to move it to a location several miles away in Noblesville and to grow it into a vital and mission-minded church.



Building the new Bethel

REBOOT AND GROWTH

In 1998, the new building was opened, and because of the growth of the congregation, a Christian education wing was added in 2008.



Bethel Lutheran Church, Noblesville

In 2012, Bethel Lutheran Church joined the North American Lutheran Church. There was another renewal and a major “reboot” of mission, outreach, and service to the community. The vision and leadership of this renewal period was provided by Pastor Doug as he was led by God to get Bethel focused and growing.

re:boot

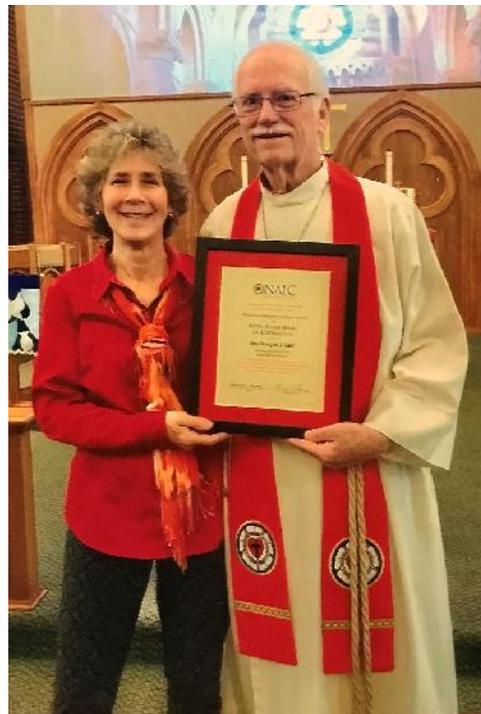
In 2012, Pastor Doug and Terri went to a conference in Ethiopia and toured part of the country and six churches. As a result of that visit and Doug feeling the call of the Holy Spirit at the Senbete congregation, Bethel became a mission partner of that congregation. Since then Bethel has supported the Senbete congregation through its growth and evangelism efforts.



Pastor Doug with Pastor Gobena Degefa of the Senbete Congregation, Ethiopia

40 YEARS + GOD'S GRACE

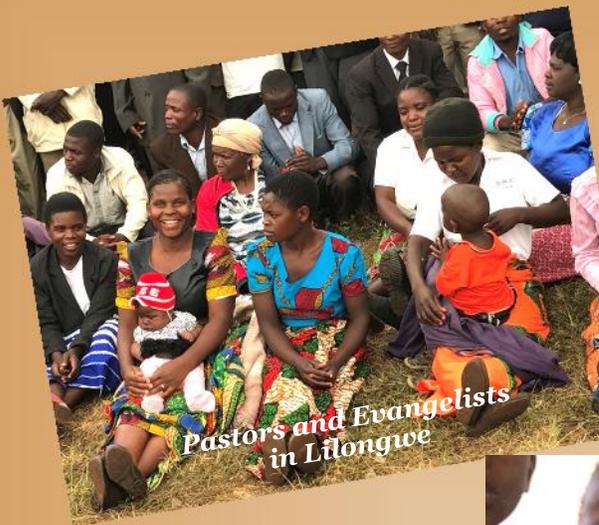
In 2016, Pastor Doug celebrated 25 years of ministry at Bethel and 40 years of ordained ministry! Unfortunately, 2016 also brought a diagnosis of esophageal cancer, but with good medical care and the love, prayers, and aid of his family, the Bethel community, and Christian friends around the world, Pastor Doug is recovering from the surgery and is cancer-free. He hopes to continue serving as a Lutheran pastor as long as God allows him to do so!



Terri and Pastor Doug celebrate his 40 years of ministry & 25 years at Bethel

Pastor Doug has a personal mission statement that he relates from time to time and is written on a board in his office. It says, “I’M GOIN’ TO HEAVEN & TAKIN’ AS MANY PEOPLE WITH ME AS I CAN.” Amen and Praise God!





Pastors and Evangelists in Lilongwe



Rev. Evance Mphalasa, ELCM



Families brought their Children



Children in Salima discovering a camera for the first time.



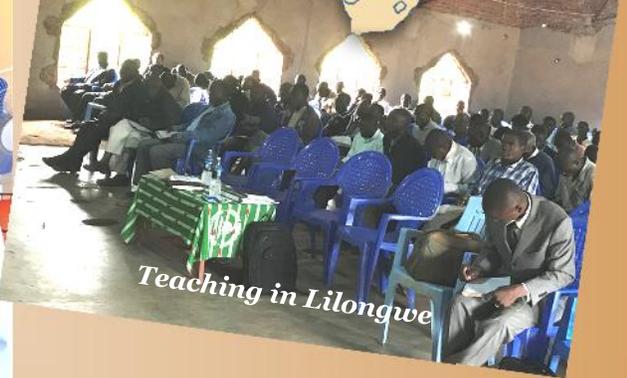
MALAWI



Teaching in Salima



Rev. Feston Pitiri, ELCM



Teaching in Lilongwe

MALAWI MISSION TRIP

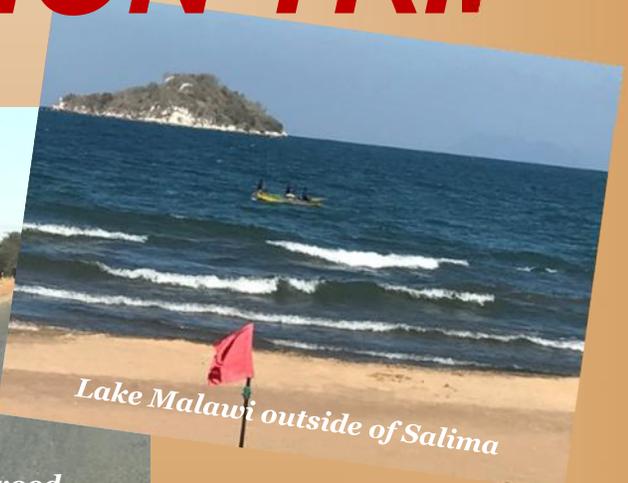
Article by Pastor Al



Roadside markets and congestion



Bicyclists carrying firewood



Lake Malawi outside of Salima

Reflections on Malawi

June 21-July 9

This past summer, Pastor Ralph Esterhaus and I taught two week-long pastors conferences in Malawi, Africa, under the auspices of Awakening Lives to World Missions (a mission partner of the NALC) and our national Church's "Theologians without Borders" ministry. Malawi is about 2 hours northeast of Johannesburg by air, surrounded by Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Tanzania. We spent the first week in Lilongwe (population 2.2 million), and the second week in Salima (population 400,000), a town east of the capital on Lake Malawi, just north of Chipoka. Since we were in the Southern Hemisphere, Malawi was in the middle of winter; highs were in the upper 70s and low 80s, and evenings were in the mid-50s. Since few buildings are air conditioned, this made for a perfect teaching climate! Everyone we met exuded a genuine warmth and hospitality that set us at ease right away. It was a little disconcerting, though, to be in the clear minority. We saw very few Westerners during our time in Malawi, although Alex reported that many from India and China live and work in Lilongwe.



A typical home in Alex's village

Housing for the vast majority of people is very simple. There is some Western-style housing (behind walled compounds) primarily for the wealthy, the government leaders, and the diplomats. Nearly 90% of Malawians live in 3-4 room, single-story brick homes. The poorest have thatched roofs, and those with more income may have a tin roof. There are few furnishings in the average home. Most people sleep on woven mats rather than beds. Less

than half of these homes have electricity. Few have inside running water or plumbing. Most kitchens are outside,



attached to the house; some are larger for the entire village. Most villages raise their own crops and tend communal flocks of goats and chickens. Aside from subsistence farming, there are few commercial or manufacturing jobs. There are some jobs available in the service industry; others tend small stalls in markets along the road or in the Old Town part of Lilongwe. There are few multi-story buildings in the capital; we saw a new 5-story hotel being built, and even the government buildings were only 2 stories tall. In Salima, we didn't see any multi-story buildings.

This first week we taught in Lilongwe at Pentecostal Evangelical Ministries, a group our host Alex Chambaro founded after leaving the Assemblies of God church many years ago.



Pastor Alex Chambaro

He felt God calling him to leave his settled and comfortable ministry to begin this new venture. He and his colleagues have planted many new churches throughout Malawi, and his church in Lilongwe where we taught is his "mother church." Approximately 150 pastors and evangelists attended; both men and women participated, though more men than women.



Rev. Phillip Phiri

We spent the second week in Salima, a medium-sized city near Lake Malawi. The lake reminds me of Lake Michigan by its size and the waves we saw during our Saturday afternoon visit. The beaches are a popular destination throughout the year for those with the means to travel; as a result, you will find many western-styled hotels along the lake. Our host this second week was Pastor Phillip Phiri, the leader of the evangelical ministry "Pillars of Fire." He went to seminary in Nigeria several years ago before founding his church. It has now multiplied to 6

“branches.” He was a gracious host and made our time with the pastors and evangelists of his community very enjoyable. 65 men and women attended the conference in Salima. We taught in one of the villages about 6km outside of town. During the week, the building is used by an orphanage. On the weekends, his church rents the space for their services. The smaller, more intimate setting allowed for more discussion and conversation, especially after each teaching session. Ralph and I would ask if there were any questions, and as the week

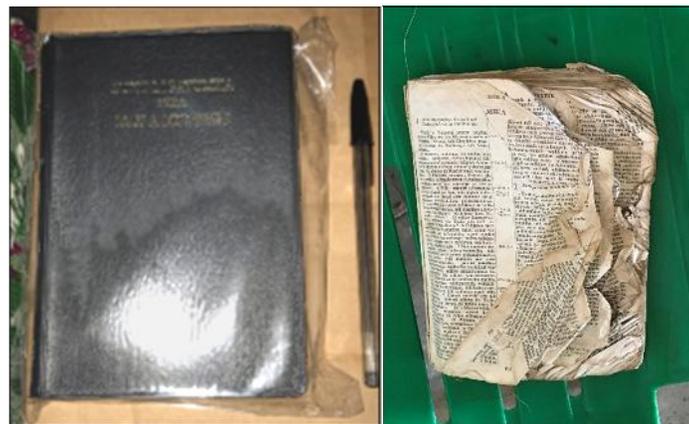


progressed, this Q&A time became longer and longer.

Each weekend Ralph and I worshipped in local congregations. Both of us preached, and the services were incredibly worshipful. The first weekend, worship at Pastor Alex’s church lasted four hours – but it didn’t seem like it at all! It was filled with music by several singing groups of all ages, 4 testimonies from worshipers about God’s presence and activity in their life, an offering, a sermon from each of us, and a freewill thank-offering for us for the week of teaching we were leading. I was touched by this thank offering, because the people don’t have much, but nearly everyone came forward to give something. One gentleman gave a plastic ballpoint pen as his offering, as he didn’t have any money to share but he wanted to give something in support of what we were doing. Oh my!! It was interesting to experience their prayer time – when Pastor Alex said, “Let’s pray” the entire congregation broke out in prayer together. It sounded like the first Pentecost Luke describes in Acts 2!

The second weekend, we worshipped with two of Pastor Phiri’s congregations in two of the smaller villages outside of Salima. At both churches, the members greeted us as we drove up, singing beautiful Christian songs in Chewa (the native language of Malawi). These churches were smaller than Alex’s congregation, but just as warm and welcoming. Music at these services was acappella and included beautiful harmonies! I can now imagine how the heavenly choruses will greet us when we get to heaven! Each service was closer to two hours long, but the Holy Spirit was clearly evident in both ministries!

The participants both weeks were *thrilled* to receive a Bible. They contained both the Old and New Testaments, in the local language, Chewa. As you can tell from the size of the pen next to it, the Bible was approximately 5” long



by 4” wide. In some cases, the pastors/evangelists didn’t have a Bible. In other cases, the ones they had looked like the one at the right. It was clear from what both Alex and Phillip said to the conference participants that they will treasure these new Bibles and the bookmarks our children made. It is crucial that they have this important tool for their ministry. This gift also affirms their calling to be pastors and the seriousness with which they take that calling.

We finished our conference in Salima on Thursday. Alex and his son brought us back to Lilongwe. On Friday, we met with representatives from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi (ELCM). We thoroughly enjoyed our two-hour long visit with them, as we shared the history and ministry of the NALC and our desire to work with them should they want similar teaching conferences in the future for their pastors, evangelists, and/or lay people. We met with the Rev. Feston Phiri, Director of Training, and the Rev. Evance Mphalasa, the Assistant General Secretary. Both are involved with personnel development for the pastors, evangelists, and key lay leaders in the Church, and will be the perfect people with whom to work to organize future ministry training seminars. Two NALC pastors will be working with them in January 2018, for teaching seminars for women in the Church.

It was abundantly clear to both of us that the Holy Spirit was guiding our time in Malawi. I felt that guidance most clearly as I was teaching, as I adjusted what I said and how I said it “on the fly” to make my presentations more approachable to a non-English speaking audience. We also were keenly aware of the Holy Spirit in the vibrancy of the pastors and leaders, and in their descriptions of their ministry with the people. Healings and exorcisms were very common, and people’s testimonies about this during worship each weekend was both heartfelt and well received by worshipers. God is active and alive for them – thanks be to God! I know that my own faith was strengthened, and that God answered my prayer to learn from the participants as much (or more) than I gave them. I will treasure my time in Africa for the rest of my life, and I’m confident God will use it in my teaching and preaching from now on. I look forward to going back again whenever the opportunity presents itself. The need is certainly there, and the pastors with whom we spoke are interested in continuing this partnership. ALWM is committed to an ongoing relationship with local Churches. I can’t imagine there not being an opportunity to go again, especially if the ELCM is open to our coming.

NEW DISCIPLES AT BETHEL

Bethel welcomed new members in October as well as having a current member reaffirm his membership.



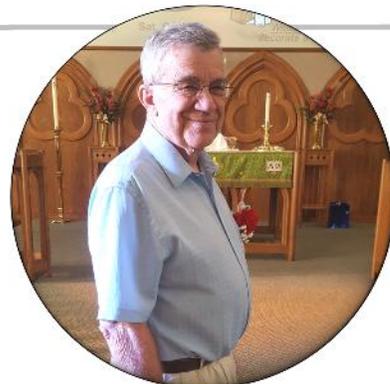
Curt & Jane Bragg
Tristan & Hayden

Curt and Jane Bragg with sons Tristan and Hayden reside in Noblesville. Curt keeps busy as an Account Executive at Nuance Communications. Jane also keeps busy as a Case Manager RN at Managed Health Services.



Larry & Arlette Gray

Larry and Arlette Gray of Cicero, Indiana, were also among the new members welcomed in October.



Jim Nighthelser

Jim Nighthelser of Arcadia attended the new member classes in order to reaffirm his membership here at Bethel.



Susan (Sue) Wilson

Susan (Sue) Wilson is one of our newest members. Sue is a retired Shift Supervisor at CVS. Born in St. Paul, Minnesota, she now resides in Noblesville. She is an avid reader and prefers the old-fashioned bound book to "get lost in." Sue has two adult sons, Adam, and Nathan.

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



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



Kent Zepick

Kent Zepick is an attorney for the state of Indiana. Kent and his wife, Rebecca reside in Fishers and have one son at home, Connor, and one son, Caleb, at college in Florida.

Focus on Christian Education

By Sarah Manro



ABOUT THE PRESCHOOL

The Bethel Preschool Mission and Program Statements read: *"We believe that a child is created in God's image. Therefore we strive to lovingly develop our students' spiritual, emotional, social, intellectual and physical abilities in a safe and caring environment."*

"The Bethel Preschool offers a program of learning that responds to the children's needs where they are in their development so they become adequately prepared to enter full day Kindergarten in the prevailing school systems. This program is done within a Christian atmosphere of love for each child with some time devoted to teaching Christian Bible Stories, values and mores. All areas of a student's growth in social skills, emotional skills, intellectual development and physical abilities are addressed through the appropriate activities. Regular evaluation and parent interaction is also an intricate part of the program."

In September, Bethel Lutheran Preschool began its new school year. This year we have 44 students in 4 different classes. We have a few changes this year. Our Juniors Lead teacher, Laura Houser, has stepped up to also direct our preschool program. We also have two new teachers. Sarah Manro is assisting in Juniors and Danielle Schultz is assisting in our Parent's Day Out (PDO) classes.

Our preschool program has several options. This includes morning-only preschool from 9:00-11:30 a.m. or extended day including lunch-bunch until 1:00 p.m. Each week all the classes have a letter of the week. Stories and projects each day focus on words that start with that letter. One day a week is chapel day and students go down to the sanctuary and have a Bible story read to them by one of our pastors here at Bethel.



CLASSES

Our preschool classes are:

SENIORS - consists of 4- and 5-year olds. These students are getting ready for kindergarten! Seniors meet Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. This class is taught by Krista Robbins and Sharri DeYoung, who have been teaching together in our Seniors class for 4 years.

JUNIORS - consists of 3- and 4-year olds. Led by Laura Houser, she is assisted this year by Sarah Manro. Juniors meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

PARENT'S DAY OUT (PDO) - is for children 18 months old to 3 years olds. The PDO day is 9:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m. Our youngest students are taught by Brittany Pritsch and Danielle Schultz.

S.M.A.S.H. - is a wonderful enrichment class for our Junior and Senior students. S.M.A.S.H. stands for Science, Music, Art, and Stories. This class meets Fridays only. Each Friday of the month focuses on one of these subjects. If there is an extra Friday in that month, the students get a Hodgepodge of the subjects. S.M.A.S.H. is taught by Brittany Pritsch and Sharri DeYoung.

To learn more about our Preschool program, visit <http://www.bethellutheranchurch.com/preschool> or contact Laura Houser at 317-773-4315 ex. 33 or laura@bethellutheranchurch.com.



Did You Know?

The 12 Days of Christmas -- The Rest of the Story



When most people hear of "The 12 Days of Christmas", they think of the song. This song had its origins as a teaching tool to instruct young people in the meaning and content of the Christian faith.

Each of the items in the song represents something of religious significance. The hidden meaning of each gift was designed to help young Christians learn their faith. The song goes, "On the first day of Christmas my true love gave to me..."

The "true love" represents God and the "me" who receives these presents is the Christian. Here you go:

The "partridge in a pear tree" was Jesus Christ who died on a tree as a gift from God.

The "two turtle doves" were the Old and New Testaments - another gift from God.

The "three French hens" were faith, hope and love - the three gifts of the Spirit that abide (I Corinthians 13).

The "four calling birds" were the four Gospels which sing the song of salvation through Jesus Christ.

The "five golden rings" were the first five books of the Bible also called the "Books of Moses."

The "six geese a-laying" were the six days of creation.

The "seven swans a-swimming" were the "seven gifts of the Holy Spirit."

(I Corinthians 12:8-11; Romans 12; Ephesians 4; I Peter 4:10-11).

The "eight maids a milking" were the eight beatitudes.

The "nine ladies dancing" were nine fruits of the Holy Spirit.

(Galatians 5:22 & 23)

The "ten lords a-leaping" were the Ten Commandments.

The "eleven pipers piping" were the eleven faithful disciples.

The "twelve drummers drumming" were the twelve points of the Apostles' Creed.

So, the next time you hear "The 12 Days of Christmas", consider how this otherwise non-religious sounding song had its origins in the Christian faith.



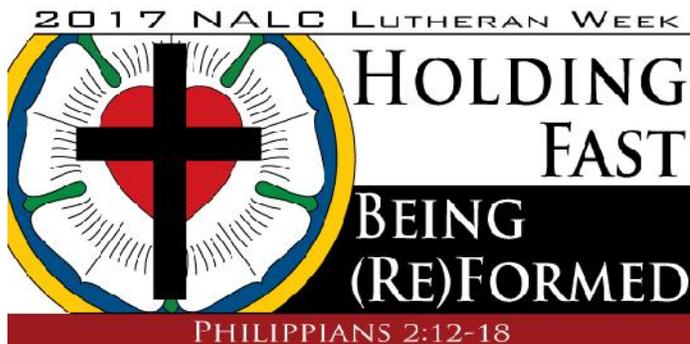
Answers from Page 24. Name that Carol: 1-Joy to the World, 2-What Child Is This?, 3-Silent Night, 4-We Three Kings, 5-The First Noel, 6-Holy Night, 7-Little Town of Bethlehem, 8-Away in a Manger, 9-Angels We Have Heard on High, and 10-Come All Ye Faithful. Gifts of the Wise Men: Gold-C; Frankincense-A; Myrrh-B. These valuable items were standard gifts to honor a deity or king in the ancient world.



NALC

North American Lutheran Church

2017 NALC Convocation focuses on Discipleship and Reformation



Nearly 700 NALC members gathered August 9-11 for the 2017 NALC Convocation in Nashville, Tenn., around the theme, “Holding Fast: Being Reformed.”

The 500th anniversary of the Reformation provided a focus for the Convocation. The leaders of the largest Lutheran churches in the world were featured speakers for the worship services. The Rev. Dr. Fredrick Onael Shoo, Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, was the preacher for a festival service observing the Reformation anniversary. The Rev. Yonas Yigezu, President of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus, preached for the opening worship of the Convocation Mission Festival.

The Rev. Dr. James Nestingen and the Rev. Dr. Nathan Yoder delivered keynote Bible study addresses on Reformation themes. The Rev. Dr. Jared Wicks addressed Martin Luther from a Roman Catholic perspective, and Carmen Fowler LaBerge addressed the Lutheran Reformation from a Reformed perspective.

The NALC’s focus on discipleship featured prominently in the Convocation. Bishop John Bradosky provided a keynote address and Bible study on discipleship for the Mission Festival. Discipleship was also a focus of his report to the Convocation and of other speakers and workshops.

The NALC Mission Festival began the Convocation under the theme, “Renewing Congregational Life Through the Word of God.” Keynote addresses were given by Bishop Bradosky, the Rev. Dr. Gemechis Buba, and the Rev. Dr. Joseph Parsalaw of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania. Church leaders from around the world took part in a panel discussion on congregational life in their countries. Workshops addressed a variety of topics.

Stuff the Truck for NALC Disaster Response was a great success. So many supplies were brought for NALC Disaster Response that a larger truck needed to be obtained. Donated supplies included 400 quilts, 366 health kits, 112 school kits, 70 flood buckets, and 225 Bibles.



The Bishop election process will remain the same as proposed constitutional amendments were not approved.

Elected to the NALC Executive Council to four-year terms were Brian E. Sutton of Statesville, N.C., and Pastor Mark Braaten of Tyler, Texas. Pastor Jeffray S. Greene of Brooks, Ga., and Lyle Hollander of Boyden, Iowa were elected to the Court of Adjudication. The Convocation also ratified the election of Julie Eskeland to the NALC-Canada Section Governing Board.

2018 budgets were approved. The Convocation approved a \$2.1 million operating budget for the NALC. Budgets were also approved for NALC designated funds: \$543,000 for the Theological Education Fund (which includes the North American Lutheran Seminary); \$165,500 for the Great Commission Fund; and \$64,000 for the Disaster Response Fund. Budgets anticipate spending some cash reserves. Delegates also approved a resolution encouraging congregations to increase their benevolence giving to the NALC by at least 1 percent of their congregational budget annually.

The Braaten and Benne Lectures in Theology, the annual theological conference which precedes the Convocation, focused on theological perspectives on the Work of Christ. The speakers were Dr. Don Collett, Dr. Gordon Isaac, Dr. Paul Hinlicky, Dr. David Luy, and Dr. David Yeago.

Video recordings of the NALC Convocation and the Braaten Benne Lectures on Theology will be available for viewing online at www.thenalc.org. Documents and photos from the Convocation are also available online.

ASK THE PASTOR



IS THERE SOMETHING YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO ASK?

By Pastor Doug Gast

Every once in a while someone will say to me: “I sure wish I were a Pastor, I’d only have to work one day a week and a half a day at that!” My response is usually something like, “in reality Sunday is really the easiest day of the week. It is basically the follow through of the plans and preparations that we have been working on throughout the week. Plus it is just fun sharing worship and fellowship time together.”

Sunday mornings are demanding for sure. In a four-hour time slot, there are more things happening and more requests and sharing going on with more people than on any other day of the week. I hope I have remembered everything and that glitches are kept to a minimum and that the Spirit of Christ is at its best. Yes, Sunday mornings are emotionally draining, because I hope I always bring my “A” game to everything that is going on. And yes, I am hyper aware of who is new, who is hurting, who has asked me to remember something or who has volunteered for a ministry we are trying to pull together.

Back to the question . . . What do I do? You would think that that would be an easy question to answer. What does a pastor’s job description look like? Basically the pastor’s job is to carry out the ministry of Word and Sacrament to the best of his/her ability. That is as specific as it gets. I know some pastors who put in 70 to 80 hours a week . . . and I know some pastors who basically put their time in on Sunday mornings and that is the pretty much the extent of their work week.

Working and working hard is a Gast family trademark. When I was growing up, I lived on a farm. We had chores to do morning and evening. Those chores were pretty well spelled out and if you forgot them, neglected them, or just flat out didn’t do them . . . then livestock didn’t get taken care of or fed. Crops didn’t get planted or harvested in a timely fashion. Equipment wasn’t maintained or serviced. There was a price to pay and the bottom line came at the end of the year.

When I was in college and seminary I worked concrete construction. At the end of the day you could stand back and see exactly what you had accomplished. I love building things for that very reason. There is tangible evidence that you have made progress and gotten the job done.

Ministry is very different. You have no clue whether what you have done has had any impact or made a difference in the lives of those you are called to serve. You can work as much or as little as you want. Over the long haul, I do know there is a correlation between the time, energy, and effort put into ministry and the fruit and the positive God-honoring difference that work produces.

How I got into ministry is truly a God thing and a reminder God has a weird sense of humor. I have always known I am

different. I don’t walk around with my hands. My Meyers Briggs Personality Inventory reflects a different personality type than that of most pastors. There are evenings when I drop in my Lazy Boy chair wondering if I got anything done that day, and whether God’s kingdom is better or worse off for my efforts. One of the things I do realize is that what I do has changed through the years. Like the old country and western song echoes. . . . “I can’t do what I once did, now I can do what I did . . . once.” Hopefully some wisdom also comes with age and the tough things we go through in life.

When I am asked who I am . . . I would say Christian, husband, father, son, brother, pop pop, and hopefully a friend to many. When I reflect now on how well I have done, you will have to ask those who I have lived and shared life with. With the exception of my family and close friends most people know me as Pastor Doug. Those two words define not only who I am, but what I do and what brings joy, fulfillment and a sense of purpose to my life.

So what does Pastor Doug do? This is the surprising answer. Everything and nothing.

This summer I was given the assignment by one of my doctors to make a list of everything I do. I came up with 89 job duties and responsibilities covering everything from worship, meetings, pastoral guidance and care, teaching and leading staff. There are also hospital calls and helping those who are struggling in some way. I write thank-you notes and send cards and try to keep up with emails. There are always care ministry concerns and of course it is always essential to take time out to pray. Sometimes it’s necessary for me to be a historian and a visionary. That’s more than enough, but hope you get the idea. I don’t think there is ever a time when I feel like I have completed a task. Just about the time I think I know what I am doing or I feel like I am caught up there is an emergency or a crisis that needs immediate attention.

And that is OK. Ministry is a funny profession. You are never totally off duty. I was reminded of that the other night when we were at a local restaurant with friends. Our server was a neat young man. Somehow during our conversation with him he realized that I was a pastor. He opened up to us about some difficult things going on in his life and some tough decisions he was facing. Every time he stopped by our table, he unfolded a little more of his story. Just before we paid our check, we asked if we could pray for him. He said yes. How about right now? So the five of us stood there in the restaurant, hand in hand, and prayed. The people sitting in our area got real quiet. It was a God moment. That’s the kind of stuff that keeps me in this business.

Continued on page 26.

SEASONS & HOLY DAYS

ADVENT, CHRISTMAS, EPIPHANY

By Carole Kuhn

Advent is defined as “arrival” or “coming.” Thus, during this time of year we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ (arrival), the First Advent, as well as prepare for the return (coming) of Christ the King, the Second Advent. The Old Testament dwelt on this time as a wish for the coming of the Messiah for redemption from worldly evils. Some have celebrated this time of year with fasting and penitence for sins. Today, we look to Advent as a time of joy and happiness as we await the return of Jesus. Advent begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas Day. Some make an interesting reference to Matthew 25: 1-13, the parable of the bridesmaids waiting for the coming of the Bridegroom, as the spirit of Advent. The Season’s color is blue, indicating the hope of the season and the royalty of Christ.

The **Advent Wreath** displays the colors of Advent. The round wreath is to remind us of God, His eternity and endless mercy, no beginning, no end. The green color of the wreath signifies the hope we have in God and the hope of renewal. A circle of four candles on the wreath remind us of the four weeks of Advent. We light one new candle each week, along with the previous week’s. There are three in blue and one pink, plus a white candle in the middle. The three blue candles continue the color of hope of the season and the royalty of Christ. The fourth candle of pink signifies joy; and in the center, the white candle, lit on Christmas Eve reminds us of the incarnation, giving light to the world. It is often referred to as the Christ candle.

Christmas, the birth of Jesus, is celebrated December 25th, continuing until Epiphany. The date is more of a commemoration of the event than one of observing an actual date. No real facts for the date have ever been agreed upon; however, one of the most accepted answers is that Christmas originated in the Roman culture in their celebration of the winter solstice on December 25. That was a pagan celebration of the birth of the sun, marking the change of seasons as the sun moved back north from the south. Christians wanted nothing to do with the pagan celebration, so early in the fourth century, they began celebrating the birth of Jesus at the same time. But we celebrate this date with joy and thanksgiving for Christ’s first coming and the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies of a Messiah for all. The color white is used for joy in the light of Christ.

Epiphany begins at sundown the day before January 6, celebrating the Wise Men arriving in Bethlehem to worship the baby Jesus. “Manifestation” is the definition of Epiphany, and is celebrated as the official Season for remembering and worshipping our Savior. The Season continues until the last Sunday before Ash Wednesday, with the “color” being green. In some countries, *The Twelve Days of Christmas* song is recognized as a time that the Wise Men “arrive” to worship Christ and while they are “there,” is the Epiphany Season.

The stories of the birth of Jesus are found in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. And the prophecies of God that a Messiah would be born are covered in Isaiah.

¹ The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, ² as it is written in Isaiah the prophet:

“I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way”—

³ “a voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’”

Mark 1:1-3 NIV

¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

¹² And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.”

Luke 2:11-12 ESV

¹ After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ² and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

Matthew 2:1-2 (NIV)

LUTHERAN CHRISTIANS

WHO WE ARE - WHAT WE BELIEVE

By Mary Jo Mikulski

HOLY THINGS

Our Worship on Sunday morning is a holy act in a holy space. When we walk into the sanctuary of Bethel we are walking into a holy and awe-inspiring space because God is here.



This is the space where we worship our God in the form of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. It is a special place. Now you will say that you can worship God anywhere. That is true. But this space, this sanctuary is a space set aside specifically for us to raise our voices in joy, to be still in His presence, to beseech Him to hear our pleadings, to receive his sacrifice for our sins, and to celebrate the welcoming of new children of His. It is a Holy Space. Throughout the history of our Christian faith we have as people of God built spaces large and small that are a testament to our faith and devotion to God. Whether it is a cathedral like Notre Dame or a small country church on the plains of Nebraska, they are all a holy place to worship our God.

Within this space we have “Holy Things.” These items we use are holy as they are specifically set aside for one purpose, to lift up our devotion, our love and our faith to, for and with God.

What things you ask?

There are many, but three of these “things” are very special and are set aside each week for us as we worship our Lord. The first is the **font**. A bowl containing water, a pedestal with a large basin on it containing water, or a pool of water lifts up the holy thing that God does for us: He welcomes us to be a child of his through our baptism and the splashing of this water on us. We are His for all time! This font is a holy “thing”.



The second is the **chalice or cup**.

A goblet, a glass, a brass container that holds the wine. This wine represents the blood of Christ that was given for us. This goblet is blessed each Sunday with the words “This is the blood of Christ shed for you”. And then in this holy place with this holy cup we

partake of the wine reminding us of His giving of His life blood for each and every one of us. We are participating in a “holy time.”

The third is the **paten** or plate. A holder for the loaf of bread that is the “bread of life.” The pastor raises the bread on the plate and says “This is the body of Christ, given for you.” Then in this holy place we partake of the bread reminding us of His giving of His body for each and every one of us. We are again participating in a “holy time.”



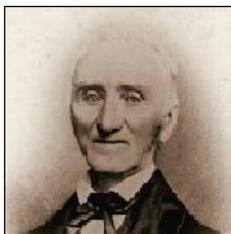
All these things are holy because they are the means we use to show our worship and our devotion to our Lord who first died and was raised again to grant us eternal life. We are truly in a “holy space” doing “holy actions” with “holy things.”

CHURCH HISTORY

MT. PLEASANT LUTHERAN CHURCH: 1837-1936

Mt. Pleasant

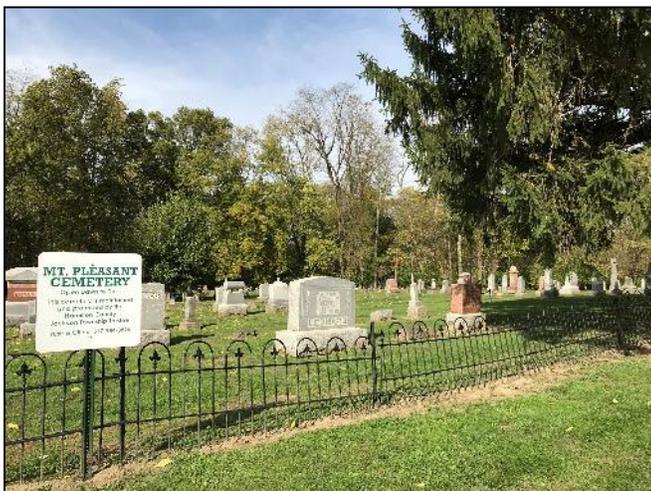
The Rev. Abraham Reck and the Rev. John Garver, residents of Indianapolis, traveled to Hamilton County by horseback, visiting people in Jackson and White River Townships and preaching to groups in private homes. The devoted efforts of these two men culminated in the organization of Mt. Pleasant congregation in November of 1837 with 15 members. The Council consisted of two elders, two deacons, and the pastor, the Rev. John Garver, who received \$15 to \$20 per year for his services.



Rev. Abraham Reck

During the first year, five new members were gained. With continued growth, the second year saw the erection of the first little frame church building, dedicated in May of 1839. It was built one mile east and a quarter of a mile south of Arcadia, on a lot donated by Peter Achenbach. Many of the early church members were German, therefore, it was this language that prevailed in the services.

In the course of the next twenty years, there was a rapid growth of membership, several pastoral changes, and the withdrawal of several of the German families. Those families left to form their own church, which later became Arcadia's Emmanuel Lutheran Church of the Missouri Synod. Despite this loss, Mt. Pleasant's membership had increased by the 1860's to the degree that the "little church" was no longer adequate. A larger building was constructed in 1862 and used until 1936, when the congregation merged with Bethel.



Mt. Pleasant Cemetery 2017



Mt. Pleasant—1909

Historical Highlights

1837 – Mt. Pleasant congregation was organized with Rev. John Garver serving as pastor. The 15 members met in a school on David Knapp's farm. Pastor Garver received \$20 per year for his services.

1838 – Mt. Pleasant confirmed a class of 8 catechumens and administered communion to 28 members.

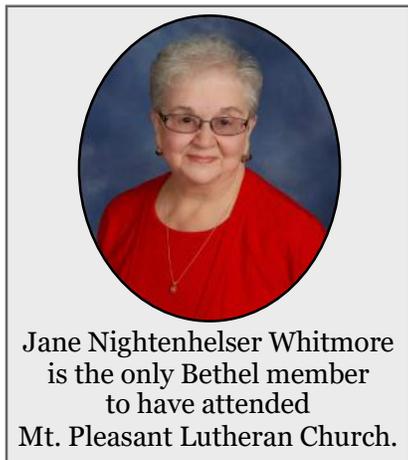
1838 – Peter Achenbach donated land for a church. This was a small crude building with low ceilings and rough-hewn floors.

1852 – Congregation split with many German members joining the newly organized Missouri Synod and erecting a building 1/4 mile south of Mt. Pleasant. This was the beginning of Emmanuel Lutheran Church located in Arcadia.

1862 – Mt. Pleasant's building became too small. The congregation purchased lumber cut for a barn, but never claimed, for \$150. Because of this, the completed building stood higher than most churches. It is interesting to note that years later, after Mt. Pleasant ceased as a congregation, the building was moved across the road and was converted into a barn. It was destroyed by fire in the 1970s.

1936 – Congregation joined the Bethel congregation.

From 1837-1936, Communion was given 4 times a year — once a quarter.



Jane Nightenhelser Whitmore is the only Bethel member to have attended Mt. Pleasant Lutheran Church.



CHURCH MUSIC

By Susan Adda

Good King Wenceslas

As we quickly approach the most wonderful time of the year, we will be listening to and singing Christmas carols aplenty. We all have our favorites, to the point that it just wouldn't seem like Christmas without them.

One carol stands out to me and many others as an example of what Christmas and being Christ-like is all about - *Good King Wenceslas*.

This carol was written by John Neale, a British minister, in 1853. While the Christmas story is not referred to in its lyrics, their meaning revolves around the Feast of Stephen which is celebrated the day after Christmas, December 26th. St. Stephen was the first martyr of the church (note the Book of Acts.) As a young man, he dedicated his life to the church and serving others in need such as the poor, orphans, and widows. St. Stephen's Day in England and Canada is also referred to Boxing Day, a day when boxed gifts are given to trades and service people in remembrance of St. Stephen.



But back to the carol itself. Good King Wenceslas was actually about a Bohemian Duke of the 10th century - the Duke of Vaclav - who was a committed Christian. He understood what Christ expected of us as Christians to

care for and show compassion to people who need it the most. Wenceslas went off on the Feast of Stephen to help a peasant in need of food and fuel, bringing along his page for help. As his page claims he can't go on because he's cold and the weather is getting worse, the King shows even more compassion by telling the page to step in his footprints to get warmth from his steps.

Let us as Bethel Lutheran Christians have the mindset that every day should be celebrated as if it was the Feast of Stephen.

Good King Wenceslas

*Good King Wenceslas looked out
on the Feast of Stephen,
When the snow lay round about,
deep and crisp and even,
Brightly shone the moon that night,
though the frost was cruel,
When a poor man came in sight,
gathering winter fuel.*

*“Hither, page, and stand by me,
if you know it, telling,
Yonder peasant, who is he?
Where and what his dwelling?”
“Sire, he lives a good league hence,
underneath the mountain,
Right against the forest fence,
by St. Agnes' fountain.”*

*“Bring me flesh and bring me wine,
bring me pine logs hither,
You and I will see him dine,
when we bear them thither.”
Page and monarch, forth they went,
forth they went together,
Through the rude wind's wild lament
and the bitter weather.*

*“Sire, the night is darker now,
and the wind blows stronger,
Fails my heart, I know not how;
I can go no longer.”
“Mark my footsteps, my good page,
tread now in them boldly,
You shall find the winter's rage
freeze your blood less coldly.”*

*In his master's steps he trod,
where the snow lay dinted;
Heat was in the very sod
which the saint had printed.
Therefore, Christian men, be sure,
wealth or rank possessing,
You who now will bless the poor
shall yourselves find blessing.*



CARING CORNER



CARE MINISTRY

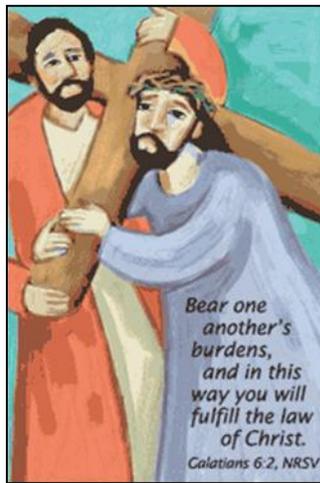
By Kim Radant

***He Heals the broken in heart
and binds up their wounds.***

Psalm 147:3

Introducing All Things CARING

So, why do we care? People who are united by Jesus Christ form a family. We are the *body of Christ*, a community that comes with both benefits and responsibility. God created our Christian family and wants us to reach into the lives of our Christian family members with love and understanding. The Bethel Care Ministry strives to exemplify Christian Caregiving through the ministry of presence, nourishment, Christian education, and prayer.



“Just as the human body has many parts, so it is with the body of Christ.” 1 Corinthians 12:12



The Bethel Care Ministry is chaired by Jill Duncan, who serves on the church council to represent the Care Ministry. The Bethel Care Ministry actually consists of six groups of Bethel servants

who join together to help others in need. They are as follows:

1) The Bethel Care Ministry Group, a group of members who visit people who are grieving, who are in hospitals or nursing homes, or who are elderly and live alone. This group also sends cards to those undergoing surgery, are suffering a loss, or just to inspire them and let them know they are loved. They sponsor grief programs, movie Sundays, and a variety of educational programs for the congregation. It is chaired by Pastor Al, Jane Nee and Kim Radant.

2) The Sunshine Club is a group of members who cook meals to take to the homes of those who are ill or unable to cook for themselves. It is chaired by Bobbie Dankert.

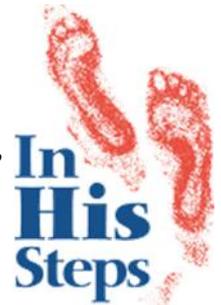
3) Funeral Dinners are a service provided by this group of Bethel members after the funeral of a loved one. These meals are coordinated by Lee Anne Burrow.

4) The Eucharistic Ministry consists of a group of members who take Communion to those who are not physically able to come to church. It is chaired by Ellen Gill.

5) The Circle of Sisters is a group of creative Bethel members that send cards, make comfort items for those in need and sell their beautiful crafts and donate the proceeds to various causes at Bethel. It is chaired by Suzy Patterson.

6) Last, but certainly not least, is the Bethel Prayer Chain. This chain of volunteers, led by Trudy Kussow, regularly provides us with beautiful words of scripture to hold those in need up in prayer.

The Bethel Ministry **CARE Corner** will become a regular column in **FOOTPRINTS**. In each issue, we will cover a variety of topics including grief, finances, inspirational prayer, and tips for healthy Christian living. We welcome contributors to this column, as we strive as a Christian family to care for one another as God has cared for us.



“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.” Galatians 6:9



MISSIONS

“WE ARE ALL ONE IN MISSION”



WATER MISSIONS

By Vicki Cooper

WATER!!

What does that word conjure up in your mind? Something to bathe/shower in? Brush your teeth with? Something to refresh your plants or green up your yard? Something to drink when you are thirsty? Cook with? Use when clothes need washed? Or do you even think about it? Just take it for granted? Knowing that when you turn on the faucet, water, clean water will run out?

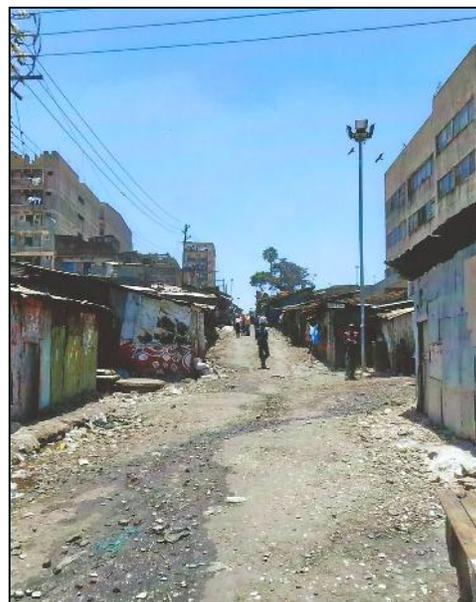
In the fall of 2013, I became very conscious of water ~the lack of it and the cleanliness of it. I had the opportunity to go on a mission trip to Kenya with a group from White River Christian Church, who had donated money for a well in Isinon, a very small village in Kenya. It was hoped that the well would be supplying clean water when we got there but all sorts of roadblocks had kept that from happening by October, 2013. We did see the sight where the well was to be dug, and we prayed there with many villagers. We also walked to the pond where they got their water to drink, to cook with, and to wash in. It was not very clean and animals used it, too. Without rain in the near future, there was only about two weeks' worth of water left in their pond when we were there.



Isinon's water supply before the well was finished

We had packed sandwiches for lunch which we ate before leaving Isinon and, of course, bottled water. So we withdrew from the village to where our vehicles were to have our lunch. An older villager wandered over to where we were and in pointing at one of our guys, we realized he wanted the bottle of water Trevor was drinking. So Trevor, who had drank about a third of it, gave it to the old gentleman. The villager drank every drop of the water without taking a break, handed the

empty bottle back to Trevor and walked off. I can still “see” him downing that bottle of water! Do you think he thirsted for clean water? (By the way, Isinon has its well now.)



sewage running between the shacks

touch us. But the thing that sticks in my mind from the slums area was toddlers drinking water, dirty water, in their bottles – another picture that I can still “see” in my mind’s eye!

Because of this trip and my awareness of water in other places I have become very supportive of Water Mission and Bethel’s support of it. Water Mission is a nonprofit Christian engineering organization providing sustainable safe water and sanitation solutions for people in developing countries and disaster areas. It is also a Christian ministry that by helping to fight global water crises provides those they serve with the opportunity to hear about the Living Water ~ Jesus Christ!

You can donate to Water Mission through your weekly/monthly offerings. Many times I have donated directly to WaterMission.org in honor of birthdays or anniversaries of my family and friends. When doing the direct donation, you can designate where you want it to go.



CHRISTIAN

CHILDREN AND YOUTH



Sunday School for children ages kindergarten through 5th grade begins at 10:00 a.m. Children will gather in the Christian Ed room upstairs until 10:00 a.m. when the teachers will greet and walk them to their classrooms. Children will gather back in the Christian Ed room at 10:45 a.m. for a large-group recap of the lesson and announcements. They are dismissed to parents from there at 11:00 a.m.

Nursery — Infants and toddlers under 3 are welcomed into our nursery during the 8:45 service. Nursery attendants read Bible stories, play and love on our youngest members while their parents attend Adult Education classes or worship.

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

K-5th Grade — Children are grouped into Sunday School classes by age/grade. The curriculum follows the weekly worship themes. The focus for this group is growing in faith and learning the basic stories and Lutheran concepts that will prepare them for Confirmation in middle school.

High School — We begin class each week sharing at least one good thing from the past week. We encourage conversation and discussion in a respectful manner. We encourage active serving while reminding them of the little eyes looking up to them here at church. We end each class with prayer requests and prayer.



Confirmation

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



MIDWEEK: High School Youth Ministry

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



Baptism Class

This class is for parents who wish to have their child(ren) baptized. During this session, we explore what happens when we come to the font and what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. We review the expectations placed on parents and the support they can expect to receive from the church.



First Communion Class

Children in 4th grade and up learn about God's promises and the importance of Holy Communion. Classes are held each Spring during the Sunday School hour, beginning in Lent and culminating with the Rite of First Communion on Maundy Thursday. For more information, speak with Kris Lingenfelter .



Discovery: Becoming a Disciple of Jesus

Next Class: Sundays — starting in January—date to be announced

During this interactive and engaging "new disciple" orientation, participants will grow deeper into the life of discipleship as we explore key aspects of our Lutheran Christian faith, including how God has wired each person to be ministers rather than simply members of the Church. Contact the church office at 317-773-4315 or talk to one of the pastors to register.

EDUCATION

ADULTS

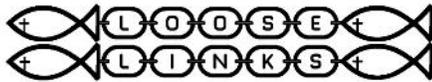
Sundays

Coffee time: 9:40 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. Class from 10:00 a.m. - 10:55 a.m.



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

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

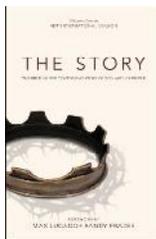


Loose Links—Library
Led by Suzy Patterson & Tree Rudy

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

The Story — Room 215
Through May 2018

The "Greatest Story Ever Told" is more than just a cliché. God has gone to great lengths to rescue lost and hurting people. That is what *The Story* is all about: the story of the Bible, God's great love affair with humans. No previous experience with the Bible needed.



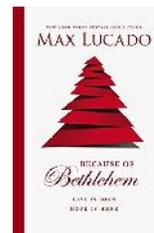
The Shack — Fellowship Hall
Jan 7 -Feb 18
Led by the Care Ministry

In a world where religion seems to grow increasingly irrelevant, *The Shack* wrestle with the timeless questions, "Where is God in a world so filled with unspeakable pain?" Join the Care Ministry for a study and discussion of this provocative book. How do the ideas the author presents square with the teachings of Scripture and our tradition?



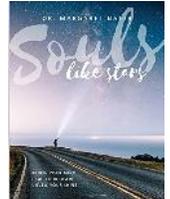
Because of Bethlehem—
Fellowship Hall
Nov 26-Dec 17

In this four-session video-based study, bestselling author Max Lucado reveals that Because of Bethlehem, we have the promise that God is always near us, always for us, and always with us.



Souls Like Stars: Renew Your Mind, Heal Your Heart, Unveil Your Shine — Room 214-216
Through December 10

Join Pastor Joe Freeman as we explore the stories of real people - people much like you - who once felt hopeless and helpless. Thanks to God's transformative love and presence, they experienced true love and their hearts were unveiled. Like stars reflect the light of the sun, you and I were created to reflect the glory of our Heavenly Father. Text available for purchase (\$25).



The Gospel of Mark—
Fellowship Hall
Jan 7-Feb 11

With the beginning of Advent in December, our Gospel readings during worship will come (mostly) from Mark's gospel. Each of the four gospels tell the one Gospel story of Jesus. However, it is helpful to step back from our individual weekly readings to focus on Mark's unique message. We will explore the who, when, and why behind Mark, how the evangelist begins and ends this gospel, the one parable that is unique to Mark, as well as some other stories that are central to this gospel and found elsewhere, including Jesus' passion, death, and resurrection. Come and see!



During the Week

Sausage and Scripture - Fellowship Hall

Men's Breakfast and Bible Study meets Saturdays at 7:30 a.m. For more information, please contact Kevin Hardie (765-432-6211).

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

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).

FOCUS ON MINISTRY

ALTAR GUILD

By Jill Duncan

Have you ever wondered who fixes communion every week for worship or who changes the banner hanging in the sanctuary as well as the altar linens or who cleans up after/between services. In this issue of FOOTPRINTS, I am going to give you information about the Altar Guild, what we do, why we do it, and who we do it for.

First of all, what is the Altar Guild? It is a group of men and women who are called to serve God by preparing and caring for the physical settings of the worship space. The work they do together is an offering of time and many talents. It is a ministry of love undertaken in the name of Christ. Before one is an altar guild member (in some churches they are known as sacristans but Lutherans traditionally favor the term altar guild) one is a baptized, worshipping, communing Christian. Serving in an altar guild is not like participating in a "social" group. Altar Guild is a ministry that can only be carried out with a song in one's heart. Christ's Spirit fills us with songs of thanksgiving for all that God has done for us.



Therefore, we offer ourselves to Christ's service. So, the basic motivation for serving in the altar guild is gratitude. Members of the altar guild are grateful servants: ministers of God, ministers of God's people, ministers of the liturgy and ministers of the worship space. Worship involves the ministry of many—altar guild, presiding and assisting pastors, musicians, acolytes, ushers—and it is vital that



each person fulfill his/her responsibility.

It is a sense of privilege to serve on the altar guild. Most of the work goes on quietly behind the scenes. The work is often unnoticed because in normal circumstances average worshipers don't think about the familiar scene in front of them as long as it is familiar. They don't consider who puts the altar furnishings in place or who cares for them.

What the altar guild is asked to do depends on the pastor(s) for whom they work. They serve a special role as the pastor(s) liturgical partner in making the worship life of the church run smoothly. The first and very critical responsibility of altar guild is reliability: being reliable to the pastor(s) and reliable to the

congregation. Other responsibilities include purchasing and caring for linens; managing flower monies and orders as well as arranging the flowers (Christmas and Easter); replenishing (even making) the supply of bread, wine and candles; teaching church school classes, acolytes, or other groups about the things of worship; suggesting memorial gifts; participating in special ceremonies such as stripping the altar on Maundy Thursday and weekly communion; changing altar paraments and banners based on the seasons of the church; preparing and cleaning up communion; keeping candles filled (oil); preparing for baptisms and funerals; and cleaning of the worship space (dusting and vacuuming); changing the eternal candle.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Altar Guild or baking communion bread, please speak to me.



Some of info was taken from Altar Guild and Sacristy Handbook by S. Anita Stauffer and the New Altar Guild Book by Barbara Gent and Betty Sturges.

Communion Bread Recipe

1 cup hot water	2 1/2 cups whole wheat flour (not whole grain)
1/3 cup honey	1 tsp. salt
1 tbs. vegetable oil	1 tsp. baking soda

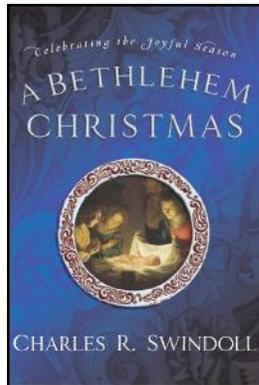
Combine water, honey and oil. Set aside. Combine flour, salt and baking soda. Stir into water mixture. Mix well. (Can add a little flour if dough is too sticky.) Divide into 4 portions on lightly floured surface. Shape into flat circles about 6 inches in diameter and place on lightly greased cookie sheet. With knife, cut a cross into top of each loaf. Bake for 5 minutes at 350° and brush with oil. Bake 5 more minutes and brush with oil again. Do not overbake or loaves will be crumbly. Cool.

Tip from Trudy Kussow: She did not divide dough on floured surface. Instead she shaped dough directly on cookie sheet. To handle it she sprayed her hands with a little cooking spray and was careful to flatten to full 6" circle. Loaves held together better.

BOOKS OF INTEREST

Reviews by Connie Wooldridge & Carole Kuhn

Reading level:
adult



A BETHLEHEM CHRISTMAS

by Charles (Chuck) R. Swindoll

Swindoll always “wanted to re-visit the scenes in Bethlehem in a new and creative way....”

So the stories of Mary, Joseph, and the angel Gabriel are told as if by each of them personally. The stories were researched carefully in the New Testament and historical volumes so that scenes could come to life more colorfully but also accurately. First, Gabriel gives Zacharias joyful news. He and Elizabeth would at last have a son... “Your son will be very special.”

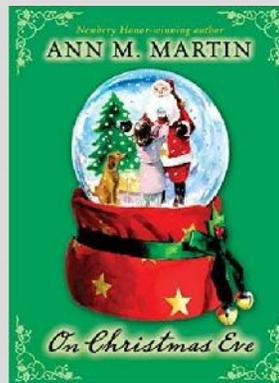
Mary begins her story “Most people in Nazareth farmed for a living; my father was a stone mason.” She too has a visit from Gabriel. “I had never met anyone like Mary before,” Joseph begins.

Gabriel states that despite his enjoyment of being a heavenly messenger, he has difficulty understanding “God’s persistent, unrelenting love for people.”

This book invites us to think about Mary and Joseph as real people and contemplate angels in a different manner. An enjoyable read.

Charles Swindoll is a noted pastor, teacher and author. His sermons on radio are heard worldwide.

Reading level:
Grades 2-5



ON CHRISTMAS EVE

By Ann M. Martin

It’s 1958 and Tess McAllister is in third grade. This is the year, she decides, that she really will stay awake and meet Santa Claus on Christmas Eve. She has a special wish this year: Her best friend’s father is very sick and she wants Santa to make him well.

The author draws a careful distinction between the magical parts of Christmas (like gifts and flying reindeer) and the miraculous event it celebrates. As Tess discovers, Santa has his limits. But hope and the love that came down at Christmas do not.

These books are
all available from
the
Bethel
Library



Reading level:
ages 4-9

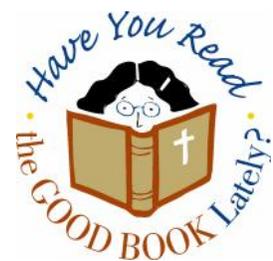


GOOD KING WENCESLAS

By John Mason Neale
Illustrated by Christopher Manson

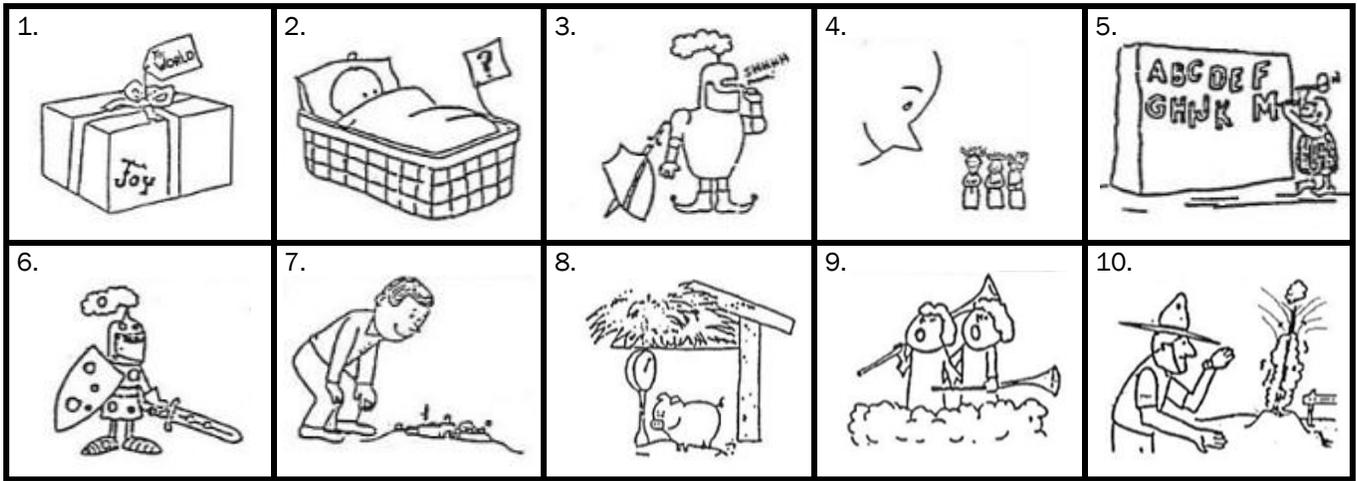
The hand lettered text of this picture book will be familiar: The English Christmas Carol *Good King Wenceslas*. The woodcut illustrations, framed by traditional borders, transport readers back to 10th century Bohemia (present day Czech Republic).

On the Feast of St. Stephen - the day after Christmas - Wenceslas and his young page leave their warm castle, forge through “bitter weather,” brave the “rude wind’s wild lament,” and bring dinner to a poor peasant and his family. Parts for “Page,” “King,” and “All” are marked, which will make for delightful December reading or singing in front of a warm fire. As an added bonus, the final pages of the book contain the musical score along with brief biographies of both the 18th-century writer of the carol and the real Duke of Wenceslas.



WORD

NAME THAT CHRISTMAS CAROL



1. _____	6. _____
2. _____	7. _____
3. _____	8. _____
4. _____	9. _____
5. _____	10. _____



Why did the Wise Men bring the gifts they did?

On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Matthew 2: 11 (NIV)

Match the gift with the meaning:

_____ Gold

_____ Frankincense

_____ Myrrh

A. Highly fragrant resin used in worship—symbol of holiness and righteousness.

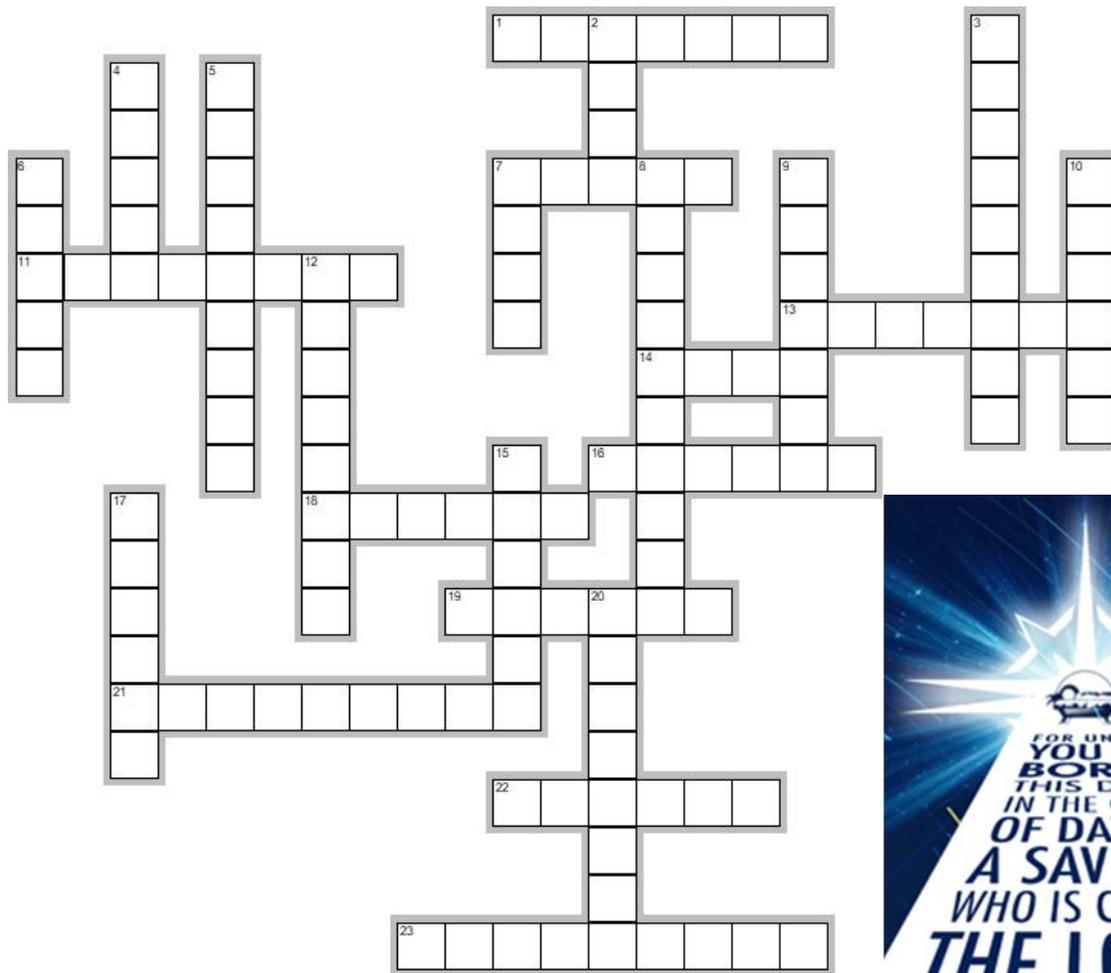
B. Spice used in embalming—symbol of bitterness, suffering, and affliction—death on the cross

C. Precious metal—symbol of kingship and divinity

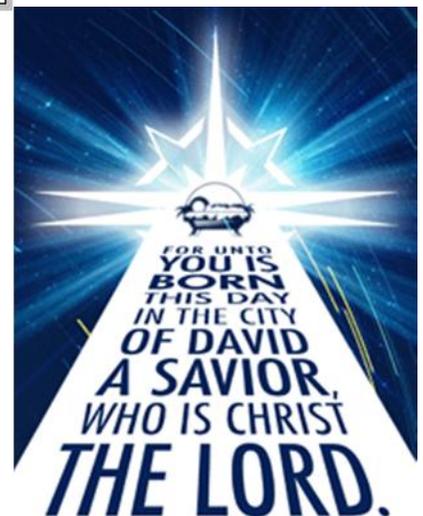
ANSWERS ON PAGE 11 TO BOTH PUZZLES.

PLAY

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ESpazCrossword.com



LUKE 2:11, ESV

ACROSS

1. The promised deliverer of the Jewish nation
7. The Wise Men brought gold, incense, and _____ to Jesus
11. The meaning of Jesus' name (2 words)
13. Feel or show great joy or delight
14. Wise men came from the East to worship the newborn king
16. There was no room at the inn so this is where Jesus was born
18. The coming of Christ into the world
19. Feel or express sincere regret or remorse about one's wrongdoing or sin
21. The first people to hear the Good News of Jesus' birth
22. Where the newborn Savior was laid
23. City of David where Jesus was born

DOWN

2. This appeared in the sky to show where the newborn Savior lay
3. Father of John the Baptist
4. King of Judea at the time of Jesus' birth - tried to have him killed
5. John the Baptist's mother
6. It shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it
7. Mother of Jesus
8. Deliverance from sin; salvation
9. Angel who foretold the births of John the Baptist and of Jesus
10. Husband of Mary and Jesus' earthly father
12. The revelation of Christ to all nations as represented by the wise men who came to worship Jesus
15. They proclaimed the birth of Jesus to the people
17. The Messiah or "Anointed One"
20. Means "God with us"

ANSWERS ON PAGE 26

CALENDAR

LITURGICAL CALENDAR

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

DAY	DATE	CHURCH CALENDAR
Sunday	11/5/17	All Saints Sunday
Sunday	11/12/17	23rd Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday	11/19/17	24th Sunday after Pentecost
Wednesday	11/22/17	Thanksgiving Eve Service
Sunday	11/26/17	Christ the King Sunday
Sunday	12/3/17	1st Sunday of Advent
Sunday	12/10/17	2nd Sunday of Advent
Sunday	12/17/17	3rd Sunday of Advent
Sunday	12/24/17	4th Sunday of Advent
Sunday	12/24/17	Nativity of Our Lord
Monday	12/25/17	Nativity of Our Lord
Sunday	12/31/17	First Sunday after Christmas
Saturday	1/6/18	Feast of the Epiphany
Sunday	1/7/18	Baptism of Our Lord
Sunday	1/14/18	Second Sunday of Epiphany
Sunday	1/21/18	Third Sunday of Epiphany
Sunday	1/28/18	Fourth Sunday of Epiphany
Sunday	2/4/18	Fifth Sunday of Epiphany
Sunday	2/11/18	Transfiguration of Our Lord

Continued from page 13.

I think ministry is more about what I do than about who I get to be. So much of what I do is called a ministry of presence. I get to be with individuals and families when they are celebrating the great joys and blessings of life. I am humbled to be called to be with families in times of sorrow and crisis. I take seriously God's call to be His spokesperson of hope, joy, encouragement, and grace.

Last week my internship supervisor called me from Cheyenne. He hadn't heard from us in a while and just wanted to see how I was doing. Other than cards and emails once in a while, we haven't spoken directly with him since my 25th anniversary of ordination which was about the time he had retired. At that time, I asked him what he would have done differently if he was given the opportunity to re-do his ministry. He said he would trust his people more. That's my hope and dream for myself and other pastors as well. If I asked each of you what you think Pastor Doug does here are some things that I hope I might hear:

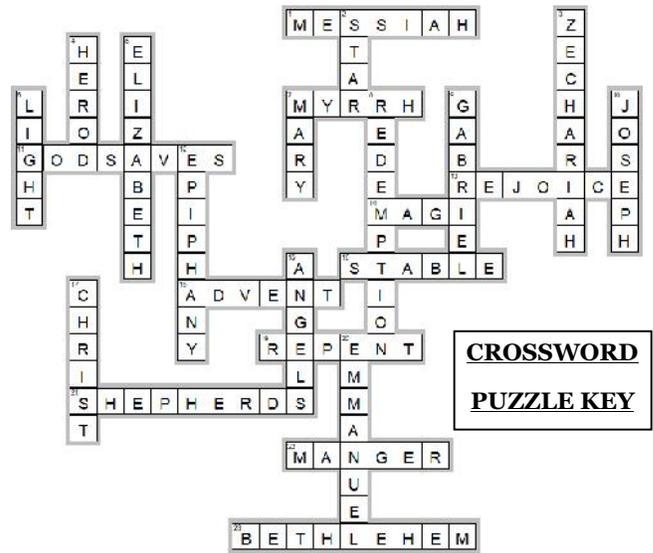
EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

November 1, 2017—February 11, 2018

- Nov 1 Healing Service 7 p.m.
- Nov 18 Thanksgiving Food Basket Distribution
- Nov 22 Thanksgiving Eve Service 7 p.m.
- Dec 2 Hanging of the Greens
- Dec 6 Midweek: Meal 6-7 p.m. Worship 7-8 p.m.
- Dec 9 Christmas Food Basket Distribution
- Dec 13 Midweek: Meal 6-7 p.m. Worship 7-8 p.m.
- Dec 14 Preschool Christmas Program 7-8 p.m.
- Dec 20 Midweek: Meal 6-7 p.m. Worship 7-8 p.m.
- Dec 24 Christmas Eve Services

2018

- Jan 3 Healing Service 7 p.m.
- Jan 6 Feast of Epiphany
- Feb 11 Transfiguration of Our Lord



- ⇒ He has done his best to equip us, his people, to be fully engaged disciples of Jesus
- ⇒ He has been a shepherd of the shepherds who shepherd God's flock
- ⇒ He has been a faithful and trusted leader
- ⇒ He has no pretenses . . . what you see is what you get
- ⇒ He has in every situation had the heart of Jesus and passion for what he does
- ⇒ He has made being a part of the church something that is both fun and meaningful
- ⇒ He is not perfect, sometimes he has feet of clay, but he lives by the grace of God and shares that grace readily with others
- ⇒ He is a partner in ministry, a friend in Jesus and a fellow worker with us in the Body of Christ

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Doug

Events & Activities



SERVICE OF
HEALING



Thanksgiving
Worship



Thanksgiving
Food Baskets

Advent



Sundays &
Midweek



Hanging
of the Greens

Christmas
Food Baskets



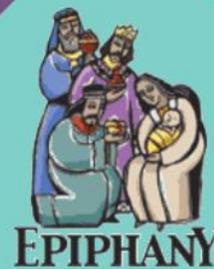
Children's
Christmas Programs



Bethel
Angel
Tree

Joy
to the
World

Christmas Eve
Services



EPIPHANY

Transfiguration
OF THE LORD





20650 Cumberland Road, Noblesville, IN 46062
317.773.4315 www.BethelLutheranChurch.com

WEEKEND WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

SATURDAY

5:30 p.m. – Casual Worship

SUNDAY

8:45 a.m. – Classic Worship

10:00 a.m. – Christian Education Hour

11:11 a.m. – Praise Worship

Communion will be celebrated at all services.

OTHER WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

FIRST WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH

7:00 p.m. – Healing Service *(except during Advent & Lent)*

NOVEMBER 23rd

7:00 p.m. – Thanksgiving Eve Worship

DECEMBER 6th, 13th & 20th

Midweek Advent: Fellowship Meal 6 p.m. & Worship 7 p.m.

DECEMBER 24th

Sunday morning 10:00 a.m. *(one service only)*

Christmas Eve Worship at 5 p.m., 7 p.m. & 10:30 p.m.



NALC

North American Lutheran Church