

Bethlehem Star

A Message from Pastor Gary

As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth; who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here..." [Mark 16:5-6]

By the time the sun set on that first Good Friday Jesus was dead. It looked like the politicians had had their way. The itinerant, upstart, rabble rousing rabbi from Nazareth was dead – and they hoped his movement was dead, too. On that day one might have concluded that the status quo had won. For the people of Palestine, it seemed, it would be business as usual with the Romans in charge and the local authorities doing their best to please the masters, as if nothing could ever change.

A casual observer might look at our world today and say nothing has changed in the millennia that have passed since that first Good Friday. But the casual observer would be wrong!

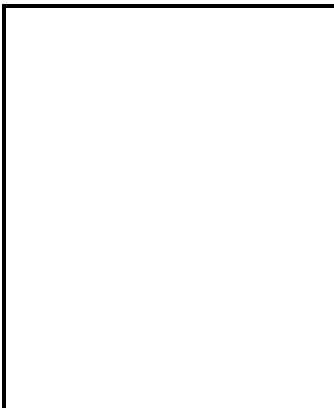
At sunrise on that first Easter the women who went to the tomb were surprised to learn that Jesus was no longer dead, no longer buried, no longer there where they had laid him. They were told, "He is not here." After all they had been through the women learned that the politicians had not won, the status quo had been trumped! Things, after all, do change! God's love is greater, stronger and bolder than human sin and death. And that is the better story that we are called to tell.

It would be wrong for us to gloss over the many problems faced by humans in these modern times. We know that injustice, poverty, greed, hunger, lust, petty jealousies, self-centeredness, and myriad other items keep much of humanity from recognizing God's kingdom here and now. The reality of sin troubled humanity has been with us through the ages. But that is only a portion of our story. We have a much greater and better story to tell!

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Pastor's Message *(continued)*

That greater and better story begins for us on the cross. Just when all seemed lost, when the Christ movement seemed doomed, when Jesus' followers were ready to admit defeat, God steps into our story again by opening the tomb and freeing Jesus from the captivity of death. This greater and better story is our story – let us tell it with confidence!

That greater and better story has been told at Bethlehem for more than a century. This congregation tells the greater and better story through its mission – locally, regionally and globally. We tell the story through the gifts we share with others. We tell the story through the people we share with the world. Thirty of Bethlehem's children have been ordained into Word and Sacrament ministry over the years! Bethlehem's members who have moved away continue to share the missionary spirit of this congregation in the new places they now call home. We tell the greater and better story when we travel to places near and far.

The choice of stories to tell is always before us. We are blessed to be able to tell the greater and better story that is easily summarized this way: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again, and we are Christ's people representing our Lord in the here and now!

Amani,
Pastor Gary

Saturday Afternoon Movies

Spring

Is here!

April Movies

Saturday, April 11

"Enchanted April" with Joan Plowright, Miranda Richardson and Alfred Molina
1992/Color/93 minutes

Saturday, April 25

"Medicine Man" with Sean Connery and Lorraine Bracco
Color/105 minutes



Membership Updates, Concerns and Thanks

OUR SYMPATHIES are extended to Pat & Gary Erickson on the recent death of Pat's father, James Kelly, in Wisconsin.

Congratulations to Chris & Stacy Fowler on the birth of their baby boy, Graddy Gene, on March 3.

A BIG thank you to all our Volunteers. We couldn't do it without you!

SYMPATHY to Bob & Marilyn Hongisto on the death of Bob's sister in Michigan.

Congratulations to Dick & Laurel Stokke on the birth of their granddaughter, Katherine Stephanie Stokke.

OUR PRAYER LIST:

Gary Brooks
Carolyn Siebens
Genevieve Davis
Kim Martin
Laura Hammes
Helen Riihimaki
Scott Martin
Bob Fischer

*"Thank you to everyone for your prayers and thoughtful expressions of sympathy as we celebrate my dad's life and commend him to God's everlasting care."
Pat & Gary*

*Dear Bethlehem,
"We would like to extend our greatest thanks for supporting our mission trip to Guatemala. It was such a pleasure to visit your congregation and share our story. As we head down in a few days, we would like to reiterate how much of a community effort this school is, and you are part of that community! We look forward to returning to Bethlehem to share our experiences. May God bless you!"*

Yesenia, LCM Peer Minister

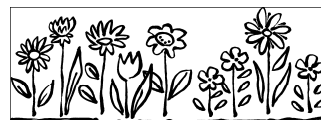
Bethlehem photo dates are:

Tuesday, April 28
Wednesday, April 29
Thursday, April 30
Saturday, May 2

Sign up in several ways:

- +Visit www.bethlehemdekalb.org and click on the Portrait Sign-Up button
- +Stop by the table after Sunday worship
- +Schedule by phone when callers contact you.

You may be the right person to give a gift that will last a lifetime to a youngster in need. Volunteers are needed for a new mentoring program sponsored by DeKalb County Court Services. For more information please call (815) 895-7199.



You're Invited!

WELCA SPRING BANQUET

May 2

Enjoy lunch at 12:00 noon followed by a special program.

Church Council Notes—March 10

Pastor's Report: Pastor reported that the Community Service project that we are involved with is going well. Two more individuals have been assigned to Bethlehem and their help has been much appreciated.

Pastor is applying for a grant funded by the Lily Endowment Fund to take a three-month sabbatical from August-October 2010. Jerry Johns, Roberta Linder and Valerie Talsma were asked to assist Pastor Gary in writing the application for this grant. The deadline for application is May 2009, with the recipients to be announced about September. The goal of the sabbatical is renewal and reflection. Pastor would travel to India, Russia and Africa to spend some time with each of the congregations that we include in our Sunday prayers. He would like to strengthen these connections and have time at the end of the visits to do some writing. The grant would pay for travel expenses as well as supply pulpit. The congregation would continue to pay the pastor's salary while he is gone.

Christian Education: The class provided by Pastor Dardon called "Lenten Getaway Program" is being well received by the youngsters. The class has a brief lesson, a social time, and dinner which the students help prepare.

There will be no Sunday School on Easter Sunday. The last day of Sunday School is May 17. A new curriculum for Sunday School is being selected for the fall. Vacation Bible School dates are August 11-14 with teachers coming from LOMC.

Evangelism: The new mugs are in and will be handed out to visitors. They are also for sale to church members.

The committee would like to have name tags used on Sunday morning by all people attending service.

The schedule for taking pictures for the new Picture Directory is now available.

Stewardship: This committee met with Mission Endowment.

Finance: Tammie informed the council that the budget is being closely watched. The committee is working hard to simplify the budget process—they are attempting to find a more user-friendly accounting system. The "Buy a Degree" project is going well. A thermometer telling just how we are doing should be up soon.

Property: New lights were installed in the Fellowship Hall.

Social Ministry: Food pantry in February served 460 household with 1415 people receiving food.

New business: Gary Brooks asked to use Bethlehem on Tuesday for Cub Scout meetings. Approved.

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

SATURDAY, APRIL 4
8:30—9:30 A.M.
(Mark your calendars for May 2.)

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!

Food Pantry

EASTER SPECIAL:
WE ARE ABOUT TO RECEIVE A SHIPMENT OF TURKEY BREASTS FOR OUR FOOD PANTRY CLIENTS.

We can buy 2 turkey breasts for \$3.24 and each one is 8-9 pounds!

So if you donate \$10.00 we can get about 6 turkey breasts.

If you would like to donate to this important project, please make your check payable to Bethlehem with "Food Pantry Easter Turkey" on the memo line.

A big thank you to Wal-Mart for donating the sandwich buns for the Luncheon we served at Lutheran Campus Ministry at NIU on Sunday, Feb. 15, as part of the commemoration of the tragic shootings and deaths last year. The Food Pantry would also like to thank **Schnuck's** and **Jewel** for donating bread each week. Our food pantry has been very busy recently with the downturn in the economy.

Ushers for Sundays in April

April 5	Barb Luchsinger Maria McMillion Lou Meinert Betty Ruby	April 11	Wayne & Nancy Coffman
April 9	Ray Steinbis Dick & Laurel Stokke Karin Stokke	April 12	Louis & Lysa Wright Logan & Lucas Wright
April 10	Carole Asbell Bob Hongisto	April 19	Ed & Edna Schramm Eldon & Helen Miller
		April 26	Steve & Carol Cook Amanda & Emily Cook

Greeters for Sundays in April

April 5 (Palm Sunday)	June Whitney and Norma Wiegartz
April 9 (Maundy Thursday)	LaVern & Louise Burhop
April 10 (Good Friday)	Pat Erickson and Anne Hietikko
April 11 (Easter Vigil)	Jerry & Annette Johns
April 12 (Easter Sunday)	Ann, Noah & Abbey Brooks
April 19	Elmie Carey and Evelyn Hoffman
April 26	Frank & Rose Mary Garcia

Lectors

April 5 (Palm Sunday)	Kathleen Hunt
April 9 (Maundy Thursday)	Frank Luedtke
April 10 (Good Friday)	Judy Sisler
April 11 (Easter Vigil)	Rob McMillion
April 12 (Easter)	Betty Ruby
April 19	Bob Hongisto
April 26	Heather Breuer

Communion Asst.

April 5	Dick & Laurel Stokke
April 9	Margie Hargrave Valerie Talsma
April 12	Judy Sisler Ray Steinbis
April 19	Edna Schramm Myron Bond
April 26	Harry Theisen Mona Theisen

Com-

The Barnyard

The Barnyard

People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them

Mark 10:13

The Frogpond

(Senior and Junior High)

Lutheran Youth Organization Gathering: The Synod LYO is hosting a gathering of food, fun, and games on April 18 at Our Saviors in Seneca. We will leave church around 8:30am and return around 2:30pm. Mary is in charge of this event and we need to be there a few minutes early. Let Mary know if you are interested in going.

LYO Synod Assembly, June 19 – 20: Come to Augustana College in Rock Island to have fun and learn about “Uni-Diversity.” As a congregation in DeKalb we already are part of a diverse community, Let’s learn ways we can invite our friends to come to Bethlehem and share the Good News we have to offer. The cost is \$ 85.00 per person. Scholarships are available, the amounts depend on how many want to go. It is a very fun time! Don’t miss it. Look for further information when registration forms become available from the Synod office. Any questions, contact Mary at 815-758-3203.

The Rest of the Barnyard

Sunday School: Just a quick note that there will be no Sunday School on Easter Sunday.

Last Day of Sunday School will be May 17, with the annual Last Day of Sunday School Party.

Getaway: If you haven’t come to our Wednesday Night Program, you are missing a lot of fun! It’s from 5:30pm – 6:45pm. We are having so much fun there is talk of continuing to meet until the end of Sunday School.

Vacation Bible School: Mark your calendars! VBS will happen this year August 10 – 14, 2009. We will be inviting more counselors for LOMC to be with us. They always keep us laughing and learning!! Registration forms will be available beginning May 1! Any questions contact Mary Lasits at 815-758-3203.



Photo Directory Sign-Up Beginning

Bethlehem Photo Directory

Members and Friends – We need you to make our Bethlehem photo directory complete!

Photo dates are:

Tuesday, April 28

Wednesday, April 29

Thursday, April 30

Saturday, May 2



Sign up for your photo appointment in several ways:

- Visit <http://www.bethlehemdekalb.org/> and click on the Portrait Sign-Up button,
- Stop by the photo sign-up table after Sunday worship,
- Schedule by phone when our callers contact you.

Global Health Ministries

Hospice Kit Project

Tanzanian Lutherans call for help

The HIV/AIDS epidemic has added enormous challenges to health care world wide. Missionaries, their health care worker colleagues, and patients' families in third world countries must provide daily care to AIDS patients. But what can we do to help? An AIDS/Hospice Kit can provide cleanliness and comfort and hope. Our prayers and generosity can reach far into the lives of those who have been affected. As you pack the kit, pray for the church visitation teams and medical professionals who provide spiritual and medical care and place the kits in the hands of those who are affected by AIDS.

Kit Contents: New or gently used items; Regular sized bath towel, wash cloth

New items;

1 bath sized bar of soap (wrapped, any brand), 1 toothbrush and medium or large toothpaste

1 "pick" style comb (see web site for details), 1 nail clipper, 6 band aids

1 jar or tube of petroleum jelly, 1 heavy duty pair of kitchen type household gloves (size: medium)

1 small devotional booklet (Christ in Our Home),

Wrap all items in the towel and place in large (2 gallon or larger) "Ziploc" plastic bag

Include note: "AIDS/Hospice Kit" (the note should be visible through the bag)

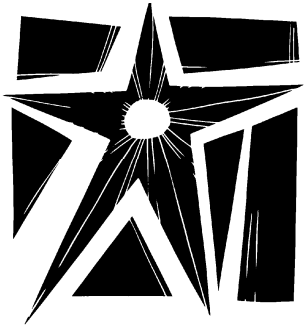
Bring the kit to Bethlehem

Video instructions and more information are available at:

<http://www.ghm.org/resources/hands-on/hospicekit.html>



Bethlehem Star



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DeKalb, IL 60115
Permit #121

Bethlehem Evangelical
Lutheran Church
1915 N. First Street
DeKalb, Illinois 60115

Phone: 815-758-3203
Fax: 815-758-1411
Email:
belcdekalb@comcast.net
website: bethlehemdekalb.org

Address Label Here



Birthday List for April

April 2009

Birthday Greetings to:

- 1 Leland Hoffman
- 3 Logan Wright
- 4 Gin Rasmussen
- 6 Anne Hietikko
- Harry Theisen
- Brandon Clark
- 8 Patrick McMillion
- 11 Jared James Holley
- 15 Christine Johnson
- 22 Vicki Ann Ross
- 23 Laurel Stokke
- 24 Lorna Knuuttila
- 29 Joshua Breuer



If you don't find your name on the Birthday Lists, please call the church office at 758-3203.