

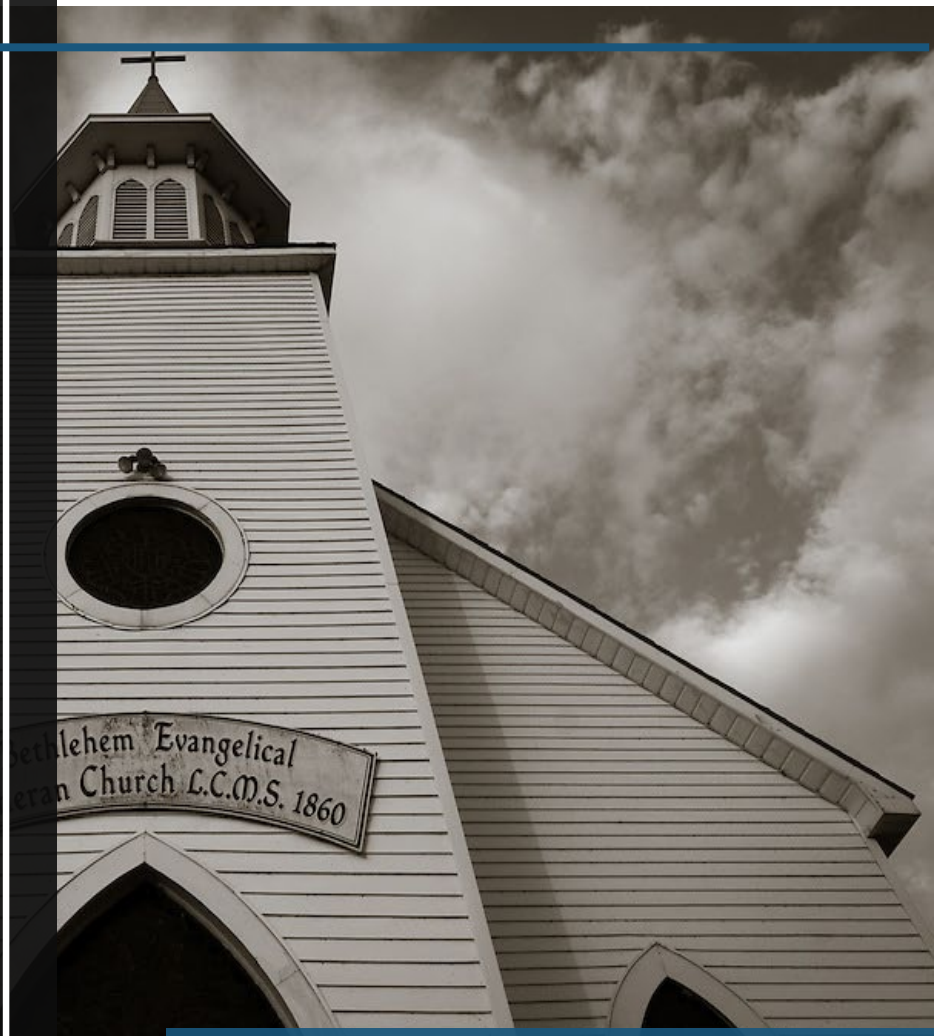
Bethlehem Lutheran Church . William Penn, Texas



Ghost Town Gazette

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
William Penn, Texas

Vol. 4, No. 6, June 2026



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“We must never regard the [Lord’s Supper] as a harmful thing from which we should flee, but as a pure, wholesome, soothing medicine that aids you and gives life in both soul and body.”

- Martin Luther

GATHERED AROUND CHRIST'S GIFTS

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As summer begins and schedules become busy, June gives us an opportunity to remember what truly gathers and sustains the Church. Christian fellowship is not built merely upon shared interests, family history, or social connection. The fellowship of the Church is created and sustained by Christ Himself through His Means of Grace: His holy Word and Sacraments.

In Holy Baptism, our Lord united us to His death and resurrection. Each day we live in that Baptism through repentance and faith. Luther reminds us that the old Adam in us should daily be drowned and die with all sins and evil desires, and that a new man should daily emerge and arise to live before God in righteousness and purity forever. Our Baptism is not simply a past event; it is our daily identity. We belong to Christ. We are His people.

That Baptismal life is strengthened as we gather week after week with fellow Christians around the gifts of Christ. In the Divine Service, God is not distant from His people. He comes to serve us. Through Holy Absolution, Christ speaks His forgiveness directly into our ears. The burdens of sin, guilt, and shame are not ignored or minimized. They are forgiven by the blood of Jesus Christ. Week after week, the pastor stands in the stead and by the command of Christ to declare that your sins are forgiven.

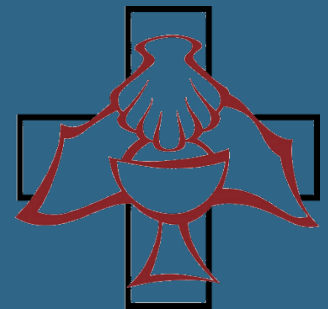
The Lord also continues to speak through His preached Word. The sermon is not merely religious instruction or motivational speaking. Through the preaching of Law and Gospel, the Holy Spirit convicts sinners and comforts troubled consciences with the promises of Christ crucified and risen. In a world filled with noise, confusion, and false promises, Christians need to hear again and again the voice of their Good Shepherd.

And at the Lord's Table, Christ gives His true Body and Blood for the forgiveness of sins. The Sacrament of the Altar is not symbolic fellowship; it is communion with Christ Himself and with one another as members of His Body. Here, our Lord strengthens weak faith, comforts weary consciences, and prepares His people for eternal life.

This is why faithful church attendance matters. We do not gather because God needs our service. We gather because we need His gifts. The Christian life cannot be separated from Christ's Church, for it is here that Christ continues to forgive, strengthen, and sustain His people through His appointed Means of Grace.

As June unfolds with vacations, summer activities, and changing routines, do not neglect the gathering of the saints. Remain steadfast in the fellowship centered upon Christ's Word and Sacraments. Here, the Lord continues to bless His people with forgiveness, life, and salvation.

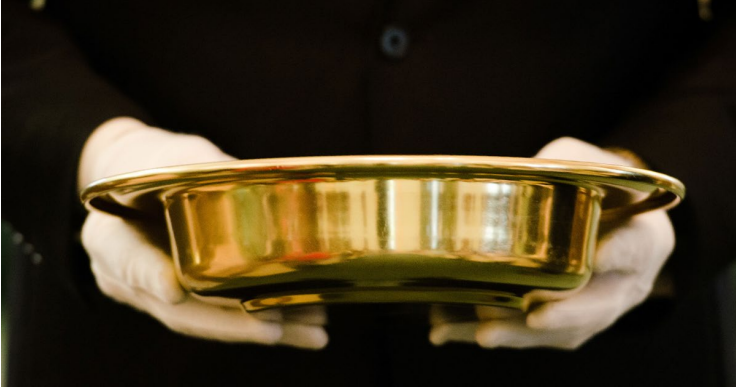
In Christ's Service and Yours,
Pastor Krieg



“And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.”

Acts 2:42.

THROUGH THE LITURGY: THE OFFERING



Why do we give money to the church?

The offerings gathered in the congregation support the preaching of the Gospel, the administration of the Sacraments, the care of the church, and works of mercy toward those in need. In this way, God uses the gifts of His people for the strengthening of His Church and the spread of the Gospel.

The Offering is concluded with the Offertory, the hymn sung as the gifts are brought forward. In the historic liturgy, the congregation often sings words from Psalm 51: "Create in me a clean heart, O God." This reminds us that the greatest offering God desires is not merely outward gifts, but repentant hearts trusting in His mercy through Christ Jesus our Lord.



What is the "Offering"?

The Offering is not simply a pause in the Divine Service to collect money. It is a response of faith to the gifts God has first given to us. Throughout the Scriptures, God's people bring offerings in thanksgiving and praise for His mercy and provision. King David confessed, "All things come from You, and of Your own have we given You" (1 Chronicles 29:14). Everything we possess, our life, daily bread, family, abilities, and salvation itself, comes from the gracious hand of God.

For this reason, Christians give willingly and joyfully. The offering is not a payment made to God, nor is it a way of earning His favor. Christ has already won our salvation completely through His death and resurrection. As the Lutheran Confessions teach, we are justified by grace through faith alone, apart from works. Therefore, our giving is not done out of compulsion or guilt, but as the fruit of faith created by the Holy Spirit.

“For it is plain that, though beheaded, and crucified, and thrown to wild beasts, and chains, and fire, and all other kinds of torture, we do not give up our confession.”

St. Justin



HEROES OF FAITH: ST. JUSTIN

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 June 1st, the Church remembers St. Justin, martyr, apologist, and witness to the faith.

Justin lived during the second century, when Christianity was often misunderstood and fiercely persecuted by the Roman world. Before his conversion, he searched for truth through the various schools of pagan philosophy, yet found no lasting hope. In Christ, however, Justin discovered the true wisdom of God and the salvation won through the crucified and risen Lord. He became a bold defender of the Christian faith, writing clearly about the teachings of Scripture, the worship of the early Church, and the certainty of Christ's resurrection. Justin especially confessed that salvation is found not in human wisdom or works, but in Jesus Christ alone. For this confession, he was eventually arrested and put to death, receiving the crown of martyrdom. We remember Justin not merely for his learning, but for his faithful witness to Christ before a hostile world. His example reminds us that the Gospel is the true wisdom of God, foolishness to the world perhaps, yet the very power of God unto salvation for all who believe.



On Sunday, June 7th, the Youth League will meet during Sunday school. We will be discussing our summer trip, our next outing, and preparing for our next fundraiser.



YOUTH LEAGUE UPDATE

Memorial Day

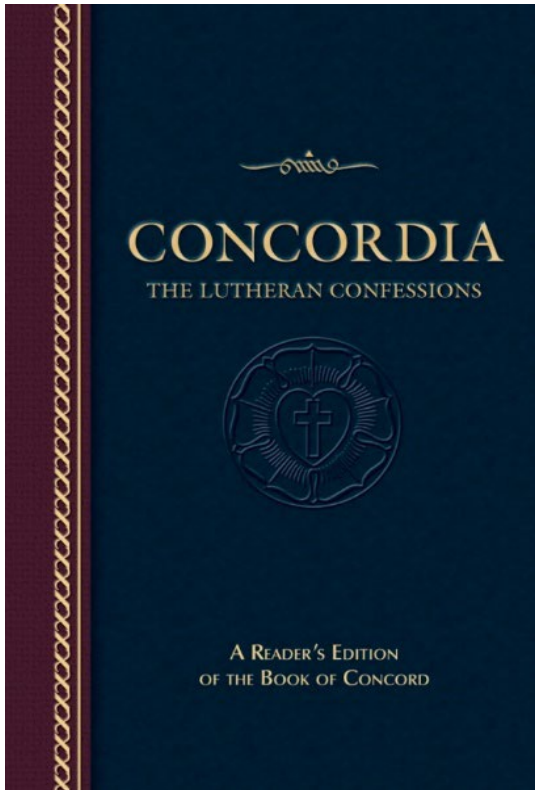
As Memorial Day approached, the youth of our congregation had the privilege of serving in a meaningful way by placing flags on the graves of veterans buried in our church cemetery. It was a simple act, but also a powerful reminder of the sacrifices made by so many men and women who served our country with honor and courage.

Our youth took time to carefully place each flag, remembering that these are not just names on stones, but faithful neighbors, family members, and brothers and sisters in Christ who lived lives of service. Memorial Day gives us an opportunity not only to give thanks for those who defended our nation, but also to reflect on the blessings God has provided through their sacrifices.

As Christians, we especially remember the words of our Lord Jesus Christ: "Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). While Memorial Day is not a religious holiday, it reminds us of the selfless service and love shown by many, and ultimately points us to Christ, who gave His life for the salvation of the world.

Thank you to all of our youth who participated in this project and helped show respect, gratitude, and Christian love to those who served.

THE LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS: ARTICLE XXIII CONCERNING THE MARRIAGE OF PRIESTS



The subject of the marriage of priests has been a source of great controversy between members within the church for hundreds of years. It remains so in our time as well, thanks to the numerous and widely publicized cases of sexual misconduct of priests in the Roman Catholic church. Before we look directly at Article XXIII, we should understand a bit more about the history of celibacy amongst the clergy.

Throughout the history of the Church, there have been many attempts to make clerical celibacy mandatory. Although ultimately rejected by the Council of Nicaea in 325, the movement toward clerical celibacy was considered. Following centuries saw several popes decree celibacy: Damasus I (384), Siricius (385), Innocent I (404), and Leo I (458). In addition, local councils issued edicts imposing celibacy on the clergy: Carthage in Africa (390, 401-19); Orange (441) and Tours (461) in France; and Turin (398) in Italy. By the time of Pope Leo I (who died in 461), no bishop, priest, deacon, or subdeacon could be married.

By the time of the First Lateran Council (1123), celibacy was mandated for the Western clergy. Following the Reformation in 1563, the Council of Trent stipulated that although celibacy was not a divine law, the Church had the authority to impose celibacy as a discipline. To this day, the Roman Catholic church continues to affirm the discipline of clerical celibacy.

They clarify that the church “forbid no one to marry. No one is required to take a vow of celibacy; those who do, do so voluntarily. They ‘renounce marriage’ (Matt. 19:12); no one forbids it to them.” They continue, “The Church simply elects candidates for the priesthood from among those who voluntarily renounce marriage.”

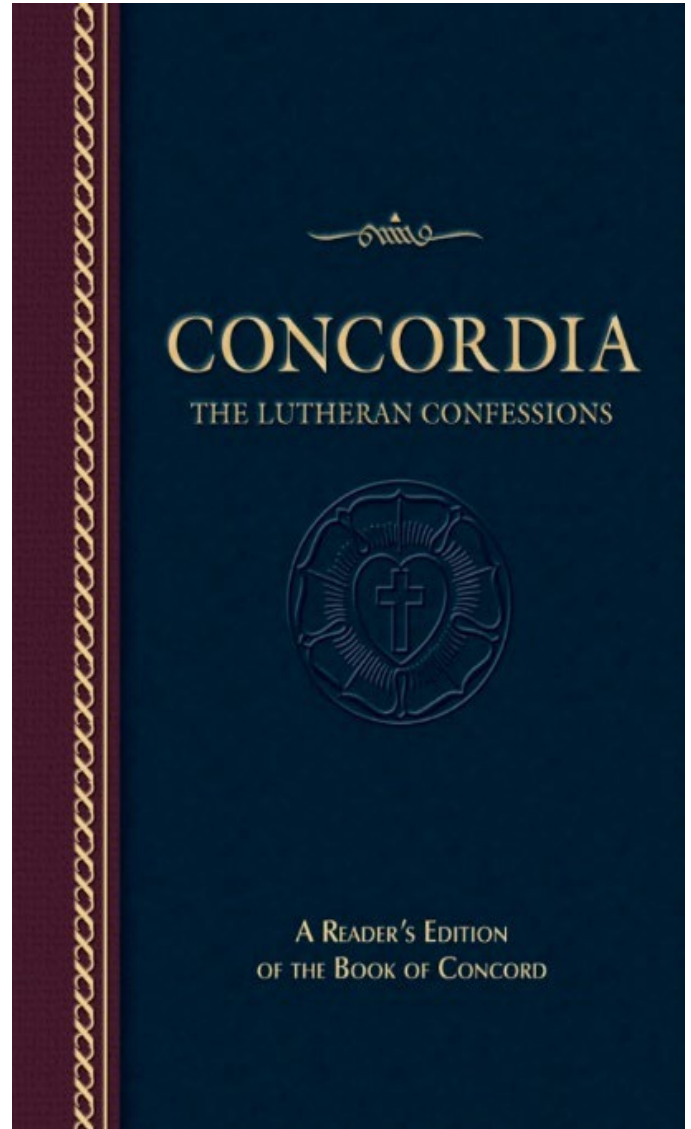
THE LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS: ARTICLE XXIII – CONCERNING THE MARRIAGE OF PRIESTS

The reason for AC XXIII was the abuses that were taking place by the priests as a result of vows of celibacy. “Complaints about unchaste priests are common.... While God’s commandment is in force, and the custom of the Church is well known, impure celibacy will cause many scandals, adulteries, and other crimes that deserve punishment from just rulers. In light of all this, it is incredibly cruel that the marriage of priests is forbidden.” (AC XXIII, § 1,18).

Throughout the Bible, we are reminded of the benefits of marriage for both men and women, as well as for clergy and laity. Paul includes marriage among the good qualities of a bishop (1 Tim. 3:2, 4-5, 11-12; 1 Cor. 7:25, 35; Titus 1:5-9). Paul insists that it is a doctrine of demons to prohibit marriage on account of hypocrisy or external show of holiness (1 Tim. 4:1-3), for marriage is honorable in men of every class (Heb. 13:4).

We must recognize that marriage is a wonderful blessing given by God, and that this blessing has been granted to all people.

We must also note that there is no general prohibition from God against His called servants marrying. In addition, both Christ and Paul state that the gift of celibacy is not given to all people, and that such a rule by the Church has been the cause of prevalent immorality throughout history. A vow of celibacy is not required of God’s spiritual leaders, and it should not be mandated or imposed on them by other human beings or religious institutions.



CONGRATULATIONS ON 50 YEARS OF FAITHFUL SERVICE!

The Bethlehem LWML hosted an honorary meeting on Tuesday, May 5th. The ladies recognized those members who have served in our church for fifty-plus years through the LWML. Those honorees were Grace Kankel, Pauline Kettler, and Diane Jaehne. Other honorary members are Amanda Hafer, Mildred Holle, Shirley Klussmann, and Thelma Moore.

The ladies enjoyed refreshments and a presentation of the LWML history and a devotion titled "Mentoring Moms." The ladies also enjoyed a left and right game, "Jesus Love For Women."



67th
ANNUAL

KARTOFFEL PFANNENKUCHEN ABENDESSEN

(Potato Pancake Supper)

*Good Food.
Good Fellowship.
Rooted in Faith.*



KARTOFFEL PFANNENKUCHEN ABENDESSEN

The Potato Pancake Supper is Back Again!

After a great success last year, the annual Potato Pancake Supper will continue on Friday, June 5, from 5 to 7 pm.

RSVP at the QR code below.

Enjoy an all-you-can-eat meal featuring our famous homemade potato pancakes!

Bring the whole family for an evening of great food and fun, with traditional German music and a water slide bounce house for the kids, we look forward to seeing you there!

67th Annual

Potato Pancake Dinner

June 5, 2026

5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

All you can eat!!!

Adult tickets are \$15, children ages 6-12 are \$10, and children under 6 eat free. All children's tickets will be sold at the door. For more information, please contact Charles Meyer at 832-527-0172.



“Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.”
1 Timothy 1:15

TOPICAL TREK VBS, 2026 – JUNE 16TH – 19TH



This summer, we are going on an epic Tropical Trek! Where the kids will explore God's Word (the Bible) and discover how God finds and helps us in every situation we encounter in life. Our world is filled with exciting things to explore and enjoy. But there are also challenges and hardships we face along the way. Our loving and powerful God desires to help us. He

seeks us out and leads us to faith. We can trust in Him! At Tropical Trek, kids will learn how Jesus seeks them and all people. He is the Son of Man, who came to seek and to save the lost!

Each night will last from 5:00-7:30 pm, with dinner from 5 -6 pm.

Pastor Krieg will offer a Bible class for adults during kids' activities, so there will be something for everyone.

We need adult volunteers to help lead music, crafts, games, and the kitchen. If you are interested, please contact the Board of Ed or sign up in the parish hall. Also, if you are interested in your child or grandchild participating in VBS this summer, please sign them up in the parish hall.



June 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	Blane Ashorn	Colin Schomburg, Brandy Watkins, Daniel Watson II 7:00 – 7:30 PM LWML Social 7:30 – 8:30 PM LWML Meeting	Jennifer Krieg, Jesse Young	Dale Schroeder 6:00 – 7:00 PM Elders' Meeting	5:00 – 7:00 PM Potato Pancake Supper	Kaci Luera 7:30 – 8:30 AM Men's Club Breakfast, Bible Study & Meeting
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	Brian Kimmel	Albin Flisowski, Ray Wellmann	Norman Krieg, Dorcas Schroeder 8:30 – 9:30 AM Sonshine	Landon Kohring	Kaden Flisowski, Diane Jaehne, Rylee Molitor	
Laura Fisher, Tyler Hinze 9:00 – 10:00 AM Sunday School & Adult Bible Class 10:15 – 11:15 AM Worship			Brenda Gaskamp, Doris Gaskamp, Jaxx Young	Lane Borgstedt	Dustin Baichtal, Julie Hardin	Robert Kettler 8:30 – 10:00 AM Sisters in Christ Bible Study
Lori Schramme 9:00 – 10:00 AM Sunday School & Adult Bible Class 10:15 – 11:15 AM Worship w/ Communion	Craig Boggan	Mike Brinkmann				
9:00 – 10:00 AM Sunday School & Adult Bible Class 10:15 – 11:15 AM Worship		Jason Holle, Kayla Maya				

June 2026

Birthdays

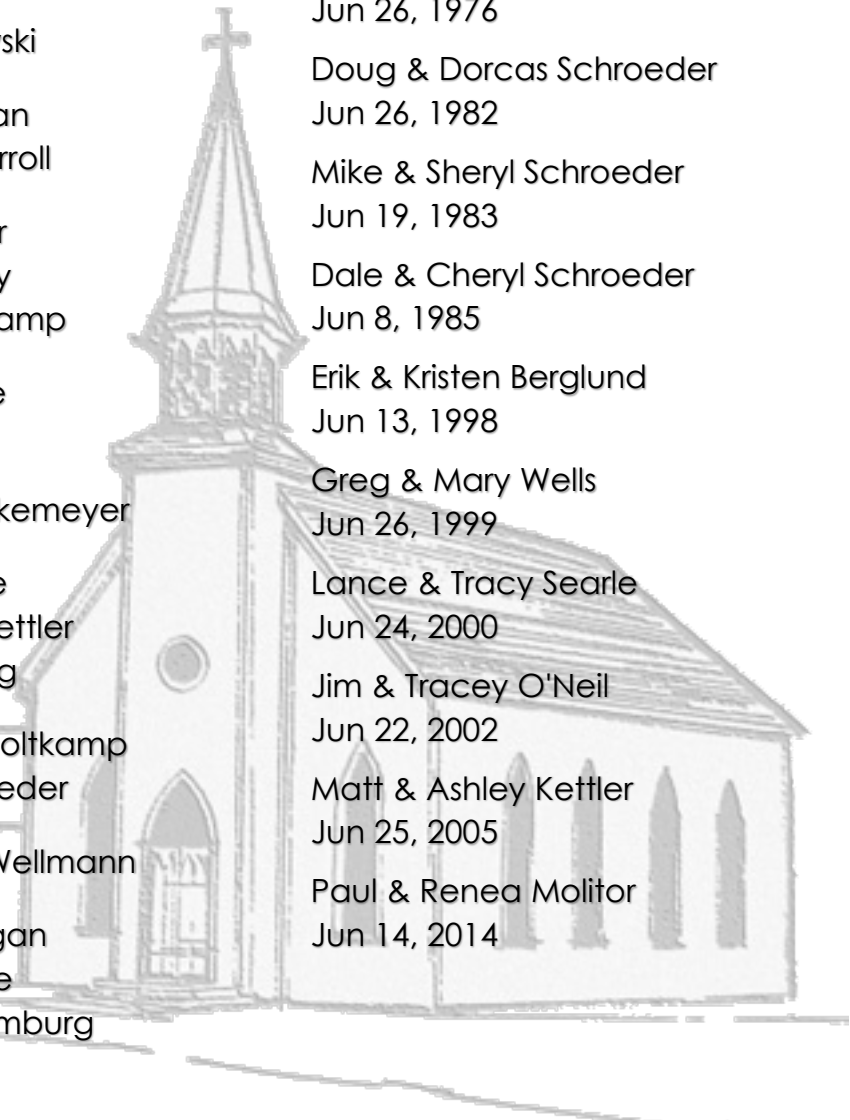
1 Blane Ashorn
 2 Colin Schomburg
 Brandy Watkins
 Daniel W. Watson Jr
 3 Jennifer Krieg
 Jesse Young
 4 Dale Schroeder
 6 Kaci Luera
 8 Brian Kimmel
 9 Albin Flisowski
 Ray Wellmann Jr
 10 Norman Krieg
 Dorcas Schroeder
 11 Landon M. Kohring
 12 Kaden Flisowski
 Diane Jaehne
 Rylee Molitor
 14 Laura Fisher
 Tyler Hinze
 17 Brenda Gaskamp
 Doris Gaskamp
 Jaxx Young
 18 Lane Borgstedt
 19 Dusty Baichtal
 Julie Hardin
 20 Robert Kettler
 21 Lori Schramme
 22 Craig Boggan
 23 Mike Brinkmann
 30 Jason Holle
 Kayla Maya

Baptismal Birthdays

1 Heather Ashorn
 2 Jackie Kankel
 3 Judy Baichtal
 Sharon Schwartz
 8 Paul Molitor
 9 Adeline Platt
 10 Albin Flisowski
 12 Hoyt Boggan
 Raellen Carroll
 14 Laura Fisher
 Tyler Gandy
 Greg Gaskamp
 15 Lester Hinze
 Mary Wells
 17 Becky Luetkemeyer
 20 Jacey Holle
 Matthew Kettler
 Jesse Young
 23 Benjamin Holtkamp
 Dale Schroeder
 28 Rebecca Wellmann
 29 Ethan Boggan
 Kaitlyn Holle
 Colin Schomburg

Wedding Anniversaries

Gene & Billie Weidemann
 Jun 26, 1965
 Billy & Vickie Ashorn
 Jun 15, 1975
 Terry & Becky Lueckemeyer
 Jun 21, 1975
 David & Cathy Hodge
 Jun 26, 1976
 Doug & Dorcas Schroeder
 Jun 26, 1982
 Mike & Sheryl Schroeder
 Jun 19, 1983
 Dale & Cheryl Schroeder
 Jun 8, 1985
 Erik & Kristen Berglund
 Jun 13, 1998
 Greg & Mary Wells
 Jun 26, 1999
 Lance & Tracy Searle
 Jun 24, 2000
 Jim & Tracey O'Neil
 Jun 22, 2002
 Matt & Ashley Kettler
 Jun 25, 2005
 Paul & Renea Molitor
 Jun 14, 2014



BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH-
WILLIAM PENN

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PASTOR KRIEG
PASTORKRIEG@BETHLEHEMWMPENN.ORG

OFFICE HOURS: M-TH; 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM

Bethlehem Lutheran Church .
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