

Marh 2024

BETHEL MESSENGER

Bethel UCC, W4225 County Line Road, Elkhart Lake, WI 53020
www.bethelucc-ada.org (920) 565-2977

March



From the Pastor

Lent this year came very early. It may have felt odd that Valentine's Day and Ash Wednesday were on the same day. We celebrate Valentine's Day on the date associated with the burial of St. Valentine. We celebrate Easter on the 3rd day after Jesus' death and his rising from the dead. The information in Wikipedia about Saint Valentine is more of a puzzle than an exact explanation of who he was, what he did, and how he died. Perhaps because he lived in the third century and Valentine was a popular name. But it does seem that Saint Valentine was a Priest or Bishop that died trying to save and protect Christians.

Following Jesus isn't always easy. The disciples left behind jobs and family to follow Jesus. Over the centuries since Jesus walked the earth many people were martyred. Perhaps it is because the world does not recognize the miracle of God's love and the gift of Jesus. Or maybe we get distracted by power, wealth, family, work, hobbies, or infinite other things. Maybe we can't fathom the creator of the universe would love humankind enough to leave heaven and walk the earth as a human.

We find ourselves in the middle of Lent. Those Forty Days when we remember Christ's time on earth and seek to follow Jesus closer on the path God has ordained. We try to turn our focus from power, wealth, family, work, and hobbies to our relationship with God. In the scriptures we read, we relive the journey to Jerusalem. We walk with Jesus and his disciples, we sit at his feet and listen to his teaching, we weep as he is nailed to the cross,

and on Easter we will go with the women to the Grave to find it empty.

The question becomes, do we leave and not tell anyone or do we leave with Hallelujahs on our lips? In the Gospel of Mark, it's original ending, the women do not share the Good News. Fear is a reasonable reaction to the empty tomb. Especially if we consider the persecution the Apostles faced as they sought to follow Jesus' command to go into the all world and preach the gospel. Bringing the Good News of the Love of God and the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus the Christ has not been easy. But Bethel is a gift from God and from the saints that have prepared the way for the church.

February and March are the months we remember the new beginning in this church. The time when ancestors of many of you gathered together and decided to take the risk to form a new church family. I am sure it was not easy. They needed a place to worship, to gather to study, to share joys and sorrows. They needed to seek a leader. Yet it was not easy ... they would first gather in a school building, but that was not something they were allowed to do forever. They were faced with a need for a building – land for the building, a place to bury their dead, and a place to harness the horses that brought them to church. God and the ancestors of many of you donated land, the needed materials, worked to build the building, filled out the government paperwork, and reached out to Mission House for a leader.

None of this was easy. But in their desire to follow Jesus and walk the path that God intended for their lives gave them strength to go on. There were still animals to tend, cows to milk, cheese to make, crops to plant and harvest. When we gather in this building,

not the first place Bethel worshiped, we see the fruit of their labors. When we enter the Fellowship Hall we see the effort made in recent times by the people of Bethel. When we travel the roads in the area we see the fruits of their labors on their homesteads, when we drive through the campus of Lakeland we see the fruits of the support the local churches gave to the school. None of this was easy.

On the very last day of this month we will come together to celebrate Easter. Each year Christians all over the world celebrate Easter. Easter is the sign of a new beginning. Each year we are reminded of Jesus' Resurrection! Our hope and our faith arise from this miracle. God, in Jesus' life and death and resurrection has brought a new beginning to the world.

The very first Easter morning was frightening. Jesus' body was missing. The disciples hid away after Jesus was arrested fearing for their own lives. In the Gospel of Mark the women go away and don't say anything because they were afraid.

But other Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles tell us more of the story. It might not have been easy, but the women ran to tell the disciples. The disciples left their hiding place and went out into the world to spread the Good News. Easter was a New Beginning. Easter gives us hope and pulls us closer to a God that sent His only Son to dwell with humankind. We hear the same story that the very first members of Bethel heard. We hear the story they brought with them from Europe. We hear the same story that gave them the strength to do so many things that were not easy.

As we start another year as the family of Bethel, may we do the hard thing. May we follow Jesus more closely. May we seek the path God has ordained for each one of us. May we share the Good News, Alleluia and Amen. Pastor Diane

Thank You

Thank you for the Christmas of gift cards. It is very special to be remembered at Christmas. I chose Amazon gift cards, and

will be using them to purchase books. You may look in the 2nd bedroom of our home and see the three sets of book shelves filled with books and wonder, "Why?" But if you were to stop over you would see stacks of books on the dining table. Different translations of Bibles and multiple hymnals are pulled out weekly. I am no great Biblical scholar and rely on more learned people's knowledge. And perhaps a frivolous book or two to take on vacation!

Thank you! Pastor Diane

During March we will be singing Blessed Be the Tie That Binds as our final hymn each Sunday. It is a small reminder of those that came before us and those yet to come. Indeed, we are blessed by Jesus, our Lord and Savior, to be bound together in this family of faith.



Sunday School Update

Students and Parents-----Please mark your calendars-----VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL will be held during the last week of July. Beginning Monday, [July 29th](#) through Thursday, [August 1st](#). We will meet from 9:00a.m.until 11:30a.m. each day. The next few months more information will be following.

We will celebrate Easter on Palm Sunday, [March 24th](#) with a big Easter egg hunt, pretzel baking and working on an Easter project. The Junior choir will be singing that day and the Junior bell choir. There will not be any Sunday school classes on Easter Sunday, [March 31st](#).

[Sunday](#) school superintendent, [Mardell Blohm](#)

Consistory Minutes February 6th, 2024

Members Present: Chuck Grubisic, Jamie Weidemann, Faye Spindler, Randy Henschel, Dan Huber, Julie Mueller, Pastor Diane Cayemberg.

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 P.M.

Regular Meeting

The secretary's minutes from January were reviewed. There was a motion (Faye/Randy) to approve the minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

The treasurer reports were reviewed for January. There was a motion (Dan/Randy) to approve all the treasurer reports. The motion carried unanimously.

Pastor's Report:

- Maundy Thursday: Pastor Randy has invited Bethel to come to Bethlehem.
- Move May Communion Sunday to May 12th (Mother's Day).

Old Business:

- Wednesday Evening Lenten Services:
 - Soup Supper: 6:15 PM.
 - Worship: 7:00 PM.
- Review of Upcoming Schedule:
 - February 11th – Pastor Diane will be off. Cary Knier Johannes will lead worship.
 - February 14th – Ash Wednesday Service – Lent Begins
 - February 18th – Sunday service
 - February 21st – Lenten service
 - February 25th- Sunday service
 - February 28th- Lenten service
 - March 3rd – Sunday service
 - March 6th- Lenten service
 - March 10th – Sunday service

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New Business

- Need to develop policies specific to the Youth Room i.e., acceptable activities and adult supervision. Also, make sure all devices are safe for youth use.
- Update Policies for the website.
- Jamie updated accounts at National Exchange: Took off Kim Rietbrock and added Chuck Grubisic.
- Robert Eckert turned Cemetery Account books over to David Voss.
- June 30th Raffle Drawing
- Adding to Long Range Plan: New Keyboard
- Review constitution and restructuring Consistory (adding and/or consolidating positions).

There was a motion (Dan/Randy) to adjourn at 7:54 P.M. The motion carried unanimously. We ended with the Lord's prayer.
Respectfully Submitted, Julie Mueller

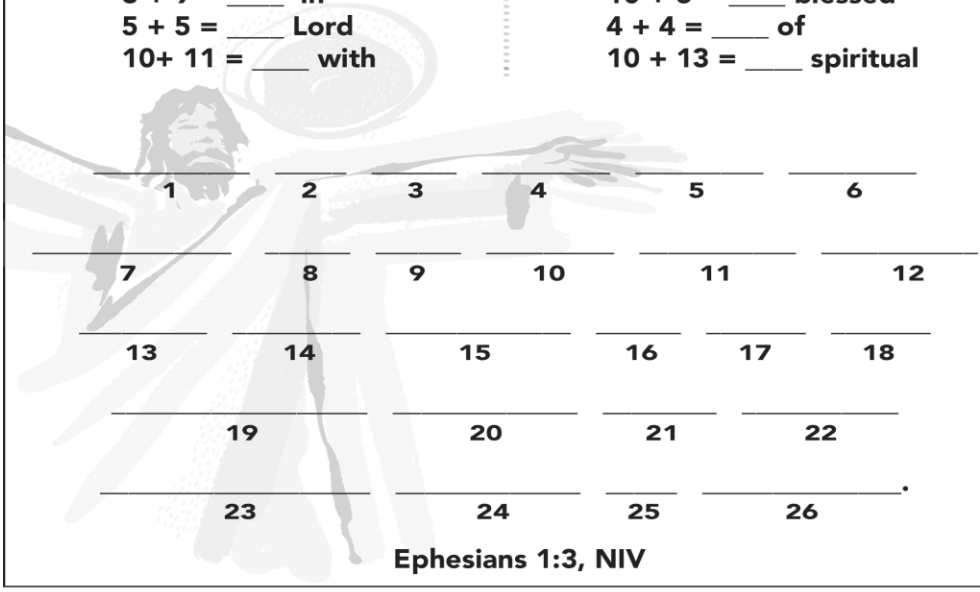


Puzzle!

After solving the equations, write the words on the correct numbered lines below. Complete Ephesians 1:3 (NIV) to discover how God shows his great love for us.

- 14 - 7 = ___ Father
- 10 + 9 = ___ heavenly
- 9 + 9 = ___ the
- 12 + 12 = ___ blessing
- 2 - 1 = ___ Praise
- 7 + 7 = ___ has
- 11 + 11 = ___ every
- 13 + 13 = ___ Christ
- 8 + 8 = ___ us
- 10 + 10 = ___ realms
- 8 + 9 = ___ in
- 5 + 5 = ___ Lord
- 10 + 11 = ___ with

- 10 + 15 = ___ in
- 10 - 5 = ___ God
- 6 - 3 = ___ to
- 12 - 6 = ___ and
- 6 + 6 = ___ Christ
- 18 - 9 = ___ our
- 22 - 11 = ___ Jesus
- 1 + 1 = ___ be
- 7 + 6 = ___ who
- 2 + 2 = ___ the
- 10 + 5 = ___ blessed
- 4 + 4 = ___ of
- 10 + 13 = ___ spiritual



1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22		
23	24	25	26		

Ephesians 1:3, NIV

Answer: Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. Ephesians 1:3, NIV