

# THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

Saturday, April 26, and Sunday, April 27, 2025



# Bethlehem

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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.*

## **WELCOME TO WORSHIP AT BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH**

*We are so glad you're here! Bethlehem is a caring community of believers committed to being a birthplace of hope in southeast Fort Wayne. We are a congregation of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, where Christ's sacrificial love shapes who we are and how we serve.*

*Our worship centers on God's gifts to us in His Word and Sacraments. Here, Jesus meets us through His promises of forgiveness, life, and salvation, and we respond with prayer, praise, and thanksgiving. Whether this is your first time worshiping with us or your spiritual home, you are part of our family today.*

*Thank you for joining us as we rest in God's grace and grow in His love. May you be refreshed by the beauty of Christ's sacrifice and sent out to reflect His light in the world!*

## **HOLY COMMUNION EXAMINATION**

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.)***

# + PREPARATION +

## PRESERVICE MUSIC

### WELCOME / RINGING OF THE BELLS

#### OPENING HYMN

LSB # 336

#### LO! HE COMES WITH CLOUDS DESCENDING

1 Lo! He comes with clouds de - scend - ing,  
2 Ev - 'ry eye shall now be - hold Him  
3 Those dear to - kens of His pas - sion  
4 Yea, a - men, let all a - dore Thee,

Once for ev - 'ry sin - ner slain;  
Robed in glo - rious maj - es - ty;  
Still His daz - zling bod - y bears,  
High on Thine e - ter - nal throne;

Thou - sand thou - sand saints at - tend - ing  
Those who set at naught and sold Him,  
Cause of end - less ex - ul - ta - tion  
Sav - ior, take the pow'r and glo - ry,

Swell the tri - umph of His train:  
Pierced and nailed Him to the tree,  
To His ran - somed wor - ship - ers.  
Claim the king - dom as Thine own.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -  
Deep - ly wail - ing, deep - ly wail - ing, deep - ly  
With what rap - ture, with what rap - ture, with what  
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -

lu - ia! Christ the Lord re - turns to reign.  
wail - ing, Shall their true Mes - si - ah see.  
rap - ture Gaze we on those glo - rious scars!  
lu - ia! Thou shalt reign, and Thou a - lone!

*(Stand)*

## INVOCATION

Pastor In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
Congregation **Amen.**

## CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor Seek the LORD and His strength;  
Congregation **seek His presence continually!**

Pastor He remembers His covenant forever,  
Congregation **the word that He commanded, for a thousand generations.**

Pastor Bidden by the Lord and confident of His steadfast love and mercy, let us confess our sins.

*(Silence is kept for meditation and reflection.)*

Pastor Merciful Lord, almighty Father,  
Congregation **we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

Pastor Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
Congregation **Amen.**

Pastor He who began this good work within you will bring it to completion on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. The peace of the Lord be with you.  
Congregation **Amen.**

# + SERVICE OF THE WORD +

## THIS IS THE FEAST

LSB pg. 155



**C** This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



1 — Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose  
 2 Pow - er, rich - es, wis - dom, and strength, and  
 3 Sing with all the peo - ple of God, and  
 4 Bless - ing, hon - or, glo - ry, and might be to  
 5 For the Lamb ——— who was slain has be -



blood set us free to be peo - ple of God. *Refrain*  
 hon - or, bless - ing, and glo - ry are His. *Refrain*

join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion: *Stanza 4*  
 God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men. *Refrain*

gun His reign. Al - le - lu - ia. *Final Refrain*



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Pastor                    The Lord be with you.

**Congregation        And also with you.**

Pastor                    Let us pray. Almighty God, grant that we who have celebrated the Lord's resurrection may by Your grace confess in our life and conversation that Jesus is Lord and God; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Congregation        Amen.**

*(Sit)*

## **FIRST READING**

Acts 5:12-20

<sup>12</sup>Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico. <sup>13</sup>None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high esteem. <sup>14</sup>And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, <sup>15</sup>so that they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mats, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them. <sup>16</sup>The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed. <sup>17</sup>But the high priest rose up, and all who were with him (that is, the party of the Sadducees), and filled with jealousy <sup>18</sup>they arrested the apostles and put them in the public prison. <sup>19</sup>But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said, <sup>20</sup>"Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life."

Leader                    This is the Word of the Lord.

**Congregation        Thanks be to God.**

## EPISTLE

Revelation 1:4-18

<sup>4</sup>John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, <sup>5</sup>and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood <sup>6</sup>and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. <sup>7</sup>Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen. <sup>8</sup>“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.” <sup>9</sup>I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. <sup>10</sup>I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet <sup>11</sup>saying, “Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.” <sup>12</sup>Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, <sup>13</sup>and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. <sup>14</sup>The hairs of his head were white like wool, as white as snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, <sup>15</sup>his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. <sup>16</sup>In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength. <sup>17</sup>When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, “Fear not, I am the first and the last, <sup>18</sup>and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.

Leader	This is the Word of the Lord.
Congregation	Thanks be to God.

(Stand)

## ALLELUIA AND VERSE

LSB pg. 156

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the  
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

## HOLY GOSPEL

John 20:19-31

<sup>19</sup>On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.” <sup>20</sup>When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. <sup>21</sup>Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.” <sup>22</sup>And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup>If you forgive the sins of anyone, they are forgiven; if you withhold forgiveness from anyone, it is withheld.” <sup>24</sup>Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup>So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe.” <sup>26</sup>Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” <sup>27</sup>Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe.” <sup>28</sup>Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” <sup>29</sup>Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.” <sup>30</sup>Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; <sup>31</sup>but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Pastor This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Congregation Praise to You, O Christ.



(Sit)

## HYMN OF THE DAY

LSB #470

### O SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF THE KING



1 O sons and daugh - ters of the King, Whom heav'n - ly  
5 When Thom - as first the tid - ings heard That they had  
6 "My pierc - ed side, O Thom - as, see, And look up -  
7 No long - er Thom - as then de - nied; He saw the  
8 How blest are they who have not seen And yet whose



hosts in glo - ry sing, To - day the grave has lost its sting!  
seen the ris - en Lord, He doubt-ed the dis - ci-ples' word.  
on My hands, My feet; Not faith-less but be - liev-ing be."  
feet, the hands, the side; "You are my Lord and God!" he cried.  
faith has con-stant been, For they e - ter - nal life shall win.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!  
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!  
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!  
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!  
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

Text: attr. Jean Tisserand, d. 1494; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–66, alt.  
Text and tune: Public domain

Tune: Melchior Vulpus, c. 1570–1615

## SERMON

*“For Those Who Stayed”*

*(Stand)*

## **NICENE CREED**

**I believe in one God, the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God,  
begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light,  
very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father,  
by whom all things were made;**

**who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven  
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man;  
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried.**

**And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures  
and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father.  
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,  
whose kingdom will have no end.**

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,  
who spoke by the prophets.**

**And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,  
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,  
and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.  
Amen.**

*(Sit)*

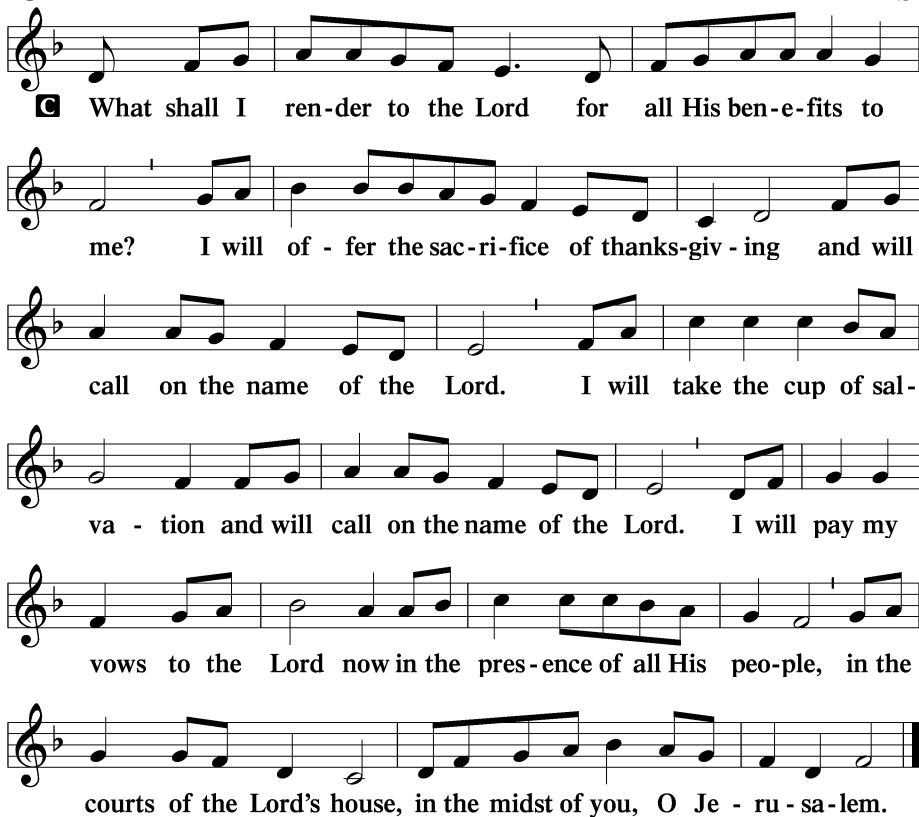
## **PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

### **OFFERING**

(Stand)

## OFFERTORY

LSB pg 159.



What shall I ren-der to the Lord for all His ben-e-fits to  
me? I will of - fer the sac-ri-fice of thanks-giv - ing and will  
call on the name of the Lord. I will take the cup of sal-  
va - tion and will call on the name of the Lord. I will pay my  
vows to the Lord now in the pres-ence of all His peo-ple, in the  
courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Je - ru - sa - lem.

The musical score is written on six staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics printed below each staff. The first staff begins with a square box containing a stylized 'C' logo. The piece concludes with a double bar line on the sixth staff.

## **+ SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT +**

### **PREFACE**

LSB pg. 160

**Pastor** The Lord be with you.

**Congregation** And also with you.

**Pastor** Lift up your hearts.

**Congregation** We lift them to the Lord.

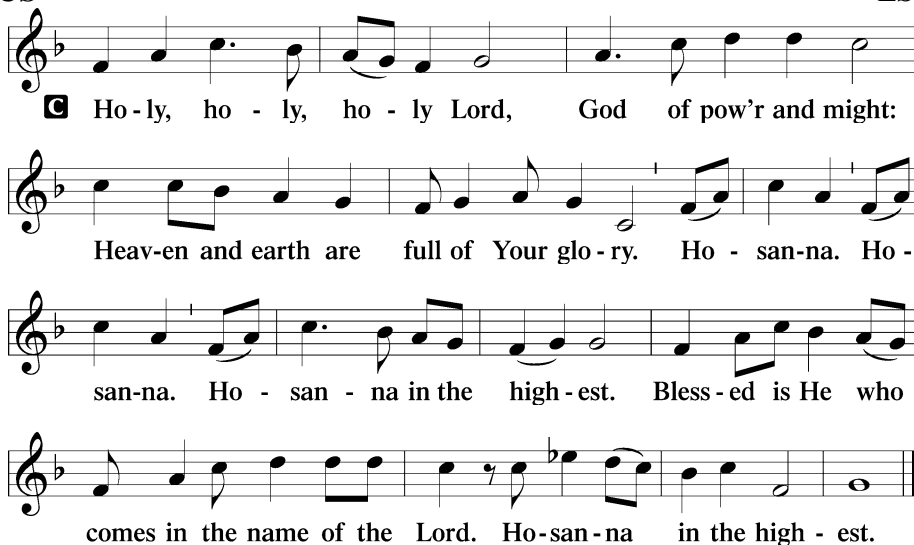
**Pastor** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**Congregation** It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

### **PROPER PREFACE**

#### **SANCTUS**

LSB pg. 161



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:  
Heav-en and earth are full of Your glo - ry. Ho - san-na. Ho -  
san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is He who  
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the high - est.

### **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

#### **LORD'S PRAYER**

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name,  
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;  
give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever.  
Amen.

## THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

### PAX DOMINI

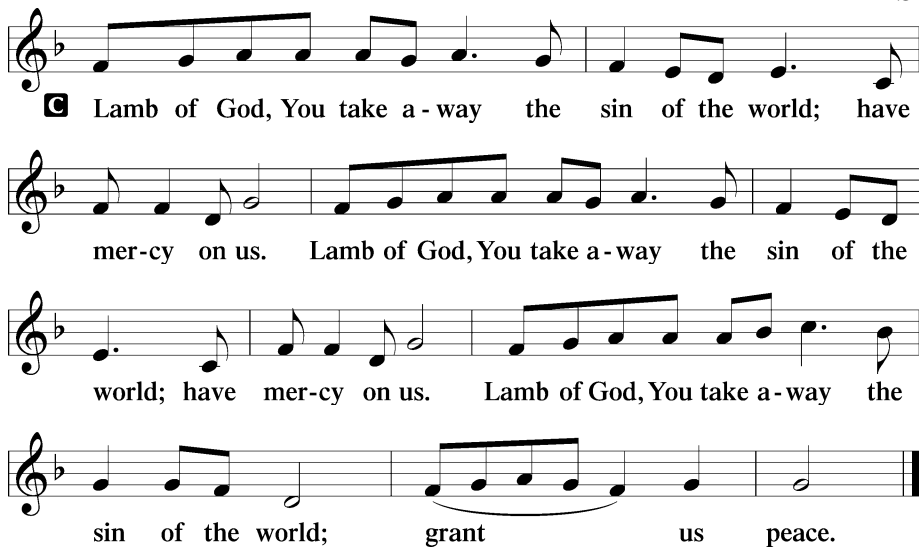
LSB pg. 163

Pastor The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Congregation Amen.

### AGNUS DEI

LSB pg. 163



**C** Lamb of God, You take a-way the sin of the world; have  
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a-way the sin of the  
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a-way the  
sin of the world; grant us peace.

*(Sit)*

### DISTRIBUTION

### PRAYERFUL MEDITATION

(Stand)

## POST COMMUNION CANTICLE

LSB pg. 164



**C** Thank the Lord and sing His praise; tell ev-'ry-one what He has done.



Let all who seek the Lord re - joice and proud-ly bear His name.



He re - calls His prom - is - es and leads His peo - ple forth in joy



with shouts of thanks-giv-ing. Al - le - lu - ia, al-le - lu - ia.

## POST-COMMUNION COLLECT

### BENEDICTION

Pastor

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

Congregation

**Amen.**

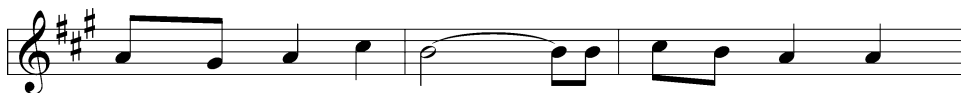
## CLOSING HYMN

LSB #720

### WE WALK BY FAITH AND NOT BY SIGHT



1 We walk by faith and not by sight, No  
2 We may not touch His hands and side, Nor  
3 Help then, O Lord, our un - be - lief; And  
4 For You, O res - ur - rect - ed Lord, Are  
5 Lord, when our life of faith is done, In



gra - cious words we hear From Him who spoke as  
fol - low where He trod; But in His prom - ise  
may our faith a - bound To call on You when  
found in means di - vine: Be - neath the wa - ter  
realms of clear - er light We may be - hold You



none e'er spoke, But we be - lieve Him near.  
we re - joice And cry "My Lord and God!"  
You are near And seek where You are found.  
and the Word, Be - neath the bread and wine.  
as You are, With full and end - less sight.

Text: Henry Alford, 1810–71, alt.

Tune: Marty Haugen, 1950

Text: Public domain

Tune: © 1984 GIA Publications, Inc. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110001608

## POSTLUDE

## **MINISTRY TEAM**

### **The Reverend Ben Ahlersmeyer**

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### **Rhonda Cheng, Office Manager**

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### **Sharon Shediack, Accounting Manager**

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### **Kasey Needham Hapner, Music Director**

Email ..... kaseyneedham92@gmail.com.

### **Janelle Deal, Organist**

Email ..... janelle.buford@my.wheaton.edu.

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**President – Greg Shediack**

**Vice President – Evans Branigan**

**Secretary – John Stafford**

**Treasurer – Brian Bates**

## **At Large Members:**

**Dan Bates**

**Rachelle Dance**

**David Schult**

**Blake Sebring**

## **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**

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www.bethlehemlcms.org

Church Office, (260) 744-3228 Fax Number, (260) 744-3229

Office Hours: 10:00am – 4:00pm (Monday – Friday)

### ***Our Worship Schedule:***

*Saturday Afternoon Worship Service at 4:00pm*

*Sunday Morning Worship Service at 9:00am*

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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