

THE VISITOR



Volume 67, No. 4

April 2017

**“Blessed to serve God
and share our faith with
all!”**

Join us for Church on Sunday:

Choir Practice	9:04 a.m.
Sunday School for all ages	9:15 a.m.
Sunday Worship	10:30 a.m.
Fellowship	11:30 a.m.

CHURCH CONTACT INFORMATION

1312 S. 45th Street; Omaha, NE 68106

Phone: 402-551-1063

Email: blchurch1@q.com

Bethel Home Page - <http://bethellutheranomaha.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/BethelLutheranChurchOmaha>

~ Pastors Rich & Rebecca Sheridan ~

~ Pastor Rich Cell: 402-680-3901 ~

~ Pastor Rebecca Cell: 402-658-7792 ~

~ Pastor Rebecca: pastor.rsheridan@gmail.com ~

~ Pastor Rich: rich@nebraskasynod.org ~

Church Council Executive Committee:

Jan Kammerer, Pres. (402-210-9870)

LeAnn Ryan, Vice Pres (402-639-7190)

Tom Haskell, Treas. (402-391-7966)

Erica Heiden, Secretary (308-991-7285)

Administrative Assistant: Laura Davis

Choir Director: Stephen Lawrence

Organist: Teri Davis

Custodian: Corey McDaniel

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

The following is reprinted from Pr. Rich's Leadership Development Table devotion for April 2017, found on the Nebraska Synod website nebraskasynod.org.

“As I write this devotion, we find ourselves in the season of Lent. Apart from Sundays, this penitential time traditionally lasts forty days. Those forty days recall both the time Jesus spent fasting amid temptation in the desert, as well as the forty years the Israelites wandered in the wilderness—between captivity in Egypt and new life in the Promised Land.

Reflecting upon Christian leadership during this traditional period of self-examination and repentance, I am reminded of Moses' leadership—along with the challenges he and those early Israelites faced as they sought to navigate an austere landscape, a fearsome present, and an uncertain future. And while there are many lessons we can draw from Moses' leadership experiences and the ways his parallel our own, I'd like to share with you just a few key highlights that stuck out to me:

- ***The Call and Moses' Excuses (Exod 3-4):*** Moses was called by God in a powerful way, to an incredible undertaking. But surprise, surprise, he wasn't so sure he was up to the task! How many times have we heard the Spirit calling us to bold and ambitious leadership, only to be held back (or worse yet, dismiss that call outright) due to doubts and fears? Not only does Moses' example offer reassurance that God will provide the help we need, but it also reminds us just how much we benefit from exercising the necessary humility and openness to accept the help God (and others) provide(s).
- ***The Golden Calf (Exod 32:15-20):*** Just like us, Moses often became frustrated—angry even—as he sought to remain faithful himself and lead the community on a godly path. This was a particular challenge given the doubts and anxiety that were rampant (and at times, arguably justifiable) among that early community of faith. Moses regularly prayed and pleaded with God: Ultimately he and the

community he led could depend upon God alone to not only forgive, but to aid and accompany them on their way.

- ***The People Complain (Num 14:1-14):*** Let's face it, over the course of that long and arduous journey, the going often got tough, tensions ran high, and stress was hardly in short supply. That said, Moses listened to lots of grouching and complaining as he strove to serve God and a sometimes faithless and stubborn people. Moses, though a great leader, even gave in to grouching and complaining himself! Over the course of his own leadership journey, he learns patience and a love for the people he serves. But his story reminds us these things take time to learn, and even for great leaders can represent frequent struggles! Further, when we find ourselves grouching or blowing off steam, it doesn't necessarily mean we need to stew in our frustrations or become overwhelmed by them. Instead, we prayerfully strive to trust that God goes with us and that it's all part of the journey!
- ***Moses' Death (Deut 34:1-12):*** Moses spends nearly an entire lifetime leading the Israelites toward the Promised Land, but he never gets there himself! Just as we are, Moses was part of something much larger than he—God's grand work of loving, saving, renewing, and reconciling all creation! There can be something really energizing about this if we are able to "keep our eye on the prize," but we can admittedly get sucked into the little stuff and lose sight of the larger goal. At the end of his life, Moses there are fruits of his labor he will never know. Yet, what he has achieved and experienced by God's power is somehow enough. And as leadership passes to Joshua and the judges (and eventually to kings, prophets, Jesus, the disciples and so forth), we can take heart that God's mission continues far beyond what we can see or achieve on our own!

I pray these reflections give you boldness and courage as you strive to faithfully lead—in whatever way God is calling and empowering you to do it! Blessed journey,
Pr. Rich Sheridan, Nebraska Synod Evangelist & Leadership Development Table Staff Liaison

Pastors' Parental Leave:

Baby Sheridan #2 is due April 4. We anticipate being on leave April 2 through May 13, depending on how accurate that arrival date is! According to Nebraska Synod guidelines, pastors who serve together may share four weeks of parental leave, and then we plan to take two weeks of our vacation for a total of six weeks off. Pastor Linda Walz will be leading worship for us during that time, and she will be on call for any pastoral care emergencies. Her cell phone number is 1-402-806-0757. We look forward to celebrating our new addition with you all!

BETHEL NEWS

Evangelism/PR Notes:

Any Bethel church event or activities that you would like in the newsletter, on our website, or Facebook page should be submitted to the church office by the 20th of the previous month. Please instruct the committee on where you would like the event advertised and for how long. While we will try to accommodate requests as best we can, committee will use discretion depending on the number of other events happening, print space, etc. Our hope is that we will be able to better coordinate and promote all Bethel events with this system.

Worship/Education News:

Lent and Holy Week Schedule:

Wednesday, April 5th is our last midweek Lenten worship service at 7pm on We Are Apostolic. The WELCA circles are hosting the potluck at 6:30pm in Pilgrim Hall.

Sunday, April 9 is Palm/Passion Sunday at 10:30am

Maundy Thursday, April 13 7pm

Good Friday, April 14 7pm

Easter Egg Hunt Saturday, April 15 1pm

Easter worship on Sunday, April 16 at 7:30am and 10:30am with Pancake Breakfast served 8:30-9:45am.

On Sunday, April 30, we welcome Matt and Simone Weber, co-founders of Table Grace Ministries, to lead worship for us. Simone is a talented singer-songwriter, and Matt is a professionally trained chef. Together, they operate Table Grace Café, a pay-as-you-can community

café on 16th and Farnam Streets in Omaha. They will share the story of Table Grace with us as well as some of their original music.

Nebraska Synod Happenings:

The Nebraska Synod is hosting an cross-generational “mission trip” right here in Omaha for all ages June 11-16, 2017 called “The Heart’s Journey.” This is a great opportunity to learn more about the different ministries we support in Omaha in a hands-on way, including Lutheran Family Services and Mosaic. Registration is \$95 (children 3 and under are free) and scholarships are available. To register, we have put the link on our Bethel website, or go to:

<https://nebraskasynod.org.presencehost.net/ministries/faithformation/youth/trips/journey-registration.html>.

Drinking from the Well is a new 8-month course led by Seeking the Spirit Within spiritual directors. Classes start in September and go through April, 2018, which include online and in-person components each month helping you explore new prayer practices and meeting with a spiritual director. You can find more information and register here:

<http://nebraskasynod.org/discernment/spiritualdirection/drinking-from-the-well.html>

We also have printed some informational brochures that are available at the back of the sanctuary.

500th Anniversary of the Reformation:

Prayer Service May 1, 2017 at 7pm at St. Cecilia’s Cathedral. Archbishop George Lucas of the Omaha Roman Catholic Archdiocese will preside and Bishop Brian Maas of the Nebraska Synod, ELCA will be preaching. This is a historic worship opportunity for our Lutheran and Roman Catholic communities to worship together and commemorate what caused a devastating division in the Christian church. While Martin Luther never intended to leave the Catholic Church, his firm stand and challenge to reform the Church has led us to the point of being able to worship together once again. If you can’t make this prayer service, another is scheduled at Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church on September 11, 2017 at 7pm with Archbishop George Lucas preaching and Bishop Brian Maas presiding.

Sunday April 2nd, you are invited to Evensong:

A Celebration of Ministry with College Students in the Omaha Metro at St. Thomas Lutheran Church (17007 Q Street). The event begins with a reception at 3:00 p.m. where you can enjoy the hospitality of students participating in this ministry and bid on Silent Auction Baskets donated by area congregations and friends of College Ministry. At 4:00 p.m. we will come together to worship with Holden Evening Prayer. The service will feature special music from students and anthems from a combined choir from area congregations. Following worship, we will announce the winners of the Silent Auction. All proceeds from this event will go to support Nebraska Lutheran Campus Ministry-Omaha.

Endowment News:

Bethel will host a Legacy of Giving Seminar on Sunday, April 30. Craig Stirtz, president of Lutheran Planned Giving Services – Nebraska, will present information on providing for loved ones and making gifts to support ministry. You are invited to attend this event in Pilgrim Hall after the worship service. A light lunch will be served.

Items Needed for Project Hope:

Our greatest needs right now are for:

~Food: non-expired, non-perishable items, especially cereal and canned beans.

~Clothing: in all sizes, from newborn to adult.

~Baby needs: diapers, especially sizes 4, 5 & 6, diaper rash cream, and tear-free shampoo/body wash.

~Personal care items: shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste & tooth brushes, soap, conditioner, bar soap, feminine hygiene products.

~Paper products: dish liquid, toilet paper, paper towels, Kleenex tissue, small bottles of laundry detergent.

~Household items: pots, pans, dishes, books, videos, toys.

Thank you

Thank yous:

A special thank you to Marlene Haskell who played for me on March 2nd, and Shelley Williams who played for the Wednesday night service.

Teri Davis

I want to thank all of you for your prayers for my grandson, Sagan. Sagan was born with a club

foot last July which required monthly casting and a small surgery with another cast for 3 months. Since then he was required to wear boots and bars for 23 hours each day for 2 months, now he only has to wear them when he sleeps at night. Sagan will continue to wear the boots and bars at night until he is 4 years old. Then, I think, he will be good to go. The doctors are very pleased with his progress. Again, thank you for your prayers, they are much appreciated.

Jennifer Mitchell

Rich & Rebecca – thank you for your hospitality and warm welcome. Rich – thanks for your message. Steve – your jazzy band is great; your choir is likewise. Steve Kraft can also sing well – thanks to all of you. Pat & crew – Swedish meat balls, cheesy potatoes, lots & lots of other great dishes, thanks for a great fellowship meal. Blessings!

Diane

Crossroads Prison Ministry

Dear Ministry Partner,

Your partnership in ministry, and support of the work and mission of the larger church is humbling, and affirming, and we are grateful for your mission share contribution for 2016. Your partnership makes so much of the work and ministry of the larger church possible. It provides the resources for the important work of teaching and preparing new leaders of the church. It supports the work, ministry, mission, and response of the church to the many needs of the world through ELCA and synod efforts as well as through the work and ministry of our serving arm partners. It also helps promote new resources for ministry that can be used in congregational contexts, as well as supports new mission starts, and transforming and redeveloping ministry initiatives here in Nebraska and across the whole ELCA.

Thank you again and God's blessing,

*Deacon Timothy Siburg
Director for Stewardship
Nebraska Synod, ELCA*

Lutheran Women of Omaha

Lutheran Women will meet at Immanuel Lutheran Church, 2725 N. 61th Ave., April 11, 2017 at 12:00 p.m. Send your reservations to Mardelle Gocek at (402) 292-1328 by April 9th.

SERVING IN WORSHIP

SERVING AFTER CHURCH FELLOWSHIP

****Please sign up to host after-church fellowship. The calendar is in the kitchen. Thank you****

ALTAR FLOWER DONATIONS:

04/02 Pastors Rich & Rebecca Sheridan
04/09 Gene & Jan Hansen
04/23 Tom & Gloria McDaniel
04/30 Mary Kay Boschee & Zoe Smith

READERS/COMMUNION ASSISTANTS

04/02 Steve Kraft/Anastasia Petersen
04/09 Shelley Williams/Lori Rogers
04/16 Marlene Haskell/Tom Haskell (7:30)
Pat Beatty/Dave Rogers (10:30)
04/23 Mike Rodgers
04/30 Connie Mahoney

COUNTERS


04/02 LeAnn Ryan
04/09 Shelley Williams & Tom Haskell
04/16 Erica Heiden
04/23 Jan Kammerer
04/30 Corey McDaniel

BIRTHDAYS

04/04 Pete Santon
04/05 Rich Kjar
04/13 Gloria Madsen
04/19 Kristina Henkel
04/20 Jan Hansen
04/26 Marlene Johnson
04/28 John Schmidt

ANNIVERSARIES

04/15 Mr. & Mrs. Tim Williams
04/21 Mr. & Mrs. Tom McDaniel
04/23 Mr. & Mrs. Todd Davis



*You are invited to begin your
Mother's Day Celebration
with*

"A Service of Musical Praise"

*Sunday, May 14th @ 10:30 am
Bethel Lutheran Church*

With special performances by

- The Bethel Church Choir*
- The Bethel Band*
- The Vocal Ensemble*
- The Brass Ensemble*
- Instrumentalists*

Invite your family and friends!



CAMPING

Join us for fun and fellowship at
Louisville State Recreation Area!
Camping: June 9th-12th

****EVERYONE'S INVITED!!****

Saturday evening (June 10th)
Potluck dinner at 6:00, followed by a
Worship Service around the campfire

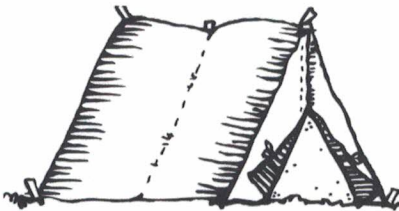
Smoked pork sandwiches, plates and silverware,
and iced tea provided

Bring:

a lawnchair
a side dish or dessert to share
drinks (if you don't want iced tea)
outdoor games?

Come earlier to visit, swim, or take a walk.
Bring your bike and ride around the park!

You will need to buy a park permit to enter the
park (\$6 for a day pass)



Call for questions or directions:
Schroeders: 651-9106
Vaceks: 699-6834 or 699-6835

*For information on camping reservations,
call Kathy Vacek*

****Our spots are in the 80's and 90's****
(If you get to the store in the park,
you have gone too far!)