

CHIMES Newsletter

APRIL 2021 VOLUME 83, ISSUE 4

MESSAGE FROM PASTOR JEN...

I've been toting around a periodical with an article in it that catches my attention. I don't normally read anything from this particular magazine, and while I do carry a lot of "extra" stuff in my work bag, magazines are not usually one of those items. So to me at least, this article must mean something.

The article is about asking questions; more specifically about asking the right (or better?) questions. In the February Chimes I wrote my submission on asking God Questions and began the piece with the line, "The only bad question is the unasked question," or something to that effect. In this line of thinking it is difficult to deem a question "right" or "wrong" I believe. Perhaps a different way of looking at this would be to ask, "Is my question helping me understand something better?" or "Is this question bringing me to a greater appreciation for ideas outside of my usual way of thinking?"

As I talk with my granddaughter she asks me questions that help her understand the world around her. At 3 years old this is often a "why" or "what" question. She also asks me questions that invite me to join with her in things she enjoys. "Would you like to see my room, Gramma Jen?" "Would you like to play with me, Gramma Jen?" What's cool, I realize, is that her questions not only help her understanding and get me sitting on the floor with her to play Barbies; they create an opportunity for Evelyn and me to grow closer together in relationship. We care about each other in our knowing and growing together.

I do acknowledge that these types of open-ended and exploratory questions are not everyone's cup of tea. Some of us are more inclined to ask questions to get answers; facts, evidence, more concrete ideas and so forth. I am grateful for these people and their questions. My gratitude stems from both my tendency to lean toward questions that lead to more questions and from my appreciation that this is how we get evidence-based research that undergirds the structure of society. Chemistry, Geology, Physics, Engineering, Agriculture, Medicine, to list a few examples. Again, these are areas where questions are asked in order to find testable, verifiable answers. These types of questions that lead to answers bring us to a greater understanding and appreciation for the world around us, too.

In the church, or more specifically, in our individual and communal relationship with the Triune God we enter a realm where concrete and abstract come together. Maybe this is one of the reasons for disagreements in church? Think about it for a moment with me, please. Two people and one situation: one person's approach is how to fix or make whatever it is better, while the other person's approach is directed toward what possibilities exist or what we can learn from the situation. Both approaches are valid, important, and needed. Both approaches bring us to a greater understanding and appreciation for the world around us. And, we find, that



UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL 1

Maundy Thursday Worship 5:30 pm

APRIL 2

Good Friday Worship 1 pm
Jesus Christ Superstar Movie via
Zoom 6:30 pm

APRIL 4

Easter Worship 8:30 am & 10:30 am

APRIL 5

Pr. Jen out of office

APRIL 6

Finance Meeting 5 pm
Covid Task Force Meeting 6:30 pm

APRIL 7

Confirmation resumes 6:30 pm

APRIL 8

Dwelling in the Word 7:15 pm

APRIL 12

Dwelling in the Word 2 pm

APRIL 15

Council Meeting 6 pm

APRIL 18

Earth Day Clean Up 10 am

APRIL 20

Covid 19 Task Force Meeting 6:30 pm

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, ELCA

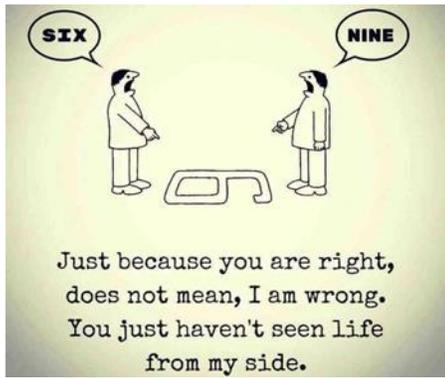
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Portage, WI 53901

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the combination of approaches can make us or break us as a community of faith.

I guess another way of talking about this is to use the word perspective. Are we able to release the grip on our own way of thinking long enough to hear a different perspective? Are we able to understand that just because it is our own idea that there also exist other possibilities? When I used to work in the food service industry I had the responsibility of training new staff. Early on in this endeavor I would walk the trainees through a step-by-step process of how to do whatever I was teaching them. Eventually I realized that just because one way worked best for me that didn't mean another person's methods weren't valid. I got to the point where we would first talk about the task at hand. I would share

what we were doing and what we were trying to accomplish. I would show the person the way I did it, from beginning to end. I would then let them know that if they found a different way of achieving the same goal (respecting necessary safety and economic protocol) that they were encouraged to follow that path.

In a community of faith there are as many ideas of who, what, where, why, and how as there are individuals in the Body of Christ. To live together in faithful, compassionate community means that we will necessarily be at odds with one another from time to time. That's just part of the joy of togetherness. We need one another. We need there to be differing perspectives within our community in order to live and grow as followers of Christ. And we need to be humble and to be vulnerable enough to both hear and be heard.

Amen, amen, amen.

Pastor Jen

OUR CHURCH

WORSHIP UPDATE

The Covid-19 Task Force continues to meet every two weeks to assess the current Covid situation. As new Covid-19 cases continue to decline and vaccines are being given out, we will be **increasing our capacity limits for worship to 50 people starting Sunday, March 28th**. Reservations will still be required, as well as all the prior safety precautions. You can make a reservation by signing up on our website:

www.bethlehemlcportage.org or calling the office 742-8502. You can make online

reservations right up until the morning/evening of church. We ask that you make reservations as it helps us keep our number within capacity and it is also a means for contact tracing if necessary.

We understand that plans change, and you may make a last minute decision to come to worship without being able to make a reservation. Please still come to church. We will always make room for all who attend; you will not be turned away. We will always have overflow seating in the narthex if needed.



LENT & EASTER PLANS



Good Friday: We will continue our tradition showing the movie "Jesus Christ Superstar" the evening of Good Friday at 6:30 pm. **This year though it will be via Zoom.** You can watch from the comfort of your own home. We will be watching the John Legend version. Use this link to join in and watch:

<https://zoom.us/j/93527272621?pwd=UnRwWThRaVNjkb9pYnhzelpNRkhvdz09>

Please do not share this link with the public, as it would infringe upon copyright laws. We are only allowed to share it with our members as a closed group. Because we are watching it together, please make sure your microphone on your computer or device is muted, as

others will be able to hear you if you do not.

Easter Sunday: We are planning to have two worship services on Easter Sunday to keep the capacity to manageable numbers and keep people safe. Those services will be at 8:30 am and 10:30 am. Worship will also be livestreamed at 8:30 am. Reservations and masks will be required. The Confirmation families will be hosting a Grab & Go Continental Bag Breakfast on Easter Morning raising funds for bible camp scholarships.

	Date	Event	Worship Times
	4/1	Maunday Thursday	5:30 pm In person & Online
	4/2	Good Friday	1 pm Worship In person & Online 6:30 pm "Jesus Christ Superstar" movie
	4/4	Easter Sunday	8:30 am In person & Online Continental Breakfast Bags to Go 10:30 am In person

WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS



Love. Grow. Serve.

We have a lot of open spots for worship volunteers in April, especially for Holy Week. We need ushers and readers. Also, if you are interested in learning how to run the audio/visual equipment for live streaming, please contact the office. Please sign up! You can do so by calling the office or on our website: www.bethlehemlcportage.org. Thank you to all of the volunteers that have been helping throughout 2020 and into 2021!!

NO INTERNET, COMPUTER FOR CHURCH?

Do you not have a computer or connection to the internet at home to be able to enjoy "online" church? And are you not able or comfortable coming to church in person? BLC has purchased tablets that we can bring to those that have not been able to be a part of church worship services during the pandemic. You will be paired with a "buddy" who will either bring you the tablet and leave it for you to watch or will stay and watch church with you. If you are interested in this, please call the church office: 608-742-8502. We are also looking for "buddies": people that would bring the tablet to those in need, watch it with them or drop it off, start it and pick it up later.



PRAYER LIST



Do you have someone you like to have added to the prayer list that we print in the bulletin? If so, just let Pr. Jen, Janice Petersen, or the office know.

EARTH DAY CLEAN UP



Save the date: April 18th

After church will we gather outside for our annual Earth Day Clean Up.
Rain date: April 25th

CALL COMMITTEE UPDATE



Call Committee Update

Over the past month, the Call Committee has met to discuss and work on interview questions for prospective candidates. The interview questions are based on feedback received and reviewed from the Bethlehem member survey for the important attributes our congregation is seeking with a new pastor. We also recently met virtually with Pastor Enstad from Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Madison for a "mock interview" to get his feedback and suggestions on the questions we have developed. This meeting was valuable to our committee, and he felt we were asking good questions for our congregation.

Again, the Bishop has approved the Ministry Site Profile for our church and is continuing the search for potential candidates. The council has reviewed the Ministry Site Profile and the member survey results that developed the profile. We will keep you informed on interviews and progress in the pastoral call!

For anyone who would like any additional information on the Call Committee's efforts please contact any **Committee** member. We will be happy to answer your questions, discuss the process we have prayerfully followed, and provide information on decisions made on behalf of the congregation. Our numbers are below.
Peace. Jeff Melby

Review of Call Committee Timeline since October 2020: At the Annual Meeting held on February 7th, Chairperson Bonnie Dixon reported on the work and

progress our committee has made since late 2020. Her summary stated that a Ministry Site Profile was created from the congregational survey, finalized, and has since been submitted to the council and the Synod.

Regarding the survey, Bonnie spoke about the process, the many factors included, and the results that led to the committee decision (from the congregation's input) that we would be seeking a new pastor this year.

Bonnie also made it known at the meeting that Pastor Jen has done wonderful work as a renewal pastor for the past two and half years and we have greatly appreciated her efforts especially during the disruptions in life the pandemic continues to put forth. Pastor Jen's renewal efforts for our congregation continue until July of this year and we are grateful for her service.

The Call Committee's goal is to have good communication with congregation members of Bethlehem throughout the call process. We will strive for frequent communication to you via announcement updates, the Chimes, the church website, etc. The pastoral call is not simply the committee's decision. We are reaching out to members of Bethlehem of all ages to help and guide us as we determine a profile for our church life and find the optimum fit for a pastor we will call.

The committee members are Bonnie Dixon (Chairperson), Jeff Melby, Melissa Bradbury, John Denhartigh, Kathryn Crawford, and Tina Thomas. Council Member Jack Paulson is the liaison between the committee and Church Council.

Bonnie Dixon	608-697-9579
Jeff Melby	608-697-8347
Melissa Bradbury	608-697-4972
John Denhartigh	262-308-1027
Kathryn Crawford	608-697-5262
Tina Thomas	608-577-6607

DWELLING IN THE WORD

Dwelling
in the
WORD



Dwelling in the Word will be offered the following days in April:

April 8th, 7:15 pm with Chaplin Mark

<https://zoom.us/j/98949322327?pwd=ZStkbENIMjBjVjVxaWlYVVF1NHRGQT09>

April 12th, 2 pm with Pr. Jen

<https://zoom.us/j/92865189344?pwd=VVRycDdRcGZReHBTNk9QMctvRmVvdz09>

FAITH FORMATION

FIRST COMMUNION



Congratulations to our fifth grade students who received their First Holy Communion on Palm Sunday, March 28th.

Avri Anderson
Kayson Bulgrin
Beau Grosklaus
Gerald Guenther
Colin Langan
Kensington Thiede
Dayne Wagner

CONFIRMATION

faith formation
BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH



Classes will resume April 7th with an in-person option. Parents please watch your email for more information coming soon.

EASTER BREAKFAST BAGS

Just a reminder for confirmation students to bring back your decorated Easter breakfast bags the week before Easter. You can drop them off at the office during office hours, bring them to church and leave them in the youth coordinator's office, or put them in the black mailbox near the outside office door after hours.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE

TORNADO & SEVERE WEATHER AWARENESS MONTH



April is tornado and severe weather awareness month. Thursday, April 15th is the statewide tornado drill. Please take time to check out the designated safe places within the church building. They are listed on various maps and signs are posted indicating their placement. It would also be a good time to talk about and plan for severe weather at home.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Below is this month's financial report. Thanks for your continued support of the ministries of Bethlehem Lutheran Church.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Profit and Loss Comparison

March 1-23, 2021

	TOTAL				
	MAR 1-23, 2021	MAR 1-23, 2020 (PY)	FEB 1-23, 2021 (PP)	JAN 1 - MAR 23, 2021 (YTD)	JAN 1 - MAR 23, 2020 (PY YTD)
Income	\$14,004.75	\$16,675.62	\$15,346.00	\$51,611.01	\$57,368.78
GROSS PROFIT	\$14,004.75	\$16,675.62	\$15,346.00	\$51,611.01	\$57,368.78
Expenses	\$12,944.14	\$9,900.96	\$11,988.54	\$51,719.38	\$58,318.50
NET OPERATING INCOME	\$1,060.61	\$6,774.66	\$3,357.46	\$ -108.37	\$ -949.72
Other Income	\$31.42	\$1,500.00	\$1,850.00	\$3,981.42	\$4,472.61
Other Expenses	\$0.00	\$1,404.50	\$1,724.25	\$3,755.50	\$4,269.25
NET OTHER INCOME	\$31.42	\$95.50	\$125.75	\$225.92	\$203.36
NET INCOME	\$1,092.03	\$6,870.16	\$3,483.21	\$117.55	\$ -746.36

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

April 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 5:30 pm Maundy Thursday Worship 	2 10:30 am Tai Chi 1:00 pm Good Friday Worship 6:30 pm Jesus Christ Superstar Showing Via Zoom 	3
4 8:30 am Worship Online & In Person 10:30 am Worship Online & In Person 	5 Pr Jen out of office 10:30 am Tai Chi 5:30 pm Call Committee Mtg	6 9:00 am Quilters 5:00 pm Finance 6:30 pm Covid 19 Task Force Mtg	7 Food Pantry 7/8th 10:30 am Tai Chi 5:30 pm Worship Online & In person 6:30 pm Confirmation Resumes Grades 6th - 8th Via Zoom 	8 7:15 pm Dwelling in the Word w/ Chaplin Mark 	9 10:30 am Tai Chi	10
11 9:00 am Worship Online & In Person	12 10:30 am Tai Chi 2:00 pm Dwelling in the Word w/ Pastor Jen 5:30 pm Call Committee Mtg 6:00 pm SREA meeting 	13 9:00 am Quilters	14 10:30 am Tai Chi 5:30 pm Worship Online & In person 6:30 pm Confirmation Grades 6th - 8th Via Zoom	15 6:00 pm Council Meeting	16 Chimes Articles Due 10:30 am Tai Chi	17
18 9:00 am Worship Online & In Person 10:00 am Earth Day Clean up 	19 10:30 am Tai Chi 5:30 pm Call Committee Mtg	20 9:00 am Quilters 6:30 pm Covid 19 Task Force Mtg	21 10:30 am Tai Chi 5:30 pm Worship Online & In person 6:30 pm Confirmation Grades 6th - 8th Via Zoom	22	23 10:30 am Tai Chi	24
25 Rain Date for Earth Day Clean up 9:00 am Worship Online & In Person	26 10:30 am Tai Chi 5:30 pm Call Committee Mtg	27 9:00 am Quilters	28 10:30 am Tai Chi 5:30 pm Worship Online & In person 6:30 pm Confirmation Grades 6th - 8th Via Zoom	29	30 10:30 am Tai Chi	

