



# 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

March 2021, Volume XXI, No. 3

**Reach Up, Reach In, Reach Out**



**Lenten Suppers will be provided each week during Lent on Wednesday's through March 24, at 6:00 p.m.**

Various families and individuals in the congregation will be asked to provide the meal. These meals should be kept very simple – soup, sandwiches and salads. Reservations will be required for each meal so those providing the food will know how much to prepare.

Sign-up sheets will be on the bulletin board.

## **WINTER STORM RELIEF IN TEXAS THROUGH LUTHERAN CHURCH CHARITIES**

Lutheran Church Charities is seeking monetary donations and plumbers to help storm victims in Texas. As deadly winter storms moved through the Southern US last month, the people of Texas were hit especially hard because of widespread utility system failures from days of subfreezing temperatures. Now many in the state are facing food and water shortages along with property damage from freezing pipes and other storm-related catastrophes. Lutheran Church Charities (LCC), working closely with the Texas District - LCMS, is coordinating a relief effort to provide both financial resources and volunteers (especially plumbers) to help Texas residents recover from this series of devastating impacts. We also pray for the relief efforts of Lutheran Church Charities as they once again reach out to serve in the name of Jesus.

**LCMS Life Conference**   
MARCH 19-20, 2021

**SAVE THE DATE**

**Making Disciples > VALUING LIFE**

Join us as we build a team for new Life Ministry challenges. Individuals and congregations can be a part of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod's international effort to gather a cohort of highly informed, dedicated team members who are speaking up for the sanctity of human life and caring for our neighbors. REGISTER TODAY! We are excited to feature many experts on Life Ministry topics in the upcoming Making Disciples > Valuing Life conference. Presenters include: Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Gibbs emeritus professor Concordia Seminary Sarah Gulseth, KFUO and the Lutheran Ladies Lounge podcast Dr. Donna Harrison, AAPLOG Rev. Dr. James Lamb, Lutheran Family Service Stephanie Neugebauer, Friends for Life podcast Rev. Peter Preus, author and emeritus LCMS pastor Rev. Michael Saleminck, Lutherans for Life Deac. Dr. Kim Schave, Humanitri Rev. Dr. Kevin Voss, Concordia University Wisconsin Rev. Roberto Weber, Pastor en la Iglesia Evangelica Luterina Argentina Rev. Dr. Lucas Woodford, Minnesota South District and many more Presentations will be available on-demand as soon as you log into the conference. Included are special conference tracks with sessions created for Lutheran school ministries as well as a Spanish track. Registration is open now. To register for the conference or learn more information, visit [lcms-life.org](http://lcms-life.org).



## Notes from the Pastor's Desk

We are Jesus' hands and feet.

The new normal is once again on my mind this month. Again, as baptized members of the Body of Christ, we already live in a new normal that is contrary to the norms of this world. We have died to sin and have been raised to life in Christ. We are no longer prisoners under the mastery of sin, death and the devil. We have been set free from those chains by Jesus' saving work to live as dearly loved children of God. As Luther would say, "This is most certainly true."

The new normal for the world may continue to stress physical distance and wearing of face masks as prudent steps in maintaining good health and bringing the spread of the COVID virus under control. In that context, we need to ask God to help us see how we can continue to join Christ in His mission to build community – to build the Church.

The transition from isolation to in-person community won't be like the flipping of a switch. It's a process that requires patience and a clear understanding of who we are as members of the Body of Christ.

Paul writes in Ephesians 4:14-16d these words: "Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every word of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into Him who is the Head, that, Christ. From Him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work."

There is a lot to deal with in those three verses and each point could easily become the focus of a dissertation. For the sake of brevity, I'm going to focus on just a couple.

The first is that the work of building community is God's work. He is at work to call and to gather. He is at work through His Word to cause us to grow up into Him – into Christ – who is the Head of the Church. He is at work to gather together. He is at work to remove those things that breed separation and isolation.

We've seen some of that in the live-streaming of our worship services and the Wednesday evening class. Those have been opportunities to maintain connections with those who choose to stay at home. It has also been a way to make connection with those in the community who are looking for a word of hope.

The phone conversations, cards, emails and texts that have been used to maintain connections have also been a blessing in these trying times. And I look for that to continue as we look out for one another – as God continues to do His work of community building. We could add to that list taking time to pray for and with each other.

We need to continue to look for ways to maintain and build community. That is the challenge that I place on myself and ask you to prayerfully consider. What I'm challenging myself to do is to take the time to connect – to spend time before or after worship or at one of the Lenten suppers – with someone I don't know well or really don't know at all.

If I do that, if we all do that, then the whole body, as Paul writes, will be built up in love as each part does its work. And that's the second part. We are all a necessary part of that work. As we speak the truth in love with one another and trust God to do His work, we will, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, meet the challenges set before us and join with Jesus as He calls and gather us into His arms.

God comes and invites us to join Him in His house and at His table on a regular basis. As we answer His invitation, here is the schedule of worship times this month. See you there!

March 3 . . . Lenten Vespers <b>7:00 pm</b> SERMON TEXT: Lamentations 3:1–9, 19–33 SERMON THEME: "The Disposition of the Penitent" LITURGY: <b>Blended</b>	March 14 . . . 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent <b>8:00 am</b> SERMON TEXT: John 3:14–21 SERMON THEME: "God So Loved the World" LITURGY: <b>Divine Service 1 w/ Communion</b> <b>10:45 am</b> SERMON TEXT: John 3:14–21 SERMON THEME: "God So Loved the World" LITURGY: <b>Divine Service 1 w/ Communion</b>	<b>10:45 am</b> SERMON TEXT: Mark 10:32–45 SERMON THEME: "To Serve or Not To Serve" LITURGY: <b>LITURGY: Divine Service 3 w/ Communion</b>
March 7 . . . 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Lent <b>8:00 am</b> SERMON TEXT: John 2:13–25 SERMON THEME: "Grace for Sale" LITURGY: <b>Divine Service 4 w/ Communion</b> <b>10:45 am</b> SERMON TEXT: John 2:13–25 SERMON THEME: "Grace for Sale" LITURGY: <b>Divine Service 4 w/ Communion</b>	March 17 . . . Lenten Vespers <b>7:00 pm</b> SERMON TEXT: Isaiah 55:6–13 SERMON THEME: "Hope in the Lord" LITURGY: <b>Blended</b>	March 24 . . . Lenten Vespers <b>7:00 pm</b> SERMON TEXT: Micah 7:18–20 SERMON THEME: "Wait Patiently on the Lord" LITURGY: <b>Blended</b>
March 10 . . . Lenten Vespers <b>7:00 pm</b> SERMON TEXT: Exodus 20:1–17 SERMON THEME: "Pray for a Penitent Heart" LITURGY: <b>Blended</b>	March 21 . . . 5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent <b>8:00 am</b> SERMON TEXT: Mark 10:32–45 SERMON THEME: "To Serve or Not To Serve" LITURGY: <b>LITURGY: Divine Service 3 w/ Communion</b>	March 28 . . . Palm Sunday <b>8:00 am</b> SERMON TEXT: John 12:12–19 SERMON THEME: "Loud Hosannas" LITURGY: <b>Divine Service 4 w/ Communion</b> <b>10:45 am</b> SERMON TEXT: John 12:12–19 SERMON THEME: "Loud Hosannas" LITURGY: <b>Divine Service 4 w/ Communion</b>

## Sew Crazy



Sew Crazy meets in March with continued plans to sew baby items for the Pregnancy Support Center of Johnson County (Mountain City).

This month the group will be making infant sleep sacks and kimono tops. Sew Crazy is free, open to anyone who sews or who would like to help out. We are currently looking for help with cutting fabric into 6x6 squares to be donated to a local quilting charity.

All fabric is supplied. Please contact us if you are interested in helping.

There is no cost to join us! For additional information on the group:  
<http://www.sew-crazy.org>.  
 We are also active on Facebook



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.



## Statistical Report for February

Attendance	<u>8:00 a.m.</u>	<u>10:45 a.m.</u>	Offerings	
February 7	10	36	General Fund	\$ 4,605.00
			Family Promise	\$ 400.00
			Shaneyfelt Mission	\$ 50.00
			Youth Ministry	\$ 400.00
February 14	33	41	General Fund	\$ 6,070.00
			Shaneyfelt Mission	\$ 50.00
			Melting Pot	\$ 50.00
February 21	28	55	General Fund	\$ 3,607.75
			Shaneyfelt Mission	\$ 50.00
			Melting Pot	\$ 75.00
February 28	33	50	General Fund	\$ 7,530.00
			Sanctuary Repair	\$ 100.00
			Good Samaritan	\$ 50.00
February 17, Ash Wednesday		62	General Fund	\$ 342.00
			Fetzer Memorial	\$ 100.00
February 24 – Lenten Service		57	General Fund	\$ 750.00
On-line Giving in February				\$ 2,110.00
Spending Guidelines for 2021				\$ 287,740.89
Offerings needed each week in 2021				\$ 5,333.48



Come join us for a fun evening of games and fellowship for all ages

**SATURDAY, MARCH 20,  
6 pm - ???**

Bring a snack to share, and if you have a game you've been wanting to try, bring that too. Last month we played Shirts & Pants, Code Names, Taboo, Uno, Trouble, and Pop the Cup (ask David), maybe others? There will surely be something interesting to everyone, so feel welcome to pop in!

## Happy March Birthdays to

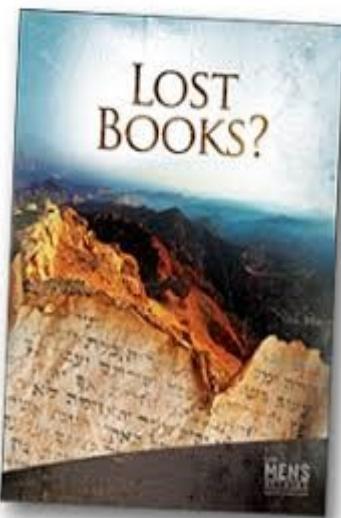
Wayne Boeker (7th), Lee Talbert (8th),  
 Megan deNobriga & Brittany Allen (9th), Samantha Joyner (11th),  
 James Wudtke & Joshua Weishaar (12th), Ann Larson (14th),  
 Deborah Talbert, Eli Barton & Dan Harmon (18th),  
 Stephanie Shaneyfelt & Mia Whaley (21st),  
 Jerit Wohlford (22nd), Hermann Kueck & Judy Minor (24th), Paula  
 Baskin & Betty Jeane Sotherland (26th),  
 Margaret Loesel (28th)



We had another awesome month together throughout the month of February. We were able to listen to Patti Harmon tell us about her ministry over the years through the gift of being able to sign God's word with her hands to those that are hearing impaired or completely deaf. Thank you, Mrs. Harmon, for sharing your beautiful testimony with us. With that said, our youth group needs you!!! We would love to hear from you throughout 2021. We are starting a new way of doing our youth meetings on Saturday nights. We are asking that you would prayerfully consider sharing your testimony with us. We want to get to know you in a deeper way by hearing about your faith in Christ. We are also thankful for Susan Burkey for coming this past January to share what God has done in her life and how she is spreading His love with others. Please be praying about coming to share your story/testimony with us. We're in the early stages of planning a trip to The Bible Museum in Washington DC. We would like to open this trip with the youth to the entire congregation. If you would be interested in traveling with us to visit the museum, please speak with David Nutter. We were planning to do a trip to Gatlinburg for the day on Saturday, February 20<sup>th</sup>, but the weather was bad, and we had to cancel. We're going to try to do this trip again on either Saturday, March 6<sup>th</sup> or on Saturday, March 20<sup>th</sup>. We'll look at the weather and when the majority of the youth would be able to go. Our youth will do a little hiking, putt putt, and a church van tour of the old Gatlinburg. While we're there, we're going to be looking for ways we can minister to people by asking them how we can pray for them and then pray with them. We will continue to have our apologetics class every Sunday morning at 9:15am. The following is what we have on the calendar for our youth group for this upcoming month.

#### Month of March at a Glance:

Saturday, March 6<sup>th</sup> .... Possible trip to Gatlinburg or Meeting at Bethlehem at 6pm (TBA)  
Sunday, March 7<sup>th</sup> ..... Sunday School Class from 9:15-10:30 Sunday  
Sunday, March 14<sup>th</sup> ..... Sunday School Class from 9:15-10:30 Sunday  
Sunday, March 14<sup>th</sup> ..... Youth on Spring Break from School for the Week  
Saturday, March 20<sup>th</sup> ..... Youth Trip to Gatlinburg (alternate plan) or Meeting at the Church  
Sunday, March 21<sup>st</sup> ..... Sunday School Class from 9:15-10:30 Sunday  
Saturday, March 27<sup>th</sup> ..... Youth Group Meeting at the Church  
Sunday, March 28<sup>th</sup> ..... Youth Group Meeting at Bethlehem at 6pm (Stuffing Easter Eggs)



## Lost Books ?

The fourth and final session of our Lost Books study will take place on

**Saturday, March 6th,**

**beginning at 9AM in the Fellowship Hall.**

In this session, we'll look at the Gospel of Thomas, one of the Gnostic documents found contained in the Nag Hammadi codex in 1945. We'll also look at the Didache, a book that many of the early Christian fathers thought should be included in the Bible. Finally, we'll preview our next series, Death . . . Then What? These sessions are open to everyone so don't hesitate to attend and bring a friend.



Live Streaming of the 10:45  
Sunday service will continue  
each week along with the  
Wednesday Evening Lenten  
Services.



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 Hand Bell Practice, 5:30 p.m. Lenten Supper, 6:00 p.m. Lenten Worship, 7:00 p.m.	4	5	6 “Lost Books” Class, 9:00 a.m. Youth Group to Gatlinburg
7 Worship, 8:00 a.m. Bible Study, Sunday School & Confirmation, 9:15 a.m. Choir Practice, 10:20 a.m. Worship, 10:45 a.m. Ensemble Practice, 4:30 p.m.	8 Hands Up Board, 4:00 p.m. Esther-Mary Circle, 7:00 p.m.	9 Ladies Bible Study, 10:00 a.m.	10 Hand Bell Practice, 5:30 p.m. Lenten Supper, 6:00 p.m. Lenten Worship, 7:00 p.m.	11	12	13
14 Worship, 8:00 a.m. Bible Study, Sunday School & Confirmation, 9:15 a.m. Choir Practice, 10:20 a.m. Worship, 10:45 a.m. Board of Directors Lunch & Meeting after the late service Ensemble Practice, 4:30 p.m.	15	16	17 Hand Bell Practice, 5:30 p.m. Lenten Supper, 6:00 p.m. Lenten Worship, 7:00 p.m.	18	19	20 Sew Crazy, 10:00 a.m. Youth Group to Gatlinburg alternate date Game Night, 6:00 p.m.
21 Worship, 8:00 a.m. Bible Study, Sunday School & Confirmation, 9:15 a.m. Choir Practice, 10:20 a.m. Worship, 10:45 a.m. “Decluttering” Workshop, Concordia, Kspt, 1 - 3 p.m. Ensemble Practice, 4:30 p.m.	22	23 Ladies Bible Study, 10:00 a.m.	24 Hand Bell Practice, 5:30 p.m. Lenten Supper, 6:00 p.m. Lenten Worship, 7:00 p.m.	25	26 Prepare Lunch Bags for Melting Pot, 9:00 a.m.	27 Men’s Bible Study, 9:00 a.m. Youth Group, 6:00 p.m.
28 Worship, 8:00 a.m. Bible Study, Sunday School & Confirmation, 9:15 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, 10:20 a.m. Worship, 10:45 a.m. Ensemble Practice, 4:30 p.m. Youth Group, 6:00 p.m.	29	30	31 Hand Bell Practice, 5:30 p.m. Ensemble Practice, TBA		Good Friday	Holy Saturday
						Maundy Thursday
						HOLY WEEK

## A Collaborative Art Project

Beginning next Sunday, February 14th, you will have the opportunity to contribute to a church art project. From toddler to nonagenarian, all are asked to decorate a small cross made from popsicle sticks (Crosses will be provided). Let your creative juices flow!!! .you can use crayons, markers, paint, washi tape, stickers, whatever. On the reverse side you can add a favorite bible verse, a prayer request, or just your name. We will be collecting crosses until Sunday, March 21st. The completed art project will be displayed beginning March 28th (Palm Sunday). We are hoping everyone in the congregation will pick up a cross and complete it for this project. If you are unable to pick up a cross after service, there will be a plastic container on the front porch of the annex, you can pick up a cross and return it there. If you are unable to pick one up at church, please ask your elder to bring you one and return it for you. If you have any questions, contact Ann Larson.

## Serving This Month

8:00 a.m. ELDER OF THE MONTH: Ted Wilson USHERS		10:45 a.m. ELDER OF THE MONTH: Scott Pruitt USHERS
3/7	Tom Watson Roy Knispel Ann Larson	Lee Talbert Silas Whaley Robb Whaley
3/14	David Nutter Christian Nutter Ann Larson	John Port Ben Wohlford Nicholas Leone
3/21	David Nutter Christian Nutter Tom Watson	Cary Allen Tim Treece Dylan Treece
3/28	David Nutter Christian Nutter Ann Larson	Lee Talbert Nicholas Leone Andy Tester

Altar Guild for March: Linda Tallmadge & Marilyn Abbott



**Palm Sunday**  
Sunday, March 28  
Worship Services  
8:00 am  
10:45 am

**Maundy Thursday**  
Thursday, April 1  
Worship Service with Communion  
7:00 pm

**Good Friday**  
Friday, April 2  
Worship Service  
7:00 pm

**Easter Vigil**  
Saturday, April 3  
Service 7:00 pm



**SONrise Service**  
Upper Mausoleum  
Happy Valley  
Memorial Park  
7:00 am



9:15 am  
Fellowship Hall

**Hallelujah**

**Worship Services**  
8:00 am  
10:45 am