

# March



March 2025  
Volume 44 Number 3

# Bethlehem Star

A PUBLICATION OF BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH, GRAND MARAIS, MN

**THEN JESUS WAS LED UP BY THE SPIRIT INTO THE WILDERNESS TO BE TESTED BY THE DEVIL.**

**MATTHEW 4:1**

Ash Wednesday is the beginning of Lent, a 40-day journey of prayer and fasting and almsgiving. Lent is 40 days because 40 is a significant number in scripture. 40 represents a time of trial, a time of waiting, or an in-between time. Before Jesus began his ministry, he went into the wilderness for 40 days. The Israelites wandered in the wilderness for 40 years. During the flood, it rained 40 days and 40 nights. The list goes on.

Our journey through Lent is a time for us to focus on our own humanity, to look inward at the sin that affects our lives and our world (and to repent from that sin), and to turn to Christ for healing and resurrection life.

This Lent I want to encourage you to dive into the world of church. Show up to every service, even our midweek Lenten services and Holy Week services, so that you can experience the Lenten Journey. We'll have worship as usual on Sundays, following the Lectionary texts. Wednesday evenings we'll be taking a look at The Lord's Prayer and exploring different versions of that prayer. And during Holy Week we'll have our Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services the week before Easter.

What I love about both Church and God's Word is that both of them are alive. Both of them, while static in nature, breathe new life into us all the time. We find new meaning, new experiences, and new life from both. Let's commit to this together, and see what God is up to this Lenten season.

Peace in Christ.

*-Pastor Calvin Konop*



**February Highlights** (Color-coded)  
Children's Prayer time. **Quilters.**  
**Your new Church Council.**  
**BLCW Valentine's Cookie Pack.**  
**Choir practice.** Confirmation Skit Night.



# Devotions

By Pastor Calvin Konop



[Jesus] said to them, "When you pray, say:

*Father, may your name be revered as holy. May your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us. And do not bring us to the time of trial."* Luke 11:2-4

The Lord's Prayer is one that is near and dear to many of us. Some of our oldest memories are of saying the Lord's Prayer either at church or at home, and once of those versions of the Lord's Prayer is etched into our bones, it can be difficult to learn a new version.

When I first became a pastor, the church I was called to used the "new version" of the Lord's Prayer, and every Sunday I found I needed to read it while I was saying it so that I didn't mess up - I learned the traditional version!

While tradition can be a difficult thing to get rid of, there is good that can come out of it. Different translations of The Lord's Prayer bring to light new understandings of who God is and how God is at work in the world. The new versions can also break us out of the rote recitations that we sometimes fall into, and force us to focus on the words that we are saying - making us pray in a new way.

This Lent, during our midweek services, we'll be taking a look at each of the parts of the Lord's Prayer, and we'll be praying through different versions, too. May we both stay rooted in our tradition of faith in Christ, and be led out into the newness of faith by the Spirit. Amen.



**The Cook County Food Shelf** is in NEED of brown Paper Grocery BAGS !!!

We usually double bag food for our clients. They can be dropped off at the lower level door at the Congregational Church. THANKS!

Bethlehem members who will be pursuing their post-high school education are invited to apply for the following scholarships:

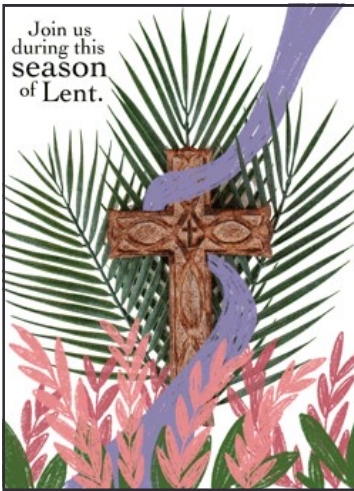
1. **MISSION ENDOWMENT FUND SCHOLARSHIP.** A portion of the investment earnings generated by Bethlehem's Mission Endowment Fund is used to provide this scholarship opportunity. Students are invited to apply if they will be attending any accredited post-secondary educational institution. This could include a two- or four-year college, vocational school, on-line program, or other post-secondary option.

2. **CONCORDIA COLLEGE CONGREGATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP.** 

An anonymous Concordia College alumnus donated funds to Bethlehem to create this scholarship program. Any Bethlehem member who attends Concordia College in Moorhead, MN at least half-time is invited to apply. This scholarship is potentially renewable for four years. (A brochure is posted on the Youth Bulletin Board across from the bathrooms.)

The committee will then meet in late March or early April to review the applications; the church council can vote to hopefully approve the committee's recommendations at its meeting on April 21<sup>st</sup>, and the scholarships can be presented to students at the CCHS Senior Awards Ceremony on May 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Further information and application forms for both scholarships are available on the church's website ([www.sharingchrist.org/forms](http://www.sharingchrist.org/forms)) or by contacting the church office. **Applications must be received by Bethlehem no later than Friday, March 21, 2025.**



## Up-To-Date On Lent

The first day of Lent is Wednesday, March 5th, which is Ash Wednesday. On Ash Wednesday we'll have dinner from 5:30-6pm, and then service at 6pm. After that we'll have 5 weeks of midweek services on the 5 following Wednesdays. Dinner will still be at 5:30, and service at 6pm.

Our theme for those 5 Wednesdays will be **The Lord's Prayer**.

We'll have our **Palm Sunday** service as a kick-off to **Holy Week**, complete with palm branches to wave around during service. During Holy Week we'll have a 7pm service on **Maundy Thursday** (4/13) and 7pm service on **Good Friday** (4/14). **Easter Sunday** services will be at either 8am or 10am, with a breakfast between services from 9am-10am.

Finally: Check out our CYF updates to see how you can help be a faith mentor to a confirmation student.



## A Word From Your Pastor

At our annual meeting I committed to being a broken record for our church, so that as we explore what it means to be an RIC church, we know exactly what that means.

The purpose of the Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Program is to ensure the welcome, inclusion, celebration, and advocacy for people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions; work for racial equity

and commit to anti-racist work and support the national program.

To be recognized as a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Partner, your faith community will:

1. Clearly state a welcome to people of "all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions" or "LGBTQIA+" and name its commitment to "racial equity" or "anti-racism" in a Welcome Statement.
2. Be open to calling 2SLGBTQIA+ and BIPOC (Black, Brown, Indigenous, Person of Color) Rostered Leaders (rostered leader = pastor or deacon).
  - i. Note: I am currently your rostered leader. This doesn't mean that we need to call someone else to serve with me, or that I need to be replaced. It does mean that if Bethlehem is ever to call another rostered leader, that they would be open to interview all candidates, including those who may land into either of those minoritized groups.
3. Allow sanctuary/community space to be used for LGBTQIA+ weddings and blessings.
4. Make a meaningful contribution annually to support the national RIC program.

Basically, what it means to be an RIC church is to openly and publicly say that we are welcoming, opening, and affirming of 2SLGBTQIA+ folks and people of color, and to back it up with our actions. In so many ways, we are already doing this important work of inclusion and grace at Bethlehem. Now we get to explore what it means to be public about it.

As always, my door is always open for those who want to talk more, express excitements or concerns, to learn more or ask questions, or anything you might need during this process. Our RIC Committee is also reaching out to members for more conversations.



## *Committee for Membership and Congregational Life*

Is a team who:

- ◆ LOVE promoting relationships and fellowship
- ◆ will PLAN EVENTS that HELP the members and friends of BLC
- ◆ CONNECT with each other Spiritually and Socially,
- ◆ who will FIND Creative and Innovative ways to INVITE and WELCOME people from the larger Cook County community to congregational functions and into membership.

In January, a friend of mine asked what was a word that we chose for the coming year. My word was connection. I have been pondering this word for a while now. Since the pandemic and the time of forced isolation, 'til now, when it seems that leaving our homes by choice requires Herculean effort.

When I think of the community of my youth, I can remember many ways we gathered both in our church activities and socially. My parents had adult gatherings, we had youth gatherings and we had intergenerational gatherings where we benefited from positive mentoring.

That might sound a bit rosy, and I know it wasn't perfect, but we learned about each other in ways that created bonds. The kind of bonds where we respected each other over and above disagreements. We continued to meet and communicate. Some of those bonds became

lifelong. Sometimes resulted in mere tolerance of each other but respectful tolerance is what binds a community together.

I doubt it would shock anyone if I said the world feels off kilter. The information we receive from an almost infinite number of sources makes it difficult to discern or understand how to filter it. Then on top of that, we have become afraid to have dialogue - *open dialogue* - for fear of conflict or judgement or of feeling ignorant. What can we do?

*Let's find ways to connect.*



We are starting a new, revamped committee for Membership and Congregational Life.

As a council member, I volunteered to lead the committee because I think building connections between us in a variety of ways is going to help every one of us as we meet the future. I also feel that there are a lot of people who need to find the loving community created by those intentionally following the ways of Jesus and experience (again or for the first time) the welcome that can be found here.

Some ideas I have are: evening adult bible study, themed dinners, spiritual social justice educational adult learning opportunities, more book groups, bingo nights, evening card games, group outings, and a few more.

*How would you like to connect?*

*Will you join me on the committee, share your ideas and work with me to make them happen?*

*Please give me a call or come chat with me after church March 16th.*

- ◆ Sue Hennessy, Council Member
  - ◆ [suehenn@boreal.org](mailto:suehenn@boreal.org)
  - ◆ 218-370-0224

## Learning About Communion

We are offering Communion classes to **3<sup>rd</sup> graders** and **anyone** who may want to learn about the sacrament of Holy Communion. We will be meeting after church on **Sundays from 11:15am-12:15pm in the Library on Sunday March 2nd, 9th, and 16th.** We'll also gather at the same times after church on Sunday, April 6th to make unleavened communion bread together that will be used for our First Communion service. The cost for the First Communion book is \$10.

The First Communion Service will be at our 7pm **Maundy Thursday service on Thursday, April 17<sup>th</sup>.** At this service the students will take their first communion, and they will also help during different parts of the service. Reach out to Pastor Calvin if you know of someone who will be joining us so that we can have the books ordered and ready.

FOR ALL THOSE COMMUNING OR INTERESTED IN COMMUNING

**FIRST COMMUNION EDUCATION CLASS**

March 2—16 following Sunday Worship, 11:15am

COME AND LEARN MORE ABOUT COMMUNING WITH CHURCH

First Communion will be Maundy Thursday April 17, 2025



## Confirmation Mentors During Lent

This Lent we are going to pair up adult mentors with Confirmation students to meet after our Midweek Lenten Services. These services start the week after Ash Wednesday, and the last midweek services is the Wednesday before Holy Week begins.

Those who are mentors to students would gather with all of the other mentors and students in the fellowship hall every Wednesday night. We'd start with an ice breaker to help folks get to know each other, and then we'd have some discussion questions and activities based on the content of the service for that night.

This is an opportunity for our different generations to help pass along the faith, and invest in the faith lives of our young people. There are no requirements to be a mentor, you don't need to have all of the answers (actually, it's preferable if you don't!), and you don't need to have worked with youth in the past. All you need is to be willing to listen, learn, and love our youth.

If you would like to be paired up with one of our students, reach out to Pastor Calvin or write your name on the sign up sheet in the Narthex. We have 18+ middle school students, so we need 18+ adults to sign up. Please reach out to Pastor Calvin if you have any questions.

*Make me to know your ways, O LORD;  
teach me your paths.*

*Lead me in your truth and teach me,  
for you are the God of my salvation;  
for you I wait all day long.*

*Psalms 25:4-5*

# HOSPITALITY TEAMS

## Team #1

\*Patti Beyer  
Eric & Sue  
Anderson  
Stephanie  
Anderson  
Dave & Cathy  
Hawkinson  
Robin Johnson  
Libby Larson  
Gwen Lenz  
Rolf & Amy Morck  
Chris O'Brien &  
Jane Alexander  
Craig & Dianne  
Peterson  
Peggy Peterson  
Dave & Linda  
Prinsen  
Martha Rosbacka  
Steve & Nancy  
Sande

## Team #2

\*Kathleen Johnson  
Barbara Backlund  
Teresa Bragg  
Barb Coe  
Joan Ege

Jane Gellner  
Anne Hegg  
Bruce & Stacey  
Johnson  
Cheryl Johnson  
Ethel Johnson  
Dick & Becky  
Kayser  
Kathy Kippley  
John & Cindy  
Muus  
Dena Schliep  
Brad & Brooke  
Shannon

## Team #3

\*Joy Oberg  
Phillis Anderson  
Mike & Teresa  
Chmelik  
Marja Erickson  
Milly Gestel  
Kris Hedstrom  
Dan Helmerson  
Ann Jorgenson  
Ashley Konop  
Paul Magnuson &

Pam Prenevost  
Kyle & Theresa  
Oberg  
Lorri Peterson  
Mike & Sue Prom  
Butch & Rhonda  
Schulte  
Joanne Smith

## Team #4

\*Cathi Williams  
Lindsay Mielke  
Stephanie Radloff  
Chuck & Shirley  
Soderholm  
Lyle & Laurie Spry  
Ruth Tice  
Shele Toftey  
June Tveekrem  
Samantha Wallner  
Jim Wiinanen  
Seth & Kelsi  
Williams  
Annalisa Winje  
Mark & Brooke  
Youngdahl  
Mike Youngquist



*Starred (\*)  
member is  
the lead  
person for  
each team.*



*If your name  
isn't listed,  
please  
contact  
Denise in the  
office or one  
of the lead  
members.*





## Meet Your Council 2025-26 Members

- Kristin Lindholm, President
- Kris Hedstrom, Vice President & Church in Society
- Mark Youngdahl, Treasurer
- Theresa Oberg, Financial Secretary
- Joy Oberg, Secretary & BLCW
- Mike Chmelik, Property
- Sue Hennessy, Congregational Life & Worship
- Gwen Lenz, Stewardship
- Marja Erickson, Member-at-large
- Mike Prom, CYF
- Open Position, Finance



Each day, I start my classes with a question (I call these "Go-Arounds"). Often, these questions are silly-like, "Would you rather eat bugs or give a speech?" (You'd be surprised how many bug eaters there are!)

Sometimes, the questions are more serious.

Recently, I asked, "What is bringing you joy these days?" This is the time of year when my students seem to struggle the most. However, when I heard the answers to this question, my spirits lifted. Some answered, "The days are getting lighter." Others said, "Giving my dog a hug at the end of a long day," while one responded, "Wednesday night at church." That answer gave me pause.

This place we call Bethlehem is a refuge for our students. The energy in the building on a Wednesday night is palpable. If you could use an extra dose of joy, I invite you to Wednesday night supper and worship. My guess is that you, too, will find a reason to smile in this space.

I would personally invite you to consider mentoring one of our Confirmands during this Lenten season. From now until Easter, our Confirmands will meet with mentors after worship each Wednesday to build new intergenerational relationships and discuss matters of faith-talk about joy! Please let Pastor Calvin know if you're

interested. May we all find joy these days.

Peace to you,  
Kristin Lindholm



The Church in Society Committee is promoting an interesting outreach project this month. We will be raising funds to have a "free laundry" day for local individuals and families. We plan to have the event on the first Saturday in April at Sqigg's Laundry. Bethlehem will provide quarters for the machines, and any laundry supplies needed. We will also have coffee and some kind of food available.

We want to create a comfortable time for people to get to know each other, socialize, and learn about Bethlehem if they wish. We want to extend our welcoming atmosphere out into the community.

Please support this project and consider coming that day get to know someone new.





# THE QUILTERS OF BETHLEHEM INVITE YOU

TO Learn how to make a QUILT

TO Bring favorite scraps of fabric you would like to use, for your own piece

TO Use the fabulous fabrics Bethlehem has to offer

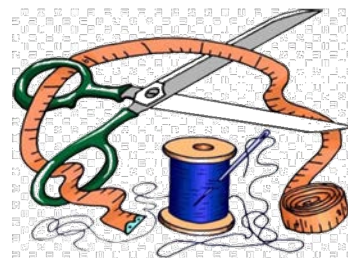
TO Learn more about Lutheran World Relief

TO Help out with pieces on that special day in APRIL

TO Support the ministry of the Quilters

TO Have fun with a great group of people (8 in all)

TO Learn where Bethlehem's Quilts end-up going to



Now, I mentioned a day in APRIL. We are planning on **APRIL 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025**.

The Quilters are in the Social Room every Thursday from 9:00 until 11:45-ish.

## WE ALWAYS WELCOME EVERYONE ON THURSDAYS!

Another "ALWAYS" is that there will be treats, and coffee available and lots of CONVERSATIONS at 10:00. - Submitted by Gwen Lenz

### Embracing Peace By Kelly Mason

In a world that often feels overwhelming, intentionally cultivating a mindset of peace invites us to acknowledge God's presence amid the chaos. This collection of prompts encourages you to reflect on how cultivating peace can bring comfort and calm to your daily life.

Scriptures to hold on to:



*"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change" (Psalm 46:1-2).*

*"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid" (John 14:27).*

### Journal prompts

Take 10 minutes or so to handwrite Psalm 71:1-6. After you are finished, read the verses aloud, noticing how they look in your handwriting. When you're finished, jot down the feelings you experience when seeing these words in your own hand. Finish this time by reading the following prayer aloud.



### Prayer

God of comfort and care, when life feels uncertain and anxiety begins to rise within my heart, remind me of your constant presence. You are my rock, my fortress, my hope. Thank you for being my constant companion. Amen.

### Affirmation

God is my source of hope, my anchor in any storm.





EcoFaith Summit 2025

Earth's Cries,  
Earth's Call

Saturday, April 5, 2025

at First Lutheran Church in  
Duluth and Online  
9:30am - 5:00pm  
(Free Childcare Provided)

Bethlehem will cover Registration  
Costs and Mileage

- ◆ Individual - \$30
- ◆ Carpool Rate - \$25
- Under 30 years old register free
- Livestream Registration - Free

Will you become a  
Representative for  
Bethlehem?

**The ever-increasing cries of creation in crisis could easily overwhelm us.** Instead let them serve as a clarion call to help bring life out of potential death, to help give renewed birth to all creation, to all creatures including ourselves.

**Join in becoming midwives of hope and healing.** Like Shiphrah and Puah in the Exodus story, who defied Pharaoh and brought forth life in the midst of slavery and death, we know that every child, all life, all of creation is worthy of saving through defiance and courage. Their story births something in us. These midwives become our models. They call and sing to us from the pages of Scripture – ‘Do likewise, O people, help bring forth life that staves off death.’

**Keynote speaker** Dr. Cynthia Moe-Lobeda, author, organizer, and theological ethicist, will lead us in naming the powers that are destroying the earth and introducing us to midwives of hope today.

**Special presenter** Dr. Kelly Sherman-Conroy, member of the Oglala Sioux Tribe, dynamic storyteller, poet, scholar, and the the first Native woman to earn a PhD in theology within the ELCA, she offers a groundbreaking blend of Indigenous spirituality and Christian teachings.

**The Summit will feature** compelling speakers, enlivening worship, informative exhibits, opportunities for networking, and an array of engagement sessions for giving birth to strong, creative action in our congregations, camps, campuses, and communities. Morning refreshments, fresh local lunch and celebratory final reception are included in the day.

**We need a Synod Representative to EcoFaith.**

**Will you become a Representative for Bethlehem?**

**Please talk to Pastor Calvin if you have an interest in EcoFaith programs.**

<https://www.ecofaithnetwork.org/ecofaith-summit-2025>



# March 2025



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 I am Celebration of Life for Matt Gwash
2 8:40am Choir practice 10:00am Worship & Sunday School 11:15am First Communion Class	3 11:00am Staff meeting 3:30pm Girl Scouts	4	5 Ash Wednesday 8:00am Church in Society Meeting 12:30pm Text Study 5:30pm Meal 6:00pm Traditional Ash Wednesday Worship 	6 8:00am Men's Bible Study 9:00am Quilting 6:30pm Ping Pong	7 Clarity Hearing Appts	8
9 Daylight Savings Time Starts 8:40am Choir practice 10:00am Worship & Sunday School 11:15am Communion Class 	10 11:00am Staff meeting 6:30pm Executive Committee meeting	11	12 12:30pm Text Study 5:30pm Meal 6:00pm Lent Worship 6:30pm Confirmation 	13 8:00am Monthly Council Reports due to office 8:00am Men's Bible Study 9:00am Quilting 9:30am BLCW Circle & Bible Study 6:30pm Ping Pong	14 8:00am Deadline for changes to Council agenda and reports 12:00pm Monthly Reports distributed to Council members	15
16 Shamrock Shakes—High Schoolers  8:40am Choir practice 10:00am Worship & Sunday School 11:15am Communion Class 2:00pm Care Center Worship Service	17  11:00am Staff meeting 3:30pm Girl Scouts 6:30pm Church Council Meeting	18 6:30pm Worship Planning Meeting	19 12:30pm Text Study 5:30pm Meal 6:00pm Lent Worship 6:30pm Confirmation 	20 8:00am Men's Bible Study 9:00am Quilting 6:30pm Ping Pong	21 Clarity Hearing Appts 6:30pm Diaper Wars - Middle School Youth 	22 Newsletter articles due 
23 8:40am Choir practice 10:00am Contemporary Worship Service & Sunday School	24 Denise is out of the office today	25	26 12:30pm Text Study 5:30pm Meal 6:00pm Lent Worship 6:30pm Confirmation 	27 8:00am Men's Bible Study 9:00am Quilting 6:30pm Ping Pong 	28	29
30 8:40am Choir practice 10:00am Worship & Sunday School	31 11:00am Staff meeting		Join the Pincushion Mountain Table Tennis Club on Thursday nights at 6:30pm. All are welcome!!		Free Laundry Day April 5, 2025 Squigg's Laundromat	

5655877

# Bethlehem Lutheran Church

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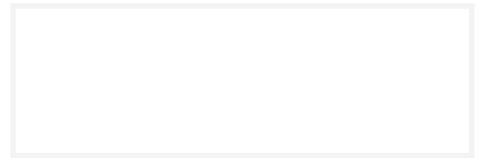


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55604

*Belonging to Christ,*

*Sharing Christ on the*

*North Shore and beyond.*



**Confirmation Diaper Wars!!  
All Middle School Youth  
are invited**

