

MINISTRY TEAM

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SCHOOLS

Lutheran South Unity School.....lsusfw.org.....744-0459
Concordia Lutheran High School.....clhscadets.com.....483-1102

COUNSELING NEEDS

Please talk to Pastor Ben Ahlersmeyer for a referral for counseling to Cross
Connections.

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

3705 South Anthony Boulevard
Fort Wayne, Indiana 46806-4329

www.bethlehemlcms.org

Church Office, (260) 744-3228

Fax Number, (260) 744-3229

Office Hours: 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (Monday – Friday)

Our Worship Schedule:

Saturday Afternoon Worship Service at 4:00pm

Sunday Morning Worship Service at 9:00am

ASH WEDNESDAY

February 14, 2024, 6:30pm



Bethlehem

LUTHERAN CHURCH

Gathering – Welcoming – Serving – Restoring

WHO WE ARE

*As forgiven children of God, Bethlehem Lutheran Church
shows Christ's love through acts of service
so that we can share the hope of the Gospel with others.*

HOLY COMMUNION

In the Bible the Apostle Paul wrote, "A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup." (I Corinthians 11:28) In order to examine yourself before attending the Lord's Supper, ask yourself the following questions:

- Do I believe that I am a sinner, and am I sorry for my sins?
(Proverbs 28:13; Romans 3:23; I John 1:8-9)
- Do I believe that Jesus Christ by His death offers me forgiveness for all my sins?
(Romans 5:8; Colossians 2:13; Hebrews 9:28; I John 1:7)
- Do I believe that I receive the body and blood of Christ in and with the bread and wine
(not merely symbolically present)?
(Matthew 26:26-28; I Cor. 10:16; I Cor. 11:24-25)
- Do I desire to turn from my sinful ways and live a God-pleasing life?
(Isaiah 1:16; John 8:11; Romans 6:12)

If you are unable to answer "yes" to these questions or believe further instruction is needed, please talk to a pastor or an elder before communing as participating without a proper understanding of Holy Communion can be spiritually harmful (I Corinthians 11:27-29). If you can answer "yes" to these questions, then come with a repentant heart and join us in the reception of the Lord's Supper. If not, adults and children who have not yet taken part in communion instruction classes are invited to come forward for a blessing and are asked to keep their arms folded over their chest during the distribution.

*(Children's Activity bags are available in the Narthex.
Please remember to return them to the rack after the service.)*

✠ WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS ✠

THEME OF THE DAY

God does big things with small stuff! He does it for Israel through Moses and he does it for us through Jesus.

OPENING HYMN

"Lift High the Cross"

LSB #837 (verses 1-4)

! INVOCATION AND CALL TO WORSHIP

(During the sermon series on Exodus our worship will use Psalms that celebrate Israel's deliverance from Egypt. Today we use selected verses from Psalm 66.)

Pastor: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

Pastor: Say to God, "How awesome are your deeds! So great is your power that your enemies cringe before you."

People: **Come and see what God has done, how awesome are his works for us!**

Pastor: For you, O God, tested us; you refined us like silver.

People: **You brought us into prison and laid burdens on our backs.**

Pastor: You let people ride over our heads; we went through fire and water.

People: **But God has listened and heard our prayer.**

Pastor: He turned the sea into dry land, we passed through the waters on foot.

All: **He has brought us to a place of abundance!**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Hear me, merciful and mighty Father, as I confess my bondage to sin and death.

People: **I know that nothing good lives in me.**

Pastor: That is, in my sinful nature.

People: **I have the desire to do good.**

Pastor: But I cannot carry it out.

People: **What I do is not the good I want to do.**

Pastor: No, the evil I do not want to do, this I keep on doing.

People: **I find this law at work—**

Pastor: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me.

People: **In my inner being I delight in your law.**

Pastor: But I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war and making me a prisoner of the law of sin and death.

All: **Who will rescue me from this body of death?**

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Pastor: Dear brothers and sisters of our Lord Jesus Christ, on this day the Church begins a holy season of prayerful and penitential reflection. Our attention is especially directed to the holy sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

From ancient times, the season of Lent has been kept as a time of special devotion, self-denial, and humble repentance borne of a faithful heart that dwells confidently on His Word and draws from it life and hope.

Let us pray that our dear Father in heaven, for the sake of His beloved Son and in the power of His Holy Spirit, might richly bless this Lententide for us so that we may come to Easter with glad hearts and keep the feast in sincerity and truth.

(Everyone is invited to the altar to receive ashes on either the forehead or the wrist.

(You are invited to silently reflect on the fact that though our sin is great, Christ's love is greater.)

Pastor: Hear the good news! The same God who delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage also delivers you from your body of sin and death! Jesus Christ, the Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed and His blood forgives you and sets you free! He turned the sea into dry land; we passed through the waters on foot.

All: **He has brought us to a place of abundance!**

HYMN *“Lift High the Cross”* LSB #837 (verses 5-6)

PRAYER

Pastor: The Lord be with you,

People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting God, you despise nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and contrite hearts that, lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, we may receive from You full pardon and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

All: **Amen.**

† WE HEAR GOD’S WORD †

OLD TESTAMENT READING Exodus 2:1–10

EPISTLE READING 2 Corinthians 5:16–21

GOSPEL READING Matthew 6:1–4, 16–18

CREED (Luther’s Explanation of the 2nd Article)

All: **And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

What does this mean? I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

HYMN *“What Wondrous Love Is This”* LSB #543

SERMON (Exodus 1:1–2:10) *“Big Things with Small Stuff”*

† WE RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD †

OFFERINGS

MUSICAL OFFERING Choir
“Lord, Sanctify Me Wholly” (by Jean Pasquet)
(This is an adaptation of the psalm for Ash Wednesday, Psalm 51.)

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

...Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

... Have mercy on us, O God, according to Your steadfast love. In Your abundant mercy, blot out our transgressions for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, who was crucified for our sins and raised for our justification. Preserve the proclamation of His cross among us, and guard Your Church from every false teaching that might delight our desires but leave us lost in our iniquity. If the Son sets us free,

People: “We are free, indeed.”

...Look graciously on Your Church, and preserve the Gospel among us. Renew us in this penitential season to strive against the desires of the flesh, to grow in the joy of Your salvation, and to look in love and service toward our neighbors, especially those of the household of faith. If the Son sets us free,

People: “We are free, indeed.”

...Remember in mercy all who bear office in our land. Give them wisdom, protect them from danger and help them serve our people according to Your gracious will. Help us to become a people that guards the rights of the weakest and most vulnerable, especially the unborn. If the Son sets us free,

People: “We are free, indeed.”

... Behold in mercy all who are sick, who suffer and who rejoice. Be with all expectant mothers, all whose work is dangerous, the unemployed, those near death and those who mourn. Comfort us who are dust and must return to dust with the promise that a broken and contrite heart You will not despise. If the Son sets us free,

People: “We are free, indeed.”

...Grant us repentance at the Lord’s Table. Let us recognize the enormity of our sins by the measure of Your abundant pardon by the sacrifice of Christ, our Savior. Grant us faith to eat and drink His true body and blood worthily and to learn from Him to love our neighbor. If the Son sets us free,

People: “We are free, indeed.”

...Bless us, heavenly Father, on this holy day of repentance. As we enter the season of Lent, let us hold fast to Your Word. Teach us to die to self and serve You faithfully throughout this mortal life, until at last You bring us with the blessed saints into Your presence forevermore; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

† HOLY COMMUNION †

! PREFACE

LSB pg. 160

PROPER PREFACE

SANCTUS

LSB pg. 161

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

LORD’S PRAYER

LSB pg. 162

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

LSB pg. 162

SHARING OF THE PEACE

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: Amen.

AGNUS DEI

LSB pg. 163

! DISTRIBUTION HYMN

LSB # 607

“From the Depths of Woe I Cry to Thee”

! POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE

LSB pg. 165

“Nunc Dimittis”

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

BENEDICTION

Pastor: God has listened and heard our prayer!

People: He turned the sea into dry land; we passed through the waters on foot.

Pastor: May the Almighty God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—lead you to a place of abundance.

All: Amen and Amen!

! CLOSING HYMN

LSB #422

“On My Heart Imprint Your Image”

(Silent Prayer: Lord Jesus, I believe that You will bring me out of my prison, because You delight in doing big things with small stuff! Amen.)