

The Tidings



Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Sun Prairie, Wisconsin

March 2008

Lent/Holy Week Worship Schedule

March 5 Wednesday 7:00 p.m.
Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews
John 19:19-22

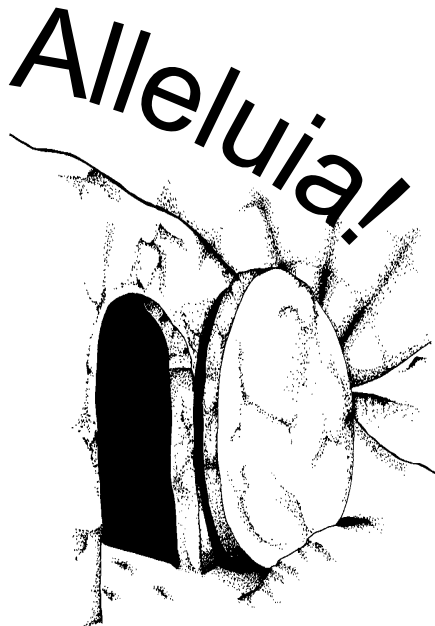
March 12 Wednesday 7:00 p.m.
Truly This Man Was the Son Of God!
Matthew 27:50-54

March 16 **Passion Sunday** 8:00 & 10:45 a.m.
Father, Forgive Them, for They Know Not What They Do
Matthew 27:39-44

March 20 **Maundy Thursday** with Holy Communion 7:00 p.m.
Let His Blood Be On Us and Our Children
Matthew 27:15-26

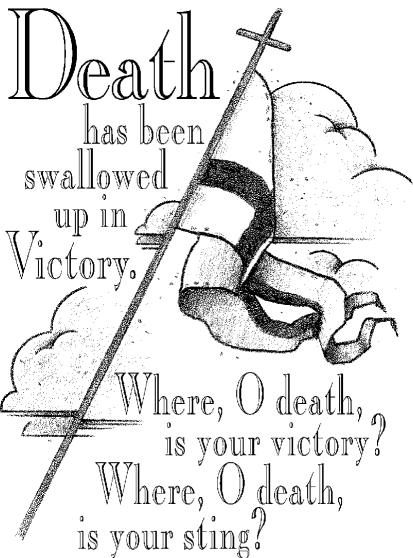
March 21 **Good Friday Contemporary** 7:00 p.m.
It Is Finished!
John 19:30

March 23 **Easter Sunday** 8:00 & 10:45 a.m.
Why Do You Seek the Living Among the Dead?
Luke 24:1-11



Dinner is served A light supper is served before each Wednesday Lenten Service beginning at 5:45 p.m. Free-will donation.

Easter Pancake Breakfast will be served from 8:45 – 10:30. Freewill offering will be matched by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans up to \$800.00 for our youth.



1 Corinthians 15:54-55

Dryden, Ontario, Canada) we checked into our rustic cabin and prepared our gear for 3 days of fishing. We would catch our limit of walleye and northern pike every day! We were instructed to crimp our hooks so there would be no “barb” to damage the fish we needed to release. We had to release any fish caught between 17 and 21 inches long for spawning reasons. We caught enough fish that length to release many unharmed. One particular walleye, however, was not so lucky. The fish had swallowed the hook so deeply as to cause damage within its guts. After removing the hook the fish was thrown into the lake and we watched the fish float to the surface in just a minute-the damage was too great. This was the only fish that died in such a fashion.

As we approach the Day of Resurrection we need a Savior who can save us from the power of this world’s god (2 Cor. 4:4) and this world’s prince (John 16:11), the devil. We must have a Savior who can save us from the power of sin and death. Christ must be the true, eternal God through whom all believers receive God’s approval and are saved. If Christ wasn’t greater or better than Moses, Elijah, Isaiah, or John the Baptist, then He wouldn’t have been able to reclaim us and free us from our sins when he shed His blood. If we believe this, we can rub it in the devil’s face whenever he tries to torment or terrify us with our sins. This will quickly defeat the devil. He will be forced to retreat and leave us alone.

Christ Jesus defeated the devil by dying. Here’s an illustration: the fishing hook, which is Christ’s divinity, was concealed by the earthworm, which is Christ’s humanity. The devil swallowed both when Christ died and was buried. But Christ’s divinity ripped open the devil’s stomach so that it couldn’t hold Christ anymore. The devil had to throw him up. The devil ate something that proved to be fatal. This truth gives us wonderful comfort. Just as the devil couldn’t hold on to Christ in death, so the devil can’t hold on to us who believe in Christ. **“Death has been SWALLOWED up in victory.” (1 Cor. 15:54)** May the Resurrected Lord Jesus give you comfort and hope as you place your faith in Him! Blessed Easter!

“Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil.” (Hebrews 2:14)

When we arrived at the Silver Water Wheel Lodge (one hour’s drive north of

In His service,
Pastor Mueller



Balance

“The Inner Battle”

Have you ever caught an episode of the TV hit Survivor? It’s the reality television show where castaways are left on a remote island with nothing more than the clothes on their back, but they are allowed to take one item from home. Some choose to take deodorant or a toothbrush, which are all basic necessities and pretty good choices. If you were stuck on a desert isle what would you want with you? Would you choose toothpaste? Suntan lotion? Soap? Even with the one item the survivors take with them, many still find life on the island unbearable. Their one thing isn’t enough. They often can’t start a fire – thankfully, they are able to win matches through competitions. As the show moves on, the survivors are able to win other things that they need, like towels, blankets, pots and pans, for the lucky few, gourmet meals. These are all things survivors need to make it and survive.

Or do they?

Like you, the survivors could probably get by on less. But they continually strive each week to win more of the good stuff. Things like plush towels aren’t necessary, but they are a luxury worth fighting for.

Okay, back to your reality. Do you feel satisfied with the stuff you have? Or are you a survivor? What kind of stuff is at the top of your must-have list? Is it the latest hot electronic gismo, iPod, or how about a very collectible Dodge Viper?

We need it. And companies have caught on. That’s why their ads are everywhere you look – on TV, billboards, and now sand-wiched between movie previews.

Buy it. Be happy.

And we buy it all.

So what’s the difference between the things you need and the things you want? To get a handle on this, open your Bible and take a look at Luke 12:27-31. The passage reads:

“Consider how the lilies grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith! And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.”

God wants you to focus your attention on him, not on worldly possessions. He even says don’t worry about what you eat or drink, let alone buying that new high-

tech gadget you have your eye on. After all, stuff happiness is short-lived.

So in order to survive and thrive in this material-obsessed world, choose God first. The rest will fall in place. He promises to fill you with more joy and happiness than anything money can buy.

Go ahead and leave the island to the survivors. Head for the good life.

Peter R Imlah
Youth & Family Minister

CrossTraining

Middle School Youth Ministry

Confirmation

March

- 5 Absolution 6:00pm
- 12 Answering God's Call 6:00pm
- 19 Office of the Keys/
Mentors (6th Graders)6:00pm
- 26 OFF

March 15

Mini-Golf Tournament
Meet at church at 4:00pm



Soul+Fire

High School Youth Ministry – Sundays at 6:00 p.m. in the Youth Room

March

- 2 The Dating Game
 - 9 The Dating Game II
 - 16 The Dating Game III
 - 23 Easter (No Youth Group)
- Youth Serving Easter Breakfast**
- 30 Spring Break (No Youth Group)

Parent Connect:

What “The Dating Game” (above) is all about

Even if they can't actually go anywhere, our students start “going out” as soon as they discover a mutual affection for the opposite sex. Whether they're serial daters, group daters, long-term daters, or non-daters, we need to help students think about how their faith should influence their dating.

In a culture where premarital sex is no longer viewed as taboo and the anonymity of chat rooms and online dating is more popular than ever, our students need help focusing on what matters in relationships.

Whether they're asking tough questions about dating or wondering what the Bible says about the topic, this study will help youth use discussions which will lead to learning.

When God's People Pray

Tuesday Mornings at 6:00a.m.

Beans N Cream
Madison

Begins March 4, 2008

Come discover the transforming power of prayer.

Very Important Voters Meeting

Sunday, March 9 at Noon
in the Fellowship Hall

Agenda:

- Opening prayer
- Sign in
- Reception/removal of
members Approve minutes
- Treasurer's report
- Board & staff reports

Motion to increase 2008 Budget to add lead pastor to staff

- Old business
- New business
- Announce nominating
committee
- Adjourn.

All of Bethlehem's voting
members are urged to attend.

Mission Trip Informational Meeting

Sunday, March 9 at 5:30 p.m.

All youth and their parents and any adults wishing to go on this summer's mission trip should attend.



Easter Breakfast

April 8 8:45-10:30 a.m.

Come for Breakfast!

Make plans to attend our 7th annual Easter Pancake Breakfast on March 23 from 8:45-10:30 a.m. Proceeds from this event will help support the participants in this summer's mission trip to inner-city Chicago Lutheran Schools and other organizations and will be matched by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans up to \$800.

Please sign up at the round table in the narthex if you plan to attend and/or if you would like to donate food items for the breakfast. Food items need to be dropped off in the kitchen by Friday, March 21. Thanks!

Board of Properties Winter Update

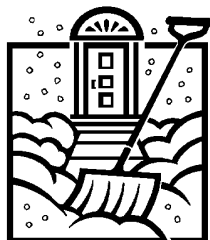
Wow, what a winter! Record snow fall with a bit of rain in between, warm and cold temperature cycles - this has been a very unique year.

I would like to give everyone an update on the church roof and water issues. Tom Heumann has been coordinating the recovery efforts with our insurance company, the insurance adjuster and many of the contractors who will be utilized to effect the repairs at the appropriate time. So far we believe all of the internal damage will be covered by our policy, except for our deductible. However, a lot of the actual repairs will not begin until we have confidence that the leaking is over.

The external roof repair will be focused on a "valley" over the counseling room where the old and new sections of the church meet. We believe the needed repairs will eliminate the main recurring water fall in this room. The rest of the incoming water in the sanctuary will also be fixed with the application of an extensive heat tape system to eliminate the ice dams that have caused most of the problems in the areas other than the counseling room. We have already executed the contract with the roofer to make the needed repairs, but now we need the snow and ice to leave to be able to "get at the roof".

A lot of effort has been extended by the properties board in reaction to the snow and ice: roof raking, over 400 lbs. of ice melt and rock salt applied to ice dams, shoveling the roof and even using a chain saw to cut grooves in the ice to allow the water to drain have been tried.

I would like to recognize Jim Kazda and Jerry Weisensel for their continued and focused efforts in working with this issue. It is also important to recognize Ron Knutson for his ongoing efforts before



Sunday services. Ron comes to the church well in advance of anyone else on Sundays to shovel and salt the walks, a big job in an average year!

When the roofing contractor was at the church he commented that this has been one of the worst years he can remember for ice dams and was actively working with four other churches.

So I'll close as I began, by again thanking the members of the properties board and saying "Wow, what a winter".

Keith McCredie
Properties Board Chair



Lutheran Women in Mission

Our Women's Guild/LWML will mark Bibles for Prison Ministry at the next meeting on Monday, March 3 at 7:00 p.m. All women and confirmed girls are invited to attend. Bring a pen and ruler if desired.

Make a Blanket for Project Linus

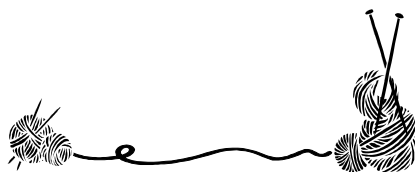


Project Linus is a non-profit organization, dedicated to "Providing Security Through Blankets," for ill or traumatized children and teens.

Blankets should be **home-made of all-new washable materials** (no recycled materials or **wool**) in child or teen-friendly colors or prints (animals are especially popular). 45x60" is the most needed blanket size, but many sizes are useful. They should be at least 30x36" for infants, 45x45" and 45x60" for older kids, up to a maximum of about 45x72."

Blankets may be knitted, crocheted, fleece or quilted. For fringed fleece blankets, it is best to start with a 1 1/2 yd length of 60" wide fleece.

Place finished blankets in the blue box under the Women's Guild table in the hallway.



Call the Prayer Chain

If you have a prayer request for members of Bethlehem, their families or friends call Judy Meyers at 608 837-4992 (home) or Nancy Anderson at 825-3333 (home) or 244-6181 (work) to activate the prayer chain.



MarriageCounsel

Marriage and the Man in the Middle

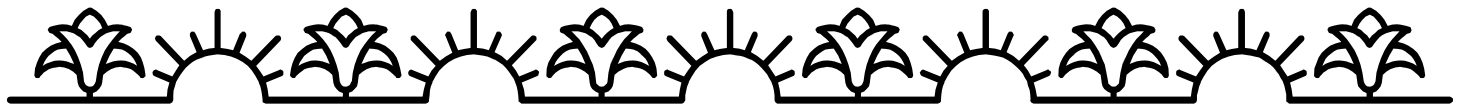
In Ecclesiastes 3:12, Solomon said, "A cord of three strands is not quickly broken." As Christians, we know that the strength of marriage depends on more than a husband and wife. Jesus Christ is the Man in the Middle whom every marriage needs for strength. That doesn't mean that there won't be arguments, problems or selfishness. Because **marriage** is such an important gift, we need to work at it, and the counselors at **Lutheran Counseling and Family Services of Wisconsin** can help us do that. Call 800-291-4513 for a local appointment.

Sponsor Flowers and/or Bulletin

Sign up to sponsor the altar flowers and/or the Sunday bulletin in honor of or in memory of some-one special on the bulletin board next to the nursery. Cost is \$20 for one bouquet or Sunday's bulletin. Flowers may be taken home after the 10:45 service that day. If they are left, they will be taken to one of our shut-ins.



Payment can be placed in one of the "designated gift" envelopes in your offering box and put in the offering plate.



We have tomorrow!

During the Korean conflict, Marguerite Higgins, an award winning reporter covering the war, asked a young soldier, "If I could give you anything in the world you wanted, what would you ask for?"

It was a freezing day. The soldier was eating out of a tin can. His face was a bit muddy. He thought about Miss Higgins' question for a few seconds, and then replied, "Give me tomorrow."

Christians are people who not only have today, but also have tomorrow. That is, because we are people who believe in the resurrected Christ, we believe that whatever comes, what-ever happens to us in this life, we will be victorious. The Bible proclaims that "Death has been swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor. 15:54, NRSV).

St. Paul put it this way: "Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 15:57, NRSV). We who trust in the God who raised Jesus from the dead have tomorrow already assured.

Family Emergency Steward Account ®

Do you have funds set aside that can be used for the unexpected? The Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) offers an investment tool that helps to meet the needs of your family during those surprising times. The Family Emergency Steward Account provides opportunity for investment growth and convenient access to funds. Call 1-800-843-5233 or visit the LCEF Web site www.lcef.org for more information

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

300 Broadway Drive
Sun Prairie, WI 53590
608-837-7446

Worship:

Sundays 8:00 & 10:45 a.m.
Sunday School 9:25 a.m.

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

www.bethlehemlc.org