

Bethlehem Star

A Message from Pastor Gary

There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves... Then they will see the Son of Man coming with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.
[Luke 21:25-28]

Don't write us off yet, because we're not finished! For generations there have been prognosticators writing the obituary for the church. By divine grace the church exists, strong in some places and weak in others. Whether strong or weak, large or small, the church exists by God's call and will through congregations, social service agencies, colleges, seminaries and missions.

Pollsters are writing about the increasing number of people who claim no religious affiliation. Christians could sit back, wring our hands, and murmur in fear. Or, we can continue to do what God has always called us to do – **proclaim Christ!**

Here are the steps the members of Bethlehem can take to Make Christ Known through our congregation:

1. Worship as often as possible. Come joyfully expecting to meet Christ in Word and Sacrament.
2. Pray regularly for Bethlehem. And while you are praying, remember the Northern Illinois Synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Lutheran World Federation, Naberera Parish, St. Mary's Parish, and Arcot Lutheran Church.
3. Give generously. A healthy congregation is vibrant, attractive, and willing to invite the unchurched to come and worship.
4. Be the church when out in public. Practice kindness, justice, patience and love in all you do, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

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Pastor's Message *(continued)*

5. Tell the better stories. When people ask about your congregation tell them the good stuff – because we all know that Bethlehem has a lot of good to share.

Until Christ returns the church will never be finished with its work of sharing the faith. So let us encourage one another with the Gospel and make the best use of the resources we have been given. We are all in this together. Hand-in-hand we can make Bethlehem the strong, vibrant and growing congregation God is calling us to be.

Amani,
Pr. Gary

VBS will be held August 10-14 this year. More info to come!

Saturday Afternoon Movies at Bethlehem



Don't forget that
Mother's Day is
Sunday, May 10!

May Movies

Two great movies are on the schedule in May!

May 9 at 2:00 p.m.

"Last of the Dogmen" starring Tom Berenger and Barbara Hershey tells of a people lost in time. It's an adventure you will never forget. 1995/Color

May 23 at 2:00 p.m.

"What's Eating Gilbert Grape" stars Johnny Depp, Juliette Lewis and Leonardo DiCaprio in his Oscar-nominated performance. This is one of the most real, honest and unusual pictures you will ever see.

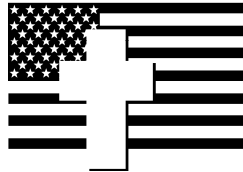
Membership Updates, Concerns and Thanks

Sympathy to the family of Ross Young on his recent death. Funeral services were held on April 22.

*"What a blessing you are!
Thank you to my Bethlehem Family for sending cards and well wishes to me and my family.
A special thank you to Pastor Gary for the visit."
Love & God Bless,
Karen Gilbert*

DEEPEST SYMPATHY
to the family of Mayme Makela on her recent death. Funeral services were held at the church on April 14.

MEMORIAL DAY



**May 25
Offices Closed**

We are sorry if you have been receiving your newsletter late. The Post Office has had some changes/layoffs that are affecting local bulk mail delivery and in March and April they "misplaced" newsletters from various organizations destined for local delivery. We are trying to work through some of the glitches because it has taken over 10 days for DeKalb residents to receive their *Star*.

To Everyone who helped out for Mayme's funeral:
"Thank you so much for your time and hospitality during Mayme's funeral. It was a comfort to share a meal and to know that so many of you knew her and cared about her. The church was such a part of her life and I am grateful for your service."
God's Blessings! Lisa Makela Novinska

Do you know the name of a student graduating this year? If so, please give their names to the church office as soon as possible. Thanks!



Dear Bethlehem Lutheran,

"I am so sorry I have not written you as a whole in a long time. So many of you have taken the time to write me on your own and I am so grateful to you. It has been quite dusty here the last few days. That is always the most dangerous time for us because when the helicopters can't fly we are a little more vulnerable. I always feel my guardian angel watching over me. I have heard about other units and people getting hurt being in some of the same places I have been and all I can do is pray for them and thank God it wasn't me. It feels like a true blessing and miracle. I always hope they are okay and recover quickly if need be; hoping their injuries aren't severe. I started collecting candy from some of the excess care packages and giving it to the kids when we go out. I have to throw it from the top of the vehicle while manning the main weapon, but the look of joy on their faces as they wave thank you means I am doing my part to help. I always wish there was more, but I'm doing the best I can with what I have. I ran a race today and won 12th place out of about 1200 people. It was fun for St. Patrick's Day. There were all kinds of people there, but I feel I did really well. I miss you all so much. Chandy and I talk about how hard it will be in Missouri without you all, but we always know where to find you."

All my best, Sgt. Dave

Church Council Notes

Pastor's Report: Pastor will be away on vacation May 5-16.

Pastor lead a discussion on "How do we as a church become healthy?" and "How do we act?" Pastor notes that the sabbatical is about being a healthy leader. The council by consensus encouraged and supported the proposal with enthusiasm.

Evangelism: Bethlehem's image on the website is being updated. New mugs have been ordered. These are given to visitors to Bethlehem.

Youth: The Lenten midweek meetings with the youth lead by Pastor Dardon were very successful. These meetings included an activity and dinner sometimes prepared by the youth.

Planting Seeds: The document generated by the questionnaire seeking long-range ideas for Bethlehem is forthcoming soon.

Fellowship Committee: The committee feels a need to generate activities that include all ages focused on having fun. Getting this going is in progress.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Stewardship: No report.

Finance: Committee continues to look at new systems for reporting our financial situation.

Mission Endowment: The available funds that are to be shared with local, regional, and global groups will be disbursed this summer.

Worship & Music: No report

Property: The wall behind the cupboards that were moved in the fellowship hall has been painted and looks great.

Social Ministry: Food Pantry served 635 households in March with 1,935 people. These are the highest numbers so far. The need for assistance is growing.

Old Business: Boiler funding project is moving along with about \$9,000 paid back so far.

New Business: There was a suggestion that we place a Bible in each of the pews. There may be money in the Memorial Fund to cover this expense.

The Council will host a coffee during summer for the Boiler Project. Date to be selected.

Adjourned.

Notes by Anna Fischer

Spring Luncheon Scheduled for May 2

WELCA

Spring Banquet

Time: 12:00 Noon

May 2

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
1915 North First Street

Please join us for a
delicious luncheon at 12:00 Noon
followed by a special program
on Ellwood House and the
Antique Car Museum.

Menu:
Relish & Cheese Tray
Baked Chicken with Roasted
Red Skin Potatoes
Riviera Blend Vegetables
Strawberry Shortcake

Contact: 815-758-3203

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY
(First Saturday of each month)

SATURDAY, MAY 2
8:30—9:30 A.M.
(Mark your calendars for June 6.)

We spend an hour reading Scripture and talking about issues important to faith, life and the issues that face us publicly and personally.
Come once, or come each month, the coffee's always on!

Weekly Men's
Breakfast

This group meets Friday mornings just before 8:00 a.m. at the Lincoln Inn in downtown DeKalb.

Come as often
as you can!

Adult Educational Opportunities in May

Come for a stroll through Scripture:
La Passeggiatta

La passeggiatta is the Italian tradition of a leisurely evening walk through town. The evening stroll occurs when the summer sun sets inviting people to savor the fresh air of dusk. Bethlehem will celebrate a passeggiatta through Scripture on the Wednesday evenings during June. Come for a stroll through Scripture and enjoy a fresh look as we share the Word together.

La passeggiatta begins at 5:45 pm with a salad supper. Lettuce and beverages will be provided, please bring a salad dressing or topping to share. Our stroll through Scripture begins at 6:30 and ends at 7:30.

Wednesday, June 3: 1 Kings 18 – 19: A significant contest.

Wednesday, June 10: Jeremiah 36: The Word remains.

Wednesday, June 17: Acts 10: A new look.

Wednesday, June 24: Revelation 21 – 22: The home of God.

Ushers for Sundays in May

May 3 Ed & Edna Schramm
Harry & Mona Theisen

May 10 Larry & Joan Vandre
June Whitney
Norma Wiegartz

May 17 Lorna Bemis
Jane Bidstrup
LaVern Burhop
Butch Burrig

May 24 Elmie Carey
Don Davidson
Lorna Knuuttila
Anne Hietikko

May 31 Sandy Dumdie
Matt Dumdie
Frank & Rose Marie Garcia



Greeters for Sundays in May

May 3 Don Davidson and Lorna Knuuttila

May 10 Wayne & Nancy Coffman

May 17 Paul & Karen Gilbert

May 24 Bill & Susan Gulke

May 31 Pat Humo and Kathleen Hunt

Lectors

May 3 John Metzler

May 10 Richelle Johnson

May 17 Sarah Trostle

May 24 Valerie Talsma

May 31 Kate Metzler

Communion Asst.

May 3 John Metzler
Beth Metzler

May 10 Wayne Coffman
Bob Hongisto

May 17 Ben Pearson
Sherry Krehl

May 24 Jerry Johns
Annette Johns

May 31 Barb Luchsinger
Virginia Luedtke



LOMC News

Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center is gearing up for summer and is looking for volunteers to help make the camp ready over Memorial Day Weekend May 22-25. With more than 100 projects on the list this year, volunteers with varying skills are needed before campers start arriving.

LOMC provides housing, meals and free time activities, all we ask is for your time and talents. Call George Davis with any questions at (815) 973-5272. To make reservations, please email Audrey Adams at registrations@lomc.org or call her at (815) 732-2220.

Turtle Search Sunday has been changed to “Meet the Staff Saturday.” Join LOMC from 10-4, May 16, to meet the wonderful staff who will be caring for the needs of your campers this summer!

Challenge Course Changes

LOMC has improved and expanded its low ropes challenge course with the help of generous donations of time and money to provide a safe, exciting experience for all of our guests.

When our old course failed to pass inspection last fall, plans were set into motion that involved cooperation between board members, the program staff, maintenance staff and the executive director in order to determine what objectives could be constructed in-house and what needed to be farmed out.

The result was a 10-obstacle course, with seven elements being constructed by our staff and three being erected by Experiential Systems, Inc. out of Lansing, 80 percent of which were completed in less than a week.

The course was designed with optimal expansion in mind. An additional 10 elements will be added as resources and funding become available.

The Greater Kishwaukee Concert Band will present a final concert of the 7th season on Saturday, May 2, at 3:00 p.m. in the Boutell Memorial Concert Hall. Members of the military will be honored with many marches and patriotic songs. The concert is free and handicapped accessible.

Now to conclude your “Day of Music,” the **DeKalb Area Handbell Choirs** will present a concert on Saturday, May 2, at 7:00 p.m. at First Lutheran Church of DeKalb on 3rd & Pine Streets. Mark Bloedow, director of the Wisconsin MACH Ringers will be the clinician. Six area handbell/handchime choirs will be participating—approximately 80 ringers.

Prayer Petition: On Good Shepherd Sunday, May 3, we call to mind the gentle yet strong care that thousands and thousands of children, women and men, receive through our church’s statewide service ministry, Lutheran Social Services of Illinois. Strengthen, O Gracious God, those who lead LSSI, those who provide face-to-face service to hurting people, and those whom we serve, your own precious lambs and sheep, those for whom you gave up your own life. Make us worthy to be called your disciples as we feed and tend to the needs of all people. Bless our hands to do your work.

Pick Your Favorites!



Summer is the time to sing your favorite hymns!

During the summer months we want you to pick your best-loved hymns for the congregation to sing during worship! You can sign up here and drop off when you are in church or you can sign up on the clipboard outside the sanctuary in May.

My favorite hymns are:

Your Name _____

Blood Drive

 * MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW *
 * FOR A *
 * BLOOD DRIVE AT BETHLEHEM *
 * Monday, June 1, 3-7 p.m. *
 * Watch your bulletins in May for more information. *

You Are Invited!



Please join our family on this joyous occasion
when our parents, Bob & Marilyn Hongisto
celebrate 50 years of marriage at an Open House
in their honor on Sunday, May 17, 2009

2:00—5:00 p.m.

at Bethlehem Lutheran Church
1915 North First Street
DeKalb, Illinois 60115

Nick & Diane Hongisto
Maria (Hongisto) & Rob McMillion

PEACE HOUSE AFRICA

In recent weeks there have been bulletin inserts about Peace House Secondary School—a school for AIDS orphans near Arusha, Tanzania. The group of 7 Beloit college students, led by dance professor Chris Johnson, will be traveling to Peace House in June 2009 to work with the African orphans through a program of dance and movement workshops.

The Bethlehem Endowment Fund Committee has considered the Peace House a very worthwhile organization to include in our annual distribution of funds. While the formal gifting of funds is several months away, the June travel time will be upon us quickly and therefore a separate gift will be made soon.

The Endowment Fund intends to gift \$1000 to Peace House, with the added challenge to our congregation to match this gift. We would hope to see an additional \$1000 come in the name of Peace House. There has already been a gift of \$100; we hope to see another \$900 over the next several weeks.

Please give this request your prayerful consideration. We also ask you to keep Chris Johnson and the students in your thoughts and prayers for the summer.

PEACE

Easter Lilies

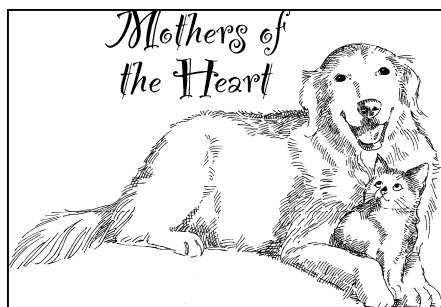
Thank you to the many people who donated Easter lilies for our Easter services helping to make our Sanctuary a special place for the day!

The beautiful lilies on the altar were given to the glory of God and in memory of . . .

Asbell, Donald by Carole Asbell
Burrigh, Martha by Butch Burrigh
Carey, David, by Sandy, Sara, & Matt Dumdie
Carls, Ed & Esther by Joe & Vicki Ross
Ekstrom, Ted by Irene Ekstrom
Family members by Gordon & Virginia Rasmussen
Hughes, Janie & Jess by Linda & Lee Hoffman
Hunt, Thomas by Kathleen Hunt & Family
Jarvi, Elna by Rev. Ellen Jarvi & Charles Arthur
Jarvi, Frank & Ida by Rev. Ellen Jarvi and Charles Arthur
Loved ones by Bill & Deb Perian
Loved ones by Carl & Margie Hargrave
Loved ones by Eldon & Helen Miller
Loved ones by Elmie Carey
Loved ones by Frank & Rose Mary Garcia
Loved ones by Gary & Pat Erickson
Loved ones by Lauri Koski and Toini Koski
Loved ones by the Bob Ewing Family
Loved ones, by Ed & Edna Schramm
Maki, Uno by Dee Maki & Family
Our parents by Bill & Sue Gulke
Our Parents by Carl & Doris Nordstrom
Riippi, "Skinny" by Doris Riippi
Stokes, Jack & Rose by Andres & Deborah Velez
Whitney, Cliff & Helen by John Whitney
Whitney, Clifford by June Whitney

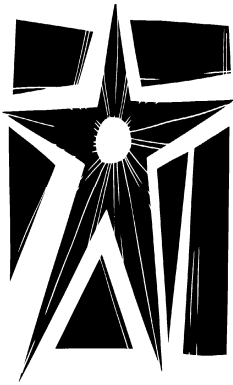
And in honor of . . .

Easter, by Ed & Judy Sisler
Ross, Blake and Abigail by Joe & Vicki Ross
Our Grandchildren by Paul & Karen Gilbert



Happy Mother's Day
to all!

Bethlehem Star



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DeKalb, Illinois 60115

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Fax: 815-758-1411
email:belcdekalb@comcast.net
website:bethlehemdekalb.org

Address Label Here

Birthday List for May

May 2009

Birthday Greetings to:			
		16	Sherry Krehl
			Margie Gommel
1	Mona Theisen	18	Sue Gulke
2	Elaine Draves	19	Sue Ann Brown
	Jemimah Lach	21	Julia O'Brien
	Keziah Lach	22	Roberta Linder
4	Elaine Licking	23	Amanda Veldhuizen
	Joan Vandre	24	Blake Ross
	Todd Signorella	25	Frank Garcia
5	Lauri Koski		Jennice O'Brien
10	Anna Fischer	26	Jennifer Huffman
11	Mathew Brown	28	Nate Inboden
13	Don Davidson	29	Lyndon Farm
15	Evelyn Hoffman		

**Join Bob & Marilyn Hongisto as they celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on May 17, 2-5 p.m. at the church.*