

The Bethlehem Star

Empowered by Jesus to be His hands and feet, Bethlehem is a caring Community called to be His compassionate presence in this world and to build community by reaching out with the life-giving Word to those in our neighborhoods who are wearied and burdened by life's demands and changing Circumstances.

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH
201 E. Watauga Avenue
Johnson City, TN 37601
Rev. Steven Harmon, Pastor
Church: 423-926-5261

August 2020, Volume XX, No. 8

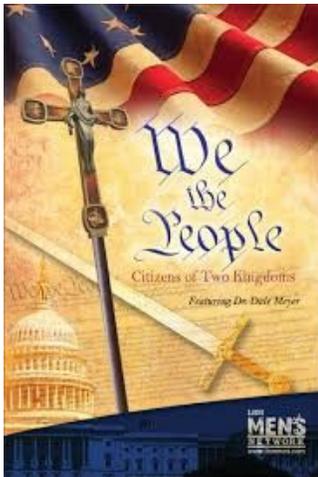
Reach Up, Reach In, Reach Out



**SUNDAY, September 6th,
Harris Pavilion, Rotary Park
at 10:30 a.m.**

There will be only one service that day with no Sunday School, Bible Class.

Depending on the COVID-19 numbers and regulations at the park, we may have to move the picnic to the church. Details will be forthcoming a little later, but we wanted to make sure everyone is aware of the event. Any comments can be directed to any of the Board members. Continue to watch the bulletin for updates.



Citizens of Two Kingdoms

Our monthly Saturday class will shift from studying the Church of Jesus Christ or the Latter Day Saints to exploring Martin Luther's doctrine of

Christians living as citizens of two kingdoms. In an election year, this Lutheran Hour Ministries three session is timely as well as informative. We'll hold our first session on **Saturday, September 12th at 9AM** in the Fellowship Hall. As usual, everyone is invited so plan on attending and bring a friend.

Happy August Birthdays to

Anna Banner, 102 years old (1),
Peggy Sartoris (11),
Ava Barton (13),
Leslie Padgett (15),
Blaine Donaldson (16),
Kirby Fetzer (17),
David Stratton (21),
Courtney Scruggs &
Beverly Maupin (23),
Charlotte Woody (24),
Emrie Scruggs (26),
Henrietta Paulsen (27),
Bueford Stanley, 91 years old (28),
Larry Larson (31)





Notes from the Pastor's Desk

We are Jesus' hands and feet.

I remember decades ago the Bell Telephone commercial that said, "Long distance is the next best thing to being there." Today, with Skype and Facetime, we can see those we are talking to over the phone, tablet or computer.

It is the next best thing to being there, but it still comes in a distant second. There really is no substitute for personal contact – for face to face encounters. My experience with facetime is that it actually increases the desire for that personal contact – especially with grandchildren.

In our current situation as we deal with the effects of this pandemic, we can certainly affirm that social media and facetime are the next best thing to being there. Live streaming worship has provided opportunities to worship together while still limiting physical contact.

But, as good as those benefits might be, they are still a virtual reality. We can still maintain a connection, but those realities still lack a true physical connection. We can still worship on-line, but we miss the physical reality of being surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses.

The dark side of all those on-line connections is that it encourages isolation – especially in these times of limited physical contact. If the devil is indeed like a prowling lion seeking whom he might devour, we need to know that's how lions hunt. They separate. They isolate with the intent to catch and consume. Separated from the herd, we become easy prey.

But God is at work in Christ and through His Word to gather in – to remove the separations caused by the consequences of sin. Whether it is our sins or the sin at work in the world through something like the corona virus causing those separations, God is at work to gather in His sheep.

The primary example of God's gathering work is His invitation to come each week into His house – to be physically present with Him and with each other.

Jesus comes to us in the bread and wine to be present with us – to touch us. We receive the bread and wine and are brought into intimate contact with Jesus as we also receive His body and blood in, with and under the bread and wine.

He invites us to come - physically – to His table and receive the peace and assurance that comes as we answer His invitation. And we need to know that, even in these trying times, God does not invite us into a dangerous situation. He in fact, prepares a table for us in the presence of our enemies.

I know that many of you are staying away from worship out of concerns for your health and for the health of others. Some of you, who have been coming, have not participated in the Lord's Supper for the same reasons. You have to follow your conscience and do what you believe is best for you and your neighbor.

And while God can deliver His gifts to you through His Word, even over the internet, I just want to remind you of what is missing from your experience at home. You miss that concrete physical connection with your brothers and sisters in Christ and with Christ Himself through the bread and wine.

In the meantime, continue to enjoy and participate our worship together via live stream. My prayer is that experience, even though it's the next best thing to being here, will increase a desire in you for the physical communion that is available to you every Sunday. I continue to pray that God will guard and keep you in the one true faith so that when all of this mess is over, we can once again enjoy unrestricted fellowship together with one another and with Christ our Lord.

God comes and invites us to join Him in His house and at His table on a regular basis. During this time of restrictions, we will be *live streaming our worship service at*

We are fortunate that the call for distancing does not prevent us from worshipping together. As we answer God's invitation, here is the schedule of worship times. See you there!

August 2 . . . 9th Sunday after Pentecost

8:00 am

SERMON TEXT: Matthew 14:13-21

SERMON THEME: "Food for the Soul"

LITURGY: **Blended w/ Communion**

10:45 am

SERMON TEXT: Matthew 14:13-21

SERMON THEME: "Food for the Soul"

LITURGY: **Blended w/ Communion**

August 9 . . . 10th Sunday after Pentecost

8:00 am

SERMON TEXT: Matthew 14:22-33

SERMON THEME: "Why Did You Doubt?"

LITURGY: **Divine Service 1 w/ Communion**

10:45 am

SERMON TEXT: Matthew 14:22-33

SERMON THEME: "Why Did You Doubt?"

LITURGY: **Divine Service 1 w/ Communion**

August 16 . . . 11th Sunday after Pentecost

8:00 am

SERMON TEXT: Matthew 15:21-28

SERMON THEME: "Eating Crumbs"

LITURGY: **Divine Service 3 w/ Communion**

10:45 am

SERMON TEXT: Matthew 15:21-28

SERMON THEME: "Eating Crumbs"

LITURGY: **Divine Service 3 w/ Communion**

August 23 . . . 12th Sunday after Pentecost

8:00 am

SERMON TEXT: Matthew 16:13-20

SERMON THEME: "Who is Jesus?"

LITURGY: **Divine Service 4 w/ Communion**

10:45 am

SERMON TEXT: Matthew 16:13-20

SERMON THEME: "Who is Jesus?"

LITURGY: **Divine Service 4 w/ Communion**

August 30 . . . 13th Sunday after Pentecost

8:00 am

SERMON TEXT: Matthew 16:21-28

SERMON THEME: "Cross Bearing"

LITURGY: **Divine Service 4 w/ Communion**

10:45 am

SERMON TEXT: Matthew 16:21-28

SERMON THEME: "Cross Bearing"

LITURGY: **Blended w/ Communion**



Sew Crazy



Sew Crazy is bringing back our most popular and requested project: mastectomy aprons for cancer patients. Starting this month, the group will begin construction of both large & small aprons at their monthly meeting on Saturday, August 15. These aprons will be delivered to the Cancer Center at Holston Valley where they will be distributed throughout the Ballad Health Care System to both men & women throughout the Tri-Cities area. We will have kits cut out if you would like to come join us for some simple sewing to benefit so many in our area. Our goal this year is 200 + aprons. 2020 makes the 9th year Sew Crazy has sewn these easy items and we welcome all who would like to join us! Currently several of our members come to meetings to pick up supplies and sew the projects at home. If that appeals to you, please let us know! Apron turn in will be at our October meeting. Sew Crazy is free and open to all who sew.
<http://www.sew-crazy.org>
 and we are also active on Facebook.
 Search Sew Crazy.

Statistical Report for July

<u>Attendance</u>	<u>8:00 a.m.</u>	<u>10:45 a.m.</u>	<u>Offerings</u>	
July 5	24	44	General Fund	\$ 6,030.00
			Soc. Min. Upgrade	\$ 400.00
July 12	29	29	General Fund	\$18,000.00
			Federwitz Mission	\$ 100.00
			Social Ministry	\$ 2,000.00
			Soc. Min. Upgrade	\$ 2,000.00
			Food Pantry	\$ 100.00
			Lutheran World Relief	\$ 2,000.00
			Melting Pot	\$ 20.00
			Rummage Sale	\$ 640.00
July 19	24	31	General Fund	\$ 3,385.00
			Soc. Min. Upgrade	\$ 150.00
			Melting Pot	\$ 90.00
			Federwitz Mission	\$ 50.00
			Center for Bio-Ethical Reform for Annie & Heidi Whaley	\$ 100.00
July 26	31	43	General Fund	\$ 7,011.00
			Federwitz Mission	\$ 50.00
			Social Media Upgrade	\$ 300.00
			Melting Pot	\$ 89.86
			Food Pantry	\$ 40.00
On-line Giving in July				\$ 3,460.00
Spending Guidelines approved for 2020				\$272,805.04
Offerings needed each week in 2020				\$ 5,246.25

Serving This Month

	8:00 a.m. ELDER OF THE MONTH: Ted Wilson & Larry Larson USHERS	10:45 a.m. ELDER OF THE MONTH: James Wudtke USHERS
8/2	Ted Wilson Ann Larson Tom Watson	Frank deNobriga Dylan Treece Tim Treece
8/9	Tom Watson Ted Wilson Ann Larson	John Port Nick Leone Ben Wohlford
8/16	Ted Wilson Tom Watson Adam DeMello	Lee Talbert Robb Whaley Silas Whaley
8/23	Ann Larson Roy Knispel Larry Larson	John Port Andy Tester Ben Wohlford
8/30	Youth Communion: Larry Larson, Roy Knispel, Adam DeMello	Youth Communion: Tim Treece Dylan Treece, Cary Allen

Altar Guild for August: Mae Bullard & Becky Kueck



The Church office is open

Monday - Friday
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Saturday:
9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Susan is off on Thursdays
Pastor is off on Fridays
Voice mail and e-mails
are checked regularly.





Live Streaming of the 10:45 service will continue each week.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 Worship, 8:00 a.m. Bible Study & Sunday School, 9:15 a.m. Worship, 10:45 a.m. Ensemble Rehearsal, 5:00 p.m.	3 Memorial Service for Hugh Pruitt 10:00 a.m. VA Cemetery	4	5 Hand Bell Practice, 6:00 p.m. Instruction Class, 7:30 p.m.	6	7	1 Mormon Class, 9:00 a.m.
9 Worship, 8:00 a.m. Bible Study & Sunday School, 9:15 a.m. Worship, 10:45 a.m. Ensemble Practice, 5:00 p.m.	10 Hand Up Board, 4:00 p.m. Esther-Mary Circle, 7:00 p.m.	11 Ladies Bible Study, 10:00 a.m.	12 Hand Bell Practice, 5:30 p.m. Board of Directors, 6:00 p.m. Instruction Class, 7:30	13	14	8 Youth Group, 6:30 = 9 p.m.
16 Worship, 8:00 a.m. Bible Study & Sunday School, 9:15 a.m. Worship, 10:45 a.m. Ensemble Practice, 5:00 p.m.	17	18	19 Hand Bell Practice, 6:00 p.m. Instruction Class, 7:30 p.m.	20	21	15 Sew Crazy, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Youth Group, 6:30 - 9 p.m.
23 Worship, 8:00 a.m. Bible Study & Sunday School, 9:15 a.m. Worship, 10:45 a.m. Ensemble Practice, 5:00 p.m.	24	25 Ladies Bible Study, 10:00 a.m.	26 Hand Bell Practice, 6:00 p.m. Instruction Class, 7:30 p.m.	27	28 Prepare bag lunches for Melting Pot, 9-00 a.m.	22 Youth Group, 6:30 - 9 p.m.
30 YOUTH SUNDAY Worship, 8:00 a.m. Bible Study and Sunday School, 9:15 a.m. Worship, 10:45 a.m. Ensemble Practice, 5:00 p.m.	31					29 Men's Breakfast and Bible Study, 9:00 a.m.

Family Promise Update



Hello! As our Family Promise Coordinator, I wanted to provide some basic information about this outreach opportunity (for those who may be new to us) and share updates about how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted this program.

Family Promise is a national organization that helps homeless and low-income families work their way back to independence. Locally, a network of 45 partnering faith congregations and their volunteers provide food, overnight shelter and compassionate assistance to homeless families. During the day, families are transported to a Day Center where they work on their goals and objectives with case managers and other volunteers. This program is unique in that it helps families with children and keeps them together and requires them to actively work toward changing their circumstances so that they do not remain homeless.

We, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, serve as a support congregation to Grandview Christian Church, who actually houses families several weeks throughout the year. We provide meals and stay with the families two evenings per week, typically Tuesdays and Fridays (not overnight, but just for the evening until the overnight host arrives, usually around 9pm).

Unfortunately, during the pandemic, Family Promise has not been able to host families in churches, as normal. As an alternative, families are staying in a hotel for the week, with the host and support churches covering the cost. The cost to house each family in a hotel for the week is \$411.88. In lieu of serving meals, families are also provided a \$100 gift card to a grocery store for use to supplement their food stamps. Throughout the pandemic, the number of families has been limited to three.

We are scheduled to care for families for the week of September 6-12. How can you help? Please consider helping by making a monetary donation to help cover the cost of the hotel rooms and gift cards for groceries. Grandview Christian Church will be contributing for the week as well. Please make donations payable to Bethlehem Lutheran Church and indicate it is for Family Promise.

As Jesus' hands and feet, this is a way to truly serve others in our community who are in need. If you have further questions, please feel free to contact me at megan-denob@gmail.com or 571-330-8914.

Megan de Nobriga