



**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

### April 2025

*If one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Colossians 3:13*

Any day or season can be a time for forgiveness. After all, “we daily sin much” yet, we still ask our Heavenly Father to not look at our sins or deny our prayer because of them (Small Catechism, Lord’s Prayer, 5<sup>th</sup> Petition).

However, there’s something about Lent and Holy Week that’s extra fitting when it comes to forgiveness. Being forgiven by God, yes. But also forgiving those who have sinned against us. When confronted with a bloody Savior on a rugged cross, we can’t help but realize the depth of our own sin and at the same time, the depth of God’s love and forgiveness. If you or someone you know is unsure of this, I highly invite you (or them) to ponder this anew during Lent and Holy Week this month.

On Good Friday, one of my favorite corporate prayers is to pray for our enemies. That by God’s gracious visitation, all our enemies may be led to true repentance and may have the same love and be of one accord and one mind and heart with us and with the whole Christian Church. We can pray this any time, any day. But hearing our savior say before His death, “Father forgive them, for they know not what they do” does give this prayer extra weight and priority on Good Friday. Especially in our midweek services (Apr 2 & 9), we’re still on a Lenten journey with Joseph, son of Israel. We’ve covered Joseph’s severe trials and suffering so far. Now, we’re going to move toward God raising up Joseph and the reconciliation between him and his brothers (Genesis 41-50).

Did you know that every month our school has a “Christian Character” word that is our emphasis? This month is forgiveness. In chapel and in our classrooms, we will ask the Holy Spirit to instill the attitude and practice of forgiveness during April. May the Holy Spirit move us all to forgive one another as God in Christ has forgiven us.

*Looking to Jesus,*

*Pastor, Chaplain Keith Witte*



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### **From Passover to Communion**

As we enter April, we also approach the end of Lent and the celebration of Holy Week that culminates in a jubilant Easter morning. During Jesus's earthly ministry, this time period was still reserved for the feast of Passover. We are taught in Hebrews 8 how the shadow of the Old Testament faded away when the New Covenant was revealed, thus the Passover giving way to the Holy Eucharist; this we celebrate on Maundy Thursday commemorating its institution on the night of Christ's betrayal. There are many parallels to appreciate between these two ordinances; put briefly, Jesus Christ is the final Great Passover Lamb who was slain for our salvation, and we partake in the feast of His offering, freeing us from the slavery of sin. An even closer look at the Passover can give us deeper understanding of the Sacrament we celebrate today.

The first Passover saved the lives of those who had faith in God's promise—when the Angel of Death came to Egypt it did not distinguish between Israelite and Egyptian, but between those that celebrated the Passover, with lamb's blood on their lintel, and those who did not. When the commands to keep the Passover (of which there are no less than 7 in the Old Testament!) were given, there were consequences for those that did not—"[he] shall be cut off...that man shall bear his sin" (Num 9:13). This consequence was realized when the Passover was neglected in Israel in the time between King David and King Josiah, during which Israel fell away, and God's judgement was on His people. This Eucharistic parallel can be seen in John 6:53 "Then Jesus said...unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you."

The Passover was also to be celebrated as a remembrance and a witness to future generations—"And it shall be when your children say to you 'What do you mean by this service?', that you shall say 'it is the Passover sacrifice of the Lord...'" (Ex 12:26-27) Similarly, we are called to remember and confess—"do this in remembrance of Me." (Luke 22:19) and "For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes." Today we teach and confess this truth both through catechism and the regular celebration of Holy Communion.

Finally, the command to celebrate the Passover clearly distinguished who could participate. It was specifically for all the nation of Israel and no outsiders—unless they were circumcised (Ex 12:43-48). Likewise, Christ's Body and Blood are reserved for His Bride the Church, washed in the waters of Baptism—of which circumcision was a type under the Old Covenant. We take care to eat and drink in a worthy manner by discerning the Sacrament (1 Cor 11:29) and remain in confessional unity as one body (1 Cor 10:17).

Appreciating these facets of the Passover feast can strengthen our adoration of its New Covenant counterpart. Jesus is the final Passover offering—where the Old Testament Passover gave earthly life and blessings, Christ comes to us in Holy Communion to give eternal life and forgiveness of sins. We should approach His table with reverence, joy, and unity this upcoming Holy Week—and every Sunday—as we examine, discern, confess, and joyfully eat and drink this wonderful gift from our God.

*In Christ,*

*Dalton Miller, Elder*



# PRINCIPAL'S PAGE



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



We had our Spring Break at the end of March so April begins the trek to the end of the school year! It is hard to believe that we are already in the fourth quarter. It has been amazing to see all of the growth that students have made over the course of the year in their academics and in their demonstration of Christ-like qualities.

This month we are having our Family Literacy Night. We have a circus theme this year and all of the Bethlehem parents are invited to come and experience a night centered around a love of literacy. There will be classroom activities that teachers will be planning that families can do together and that they can take home to use going forward as they support their student's reading journey. Family Literacy Night is Thursday, April 10th from 6pm - 7pm.

We have Good Friday, April 18th, and Easter Monday, April 20th, off in recognition of those holidays.

Some of our 7th grade girls (Zoe, Victoria, Caroline, and Valerie) will be competing in the State History Day Competition at Capital University on April 26th. Good luck to them!

This year we have been going through the NLSA (National Lutheran Schools Accreditation) accreditation process for the first time. We started this process in August and have been consistently working on it since then. We have examined our entire school program, asked various stakeholder groups to complete surveys, and analyzed the data in the creation of our report. This report was submitted to NLSA and they have a six member team that will be visiting Bethlehem for three days at the end of April to validate what was said in the report. Through this process we have highlighted areas that are strengths and areas in which we can improve. The visiting team will affirm these areas for improvement and will potentially add more areas to improve based on their findings. We must make a plan for the next five years in which we strengthen these areas and each year we report progress on this plan to NLSA.



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*

# St. Timothy Men's Night Speaker

8-May-2025

St. Timothy, 5040 Rye Dr., Huber Heights, OH 45424

Compline begins at 6:30 pm in the sanctuary

Rev. Bombaro's presentation immediately following.

Rev. Bombaro will be speaking on the liturgy and how it is integrally linked to the Church's Gospel confession in proclamation and practice.



**Rev. John Bombaro, Ph.D.**

Senior Pastor

765-423-1616

seniorpastor@stjameslaf.org

www.stjameslaf.org

800 Cincinnati Street, Lafayette, IN 47901

About Rev. Bombaro:

John J Bombaro is Sr Pastor of St James Lutheran Church, Lafayette, IN. He also holds the rank of Commander in the US Navy Reserves, serving as a LCMS Chaplain. His undergraduate training took place at Rutgers University and Columbia International University, continuing at the University of Edinburgh (MTh), King's College London (PhD), Concordia Theological Seminary (MDiv), and Westfield House, Cambridge (DTM). He has been a faculty member at Dickinson College, Messiah College, University of San Diego, Luther Academy (Rīga) and Charles University (Prague). Dr. Bombaro successfully planted St. Matthew's Lutheran Church on Kaua'i and Blessed Sacrament Lutheran Church in Hayden, Idaho. From 2007-2018, he was Senior Pastor at Grace Lutheran Church in San Diego. The Bombaro family were missionaries in Europe from 2020-2024. He is widely published and a frequent contributor to Issues, Etc. He and his wife, Melinda (Vidal) Bombaro, have four children and love Penn State football and the National Parks.



Joseph Forgives His Brothers

This Lent, we will journey with Joseph, son of Jacob, to the cross. While Joseph was not crucified for our salvation, the themes of betrayal, temptation, trials, suffering, forgiveness, reconciliation, God's will, mercy, and endurance have much in common with Jesus' journey to the cross. We will find much in common with Joseph—the same struggles and the same strength in God's good and gracious will. In worship, we will hear portions of Genesis, chapters 30-50 and Luke, chapters 22-23. If you would like the whole picture, please read these chapters before or during Lent.

### **Wednesday, April 2**

*Chased by a Dirty Conscience*

Lenten supper	6 pm
Lenten service	7 pm

### **April 6 (5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent)**

Divine Service	8 & 10:45 am
Sunday School	9:30 am
Catechism class	12 noon

### **Wednesday, April 9**

*God Does Have a Plan*

Lenten supper	6 pm
Lenten service	7 pm

### **April 13 (Palm Sunday)**

Divine Service	8 & 10:45 am
Sunday School	9:30 am
Catechism class	12 noon

### **April 17 (Maundy Thursday)**

Divine service	7 pm
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### **April 18 (Good Friday)**

*Forgiveness Finished*

Chief Service	Noon & 7:30 pm
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### **April 20 (Easter Sunday)**

Divine Service	8 & 10:45 am
Sunday School	9:30 am
Easter breakfast served by LIFE	

## **Come, Work at Bethlehem**

We currently have two open positions within the church:

**HANDYMAN**— a part time position (21 hours a week). The Handyman is responsible for the regular maintenance of the building and also for monitoring the many systems (elevator, furnace, etc.) we have. Must be able to pass a background check and drug screening, have your own transportation and driver's license. Compensation commensurate with experience and ability. See Brett Fiepkke if you are interested.



**PARISH ASSISTANT**—a part time position (15 - 20 hours a week). The parish assistant will help pastor to organize and recruit volunteers for board memberships/leaders, small group Bible Studies and coordinate fellowship opportunities with the school and congregation. A more detailed job description was e-mailed concurrently with the Star. If you are interested, please send a resume to Pastor Witte by April 13:



[pastorwitte1@gmail.com](mailto:pastorwitte1@gmail.com)





### April Birthdays

Betty Marlette.....	1
Chad Hollingsworth .....	13
Maggie Nelson .....	14
Kathy Fiene .....	22
Kristen Morgan	
Paul Thibeault	
Tom Hitzeman .....	24
Christian Huffman	
Jane Jones	
Brett Fiepke.....	25
Phil Maffett	
Sue Saunders	
Benjamin Ausserer .....	26
Adam Card	
April Sadowski .....	27
Johnathan Tressler	
Jenny Ramsey .....	29

### April Anniversaries

Jim & Kathy Fiene .....	3
Pastor & Edna England.....	6
Scott & Holly Olcott .....	10
Dalton & Kyla Miller .....	27



Kathy Brockman .....	1
Arthur Casci .....	9
Chris Nelson .....	14
Clayton Vail .....	15
Elaine Schultz .....	17
Pat Horn .....	23
Mary Hooper.....	25
Jodi Crosby .....	26

Jonathan Fiene

Matt Greggerson

Nesta Harris

Louise Hellickson

Doris Humphreys

Bob Koogler



Ezra Miller

Jean Robinson

Marilyn Scheu

Elaine Schultz

Robyn Shipman

Alison Witte

Gladys Zink



Hello from 4th grade!

We have a lot of exciting things going on in our classroom. In math, we really had to use the word of the year ENDURE to master the skill of long division. In history, we learned about famous Ohio inventors and were amazed to see just how many awesome things came out of Ohio. We recently filled our class reward jar and got to have a pajama party! Our next reward that we are working on is an afternoon filled with learning new board games! Overall, we are excited for what the rest of the year has in store for us and are ready to finish the year out strong!

*Thank you,*

*Mrs. Brock*

# The Bethlehem STAR

April 2025

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

4/17 7 pm

## Good Friday Worship Service

4/18 noon and 7:30 pm

## Easter Divine Service

4/20 8:00 and 10:45 am

### Church Office

Phone: (937) 878-0651  
FAX: (937) 878-4794  
Email: [bethlehem7@aol.com](mailto:bethlehem7@aol.com)  
Web Page—[www.Bethlehem7.org](http://www.Bethlehem7.org)

### School Office

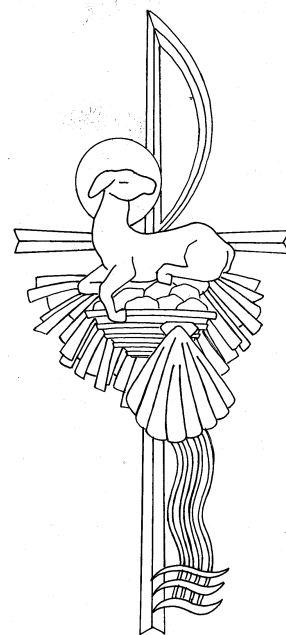
Phone: (937) 878-7050  
Email: [bethlehemschool@aol.com](mailto:bethlehemschool@aol.com)  
Web Page—[www.mybethlehemschool.com](http://www.mybethlehemschool.com)  
Mr. Scott Ferguson, Principal  
Mrs. Michelle Zulfer, Vice Principal

### Sunday

**Worship Services at 8:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.**  
**Online: [churchstreamer.org](http://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



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**May 2025 deadline: Sunday, April 20<sup>th</sup>.**