



**Bethlehem Lutheran Church**  
5484 County Road E  
Athens, Wisconsin 54411  
**Sunday Worship at 8:15 a.m.**  
**Dual-Parish Office**  
Office Hours: M, T, W, F: 1:00pm to 4:00pm  
Dual Parish Office: 715-352-2888  
Dual Parish Email: [secretary@bethstj.org](mailto:secretary@bethstj.org)  
Dual Parish Website: [www.bethstj.org](http://www.bethstj.org)  
[webmaster@bethstj.org](mailto:webmaster@bethstj.org)

**St. John "High Steeple" Lutheran Church**  
119415 Huckleberry Road  
Edgar, Wisconsin 54426  
**Sunday Worship at 10:15 a.m.**  
**Rev. Frank Giebel - Vacancy Pastor**  
Pastor's Cell: 715-298-0303  
Church Office: 715-352-2888  
Dual Parish Email: [secretary@bethstj.org](mailto:secretary@bethstj.org)  
Dual Parish Website: [www.bethstj.org](http://www.bethstj.org)  
[webmaster@bethstj.org](mailto:webmaster@bethstj.org)



## IN Faith

The season of Epiphany focuses on how God was made manifest in the flesh of Jesus. The church spends time hearing of the

miracles, the signs and wonders, of Jesus in the world.

And this made plain to all that Jesus was who He said He was: He was the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, the only-begotten Son of the Father, in the flesh. For "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14).

It is revealed for all the world to see that Jesus is God in the flesh. It is made manifest by His words and His work, by what He said and by what He did. And these belong together, for "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us."

Jesus is the Word and will of God in the flesh, that is, He is the walking, talking, enactment of God's Word.

It is no different for us. We are called not just to believe in God in hearts, but also to trust in God in word and deed.

As James wrote: "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves" (James 1:22), and again, "What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? ... So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. ... Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. ... For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead" (James 2:14, 17-18, 26).

Our faith is lived out in works for our neighbor. Our trust in the Word and will of God is lived out not in word only, but also in deed and in truth.

In other words, the Epiphany of the Lord

creates in us an epiphany of our faith in our works of obedience to God who commanded them. By this, our faith is made manifest to the world. It is, as Luther wrote of faith:

"Faith is a divine work in us. It changes us and makes us to be born anew of God (John 1). It kills the old Adam and makes altogether different people, in heart and spirit and mind and powers, and it brings with it the Holy Spirit.

"Oh, it is a living, busy, active, mighty thing, this faith. And so it is impossible for it not to do good works incessantly. It does not ask whether there are good works to do, but before the question rises, it has already done them, and is always at the doing of them.

"He who does not these works is a faithless man. He gropes and looks about after faith and good works and knows neither what faith is nor what good works are, though he talks and talks, with many words about faith and good works.

"Faith is a living, daring confidence in God's grace, so sure and certain that a man would stake his life on it a thousand times. This confidence in God's grace and knowledge of it makes men glad and bold and happy in dealing with God and all His creatures.

"And this is the work of the Holy Spirit in faith. Hence a man is ready and glad, without compulsion, to do good to everyone, to serve everyone, to suffer everything, in love and praise to God, who has shown him this grace.

"And thus it is impossible to separate works from faith, quite as impossible as to separate burning and shining from fire. Beware, therefore, of your own false notions and of the idle talkers, who would be wise enough to make decisions about faith and good works, and yet are the greatest fools." (*Preface to the Book of Romans*)

So, then, let our faith be active by God's power in the Word through the Holy Spirit. And let then our faith be made manifest to the world by what this faith does: serving our neighbor — in church, in the family, and society — with the works of faith in time, talents, and treasures.

**Open Door Ministry:** We would like to thank you for your generous donations to Open Door. Our guests are incredibly grateful, and we would not be able to do what we do without your support.

When Open Door began in 2010, we had a simple goal of giving clothes to people coming out of Marathon County jail. Fast forward to 2019, and we are giving out clothing, hygiene, a hot cup of coffee, helping accessing resources, several education/life skills programs and so much more. All this is made possible through the generosity of the community and dedicated group volunteers.

When someone becomes homeless after release from jail, we offer them an address to receive mail and a phone number to receive messages. We also encourage them to set up an email account when they are ready to begin looking for employment.

Since we opened our doors, we have served thousands of individuals and changed the lives of many more. We are the only agency in Central Wisconsin to serve this population and with your continued generosity, will continue to do so.

Thank You again for your generosity!

## *ANNIVERSARY ANECDOTES* *Celebrating 150 Years (1869-2019)*

### CALLING AND KEEPING A PASTOR

As we look forward to celebrating our congregation's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, we are reminded every Sunday that one of our biggest challenges this year will be calling and receiving an accepted call for a full-time pastor. The process (especially to those on the call committees) can seem to be quite daunting. If there is any consolation to be had, this congregation has been through this process many times before and God has always answered in His time.

Our congregational ancestors were all too familiar with the difficulties involved in finding a shepherd for their flock. Initially worship services were held in their log homes, most often with lay leadership since there were few clergy available in the area. Beginning in 1862, Rev. J.J. Hoffmann from St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church at Naugart, Township of Berlin, visited them occasionally to provide a service. Copies of old records from St. Paul's show that from 1862 to 1874, numerous babies were baptized by Rev. Hoffmann either at "Town Wien" or "in church" (which sometimes meant it took place at Naugart), or at church in "Marathon City" (we have no other details available about that location).

Rev. Hoffmann's successor was Rev. J.F. Hudtloff, who also regularly visited the Town of Wien congregation and played an important part in the organization of our St. John congregation, which occurred in 1869. But it still took until September, 1875, before Rev. Wilhelm Weber was installed as the first resident pastor of St. John. The very next year Rev. Weber accepted a call and left St. John. For the next two years, Rev. Hudtloff returned to again serve as a vacancy pastor.

In 1878, newly-ordained Rev. Hermann Erck was called to serve as an itinerant pastor of the district, with St. John furnishing a parsonage and \$100.00 salary. This meant that St. John's had a pastor, but for only two weeks out of the month. The rest of each month was divided between 16 settlements covering an area from Auburndale to Ashland. Rev. Erck left his position in 1882, and shortly thereafter Rev. F. H. Reichmann was installed, who then left after a year.

For the next two years St. John was without a full-time pastor. Eventually, they called Mr. Carl Busch, a former school teacher who had been deposed of his office in Germany. Within a short time of his arrival in 1884, the congregation began disagreeing over the suitability of the unordained teacher serving as a pastor, which led to a separation of the members. The majority retained Mr. Busch, who left about one year later, and they went on to be served by pastors from the Ohio Synod, and then the American Lutheran Synod. This congregation is still in existence as our neighbor, St. John (ELCA) on Highway N.

In 1885, those members who desired to separate from the majority reorganized into our current St. John congregation. By 1886, the members were worshipping in a white frame church, placed on a corner of the Friedrich Hamann farm. For nearly ten long years this renewed congregation was unable to secure a full-time pastor and was served by neighboring pastors and theological students.

Three acres of land were purchased in 1894, and the white frame church was moved to this new location, which is where we still are today, and to increase their chances of finding a pastor a parsonage was also built. From 1894 to 1901 three pastors came, each stayed for a period of time, and then left. They were followed by Rev. Joseph Oesch, who faithfully served for eight years, from 1901 to 1909.

The challenge of calling and keeping a pastor for the first thirty or so years must have seemed overwhelming and unending. There was much sharing of pastors, but in time St. John was not only on the receiving end of these arrangements. In 1904, Rev. Oesch assisted in the organization of Bethlehem Lutheran in Milan, and from 1939 to the present, the two congregations have shared a pastor.

In 1910, St. John's pastor, Rev. F. A. Schiemann, helped to organize St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Fenwood. Throughout its entire history (1910-1952) St. Paul's was served by St. John pastors.

We do not know what the future will bring to the St. John congregation. We all long for a shepherd who knows us by name and guides us in worship. History shows us this will happen in due time. Faith assures us that it will be by God's direction.

## BETHLEHEM

### BIRTHDAYS

Bernt, Gracelyn 2/3  
Strack, Robert 2/3  
Kosik, Kevin 2/9  
Penk, Jill 2/12  
Venzke, Rick 2/12  
Mulderink, Keith 2/17  
Schumacher, Paxton 2/17  
Venzke, Brian 2/17  
Schmidt, Olivia 2/18  
Denzine, Shawn 2/19  
Schwarting, Delbert 2/20  
Venzke, Wanda 2/20  
Barkow, Janna 2/26  
Strack, Maria (Kena) 2/28

### ANNIVERSARIES

Larry & Linda Cooper Jr. 2/7  
Kevin & Beth Kosik 2/14  
Daniel & Jane Becker 2/17

### IN SERVICE FEBRUARY

#### Sunday, February 3, 2019

Greeters: Kevin, Beth Kosik  
Elder: Virgil Underwood  
Reader: Shane Hammel  
Acolyte: Ashton Hammel  
Projection: Olivia Hammel

#### Sunday, February 10, 2019

Greeter: Tom, Cindy Graun  
Elder: Scott Parker  
Reader: Brenda Schmidt  
Acolyte: Alexis Gumz  
Projection: Randy Reynolds

#### Sunday, February 17, 2019

Greeter: Richard, Lois Niemi  
Elder: Del Schwarting  
Reader: Phil Carlson  
Acolyte: Amber VanLuven  
Projection: Isaac Hammel

#### Sunday, February 24, 2019

Greeter: Nathan Kunze  
Joseph Marier  
Elder: Virgil Underwood  
Reader: Scott Parker  
Acolyte: Olivia Hammel  
Projection: Alexis Gumz

## ST. JOHN

### BIRTHDAYS

Martens, Virgene 2/1  
Krenz, Julie 2/2  
Miessner, Selma 2/2  
Syring, Arabella 2/4  
Thompson, Cassidy 2/5  
Punke, Andrew 2/6  
DeRosier, Patrick 2/7  
Reis, Jared 2/8  
Mueller, Greg 2/9  
VanDerLeest, Kelsey 2/11  
Syring, Randall 2/12  
Murkowski, Charlotte 2/16  
Jennejohn, Steve 2/18  
Reis, Jared 2/18  
Werner, Eunice 2/20  
Schneider, Catherine 2/21  
Mueller, Hannah 2/23  
Wendtland, Dakota 2/26  
Wolff, Miriam 2/28

### ANNIVERSARIES

Richard & Nancy Hippe 2/3

### IN SERVICE FEBRUARY

#### Sunday, February 3, 2019

Greeters: Mae Morien, Phyllis Diedrich  
Elder: Lloyd Schultz  
Reader: Ron Hahn  
Acolyte: Caleb Mroczenski  
Ushers: Steve Schneider  
Bud Mortvedt

#### Sunday, February 10, 2019

Greeter: Mark, Stacy VanHoy  
Elder: Lloyd Schultz  
Reader: Mike Thompson  
Acolyte: Lillian Pehlke  
Ushers: Steve Schneider  
Jared Reis

#### Sunday, February 17, 2019

Greeter: Ron, Carolyn Hahn  
Elder: Lloyd Schultz  
Reader: Pete VanDerLeest  
Acolyte: Ethan Telschow  
Ushers: Steve Schneider  
Callie Callies

#### Sunday, February 24, 2019

Greeter: Roger, Sharon Ballerstein  
Elder: Lloyd Schultz  
Reader: Traci Pehlke  
Acolyte: Natalie Thompson  
Ushers: Steve Schneider  
Dennis Punke

## Lutheran Hour Sermon Schedule

### **February 3**

#### **"Slow Solution"**

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler  
Some problems can be quickly resolved. Others require us to interact with people, take time to know them, get involved with them. The Gospel is the answer to the hidden problem that separates us from God and from each other.  
(John 20:21)

### **February 10**

#### **"Where Heaven Meets Earth"**

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler  
Jesus is the place where heaven and earth overlap and intersect. So what does this mean for us? It means that the night is over and it's time to stop snoozing and wake up!  
(John 3:1-21)

### **February 17**

#### **"Enter His Labor"**

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler  
What would you do if your Word was all-powerful? Jesus started a conversation with an outsider.  
(John 4:1-42)

### **February 24**

#### **"Not by Bread Alone"**

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler  
There is a spiritual hunger beyond food that is expressed in food. Jesus provides for both.  
(John 6:1-29)

## Lutheran Hour Radio Schedule

Station	City, State	Freq.	Day	Time
WDLB	Marshfield, WI	1450 AM	Sun	8:00am
WRVM	Marshfield, WI	91.3 FM	Sun	10:00am
WRVM	Medford, WI	98.7 FM	Sun	10:00am
WRVM	Wausau, WI	101.3 FM	Sun	10:00am
WSAU	Wausau, WI	550 AM	Sun	8:30am
WSAU	Wausau, WI	99.9 FM	Sun	8:30am
WAXX	Altoona, WI	104.5 FM	Sun	6:30am

You can also go on line at [www...lhm.org](http://www...lhm.org) or  
download the free App @ [LHM.ORG/APPS](http://LHM.ORG/APPS)



