

Bethlehem Lutheran Church . William Penn, Texas



Ghost Town Gazette

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
William Penn, Texas

Vol. 4, No. 3, March 2026

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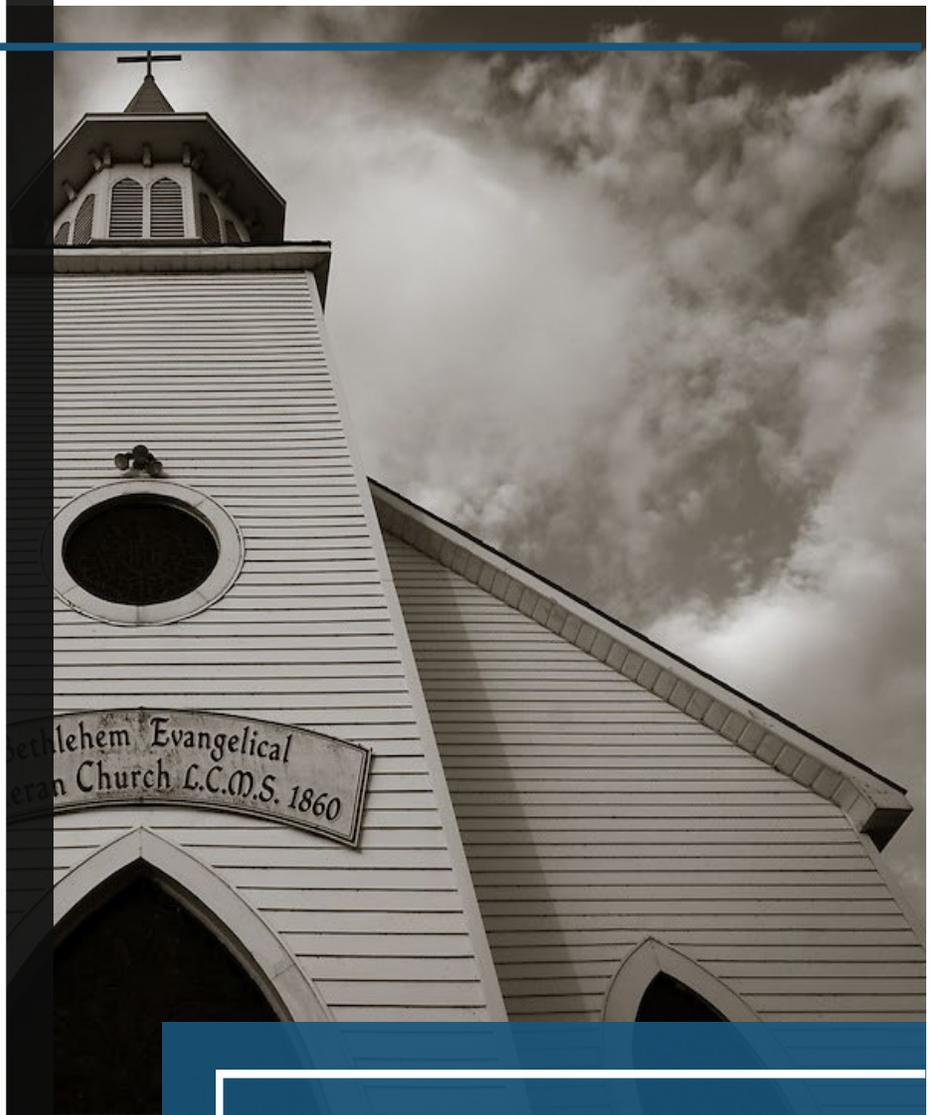
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“Nothing helps more powerfully against the devil, the world, the flesh, and all evil thoughts than occupying oneself with God’s Word, having conversations about it, and contemplating it.”

- Martin Luther



MARCHING TOWARDS THE CROSS

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As winter fades and we approach the joys of spring, March invites us to reflect on the steadfast love of our Lord. This month, we continue our journey through the penitential season of Lent, preparing our hearts to celebrate the victory of our Savior, Jesus Christ, over sin, death, and the devil.

During Lent, we are reminded that our salvation is not earned by our efforts but is freely given through Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection. As the Scriptures teach, "For by grace you have been saved through faith" (Ephesians 2:8). This is the heart of the theology of the cross: God's power is revealed in Christ's humility, suffering, and sacrifice for our sake.

We encourage every member to participate in our midweek Lenten services, where we gather around God's Word. These services are a time to hear again of God's promises, to repent, and to rejoice in His forgiveness.

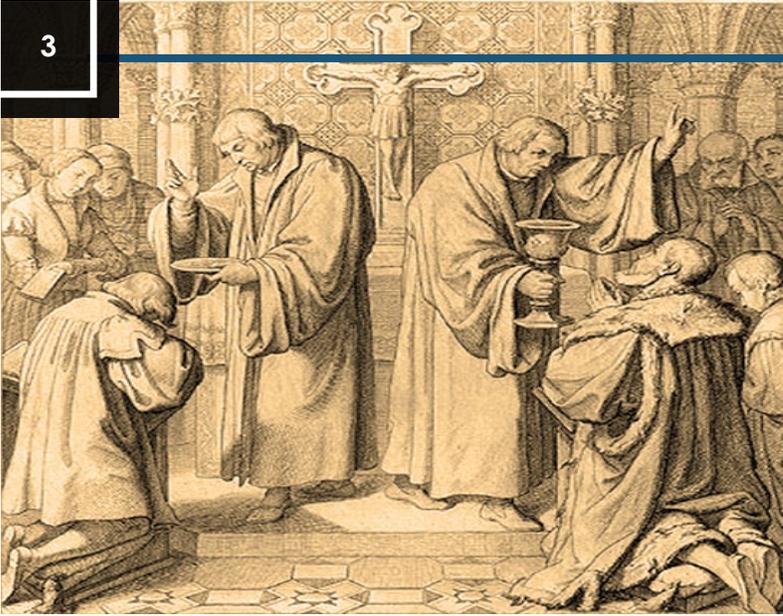
Additionally, our Sunday School children continue to learn about God's faithfulness through the Gospels, and our adult Bible studies are delving into the richness of the Book of Romans, uncovering Christ as our great High Priest.

Let this month be one of reflection, repentance, and renewed joy in the Gospel, as we fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith.

In Christ's Service and Yours,
Pastor Krieg

**For by grace
you have
been saved
through faith.
And this is
not your own
doing; it is
the gift of
God, not a
result of
works, so that
no one may
boast.**

Ephesians 2:8-9



THROUGH THE LITURGY: THE DIVINE SERVICE

What does "worship" really mean?

If you look in a dictionary, the word "worship" comes from an older word – "worthship." To "worship" is to honor God's "worthship," according to the dictionary.

This tells us something about what we do in worship. We sing, we praise, we give thanks, we honor Christ. But it doesn't tell us the most important thing about what goes on in worship. The most important thing about worship is what Jesus gives us in His Word and Sacraments – forgiveness of sins, life, and eternal salvation. That's why we may sometimes use another word for "worship" – "Divine Service."

What makes the Divine Service so important?

The word "Divine Service" tells us what Christ has promised to do for us in worship. He serves us His forgiveness of sins again and again – through our Baptism, in Holy Absolution, in the reading of Holy Scripture, in the Sermon, in the Lord's Supper, and in His Benediction. What a wonderful Savior, we have! And what wonderful forgiveness He gives us in His Divine Service!



“And the angel answered her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore, the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.'”

Luke 1:35



HEROES OF FAITH: THE ANNUNCIATION OF OUR LORD

Each month, we will highlight one of the many heroes of the Christian faith who have stood firm in the truth of Holy Scripture. We will look at the apostles who knew our Lord Jesus Christ personally, his friends who were witnesses to His miracles, the faithful ancestors of the Old Testament who patiently awaited His first Advent, as well as the many other Godly men and women who have been bold witnesses throughout the years, to the one true faith. We look to them not as people to be worshiped or prayed to but as ordinary sinners, like us, to whom the Holy Spirit gave faith to be extraordinary. They are holy because the blood of Christ forgave their sins. They are holy because the Holy Spirit gave them a living faith in which the love of Christ shone through.

On March 25th, the Church celebrates with great joy the Feast of the Annunciation of Our Lord.

On this day, we remember the angel Gabriel's visit to the Virgin Mary, announcing that she would conceive by the Holy Spirit and bear the Savior of the world. Though she was young and humble, Mary received this astonishing news in faith, declaring, “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” In her obedience, the eternal Son of God took on human flesh, beginning the fulfillment of God's promise of salvation. We remember the Annunciation not merely as a story of wonder, but as a proclamation of the cross to come: the Word made flesh, born to die for sinners. In Christ, God Himself enters our world, bearing the weight of our sin, that we might live. Mary's “yes” points us to Jesus, the faithful Servant who accomplishes our redemption.

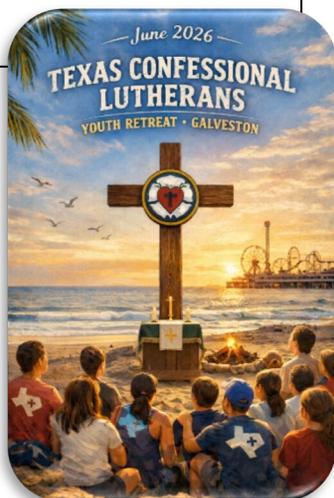


NEXT MEETING



On Sunday, March 1st, the Youth League will meet during Sunday school. We will be discussing our summer trip, our next outing, and preparing for our next fundraiser.

If you are going to attend our **summer trip** to Galveston in June, you need to let Pastor Krieg know so we can get the accommodations lined up for everyone.



YOUTH LEAGUE UPDATE

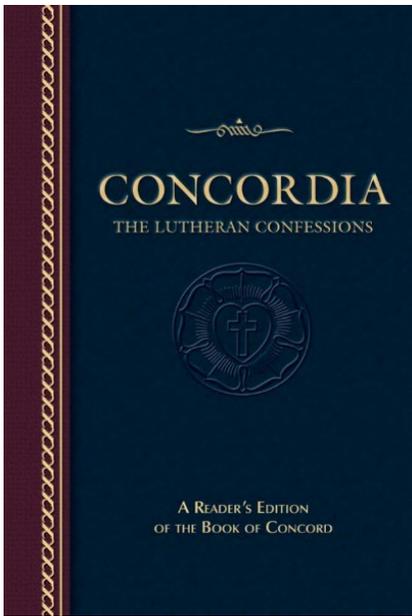
February was a busy month for our youth group! We kicked off the month with our Soup for the Group fundraiser, warming hearts and bellies while supporting our ministry. Later, we had a blast at the 3rd Annual Quiz Night, testing our trivia skills and enjoying time together as a community.

Looking ahead, March will bring even more excitement! The group is focusing on preparations for our Galveston trip, including planning and fundraising for the adventure. We're also organizing an additional spring fundraiser to help make the trip possible. Plus, the youth have a fun outing planned for March, so there's plenty to look forward to.

Stay tuned for updates, and keep praying for our youth as they grow in faith and fellowship!

THE LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS: ARTICLE XX

FAITH AND GOOD WORKS



Article XX relates to AC VI – Of New Obedience closely. The foundation laid in AC VI is necessary for a proper understanding of the role and purpose of good works. As we study AC XX, keep in mind our brief summary of AC VI: New obedience is the work of God in the child of God. It flows from God's act of declaring us "not guilty" through faith in Christ, and it can in no way merit forgiveness or anything from God.

AC XX is one of the longer articles and can be divided into several smaller sections to better understand its purpose.

The article begins with a defense of the Lutheran theologians who, it was claimed, forbade people from doing good works. The confessors point out that they do not forbid good works, they encouraged them. But their emphasis was on true good works, rather than useless works that were self-righteous in nature.

They continue with a brief summary of what the Lutheran churches teach concerning good works: "First, they teach that our works cannot reconcile God to us or merit forgiveness of sins, grace, and justification. We obtain reconciliation only by faith when we believe that we are received into favor for Christ's sake. He alone has been set forth as the Mediator and Atoning Sacrifice (1 Timothy 2:5), in order that the Father may be reconciled through Him. Therefore, whoever believes that he merits grace by works despises the merit and grace of Christ [Galatians 5:4]. In so doing, he is seeking a way to God without Christ..." They follow this summary with the Scriptural support for their teaching on good works.

The next section cites Augustine's teaching to demonstrate that their teaching on good works is not new.

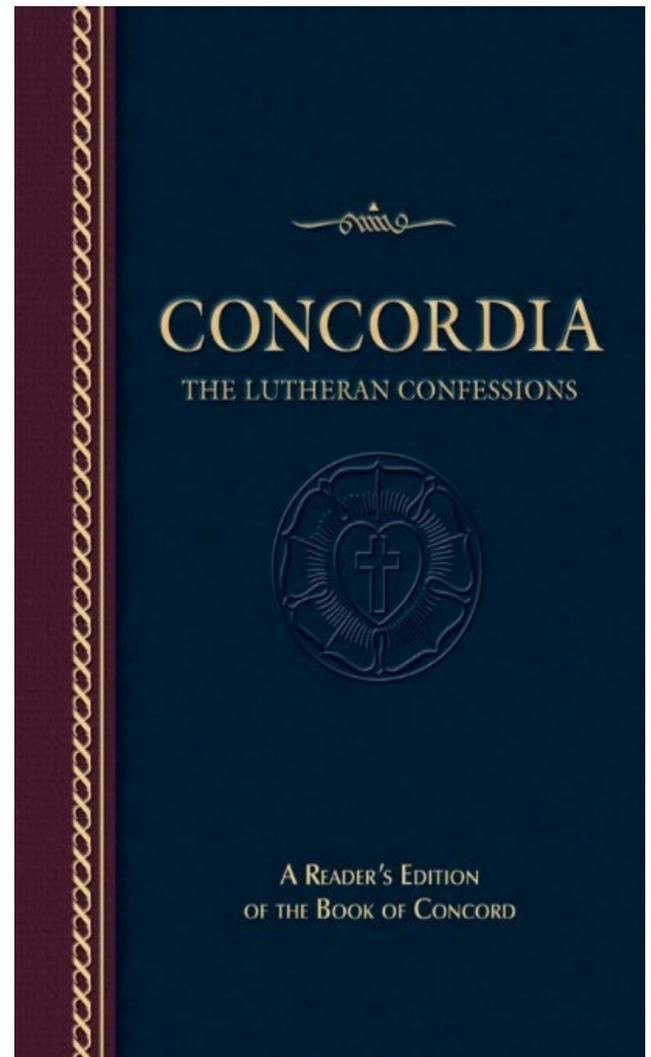
They continue to discuss the peace and comfort that sinners can find only through the message of forgiveness, and never through works: "Consciences cannot be set at rest through any works, but only by faith, when they take the sure ground that for Christ's sake they have a gracious God. As Paul teaches, 'since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God (Romans 5:1).'" Peace can only come through faith in Christ's work for us.

THE LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS: ARTICLE XX – FAITH AND GOOD WORKS

In order to clarify what is meant by faith, they present the Scripture's own definition of faith, and clarify that saving faith is different from the "knowledge" of Christ, which both the devil and unbelievers may possess. "Augustine also warns his readers about the word faith and teaches that the term is used in the Scriptures, not for the knowledge that is in the ungodly, but for the confidence that consoles and encourages the terrified mind."

In conclusion, the article reiterates that good works are important and will be prevalent in the lives of God's children, not meriting God's grace, but as a fruit of faith in Christ's work. "Furthermore, we teach that it is necessary to do good works. This does not mean that we merit grace by doing good works, but because it is God's will [Ephesians 2:10]. It is only by faith, and nothing else, that forgiveness of sins is apprehended. The Holy Spirit is received through faith, hearts are renewed and given new affections, and then they are able to bring forth good works. Ambrose says, "Faith is the mother of a good will and doing what is right." Without the Holy Spirit, people are full of ungodly desires. They are too weak to do works that are good in God's sight [John 15:5]."

Scripture states quite clearly that we are "justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:24). Jesus told His disciples: "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life" (John 5:24). Paul writes: "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9). So rest soundly, that your salvation does not rely upon your works, but solely upon the works of Christ on the cross for you.



“Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it.”

1 Corinthians 9:24



QUIZ NIGHT FUN

Laughter, friendly rivalry, and a few gloriously questionable answers filled the air at the 3rd Annual Quiz Night, held at Sons of Hermann Hall. The evening proved once again that trivia knowledge and good humor make an unbeatable combination, especially when it's all for a great cause.

This year's event doubled as a fundraiser for our Youth League, helping send them on their summer adventure to Galveston. Thanks to the enthusiastic participation (and competitive spirit!) of our teams, the group is one step closer to sandy beaches, Gulf breezes, and—let's be honest—plenty of snacks.

The competition itself was fierce. Questions ranged from the “Oh, everyone knows that!”

to the “Was that even in this century?” category. While many teams displayed impressive brainpower, one squad rose above the rest: Grace Lutheran Church's own **The Unclean Mangers**. With confidence, quick thinking, and possibly a secret trivia superpower, they claimed the top prize and eternal bragging rights, at least until next year.

Bethlehem's teams held their own, with “**Make Trivia Great Again v2.0**,” “**The Stars of Bethlehem**,” “**The Men's Club**,” and “**Team Molitor**” all challenging for the trophy. Meanwhile, “**The Party Girls**” took home the honor of last place for the third year in a row, but they didn't leave empty-handed, as they were rewarded with a special gift basket for their valiant efforts! A special shoutout goes to the “**Tail Gaters**,” who won the prize for Best Decorated Table.

A heartfelt thank-you goes out to everyone who organized, participated, donated, cheered, and kept the spirit of fun alive throughout the night. If this year's Quiz Night taught us anything, it's that knowledge is power... but teamwork, laughter, and a good cause make it truly meaningful.

We can't wait to see what next year's quizmasters have in store!

DIRECT YOUR THRIVENT DOLLARS TODAY



Grant Funding from Thrivent Financial through its Thrivent Choice Dollar program can help support Bethlehem Lutheran Church projects. Don't let your designated Thrivent Choice Dollars expire!

Eligible Thrivent Financial members who have designated Thrivent Choice Dollars have until **March 31, 2026**, to direct any remaining 2025 Choice Dollars. Go to **Thrivent.com/Thrivent choice** or call **800-847-4836** and say "Thrivent Choice" after the prompt. If any of you have questions, eligible members can call an area associate @ 979-836-0693.

**"Therefore
welcome
one another
as Christ has
welcomed
you, for the
glory of God.**

Romans 15:7

Life with God — New Members Class

Our adult information class covers the most important teachings of the Bible as they are believed, taught, and confessed here at Bethlehem. It is designed for anyone considering membership, new members, and any member of the congregation who would like a thorough review of basic Biblical doctrine. Mark your calendar and join us on **Monday nights from 6:00 to 7:30 PM**. Classes run weekly for 10-12 sessions.



Prayer Service



The ladies of Bethlehem LWML would like to invite the ladies of the congregation to attend our prayer service on **Tuesday, March 3rd at 7:00 P M**. Light refreshments will follow the service.

FLOWERS FOR THE ALTAR

The 2026 Flower Chart is posted in the Parish Hall foyer. Please sign up for special occasions such as anniversaries, birthdays, or other remembrances. The church secretary will remind you of your upcoming commitment via email or phone call. The Bethlehem LWML appreciates your support.

NEW VESTMENTS BLESS OUR WORSHIP

The church is grateful to share that, with the generous support of the Schroeder Family, the memorial funds given in loving memory of Lorine Schroeder have been used to purchase new acolyte robes for our congregation. This meaningful gift will serve our worship life for years to come and stands as a beautiful testament to Lorine's faith and devotion.

You may notice that our acolytes are now vested in a cassock and surplice rather than the white albs we have used in the past. This change was made to reflect a long-standing tradition in the Lutheran Church's liturgical life. The cassock, a close-fitting robe historically worn by clergy and church assistants, developed from everyday garments of the early centuries of the Church and came to symbolize a life set apart for service. Worn over the cassock, the surplice is a white, flowing vestment that represents purity and the joy of serving in God's presence.

For generations, acolytes have worn the cassock and surplice as a visible reminder that they assist in worship not only with their actions, but also through reverence and humility. By adopting this traditional vesture, we connect our congregation's worship to the broader history of the Church while also providing our acolytes with attire specifically designed for their important role.

We give heartfelt thanks to the Schroeder family for this thoughtful memorial gift. Through it, Lorine's memory continues to bless our congregation and support the worship life she cherished so deeply.



**And you shall
make holy
garments for
Aaron your
brother, for
glory and for
beauty.**

Exodus 28:2

“For us baptized, for us He bore
His holy fast and hungered sore; For
us temptation sharp He knew; For
us the tempter overthrew.”
O Love, How Deep (LSB 544)



LENT MIDWEEK SERVICES

This year, our Lenten midweek services will take the theme of “For Us.” “For us” is not simply a pithy line to use because it is easy to repeat. It is a confession of who God is and what He brings in giving us His Son. It helps us understand *why* God would send His Son to die for us.

The phrase “for us” also captures much of the Reformation’s theological emphasis, and Luther’s understanding of Scripture in particular. Luther went from searching for a righteous God and finding only stern rebuke to seeing God in the form of a little baby and as the one who became one of us *for us* so that we might become like Him.

So, join us on Wednesdays in Lent for a meal at 6:00 PM and service at 7:00 PM.

Mar. 4, 11, 18, 25

LEARN WITH OUR CONFIRMANDS

Memorization is a key component of Confirmation and of being a lifelong learner of Scripture. I ask that you keep our confirmands in your prayers and encourage them in their studies. To that end, I have placed all the memory work they will be learning this month below, and I challenge you to dust off your Small Catechism and relearn the treasures we hold so dear alongside them. The Small Catechism is not just for the young or those going through Confirmation; it is for us all. When you see them, recite the memory with them, encourage them in their studies, and let them know you support them and are praying for them.

February	Catechism Memorization (Wednesdays)	Scripture Memorization (recited on Sundays)
4-Mar	The Office of the Keys	1 Corinthians 11:26
11-Mar	The Nature of the Sacrament of the Altar	1 Corinthians 11:28
18-Mar	The Benefit and Power of the Sacrament of the Altar	Matthew 26:28
25-Mar	How to Receive This Sacrament Worthily	2 Corinthians 13:5

March 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9:00 – 10:00 AM Sunday School & Adult Bible Class 9:00 – 10:00 AM Youth League Mtg 10:15 – 11:15 AM Worship w/ Communion	2 6:00 – 7:30 PM New Member Class	3 7:00 – 7:30 PM LWML Social 7:30 – 8:30 PM LWML Meeting	4 Tate Crabb 4:30 – 6:00 PM Confirmation 6:00 – 7:00 PM Lent Meal 7:00 – 8:00 PM Midweek Lent Service	5 Destiny Interiano 6:00 – 7:00 PM Elders' Meeting 6:30 – 8:00 PM Ladies Bible Study	6 Christopher Teague	7 7:30 – 8:30 AM Men's Club Breakfast, Bible Study, & Meeting
8 9:00 – 10:00 AM Sunday School & Adult Bible Class 10:15 – 11:15 AM Worship w/ Communion 11:30 AM – 12:30 PM Shekel Store	9 Wendy Ashorn, Renea Molitor 6:00 – 7:30 PM New Member Class	10	11 8:30 – 9:30 AM Sonshine 4:30 – 6:00 PM Confirmation 6:00 – 7:00 PM Lent Meal 7:00 – 8:00 PM Midweek Lent Service	12 Lacy Boggan 6:30 – 8:00 PM Ladies Bible Study	13	14 Destry Pohlmeier
15 Tom Hayden, Ann Smitherman, Mary Wells 9:00 – 10:00 AM Sunday School & Adult Bible Class 10:15 – 11:15 AM Worship w/ Communion	16 Samantha Medve 6:00 – 7:30 PM New Member Class	17 Shirley Ashorn	18 Cheryl Straker 4:30 – 6:00 PM Confirmation 6:00 – 7:00 PM Lent Meal 7:00 – 8:00 PM Midweek Lent Service	19 Megan Fridye 6:30 – 8:00 PM Ladies Bible Study 7:00 – 8:00 PM Men's Club Meeting	20	21
22 8:00 – 9:00 AM Amphitheater Worship 9:00 – 10:00 AM Sunday School & Adult Bible Class 10:15 – 11:15 AM Worship w/ Communion	23 6:00 – 7:30 PM New Member Class	24	25 Raife Kimmel 4:30 – 6:00 PM Confirmation 6:00 – 7:00 PM Lent Meal 7:00 – 8:00 PM Midweek Lent Service	26 Madison Kettler 6:30 – 8:00 PM Ladies Bible Study	27 6:00 – 7:00 PM Confirmation Questioning	28 8:30 – 9:30 AM Sisters in Christ
29 Ken Holle, Douglas Kettler 9:00 – 10:00 AM Sunday School & Adult Bible Class 10:15 – 11:15 AM Worship w/ Communion 11:30 AM – 2:00 PM Hinze Confirmation Party in Parish Hall	30 Emmett Molitor 6:00 – 7:30 PM New Member Class	31				

March 2026

Birthdays

4 Tate Crabb
 5 Destiny Interiano
 6 Christopher Teague
 9 Wendy Ashorn
 Renea Molitor
 12 Lacy Boggan
 14 Destry Pohlmeier
 15 Tom Hayden
 Ann Smitherman
 Mary Wells
 16 Samantha Medve
 17 Shirley Ashorn
 18 Cheryl Straker
 19 Megan Fridye
 25 Raife Kimmel
 26 Madison N. Kettler
 29 Ken Holle
 Douglas Kettler
 30 Emmett Molitor

Baptismal Birthdays

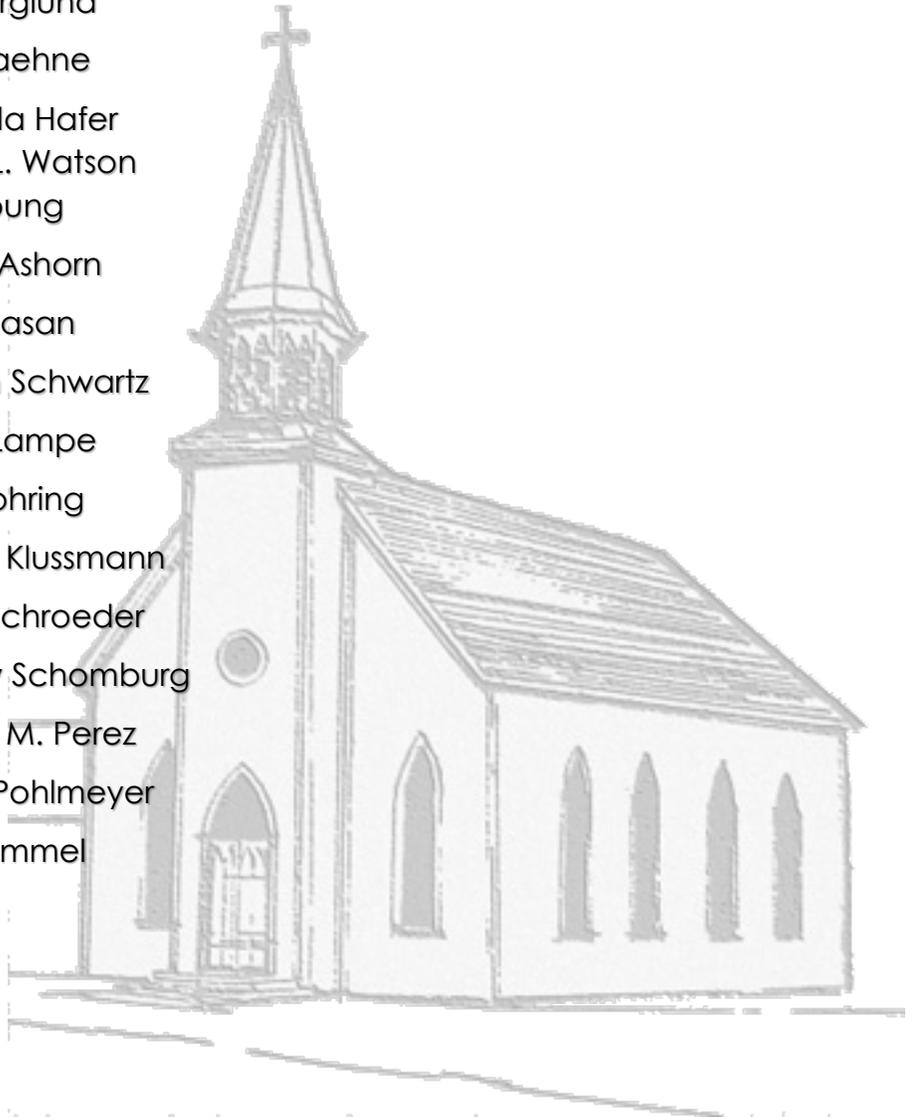
2 Daryl Dahman
 3 Nancey McClure
 4 Doyle Dahmann
 7 Tate Crabb
 Lindsay Kimmel
 8 Hanna R. Glenz
 9 Claire Berglund
 Lillian Berglund
 10 Allan Jaehne
 11 Amanda Hafer
 Sherry L. Watson
 Jaxx Young
 13 Westin Ashorn
 16 Tina Ahasan
 20 Trenton Schwartz
 21 Hattie Lampe
 22 Jerry Kohring
 23 Wayne Klussmann
 24 Henry Schroeder
 25 Bradley Schomburg
 28 Jessica M. Perez
 29 Destry Pohlmeier
 31 Raife Kimmel

Wedding Anniversaries

Jerry & Doris Kohring
 Mar 20, 1965

Chuck & Diane Boggan
 Mar 9, 1974

Douglas & Theresa Kettler
 Mar 7, 1981



BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH-
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OFFICE HOURS: M-TH; 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM

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