

Bethlehem Star

A Message from Our Pastor

"I Love to Tell the Story" is a well-known [hymn](#) which was written as a poem by an English evangelist, Katherine Hankey. It was set to music by William G. Fischer. The song was published in 1869. The poem Miss Hankey wrote was written during a long convalescence from a serious illness suffered during a mission in Africa. The story of Jesus love gave her hope and courage and still to this day is a song we still love to sing. This will be our theme for the time of Lent.

The season of Lent begins March 6, Ash Wednesday, 6:30 pm, as we receive ashes on our forehead marking us with the cross of Christ and reminding us of our own mortality. Once again, or perhaps for the first time, we move through the final weeks of Jesus life on earth searching to understand the circumstances and forces that lead to that final week and Jesus death on the cross. We do this to help us understand God's final triumph over death itself and the salvation we have in Jesus Christ. We learn the story so that we can tell the story of God's love in our own lives.

Our midweek services will be on Wednesday's at 6:30 pm alternating between Bethlehem Lutheran and First Lutheran. The theme will be "I Love To tell the Story." We'll be at First on March 13, 27 and April 10, and gather together at Bethlehem on March 20 and April 3. We will be worshiping, praying and "telling the story" of God working in our own lives. I'm still looking for a couple of folks who would be willing to share their own stories of how God has worked in their lives. It is always powerful for us to hear and see the ways God is active in the now.

"Entering the Passion of Jesus: A Beginner's Guide to Holy Week" will be offered as a book and bible study beginning on Thursday, March 7th, and continuing through April 11th. We'll meet at 6:30 in the lounge. Pastor Janet and I will be leading the study at Bethlehem and welcome those from First who would like to come. The study will be offered at First as a 4 week adult study after worship led by Pastor Janet.

(continued)

Lent Information	2
Updates & Concerns	3
World Day of Prayer	4
Resourcing Event	5
Ushers, Greeters	6
Pantry Info to First	7
Spring Retreat	8
Calendar & Misc	



Pastor Message *(continued)*

From Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem to his prayerful agony in Gethsemane, the study brings forward aspects and details that open doors for beginners as well as seasoned readers of the Bible. This class will raise ethical and spiritual questions for us and challenge us in terms of how we all face risk in our Christian Experience. (Cost for Participant Books is \$12 and will be available in the office at Bethlehem or First.)

Lent—a time of listening, praying, learning, and telling of God's love in Christ Jesus.

Pastor Elizabeth

LENT WILL BE HERE SOON!

The **Lenten Midweek services** will center on the theme "I Love to Tell the Story." We want to hear from you! Along with evening prayer we want to hear how God has worked in your lives and who you would like to hear from. Please talk to Pastor Elizabeth if you want to nominate a person or if you would like to be that person! (Bethlehem will be responsible for 3 stories.)

Lent begins . . .

Ash Wednesday

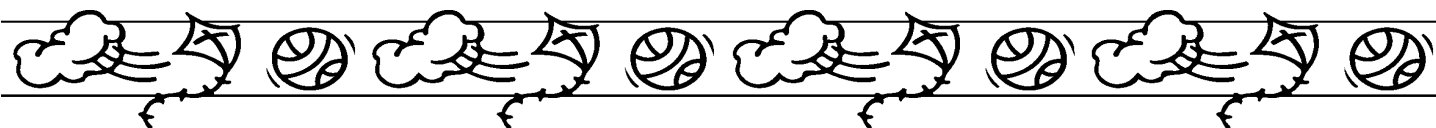
March 6

6:30 p.m. service



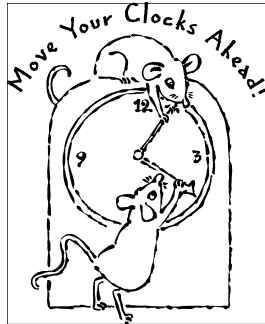
Lutheran World Relief Mission Road Trip

Maryland is beautiful in May! First Lutheran Church, DeKalb, is again sponsoring a week-long Lutheran World Relief mission trip to New Windsor, Maryland, April 27-May 4, 2019. This trip assists in the global mission of LWR to help people in severe distress through its quilts and kits ministry. The week is spent helping pack quilts and kits for overseas shipment, visiting the LWR office in Baltimore, and doing some sightseeing on the travel to and from Maryland. Participation is limited to 16 persons, and there are still several openings. A brochure with further information is available in the Bethlehem Church office. If you have questions or are interested in participating, please call Pastor Dennis or Beverly Heaney at (815) 748-7124 by March 25th.



Membership Updates, Concerns and Thanks

A big thank you to Schnuck's Market for donating all the bread for our food pantry use. Wal-Mart continues to provide us with many items on Wednesdays and Saturdays from the Feeding America Program. We thank them also! And thank you to Pr. Elizabeth & Jim Mascal, Pr. Bob Hansen & NIU students, Carol V. and Sonja H, Ted & Sandy W. for picking up items.



March 10-2am

HONORING GRADS

*We will be honoring graduating seniors on **May 12** this year! If you know of a graduating senior (high school or college), please contact the church office. Thank you!*



DINNER TO BENEFIT FRIENDS OF THE SYCAMORE LIBRARY

Join us on Friday, March 1, from 4-8 p.m. for dinner at the Sycamore Veterans Home, 121 S. California St. in Sycamore, for an all-you-can-eat buffet to benefit the Sycamore Library. Eat there or carry out. You can get tickets from Jerry & Annette or from the Library:—\$15 advance, \$8 ages 6-9, Kids 5 & under free or at the door—\$16, \$9 ages 6-9, under 5 free.

JESSICA B. HAS A BIRTHDAY IN MARCH

(March 25). She would love birthday cards and notes! Send to: Jessica Breuer
Y15555—P.O. Box 1000
Lincoln, IL 62656

January Financials

From Members & Friends	\$14,486.92
Expenses	<u>12,292.66</u>
Total	\$ 2,194.26

Weekly Divorce Care Group

*Begins March 6, 7-9 p.m.
Meets at Crossview Church
150 Bethany Rd. DeKalb
(815) 756-8729*



Little Lambs Preschool (Immanuel Lutheran Church) registration begins for spring semester on March 18, 8:30 a.m. Classes are open to potty-trained children ages 3-5 years. Class options are available for two, three or five mornings a week.
(815)756-6669 for information



Saturday, March 2
10:00 a.m.
Salvation Army
830 Grove St.

Remember if you signed up to pick up your STAR at church then we won't put it in the mail. Thanks for saving us \$\$\$ on stamps!

Everyday Better Initiative

It's time for an update! Things have been quiet around Everyday Better Initiative. Our Board has been working on preparations for our school-building project in Sierra Leone and a final fund-raising push to make the project happen! This \$7000 project will include moving walls to better utilize space, adding a dropped ceiling for sound control, and finishing of extra classrooms, libraries, and other learning spaces.

We'll be traveling to Sierra Leone in August. Going in the summer allows us to do construction while the kids are on summer holidays. It also means we'll be in Salone during the "Raining Season." Like many tropical countries, Sierra Leone has two primary seasons: dry season (Oct-April or so) and rainy season (May to November). Rainy seasons can be a little bit cooler, which some of our board members are really excited about.

We have been working on planning budgets for supplies needed so we can hit the ground running! Our board members personally pay 100% of their own travel and lodging for these trips which means all donations are completely used in-country to fund infrastructure and development.

While we'll work to provide structural sustainability, local staff are working to increase funding to ensure a sustainable business plan for the school. Higher wages ensure better teachers and better education for the future leaders of Salone!

We are looking for partners to join us in the work of making the world a better place! Contact us at (everydaybetterinitiative@gmail.com) or check out our website (www.everyday-better.org) for more information on how to make a donation.



Lynnea

2019 Congregation Resourcing Event March 9

The 2019 Congregation Resourcing Event will take place on March 9, at Kishwaukee College, 9:15—3:15 p.m. The keynote presenter will be the Rev. Dr. Dave Daubert. His address to the group: "Being Disciples Comes First."

Many workshops are available include topics such as: Administration/Council/Treasurers, Faith Formation and Growth, Education, Evangelism/Outreach/Hospitality, Global/Inter-Faith, Leadership, Social Justice, Spirituality/Prayer/Health & Wellness, Stewardship, and Youth/Young Adult/Family Ministry.

Register at nisynod.org/cre or talk to Pastor Elizabeth. Find out more nisynord.org/cre.

World Day of Prayer

This year, the Women of the World Day of Prayer Committee of Slovenia call us to worship with the invitation from Luke: "Come, everything is ready." The table is ready and open to everyone. God's house is to be filled with joy and presence, to smell like food, to be occupied with conversation, no matter the excuses of the privileged. The door of God's house is open to those from the streets. Let's build and strengthen the communities around God's table.

We are invited to learn about Slovenia's history and rich culture. The women share their stories of intergenerational wisdom, traditions, and experiences of God's profound love.

One phase in the worship service especially captures the ideas we will explore: "Welcoming God, in your love, you have prepared a table for all, and you inspire us to open our hearts and our homes to offer a place to the ones who are not yet at the table." Who isn't at your table yet? Who isn't at your World Day of Prayer service . . . yet? The women of Slovenia challenge us all to widen our circles, to expand our communities.

World Day of Prayer's guiding principles affirm "prayer is rooted in listening to God and to one another." Through the worship service, we listen to the people to Slovenia. They take us to their communities and through their concerns. Their everyday life is woven into their prayers. They invite us to follow prayer with action. WDP's motto "informed prayer leads to prayerful action" affirms that prayer and action are inseparable and that both have immeasurable influence.

Join us!

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

SATURDAY, MARCH 2, 10 A.M.

**THE SALVATION ARMY
830 GROVE ST. DEKALB**

A Letter Sent to First Lutheran

Three times Peter answered, “Yes Lord, you know I love you” to Jesus’ question of “Do you love me”? Then Jesus said, “Feed my sheep.” It is from this scripture that Bethlehem Lutheran Church takes the name of our food pantry. More than 35 years ago at Bethlehem started a food closet first serving a few members and friends with food items donated by church members gradually evolving into a full food pantry that now serves an average of 1,450 clients each month. In 2018 Feed My Sheep served 17,397 individuals many who are children. We often don’t realize how many of our neighbors are food insecure or what a tremendous help it can be for a family to have help with food during a job loss, freeing up financial resources to pay bills that just don’t stop.

Most of our volunteers, fifteen to twenty a week, are former clients who desire to give back in a way that makes a difference in people’s lives and in gratitude for support that they needed at one time. The pantry operates on a client choice policy that is recommended by the major food banks. It’s a user friendly approach that is believed to be most respectful of people and least wasteful of food. Clients shop and choose the food they like and volunteers can assure that less abundant items are shared with all. Volunteers are there to serve. In 2018, our hours were Tuesdays from 3 – 5 PM and Thursday from 9:30 – 11:30 AM. We receive purchased and commodity foods twice a month from the Northern Illinois Food Bank and volunteers pick up surplus food from Walmart twice a week and Schnucks once a week.

In conjunction with our food pantry, we operate a community garden providing hundreds of pounds of fresh vegetables each summer. Plants for our garden are provided by the DeKalb County Community Gardens while we bring all of the rest of the “people power” to plant, tend, and harvest the bounty.

Feed My Sheep is a wonderful asset for our entire community but we do need help. We are fully funded by the congregation with help from our Mission Endowment Fund but as our Bethlehem community grows smaller and older we need people power to continue to serve our neighbors. If you have a few hours a week to make a difference in your neighbor’s lives, give us a call and we’ll put you to work!

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, your partner in Christ.
815-758-3203 or email us at belcdekalb@comcast.net

Opportunity to Volunteer in Senior Services

Recently, Family Service Agency received funding from the *Retirement Research Foundation* to implement *Senior Connections*. Volunteers at least 21 years old are paired with older adults who could benefit from friendly visits. Through regular visits, *Senior Connections* paves the way for friendships to develop. It’s been observed that warm, caring relationships significantly impact the level of loneliness and isolation felt by older adults. *Senior Connections* will provide opportunities for friendship to older adults in the hopes that they can remain independent in their own homes, one of many goals for Family Service Agency. Those who are interested in volunteering can contact the director at (815) 758-8616.

Women of the ELCA Spring Retreat



NORTHERN ILLINOIS SYNOD
presents



GOD FOR ALL SEASONS RETREAT *An ELCA women's retreat*

SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 2019

*Bible study led by Esther Prabhakar
Special music presentation by Peg Lehman
Worship Service led by Pastor Jessica Bakken*

The retreat is at LOMC, Oregon, Illinois

*Scholarship application deadline is March 15, 2019
Copies available in lounge*

EASTER LILY ORDER FORM **2019**

To order your plant, please complete this form and give to an usher; place in the offering plate, or **leave in the church office no later than Sunday, April 7.** Please make your check payable to Bethlehem Lutheran Church and include with your plant order.

_____ plant(s) @ \$13.00 each

Name of Donor



In memory of

In honor of

Easter Sunday is April 21.