



Bethany Lutheran Outlook
February 2019

Serving God, Community, and Individuals





PASTOR'S REFLECTIONS

The cold grows colder, even as the days grow longer, February's mercury vapor light buffing but not defrosting the bone-white ground, crusty and treacherous underfoot. This is the time of year that's apt to put a hammerlock on a healthy appetite, old anxieties back into the night, insomnia and nightmares into play; when things in need of doing go undone and things that can't be undone come to call, muttering recriminations at the door, and buried ambitions rise up through the floor and pin your wriggling shoulders to the wall; and hope's a reptile waiting for the sun.

If you keep track of such things, you might remember that I used the first couple of lines of this poem, simply titled *February*, two years ago in my *February Outlook* article. *This year you get the whole thing. If I was a poet I would have written these words because the image created by Bill Christopherson, the poet who did write it, quite accurately conveys how I feel about February. I don't think I would call it depression or even Seasonal Affective Disorder as it's called these days, more like a general malaise that slows you down and makes it harder to get out of bed on dark, cold mornings, harder to stay motivated.*

Even back when I was teaching school, I remember that February was often a month I would just have to grit my teeth and grind through. The school year was a little more than half over but still had a long way to go, winter was beginning to get too long. It was a month I would wind up thinking about doing something different with my life. Those thoughts always went away until I decided to go to seminary!



In the church there are some years when Lent starts in February and that provides a new focus but this year Ash Wednesday isn't until March 6th so we wind up with a longer "Sundays after Epiphany" season. It's a season that includes some great stories but still can feel like a post-holiday lull following Christmas. Add to that the fact that here at Bethany we have increasing numbers of people gone to warmer places for the winter or at least for a few weeks so attendance is lower with February attendance being about the lowest.

As I write this though, I also think about a day like yesterday, a day that while cold was stunningly beautiful with blue skies and sunshine on the white snow. Or I think about a day like today, still cold but with a gentle snow falling, snow that won't amount to anything but will add a fresh layer of whiteness to the landscape. At least for awhile, the shadow of malaise lifts and with that there's a reminder that while life has its peaks and valleys, good times and others that aren't so good, for most of us we are blessed beyond anything we deserve...even in February.



Pastor Geier

For Everything a Season

Wanting his sons to learn not to judge too quickly, a man sent each, in turn, on a quest to look at a pear tree far away and report what he saw. The first son went in winter, the second in spring, the third in summer and the fourth in fall. Finally, the father gathered the young men together. "What did you see?" he asked.

The first son reported seeing an ugly tree, bent and lifeless. The second disagreed, saying it was budding with fresh new life. The third son reported finding a tree laden with sweet-smelling, beautiful blossoms, while the fourth insisted it drooped with ripe fruit.



The father said his sons were all correct, for they'd seen the same tree, though at different seasons of its life. "Don't judge a tree — or a person — based on just one season of life," he counseled his children. "Who they are can only be known at the end, when all life's seasons have been lived.

"Furthermore," he added, "don't give up on your own life if you experience a hard season, such as winter, or you'll miss out on the renewal of spring, the joy of summer, the fulfillment of autumn."

DAILY LECTIONARY



The foundational premise of this set of daily readings is their relationship to the Sunday lectionary. The readings are chosen so that the days leading up to Sunday (Thursday through Saturday) prepare for the Sunday readings. The days flowing out from Sunday (Monday through Wednesday) reflect upon the Sunday readings.

“The Bible is the cradle wherein Christ is laid.”
—Martin Luther

February 2019

1 Psalm 111 Deuteronomy 12:28-32 Revelation 2:12-17
2 Psalm 111 Deuteronomy 13:1-5 Matthew 8:28 — 9:1

Readings for Presentation of Our Lord

Malachi 3:1-4 Psalm 84 Hebrews 2:14-18 Luke 2:22-40

3 Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

Deuteronomy 18:15-20 Psalm 111 1 Corinthians 8:1-13 Mark 1:21-28

4 Psalm 35:1-10 Numbers 22:1-21 Acts 21:17-26
5 Psalm 35:1-10 Numbers 22:22-28 1 Corinthians 7:32-40
6 Psalm 35:1-10 Jeremiah 29:1-14 Mark 5:1-20
7 Psalm 138 Numbers 20:22-29 Acts 9:19b-25
8 Psalm 138 Numbers 27:12-23 Acts 9:26-31
9 Psalm 138 Judges 3:7-11 Luke 4:42-44

10 Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 61:1-8 Psalm 138 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 Luke 5:1-11

11 Psalm 115 Judges 5:1-11 1 Corinthians 14:26-40
12 Psalm 115 1 Samuel 9:15 — 10:1b 1 Timothy 3:1-9
13 Psalm 115 Isaiah 8:1-15 Luke 5:27-32
14 Psalm 1 Jeremiah 13:12-19 Acts 13:26-34
15 Psalm 1 Jeremiah 13:20-27 1 Peter 1:17 — 2:1
16 Psalm 1 Jeremiah 17:1-4 Luke 11:24-28

7 Sixth Sunday after Epiphany

Jeremiah 17:5-10 Psalm 1 1 Corinthians 15:12-20 Luke 6:17-26

18 Psalm 120	2 Kings 24:18 — 25:21	1 Corinthians 15:20-34
19 Psalm 120	Ezra 1:1-11	2 Corinthians 1:12-19
20 Psalm 120	Jeremiah 22:11-17	Luke 11:37-52
21 Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40	Genesis 43:16-34	Romans 8:1-11
22 Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40	Genesis 44:1-17	1 John 2:12-17
23 Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40	Genesis 44:18-34	Luke 12:57-59

24 Seventh Sunday after Epiphany

Genesis 45:3-11, 15 Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40 1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50 Luke 6:27-38

25 Psalm 38	Genesis 33:1-17	1 Corinthians 11:2-16
26 Psalm 38	1 Samuel 24:1-22	1 Corinthians 11:17-22, 27-33
27 Psalm 38	Leviticus 5:1-13	Luke 17:1-4
28 Psalm 99	Deuteronomy 9:1-5	Acts 3:11-16

The Church as Mosaic



A mosaic consists of thousands of little stones. Some are blue, some are green, some are yellow, some are gold. When we bring our faces close to the mosaic, we can admire the beauty of each stone. But as we step back from it, we can see that all these little stones reveal to us a beautiful picture, telling a story none of these stones can tell by itself.

That is what our life in [the church] is about. Each of us is like a little stone, but together we reveal the face of God to the world. Nobody can say: "I make God visible." But others who see us together can say: "They make God visible." [Christian] community is where humility and glory touch.

—Henri J.M. Nouwen

Enjoy the Poetry of Hymns

Jesus Loves Me

Jesus loves me! This I know,
For the Bible tells me so;
Little ones to Him belong;
They are weak, but He is strong.

Refrain:

Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me!
The Bible tells me so.

Jesus loves me! This I know,
As He loved so long ago,
Taking children on His knee,
Saying, "Let them come to Me."

Jesus loves me still today,
Walking with me on my way,
Wanting as a friend to give
Light and love to all who live.

Jesus loves me! He who died
Heaven's gate to open wide;
He will wash away my sin,
Let His little child come in.

Jesus loves me! He will stay
Close beside me all the way;
When at last I come to die,
He will take me home on high.

—Anna B. Warner



Let the little children
come to me

LUKE 18:16

Jesus Loves Me

(1860)

That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and height - to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Ephesians 3:17-19

Anna and Susan Warner lived in a lovely townhouse in New York City where their father, Henry Whiting Warner, was a successful lawyer. But the "Panic of 1837" wrecked the family's finances, forcing them to move into a ramshackle Revolutionary War-era home on Constitution Island on the Hudson, right across from the Military Academy at West Point.

Needing to contribute to the family income, Anna and Susan began writing poems and stories for publication. Anna wrote "Robinson Crusoe's Farmyard," and Susan wrote, "The Wide, Wide World." The girls thus launched parallel literary careers which resulted in 106 publications, eighteen of them co-authored.

One of the most successful joint projects was a novel titled *Say and Seal* in which a little boy named Johnny Fox is dying. His Sunday School teacher, John Linden, comforts him by taking him in his arms, rocking him, and making up a little song: "Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so...."

The novel became a best-seller, second only to *Uncle Tom's Cabin*; and when hymnwriter William Bradbury read the words of John Linden's little song (written by Anna), he composed a childlike musical score to go along with them. "Jesus Loves Me" soon became the best-known children's hymn on earth.

Despite their success, the Warner sisters never seemed able to recover from the staggering financial reverses of 1837. Years later a friend wrote, "One day when sitting with Miss Anna in the old living room she took from one of the cases a shell so delicate that it looked like lace work and holding it in her hand, with eyes dimmed with tears, she said, 'There was a time when I was very perplexed, bills were unpaid, necessities must be had, and someone sent me this exquisite thing. As I held it I realized that if God could make this beautiful home for a little creature. He would take care of me.'"

For forty years, Susan and Anna conducted Bible classes for cadets at West Point, and both were buried with full military honors. They are the only civilians buried in the military cemetery at West Point. To this day, their home on Constitution Island is maintained by West Point as a museum to their memory.

—Robert J. Morgan, *Then Sings My Soul; 150 of the world's Greatest Hymn Stories*

Loved and Known

“Jesus knows me, this I love,” read the church sign. That twist on the classic children’s song emphasizes the importance of being both loved and known. “It’s not one or the other; it’s hard truth and ridiculous grace,” sings contemporary Christian artist Tauren Wells in “Known.”

Timothy Keller, in *The Meaning of Marriage*, describes the duality this way: “To be loved but not known is comforting but superficial. To be known and not loved is our greatest fear. But to be fully known and truly loved is, well, a lot like being loved by God. It is what we need more than anything. It liberates us from pretense, humbles us out of our self-righteousness, and fortifies us for any difficulty life can throw at us.”





A NOTE FROM SOCIAL MINISTRY

Food! We all need it. We all like it. Some of us love it! Many do not have enough of it and find it very difficult to feed their families.

The Bethany congregation has been and continues to be very generous. Our food table fills up every week, and we are able to deliver a nice contribution to area food banks.

Many people in this country live from paycheck to paycheck. Because of the government shutdown a good number of people have no paycheck right now. There probably are people in our area who are affected by this. Even though the shutdown is over, food assistance programs like SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) may be affected. If that happens, surely people in our area will be affected.



So, again, thank you, Bethany members! We may soon be needed even more than ever!



The February Noisy Offering will go to ELCA Disaster Relief.

Thanks to everyone for your generosity!



Super Bowl Sunday is February 3 Vote to Fight Hunger in Our Own Community

On February 3, Sunday school students will be collecting donations in soup kettles. You have the opportunity to “vote” with your donation for Los Angeles Rams or the New England Patriots. All proceeds will go to the local Food Bank.



LAY SCHOOL NEWS Winter 2019



- The Winter/Spring Semester is set to begin on Tuesday, January 22 and will continue each Tuesday until April 9 (so we finish before Holy Week)

- **Classes will be held at Messiah, Marquette (305 W. Magnetic)** with Pastor Warren Geier as the site coordinator.
- Four classes will be offered in the Winter 2019 semester (please note the dates and times for each class as they do vary)
- **Please note the changes in the Preaching/Exegetical Techniques class**

Prophets I/Isaiah and Jeremiah January 22nd to February 12th (3-5:30pm) (4 sessions)

An introduction to Old Testament prophetic material including the former and latter prophets. This class will focus on Isaiah and Jeremiah as the most frequently cited lectionary prophets. (Pastor Ann Gonyea)

American Church History January 22nd to February 26th (6-8pm) (6 sessions)

This class will explore the historical development of Christianity in the United States from the 17th to the 21st century. Ecumenism, especially as it relates to the ELCA, will be considered. (Pastor Stacy Pethke)

Preaching and Exegetical Techniques February 19th to April 9th (3-5:30pm) (8 sessions)

This class will be divided into two segments. The first segment (Feb 19th to March 19th) will be for five weeks and focus on biblical interpretation, the various ways that a biblical text can be examined and understood. The final three sessions (March 26th to Apr 9th) will be for those who would like to apply what they've learned, to work with a text and write a sermon. (Pastor Allan Johnson)

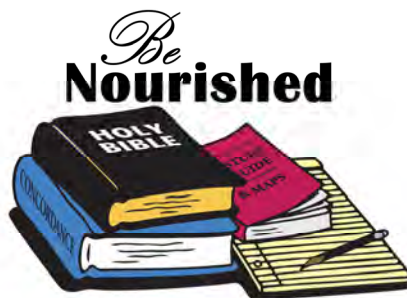
Christian Theology-God the Holy Spirit March 5th to April 9th (6-8pm) (6 sessions)
A study of the third article of the Nicene Creed. How does God's Spirit work in our lives? Included in this course will be an examination of our theology of the church and the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion. (Pastor Steve Solberg)

A reminder that as always there is no tuition; the only cost is for books (and instructors do the best they can to keep that within reason.)

As is always the case, we need new students! It should be emphasized though that one does not have to sign up for all the classes, one does not have to complete all the classes in a certain period of time, one does not even have to complete all the classes ever. You can take as much or as little as works for your schedule and your interests. The program is designed to be flexible. Also, Lay School is not designed to produce Licensed Lay Ministers. While that is a possibility and some graduates have gone in that direction, most students are just interested in growing in faith and becoming more active in their own congregations.

To register for classes, or if you have specific questions, contact your pastor or Pastor Geier (486-4351; pastor@bethanyishpeming.org). Information on books will be forthcoming. Students order books from the bookseller of their choice. Used books are often available at very low prices. If you would like more detailed information on any of the classes contact Pastor Geier.

It would be great to have some new students give Lay School a try, so consider this a personal invitation! If you're not sure, try a course and see how it goes. You will grow in faith and you and your church will benefit from your involvement!



Fellowship Hall Floor original 1962 Will patch asbestos floor and put down carpet squares which are replaceable if ruined.

Sanctuary original 1970 Carpet

Church Pews and Choir Chairs 1970 reupholster both

~From the Bishop



*“...Then shall
all the trees
of the forest
sing for joy
before the Lord;
for he is coming...”*

~from Psalm 96



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

From November 17-27, 2018, I was honored to be chosen by Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton to be one of two newly elected leaders to attend a Retreat Of Newly Elected Leaders (RoNEL) sponsored by the Lutheran World Federation. The other ELCA representative was Bishop Pedro Suarez of the Florida-Bahamas Synod. The two of us joined bishops from all over the world: India, Chile, Canada, Angola, Guyana, Tanzania, Mexico, Hungary, and Poland.

The Lutheran World Federation came into existence out of a desire to respond to the overwhelming refugee crisis after World War II. With much of Europe in a shambles, millions of people were displaced. Some estimates put the number of refugees from Europe at nearly 60 million. Around 10 million of these were Lutheran Christians. Immediately after the end of the war, Lutherans around the world mobilized to provide assistance. This was the context in which LWF was founded in 1947.

We spent about five days in Geneva, Switzerland at the Ecumenical Center. The Lutheran World Federation shares space with the World Council of Churches and they partner together, where possible, for deeper and broader impact.

the **TREES** of the forest
shall **SING** for joy.
(Psalm 96:12)

Some statistics:

The Lutheran World Federation is a partnership representing 148 churches and 75.5 million people from Lutheran traditions in 99 countries. The three areas of their work are:

1. Service
2. Holistic Mission & Theology and Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations

There are 75 staff people in Geneva overseeing the work of over 5000 deployed staff and volunteers. Pretty impressive.

After hearing about the work of the LWF, our group travelled to Wittenberg, Germany. There we enjoyed worship at St. Mary's church where Martin Luther had preached over 2000 sermons, and we took in the sites of the Castle Church where the 95 theses was first posted. A highlight for me was planting an apple tree as part of the Luthergarten project to observe the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. We are tree #468! I invite you to go to www.luthergarten.de, click on the British flag for English and find more information on this project.

Martin Luther once said, "If the world were to end in disaster tomorrow, I would plant an apple tree today." In this new year, may we look for and plant signs and seeds of hope. May God bless our efforts for the work of Christ in the year of our Lord, 2019.

Yours in Christ,
Bishop Katherine Finegan





Library Notes for February 2019

By Keenan Tunnell

February is a pretty quiet month in the church year. If there is a saint to note for the month, it is St. Valentine....who is definitely more than the hearts and flowers, cards and chocolates we associate with his day. As the Author's Note in our newest book puts it, "Uncovering facts about St. Valentine is difficult." We do know that he was a Christian priest during the reign of the Roman Emperor Claudius II and that he died a martyr's death around 269 A.D. He is the patron of engaged couples and happy marriages....not light weight responsibilities!! Our library books are for children, but they convey some of the strength and devotion of Valentine's faith, which are an example to us all. As the Epiphany season continues to reveal to us more about the nature and calling of Jesus, you also might be interested in looking at the Gospel stories in Wangerin's The Book of God and Anne Rice's Christ the Lord (two volumes covering the life of Jesus up to the wedding at Cana).

Tompert, Ann. St. Valentine. **JUV 270.1 TOM**

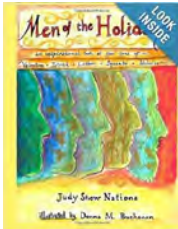
"Every February 14 we exchange cards and flowers as expressions of love. Valentine's Day is among our most popular holidays. But what do the words "Be my valentine" mean? Who was Valentine?....Ann Tompert weaves together the most enduring stories of Valentine to create a tapestry of the saint's life...including stories of Valentine performing secret weddings for soldiers who were forbidden by law to marry, and of Valentine giving comfort to persecuted Christians...glimpses of the man whose life remains essentially a mystery.



Also check out Robert Sabuda's Saint Valentine.



Nations, Judy Snow. **Men of the Holidays.** JUV 920 NAT



FIVE BOOKS IN ONE! Men of the Holidays is a very elementary history book that introduces the lives and contributions of St. Valentine, St. Patrick, Martin Luther (Reformation Day), Squanto (Thanksgiving), and St. Nicholas. Illustrated with 32 paintings, the stories will entertain, inform and inspire all ages. The book includes a timeline and maps. It is well suited for teachers to read and discuss with their students. Families will also want to read Men of the Holidays together. Comparisons with the life of Christ are briefly included in each man's story adding another level of meaning to these holidays.

Valentine

My heart overflows with love,
Fashioned in our courtship
Planted in our marriage
Blossoming in our children.

A love that has been
Pruned by life's realities and
Strengthened by its triumphs.

A love that has grown because the
Responsibility and freedom
To give and to receive
Have been shared.

A love that continues to seek its Source
In the sunshine of
God's Love -

For it is there that we find
Our reason for being and
Our reason for loving!
-Peggy Ferrell





Living Lutheran—

Cover Story:

- Fit and faithful: Wellness programs enrich and extend congregations' ministries

Features:

- What is grace? Meeting grace again for the first time
- “More, better, together” Congregations partner to share ministry gifts
- Our Lutheran musical heritage: The international language of music
- Moved by love, connection and generosity
- A rich and varied history - 400 years of Lutherans in North Americas

Reflection:

- A revelation of grace

Perspective:

- Pruned open - Before getting into the work of transformation, get to know the tree

Faith and Family:

- All in God's image

Deeper Understandings:

- Ignite, curate, practice



From Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton

- Happy New Year!





**Christmas
2018**



My Peace I Give to You

God is with us
God is among us
God is here
God is not out in some
parallel universe
observing us like ants
in a formicary jar.
God is not playing chess with us
like some
great Titan amusement.
To love someone
is to hope for the best in them always,
and God loves us
God is with us
God hopes for the best in us
always
and desires for us
abundant life.
Do not fear, says God.
Rest in me.
Warm Januarys may disquiet us
Elected officials may dismay us
Tragedies may beset us
But God is with us
And offers us peace.
Peace that flows
as a loving undercurrent
through all the turmoil
of life
And let the people say:
Amen.
Yes.



—Susan Palo Cherwien, *From Glory
Glory; Reflections for worship*

Into

Bethany 150th Anniversary

*"I will remember the days of old;
I meditate on all thy doings." Psalm 143:5*

(From the dedication of the Bethany Diamond Jubilee Booklet 1870-1945)

Planning is underway to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of Bethany on October 4, 2020. The committee has met and with Pastor's wise input decided this will begin in early 2020 and move throughout the year to October 4, 2020. A series of events is being considered. If you have ideas, input or questions or please contact any of the committee members or Pastor Geier.



Committee: Deb Cain, Peg and Bob Clark, Tony and Rae Elliot, Karen Kasper, Marian Medlyn, Karen Plaisir, Dave Leverton and Ann Sundblad

Pajama Palooza Keeps Kids Warm at Night

The success of Pajama Palooza cannot be overstated. Well over 900 pairs of pajamas were donated for needy kids in Marquette and Alger Counties. Not only was the local response phenomenal, but people from around the country with local roots contributed to our kids. Thank you for your contribution. Thank you, Addy Lemire, for coordinating this meaningful addition to our community.



Synod Assembly Choir



You are invited to join the Synod Assembly Choir. Rehearsals are May 4 at 10:00 am at Bethany, Ishpeming, and May 11 at 10:00 am at Bethany, Escanaba. Dave Dagenais will be directing. The choir will be singing on Thursday, May 16 at the Synod's 6:00 - 8:00 pm worship service.

WITH LOVE FROM ABOVE

The Bible is full of special words from our loving God.

Directions: Using the messages on the candy hearts, complete the Bible verses (all NIV) below.



God is our _____ and _____,
an ever-present help in trouble. Psalm 46:1

“Surely I am with you _____.” Matthew 28:20

And the _____ of God ... will guard
your hearts and your minds in
_____. Philippians 4:7

Whoever lives in _____ lives in God,
and God in them. 1 John 4:16

_____ love drives out fear. 1 John 4:18

Kids!



Share these jokes with your beloved on February 14 —
or whenever some humor can brighten a day!

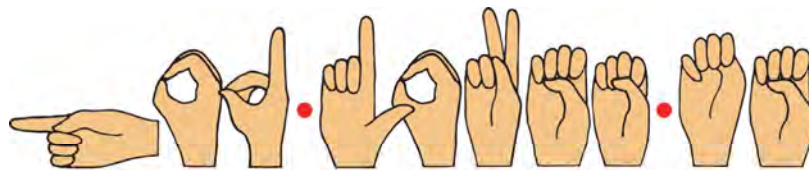
Q: What valentine did the French chef give his wife?
A: A hug and a quiche

Q: What did the paper clip say to the magnet?
A: "I find you very attractive."

Q: What did the pencil say to the paper?
A: "I dot my i's on you!"

Q: How did the phone propose to his girlfriend?
A: He gave her a ring.

Q: What do you call a very small valentine?
A: A valentiny



GOD LOVES ME



Christmas Message from Bishop Eaton

Christmas comes at a descending time. The old year is coming to an end, the new year is not yet here. It is too late to accomplish goals set on the previous New Year's Day, and just enough time to realize that whatever shape or state you are in will be the shape or state in which you end the year. There is a hefty dose of "what-might-have-been."

In the Northern Hemisphere the trees are bare, fields are barren, birds have migrated, animals are hibernating, the days are short and the nights are long. The earth's colors are muted, and when there is snow the world becomes silent. Sometimes during these short days and long nights I find myself thinking about the brevity of life. This conflicts with my tendency to believe that the possibility of self-improvement and renewal is limitless: there is always another day, more time, another chance. I remember watching our first child as she slept in her cradle, thinking about the future before her and, at the same time, the reality that there would be an end. The Ash Wednesday declaration, "Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return," became more pointed and more poignant. The cradle-to-grave progression is our path; the inevitable decline of our strength.

"As for mortals, their days are like grass; they flourish like a flower of the field; for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more" (Psalm 103:15).

Maybe this is why the Christmas season can be so fraught. Of course, there is anticipation and celebration, but there is also pressure and stress. Perhaps we are trying to greet the Lord's birth with our best efforts (when I was a girl, Christmas preparations were not complete until the silver was polished, and that job fell to me), but desperation can creep into the urgency to get Christmas right, to hold back the night. "The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight" (ELW, 279). This is freight that Christmas can't carry when Christmas depends on us.

But Christmas also comes at an opportune time. God did not come to us that first Christmas when we were at the top of our game or when the world was perfect. Even the circumstances of Jesus' birth were a sharp reminder that all was not well – forced migration to Bethlehem, no room for the young family, born in a stall. Emmanuel – God with us –

came to us and comes to us precisely at the time when our need is greatest. Our attempts to bring about perfection actually get in the way of receiving the gift. When we try to fit into an unrealistic ideal of who we ought to be instead of welcoming God into our real self, no matter how messy, then what is left on the 13th day of Christmas? Fatigue, certainly, but also the dull acceptance that life moves from cradle to grave.

On Christmas, God has reversed the cradle to grave progression. The angel announced to the shepherds: “I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: for to you is born this day in the city of David a savior, who is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.”

Here is the new reality. Here is the truth. Our lives are not a meaningless trudge from cradle to grave, but a joyful journey – true and lasting joy – from grave to cradle. All our brokenness and death meet life and healing and hope in the child in the manger. His cradle defeats the grave. We are loved. We are alive. Now we are free to greet this holy season.

Merry Christmas, dear church.

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



Council Highlights— 2018



- Carrie Meyer and Tricia Seelen made a presentation and provided handouts for a proposed pre-school to be sponsored by and conducted by Bethany.
- Received thanks from Samaritan's Purse, FLLC, and Ishpeming Public Schools
- The second test of the online communication system was a success and the system is ready for use.
- Tom Perry gave a project update on the remodeling.
- Preparations are underway for Bethany's 150th anniversary. Brainstorming meetings are underway.
- New memberships approved: Zach and Jackie Anderson, Bethany and Jeremy Forbes, Leo Dockery, and Lola Dockery.
- Pastor is still supporting Bethany Negaunee and Immanuel Skandia with a potential end in sight. They are considering called a lay leader to serve those congregations.
- A new organ tuning contractor from Ironwood named George Behr tuned the organ Dec. 10.
- Jim Kinnunen presented the financial report through December 18.
- Jim Kinnunen presented the 2019 proposed budget to be recommended to the congregation. Total expenditures are projected at \$203,791 which is \$23,449 more than projected income.
- The annual congregational meeting is scheduled for Jan. 27, 2019.

Congregational Annual Meeting



The congregation approved:

1. the proposed budget for 2019
2. an investigative survey to determine if there is sufficient need in our community for a pre-school. The results of the survey do not commit Bethany to the project.



**Happy 90th Birthday,
Colleen Sundblad!**



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Coffee Hour Fellowship volunteers are needed for March and April. If your group is one of our regulars, please sign up on the Kiosk sheet. If you would *like to help and there's an empty spot, sign in it and we can find others to help.*



This has been a growing group each Sunday and it only works if most help out in some small or big way. Thank you to the many regular volunteers. We can do this because of you.



**Winter is here!!!
Brrrrr!**

“In the month in

coldest February, as in every other every other year, the best thing to

hold on to in this world is each other.”

—Linda Ellerbee

Neighborly Love



As an ordained minister, Fred Rogers harnessed the power of television to tell children they were loved — and to show them how to love others. In *You Are Special*, he writes, “When we love a person, we accept him or her exactly as is: the lovely with the unlovely, the strong along with the fearful, the true mixed in with the façade, and of course, the only way we can do it is by accepting ourselves that way.”

In a review of the touching documentary *Won't You Be My Neighbor?* a writer for *Variety* notes: “Rogers’ real secret was ... that the call to love your neighbor as yourself isn’t a slogan to hang in your kitchen with flowers around it — it’s a decision you make at every moment, to view every man, woman and child on earth as your neighbor. If you don’t see and feel that, and act on it, then you’re just another narcissist with a kitchen slogan.”

Humor to Break Up Winter Blahs

- Don't let your worries get the best of you; remember, Moses started out as a basket case.
- Some people are kind, polite and sweet-spirited ... until you try to sit in their pew.
- People are funny: They want the front of the bus, the middle of the road and the back of the church.
- Quit griping about your church; if it was perfect, you couldn't belong.
- Forbidden fruits create many jams.
- Working for God on earth doesn't pay much, but his retirement plan is out of this world.



Bethany's Website
www.bethanyishpeming.org



To view the latest edition of the Outlook in color, please visit Bethany's website.



Keep In Your Prayers

Remember our home-bound and nursing home residents:

Valente:

Jacobetti: Carol Waters

Teal Lake Senior Living Community: Betty Geier, Jean Johns, Annette Larson,
Adeline Johnson

Mill Creek: John Pontti

- Amanda Bivins
- John Lusardi
- Ann Wise
- Loreth Johnson
- Emilie Brown
- Bob Maki
- Kay Chartre
- Kathy Geier
- Mark, Kathleen, and Karmen Slow
- Ruby Kaukola
- Dan & Sharon Argall
- Ray Chartre
- Roger & Ruth Solberg
- Doris Pellonpaa
- John and Marilyn Pontti
- Jim Sodergren, Jr.
- Cindy Warner
- Bob Kaukola
- Ted Swanson
- Judy Hogan
- Mark
- Lois Goethe
- Zander Atkins
- Jim Bjorne
- Angie Kempainen
- June Forsberg
- Those in the military that they may remain safe



Answer to puzzle “With Love from Above”: refuge, strength always, peace, Christ Jesus, love, Perfect



Contact **Linda Dahl** by phone, e-mail, or by dropping a note in the newsletter mailbox at church.

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