



# 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

*February 2022, Volume XXII, No. 2*

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



## SOUPER BOWL SUNDAE

Who doesn't like soup and ice cream sundaes???

The ladies of LWML will be serving up both on **Sunday, Feb 13th**...get it? It's Super Bowl Sunday... Please plan to join the fun.. there will be games and prizes!! and some delicious homemade soups and personally made Sundae creations! We will be accepting free will offerings... and if you can't stay you can "purchase" soup to go.

Score a touchdown and plan on joining us for SOUPER BOWL SUNDAE.



Come join us for board games on

**February 19, 6 pm - ???**

If the weather is good, we will set up cornhole boards outside. Bring a snack or drink to share. All ages welcome!

Church Volunteers needed...

- Ushers
- Sunday School helpers
- Ensemble players
- Choir singers
- Handbell Choir
- LWML



Where can you plug yourself in to make a difference at Bethlehem?



## Notes from the Pastor's Desk

*We are Jesus' hands and feet.*

January was a trying month. We lost Mike Pacula (my sister's husband) and my Dad. He died a day short of his 96<sup>th</sup> birthday. Prior to that, I spent quite a bit of time under that weather. It was hard at times to keep going and doing what needed to be done.

Through it all, God has been gracious and patient. He has supplied encouragement through His Word and through the counsel and consolation of my brothers and sisters in Christ.

I confess to you all my sin of disregard for the needs of those of the family of God here at Bethlehem. May God give me the strength to begin anew here in February and fulfill the duties given to me as the faithful steward that God has called me to be.

The hope that is mine and that we share together in Christ and the forgiveness of sin is the only thing that has kept me sane. I thank God for my family and for my wife Patty who continue to love me and stand with me as I work to be the husband and father and pastor that God has called me to be.

I continue to be, like Paul, a sinner who morae often than not does the things he hates. I also continue to be a blood bought child of God who has been raised from death in sin to new life in Christ. As Paul writes, because I have been joined together with Christ in His death and life through the power of His Word at work in the waters of Baptism, there is nothing that can separate me from the love of God in Christ.

That is the joy that is mine as I think of Mike and my Dad. Because of that hope, their death is not a goodbye. It is only momentary. We can say that, in Christ, it is until that time when we are united together before His throne. That is also my hope as I, like Paul, endure the war that rages inside me between my sinful flesh and the Spirit who dwells in me. I am confident of this, that the one who began this good work in me will bring it to completion in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I trust myself to His Word and promises. God is faithful and He will do it.

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!

February 6 . . . 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany

**8:00 am**

SERMON TEXT: Luke 5:1-11

SERMON THEME: "Let Down Your Nets"

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

**10:45 am**

SERMON TEXT: Luke 5:1-11

SERMON THEME: "Let Down Your Nets"

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

February 13 . . . 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany

**8:00 am**

SERMON TEXT: Luke 6:17-26

SERMON THEME: "Blessed"

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

**10:45 am**

SERMON TEXT: Luke 6:17-26

SERMON THEME: "Blessed"

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

February 20 . . . 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany

**8:00 am**

SERMON TEXT: TBA

SERMON THEME: TBA

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

**10:45 am**

SERMON TEXT: TBA

SERMON THEME: TBA

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

February 27 . . . Transfiguration Sunday

**8:00 am**

SERMON TEXT: Luke 9:28-36

SERMON THEME: "This Is My Son"

LITURGY: **Blended w/ Communion**

**10:45 am**

SERMON TEXT: Luke 9:28-36

SERMON THEME: "This Is My Son"

LITURGY: **Blended w/ Communion**



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.



Ash Wednesday Service  
Wednesday, March 2  
7:00 pm

Attendance	8:00 a.m.	10:45 a.m.	Offerings	
January 2	30	51	General Fund	\$ 9,871.25
			Federwitz Mission	\$ 50.00
			Lutheran Services	\$ 1,000.00
			Dist. Tornado Relief	\$ 1,000.00
January 9	32	49	General Fund	\$14,338.00
			Lutheran Services	\$ 6,000.00
			Melting Pot	\$ 25.00
January 16	23	32	General Fund	\$ 1,160.00
			Federwitz Mission	\$ 100.00
			Fellowship Acct.	\$ 60.00
			Harmon Memorial	\$ 100.00
January 23	34	50	General Fund	\$ 6,135.00
			Melting Pot	\$ 50.00
January 31	32	62	General Fund	\$ 3,729.00
			Federwitz Mission	\$ 50.00
			Chili Cook-off	\$ 400.00
On-line giving			General Fund	\$ 980.00
Spending Guidelines for 2022			\$408,992.00	
Offerings needed each week in 2022			\$ 7,986.00	



Lenten Suppers will start on  
**Wednesday, March 2, at 6:00 pm**  
and run through Wednesday, April 9. If you are interested in  
being one of our supper hosts please talk to Susan Burkey.



### Valentine's Day history

There are a number of martyrdom stories associated with various Valentines connected to February 14, including an account of the imprisonment of Saint Valentine of Rome for ministering to Christians persecuted under the Roman Empire in the third century.

The Feast of Saint Valentine was established by Pope Gelasius I in AD 496 to be celebrated on February 14 in honor of Saint Valentine of Rome, who died on that date in AD 269. The day became associated with romantic love in the 14th and 15th centuries when notions of courtly love flourished, apparently by association with the "lovebirds" of early spring. The medieval English poet Geoffrey Chaucer often took liberties with history, placing his poetic characters into fictitious historical contexts that he represented as real. No record exists of romantic celebrations on Valentine's Day prior to a poem Chaucer wrote around 1375. In his work "Parliament of Fowles," he links a tradition of courtly love with the celebration of St. Valentine's feast day—an association that didn't exist until after his poem received widespread attention. The poem refers to February 14 as the day birds (and humans) come together to find a mate. When Chaucer wrote,  
*"For this was sent on Seynt Valentyne's day  
Whan every foul cometh ther to choose his mate,"*  
he may have invented the holiday we know today.



We hope you all had a great start to the New Year in the month of January!!! We would like to thank you for all your support during the Chili Bowl Fundraiser that took place on January 30<sup>th</sup>. It was a HUGE success. We could not have done it without you. With your generosity, we were able to raise \$400. Thank you so much for your financial support and donations of food during the fundraiser. We are in the planning stages of a retreat to Roan Mountain for two nights in March. The theme of the retreat will be Faith Over Fear. We look forward to sharing more information in the March newsletter and our experience from the retreat. We are also in the planning stages of our service project to Camp Linn Haven in Linville, NC in June. More information on that will come out in the spring. The following information is when we will be meeting in February. Thank you all for your continued prayers and support.

### Month of February at a Glance:

- Sunday, February 6<sup>th</sup> ..... Sunday School Class from 9:15-10:30
- Saturday, February 12<sup>th</sup> ..... Youth Group Meeting at the Church at 6:30pm
- Sunday, February 13<sup>th</sup> ..... Sunday School Class from 9:15-10:30
- Saturday, February 19<sup>th</sup> ..... Youth Group Meeting / Game Night at 6:00
- Sunday, February 20<sup>th</sup> ..... Sunday School Class from 9:15-10:30
- Saturday, February 26<sup>th</sup> ..... Youth Group Meeting at 6:30
- Sunday, February 27<sup>th</sup> ... Sunday School Class from 9:15-10:30

## Serving This Month

8:00 a.m.		10:45 a.m.	
ELDER OF THE MONTH: Ted Wilson & Larry Larson		ELDER OF THE MONTH: James Wudtke	
USHERS		USHERS	
2/6	Roy Knispel David Nutter Christian Nutter		Lee Talbert Silas Whaley Robb Whaley
2/13	David Nutter Larry Larson Maggie Howland		Frank deNobriga Ben Wohlford Nicholas Leone
2/20	Roy Knispel David Nutter Christian Nutter		Cary Allen Tim Treece Dylan Treece
2/27	Tom Watson Ann Larson Larry Larson		John Port Nicholas Leone Andy Tester

Altar Guild for February: Jan Turner and Linda Kassem



### THE AMERICAN HERITAGE SERIES

Our monthly Saturday morning class will meet on

**Saturday, February 5<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 AM**

in the Fellowship Hall. As we continue with the American Heritage Series, we will explore the roots of capitalism and how it became the fledgling American nation's economic system. Our sessions are open to everyone so plan on being there and bring a friend.



# FEBRUARY

Live Streaming of the 10:45 Sunday service will continue each week as well as the Wednesday Night Bible Study Class.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 Hand Bell Choir, 5:15 p.m.	3 Call Committee, 6:30 p.m.	4	5 American Heritage Class, 9:00 a.m.
6 Worship, 8:00 a.m. Bible Study, Sunday School, & Confirmation, 9:15 a.m. Worship, 10:45 a.m.	7	8 Ladies Bible Study, 10:00 a.m.	9 Hand Bell Choir, 5:15 p.m. Board of Directors, 6:00 p.m. The Book of Luke Bible Study, 7:30 p.m.	10 Call Committee, 6:30 p.m.	11	12 Constitution & By-Laws Session, 9:00 a.m. Youth Group, 6:30 p.m.
13 Worship, 8:00 a.m. Bible Study, Sunday School & Confirmation, 9:15 a.m. Worship, 10:45 a.m. Souper Bowl Sundaes after the late service	14 Hands Up Board, 4:00 p.m.	15 JC Circuit Meeting, Concordia Kspt, 9:30 a.m.	16 Hand Bell Choir, 5:15 p.m. "The Book of Luke" Bible Study, 7:30 p.m.	17	18	19 Sew Crazy, 10:00 a.m. Game Night, 6:00 p.m.
20 Worship, 8:00 a.m. Sunday School, & Bible Class, 9:15 a.m. Worship, 10:45 a.m.	21	22 Ladies Bible Study, 10:00 a.m.	23 Hand Bell Choir, 5:15 p.m. "The Book of Luke" Bible Study, 7:30 p.m.	24	25 Melting Pot, 9:00 a.m.	26 Youth Group, 6:30 p.m.
27 Worship, 8:00 a.m. Bible Study, Sunday School, & Confirmation Class 9:15 a.m. Worship, 10:45 a.m.	28					



Groundhog Day



## **ASHES TO ASHES AND DUST TO DUST: WHY LUTHERANS RECEIVE ASHES ON ASH WEDNESDAY**

Many non-Lutherans wonder why their Lutheran friends or family members wear ashes on their forehead at the beginning of Lent. Are they showing off? Are they trying to stand out? Is it some weird secret church ritual? What does it mean? Should I get them too?

There are three reasons why Lutherans go to church to receive ashes on Ash Wednesday. First, the ashes remind people of their sinfulness. Second, the ashes remind people of their mortality. Third, the ashes remind people that they have been redeemed. Let's unpack this a bit.

Since ancient times, God's people have used ashes as a sign of humble repentance (e.g. Jonah 3:5-9; Job 42:6; Daniel 9:3; Matthew 11:21; Luke 10:13). This tradition was carried on by the early church and remains an important tradition today. When one willingly goes up to a pastor and receives ashes on his/her forehead, they are admitting that they are sinners in desperate need of salvation. They are admitting that they have sinned not only against their neighbors, but against God Himself. The ashes demonstrate that without God, all people are spiritually dead. The ashes remind the wearer of their need to repent and confess in order to be turned back to God. The ashes demonstrate our pleading that the Lord would purify us. The ashes serve as a tangible and visible sign of our failure to love God as much as He loves us.

The receiving of ashes on Ash Wednesday also remind people of their mortality, which is the direct result of God's condemnation of our sin. God said to Adam, "You are dust and to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:19). Ashes serve as a solemn reminder that the price of sin is death. Man cannot escape death. Often, people today feel as if they are invincible. It's easy to feel like we're at the top of the world, capable of doing anything that we desire. We keep ourselves busy doing "good" things, but fail to recognize that in reality we are dead men walking. People don't like to think about death. Our culture has seemingly sterilized death. We make every attempt to avoid death. Death is uncomfortable. And, that's why ashes are so important. They are the physical reminder that God created man from the dust of the earth and one day all men will return to the dust of the earth. Ashes to ashes and dust to dust. The ashes force us to remember that we are merely mortal and that God alone is sovereign and reigns for all eternity.

Ashes also tell us the good news of the Gospel! You see, ashes aren't just smeared randomly or haphazardly across people's foreheads. The ashes are given in the shape of the cross. In receiving the ashes, we remember that our Lord Jesus took on the fullness of our humanity. He who was sinless became our sin. Jesus the Christ was crucified on a cross. He was crucified for you. Then Jesus conquered death itself through His resurrection. He was resurrected for you. In doing so, He has taken the ashes of our past and created in us new life, allowing us to live forever in the holy presence of God! He has redeemed His children, making us clean and new. Through the cross of Christ, the power of death has been destroyed. Through the cross there is life. The cross-shaped ashes on our foreheads proclaim the good news that sin and death have been conquered through the cross of Christ.

In many Lutheran Ash Wednesday services, the Lord's Supper immediately follows the receiving of ashes. We, who were once dead in our sins, we who deserve to die, come to the Lord's Table literally wearing the cross of Christ. Here, at the Lord's table, those who have humbled themselves before the Lord, who have admitted their sin, who know they deserve death, are instead given the new life that is only found through the body and blood of our loving Lord Jesus. Here, at the Lord's table, those marked with the cross of Christ are raised up, strengthened through God's mercy, love, and grace, and sent forth into the world to proclaim the good news!

This year, you are encouraged to find a local Lutheran church so that you, too, can join in this special occasion in which we humbly come before the Lord, repent of our sinful ways and receive the free gift of our Lord Jesus Christ. Interestingly, the ashes Lutherans receive are traditionally made out of the palm branches used previously on Palm Sunday, a day when people rejoiced and praised Jesus only days before they turned on him and yelled "Crucify Him!" (Matthew 27:22; Mark 15:13; Luke 23:21; John 19:6) This serves as a powerful reminder that people are sinful, death is real, but Resurrection Day (Easter) is coming! Come, all are welcome. All are in need of salvation. Let the Lord use the ashes of your past to create in you a clean heart and new life in Him.

Reprinted with permission from Life through Lutheran Lenses on facebook

LutheranLenses.com



## **Happy February Birthdays to**

Hollis Davidson & Marlene Otto (5th), Kristen Turner, Tanya Harmon & Sveta Harmon (12th),  
Denise Sibley (15th), Phillip Joyner (17th), Nate Miller & Melanie Casey (18th),  
Misty Lyons (20th), Annie Whaley (22nd), Tom Watson & Ben Hazlett (27th),  
Jan Turner & James Davidson (28th)