



Bethlehem Star



May/June 2018

“The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom.” – Is. 35:1



Monthly Meditation

We joyously confess every Sunday, “He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty.” 40 days after Easter, the Resurrected Christ, scars and all, ascended into heaven and returned to reign in majesty seated at the right hand of God.

Some people mistakenly believe that his human body was “jettisoned” away like a spent rocket and only the divine nature ascended into heaven – his human nature left behind. It was once said, “Christ wears these scars in heaven as his ornaments. The wounds of Christ are his glories, they are his jewels and precious things.”

Others mistakenly believe that Jesus’ location at the “right hand of God” physically limits Christ to the confines of heaven. Believers will acknowledge that because Christ is God and that he is omnipresent (everywhere), but they restrict that to just his spiritual nature.

Don’t be misled. Jesus comes to us physically – in his real presence – in the Lord’s Supper when he says, “Take eat. This is my body. Take drink. This is my blood.” To say that Christ cannot be present limits his power rather than acknowledges his full omnipotence as God, our Ascended Lord.

Confirmation

On Sunday, April 22nd, four young adults were brought into communicant membership at Bethlehem. This follows two years of extensive studying of the Christian Faith and Lutheran doctrine as taught in Holy Scripture and *Luther’s Small Catechism*.

We rejoice that God called these Confirmands to faith through the Gospel and washing of Holy Baptism. In their Confirmation vows, the Confirmands affirmed their faith and are now welcomed to full Communion membership.



Please welcome Nora Pasche, August “Augie” Pasche, Mitchell “Mitch” Griffith, and Emma Griffith.





Welcome New Member

After worshipping with us for a while, Rich Andersen was happily welcomed into membership on April 29th. Rich and his wife, Holli, live on Little Glen and Rich has already become actively involved in worship and many projects around the church. Welcome, Rich!

A Fresh Look!

Say "Good-bye" to the old wallpaper and drapes in Fellowship Hall. Following many years of service, the wallpaper will be replaced by a light beige paint and new window treatments.



Diane Elmer and Laurel Peterson will repurpose the old drapes into personal possession bags for Jubilee House clients and the fabric will continue to serve!

Landscaping Project



With a big "Thank You" to Jim Kraatz, the landscaping project really began to take shape last fall when most of the old plantings

were removed to make room for some new designs.

During fall and winter, Cherry Republic's expansion needed to use part of our south lawn to complete their work. Cherry Republic is committed to restoring all that was damaged and has offered some additional support toward this project.

The Council decided that the entire landscaping will unfold over time and each year will develop a new phase along the way!



Second Quarter Voters' Assembly will meet on Sunday, June 3, following fellowship. Please mark your calendars and join us in the decision making process.

Annual Diaper Drive

Mary Martha is collecting diapers for the Leelanau Christian Neighbors' Baby Pantry during the month of May. Please consider the wee ones whose parents' love is great, but whose income is limited.



Spring Concert

Please join us on Sunday, May 6th, at 7PM for the Leelanau Community Singers as they present their Spring concert at Bethlehem. Twice a year, the Singers share their very special talents with the community and us. You don't want to miss this!



Also, please consider bringing cookies for the reception following in the Fellowship Hall.



+ Celebration of Eternal Life +

Please join the McWatt Family on Saturday, May 19th at 2:00 PM, as they celebrate the life of Ruth Elizabeth McWatt and her eternal life with Christ. Since December 27, 2017, Ruth has been singing her praises to the Triune God with "all the angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven!" Following the funeral and committal, Mary Martha will provide a luncheon. Please remember the McWatt Family in your prayers as they prepare for this day filled with mourning over their loss and rejoicing over Ruth's "crown of life!"

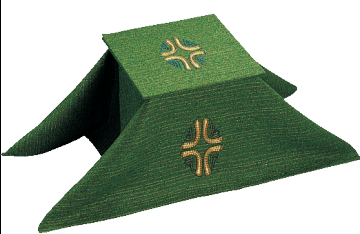


"There's no place like home!"

... Just ask Dorothy, Toto, and the Kahler Family! Around 9:00 PM, January 3, 2017; Chad and Kari's lives would change forever when their historic home was destroyed by fire on a cold, wintry night. The home, built in the 1890s by the Bow family, had been home to the Kahlers for 30 years.



Like a phoenix rising from the ashes, the Kahlers decided to rebuild the home to look identical to the original farmstead home on the exterior. Calling upon fellow member, Steve Habegger and his construction company, the Kahlers are finally back home. Welcome home, Kahlers, and may God bless!



Altar Guild

As the women came to prepare Jesus' body in the tomb on that first Easter, the church

has lovingly entrusted women with the care of the sacred vessels and linens which represent Christ's atoning death. With Bethlehem's return to the historic Lutheran practices of vesting the altar for Holy Communion, many women have inquired about joining Altar Guild.

During late May and in concert with Dianna Sheridan, Pastor Dan will train new (and those who want a refresher course) Altar Guild members in the meaning of the linens and communion vessels which hold the real presence of Christ.

If you're interested in joining Altar Guild or just interested in learning about what all of these items mean, please feel free to join us. Watch the bulletin for further details.

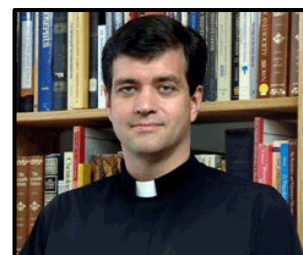
Love in Christ



Following the tragic death of the eight year old girl from Maple City on March 31, BLC was able to assist the family in paying off the final portion of the funeral expenses. When a family became aware of this, the amount given was replaced by this family in their love for Christ. With this special fund replenished, BLC is able to continue to share the love of Christ with those whom God continues to place in our path.

Pastor Zagore Accepts Call to Synod

Rev. Robert Zagore, senior pastor of Trinity-Traverse City has accepted a call to serve the national church by being the Executive Director of the Office of National Mission. He will oversee the national mission work of the Synod which is everything except foreign missions. Pastor Zagore will be a blessing to the synodical office.



Ways to Welcome Visitors

1. Every church member is a ***host*** and not a ***guest***. Making visitors feel welcome is primarily the responsibility of members, not the nebulous "church."
2. The most important person for a visitor to talk to in order to feel at home in a new church is ***you***. It is not the pastor, or the greeter, but a regular attender.
3. Treat first time visitors as ***guests of God***, not ***strangers***.
4. Smile at ***everyone*** and offer your ***hand*** and look people ***in the eye and smile***.
5. Take the ***initiative***, don't wait for visitors to initiate conversation with you.
6. Learn people's ***names*** and remember them and use appropriate ***Touch*** such as a hand shake or a gentle pat on the back.
7. Ask ***questions*** and learn about ***your guests***. It is better to express interest in them than it is to try to "sell" your church.
8. ***Listening*** is a very effective way to show love.
9. Greet children at ***their level***.
10. Let children be ***children***. And even more, when you love the kids as our kids (crying, playing, and singing!) and don't expect them to be grown-ups.
11. Invite visitors to join you at ***something, anything!*** Invite them to today's fellowship, next Sunday's Christian Education hour, or to a restaurant for some one on one time.
12. Never let new people ***sit alone***. Research again tells us, "New people should ***never*** have to sit alone. Take initiative and go to them without delay."
13. Help visitors find ***seating*** that suits their ***family's needs*** (like the bathrooms). Help first time visitors by being their ***tour guide*** and helping them find worship ***resources***.
14. Invite people to fill out your church's ***visitor registration card or information***.
15. Tell people you're ***glad*** they are ***here*** and ***pray*** for them throughout your week.
16. ***Be yourself!*** You are loving! You have a good thing going! You have the capacity to love more people, and to love more deeply. Remember,