

# Bethesda Life-Line

## Worship Services\*

Sunday 9:00

Service of Holy Communion is celebrated on the First and Third Sundays of each month.

Coffee fellowship is held in the fellowship room following the Sunday Worship service. All are invited to share in conversation and warm fellowship.



Mar. 4...Sunday Worship 9:00 AM  
Communion

Mar. 11 Sunday Worship 9:00 AM

Mar. 18 Sunday Worship 9:00 AM  
Communion

Mar. 25 Sunday Worship 9:00 AM

### Bethesda Mission Statement:

We will **LIVE** and **SERVE** through **FAITH**  
we will **ACT** with **LOVE** and **KINDNESS**  
we will **GIVE** hope and **SUPPORT** to all

## Upcoming Events

### Lent & Easter Services

March 7

5:30pm Potluck - 6:30pm Service

March 14

5:30pm Potluck 6:30pm Service

March 21

5:30pm Potluck 6:30pm Service

March 29 Maundy Thursday-6:30 pm Service  
(Communion)

March 30 Good Friday – 9:00am Service

April 1 Easter Sunday-  
8:30am & 10:00am Service (Communion)



## 2018 MUSIC News

I wanted to update everyone on the coming year's choir schedule. I have decided to start the choir practices after Easter, hoping that some of the members will be returning after the 1st of April, our first practice will be at 6:00 on April 4th and the choir should plan on sing on Sunday, April 15th. Our practices will continue each Wed. night at 6:00 pm with Praise Team Practicing at 7:00 p.m. Mark your calendars for each Wed. night at 6:00 pm choir. 7:00 pm Praise Team and sing the 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month. The 2nd Sunday of each month is Praise Team Sunday.

If you like to sing please come and join the choir or the Praise Team, as we always are in of need new voices. We would love to have you come sing with us and Praise our God with beautiful music!!

In the April newsletter I will highlight practice dates and the Sundays we sing and hope you can come and join the choir. Your fearless leader,  
Sheila Penoyer/Choir Director



Watch for Easter Lily  
Signup sheet!



Greetings, fellow sisters and brothers in Christ!

We move full speed into the season of Lent this month. Or, maybe more accurately, we slow down into the season of Lent this month. Lent, perhaps

more than any other church season, involves us in the practice of prayer, and prayer requires us to slow down. Time for us to reflect on our blessings, on our sins, on our hopes and our concerns; time for us to ask for God's help and forgiveness.

Our Lent began with a true swirl of emotions last month, first as Valentine's Day and Ash Wednesday fell on the same day, and then even more so when we heard the tragic news out of Florida, as yet another school shooting took the lives of 17 people and wounded 15 others. We continue to be a country in deep need of God's love and forgiveness.

In the week that followed, I noticed that prayer itself took a few hits in the public conversation around this tragedy, as it has in the wake of similar losses of life. As I myself did on Bethesda's Facebook page, well-meaning Christians, congregations, and other people of faith shared that "we offer our thoughts and prayers" to those who are suffering and grieving. Yet to others this seems like a meager offering. People are angry, they want change, and they have heard people offer "thoughts and prayers" before and yet mass shootings continue to plague our country. I read one column that proclaimed: "It might make the person doing the praying feel a little better, but prayers do nothing to effect change in the real world."

As someone whose job involves a lot of prayer, the first time I heard this kind of pushback, I did feel a bit personally insulted. C'mon, I thought, there are far worse things to say, and silence would be even worse. But, if I am honest, it is a fair critique. It can be far too easy to offer a quick statement of prayer and then never follow it up, and it does take something away from the sentiment. If you professed your love to someone and then ignored them for the rest of your life, they might rightly question the depth of your feelings.

Yet, as understandable as their anger might be, I do not agree that prayer is useless or has nothing to offer our world. Instead, I would say this – Yes, there is a problem, but I don't think it is with prayer itself, but more with how we pray.

For starters, it is indeed a tempting trap to turn statements of prayer into nothing more than a social nicety. Like saying "bless you" after someone sneezes. I don't think even pastors actually get out the anointing oil or do a laying on of hands on the head of the sneezer to fully bless them. It is just something we say to make people feel better. While it is nice thing to say and we mean well, prayer shouldn't be something we do just for the sake of custom.

Don't get me wrong, I am not saying there is a high bar for how to pray. Too often people get nervous about prayer, especially in public – thinking that prayer needs to be pretty and perfect. It should be a regular habit in our daily lives. Prayer is a relationship – a relationship with God that should always feel close at hand. What is difficult about prayer is not the vocabulary or poetic alliteration, it is the honesty and the awareness that good, healthy prayer demands from us.

In any healthy relationship, you need open, honest conversation with one another. So too with prayer and our conversations with God. That honesty, of course, can take many forms. Sometimes we are honest about our joys, and we thank God in our prayer. Sometimes we are grieving and we come to God in our pain. Sometimes we or those we love are suffering, and we come to God in our anger. Sometimes we struggle with faith itself and we come in our doubt. All of those have a place in our lives of faith and in our prayers. I am a firm believer that God would rather have us come as we are, doubts and anger and any other complicated mix of emotion, rather than not come at all.

And, if we are truly honest with ourselves and with God, we come to God asking for forgiveness. It is an essential part of that conversation. We don't ignore our sins. We don't excuse them away because others have sinned against us first or even worse. We don't explain them away because we didn't know or we couldn't have changed anything anyway.

(Continued on next page)

In prayer, we pray best when we are honest with God, when we are aware of ourselves and aware of our world, and when we seek forgiveness for all that we have done and all that we have failed to do.

This truly honest, truly open kind of prayer – how can that not make a difference in our world?! Good, healthy prayer should shake us from our apathy and from our guilt. It reveals our shortcomings so that we are no longer held back by them. I may not be able to fix every injustice in the world, and I ask God's forgiveness for that, but I can make a difference in the world. I can do my part. I can work to fix what I have done wrong and not do it again. Sin may be a condition of our lives and our world for some time to come, but that doesn't mean that it gets to have the last say.

In the wake of disasters, whether natural or man-made, should we offer our thoughts and prayers? Yes! But both before and after those sentiments, we should actually think and we should actually pray! We should make a commitment to do so. And then, if God speaks to us in that prayer, if God helps us realize something about ourselves, something about our world, if God works through that prayer to call us to more study, more conversations, and more actions, we should listen! Otherwise, it's just words. Nice words. But not particularly useful words. Not the kind of words that are filled to the brim with God's love. And those are the kind of words that our world needs to hear.

Yours in Christ, Pastor James

---

### TREASURER'S REPORT

General Fund	<u>January</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Income Actual	19,674	108,412
Income Budget	17,021	85,104
Expense Actual	19,901	108,763
Expense Budget	16,369	81,845
Over/(Short)	(227)	(351)



**Bethesda Lutheran Church of Malmo**  
Minutes of February 9, 2018, Council Meeting

In attendance: Mary Braun, Melody Lackner, Ron Mehlhop, Judie Birk, Kathy Berland, George Smith and Jenny Schuett.

The meeting was called to order by council

president Ron Mehlhop. Pastor James gave opening Devotions.

#### Secretary's Report:

Motion was made to accept the minutes of the January meeting by George Smith, seconded by Melody Lackner, and passed.

#### Treasurer's Report:

Financial view and current month activity for January along with some Stewardship concerns on the budget was presented by Mary Braun, Motion was made by Kathy Berland to accept the treasurer's report, seconded by Melody Lackner and passed.

#### Old Business:

Bank Accounts signature cards were signed at today's council meeting.

Picture Directory for late 2018 — Melody reported that she could not compete with Lifetouch. Mission and Evangelism will go forward with contacting Lifetouch.

Blessing Box to Feed My Starving Children is scheduled for February and March then will go back to local benevolence. George Smith checked with Isle Schools on how they spend local donations. He talked with someone from the School district office in Isle and there are a couple of ways to do this. They have started a food shelf for the kids in Isle. Food or donations money are needed. However, they cannot have any food with peanuts. This is a fairly new program in Isle. Mary Braun will bring this to the Stewardship committee. Judie will talk to the district to get more information.

Bishop's Convention scheduled for Saturday, March 17 at Zion Lutheran in Grand Rapids. Synod is encouraging all council members and other lay people to attend along with their pastors. It is entitled, "Nuts & Bolts and a Few Loose Screws". There will be workshops on church constitutions, Youth & Family Ministry, Church Finances, training for church council members, etc. Basic tools that will help each congregation.

Pastor also mentioned that First Lutheran in Aitkin is hosting a retreat "Practicing Resurrection", March 9-10. See info elsewhere in the March newsletter for more information. Pastor also mentioned an opportunity for an August family camp with Voyageurs Lutheran Ministry. Opportunities to have fun and grow.

### New Business:

A parishioner has offered to donate a large flat screen TV for West Wall of Fellowship Hall to connect to Sanctuary feed. George made a motion to approve TV being donated. Melody seconded.

Wifi has been installed throughout the church thanks to Pastor James. Guest password is 'bethesda'

Ditch cleanup is coming up soon. Mary Braun will look at who will be chairing.

Letters/Postcards to visitors — Mary will update letter to add 'Like us' on Facebook. We also have welcome cards to pass out to visitors.

Pastor Vacation – April 16-25 approved by council. A lay person was suggested for April 22 Sunday service.

May 4-6 — Synod Assembly. Pastor would need pastoral coverage.

### Pending Tasks to accomplish that were discussed:

- Church's 100th Anniversary Celebration 2019
- Meet with Insurance Agent in April to review coverage
- Revise & Adopt New Constitution
- Work with Pastor & Congregation on Church Vision/Mission Statement
- Consider launching Mutual Ministry Committees

### Committee Reports:

#### Worship and Music

Members present: Pastor James, Carol Bakken, Tom Christensen, Jim Christensen, Paula Spetz, Julie Swaggert, Sharon Whipple.

Meeting was held February 1<sup>st</sup> and opened with a prayer by Pastor James.

#### Old business:

Discussion was had about the Pastor's installation ceremony. Thanks for all the help.

Lent/Easter planning: We will have pot luck before the Ash Wed. service and also all Lent Wed. services. The Wed. services will be Holden services (we authorized ordering a new CD of the Holden service) and the pastors will be rotating between churches for the Wed. services. We authorized purchasing a new remote for Pastor to be able to control the music during services. Lent Wed

services will be at 6:30 after pot luck at 5:30. Maunday Thursday service also at 6:30 and Good Friday may be at 10AM. Pastor will decide if we do Palm Sunday or Passion Sunday. 2018 Goals and plans: We will send out the letters for requesting special music from other churches again. We will think about other plans and goals for the year and come back to it again next meeting.

#### New Business:

Isle Community Lenten Cantata March 30<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 at Faith Lutheran in Isle. Practices Six Sundays in lent 3 pm to 4:30 pm.

#### Other:

We received notes from a couple of people: one in regards to piano players. Pastor will approach the people suggested. The other talked about the need for a quiet time before the service starts for reflection. Pastor will try this during lent and maybe use a bell to ring to signal the congregation for the quiet time.

We closed the meeting with the Lord's Prayer. Next Meeting will be March 1<sup>st</sup> at 10:30 AM Submitted by Sharon Whipple

Stewardship summary of stewardship /finance meeting February 12, 2018

Members present: Pastor James, Donna Ansell, Pat Becker, Mary Braun, Patti Smith, and Mary Vukelich.

1. Mary and Mark V will meet with Mary B and George S to work on parsonage accounting codes
2. Patti S will contact Isle school to find out what they need in their school food closet. She will write article for Lifeline and bulletin so items can be collected in March
3. Names from Time and Talent are being forwarded to respective groups
4. Roadside cleanup group will meet in April
5. Next meeting-Items for discussion are parsonage account and further review of Time and Talent

Next meeting is Monday, March 5 at 1:00 Submitted by Pat Becker

### Faith Health & Wellness:

The Health & Wellness committee met to discuss the information we got concerning the use

of Bethesda church for emergency preparedness. Stacy Durgin, coordinator for Aitkin County Public Health Preparedness, was contacted to see how we might fit into this program.

She came to Bethesda to meet with us. Darlene Christensen will give a report on this meeting at our next council meeting.

Per Darlene, as of 2/5/2018, Stacy Durgin has not gotten back to us yet as far as what info they need from us.

Submitted by Kathy Berland

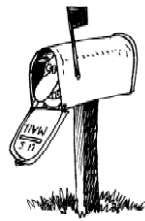
Motion was made to adjourn by Mary Braun, seconded by Jenny Schuett, and passed. The council closed with the Lord's Prayer.

The next council meeting will be March 16 at 9:00 am.

Respectfully submitted by Judie Birk, council secretary.

### GOD'S AMAZING GRACE.

NE MN Convention June 4th thru 6th 2018: Sugar Lake Lodge, Cohasset. Any ladies from Bethesda that are interested in going, please contact Dianne Jones and she can get you registered. The early bird registration deadline is April 15th, last deadline is May 4th. Our WELCA meeting is not until April 18th. Think about going with a friend.



### Attention

#### New Church Recycling Program

The church is getting serious about recycling. Everyone who uses the church is encouraged to read the signs marked on all the wastebaskets and cans. There will also be instructions posted for what is garbage and what needs to go into the recycling containers. **Please read the instructions on what can be recycled and what cannot.** In addition there will also be a container for aluminum cans. The Veggie Stand is collecting aluminum cans. Members of the recycling group will take the recycled material to Westerlund's Citgo twice a month for deposit. A container provided by Aitkin County for recycled material will be available. See schedule posted. If you are interested in helping with this project, the contact person is Dianne Jones. Community members are encouraged to

support the Aitkin County drop-off program so that it will continue here in our area.



### Bishop Aitken's Reflections Repeat Tragic Violence, Senseless Inaction, and the Lord's Prayer

"Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

When we pray the Lord's Prayer, we are asking that we would live our lives in faithful and courageous ways that concretely embody God's Kingdom of non-violence and care for all people, right here, right now, on earth. Heaven is in good shape, it's earth that needs our action. We are already equipped to boldly change those things that are not of God's Kingdom -killing innocents with guns is never part of God's Kingdom, and we know it. Time to speak out, call our representatives and legislators and act with faith, hope, and bold action that exposes the "guns as solution" madness and the continued selling of ridiculously overpowered rapid fire guns. I'm writing my Senators and Representatives, starting on the State level. I'm going to call them as well. This can be done with clarity and love that respects dialog and discussion, and rises above the polarities we are living in.

+ Bishop Thomas Aitken  
Northeastern Minnesota Synod



### Church Directory Coming this Fall

The dates have been reserved for pictures to be taken for our new directory to be ready before our 100th year anniversary in 2019.

Save the Dates!

August 15th - 18th, 2018

We will have morning, afternoon and evening sessions.



March 11<sup>th</sup>

# Activities & Events

March 2018

If anyone is unable to fulfill an assignment below, please find your own substitute or notify the coordinator

## Ushers

by Skip & Lynn Hansen

Mar 4 & 11 Judy Wozney, Winnie Z.

Mar 18 & 21 Dennis, Audry Bistadeau

April 1 Easter Early: Skip, Lynn Hansen

Late: Chuck, Elsa Carlson

Check list in office for when to light the Christ Candle  
Don't forget the blessing boxes the first Sunday of every month!! If anyone is interested in ushering please contact Skip or Lynn

## Lectors 9:00 (Paula Spetz)

Mar 4 Winnie Z.

Mar 11 Shelia Penoyer

Mar. 18 George Smith

Mar. 25 Winnie Z.

## Altar Care by Dianne Jones

March Sylvia Tapelt and Dianne Jones, Elsa

April Chuck and Elsa Carlson



## Coffee Servers by WELCA

Mar 4 Ron & Jan Aho, Ray P. & Judy W.

Mar 11 Praise Team

Mar. 18 Dennis & Audrey Bistodeau, Ron & Arty Heins

Mar. 25 Steve & Melody Lackner, Winnie Z., Marilyn Andrews

## Greeters Lynne Meidlinger

Mar 4 Wayne, Janice Olson

Mar 11 Kathy, George Larson

Mar. 18 Wally, Bev Swenson

Mar. 25 Del, Diane Jones

April 1 Kathy, George Larson

## Recycling

March..... Dianne Jones

April..... Chuck and Elsa Carlson

May..... Ron and JoAnn Haglund

June..... Ray Piispanen

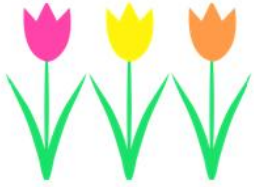
July..... Lee and Barb Forrester



March 3 Marlyn & Shirley Eklund  
March 15 Craig & Patty Kullberg  
March 23 Brian & Laurie Simonson  
March 26 Dick & Sandy Pullen



March 9 Andrew Nyberg  
March 10 Robert Carlson  
March 11 Arty Heins  
March 11 Norman Westerlund  
March 14 Troy Nyberg  
March 15 Theodore Mickelson  
March 17 Holly Grap  
March 20 Mary Braun  
March 22 Donna Westerlund  
March 25 Carolyn Morris  
March 26 Jack Spetz  
March 26 Nicole Berry  
March 27 Richard Carron  
March 28 Douglas Hansen  
March 29 Dale Peterson  
March 29 Linda Hansen  
March 29 Donna Fox  
March 29 Donette Root  
March 29 Scott Nyberg  
March 29 Emma Miles  
March 30 Jean Berens  
March 30 Ronald Richter  
March 30 Tom Petersen



# MARCH 2018

## Bethesda Calendar of Events



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				<b>1</b> 8:00 R.o.m.e.o.s 10:30 W & M 12:30 Fun Timers	<b>2</b> 10:00 Bones	<b>3</b> Foot care 1-4
<b>4</b> 9:00 Worship & Communion	<b>5</b> 1:00 Stewardship 1:00 Pinochle  7:00 p.m AA & Alanon mg	<b>6</b> 12-2 Pastor Text Study	<b>7</b> 9:00 Bible Study 10:30 Stitches 5:30 Potluck 6:30 Lent Worship 7:30 Praise Team	<b>8</b> 8:00 R.o.m.e.o.s  12:30 Fun Timers	<b>9</b> 10:00 Bones	<b>10</b>
<b>11</b> 9:00 Worship  <b>Daylight Savings Time begins</b>	<b>12</b> 1:00 Pinochle  7:00 p.m AA &	<b>13</b> 9:00 Quilters 12-2 Pastor Text Study	<b>14</b> 9:00 Bible Study 10:30 Stitches  5:30 Potluck 6:30 Lent Worship 7:30 Praise Team	<b>15</b> 8:00 R.o.m.e.o.s  12:30 Fun Timers	<b>16</b> 9:00 Council 10:00 Bones	<b>17</b>   Happy St.Patrick's Day !
<b>18</b> 9:00 Worship & Communion	<b>19</b> 1:00 Pinochle  7:00 p.m AA & Alanon mg	<b>20</b> 12-2 Pastor Text Study  <b>First Day of Spring</b> <b>Newstline Deadline</b>	<b>21</b> <b>8-12 WIC</b> 9:00 Bible Study 10:30 Stitches  5:30 Potluck 6:30 Lent Worship 7:30 Praise Team	<b>22</b> 8:00 R.o.m.e.o.s  12:30 Fun Timers	<b>23</b> 10:00 Bones	<b>24</b>
<b>25</b> 9:00 Worship Palm Sunday  	<b>26</b> 1:00 Pinochle  7:00 p.m AA & Alanon mg	<b>27</b> 9:00 Quilters  12-2 Pastor Text Study	<b>28</b> 9:00 Bible Study 9:30 Stitches  6:00 Praise Team	<b>29</b> 8:00 R.o.m.e.o.s  12:30 Fun Timers 6:30 Maundy Thurs. service	<b>30</b> 9:00 Service <b>Good Friday Service</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>1</b> 8:30 Worship 10:00 Worship <b>Easter</b>						

Bethesda Lutheran Church of Malmö  
21590 State Highway 47  
Isle, MN 56342

NON PROFIT ORG  
Paid  
Permit No. 25  
Aitkin, MN 56431

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



## The *Lifeline* Mission

We will **LIVE** and **SERVE** through **FAITH**  
we will **ACT** with **LOVE** and **KINDNESS**  
we will **GIVE** hope and **SUPPORT** to all



### Bethesda Telephone Directory

Church	<a href="mailto:blcmalmo@frontiernet.net">blcmalmo@frontiernet.net</a>	(320) 684-2123
Fax		(320)-684-2836
Toll Free		(877) 684-2123
Church Web site		<a href="http://blcmalmo.org">blcmalmo.org</a>
Facebook page		Bethesda Lutheran Church of Malmö

Pastor	Rev. James A. Muske	(320) 684-2123
Council President	Ron Mehlhop	(320) 537-4948
Vice President	George Smith	(320) 537-1020
Parish Nurse	Darlene Christensen	(320) 684-2846
Parish Nurse	Kathy Berland	(218) 838-6181

**To share articles and/or information, mail to:**

**Sue Stebbins, *Lifeline* Editor**

**c/o Bethesda Lutheran Church**

**Email address: [blnews@juno.com](mailto:blnews@juno.com)**