

The Bethlehem Record

The Official Newsletter of Bethlehem Lutheran Church

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*A family of God sharing Jesus
and serving Him faithfully*

August 2015

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Our Mission Statement

As members of Bethlehem Lutheran Church who have been granted eternal life through Jesus Christ's death and resurrection, we worship Him as our Lord and seek to further His work of salvation through word and sacrament ministry in our community and world toward the goal of creating and strengthening personal faith in Him.

The Pastor's Page

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On June 26th, the Supreme Court gave its decision on the issue of same sex marriage and differing state laws. In a 5-4 decision, the Supreme Court has attempted to change the definition of a word that has existed for far longer than the United States has been a country. The impact of this case is still yet to be felt.

As a pastor, I attempt to leave my personal political thoughts to the side. I try not to tell anyone how they ought to vote for any particular candidate. My reason for highlighting this decision is to point out a potential change in our culture. While I have my political opinions, this topic is something that we have God's Word to guide us. It is God who has instituted marriage, not the state or federal government.

When God created man and woman and brought them together, it was still in the bliss of the Garden of Eden, before the impact of sin had corrupted the world. Marriage is a creation of God. While governments and churches might explain and qualify marriage, it is not for us to attempt to change the definition. God has instituted one man and one woman, so that the two become one flesh. The change in the definition given by the Supreme Court is attempting to fly in the face of God's Word and natural law.

Some of the implications for this decision are that states, including the state of Kansas, will be required by the federal constitution to re-evaluate the processes and legal status regarding marriage. What does that mean for churches? We don't entirely know. The First Amendment of the constitution includes the Free Exercise of religion. But what happens when the amendments appear to be in conflict with each other? What happens when a church is asked by federal law to perform marriages that conflict with the teachings of that church? What happens when a same-sex couple asks to be married here?

One of the things that we can do is clarify policies. This is one thing that we will look at as a congregation. What sort of policies can we put into place, so that we are not asked to act contrary to our conscience? As we strive to uphold God's definition of marriage, how do we act to speak God's Word into a difficult situation?

Marriage is a gift from God, which we honor and uphold. It isn't for us to change and distort. It won't be easy as we strive to remain faithful to God's Word, but it never is easy. We continue to remind people that the gift of marriage is a picture of Christ and his bride the church.

In Christ,

Pastor Jon Bonine

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August Stewardship Newsletter Article

Busyness is the new black. It's stylish. We spend an inordinate amount of time comparing how busy we are with everyone else. We compare our schedules, our kid's schedules, how productive we are and how much we have because of it to everyone around us. And if we don't do or have what the next guy does or has, we just get busier and produce more so that we can.

This consumes our conversations and thoughts. And this should give us pause: Who is consuming whom, here? Are we the consumer or are we those consumed?

It's no accident that our adversary the devil is described as a lion prowling around seeking to devour us, to consume us. He gives us the liturgy of this world, the liturgy of productivity and consumption. For if he can keep us busy in "muchness" and "manyness," he can be satisfied.

And this is why the Lord, after finishing all His work of creation, rested on the seventh day. This is why He established the Sabbath day—to give His people rest from all their work. As they rested, He continued to work for them, to satisfy them, to fill them with His gifts—food from heaven by His Word and Promise.

That day came when from our Lord's cross and in His death, He proclaimed, "It is finished" (John 19:30). And so His work of redemption was complete. And so His body rested in the tomb, the belly of the earth. Though He is the Lord God who always works, yet as the Lord rested on the original Sabbath, now Jesus kept the Sabbath by resting in the tomb and rising from the dead to live forever. For this is why He came. This is why He became man: to draw all to Himself so that He could give rest and refreshment to the weary and the heavy laden.

The Sabbath is a gift, not a burden. It is a gift of time free from the liturgy of this world, the liturgy of productivity and consumption. Sabbath is time for rest and refreshment, a time free from anxiety to enjoy the gifts God gives, all of them—His Word, His Promises, His Sacraments, His creation, everything. It is a foretaste of the rest we shall enjoy in heaven.

Sadly for many of us rest has become work. It's become drudgery. We long for it but we aren't able to do it because there's so much to be done and so little time to do it. But really what's the rush? Why are we so hurried and harried? Have we forgotten that Jesus is raised from the dead and lives forever?

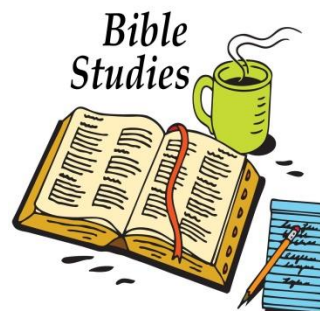
Sabbath is God's gift of time free from all of the anxiety and hurry of this world so that we can rest, be refreshed by the gifts God gives. Society won't do it for

us. They are addicted to the liturgy of productivity and consumption. Though we are in the world, we are not of it. We are the people of God, His own children by water and Word, joined to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus lives. And so shall we. So rest in the promise of our Savior that sin, death, and time have not hold on you because Jesus is raised from the dead. Jesus lives. And so shall we, forever.

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Thrivent Action Team News

The news about the happenings with the Thrivent's new method of helping distribute funds is getting more exciting as time passes. Les Walter one of the congregation's advocates was successful in getting an action team put together, and was able to purchase all the snack items, the cups, plates, etc. to distribute to the people who donated blood during the last blood drive. He has also just received the packet allowing him to purchase all the material it will take to remodel the church sign out in front of the church. It will be getting a complete paint job, with all new lettering being cut out of a plastic composite material. Coleen Ancell had put in for one, and has purchased a lot of food items that was used for VBS. He also helped Lu Willingham put in for a project that will purchase a lot of the material that will be used to make quilts, that will be distributed to Foster children. This project is still pending. The meeting after church last week was attended by about a dozen people, so hopefully more projects can be thought of and applied for. So if you're a Thrivent member and can come up with an idea that will benefit either the church or the community, fill out the application form on your computer at www.thievent.com/actionteam and see what happens. For assistance don't hesitate to get in touch with Les Walter if you have a question or need assistance. Les Walter Thrivent advocate.



Life light Bible Study

Meeting Tuesday
Morning at 9 am

Beginning September 15

Contact Lois Walter
for more information

BETHLEHEM LWML MEETING AUGUST 5, 2015

The LWML group of Bethlehem met for their bi-monthly meeting on Wednesday evening, August 5th at the Parish Hall. Opening devotions were given by Sophia Schofield. Lorelei Dohl presented the Bible Study "Faith – Trust in God, Don't Worry" with many Scripture verses read from the book of Matthew with discussion following. She also led us in singing "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus" and "Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God."

President Coleen called the meeting to order. Roll call was answered by 10 members, and 1 visitor, Isaac Schultz. Secretary Lois read the minutes from the June meeting and they were approved as read. In the absence of Treasurer Ramie, the treasurer's report was handed out to each member. The treasurer's report was approved as read. Ramie reported a balance of \$3000.07, with \$1283.74 designated in the cookbook fund, \$1365.07 in the funeral luncheon fund, and \$351.26 in the home fund. Correspondence was read. Our adopted Seminarian, Travis Ferguson, sent us another thank-you letter and a devotion he wrote. He is now on vicarage in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, for this next year.

Committee Report

Greeting cards - - we still have some cards to sell.

Mission Service - - We received thank you notes from Lutheran World Relief for the personal care kits, the school kits, and the baby care kits that we sent to LWR for distribution to Mauritania, Africa. The collected stamps were taken along to the Hays LWML Spring Rally.

Funeral luncheons - - We served a bountiful lunch for the family of Marie Zsuzsics after her funeral service on August 5th. A monetary donation was given to the LWML by the Zsuzsics families.

Banners - - Shelly has been hanging and repairing the banners in church.

Flowers - - Coleen and Justine take care of flowers in August. Shelly and Coleen will do them in September.

Landscaping Outside - - watering & weeding will be done by Ramie now through August 15th; Coleen will be August 16 – 29; Justine will be Aug. 30 – Sept. 12; Lu W. will be Sept. 13 – 19; Eunice will be Sept. 20 – 26; Barb Mettlen

Will be Sept. 27 – Oct. 3; and Lois will be Oct. 4 – 16.

OLD BUSINESS:

We discussed the 'Adopt a Seminarian' program a little. We are looking at some other avenues about this program.

NEW BUSINESS:

Our Fall Event/Guest Night will be held on Wednesday, September 2nd, at the Parish Hall. Our guest presenter will be Ramie's mom, Connie Graves, from Healy, who will show us exactly how to make and sew pillow case dresses for little girls, which she has been doing now for several years. Shelly, Sophia, and Barb Meitler will be on the committee to help Ramie with the plans.

Invitations will be sent to area LWML groups. All women of the congregation are invited to come and be our guests for a salad supper starting at 6:30 p.m. If you have pillowcases (preferably not white) to donate for the dresses, please bring them along for Connie.

The 25th Annual Bazaar of the LWML will be held on Saturday, Oct. 3rd. Shelly and Coleen are the committee and they will be getting the 'planning papers' out soon to the members, so watch your church mailboxes. We will again have a Quilt Drawing, the beautiful quilt again made by Lois Gier. We will again have the 'Garage Sale' on the cement slab south of the school.

EVERYONE is invited to bring items they no longer want, and they will be sold at the garage sale – please mark your items. All proceeds from this outside sale will go to the church treasury to pay bills. We will be making soups, sandwich meats, etc. on Friday morning, Oct. 2nd. LWML Sunday will be celebrated at church services on Sunday, Oct. 4th. The committee for this is Emilie and Marmie.

We discussed the possibility of new pew pads in our church. Lois is to get in touch with a custom upholstery shop in Salina, to see if they will come to our church and look things over, and then give us a price on new upholstery for 28 pews.

The Nominating Committee for our officer election in November is Cheryl and Lorelei. We will be electing/re-electing our Vice-President and Treasurer.

Our next LWML meeting will be Wednesday, October 7th, and don't forget our Fall Event to be held on Wednesday evening, September 2nd. Emilie gave a little devotion on the history of one of our present National Mission Projects. The meeting was adjourned. –hostess for the evening was Marmie. She served a delicious lunch of cupcakes and a fresh fruit bowl.

Respectfully submitted by Lois Walter.

The 25TH ANNUAL LWML BAZAAR is fast approaching! Mark your calendar for Saturday, October 3! The bazaar will begin at 8 a.m. We hope you come and support the work of Bethlehem's LWML Society. The ladies will have rolls and coffee for your breakfast, as well as homemade soups, sandwiches, and pies for your lunch in the Parish Hall. There will also be items for sale on the bake sale table. And don't forget to purchase your tickets for the quilt drawing. All of the proceeds from these events will be used for mission projects. Again this year, the LWML will be holding a garage sale on the concrete slab on the north side of the church. 100% of the garage sale proceeds will be given to the church general fund. How can you help? Start looking through your closets and shelves and garage and storage areas for items you no longer want or need, and consider donating those items to the sale. We will also need some helpers on the day of the sale, as the women will be inside preparing and serving food. If you have items for the sale, you may contact the Bazaar Committee members Coleen Ancell or Shelly Keller. Items can be stored in the school basement until the day of the sale. Please consider helping the ladies at the bazaar, in the Parish Hall or at the garage sale; volunteers are definitely appreciated. Pies are also welcome. Please mark your donated garage sale items with a price prior to delivering them to the bazaar committee. Thanks for your help. Please help us celebrate our 25th bazaar and make it the best one yet!

LWML Flower Committee

August

Coleen Ancell, Justine Dohl

September

Shelly Keller, Coleen Ancell

**Acolyte Schedule
August- September**

| | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| Aug 2 | Grace Chegwidden |
| 9* | Rachel Sebesta |
| 16 | Marshall Hurlbut |
| 23* | Mekelle Hurlbut |
| 30 | Grace Chegwidden |
| September 6 | Rachel Sebesta |
| 13* | Marshall Hurlbut |
| 20 | Mekelle Hurlbut |
| 27* | Grace Chegwidden |

** Communion service*
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E-Mail Received on Thursday August 13, 2015

Hello from the Augustine's!

We miss all of you and think of you often even as we continue settling in to another community. We're happy to share that we've bought a house and moved in. Pastor posted some pictures on Facebook with Anna doing a marvelous job showing some of the features. Our new address is 280 4th Ave SE, Plainview, MN 55964. We're thankful that this came about before school started and fall schedules with sports, school, and piano lessons. You continue to be in our prayers for God to provide another shepherd for you; and we know you're in good hands with Pastor Bonine.

God's blessings to you! - The Augustine's



Join the Choir...
**You'll Be Glad
You Did!**

First choir meeting September 14 @ 7 p.m.

BOCL

BOCL held their monthly meeting on Tuesday, July 7 at 8:00 p.m. Members present were Tara Kubick, Marcy Hurlbut, Brock Mueller, Ruth Mueller, Marilyn Wenthe, Tyler Gier, Gary Frederking, and guest Les Walters. Minutes were read and approved.

Gary F gave us a summary of our financial accounting,. Budget \$5067.00 left in BOCL acct. The clean-up grant is \$264 at this time, with other donations coming in, \$781 for the cobbler stand.

Marcy H reported that she is ready for a trial run on the video recording of our church services. The leaders of VBS have had a meeting to finalize the event and get everything in order.

Les reported on the Community Action Team. He advised us on how to apply for assistance thru Thrivent's fund-raising guidelines. He was approved for a \$250 funding to apply towards supplies needed for our next blood drive.

The peach cobbler stand will serve 2 nights at the Lincoln County Fair. We decided on the 23rd and 24th of July, starting at 4:30 till approximately 9 or 10. Ruth will make up the sign up sheet for work volunteers and bakers. She will be the contact person for any questions about it. Shirley Krueger volunteered to order the ice-cream from Schwan's, Ruth will get the other supplies.

Tyler G presented us with a \$45 invoice for the t-shirt design, which will come out of our budget fund. After last years' experience at the fair, the discussion of passing out free water at our stand came up, and with the Legion trying to sell water we felt there could be a conflict, Tara K moved that we give the Legion 8-10 cases of water to sell at a lower price, Ruth seconded, motion passed.

Our next meeting is set for Tuesday August 4 at 8:00 p.m. Ruth Mueller will be next month's greeter. We closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted Brock L Mueller



Mid-week begins September 16th



Pictured: Tim Schulteis, Gabrielle Hoard Emilie Wacker

Scholarship News:

The Bethlehem Lutheran Memorial Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce the awarding of three 2015 scholarships. The recipients of \$400.00 each are Gabrielle Hoard (daughter of Dave and Marcy Hurlbut), John M Augustine (son of Pastor Phil and Kim Augustine) and Timothy Schulteis (son of Kirk and Ramie Schulteis). The Bethlehem Lutheran Memorial Scholarship Fund was established in January of 2004 by a gift to Bethlehem Lutheran from Leonette Gier, deceased. Since that time additional gifts have been added to the fund. The scholarship is available to active members of Bethlehem who are graduates of high school entering a higher education for the first time.

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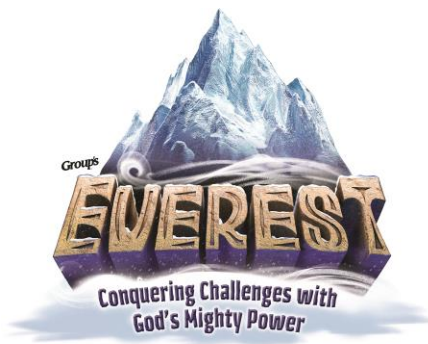
Baptismal Birthdays in August

God's blessings to you for all His gifts of grace that you have received, and we pray for many more blessings for Jesus' sake!



Taunya Campos
Arthur Dohl
Kylie Ehrlich
Christie Gier
Vera Jorgensen
Judy Meier

Roger Meitler
Brock Mueller
Ryan Schulteis
John Thaemert
Rozella Trapp
Emilie Wacker



VBS 2015

At this year's VBS, the kids embarked on an icy expedition to Mt. Everest where kids overcome obstacles with God's awesome power. The kids learned that God has the power to provide, comfort, heal, forgive us, and love us forever. We had around 60 children attending each night. A Collections for Camp Hope \$390.11, along with pop tabs for Ronald McDonald house and canned food for the Lincoln County food bank.



CU hosts Higher Things national youth conference by Jill Martin

Reprinted <http://m.sewardindependent.com/mobile/news/article>

More than 1,000 youth and chaperones from all over the United States gathered at Concordia University last week for the Higher Things Lutheran youth conference, 'Te Deum.' The four-day event was a time for youth to come together and celebrate their faith. This was the first time Higher Things has held a conference in Nebraska. Higher Things Conference Coordinator Sandra Ostapowich said Higher Things is a youth ministry organization that teaches about faith. "It's kind of unique in that we focus on teaching the kids the traditions and doctrines and practices of faith," she said. "It's a four-day conference and in that four days, there will be 14 worship services, six break-out sessions, four plenary sessions. It's intense. It's really intense but the kids love it." Ostapowich said the kids aren't generally challenged in their faith to learn the hard stuff about it outside of conferences unless they are part of a congregation that is familiar with that kind of approach and does that back home. She said youth ministry tends to be more focused on fun and games. "We've found that when you challenge them in their faith and teach them why we do the things we do, they actually begin to appreciate it and seek it out for themselves," she said. "This is a four-day immersion in their baptisms." Daily conference activities include multiple worship services, break away and plenary teaching sessions, and entertainment, all planned for the youth. The event was the final week of a three-week conference season for Higher Things, a virtual organization that plans Lutheran conferences each summer. The first week was held in Las Vegas, Nevada, and the second week was in Grand Rapids, Michigan. This summer's Nebraska conference is the 31st youth conference Higher Things, a Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod organization, has held since its beginnings in summer 2000. Last week, Seward hosted 1,052 young people and chaperones from 36 states as well as Japan. "We're very glad to be here," Ostapowich said. "Seward has been great." Ostapowich said in choosing Seward for the conference, housing was a challenge. She said students stayed on campus and they also had students staying in hotels and commuting to campus. She said the kids also enjoy swimming at the Seward pool. The Rev. George Borghardt, a pastor from Illinois and board president of Higher Things, said he appreciated St. John Lutheran Church in Seward for the use of the church to hold worship services. When asked about the kids' overall experience, Borghardt said the response is wonderful. "Many of our kids take what they learn and take it back to their congregations," he said. "We hear comments about kids come back singing loudly at their own churches." Borghardt said the Higher Things organization wants the youth to return home and have a presence in their own congregations. "Our hope is to mirror what goes on in our congregations, not to be something different," he said. "We're Lutherans and so we worship as Lutherans."

Report from our BLTs: Tonya Chegwidden and 9 members of the BLTeens group met the Augustine family in Seward Nebraska for the Higher Things conference "Te Deum" in Seward, NE. They teens left Tuesday, July 28 and returned Friday, July 31. The teens had a great time attending worship services, enjoying breakout sessions, listening to Pastor Jonathan Fisk, and enjoying recreation. Ask them about Knocker Ball! This was a wonderful opportunity for the teens to dig deep into what it means to be Lutheran. Thank you to the congregation for supporting the teens in their fundraising efforts allowing so many kids to go. Everyone had a great time and I have heard teens saying they want to go again next year.

Front row L to R Hannah Wolting, Kayla Augustine, Gabrielle Hoad, Bayleigh Brockelman, Cheyenne Meyer, and Morgan Kubick

Back row L to R Aaron Augustine, John Augustine, Tim Schulteis, Tanner Kubick, Brody Schofield, and Blake Chegwidden.

Sponsors Tonya Chegwidden and Pastor Phil Augustine



Coming Events at Bethlehem

Also available online at www.BethlehemSylvanGrove.org

| | |
|--------------|------------------------|
| September 1 | 5:50 Elder Meeting |
| September 1 | 7 p.m. BOCL meeting |
| September 2 | 7 p.m. LWML |
| September 15 | Life Light Bible Study |
| September 14 | Choir |
| September 16 | Midweek begins |

Our Weekly Worship schedule:

11:30 a.m. – Sunday School and BLTeens Bible study (school)

11:30 a.m. – Adult Bible study (Parish hall)

10:30 a.m. – Worship Service (Holy Communion on 2nd and 4th Sundays and some festivals)

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
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