## Bethesda Life-Line

**Worship Services\*** 

Bethesda now has a YouTube channel! Please check out last week's service (https://www.youtube.com/c/BethesdaLuther anChurchMalmoMN/videos), as well as on our Facebook page.



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

**March In Person Lenten Worship** 

March 3 Wednesday 6:00 PM March 10 Wednesday 6:00 PM March 17 Wednesday 6:00 PM March 24 Wednesday 6:00 PM

March 7 Sunday Worship (online) 8:45 AM
March 14 Sunday Worship (in house) 10:00 AM
Communion

March 21 Sunday Worship (online) 8:45 AM March 28 Sunday Worship (in house) 10:00 AM Communion

#### **Upcoming Events**

Weekly bulletins and services available at <a href="http://blcmalmo.org/">http://blcmalmo.org/</a>



March 14th

Daylight savings time begins



### 2021

#### **Wednesday Lenten Services**

Will continue in person throughout the Lent Season. Services will be at 6:00 pm to accommodate the Confirmation Students course of study. Rebroadcast of the service will be posted later on our YouTube channel.

#### Air Quality at Bethesda

We are improving our air quality at Bethesda: The Reopen Task Team recommended to the Council that we install an ionization unit to the furnace that feeds the Fellowship area. This unit uses Needle Point Bipolar ionization of the air going through the furnace (and air conditioning) to remove 90% of Covid-19 virus and other purities. This technology is currently being used by schools, businesses and hospitals and is suggested by the State of Minnesota recommendations for reopening for churches.

Purchase of the unit was approved by the Council and will be installed in two weeks. We are improving the conditions at church for your safety. Plus, we are following all requirements for reopening by the state.

See you in church. Lee Forrester, Property Committee





#### From the Pastor

Taken from the ELCA World Hunger website. Posted on February 17, 2021; https://blogs.elca.org/worldhunger/

"Your Father who sees in secret will reward you"
(Matthew 6:4)

Almost eight years had passed since Marina set foot inside a church building. A car accident when she was in her late 40s had left her homebound with chronic pain and without use of her legs. One of her favorite visits in her home was on Sunday after-noon, when her pastor would come by to give Marina Holy Communion and pray with her. With a half flight of stairs leading up to the church door and more stairs between the foyer and the sanctuary, worshiping with her congregation was not an option.

That's why Marina was so surprised to get a call from her pastor in July 2020 asking her to be part of a conversation about reopening the building for worship during the COVID-19 pandemic. She was quiet in that first Zoom meeting, listening to the other people share their ideas and concerns. Some were scared, some weren't, but most were exasperated and at a loss. One man seemed to put it best when he said, "This is all new to us. We've just never had to think about what it would mean to not be in church together ever." Before anyone could murmur agree-ment, Marina made her sole contribution to the discussion: "Whaddya mean 'we'?"

This "we" — or, more specifically, this call to reexamine "we" — is at the core of the gospel message for Ash Wednesday this year and, indeed, of the church's vision of a just world where all are fed.

Jesus' teaching in Matthew 6:1-6 and 16-21 is the starting point on the journey through Lent. In this excerpt from the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus admonishes his audience about public, showy displays of spirituality. Rather than take pleasure or pride in giving alms, we are to hide the deed even from ourselves. Rather than pray in public, we are to retire to private rooms. Rather than display the effects of our fasting, Jesus tells us, "put oil on your head and wash your face" (6:17).

The sermon of Jesus appears to favor private spirituality over public displays of faith. He seems to suggest that

faith is best lived out in the quiet and private spaces of our hearts rather than in public.

However, reading the sermon in this way misses the fact that the Gospel of Matthew is a call to be this very public church, which will "make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19). We might believe that the message of Lent is to practice private piety, yet Jesus focuses here not on the mere practices of faith but on the community of faith. In other words, Jesus is talking not about the *what* but about the *who* — who we are and who God is.

Noting the subtle assumptions about privilege in Matthew 6, Jesus' command to the disciples to pray in their "room" (6:6) assumes they have a private room to retreat to, even though Jesus himself "has nowhere to lay his head" (Matthew 8:20). Almsgiving assumes that you have something to give. Even fasting assumes that one has the means to make choices about when to start and stop their own hunger.

Jesus' message is a challenge to a privileged church to think more carefully about who they are. The problem isn't that they are doing the wrong things. Giving alms to support neighbors is a good thing. Praying in the sanctuary is, well, what is supposed to happen when the community is gathered. But they have forgotten why they are doing this, and they have forgotten who they are. Their practices are no longer about the good of the community or the good of the neighbor but are mere performances, focused entirely on themselves.

Almsgiving, praying, fasting — these are practices meant to remind us of each other. But has being faithful become a matter of making sure we are seen rather than of training our hearts and minds to see each other?

Accompanying our neighbors in God's work of building a just world where all are fed and tended to means reimagining who we are and who we are called to be. There are so many stories shared across this church about friends and neighbors addressing hunger and poverty together. But perhaps the significance of faith in God, who "sees in secret," is best exemplified not by the stories we can tell but by the stories we can't — stories of God at work "in secret" and in hidden ways. These are the stories we don't hear, of neighbors whose names can't be shared.

Jesus' call in the Gospel reading reminds us that being the church requires a definition of community that is more expansive, more diverse and, thus, more beautiful than the exclusive vision put forth by those in power.

#### Bethesda Lutheran Church of Malmo Council Meeting

Minutes of February 15, 2021

<u>In attendance:</u> Judie Birk, Mary Braun, Cheryl Malotky, Sherry Whipple, Joanne Stueven, Pastor James Muske, and Dennis Hennessy.

The meeting was called to order by council president Dennis Hennessy

Pastor James gave opening Devotions.

Pastor's Report –January 19 to February 15, 2021 Continuing, as I have for the past year, spending time on recording and editing music and videos for online worship. Many thanks in recent weeks to my stepmother, Sandra, for sending in music for preludes/postludes/etc.

As we discuss moving toward more in-person worship services, I feel we need to continue offering an online option (probably for the foreseeable future), but my intent is to decrease the level of editing, as I have done for worship videos for previous in-person services.

We could potentially livestream worship, but it does come with additional challenges and I would like to have a helper monitor it during the service.

Also, I would continue to pre-record some portions of the worship service to help decrease the time it takes to post a video after an in-person service. This would also include pre-recording the sung music, which is also a safety concern.

Our confirmation class changes a bit for Lent – students are required to attend midweek Lenten services, either online or in-person and then participate in a short follow-up conversation on Wednesday evenings at 7:15.

The 2021 Synod Assembly will be the weekend of April 30 – May 2. Because of COVID concerns the assembly will be held remotely, similar to the one we had in August 2020. The quilt auction will also be online.

After noticing the possibility of taking my sabbatical at the end of this year, I will explore the possibility of applying for a grant to further supplement funding for that time.

#### Secretary's Report:

Motion was made to accept the minutes of the January meeting by Cheryl, seconded by Mary, and passed.

#### **Treasurer's Report:**

Financial view and current month activity for January was presented by Mary Braun. We had a strong January financially because of the RMDs coming in. Motion was made by Judie to accept the treasurer's report, seconded by Cheryl and passed.

#### **Committee Reports**

Task Force Reopen Committee Minutes of February 9, 2021

<u>In attendance:</u> Mary Braun, Pastor James Muske, Ron Haugland, Shirley Gosselin, Joanne Stueven, Darlene Christensen, Dennis Hennessy, Lee Forrester, Dick Stebbins.

Discussion regarding the reopening of the church meeting the State & Synod guidelines:

- It was agreed that we will open to in-house worship for the Lenten season. Ash Wednesday service, and all Wednesday Lenten services will be at 6:00pm to accommodate the Confirmation Student's schedule. There will be no Pot Luck before hand.
- Our first In-house Sunday worship service will be Sunday, February 28<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am in the Fellowship Hall.
- Using the State guidelines of 50% of capacity, we estimated that the church Fellowship Hall will accommodate approximately 50-60 people.
- The temperatures of all employees and visitors will be taken when they enter the church for worship service.
- A <u>Health Screening Checklist</u> will be included in the bulletin at our in-house worship services. If employees or visitors answer "Yes" to any of the questions they should not enter the building. These Health Screening forms will be filled out with each family/person's name and contact information and returned after the service so we can contact people if needed. An optional question added to the Checklist will be: Have you been vaccinated? This will be an optional question to answer.
- Ushers will be encouraged to seat people before the service and direct them to the nearest exit after the service. Lottering or visiting will not be encouraged before or after

- the services. If you want to visit, please do so in the Parking Lot.
- Masks will be required in this facility. It is posted at the front door and there will be cloth masks available for those who do not have them. It is requested that if they take a mask that they keep the mask and re-use them after they disinfect them.
- Social distancing will be enforced staff, parishioners and visitors must be at least 6 feet apart.
- Cleaning and disinfecting of the church will continue after every service.
- For Staff and Visitors, we have posted signs requiring "Regular Hand Washing". Hand sanitizer bottles are readily available at all entrances and throughout the building.
- Building Ventilation protocols: Our heating and cooling system does recirculate outside air which eliminates indoor air recirculation. There was a discussion about installing an Ionizer for the furnace that serves the Fellowship Hall, the cost installed would be approximately \$500. Further discussion will take place at the February Council meeting.
- Certain areas of the building will be closed off to employee & visitor traffic to reduce the chance of contamination.
- Efforts are being made to contact people via phone calls to inquire about their feelings and concerns about re-opening the church.
- We reserve the right to cancel any in-person worship services if infection rates raise.
- The next Task Force meeting will be sometime in March to assess the how we are doing with our reopen schedules.

Respectfully submitted by Mary Braun, church secretary

#### **Old Business**

Welcoming New Members — Dennis welcomed our new council members, Joanne Stueven and Karen Carron. However, we still need one more council member.

Open for In-Person worship on Wednesdays during lent — Preparations are ready

In-Person Sunday worship service on Feb. 28. We will see what attendance we have before going forward. Otherwise, thinking March 14 for another

in-person service and will plan on an online Holy Week and possibly partner with another church. Communion packets — available in church office now. There's a prayer inside to be used during the service. Pastor will explain this in his announcements. Joanne suggested we do a Facebook announcement about it too.

Nothing new on the audit. Mary did find an accountant in Isle that has done church audits before. She needs to look into it further but will do after tax season.

#### **New Business**

Assignments for council members will be done at the March meeting as two council members had to leave the meeting early and one was absent. Discussion on new Council members for one-year appointments will be looked for.

Planning for returning to in-person worship was discussed.

Stage track lighting in the Fellowship Hall needed especially with services in the hall. Mary will check on this.

An ionizer for the furnace is needed. Mary will contact Lee on property committee.

Technician for Pastor (to lighten his workload) was discussed.

Electronic sign for front roadside yard. Funding was discussed.

Motion was made to adjourn by Judie Birk, seconded by Mary Braun, and passed.

The council closed with the Lord's Prayer. The next council meeting will be March 15 at 10 am.

Respectfully submitted by Judie Birk, council secretary.

#### 2021 TREASURER'S REPORT

<b>General Fund</b>	<b>JANUARY</b>	<b>YTD</b>
Income Actual	\$24,581*	$$\overline{24,581}$
Income Budget	\$12,446	\$ 12,446
Expenses Actual	\$11,818	\$ 11,818
Expenses Budget	\$12,502	\$ 12,502
Over/(Short)	\$12,763	\$ 12,763

<sup>\*\$10,600</sup> worth of RMDs received in January

#### Bethesda Lutheran Church of Malmo Annual Meeting Minutes January 31, 2021

Council Members in Attendance: Mary Braun, Ron Haglund, Dorothy Mundinger, Sherry Whipple and Dennis Hennessy.

With a quorum confirmed, President Dennis Hennessy called the meeting to order at 11:00 am.

Pastor James Muske shared an opening prayer.

#### Secretary's Report:

There were no corrections. Barry Ansell made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 22, 2019 Annual Meeting. Sherry Whipple seconded the motion and it passed.

Written Reports: Dennis thanked all who had submitted reports. A motion to approve the committee reports was made by Dick Stebbins and seconded by Mary Braun and approved. These are good summaries of the excellent work and ministries performed within our church. Mary Braun thanked the leaders of the committees and those that are on them.

#### Election:

Council Members

Three Year Terms

Joanne Stueven

Karen Carron

We can appoint a person for a year, no nominations

Sue Samuelson made a motion to accept Joanne Stueven, and Karen Carron as council member. Julie Swaggert seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Nominating Committee

- 1. Julie Swaggert
- 2. Lee Forester

**Synod Convention Delegates:** 

- 1. Dennis Hennessy
- 2. Julie Hennessy

Mary Braun made a motion to accept the Synod delegates. Darlene Christensen seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Darlene Christensen made a motion to accept the Nominating Committee. Carol Bakken seconded the motion and the motion carried.

C10.08 Constitution Amendment (remote meetings)
Vote

Lee Forester made a motion to accept remote meetings, Donna Ansell seconded the motion and the motion carried.

#### Financial Report:

Treasurer Mary Braun thanked everyone for his or her generosity, especially with the Covid-19 situation and stressed the need for continued support.

Year/Year Financial Activity Comparison:

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
General Envelope &	\$150,920	\$136,521
Plate Offerings		
Total Income	\$262,721	\$202,090
Total Expenses	\$248,015	\$205,314
NET	\$14,706	(-\$3,224)

Major Projects Completed and Paid for in 2019/20: Multi-Media Expansion - \$20,175

#### **Proposed Budget**

INCOME			
General & Other	\$140,000		
Worship & Music	\$ 400		
Christian Ed	\$ 400		
Office Expenses	\$ 50		
Utilities	\$ 1,000		
Property Improvement	\$ 7,500		
Income Totals	\$149,350		
EXPENSE			
Worship & Music	\$ 6,710		
Faith, Health & Wellness	\$ 250		
ELCA Synod Support	\$ 8,160		
Lay Leadership	\$ 700		
Christian Ed	\$ 1,500		
Evangelism	\$ 400		
Stewardship	\$ 600		
Office Admin	\$ 3,100		
Salaries	\$ 65,388		
Benefits	\$ 27,289		
Admin Expenses	\$ 2,500		
Property Maintenance	\$ 11,700		
Insurance	\$ 3,400		
Utilities	\$ 14,830		
Property Improvements	\$ 3,500		
Expense Totals	\$150,027		
NET	(\$677)		

Sherry Whipple made a motion to accept the Treasurers report. Lee Forester seconded the motion and the motion carried.

#### Old business

2020 Benevolences

- Global Non-Local
- Brainerd Lakes Local
- Local Food Shelves
- ELCA
- World Hunger
- Dedicated other

Parsonage pledge ended 3-1-20 money has been spent. Recycling continues

#### New Business:

RMD donations for 72 year olds and over was discussed.

Long Range planning committee, strategic planning and Task force for reopening committee needs volunteers.

#### **2021 Benevolence Recipients:**

**World Benevolence**: Dara Mozambique, Village of Hope Zambia, Feed My Starving Children, Lutheran Partners in Global Missions, Ingrian Church Russia

**Local Benevolence:** Aitkin Co Human Services, BLCM Emergency Fund, Christmas Joy, Camp Onomia. Aitkin County Hope House (Women/Children's Shelter)

There is a basket in the Narthex for suggestions for additional Benevolence Recipients. If you know of a worthy local or global cause, let us know your suggestions.

Dennis Hennessy thanked all the committee, bible study groups, veggie stand, memorial garden volunteers, mowers and everything else done by volunteers here at Bethesda. He also thanked the work of Dorothy Mundinger and Ron Haglund — council members leaving this year. And the continued work of the present and new council members.

Donna Ansell made a motion to adjourn. Carol Bakken seconded the motion and it carried.

Respectfully submitted by Judie Birk, Council Secretary — (with thanks to Sue Stebbins for taking notes at the meeting)



Dear Bethesda Family,

Thank you for the beautiful flowers, cards, and prayers. A Special thanks to Dennis & Luci Liljenquist, Darlene Christensen and Larry Nyberg for your help. A God Bless you all. It was greatly appreciated.

Shirley & Marlyn Eklund

#### **Paying it Forward**

On January 20, 2021 the staff at the Infusion Center at Aitkin Hospital was treated to lunch by Pastor James. Since George had received excellent care at the center, Pastor used Beanery gift cards he had received to send lunch to staff in memory of George Smith.



**PRAYER & CARE LIST**: Arty Heins, Dick Southworth, Carol Bakken (her brother passed away).

"ZOOM COFFEE HOUR": coffee and conversation will continue to meet

every other Tuesday as interest continues. Next meeting is March 2 nd at 10:00am. Please email the office if you are interested so we can email you a Zoom invite. If you have additional questions, please contact Mary in the office at blcmalmo@gmail.com or 320 684-2123.

Newsline articles are due on the 20<sup>th</sup>, email to bllnews@juno.com

#### **The Loan Closet**

Bethesda's Loan Closet has medical equipment such as walkers, crutches, commodes, toilet risers, wheelchairs, etc. that is available to members who want to borrow them on a short term basis. If you need to borrow a piece of equipment contact the Parish Nurses.



First Day of Spring March 20<sup>th</sup>

## Hacks and Tips To Make Your Face Mask More Protective

It's time to up your mask game. "A cloth mask might be 50% effective at blocking viruses and aerosols," says Linsey Marr, a researcher at Virginia Tech who studies airborne virus transmission. "We're at the point now ... that we need to do better than 50%."

Ideally, we would all be wearing medical-grade N95 respirators – so-called because they block out at least 95% of particles when worn correctly. But even now, N95s remain in short supply for consumers, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention still says they should be reserved for health care workers.

Luckily, there are other ways to seriously boost the protection your face mask offers. Here's how.

#### 1. Wear two masks

The concept of doublemasking has gotten a lot of attention lately, especially after Dr. Anthony Fauci, America's top infectious disease expert, touted it on the TODAY show.



Start with a surgical mask closest to your face, and then add a cloth one on top. You want a surgical mask made out of a non-woven material called polypropylene, because that material holds an electrostatic charge that allows it to trap particles.

By layering a cloth mask on top, you can achieve a tighter fit while also adding an extra layer of filtration. But don't keep piling on masks, just one additional mask is plenty. If your masks become too hard to breathe through, air will leak in and out through the sides instead. "Then it's like you have a hole in your mask," she says.

#### 2. Add a filter

If doubling up just isn't your thing, you can achieve a similar boost in filtration efficiency by wearing a twolayer mask with a pocket for



a filter. Adding a filter made out of two layers of polypropylene could boost a cotton mask's filtration efficiency by as much as 35%. And for a homemade option, Research has found that two facial tissues, folded over to form a four-layer filter, can also do a decent job of boosting a mask's protection. But

please, don't reach for a coffee filter: Researcher at the National Institute of Standards and Technology, note that these filters are hard to breathe through, so you end up breathing around the filter rather than through it.

#### 3. Choose a better cloth mask

For a cloth mask, in general, you want to look for a fabric with a tight weave. Multiple studies have shown that 100% cotton is a good bet. Also look for three layers in your mask: Studies have shown that a three-layer mask made from tightly woven fabric works well.

#### 4. Make your mask fit tighter

To maximize your mask's effectiveness, make sure that it fits snugly over your mouth and nostrils, up to your nose bridge and that you don't see any gaps. And please, don't let your nose hang over your mask – that defeats the purpose!

Tie the ear loops close to the edges of the mask and tuck in the side pleats to minimizes gaps. Or use a





hair clip to hold the ear loops tightly at the back of the head to achieve a tighter seal.

We now have 3 Layer Facemask available in the entryway. They are made with a middle layer of polypropylene between 2 layers of 100% cotton cloth. The elastic straps are left untied so you can adjust the fit to your face.



#### **Pretzels for Lent**

The common pretzel was originally designed for use during Lent. Sometime during the Middle Ages, when Lent was accompanied by strict bans on dairy products and meat, people subsisted largely on breads, pastries, soups, and

vegetables. Bakers in Germany decided to create a food that would even look religious — the pretzel. The crossed arms of a pretzel represent a Christian in prayer. Place the palm of each hand on the opposite shoulder, so that your forearms cross. That's the shape of a pretzel.

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	blcmalmo@gmail.com	(320) 684-2123	
Fax	CC	(320)-684-2836	
Toll Free		(877) 684-2123	
Church Web site		blemalmo.org	
Facebook page	Bethesda Lutheran Church of Malmo		
Pastor	James A. Muske	(320) 684-2123	
Council President	Dennis Hennessy	(651) 247-2283	
Vice President	•		
Parish Nurse	Darlene Christensen	(320) 279-0097	
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: bllnews@juno.com

All articles due on or before the 20th of the month

## **Activities & Events**

#### March 2021

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

**Ushers** by Skip & Lynn Hansen

March 14 – 10:00am Chuck & Elsa Carlson

March 28 - 10:00am Skip Hansen & George Larson April 4 – 8:30am Skip Hansen & George Larson

10:30am Barry & Donna Ansell

Altar Care by Dianne Jones
March..... Shirley Gosselin & Gina Rosa
April..... Lynne Meidlinger & Sylvia Tapelt

#### **Recycling** ?

#### **No Greeters Yet!**



#### Why me?

When our puppy developed hip dysplasia requiring surgery, I asked, "Why him? Why me?" Finding no satisfying answer, I proceeded to

feel sorry for Mocha and myself — sorry for his pain and suffering and for the financial sacrifice we'd have to make to help him.

So I was surprised to observe that Mocha didn't share my dismay. He hopped along happily on three legs without complaint. Neither did the surgery dampen his spirits. Never mind the six-inch scar or the cone around his collar. The ordeal made no noticeable impact on his determination to enjoy life.

I reasoned, "That's because he doesn't have the capacity to ask why bad things happen to good dogs." But then a thought occurred: Perhaps if God revealed the answers, our human minds wouldn't have the capacity to understand. So maybe Mocha had the right idea. Maybe it's better not to waste time wondering why and just be thankful instead for what we have.

# B rthday B@nanza!

- March 4 James Lange
- 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 Nicole Berry
- March 26 Jack Spetz
- March 27 Richard Carron
- March 28 Douglas Hansen
- March 29 Donna Fox
- March 29 Linda Hansen
- March 29 Scott Nyberg
- March 29 Dale Peterson
- March 30 Jean Berens
- March 30 Feat Berens
- March 30 Tom Petersen
- March 30 Ronald Richter



#### ANNIVERSARY

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



# March 2021 Bethesda Calendar of Events



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 10:00 Zoom coffee hour	3 6:00 in-person Lent Service	4	5	6
7 Facebook or YouTube service Premiere at 8:45am	8 9:00 Women's Devotional Bible study 7:00 p.m AA & Alanon mg	9 9:00 Quilters	10 6:00 in-person Lent Service	11	12	13
14 10:00 In person service  Daylight Savings Time begins	10:00 Council meeting 7:00 p.m AA & Alanon mg	16 10:00 Zoom coffee hour	17 6:00 in-person Lent Service  Happy St.Patrick's Day!	18	19	20  First Day of Spring  Newstine Deadline
21 Facebook or YouTube service Premiere at 8:45am	22 7:00 p.m AA & Alanon mg	23 9:00 Quilters	24 6:00 in-person Lent Service	25	26	27
28 10:00 In person service Palm Sunday	29 7:00 p.m AA & Alanon mg	30 10:00 Zoom coffee hour	31			