

Bethlehem's Glad Tidings

Vol. 8 No.3

March 2016

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Bonita Cadman, Church Secretary
Mrs. Melba McVay, Organist
Mr. Ed Conkle, Sexton

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Bethlehem Lutheran Church
21 Church Road
Scenery Hill, PA 15360

Council Members

Helen Myers
Becky Devore
Molly O'Brien
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Arla Dague

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Matt Devore
Janet Fowler
Peg Wilson
Carol Brewer

FROM THE
PASTOR 

My Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

This is it!! This is the greatest month of the year! This is the month of Holy Week and Easter! The Great Three Days!

At the end of March we will have held fast during forty days of Lent. We will have examined ourselves and our sinfulness and confessed our sins to God. We will have practiced our disciplines of prayer and fasting (or other disciplines like working out more regularly). We will have done works of charity and shared our blessings with others.

We will have studied and prayed with the Scriptures in our hands, the prayers and hymns of the church in our minds and hearts and voices.

We will be prepared to celebrate –

Intentionally, faithfully, hopefully, confidently.

To celebrate the triumphal procession of the savior into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday (March 20th, 11:00).

To celebrate the reading of the Passion of Our Lord according to St. Luke (March 20th, 11:00).

To celebrate the gift of Holy Communion and the New Commandment to “love one another just as I have loved you.” (Maundy Thursday 7:30).

To remember Christ’s Sacrifice on the Cross (Good Friday, 7:00 p.m., Davidson Methodist).

To rejoice with the disciples as they discover the tomb is empty (Easter Sunrise 7:00, Mt. Calvary).

To CELEBRATE THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD (Easter Sunday, 11:00).

We Christians are a people who Celebrate God’s love and God’s grace FOR US. We are confident that “God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Rom 5:8) And on the Third day, he rose again that we might have life and have it eternally!

That is what we celebrate on Easter. Not our resurrection but Christ’s! Not our power but Christ’s. Not our achievement but Christ’s! And in his resurrection, and in his power and in his achievement we place our hope!

And that is something to be Celebrated!

Join us in this holy time of Easter, 2016!

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Asplin

REFLECTIONS OF THE BISHOP

*Mercy and truth have met together;
Righteousness and peace have kissed each other.
Truth shall spring up from the earth
And righteousness shall look down from heaven.
(Psalm 85:10-11, LBW)*

It is Valentine's Day as I write this. Which likely heightens my awareness of the inherently relational character of these words. Whenever it is that you read these words, think of romantic interest and you won't go wrong.

This pair of verses has long ago taken up residence in my mind. It's like they have a little guest house there, and most of the time they go about their day without my noticing, but now and then they open the door and come out into the yard and draw my attention.

Here's what has happened in my head for many years now: I'll read a book or see a movie or notice an event in the news which provides yet one more example of the tension between "the right thing to do" and "the loving thing to do" in our world. Great drama thrives there, in the tension between "the right thing to do" and "the loving thing to do." Painful tragedy finds that dilemma irresistible as well, and is drawn to it like predators to an injured herd animal.

Just then this pair of verses will open the door of their guest house in my mind, and come out into the yard and make all kinds of noise to get my attention, and when I notice they say, "See? The world you live in is driven mad by the great distance between mercy and truth. The way you all see it, the 'loving thing

to do' can never be the same thing as the 'right thing to do,' which is an awful way to live. Look at us! Learn from us. Blessed life is found when mercy and truth meet together, when righteousness and peace kiss each other; when truth springs up from the earth and righteousness looks down from heaven." Then they go back inside, and, well ... get along I suppose.

Commentators have written many pages about whether these four attributes (mercy and truth, righteousness and peace) are meant to describe God or humanity. The academic debate over Biblical interpretation sets up a stage for the drama of bringing these characteristics into harmony. Some say that stage is inside of God, others say that this drama is acted out on a stage inside of human beings individually, or within the larger human community. Still others imagine these verses to describe some kind of monumental divine-human interaction.

But it seems almost to be a given that on any stage, mercy and truth must live in tension. Mercy, by its nature, wants to pardon and forgive and act with forbearance. Truth, by its nature, exposes every untruth, to which it cannot yield any ground and still remain true. And as echoes or reflections or added depth to the drama, Righteousness, by its nature, identifies distinctions between the right and the wrong, and must doggedly pursue the right and reject the wrong, while Peace celebrates the diversity of the whole and revels in the nuance that each contributes to delightful harmony.

That's all fine, and I don't mean for a minute to disparage the work of commentators through the years. But I get the sense that these verses want to be read as though Mercy and Truth were in love, not as a logical conundrum that cannot be resolved. Righteousness and Peace long for each other and find their fulfillment in each other, they are not opposing parties in a lawsuit.

This is on my mind these days (and I ask for your prayers) because at the end of March I will be driving to Washington D.C. to attend a meeting with the North American Lutheran Church regarding their hoped-for membership in the Lutheran World Federation. I recall so vividly the agitated voices that cried out in those days when the NALC was being formed, when our church

was coming apart at the seams, “Would you preserve unity at the expense of truth?”

It should come as no surprise that in those days the little guest house in my mind stood empty for what seemed like years at a time, while its occupants stood out in the yard and asked, “Well?”

But look! Mercy and Truth love each other. They can't stand to be apart. They are not fully who they are without the other. Righteousness and Peace find each other irresistible. They kiss, for goodness' sake! Right there in the Bible! And if heaven ever was too far from earth to be reached, still Truth springs up from the ground, leaping upward, arms outstretched, wanting to be joined to all things heavenly, while from heaven Righteousness looks down, leans way over the railing, and calls words of eschatological hopefulness, “We will reach each other, don't give up!”

The person of Jesus Christ brings heaven and earth together, things human and things divine. In him, mercy and truth meet. In him, righteousness and peace embrace. In his resurrection and ascension, truth makes the leap fully into heaven; and in his incarnation, righteousness falls over the railing and lands squarely on the earth. This Lent and Easter, as we try to figure out how “the right thing to do” can be the same thing as “the loving thing to do,” we look to Jesus.

With you in Christ,

+Kurt

COUNCIL MEETING FEBRUARY 16, 2016

The meeting was called to order by President Helen Myers

The secretary and treasurer reports were read and approved.

Pastor's report:

Discussed how visible our church is around the community, and also discussed the new website. Talked about putting a nursery somewhere for the kids to move around during services. Easter Egg was discussed for Palm Sunday and on February 29, we will do Family Promise. Scenery Hill Heritage Festival will be held on July 15, 2016.

Council voted not to put a new light in the entryway. Also voted to give permission for the dartball banquet and for the Fowlers to use the basement on April 16, 2016.

No action was taken on paving the parking lot.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING, MARCH 13, 2016

The Congregational Meeting will be held on March 13, 2016 after the morning service. Please plan to be here.

PALM SUNDAY EASTER EGG HUNT!!

The 7th & 8th Grade Confirmation Class has decided, as part of their Lenten Discipline, to put on an Easter Egg Hunt for the Children of Bethlehem!!

The Easter Egg Hunt will be held starting at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, March 20th, 2016 (Palm Sunday).

Our young Christians in Grades 1 to 6 will begin the Easter Egg hunt at 10:00.

After their hunt has concluded we will have a separate hunt for those age toddler up to Kindergarten!

The confirmation class planned and is setting up this project as a gift to the congregation!

Please plan on bringing your children to this great event!

SYNOD ASSEMBLY

Synod Assembly returns to California University this year! And this year there is a significant change! Assembly will only be two days, Friday and Saturday, June 17 and 18! Synod Assembly is a meeting to discuss the work of the Lutheran Church in Southwestern Pennsylvania, to plan ways our ministry can be more fruitful and energetic and to celebrate the hope for the future! Please talk to Pastor Asplin, Helen, Molly, Roberta or Becky if you are interested in attending. Bethlehem may send up to two confirmed members (preferably one male and one female) and an additional voting member under the age of twenty-one at the time of Synod Assembly.

PASTOR ASPLIN'S CONTACT INFORMATION

Pastor Asplin's home number is 724-503-4595. His cell phone is 724-678-8798. (pastor.asplin@gmail.com)

LENT 2016 – COME LET US WORSHIP AND BOW DOWN

Psalm 95 says: “O come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker! ⁷ For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. (Psalm 95:6-7 NRSV) This Lent, we'll be exploring the nature of worship, and the idols which draw us away from worship, through a series of chancel dramas on Wednesday nights in Lent.

Worship is a central act of faith. Worship is where we are most truly and fully part of the body of Christ. Worship is where we hear the good news – news the world denies – that we are saved by Grace through faith and not by works of the law, or by our effort or

by our own decision. Worship inspires us, encourages us, convicts us, challenges us, and most assuredly blesses us. Worship sends us out to bear Christ's creative and redeeming Word to all the world!

Our Lent 2016 Schedule

Wednesday Lenten Worship

Soup Suppers – 6:00 p.m.

Lenten Worship – 7:00 p.m.

March 2, 2016 – “At the Ball Game” (3 players)

March 9, 2016 – “Poor Peter” (1 person, 2 women)

March 16, 2016 – “Worship’s Strongest Link” (7 Players)

March 24, 2016 – 7:30 -- Maundy Thursday Service of Holy Communion

March 25, 2016 – 7:00 – Good Friday Service, Davidson Methodist Church

March 26, 2016 – 6:00 – Easter Vigil, Lynnwood Lutheran, Belle Vernon (Pastor Asplin preaching)

March 27, 2016 – 7:00 a.m. – Easter Sunrise Service and Breakfast, Mt. Calvary

March 27, 2016 – 11:00 a.m. – Easter -- The Great Feast of the Resurrection

CONFIRMATION CLASSES BEGIN AFTER WORSHIP AND END AT 2:30 P.M.

March 13, 2016

Lunch provided by Davis Family

March 20, 2016

Lunch provided by Pastor Asplin

April 10, 2016

Lunch provided by Sukal Family

April 24, 2016

Lunch provided by Naser Family

May 1, 2016

Lunch provided by Glotfelty Family

WELCA MEETING WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9, 2016

The WELCA will meet Wednesday, March 9th at 10:00 a.m. The Bible Study Christian Citizenship 101, Paul's letter to the Philippians session 3 is “Being of one mind.” Paul presents positive examples of those who have “the same mind” as Christ and care about others interests, more than their own. We will be

scanning session 1 and 2 with Ellen Smith leading the Bible study, Session 3 will be led by Betty Naser; other members taking part. A covered dish luncheon will be held following the meeting. All women of the church are invited to join us for a morning of Bible study and fellowship.

Knives, knife sets and spatulas are still available for sale.

CHOIR PRACTICE

Choir Practice during Lent, will be held after the Lenten services, Wednesday evenings, but could change. Please watch for changes in bulletins.

FOOD BANK

Don't forget to donate to the food bank. There are three ways you can participate: Through collection of non-perishable food, by giving money in your church envelope or by putting money in the basket in the narthex

February 2016

Dear friends:

"Light in a messenger's eyes brings joy to the heart, and good news gives health to the bones."

- Proverbs 15:30

Thank you for your prayers and support during these last few difficult months. Our combined prayers have been answered, and we are pleased to have good news to share with you.

Glade Run Lutheran Services and the Department of Human Services (DHS) have jointly signed a settlement agreement that will not only process pending licenses for new programming and the Isaiah Cottage building, but will allow Glade Run to continue operation of all cottages in the Annex building. A hearing will not be required, and Glade Run will continue full operation of all programs.

All of the information upon which DHS based their original decision was recently shared with us. This includes forensic interviews of youth allegedly involved in alleged events. This evidence substantiates that the information that was reported by the media was greatly exaggerated and sensationalized. This does not mean that incidents cannot and do not occur when working with such a volatile population of traumatized youth. It is an unfortunate reality in our work, but we pride ourselves on our responsiveness and transparency.

Though we certainly would have preferred to have not had this experience, we have used this opportunity to implement additional and increased safety measures for our youth that are unmatched in our field. We appreciate the cooperation of DHS to arrive at a settlement agreement that will allow us to continue to provide these critical services for the benefit of our traumatized youth, and

to continue the mission that Reverend William Passavant began 162 years ago.

What does this mean for our campaign and its projects, including Jeremiah Village? With the uncertainty of the residential treatment facility annex building's future behind us, we are once again moving forward in full force, working with our partners to bring our vision and Glade Run's future to life. New children arrive at Glade Run daily, and our referral agencies are fully supportive. While it may take some time to recover from the damage caused by the negative publicity, we are determined to continue our transformation and meet the needs of those in our communities in ways that complement our mission and utilize our expertise.

We thank you once again for your support through this challenging time. We are blessed to have your support and prayers.

Gratefully, and with kind regards,

Pastor Charles T. Lockwood, Ed.D.
President/CEO, Glade Run Lutheran Services
(T) [724-452-4453](tel:724-452-4453)

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Please mark your offering envelope indicating what money is to go to the Capital Campaign Fund, by writing one of the following things on your envelope. Capital Campaign Fund, Building Fund or New Building. If your envelope is marked for the property fund, that is not the same as the Capital Campaign Fund.

DARTBALL SEASON

The dartball, for the Monday night league and, for the Tuesday night league.

Tuesday Night Schedule 2015 – 2016

Mar. 1 st	Bethlehem and West Washington	Away
Mar. 8 th	Bethlehem and Broad Street	Home

Practice for Home Games are from 7:00 – 7:15 p.m.

Practice for Away Games are from 7:15 – 7:30 p.m.

BENTLEYVILLE AREA “MEALS ON WHEELS”

The Bentleyville Area “Meals on Wheels” program is in need of drivers. If you are interested and would like to help, please call Donna at 724-239-5887 for more information. It is a great opportunity to help your neighbors.

2016 DESIGNATED OUTREACH MISSION

We will be collecting for a new designated Outreach Mission project which will be Jeremiah’s Place of Pittsburgh, PA. They provide a safe haven of respite, health, renewal and support for children and families free of charge during times of crisis. They are in need of non-perishable food, formula, diapers and etc. These items will be collected and taken to the spring cluster meeting and again in the fall. Thanks so much for your continued support for these Outreach projects.

ADDRESS CHANGE

Bob & Virginia DiAndreth’s address has changed. It is now 106 Buckingham Road, Fredericktown, PA 15333

HYMN AND MUSIC MEETING

The Hymn and Music meeting will be held Monday March 7, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. Please come and help select the music we enrich our Worship Services with.

Acolytes

March 2 nd	Johanna Asplin
March 6 th	Madison Allender and Austin Naser (communion)
March 9 th	Jeremy Naser
March 13 th	Emma Sukal
March 16 th	Linnea Asplin
March 20 th	Palm Sunday – Communion Brittany Dayton and Miranda Van Kirk
March 24 th	Maundy Thursday – Communion Dale Glotfelty and Jessica Glotfelty
March 27 th	Easter Sunday – Communion Kaylie Randolph and Jeremy Woods -- Acolytes Emma Sukal and Jeremy Naser – Torch Bearers Jacob Davis – Banner Bearer Lindsay Davis – Crucifer

Counter

March 6 th	Helen Myers, Devon Myers, Becky Devore
March 13 th	Shirley Schultz, Carol Brewer, Bill Ulery
March 20 th	Karen Naddeo, Ed Conkle, Elinor Ross
March 27 th	Shirley Schultz, Rich Beck, Matt Devore - Easter

Ushers and Greeters

March 6 th	Harry Dayton and Brendon Dayton
March 13 th	Helen Myers and Devon Myers
March 20 th	Shirley Schultz and Elinor Ross
March 27 th	Arla Dague and Bernice Elliott – Easter Sunday

Lectors

March 6th Michelle Davis
 March 13th Ed Schultz
 March 20th Arla Dague
 March 24th Virginia DiAnderth
 March 27th Becky Devore – Easter Sunday

Communion Assistants

March 6th Bill Ulery
 March 20th Kara Blum
 March 24th Norm Davis
 March 27th Alyssa Wise – Easter Sunday

	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Offering</u>
January 3 rd	82	\$ 4,497.00
January 10 th	91	\$ 3,041.30
January 17 th	80	\$ 3,668.50
January 31 st	72	\$ 4,414.00
Averages	81	\$ 3,910.20

Due to snow and ice January 24th Worship Service was cancelled.

Bethlehem Treasurer's Report

Summary of Current Operating Account for January 2016 Approved at Congregational Council Meeting February 16, 2016

<u>Regular Income</u>	<u>January</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Envelope Offering	\$ 7,450.00	\$ 7,450.00
Special Benevolence	\$ 167.50	\$ 167.50
Other	\$ 362.30	\$ 362.30
Total Income	\$ 7,979.80	\$ 7,979.80
 <u>Expenses</u>		
Special Benevolence	\$ 808.85	\$ 808.85
Staff Compensation	\$ 7,987.00	\$ 7,987.00
Church Administration	\$ 863.34	\$ 863.34
Church Property	\$ 723.94	\$ 723.94
Mortgage Payment	\$ 1,466.35	\$ 1,466.35
Worship and Music	\$ 312.63	\$ 312.63
Church Program	\$ 39.66	\$ 39.66
Total Expenses	\$ 12,201.77	\$ 12,201.77
Total Expenses over income for month		(\$4,221.97)
Total Expenses over income for year		(\$4,221.97)
Total Income to capital Campaign thru 1/31/16		\$343,579.54
Total Expenses thru 1/31/16		(\$30,719.60)
Citizens Building Fund Balance 1/31/16		\$72,516.84

