



Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church and School is a community of sinners trusting in the forgiveness given by the crucified and risen Christ, offering peace, joy, stability, and purpose to a despairing and chaotic world by sharing this gospel through our words and deeds.

The Bethlehem STAR

March 2024

*Jesus, I will ponder now on Your holy passion;
With Your Spirit me endow for such meditation.
Grant that I in love and faith may the image cherish
Of Your suffering, pain, and death that I may not perish.
(LSB 440; v1)*

Dear Bethlehem,

We are entering the third week of our Lenten journey, following Jesus to His suffering, death, and resurrection. Let me share three ways that our worship is highlighting this journey.

First, the Lenten Midweek Services (Wednesdays at 7:00pm) are going through John chapters 18-19 section by section. This is a unique approach. We usually hear Jesus' passion on Palm (Passion) Sunday and/or on Good Friday. At these services, it is common practice to read through the events that lead up to Jesus' crucifixion, His death, and His burial all in one service. This is a good tradition that helps us to appreciate and understand the big picture. However, this particular approach in our Lenten Midweek Services—about 10-15 verses at a time—slows us down and allows us to take our time to ponder the intricate details which we might overlook.

Second, on Sundays in Lent, we are focusing on the Gospel readings, many of which are from the Gospel of Mark. Mark's style is blunt, short, choppy. He gets the point. He doesn't explain a lot, just says it like it is. While all the Gospels point us to Christ crucified, Mark's style feels very "Lenten."

Third, we will continue to observe Holy Week (March 24-30). The school offers short devotions Monday through Thursday morning, 8:45 to 9:00ish. We highlight a Lenten/Holy Week hymn and the events of Holy Week. Our congregation offers Palm Sunday service on March 24. This year, we'll focus on the events and conversations that happen on Palm Sunday when Jesus entered Jerusalem (John 12). On Thursday, March 28, we will offer Maundy Thursday Divine Service at

7:00pm, focusing on the conversations and events that took place right before Jesus was betrayed. On Friday, March 29, we will offer Good Friday Prayer Services (Tenebrae Vespers) at 12:00 noon and at 7:30pm. We will focus on the 7 last words of Christ spoken right before He died.

And of course, we will celebrate Christ's resurrection on the third day, on March 31 at the regular worship times, 8:00 and 10:45am.

For we follow Jesus and learn from Him to pray, to fight against temptation, to suffer, to bear the cross, to die, and to rise again to new life!

*Your dear Pastor,
Pastor Witte*



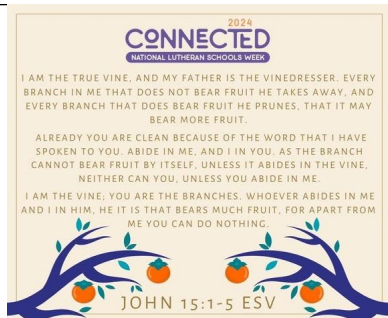
Strategic Ministry Plan Update

Thank you for all your input through every stage of this Ministry Clarity process. The Strategic Ministry Team has made presentations of the DRAFT throughout February, soliciting your feedback. Most of the comments provided thoughtful and helpful critiques, affirmations, or alternative solutions. Thank you!

The team is currently looking at the feedback and will be working on fine-tuning the plan to be presented to the congregation. Pastor and the Elders are also closely reviewing the Worship pillar since it falls under their main duties. The Strategic Ministry Team will meet together to finalize the draft during the 2nd week of March.

A team has reviewed the plan in light of the facilities and gave their findings at the Voters' Meeting on February 25. Another team has reviewed the ministry plan in light of finances. They are currently working on an analysis and will suggest possible routes to accomplish the plan.

Please keep this whole process in prayer. Pray that God grants wisdom, discretion, open minds, and renewed energy for the ministry of Bethlehem Lutheran Church and School. Remember that we are not looking to change the Word and Sacraments nor our beliefs. Rather, we look to be more intentional about how we extend the Word and Sacraments through our church and school.



PRINCIPAL'S PAGE

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

We have opened our enrollment for the 2024-2025 school year and if you know of anyone who would benefit from our Christ-centered education I would encourage you to have them contact the school office. We are doing tours each week for next year.



We had our spelling bee back in January and our Spelling Bee winner, Elizabeth Lindsey, will be competing at the regional spelling bee on March 6th at Wright State University. Good luck Elizabeth!

We will be celebrating our CONNECTION with other Lutheran schools by hosting a middle school choir from St John's Lutheran School in Fraser, Michigan on March 8th for a concert for all of our school children.



We will be doing something new this year and are having a Family Literacy Night we are calling Bethlehem's Camp Read-A-Lot. We are inviting families to come and spend an hour on March 14th at school where there will be classroom activities all centered around literacy. Our focus goal for the year is related to student literacy and we want all families to come and share some time of fellowship and learning! It is our prayer that this can be a catalyst for some awesome learning opportunities for families.

It feels like the school year is flying by and the end of our third quarter of the school year is March 20th with report cards being available on March 27th.



In March we also begin our Easter break. We will celebrate Holy Week the week of March 25th and we will begin our Easter break with no school on Good Friday, March 29th. We will be on Easter break until April 8th with school resuming at the normal time on Tuesday, April 9th.

Considering a gift to Bethlehem Lutheran School? You can still donate to the Lutheran Scholarship Granting Organization (LSGO) of Ohio. Your donation will directly impact the ministry here at Bethlehem and will go to tuition assistance for families that want to have their child in a Christ-centered school but might not otherwise be able to afford tuition. Go to <https://lsgoohio.org> for more information and to make a donation.



To keep up on what is happening at Bethlehem Lutheran School please follow us on our social media pages. Facebook - @mybethlehemschool and Instagram - @bethlehemfairborn.

Thank you for continually lifting up the students and staff at Bethlehem in prayer.

In His Service,

Mr. Ferguson

Come join us in celebration of the 25th anniversary of Bethlehem Lutheran School from 5:00 to 9:00pm on April 13th at Young's Jersey Dairy event center. This is truly an extraordinary milestone of Lutheran education in our area that has educated and shown the love of Christ to well over a thousand children over the years.



There is a max seating of 200 people so get your tickets soon! The link below is provided by Zeffy, an app that allows non-profit organizations to easily organize and sell e-tickets free of fees (there is an option to donate or help support Zeffy if desired). The cost to cover the event and the catered country style dinner is \$40 per person. There is an option to round up or donate to the school as well. If you have trouble accessing the app or have questions, please reach out to Scott Ferguson, Christine Heed, or Bill Fry.

<https://bit.ly/bethlehemanniversary>

Chaplain Witte had planned to attend a few conferences and then finish up his required, annual duty during July. However, his supervisor called and asked to change the plan. Due to the abundant ministry opportunities and a significant number of chaplains on assignment during this time, the Maxwell Chapel Team needs more help in April. Therefore, Chaplain Witte will go to Alabama (and to Georgia for a conference) from April 3-29. Pastor Witte and the elders are already working on a plan to cover the worship, visitation, and teaching needs of the congregation during that time.





RaiseRight has gift cards for all your needs (groceries, gas, clothing, sporting and household goods). Orders can be placed in-person to Alison Witte on Sunday mornings, or through the app by noon on the second and fourth Mondays to get your order in the same week. Reloads and e-gift cards can be ordered at any time. You can order gift cards to pay for your shopping or give as gifts. You need to sign up at raiseright.com or in the app using our enrollment code: 54LFL6745963.

**March order dates are:
Monday, March 11 and 25**

There will be a Special Voters' Assembly on Sunday, March 24th at 4 pm to discuss together and codify our Draft Strategic Plan. We will meet in the Fellowship Hall for in person attendance and on Zoom for attending via the internet. Either way you choose to attend, you will have the ability to opine on the business of the congregation. Zoom information will be forthcoming. See Brett Fiepke with any questions or comments.



Meal Train for the Casci family: Anne Ausserer has set up a meal train for her parents (Art & Joyce Casci) as her mom must stay off her leg for six weeks. If you can help, here is the link to sign up:

<https://mealtrain.com/gmqzgo>

News from Kindergarten

Hello!

In Kindergarten, we are learning all kinds of fun stuff! Recently, we have been talking about animals and what they need to live. The students created their own shelters for a wild animal to crawl under in a storm! We are also learning about the solar system! As our Festival of the Arts project, we are making a 3D Model of the solar system! They all chose a planet, the sun or a very special dwarf planet, and are using styrofoam balls and clay to create their planet!

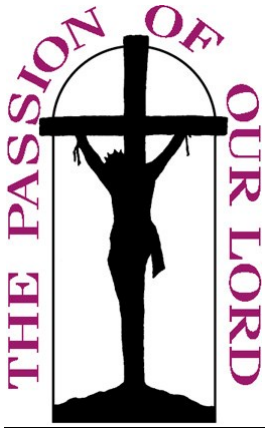
They have learned the planet song, and know what order the planets are in as well as some facts about each planet!



They are also making great progress learning ASL! In fact, next month, we will be learning a Kindergarten Graduation poem with ASL signs!

The students have a great desire to learn, and are looking forward to the rest of the school year!

Miss Harvey



The Lenten services will focus on the Passion of Our Lord as found in the book of John, chapters 18-19. Then Easter Sunday's reading will be John 20. These readings are listed so you can read ahead.

Sunday, February 11 *school children sing*

Transfiguration

Divine Services 8 & 10:45 am
Sunday School for all ages 9:30 am

Wednesday, February 14 *John 18:1-11*

Ash Wednesday

Lenten Divine Service 7:00 pm

Sunday, February 18

First Sunday in Lent

Deadline for Star articles

Divine Services 8 & 10:45 am
Sunday School 9:30 am
VBS Planning Meeting 12 noon

Wednesday, February 21 *John 18:12-27*

Lenten Supper 6:00 pm
Lenten Worship Service 7:00 pm

Sunday, February 25

Second Sunday in Lent

Deadline for Star articles

Divine Services 8 & 10:45 am
Sunday School for all ages 9:30 am
Voters' Assembly 4:00 pm

Wednesday, February 28 *John 18:28-40*

Lenten Supper 6:00 pm
Lenten Worship Service 7:00 pm

Sunday, March 3 *Bells and chimes play*

Third Sunday in Lent

Divine Services 8 & 10:45 am
Sunday School for all ages 9:30 am

Wednesday, March 6 *John 19:1-16a*

Lenten Supper 6:00 pm
Lenten Worship Service 7:00 pm

Sunday, March 10

Fourth Sunday in Lent

Divine Services 8 & 10:45 am
Sunday School for all ages 9:30 am

Wednesday, March 13 *John 19:16b-27*

Lenten Supper 6:00 pm
Lenten Worship Service 7:00 pm

Sunday, March 17

Fifth Sunday in Lent

Divine Services 8 & 10:45 am
Sunday School for all ages 9:30 am

Wednesday, March 20 *John 19:28-42*

Lenten Supper 6:00 pm
Lenten Worship Service 7:00 pm

Sunday, March 24

Palm Sunday

Divine Services 8 & 10:45 am
Sunday School for all ages 9:30 am

Thursday, March 28

Maundy Thursday

Divine Service 7:00 pm

Friday, March 29

Good Friday

Worship Services 12:00 pm & 7:30 pm

Sunday, March 24

Palm Sunday

Divine Services 8 & 10:45 am
Sunday School for all ages 9:30 am

Saturday, March 30

Holy Saturday

Youth breakfast prep 1:00 pm

Sunday, March 31

Easter Sunday

Divine Services 8 & 10:45 am
Breakfast follows early service

“For You are With Me”

If you are looking for a more intimate and comforting assurance of God's love, there is none more so than David's 23rd Psalm. Our Prayer Service will focus on this universally recognized psalm with a special emphasis on God's love for us no matter our personal circumstances or places in life.

Written and presented by Rev. Edward L. England, Emeritus
Miami Valley Zone Counsellor

LWML Miami Valley Zone Spring Prayer Service

Saturday, March 9, 2024

**St. Timothy Lutheran Church
5040 Rye Dr, Dayton, OH 45424**

\$8.00 registration

9:00 a.m. registration & light breakfast

9:30 a.m. Prayer Service

The ladies of St. Timothy will host our Prayer Service. They will serve a light breakfast. If you are able to attend, please **RSVP** to Eileen Hitzeman NLT **Monday, March 4th** so they know how many to expect.

The **Ingathering** will be for Non-perishable food items for the **Canton Food Bank** to be delivered when the LWML will hold our 2024 Convention. We will focus on canned stew, canned soup, canned vegetables, boxed cereals, canned tuna, and peanut butter. Also, we are gathering the following items for **Hope Rising**, a Christian Pregnancy Center in Dayton: Regular Enfamil, Yellow, Gentlease, all Enfamil formulas.

There will be an executive board meeting following the Prayer Service



Happy Birthday!

March Birthdays

Zayden Bell	2
Gene Ninnemann	
Karla Giese.....	3
Joe Schultz.....	5
Brian Bell	13
Carly Porter	
Mary Hooper.....	16
Linda Hall	
Yuki Lauderbach	
Riley Zulfer.....	17
Louise Hellickson.....	21
Shannon Hollingsworth	22
Joseph Witte	
Tom Holcombe.....	24
Amelia Holzmann	26
Brenda Hemphill	27



Baptismal Birthdays

Pastor England.....	10
Sue Wolaver	
Zayden Bell	13
Helga Clark	14
Pastor Witte	15
Emma Olcott	16
Victoria Lindsey	17
Daylond Hooper	18
Greg Campbell.....	21
Brian Bell	25
Shannon Hollingsworth	
Lucy Ausserer.....	26
Tom Holcombe.....	29
Joseph Witte.....	30

Jonathan Fiene

Matt Greggerson

Nesta Harris

Louise Hellickson

Doris Humphreys

Dave Johanson



Remember
in
Prayer

Bob Koogler

Ezra Miller

Jean Robinson

Marilyn Scheu

Elaine Schultz

Alison Witte



The One Spirit Fellowship Group will meet at 5 pm on Saturday, March 2nd at the home of Steve and Bonnie Fugate. The theme is Italian. If you have any questions, please contact Steve or Bonnie.

The Malachi Fellowship Group will meet at 6 pm on Saturday, March 9th at the home of Brett and Paula Fiepeke. If you have any questions, please contact Brett or Paula.

The Joyful Noise Fellowship Group will meet at a place and date to be determined. If you have any questions, please contact Alison Witte.



**Sunday, March 10, 2024
at 2 am**



March Anniversaries

Alex & Karla Giese	3
Chad & Shannon	18
Hollingsworth	

The Bethlehem STAR

March, 2024

Bethlehem Lutheran Church & School
1240 S. Maple Avenue, Fairborn, OH 45324
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
Rev. Keith F. Witte, Pastor



Maundy Thursday Divine Service at 7 pm
Good Friday services at 12 noon and 7:30 pm
Easter Divine Service at 8:45 and 10:45 am

Church Office

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Web Page—www.Bethlehem7.org

School Office

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Email: bethlehemschool@aol.com
Web Page—www.mybethlehemschool.com
Mr. Scott Ferguson, Principal
Mrs. Michelle Zulfer, Vice Principal

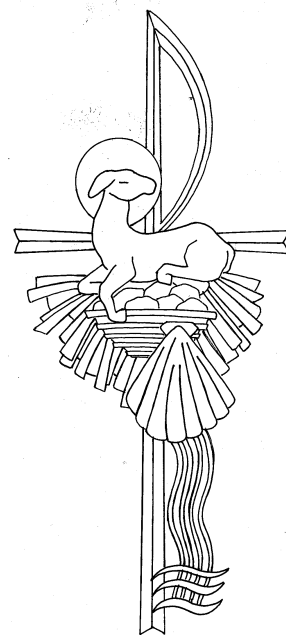
Sunday

Worship Services at 8:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.
**Online: churchstreamer.org (live at 8 am service,
previously recorded services under "Live" tab)**
Sunday School & Bible Classes at 9:30 a.m.

Wednesday

Bible Study at 9:30 a.m.
Chapel Matins Service at 8:45 a.m. (when school is in session)
Advent/Lenten Service at 7 pm

April 2024 issue deadline: Sunday, March 17th.



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