

an Church Sun Prairie, Wisconsin

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## Go and Wash Feet

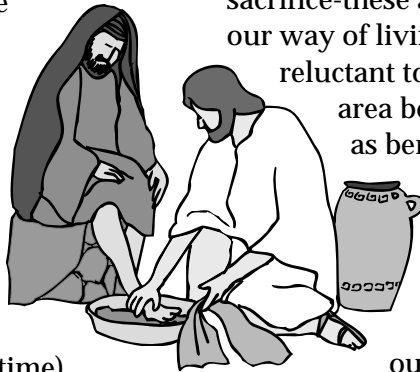
*"Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them." (John 13:17)*

It had been a hectic day full of emotions. In the middle of the evening he got up from the table and grabbed the two objects that everyone seemed to be ignoring. Slowly, he took off his outer garment and picked up the basin and wrapped the towel around his waist. Then one by one (one foot at a time), he began to wash their feet. Twenty-four feet—each of which would run away from him in the matter of a few hours.

What he was doing should have been done by a servant. No one volunteered. Why? You know the reason for that. It is the same reason that would have prevented anyone of us from offering to do it. So he did.

*"When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. 'Do you understand what I have done for you?' he asked them. 'You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you" (John 13:12-15).*

A basin and a towel. Touching images, especially as we have entered the season of the Lord's Passion, but let no one be fooled. Washing feet is rarely easy. Ask Jesus. He knows the future of the feet he washes, and yet He bends down to



wash each one of them. Jesus' act of service is a beautiful story of love. It is also the mission that He asks each of us to wrap around our waist as well. "I have set an example for you to do as I have done for you" (John 13:15). Humility-servanthood-sacrifice—these acts aren't often our way of living. So many are reluctant to offer help in an area because they see it as beneath them. They are afraid that in doing so, it will hurt their image. When we know our purpose in life and our identity, we are freed to serve others without fear or resentment.

Has it ever struck you that our lives are lived out of three basins? One is the basin used to wash feet. Another is the one Pilate chose to use to wash his hands. The second is the basin of indifference that lacks passion and conviction. The first is the basin of servanthood out of which we serve as He has served us.

Jesus calls us to go out into the world and wash feet in service to others as He has done with us. Just as the disciples let Him down, so we are bound to disappoint Him as well. Many times over we will choose to live out of the basin Pilate chose rather than the one Jesus used. That is where the third basin comes in—the basin that holds the water of our Baptism. It is here in this basin that we are cleansed again and again for all those times when our feet are the ones that turn and walk away from Him. It is in this

basin that we are cleansed and renewed in His baptismal grace. It is in this basin that the gentle splashing of water can still be heard in our hearts as Jesus cleanses more than just our feet.

*Prayer: Your servanthood humbles me, Lord. Who are we that you are this mindful and humble before us? Thank you for cleansing me through your servanthood. Help me to follow your example this day. Amen.*

Your humble shepherd  
in Christ,  
Pastor Mueller

## Obedience to God

In Revelation 2:10-11 Jesus says:

*"Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt at all by the second death."*



Being Faithful. Daily I ask myself if I am being faithful with the gifts and abilities that God has blessed me with. Am I being faithful to God with my time, finances, Bible reading, prayer life, quality family time and ministry? Am I being faithful to the call that God has placed into my life first to be a child of God, second to be the spiritual leader in my marriage and family, and third my call to be

the Youth & Family Minister here at Bethlehem. I will be honest with you here. The devil works me over when it comes to answering the third question. There isn't a Sunday I don't leave church wondering. There isn't a week that goes by that I'm not tempted to question myself and the ministry. But this I know - my struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. I must keep the main thing the main thing. I am a called child of God and I have been set apart to equip, encourage, and empower the body of Christ. This I will remain faithful to with the help of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Paul's words are comforting and powerful in 2 Corinthians 2:8-11:

*"I urge you, therefore, to reaffirm your love for him. The reason I wrote you was to see if you would stand the test and be obedient in everything. If you forgive anyone, I also forgive him. And what I have forgiven - if there was anything to forgive - I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake, in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes."*

Be Obedient. Peter wrote in his first letter chapter 1 verses 14 -15 that as obedient children, we are not to conform to the evil desires we had when we lived in ignorance but that we are to be holy in all we do. As I



read this I am reminded by recent George Barna data regarding how many Christians view themselves as Children of God and the Word of God. These are some of the questions that are being asked of church going people. "Are we being obedient to the word of God?" "Is the Word of God our standard for moral choices or do we base our decisions on our feelings and what other people expect from us." I have personally taken this obedience questioning further in my own life by asking myself, am I being obedient to God when it comes to my wife, children, finances, church responsibilities, and ministry? Am I being obedient to God in the use of my gifts and abilities that He has blessed me with? How about us as a body of believers here at Bethlehem? Are we being obedient to God as a church? As a child of God? Our congregation has been blessed by God in so many different ways. Are we spurring one another on toward love and good deeds?

God is at work here at Bethlehem and I want to be right in the middle of where God is at work. Lives are being touched, faith and knowledge is growing in our children, youth and adults and the challenge is there for each of us to grow into a deeper love relationship with Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. Are we being available to God? There are a lot of things in my own life that try to interfere with what God wants me to do. Fear, time commitments, responsibilities, and you and I can come up with a long list of

things that interfere with the voice of God. Are we available to God to answer that nudge to talk with that hurting person, talk with that visitor, and pray for or with another person? Are we available to God to join a small group Bible study which will enable us to grow in our faith and interact with our brothers and sisters in Christ? Are we available to God to serve where needed using the gifts and abilities with which He has blessed each of us? The time is now to answer to God's calling. Your church needs you, I need you, and the unchurched need you to lead to Jesus who is the way and the truth and the life.

Peter R Imlah  
Youth & Family Minister

## Soul†Fire

March  
5 Laser Tag  
12 Faith FULL Living  
19 Faith FULL Living  
26 Game Night



Lock-In "Set Apart"  
March 17-18  
At Bethlehem  
Cost is \$10

## Cross†training

March  
1 6:00pm The Recipient of the Lord's Supper  
8 6:00 pm Confession  
15 6:00 pm Office of the Keys  
22 6:00 pm Confirmation  
29 OFF

## A Six-week Bible Study for Parents of Teenagers

Hosted by Bob and Pam Hickey on Mondays beginning March 13, 7:00 p.m. at Bethlehem.

### Identity

The number one question every teenager asks is, "Who am I?" As they struggle to answer that question, tensions can build up at home.

This episode will give parents tools to help their teens find their identity in Christ. Parents will learn ways to convey the attitudes of unconditional love that will draw their teens closer. They will also explore the most important skills of communication.

### Turmoil

Every day teenagers are faced with complicated relationships, images of impossible beauty and difficult challenges. All these forces can cause a young person to feel insecure, depressed or even angry.

This episode will help parents empathize with the jumbled emotions of their teens. Parents will learn biblical and practical tips for helping teens in this turbulent time of their lives.

### Rebellion

Parenting can be tough. Teens will make mistakes, cross boundaries and lose the trust of their parents.

This episode will give advice on how to deal with the scary issues like rebellion, drugs, drinking and sex. Parents will learn

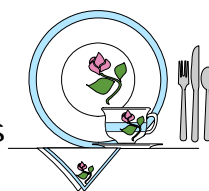
ways to set boundaries and establish clear and realistic consequences.

### Legacy

As children grow, they start seeing the world and faith through their own eyes. They can go through periods of questions and doubts about their faith.

This episode will offer parents help and encouragement to deal with the spiritual questions of their teens. Parents will learn ways to maintain the relationship even in the midst of differences in beliefs. Steven Curtis Chapman talks about his own family and faith.

## Annual MALSA Awareness Dinner



March 24, 2006

Bring your entire family for a night of fun, good food and good fellowship. The ***Have a Heart for Jesus and a Heart for the Children*** Awareness and Ministry Celebration will take place at *Bethlehem Lutheran Church* on Friday, March 24 at 6:00 p.m. All eight MALSA churches and other interested congregations are invited to attend. Dinner and dessert will be provided at no charge. Free-will offerings for the dinner and donations for operating expenses will be gladly accepted. Special activities for the children are planned, so bring your kids along. Come meet leaders and delegates of the Madison Area Lutheran School Association and discover MALSA's goals for starting

Lutheran Schools in Dane County, including its first school on the campus of the *Lutheran Church of the Living Christ*. Listen to inspiring Christian music and hear moving testimonials from those who have experienced the joy of Jesus' love in their Lutheran educational experiences. Contact your MALSA delegate if you need additional information, or call Gordy Hunter (Waunakee) at 608-850-3499.

## Stewardship Corner

Hello Fellow Stewards, What a wonderful month March is. We all know winter will soon be over bringing the promise of spring. The nominating committee is starting the process of placing our members into the positions they desire, so we can all be serving the Lord. Isn't life grand!

In case you aren't familiar with the way the nominating process works here, I'll explain a little. A chosen group consisting of board chair, assistant executive director, and respected members get together and go through the membership roster. Using



**NOMINATIONS**

their expertise and understanding they try to select people with certain talents or interest and match them up with an appropriate "job" or "task" as the case may be. This committee will then start calling the members in question and explain the job and invite

them to participate for a two-year period. This is a great way to get involved in serving the Lord at Bethlehem. The nominating committee is looking to fill broad positions. Several of our boards are trying to function without enough members. Let's help the committee fill these positions.

Another great way to become involved is for you to ask the Lord where your ministry is. As you pray and seek God's guidance you will find what your "labor of love" for the Lord is. We as a church may not find your right ministry but you and God certainly will. We will help get you there.

God has mentioned many times throughout scripture that He expects us to serve. In my heart I know that to love the Lord is to want to serve Him. As a board our goal is to help each and every member of our congregation find their ministry. Check the "opportunity to serve bulletin board," check the "sign up sheets" in the hall on your way to the fellowship area, check the "time and talent" surveys, check with God and find your spot. Maybe a board commitment isn't right for you this time around, but there is something that is right for you today. Find it and volunteer for it. Let's have Bethlehem Lutheran Church have 100% participation. After all, when I pray that's what I want from God, 100%. What do you want?? What does God want from you??

See you in Church!!

Anne Meyer  
Chair - Board of Stewardship



## Bethlehem Women are Busy this Month!

Women at Bethlehem meet monthly on the first Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m. to do special projects which benefit mission programs world-wide. Our next meeting is March 6. All women and confirmed girls are invited. **Contact Person:** Gerry Olson 608-241-0885.

### Quilting Bee

Saturday, March 18 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Ladies - come and cut squares, lay out quilt tops, stitch squares together (bring your machine), iron tops, lay out and tie quilts - something for everyone to do. Bring a sack lunch along too.



### Save your mites!

Based on the Biblical story of the widow's mite, the mite box is intended for contributions above and beyond to church or Synod. Our "mitey mites" add up to millions of dollars when put with other fellow Christian men and women across the nation. Pick up a mite box or label that will fit an empty frosting can at the cookbook table.

The cookbook sale has been a great success! We still have some extras - cost is \$18 each if you buy 1-2 copies, or \$15 each for 3 or more. Profits go to a fund to support our youth in their ministries.

### Knit or Crochet Bandages

We have also begun an ongoing project to knit or crochet simple cotton bandages for tropical ulcer patients (size 8

needles or H hook). Pick up directions on the cookbook table by the mite boxes.



### Stamps for Missions

Please save used postage stamps from your everyday mail! The money raised by doing this easy task goes to Mission projects. You may drop them in the box by the Sentry receipt basket in the hall.

Stamps should have 1/9 to 1/4 inch of envelope around them. If the stamps are trimmed when turned in, it makes our job easier.

**Commemorative stamps, high value stamps and all foreign stamps are desired. These should all have the border around them.**

## Church Telephone Directory Changes

Please make the following changes/additions in your new church telephone directory:

Kari Dailey  
Phone: 608-217-1423

Jim & Michele Falk  
302 Simon Crestway  
Waunakee, WI 53597  
608-849-7765

Mary Ellen Gernetzke  
Phone: 608-698-2273

**Please Note:** If you did not receive a new *pictorial* directory and would like one, please see Betty in the church office.



## Staffing Committee Update

February 17, 2006

In 2004, voters of Bethlehem authorized the formation of a Staffing Committee to make a recommendation on our staffing needs after Pastor Pingel retired. At the May 2005 voters meeting, the committee reported that they felt it best to monitor our staffing situation for an extended period of time before determining what areas we may need staffing help in.

As chairman of the Staffing Committee and Executive Director of Bethlehem, I have been asked by a number of members since the first of the year what our future staffing plans are. Because of this recent interest, I have asked the Staffing Committee to reconvene with the purpose of bringing a recommendation of future staffing needs to the voters for approval.

I hope the committee will be able to bring a recommendation to the voters by the May Voter's Meeting. Any recommendation that comes from this committee must be approved by the voters before it can be put into place.

Members of the Staffing Committee are our Board chairs; Anne Meyer, Dennis Dary, Mike Grulke, Mike Ferguson, and Peter Bushman, Treasurer Pat Schommer, Assistant Executive Director Steve Anacker, Past Executive Directors John Schlitz, Dennis Birkholz, Niles Jehn and Executive Director Tim Mielcarek.

We encourage all members and staff to share your feelings on our staffing needs with

anyone on the committee. The committee looks forward to working with our members as we go through this process.

In His Name,  
Tim Mielcarek  
Executive Director



## New Books in the Church Library

The following items were added in February. Many thanks to all who request a sticker on their receipts from Sentry and bring them to the box down from the mail slots; and to those who have Bethlehem designated as a beneficiary of the 1% rebate on their Pick N Save Card. If you shop at the Family Bookstore by East Towne, request stamps for our church library. One card of stamps gives us \$5 off anything purchased there. Stamps may be placed in the Sentry receipt box. (These three programs completely support the library)

**Please Help:** In order to assist our volunteer in totaling all the Sentry receipts for the library each month, please circle the balance (Bal.) amount before dropping them in the box.

### Children's Books (C)

*Because I Love You*  
*With You All the Way*  
*Stanley the Stinkbug Goes to Camp* - Max Lucado  
*Frog on a Log* - Phil Cox  
*Tales from the Ark* - David & Chondra Pierce

### Children's Videos (V5, D5)

*Veggie Tales: Duke & the Great Pie War*  
*Adventures in Odyssey - Caves of Qumran*  
*Bedbug Bible Gang*  
*Big Boats of the Bible*  
*Christmas Show!*  
*Parable Parade*  
*Hermie & Friends: A Fruitcake Christmas*

### Juvenile Fiction (B5)

*Heart of Courage*  
*The Raider's Promise* - Lois Walfrid Johnson  
*Because of Winn-Dixie* - Kate DiCamillo  
*James Herriot's Treasury of Inspirational Stories for children*

### Adult Fiction (B4)

*A Kingsbury Collection (Where Yesterday Lives; When Joy Came to Stay; On Every Side)*  
*Even Now*  
*Fame*  
*Forgiven*  
*Divine*  
*The Red Gloves Collection* - Karen Kingsbury  
*Comes A Horseman* - Robert Liparulo  
*Eden Hall*  
*Lady of the Hall*  
*Secret of the Hall* - Veronica Heley  
*On the Run* - Lorena McCourtney  
*Light From Heaven, Mitford Series* - Jan Karon  
*The Assassins* - Oliver North  
*The Preacher's Daughter* - Beverly Lewis  
*What She Left for Me* - Tracie Peterson

### Adult Non-Fiction (B2, B3, B9)

*Cure for the Common Life* - Max Lucado  
*Simple Secrets to a Beautiful Home* - Emilie Barnes  
*The Kingdom of the Cults* - Walter Martin  
*Women in League with the Lord - LWML* - Marlys Taeye Moberg  
*Defining Noah Webster* - Alan Snyder  
*Servant of the Word; The Life and Ministry of CFW Walther* - August R. Suelflow

## Volunteer Opportunities

At Oakwood Village East  
5565 Tancho Drive  
Madison WI 53718

Contact Volunteer Services  
Coordinator Kim Viney  
at 230-4238 or email at  
[kim.viney@oakwoodvillage.net](mailto:kim.viney@oakwoodvillage.net)

### Independent Living apartments computer instructors

Volunteers needed to instruct group classes or assist one-on-one for independent-living apartments residents on use of Oakwood computers, to include e-mail, internet, Word Perfect and Quattro Pro, a few times a month in the morning or afternoon.

### Volunteer Drivers

Volunteers needed to help take Apartments or assisted living residents to weekday medical appointments or on personal errands, Mon-Fri a few times a month. Volunteer needs to use their own vehicle and monthly mileage reimbursement provided.

### Independent-Living Apartment Resident Craft Group Instructors

One or two volunteers needed to develop craft project ideas for and lead weekly resident craft group Tuesday, Thursday or Friday morning or afternoon. Volunteers with experience and interest in a wide variety of crafts beneficial, and good organizational skills

needed. Day and time negotiable and flexible based on volunteer's availability.

### Oakwood Village East – Plant Sale Assistant

Volunteers are needed to assist East Gardener Chris Neumann with digging up and dividing plants to be sold as part of the Oakwood Service League spring plant sale. Bending, lifting and digging capability necessary. I

### Parish Planning Council February 14, 2006

Present: Tim Mielcarek, Pastor Mueller, Pete Imlah, Peter Bushman, Steve Anacker, Anne Meyer, Dennis Dary, Pam Hickey, John Schlitz, Betty Isaacson

The meeting was brought to order at 5:30 p.m. by Executive Director, Tim Mielcarek. Pete Imlah opened with prayer.

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as distributed.

Treasurer Pat Schommer noted that to fund the 2006 budget \$8360 is needed each week for the general fund. So far this year giving has been about \$3,000/week short of that.

The agenda for the March Voters Meeting was discussed. There will be a report on the sanctuary projection system from Sandy Phillip. The Nominating and Staffing Committees will be presented.

Pastor Mueller noted that nominations for District President are due by March 6. The consensus of the council was that Pastor and Pete should nominate someone they feel

would do the job well. It will also be announced at the Voters Meeting.

Pete Imlah announced that more small groups will be starting up in March on various topics.

Guest John Schlitz presented an idea to get more people to be involved in activities at church. It will be brought up at the Voters Meeting.

It was suggested that each board recruit members for their own boards. It was decided to have each board chair choose a Sunday to explain what their boards do and what would be expected of a board member.

The expectations for membership in Bethlehem's constitution will be printed in the bulletin. Nominations must be approached by leaders helping members to find their ministry fit. Lists are needed from boards and committee of who participated in any church activity last year.

The following excerpts from the constitution by-laws will be in the Sunday bulletin and the March *Tidings*:

*Communicant members will... Place their God-given spiritual gifts, talents and abilities at the disposal of the Pastor(s), the officers and other agencies of the congregation as set forth by the Great Commission.*

*Voting Members will... Willingly serve in any office or capacity for which his spiritual gifts, talents and abilities equip him.*

Dennis Dary reported that the Properties Board has put together some room rental guidelines. Pam Hickey announced the Lenten suppers beginning on March 1 new member welcome on March 26, and the Ladies' Retreat on April 29. Family Game Night was very well attended and craft nights are in the works.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Betty Isaacson



**Bethlehem Lutheran Church**  
**300 Broadway Drive**  
**Sun Prairie, WI 53590**

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[bethlehem@bethlehemlc.org](mailto:bethlehem@bethlehemlc.org)  
608.837.7446, fax 608.825.2268

Worship  
Sundays 8:00 & 10:30 a.m.  
Sunday School & Bible Classes 9:10 a.m.

Rev. Stephen M. Mueller, Pastor  
Mr. Peter Imlah, Youth & Family Minister