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**Living God's Word through Caring, Sharing, and Teaching**

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# ***Bethany Breezes***

## ***April 2020***

### **Inside this issue:**

Pastor's Page- Pg. 2

President's Report- Pg. 6

From the Elders- Pg. 8

LWML- Pg. 10

Youth Group- Pg. 13

April Birthdays- Pg. 16

Statistical Report & Meet Our Staff- Pg. 17

Church Information Blessings- Pg. 18



Bethany Lutheran Church-LCMS



*From Pastor Russ*

## “A Cry for the C.P.C”

### Center for Peace Control

On Sunday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, I shared a message that acknowledged not only the importance of the Center for Disease Control in these days of pandemic, but also the need to remember we have, through Jesus and His Word, the “Center for Peace Control”. I’m listing, again, the verses I used that Sunday. You may also add to this list as we continue to be strengthened by His peace in these anxious and uncertain days.

Pastor Russ

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.” John 14:27

“On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, “Let us go across to the other side.” And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him. And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?” And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, “Peace! Be still!” And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. He said to them, “Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?” Mark 4:35-40

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:6-7

“You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you. Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord God is an everlasting rock.” Isaiah 26:3-4



As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, "Peace to you!" Luke 24:36

"Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines,  
the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food,  
the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls,  
yet I will rejoice in the LORD; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.

GOD, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like the deer's;  
he makes me tread on my high places." Habakkuk 3:17-19

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### *From Pastor Phil*

#### Shared Experiences

There is great power in *shared experiences*! When together we experience significant events, we become bonded, securely joined. The more significant the experience, the greater the bond. There are many examples of this: sports teams who practice together, who sweat and struggle together can become a powerful force toward victory. There are hundreds of books that tell and retell the story of military conflict and the comradery created in their life-and-death struggle. Even our current events demonstrate this; less than two months ago our country was steeped in political rancor, each political party pointing fingers in an attempt to shame the *other* into political submission. Today we join the world with a *shared experience*. We are all fighting on the same side, together facing a common enemy, closing ranks, willing to work together for the common good.

But with our human frailties and short attention span, even this type of shared experience requires *HOPE*. We might pray the prayer of the Psalmist: "*Relent, Lord! How long will it be? Have compassion on your servants*" (Psalm 90:13). Every newscast shares predictions as to how long



we will need to remain *sheltered in place*. As I write this, our initial 14-day quarantine will end tomorrow; but it seems very unlikely that the shelter in place advisory will be lifted. My prayer? *“Relent, Lord! How long will it be? . . .”* I want to get back to my life on my terms. I want to see full grocery shelves. I want my 401K to make gains once again. I need HOPE that things will return to normal (and the sooner the better!).

The Psalmist (King David) knows better than we do about HOPE. He writes: *“I lift up my eyes to the mountains— where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth”* (Psalm 121).

What David wrote focuses our attention on the fact that our HOPE is NOT found in our “life getting back to normal,” or the return of stock-market gains. *“My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth!”* If we are to “shelter in place” let’s shelter in the loving arms of our Lord and Savior, Jesus! The Psalmist writes: *“Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, “He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust””* (Psalm 91:1-2).

These past weeks have been quite an experience for all of us. There’s been fear of contracting Covid-19 or spreading the disease to our loved ones. We all are frustrated by changes in our schedule, cancelling of social events, virtual classes and meetings and even “online Church!” For those who have contracted the disease, it’s not mere inconvenience.

But this shared experience can make us stronger, more focused, and ever more determined if we will pray as the Psalmist prays: *“Relent, Lord! How long will it be? Have compassion on your servants” **and** “I lift up my eyes to the mountains— where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.”*

Brothers and sisters in Christ, as Christian people not only do we have this Covid-19 as a shared experience, but we have the most thrilling and important shared experience known to humanity: Through our Baptism, we



share in the suffering and death of Jesus. Not only that, but because of His great love for us, **we also share in His resurrection**. St. Paul writes: “*Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life*” (Romans 6:3-4).

Today we join the world with at least ONE *shared experience*. This shared experience, though temporary, can help unite us, strengthen us as a people, and focus our attention on what really matters in life. As Christian people on Christ’s mission, we have an even greater shared experience, that of being sons and daughters of The Most High. And this gives us **the greatest reason** to invite others to join us in the name of Jesus. . .and **the greatest reason** to join others where they might be, also in the name of Jesus. That reason? So that **all** may gather at the foot of the cross of Jesus, join with us in His baptism into death, AND be raised from the dead through the glory of the Father to live the new life Christ died to provide. As brothers and sisters in Christ, we are all fighting on the same side, together facing a common enemy, and we will close ranks, and work together for the common good. May God grant us strength in His name!

--Pastor Phil Pledger



## *President's Report*

### **Greetings from Bethany Council**

The evening Jesus visited His disciples in the upper room, He said "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, I am sending you" John 20:21. Jesus' resurrection is worth sharing even when people don't believe at first hearing.

**Bethany Senior Pastor:** Pastor Phillip Pledger sent a letter accepting call to be senior pastor. Pastor Phil & Cindy are preparing to move to Vacaville. Pray for God's guidance as Bethany works with them to further God's work in Vacaville. Thanks to Pastor Russ Hess for intentional interim ministry (Office hours: Mon & Wed).

**Outreach:** Bethany school reaches families with Jesus love in the classroom and Chapel: TK-8: 116, PS: 58, TAT: 17; total of 191 students at Ulatis. The coronavirus forced preschool to close temporarily & TK-8 to go on line. Outreach Bible based classes: parenting, personal finance, exercise class, Saturday food & craft events need sponsors to organize. Your personal invitation can help friends & school families learn about Jesus' love for them. Bethany youth group is on hold during pandemic. Bethany worship services are on line thanks to efforts of Pastor Hess, Jim Witt, & Katy Green. Janine Browne is waiting for the Life Touch Bethany directory. Talk to Hew Hesterman to help with outreach.

**Property Planning:** Bethany property team, Terra Realty Advisors (TRA), MADI architects, Swank Construction, IC Engineering Geotech, Phillipi Structural, & Clabaugh Landscape Design work to complete permit drawings (65%). Bethany congregation gave go ahead to construct building C&D when \$2.7MM is in the bank. Timing depends on city permits & fund raising efforts. 661 S. Orchard closed escrow. 500 Azalea waits for Vacaville planning review of lot-line adjustment. Vacaville Unified School District (VUSD) board approved a letter of intent (LOI) to purchase 621 S. Orchard. Public hearing will be April 9. The LOI includes an offer of \$2.4MM as is + 1 year free lease back after escrow closes (6 month process). Once LOI is signed, Bethany congregation will need to approve & work with VSD to develop a purchase agreement. Architect A2R is hired to help Bethany design a sanctuary at Ulatis. God has worked it out: consider \$700K insurance + \$600K for 2 houses + \$2.4MM = \$3.7MM for Orchard property.



**Orchard Preschool building fire restoration progress:** Church Mutual Insurance denied Bethany claim of additional ~\$375,000 that would be needed to rebuild burned preschool. Ray Clemas of Top Notch Construction presented a proposal to move data connection weather head to the roof of a new waterproof utility building mounted on the slab over the existing electrical room for Orchard property data, electrical, & sprinkler controller & demolish the burned building for ~\$100K. Once the utility building is ready, a permit is needed to demolish the burned building. Council is waiting for VUSD to sign LOI which directs Bethany to remove the burned building & construct utility building.

**Stewardship:** God works in amazing ways to bless Bethany congregation & keep His work going forward. Bethany members donated \$107K for a matching fund toward a new preschool! \$6532 has been matched! \$300K is still needed to build preschool buildings C & D. [GoBethany.com](http://GoBethany.com) has a link to mobile cause options for donations. Thanks for putting the work of Christ first in your plans. Council hired Josh Winter to help negotiate refinance with tax exempt bonds to reduce payments for loan principle & interest. Interest rates are lower, but banks are hesitant, waiting for coronavirus to subside. Talk to Curt Johnston, treasurer, to help with Bethany stewardship efforts.

**Property maintenance:** Volunteers donate materials, work hard & are appreciated. Ulatis school doors are being painted during school closure thanks to Mike McCall, Ron Shively, and Shawn & Sue Sanborn. Contact Mike McCall to help with maintenance & projects.

**Business Management:** Council is managing Bethany business work flow & records retention until a business manager can be hired: special thanks to Natalie Hart, Michelle Aas, Diane Irby, Curt Johnston, & Ron Shively. Meeting weekly with US Bank helps ensure tax exempt bond finance covenants are met.

Church council reporting: Ron Shively – President, Shawn Sanborn –VP, Carole Wilson - Secretary



## *From the Elder's*

### Do Not Lose Heart

In considering a topic for this message, there were so many topics to choose from. But in a recent devotional, the words from 2nd Corinthians 4 & 5 were so compelling and pertinent to our times, that the full measure of those verses need to be shared. We were also recently reminded of King David's struggle noted in Psalm 142 as he cried to the Lord during his time of trial and struggle. His Psalm is our cry. His struggle is our struggle. His solution is our solution. But Paul, also, in bringing comfort to the Corinthians needed to remind them to "not lose heart". Here is Paul's message of encouragement to them and to us:

*Chapter 4* **15** *All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God. 16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. 17. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. 18. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.*

*Chapter 5* **Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. 2** *Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, 3* **because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. 4** *For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. 5* **Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. 6** *Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. 7* **We live by faith, not by sight. 8** *We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. 9* **So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. 10** *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad. 11* **Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade men. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience. 12** *We are not trying to commend ourselves to you again, but are giving you an opportunity to take pride in us, so that you can answer those who take pride in what is seen rather than in what is in the heart. 13* **If we are out of our mind, it is for the sake of God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. 14** *For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. 15* **And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. 16** *So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. 17* **Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! 18** *All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of rec- onciliation:*



*19that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. 21God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

There is a purpose in our suffering and trials - it is to our benefit, thanking God for inward renewal with a promise of eternal glory with increased confidence to dwell in an eternal house. We therefore live for Christ, to be a new creation, to be reconciled to God, to be ambassadors for Christ, becoming the righteousness of God. How then, can this be considered a trial or a struggle?

Submitted by the Bethany Elders  
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**APRIL 2020**

***HE IS RISEN! ALLELUIA!***

As we learn how to live in this new and unprecedented time, I found a letter from the President of the LCMS, Matthew C. Harrison. I have included only excerpts from his letter, but you can see it in its entirety at [lcms.org](http://lcms.org).

Dear friends in Christ,

*“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble” (Ps. 46:1).*

The entities of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), including her seminaries and universities, have been taking various actions in response to government recommendations and mandates to try to stem the spread of COVID-19. At this time, our global missionaries and their families are all well. Some are quarantined in their respective countries by local governments, and we have put in place a temporary travel-ban for their safety and that of others.

We do not want to add to what at times seems like a circus of media hype and political nonsense. Therefore, I would like to address you, the people of the LCMS, directly.

1. **We owe our local and national government authorities respect according to the Fourth Commandment.** We owe them our constant prayers according to specific directives of St. Paul (1 Tim. 2:2).
2. **We have a duty of love to our neighbors according to the Fifth Commandment.** “We should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body but help and support him in every physical need” (Luther’s Small Catechism)... act in ways that limit exposure for ourselves and advance the well-being of our neighbors, at church and beyond.
3. **This is a very fluid and changing situation. Responses will not be uniform across the church.** As Luther noted in his document on the plague in Wittenberg, different people will make different decisions based upon circumstance and vocation.
  - We trust our well-trained clergy...
  - We trust the great lay leaders of our congregations...
  - Given the seriousness of this virus...forgoing church services (and offering online substitutes)...We must, in love, be patient with one another as we strive to be both faithful and responsible.



Bethany Lutheran Church-LCMS



- o Also, remember to be generous with your offerings in these weeks when attendance may be affected...(Log on to [gobethany.com](http://gobethany.com) just below the picture of the church is a box for you to click on.)

4. **In Luke 21**, Jesus foretold the kinds of things that would mark the time just before His coming. Wars, rumors of wars, earthquake, famine, persecution and much more...But Jesus said at the end of his speech, “Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near” (Luke 21:28).

... “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God.” Luther’s hymn version of Psalm 46. But you may not know that it was written during the plague in Wittenberg in 1527.

“A mighty fortress is our God, A trusty shield and weapon; He helps us free from ev’ry need That hath us now o’ertaken” ( 656:1).

Your times are in the hands of the Lord (Ps. 31:15).

Your days are numbered by Him (Ps. 139).

In fact, the very hairs of your head are numbered (Luke 12:7).

You have only the resurrection to look forward to (John 11:25).

And you have the glorious apostolic promise: “All things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose” (Rom. 8:28).

I plead your patience as we all struggle through this, along with our nation and the world. I do know this: that crosses always drive people — including us — to Jesus. Count on it...

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you His peace. Amen.

Pastor Matthew C. Harrison

President, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

### **WOMEN’S RETREAT- SAVE THE DATE!!! “SOUL” FOOD APRIL 25, 2020**

We are still planning our Women’s retreat. The date may change if the COVID19 restrictions are still in force. Stay tuned for updates.

**CRAFT FAIR LEADER - Good News!** Pat Green has volunteered to take on the Fall Craft Fair. If you have any questions, please contact her at [imktzmom@sbcglobal.net](mailto:imktzmom@sbcglobal.net).

**YOUR SPECIAL INVITATION: Every Bethany lady is invited to attend and participate in LWML**



The purpose/goal of this ministry: To provide opportunities for personal spiritual growth, a richer prayer life, and retreating into the Word of God. We value each other in Christ, and we accept and encourage each woman to grow in her relationship with others and to use her God-given talents and gifts.

### **MONDAY NIGHT WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY**

Our Bible study is temporarily on hold because of COVID19. I will notify you as soon as we can safely meet again.

### **MEETING DATE – SUNDAY, April 19<sup>TH</sup> (Tentative)**

Please put Sunday, April 19<sup>th</sup> on your calendar. We will hold our meeting in room B-8 at 12:00 noon.

**MITE CHALLENGE – April 2018-March 2020** - Our district list of mission grants for 2018-2020 totals 100,000. **Bethany's mite challenge is \$3,100.** We are in the final days of the Bethany Mite challenge. I am so grateful for all of you, because we have not only reached our goal but have exceeded it! Bethany's total as of December 31, 2019 is **\$4,188.55.** CONGRATULATIONS! We will update again soon. The progress board has been moved to the Fellowship Hall. The grant information is on the LWML bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall. **ALL Grants have been paid!** Praise God for each Mite. Please fill those Mite Boxes and continue God's wondrous work! **Keep up the great work!!**

**YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE** – If you have an idea for a mission project, please come to one of the LWML meetings. Many joyful hands are an asset and doing the Lord's work is rewarding. Praise God daily and encourage a fellow sister in Christ through the spoken word, cards, emails and prayers!

Carole Wilson – LWML President



## *Bethany Youth Group*

### **Bethany Youth Ministry Update – COVID-19 Edition**

COVID-19 caused some changes for the youth group. Our Youth Group event got cancelled on March 14<sup>th</sup>. We were supposed to volunteer at Opportunity House. Our puppet play for the Children's Sermon on March 29<sup>th</sup> also got cancelled. Our schools all closed and we are not able to go to church and attend bible study.

Yet despite all the changes we are still optimistic and are making due. We will be starting some youth virtual events. We are going to try to do some virtual bible studies and will try a virtual youth group event and try to do some sort of fun activity via the internet.

In May we are hoping to still go to Mt. Cross and attend their outdoor recreation course. They have a ropes course and zip lining. We are hoping to go on all day on Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> Hopefully, it does not get cancelled, details on times and costs will be forthcoming.

In the meantime, the youth wanted to share some pictures of them and what they are currently doing.

Be safe, wash your hands, practice social distancing, and pray to God and Jesus. We will see you soon!

### **Bethany Youth Ministry Event Calendar**

Bible Study - Every Sunday Morning from 9:00 am (Moving to Virtual either on Zoom or Webex)

Middle School Youth Group every other March 4<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> from 3:00 pm – 4:30 PM Bethany School

April 5<sup>th</sup> – Virtual Event either on Zoom or Webex – Tentative 4 pm – 8 pm

April 12<sup>th</sup> – Easter Breakfast Fundraiser – TBD

May 2<sup>nd</sup> Mt. Cross Ziplining and Outdoor Rec Course – Fellowship Event TBD

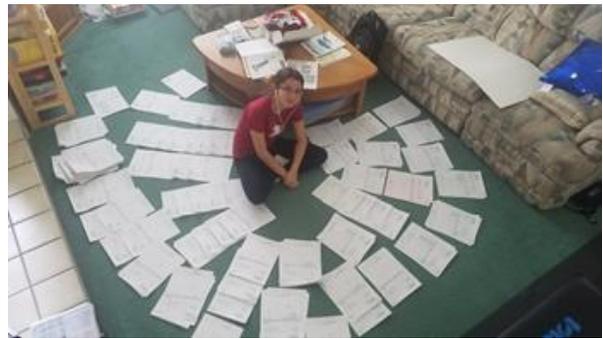


May 31<sup>st</sup> Puppet Play Children's Sermon – 8 am

Youth Group Pictures



Theo doing homework on his bed



Veronica helping out her mom filing.



James fishing or skipping stones



James working in the outdoors.





Kevin working from home.



Sam with Classmates on-line



School work not always is fun



Cassie doing some artwork for her cousin.



## *April Birthdays*

*God's blessings on you April Babies!*



Corey Hilt	April 02
Zachary Strickland	April 02
Kristen Anthony	April 04
Kaye Grundmann	April 04
Frank "Frankie" Primrose	April 04
Cheri Nichols	April 05
Marcia Bassett	April 06
Hannah Johnston	April 06
Sharone Webb	April 07
Paden Duncan	April 08
Kyle Crabtree	April 09
Spencer Anthony	April 10
Laura Strobach	April 10
Scott Bassett	April 12
Elizabeth Dykstra	April 13
Lance Langhorst	April 13
Hewett Hesterman	April 14
Carly Kostka	April 14
Anna DiMichele	April 19
Regina Brown	April 20
Jacoba Kovisto	April 20
Helen Riggert	April 20
David Bowman	April 21
PJ Martinez	April 22
Lloyd Wiley	April 22
Anna Dohse	April 23
Bryce Alyea	April 24
Semetei Andrsh	April 25
Don Fedoroff	April 25
Leroy Rittenbach	April 30



## ***Statistical Report- March 1st-29th, 2020***

<i>Week #</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Worship Attendance</i>	<i>Communion</i>	<i>Weekly Totals- Adult Bible Class</i>	<i>Weekly Giving (General Offering)</i>
<i>9</i>	<i>3/1/20</i>	<i>130</i>	<i>121</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>\$10,917.00</i>
<i>10</i>	<i>3/8/20</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>\$10,631.65</i>
<i>11</i>	<i>3/15/20</i>	<i>77</i>	<i>73</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>\$4,987.00</i>
<i>12</i>	<i>3/22/20</i>	<i>Online views: 164</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>*combined with 3/29/20</i>
<i>13</i>	<i>3/29/20</i>	<i>Online views: 109</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>\$2,171.76</i>

*Average weekly attendance for current calendar year: 113*

### ***Meet Our Staff***

*Interim Pastor- Pastor Russ Hess*

*Church Administrative Assistant- Natalie Hart*

*School Principal- Dr. Chris Smith*

*Preschool Director- Cindy Miller*

*Bethany Church Council- Janine Browne, Hew Hesterman, Diane Irby, Curt Johnston, Karen Loewe, Mike McCall, Shawn Sanborn, Ron Shively, Carole Wilson*

*Bethany Elder Board- Don Fortin, Don Henrich, Rick Martinez, Jerry Miller, Jim Witt*

*Fellowship Ministry- Cathy Hesterman*

*LWML- Carole Wilson*

*Properties- Mike McCall*



*Youth- Kevin Shaw*

## ***Church Services at Bethany Lutheran Church***

*During COVID-19 our weekly service can be found on our website at [www.gobethany.com](http://www.gobethany.com) under the church tab, then under Sunday Services.*

*You can also find them via YouTube by searching Bethany Lutheran Vacaville.*

*Weekly bulletins are also available on our website at [www.gobethany.com](http://www.gobethany.com)*

*Please email your prayer requests to: [natalie.hart@gobethany.com](mailto:natalie.hart@gobethany.com)*



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