

# Bethlehem Star

## A Message from Pastor Gary

*Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. [Philippians 2: 9-11]*

Lent 2012 offers us an opportunity to explore and grow in both knowledge and faith. Ash Wednesday is February 22. We will have our traditional worship service with the imposition of ashes and Holy Communion. Additionally we will begin our Lenten series that evening as we explore the names of Jesus under the theme "The name that is above every name."

### Wednesdays in Lent:

- February 22, Ash Wednesday: Jesus, the Name that is Above Every Name.
- February 29: Jesus, light of the world.
- March 7: Jesus, Word of God.
- March 14: Jesus, Bread of Life.
- March 21: Jesus, Messiah, Christ.
- March 28: Jesus, Son of Man.
- April 1, Palm Sunday: Jesus, Lamb of God.
- April 5, Maundy Thursday: Jesus, Son of God.
- April 6, Good Friday: Jesus, Savior.
- April 7, Easter vigil: Jesus, Teacher.

All Wednesday evening service will be at 7:00 pm. Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil will all be at 7:00 pm. On Palm Sunday we will observe our usual Sunday morning schedule with worship at 8:45 am and 11:00 am.

On page 247 of Evangelical Lutheran Worship (our hymnbook) we read, "Every Sunday in worship the church celebrates the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit gathers us to receive again the gifts of God that come to us through Christ, the saving Word. On several key days

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*"Every Sunday in worship the church celebrates the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ."*

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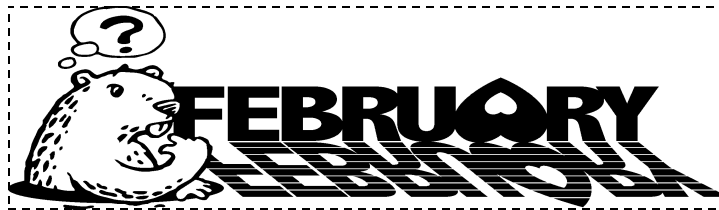
## Pastor's Message (continued)

at the center of the church year, however, worship takes a particular shape. These central days have come to be known as the Three Days, recalling Jesus' own words to his disciples that he would be handed over to death, and that "after three days he will rise again" (Mark 10:34). The Three Days encompass the time from Maundy Thursday evening through the evening of Easter Day. In particular, the service of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Vigil of Easter unfold in a single movement, as the church year makes the passage with Christ through death into life.

In addition to these central three days, the church has long used special orders of worship on Ash Wednesday – the first day of Lent – and on the Sunday of the Passion, Palm Sunday."

You are cordially invited to join the Lenten discipline of reflection and renewal as we begin our journey on Ash Wednesday.

Amani,  
Pr. Gary



**BRRRRR...**



### Saturday Afternoon Movies in February

Come in from the cold and enjoy a good movie!

**February 4 1:30 p.m.**

*"The Ultimate Gift"*

Starring Abigail Breslin, Drew Fuller & James Garner

2006/Color/117 minutes

*(Life is how you live it . . . Not how you spend it.)*

**February 18 1:30 p.m.**

*"Holiday Inn"*

Starring Bing Crosby, Fred Astaire & Marjorie Reynolds

1942/Black & White/1 hr. 41 min.

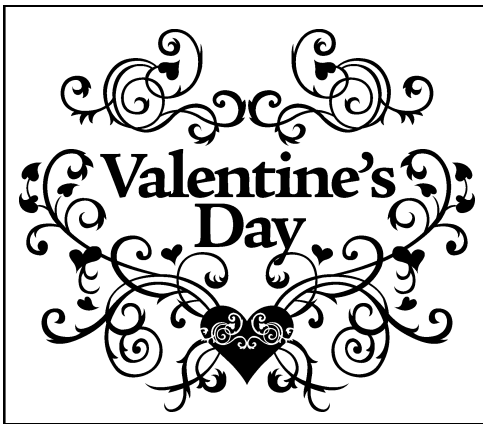
*(featuring the Academy Award-Winning Song "White Christmas")*



**Ash Wednesday**  
**February 22**  
**worship service 7:00 p.m.**



## Membership Updates, Concerns and Thanks



**Deepest sympathies** to the family of Laura Hammes on her recent death. Funeral was January 13.

Dear Friends of Laura Hammes,  
"Thank you for the delicious meal after my mother's funeral service. I know she had many fond memories of all of you."  
Blessings, Babs Koch



Thank you letters for donations were recently received by Lutheran Church Women from the following organizations:  
Safe Passage  
DeKalb County Rehab/Nursing  
Salvation Army



Dear Bethlehem,  
"My heartfelt thanks to you, my dear Bethlehem friends, for all the kindnesses shown me when I had my knee surgery. My love to you and God bless you."

Anne Hietikko

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**  
**\*\*SPRING BANQUET\*\***  
**SATURDAY, APRIL 21 12:00 NOON**



**"THANK YOU** and your parishioners for the gifts given for my grandchildren. Appreciation reaches my heart and soul. Blessings are in the smiles my grandchildren gave me when they received these gifts. Besides Christmas, thank you for all you do on behalf of your community all year long. You truly are a 'servant of God.'"

Sincerely, Marie Nikensuk

Happy 100th  
Birthday  
to  
Toini Koski

**Thank you** to the following people who volunteered to buy gifts for our Food Pantry clients' children at our Epiphany Program: Edna Schramm, Karla Neal, Karen Stokke, Sherry Krehl, Ann Brooks, Donna Bloyd, Tammie Farley, Maria McMillion, Heather Breuer, Gretchen McCleary, Virginia Luedtke, Helen Miller, Margie Hargrave, Barb Luchsinger, Laurel Stokke, Kathleen Hunt, Joan Truckenbrod, Pat Erickson, Mona Theisen, Anna Fischer, Annette Johns, Judy Sisler.

**Thank you** to everyone who made a contribution to the 2012 ELCA Youth Gathering Christmas Giving Tree fundraiser. Your gift will help our youth attend the Gathering in new Orleans this summer. Contributions continue to be received. If you would like to make a donation, please mark it clearly "2012 ELCA Youth Gathering" and place it in the offering plate. Thanks!

**Need help paying your home heating bills** or know someone who does? Call LIHEAP (Illinois Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program) at (815) 758-3835. Don't delay! You don't need to be behind on your bills. You can be a homeowner or renter and all ages are eligible.

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

**SATURDAY, MARCH 3**  
8 :30—9:30 A.M.

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!



## Sunday Adult Education for February

Sunday, February 5  
Conversation with guest preacher, the Rev. Diane Dardón.

Sunday, February 12  
Conversation with guest preacher, the Reverend Amanda Bergstrom.

Sundays, February 19 and 26  
Conversations regarding...

**NEEDED:** The church could use a donated wheelchair. Please let us know if you have a wheelchair that is not in use or know of anyone who would like to make this donation for use in the church.

*A note of thanks for all who help in so many ways that many are unaware of. Some examples: clearing sidewalks, helping people get to church, supporting our ministries, assisting people in church, greeting those who may be new to Bethlehem, helping with refreshments, increasing giving, assisting with the office and around the church, counting weekly offerings, visiting those unable to come to church, sending cards when names are mentioned in the bulletin, making hospital visits, and even more things that came to your mind as you were reading this partial list. Thanks!*

## Ushers for Sundays in February at 8:45

February 5	Frank & Rose Mary Garcia Paul Gilbert Mary Lach	February 22 <i>Ash Wednesday</i>	Ed & Judy Sisler Dick & Laurel Stokke
February 12	Leland & Evelyn Hoffman Jerry & Annette Johns	February 26	Paul & Julie Rowland Emily Rowland Ray Steinbis
February 19	Eldon & Helen Miller Betty Ruby Marlene Schoonmaker		



## Greeters for Sundays in February at 8:45

February 5	Jerry & Annette Johns
February 12	Mary Lach and Kim Martin
February 19	Estuardo & Diane Dardon, Brian and Cathryn
February 22	Betty Ruby and Alice Saari ( <i>Ash Wednesday</i> )
February 26	Ray Steinbis and Norma Wiegartz
February 29	Dick & Laurel Stokke ( <i>Lenten Service</i> )

## Lectors at 8:45

February 5	Margie Hargrave
February 12	Brian Dardon
February 19	John Metzler
February 22 <i>Ash Wednesday</i>	Rob McMillion
February 26	Julie Rowland
February 29 <i>Lenten Service</i>	Laurel Stokke

## Communion Asst.

February 5	Margie Hargrave Brian Dardon
February 12	Jerry Johns Annette Johns
February 19	John Metzler Beth Metzler
February 22 <i>Ash Wednesday</i>	Judy Sisler Dick Stokke
February 26	Ray Steinbis Sarah Trostle



### Ushers for Sundays 11:00 a.m.

February 5	Karen Schramer Myron Bond	February 19	Pat Erickson Jesse Schramer
February 12	Wayne & Nancy Coffman	February 26	Tammie Farley Kathleen Hunt



### Greeters for Sundays 11:00 a.m.

February 5	Tammie Farley and Pat Erickson
February 12	Barb and Amanda Luchsinger
February 19	Gordon & Virginia Rasmussen
February 26	Karen Schramer and Maria McMillion



### Lectors

February 5	Pat Erickson
February 12	Rob McMillion
February 19	Gordon Rasmussen
February 26	Karen Schramer

### Communion Servers

February 5	Karen Schramer
February 12	Barb Luchsinger
February 19	Jesse Schramer
February 26	Tammie Farley



**AA/Alano Club  
Sweetheart Banquet—  
February 11 — 6:00 p.m.**



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## Church Council Minutes from January 10, 2012

Present: Beth Metzler, Annette Johns, Van O'Brien, Pastor Gary Erickson, Anna Fischer, Maria McMillion, Joan Truckenbrod, Laurel Stokke, Tammie Farley

Call to Order – Beth Metzler called the meeting to order at 6:49pm.

Approval of Agenda & Minutes – The Council approved the agenda for the January meeting and the minutes from the November 2011 meeting.

Welcoming New Members – The Council welcomed the new members of the Council that were present at the meeting.

Pastor's Report – Pastor Gary's report included the following:

On March 10<sup>th</sup>, there will be a "Sees Grow Fruit" Northern Illinois Synod Congregational Resourcing Event at Kishwaukee Community College. There will be worship and several sessions on multiple issues involving the church.

The Synod trip to the Arusha Region of Tanzania is set for July 26 – August 8

Pastor Gary will be attending a Lutheran conference in Florida from January 30 – February 6.

Ambit Energy, a gas & electric surplus reseller, is soliciting BELC to give the church a discount on energy if the church helps to sign more individuals up. The Council is looking into this offer prior to making a commitment.

Property Committee (Anna Fischer) – The following issues were relayed to the Council in regard to the Property Com:

Pastor Gary, Don Kreuhl and Anna Fischer met with a consultant regarding the implementation of a lift to the basement level of the church. The consultant is putting together a plan that should be ready for review by late January.

Bill Gulke is working on repairing the light outside the front door of the church; there are several electrical issues around the church that need addressing.

Christian Education (Pastor Gary) – Valerie Talsma gave the Council a well-written letter summarizing the Christian Education part of BELC which included discussion of the success of the Christmas program and plans for the Spring.

Finance – (Tammie Farley) A year-end financial summary for December 2011 was provided to the Council with the following highlights:

Total gifts received from January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup> is \$255,631 (87.5% of 2011 budget)

Total gifts distributed from January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup> is \$253,871 (86.9% of 2011 budget)

Net cash as of December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2011 is \$2,102 (\$342 carried forward from previous month)

A comprehensive year-end report will be made available to the congregation at the second annual meeting on January 29<sup>th</sup>. The Council is also seeking an individual to take over as church Treasurer in the future. People interested in taking on this task are encouraged to talk to members of the Council.

Social Ministry (Annette Johns) – In November 2011, the food pantry served 2,325 persons/761 households; 238 of those households got food with food stamps. In December 2011, the food pantry served 2,294 persons/745 households; 222 of those households got food with food stamps.

Old Business – The following old business was discussed:

A full report consistent with the recommendations of the Vision Task Force will be prepared and presented during to the Council during the February meeting.

Meetings will be scheduled with Church staff members in January in regards to their job descriptions and evaluations.

Joan Truckenbrod notified the Council that BELC received a grant to be used toward musical artists performing at BELC. This includes a guitar ensemble and trio from Chicago, possible Finnish concert in the fall, and a May bell choir concert.

Election of Officers – In January, officers are elected each year to the four positions in the Council. For 2012, the following individuals will be officers:

Beth Metzler – President

Maria McMillion – Vice President

Van O'Brien – Secretary

Tammie Farley – Treasurer

Next Meeting - The next council meeting is set for Monday, February 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm. The second annual meeting will be on January 28<sup>th</sup>. Meeting was adjourned at 8:48. Minutes submitted by: Van O'Brien

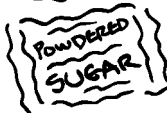
## The Kid's Page

### LOVE TREATS

Show others love by baking them a lovely treat!

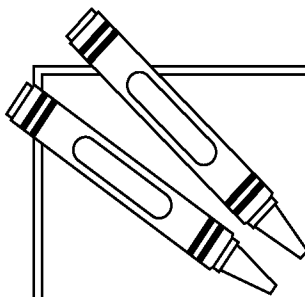
What you need:

- ♥ An adult to help
- ♥ Refrigerated cookie dough (sugar or chocolate chip)
- ♥ Jar of red jam (raspberry or strawberry)
- ♥ 1 or 2 heart-shaped cookie cutters. (If you use 2, make sure they are different sizes.)
- ♥ Powdered sugar
- ♥ Sifter
- ♥ Knife



What you do:

1. Follow the cookie dough directions for rolling out the dough.
2. If you are using one cookie cutter, cut out the heart-shaped cookies and transfer to a baking sheet. Try to have an even number of hearts when finished.
3. If you are using two cookie cutters, cut out the large hearts. Take half of the hearts, and cut out a small heart window in the center with the smaller cookie cutter. Now you have a heart inside another heart.
4. Have an adult help you bake the cookies according to the dough directions.
5. After baking, place the cookies on a cooling rack.
6. When the cookies are cooled, make cookie sandwiches by spreading jam onto the flat side of half the cookies, and then placing another cookie on top of each one. (If you made cookie windows, use those for the tops.)
7. Sprinkle powdered sugar over your heart sandwiches with a sifter.
8. Share the cookies with the people you love.



Just for **KIDS**

*But the Greatest of These Is LOVE!*

God shows love to us every day and in many ways. Fill in the blanks below with the missing letters to see how God loves us perfectly!

“For God so lo \_ \_ ed the world,

that he g \_ \_ ve

his on \_ \_ y

begott \_ \_ n

So \_ \_ ,

\_ \_ hat whosoever

believeth \_ \_ n Him

should \_ \_ ot perish,

but have \_ \_ verlasting life.

—John 3:16, KJV

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## Social Ministry/Food Pantry Report for 2011

This ministry includes coordination of volunteers for Meals on Wheels (October), sign-up to provide meals for Lutheran Campus Ministry (September-February) and maintaining the Feed My Sheep Food Pantry (all year).

The Food Pantry obviously requires the most time and effort. Our main purpose is to supply food to the needy. We occasionally offer some household goods, clothing, and other items.

Our pantry recently returned to a client choice policy that is recommended by the major food banks. This is a user-friendly approach that is believed to be most respectful of people and least wasteful for food.

We encourage our volunteers to adopt the attitude of Christ: to be servants rather than masters in dealing with the needy. *“If there is among you anyone in need, a member of your community in any of the towns in the land the Lord your God is giving you, do not be hard-hearted or tight-fisted toward your needy neighbor. Rather, you should open your hand, willingly lending enough to meet the need, whatever it may be.”* Deuteronomy 15:7-8

Numerous volunteers give many hours to placing orders, keeping records, preparing publicity, writing articles, compiling reports, attending meetings, unloading delivery trucks, stocking the shelves, breaking down boxes, and assisting clients. It's important to note that an increasing number of our volunteers are also clients who use the pantry. This benefits everyone in several ways: Bill Wilson's picking up fresh produce at the Food Bank, more helpers to speed the waiting time for clients, and the “release” of members of the congregation to seek other avenues of ministry. Of course we still have a half dozen or so members who do help on a regular basis and we continue to be grateful for the contributions of all.

Our budget remains the same as last year (\$6,200) but we could not provide nearly as much food as we do (3-5 tons per month) without added financial assistance. We rely on members and friends of the congregation to support the pantry with extra donations. In November, for example, we were able to purchase 100 turkey dinners because of extra giving. The generosity of members and friends does not go unnoticed by our clients!

With these extra donations and the government programs providing free food, EFP and TANF, we are able to help many more people than the budgeted amount would allow. Did you know that this year we are averaging over 2000 clients a month? Our pantry is perhaps the only one in the area open two days a week that permits return visits.

This December our pantry embarked on a new venture to provide gifts for the children of clients. We decided to use the Epiphany Program at Sunday worship as a time to distribute our gifts. Early in December we had a sign-up sheet for clients who were interested in registering their children for gifts. We had 38 families for a total of 101 gifts! At first the task seemed daunting but after Sherry Krehl and I started calling members to go shopping, we were happy to see that in a short time we had 28 ladies (listed in the January 2012 bulletins) to buy all the gifts we needed. There was a pot luck after church, and some clients brought a dish and stayed to share. It was a small turnout but we hope the good report of all who came will result in better attendance if we decide to repeat the project.

In the spring we hope to plan an Easter related event—perhaps baskets for the children of clients. It would also be nice if we could in some way reward the clients who volunteer regularly at our open hours. If church members have ideas feel free to share with Edie Hartman, Darlene Holland, or Annette Johns (815-895-3022). Keep in mind the Monday and Thursday hours of the Pantry and come to visit sometime. Your spirit will be raised to see the good work that goes on.

Some needs can be met with a single donation while others are on-going. Feeding the hungry is a duty that appears to be never-ending. Let us not tire but continue to do our best for the hungry with our pantry and our prayers. May we be known as the “house of bread” because we take to heart Jesus' words to “Feed My Sheep.”

In His Service, Annette Johns (Social Ministry)

## Christian Education

### Children's Epiphany Program Update

Many thanks to those who participated in the Children's Christmas-Epiphany Program, including:

*Andrey Wade, Blake Ross, Emilie Schramer, Melina Zak, Abbey Brooks, Tommy Schramer, Isaac Martin, Anastasia Wade, Skylar Martin, Charlotte Martin, Ben Martin, Christopher Holley, Ben Neal, Emily Rowland, Tommy Schramer, Catherine Dardon, Zarina Grych, Anthony Grych, Sophia Harsh, Brian Dardon, Riley Zak, Jared Holley, Emily Cook, Amanda Cook, Samantha Martin, Cooper Williams, Lief Williams, Jim Nerstheimer, Ann Brooks, Julie Rowland, Adam & Karla Neal, Anna Fischer, Pastor Gary Erickson, Valerie Talsma, Stephanie Harsh, Mark Haller-Wade.*

Also, gratitude to those who helped with props, costumes, and treats. A nice selection of photos have been posted to Bethlehem's Facebook page. Mark Haller-Wade has provided Christian Education with a CD-ROM of all the photographs if any family members would like a copy of a high-resolution image.

### Sunday School for February

The children will be studying Jesus's Parable of the *House on the Rock*.

Adult helpers for Art Activity February 5 & 12: Chandy Tracy

Storytelling helpers for February 19 & 26: Paul Rowland

Kitchen Experiments helpers for February 19 & 26: (TBA)

Curriculum materials are available from Ann Brooks. Look for a Sunday School table at coffee hour where teachers and helpers can meet and share ideas. Helpers are still needed for some rotations in March under the topic: "*Lost Sheep, Lost Coin.*"

### Young Adult Class for February

Young adults (ages 13—) will be exploring the Reformation.

### Adult Sunday Forum

Sunday, February 5: Conversation with guest preacher, the Rev. Diane Dardón.

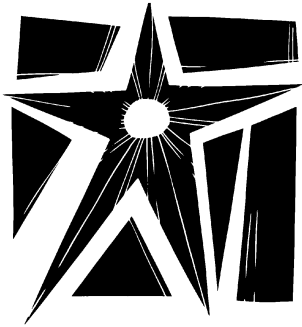
Sunday, February 12: Conversation with guest preacher, the Reverend Amanda Bergstrom.

Sundays, February 19 and 26: Conversations regarding...

If you have any question or would like to volunteer please call Valerie Talsma (The Hat Lady) (815) 825-2473 or Pastor Gary at (815) 758-3203.

**See you in Sunday School!**

Bethlehem Star



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website:  
www.bethlehemdekab.org

## FEBRUARY 2012

Return service requested



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### Birthday List for February

#### February 2012

<b>Birthday Greetings to:</b>		<b>20</b>	<b>Don Krehl</b>
		<b>21</b>	<b>Mark Domroes22</b>
		<b>22</b>	<b>Meagan Newton</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Nancy Jackson</b>		<b>Joe Ross</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Justin Zak</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>Dan Clark</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Judy Sisler</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>Loren Hayes</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Tony Denny</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>Jerry Trostle</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Brian Vanderweele</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>Tom Inboden</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Erica Schoonmaker</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>Heather Breuer</b>
	<b>Justin Huffman</b>		
<b>15</b>	<b>Ray Killham</b>		
	<b>Lori Grubbs</b>		
<b>17</b>	<b>Van O'Brien</b>		
<b>18</b>	<b>Richard Newton</b>		

**Happy Birthday!!!!**



If you would like your name on the Birthday Lists, please call the church office at 758-3203.