

PASTOR'S PAGE

Scientology

How many know of Leah Remini? She used to be the star of the hit CBS comedy series "King of Queens". She was raised in a household that practiced Scientology. The most famous Scientologists are Tom Cruise, John Travolta, Kirstie Alley and Greta Van Susteren. Over the past 2 years Remini has produced a documentary titled "Scientology and the Aftermath". This documentary was based on her book titled "Troublemaker". She, with others who left Scientology, have made the followers of Scientology uneasy.

What is Scientology? It is a 20th century cult founded by the Ron L Hubbard. He wrote a book titled "Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health" This is the authoritative word for a Scientologist. Though the book was an attempt by Hubbard to promote a scientific idea, it fell flat so he came up with the idea to turn this failure into a religious philosophy. The struggling author became a founder of a self-help movement called "Hubbardism". It evolved into what we have today as Scientology. Scientology: Scio (latin) "knowing, in the fullest sense of the word," logos (greek) "study of." Thus, Scientology means "knowing how to know" (a cute play on words). Ron taught the precise path to understand how the world is broken and how to fix it. This can only happen if a person can completely understand one's true spiritual nature and one's relationship to self.

The authoritative writings of Scientology are everything written or spoken by Hubbard. He is the sole revealer of truth. He held the secret of the universe. Though he passed away on January 24th 1986, his words are considered golden! You attack his words you will feel the wrath of the church. They literally send out goon squads to harass former members of Scientology.

The church itself denies the Triune God. They reject the divinity of Christ. They deny his sacrifice for sins of the world. In fact, sin is determined by the individual. Man is basically good. Each person is seen as spirit or a "thetan" (what makes you, you - their word for soul). One needs to achieve "clearness" or "clarity". Scientology teaches you how to become clear the "thetan". There is actually a chart a member must follow and classes one must take, pass and yes, pay for. Many members mortgage their houses over and over again to attain the dollars to achieve "clarity."

The Bible teaches that man is hostile to God. The Bible also teaches that each individual is dead in their sin. The Bible also teaches that we are blind to God's grace and love. We are blind, dead and enemies of the one true God. God, out of grace and mercy, comes to us through his word and sacrament to open our eyes, brings breath to a lifeless spiritual body and calls us to be his children. Our heavenly Father does this all out divine goodness in mercy, not found in us, but graciously given to us through His Son Jesus Christ.

God opens the way unto salvation clearly. Jesus is the way, the truth and the life. We cannot come to the Father except by Jesus. Hubbard, a mere mortal man, died and is buried in a tomb. But Jesus, God's incarnate, lived, died, was buried and rose again from the dead. He lives and reigns all eternity. God's way is made clear, not by man, but by God, Himself.

Yours in Christ

Pastor Steele

NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

December was quite a busy month here at Bethany. The decorating crew did a magnificent job of preparing our sanctuary for the Christmas Season. Outside, the large wreath over the north doors and the lighted Nativity Scene at the west entrance helped to get us into the spirit once again. The “Kohler Christmas Walk”, founded by Glen Schuman back in the mid ‘70s was restarted on December 10 after having been discontinued a few years ago due to lack of participation. With younger families now organizing this great tradition, it looks like Kohler Village could have it back as an annual event.

Many thanks to the Sunday School Staff, Music Department, Pastor Steele and other volunteers who worked with our kids to put on the December 17 Christmas Program. It would not be the same without our young people performing in some way at Christmas time. Thanks also to the children who *practice-practice-practice* to do a good job. I am proud of every one of them and encourage them to “keep it up”.

Advent services were accented with short, but very creative and energetic videos depicting the Christmas message. Christmas Eve was magical in every way. The pews were full, the lighting soothing, the music was full from the choirs to the chimes to the organ-led singing of the congregation...It was Christmas Eve and we were in a “festive mood”, as Charles Dickens has said. A special thanks to Lili Giertz for playing her flute throughout the service. The flute added to an already robust sound as we shared those favorite time-tested Christmas Carols. We enjoyed seeing many visitors that evening and hope they found Bethany to be a perfect place to celebrate Christmas Eve.

Please keep the Schuman and Mueller families in your prayers as Glen and Neil have been called home in the past weeks.

I would like to congratulate the 2017 winners of the LOVE INC Crusaders for Christ Award. Sue Prange won for the month of July and Steve Marotz won for the month of October. Great job!

...and I received the following from a friend last week and want to share it with you, it is called “A Christian”.

Several years ago, a preacher from out-of-state accepted a call to a church in Houston, Texas. Some weeks after he arrived, he had an occasion to ride the bus from his home to the downtown area. When he sat down, he discovered that the driver had accidentally given him a quarter too much change. As he considered what to do, he thought to himself, 'You'd better give the quarter back.

It would be wrong to keep it.' Then he thought, 'Oh, forget it, it's only a quarter. Who would worry about this little amount? Anyway, the bus company gets too much fare; they will never miss it. Accept it as a 'gift from God' and keep quiet.'

When his stop came, he paused momentarily at the door, and then he handed the quarter to the driver and said, 'Here, you gave me too much change.' The driver, with a smile, replied, 'Aren't you the new preacher in town?' 'Yes' he replied. 'Well, I have been thinking a lot lately about going somewhere to worship. I just wanted to see what you would do if I gave you too much change. I'll see you at church on Sunday.'

When the preacher stepped off of the bus, he literally grabbed the nearest light pole, held on, and said, 'Oh God, I almost sold your Son for a quarter.'

Our lives are the only Bible some people will ever read. This is a really scary example of how much people watch us as Christians, and will put us to the test! Always be on guard -- and remember

-- You carry the name of Christ on your shoulders when you call yourself Christian.'

Watch your thoughts; they become words. Watch your words; they become actions. Watch your actions; they become habits. Watch your habits; they become character. Watch your character; it becomes your destiny.

I do not know how long this story has been out there, and assume it is fabricated to make a point. As I read this through the first time, I recalled times in my life when I was teeter-tottering back and forth about “what to do” in a similar situation as this pastor found himself in”. Maybe you did too. Many interesting debates could come out of this short story, but to me the monkey was on the back of the preacher. It came down to a WWJD moment, which is “*What would Jesus do*”. It was not about the quarter, it was about what was the right thing to do. That fine line between knowing the right thing to do, which usually is quite apparent, and actually DOING it can drive Christians crazy. Being on our game every day and every play can be tough. We should not be having these “near misses” like the preacher did, where he grabs a light pole out of his sudden realization that he came within a whisker of selling out on his Savior. Bearing that declaration of being a Christian is quite an undertaking; we are attaching ourselves to someone who has put that bar up pretty high. All we can do is confess that we will do our best and leave the rest to the Lord. His promise of forgiveness is all part of the equation that God has provided in our lives. Without it, we are doomed. Let us praise God as we close out 2017 and pray for his guidance as we begin a new year.

His blessings to all of you and to our Bethany Family in 2018.

Lee Gumm
President, Bethany Lutheran Church

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

1-4: Genevieve Regan
Patrick Johnson



1-5: T. J. Keller

1-6: Katelynn Johnson

1-8: Audrey Nikisch

1-11: Kandice Brooks
Kelly Paltzer

1-14: Jennifer Sabrowsky

1-19: Jeanne Toepel

1-24: Nic Collins

Mary Madden

1-26: Alicia Barthels

1-27: Cheryl Rivas

1-30: Charles Keller

If we missed a member's birthday or anniversary, please contact the church office and let us know.

JANUARY/FEBRUARY CHARITY OF THE MONTH – Orphan Grain Train

During the months of January and February, all money collected from your “Designated Offerings” contribution envelopes will go **Orphan Grain Train**. Orphan Grain Train is a Christian volunteer network that shares personal and material resources with needy people in America and around the world. Grain Train volunteers gather donations of clothing, medical supplies, food, Christian literature, and other aid to meet real needs. For more information, visit their website at www.oqt.org

CHURCH CANCELLATION ANNOUNCEMENTS

In the case of bad weather this winter, please check TODAY'S TMJ4 TV station for church cancellations. You can also go online to tmj4.com or 620WTMJ on the radio.



FROM THE PARISH NURSE

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

Here we are once again in the new year – a time of reflection, renewal, resolutions and of course the joy in knowing our Resurrected King, Jesus Christ.

As the chosen children of Christ, we have the daily renewal of the blessings given to us through the blood of Jesus Christ. May we celebrate those gifts of Hope, Faith, Love, Forgiveness, Salvation and Resurrection daily and in all circumstances.

Pulmonary Hypertension is a serious condition that's treatable but cannot be cured. If you have pulmonary hypertension, the pressure within the blood vessels leading from your heart to your lungs is too high. Your heart must push harder to pump blood to your lungs, which can lead to heart damage. Doctors can recommend medications for pulmonary hypertension, but taking other steps may also help you better handle the condition.

Find a Support Group - Attending a support group can help you in many ways, says Marilyn Schmidt, RN, a nurse in Lincoln, Neb., who works with pulmonary hypertension patients and is also involved with the Pulmonary Hypertension Association's educational efforts. Speakers at support groups can teach you how to use new and existing treatments. Plus, seeing other patients coping with pulmonary hypertension may give you the inspiration you need to thrive.

Find a Specialist - "Pulmonary hypertension is not an easy disease to treat," Schmidt says, and the condition is not well understood by the medical community in general. Pulmonary hypertension can be put into five categories, including cases with no known cause and cases associated with other diseases. As a result, it's a good idea to seek treatment from a doctor who specializes in pulmonary hypertension, such as a pulmonologist (lung doctor) or cardiologist (heart doctor).

Prepare for Emergencies - "We counsel and teach patients about responding to emergencies," Schmidt says. People with pulmonary hypertension may require a medication that goes into the body 24 hours a day. If the medicine stops for whatever reason, symptoms can return quickly and dramatically, which can be life-threatening. Infections related to a catheter that is permanently inserted to infuse the medicine can also be dangerous. Talk to your doctor or other pulmonary hypertension provider about how to prepare for these emergencies.

Get Your Friends and Family Involved - "When patients come in for their evaluation and diagnosis, we think it's important that they have a family member, trusted friend, or significant other with them to hear the same information," Schmidt says. Pulmonary hypertension can be complicated to treat and difficult to understand, so it's helpful to bring someone to appointments to help you ask questions and understand the doctor's recommendations.

Keep Medication Information Handy - Some medications used to treat pulmonary hypertension are fairly uncommon; as a result, emergency medical responders and even hospitals might not be familiar with how to work with patients on these drugs, Schmidt says. For example, if you take continuous medicine through a catheter, health providers could trigger an emergency if they do the wrong thing to the catheter. As a result, be sure to keep information about your medications handy to share in an emergency.

Maintain a Backup Medical Supply - If you use medications that are delivered continuously through an infusion to treat your pulmonary hypertension, it's important to keep a backup emergency kit containing the medicine on-hand, Schmidt says. For example, interrupting the flow of the medicine **Flofan** (epoprostenol) even momentarily can be fatal, according to the Pulmonary Hypertension Association. This medicine is contained in a cassette that goes into a pump; if you were to drop the cassette and damage it, you'd need to have a backup.

Stay Positive - You may have heard information that paints a discouraging picture of the kind of life you can expect with pulmonary hypertension. However, even though pulmonary hypertension is a serious and progressive disease, people with this condition can remain productive and active, Schmidt says. Effective treatments are available, but they may take time to work. It's important when dealing with any chronic illness to try to keep a positive attitude.

I leave you with these words from Isaiah 41:10 "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand".

Roxanne Taylor RN, BSN
Parish Nurse

CHARITIES OF THE MONTH FOR 2018

In 2018, there will be 6 "charities of the month". Each charity will run for two months at a time. The 6 charities are:

January/February – Orphan Grain Train
March/April – Lutheran Bible Translators
May/June - Vernacular Video Mission International (VVMII)
July/August – Lutheran Deaf Mission Society
September/October - Good News Jail and Prison Ministry
November/December - Lutheran World Relief

2018 BOARD MEMBERS

President: Lee Gumm
Vice President: Bob Wuerzberger
Council Secretary: Lynn Litt
Board of Elders: Todd Matte, Steve Hazen, Brian Faucher, Gerry Luebke, Nic Collins, and Jim Madden
Board of Trustees: Andy Fibiger, Ryan Brooks
Board of Finance: Steve Marotz, Ben Marotz
Board of Education: KaoKalia Yang, Sara Hasler
Financial Secretary: Shirley Ottman
Treasurer: Derek MacKenzie

Thank you to all who serve Bethany!

卩 GIFTS GIVEN TO BETHANY

In memory of Glen Schuman: Memorial Fund gifts were given by Cheryl Prepster, Betty Hahn, Rayola Madson, Neil & Shirley Mueller, Roger & Barbara Strenger, Bill & Judi Strenger, and Barbara Steele. Endowment Fund gifts were given by Dave & Sue Prange and Bob & Karen Wuerzberger. Improvement Fund gifts were given by Lee & Barb Gumm, Ron & Mary Hummitsch, and Ray & Shirley Ottman.

If you would like to give a memorial gift in memory or in honor of someone, cards can be found on the counter outside Pastor's office as well as in the back of church.

MESSAGE FROM DENNIS AND BOOM DENOW

At the end of this newsletter you will find the current issue of 'Proclaim', the Denow's newsletter. Specifically, the "Special Announcement" portion as it pertains to the future of the Denow's ministry in Thailand. We pray for Dennis and Boom and whatever the future holds for them.

JANUARY MITE BOX

The large Mite Box will be out in the back of church on the last Sunday of each month and will benefit a different mission grant. The January grant is designated for Equipping Youth to Witness for Life through the Y4Life program, a ministry of Lutherans for Life. Y4Life seeks to equip Lutheran youth and young adults to be Gospel-motivated voices for life who set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, and in purity (1Timothy 4:11). Y4Life seeks to equip young people to be the voices for life in a culture that glorifies the choice of death. The need is especially true for teens, college students, and young adults who are bombarded with secular life styles that are contrary to God's wonderful plan for life. Currently, the Y4Life program is serving college campuses such as Concordia, Mequon. The mission grant funds will go directly towards expanding the initiative to include Lutheran high school campuses, such as our own Lutheran High School in Sheboygan. By training student leaders and providing ongoing mentorship and support for the individual campus ministries, they can raise their voices for life.



We are also thankful for those who continue to support our Mite Box Sundays. The total contributions for the grants throughout 2017 was \$921.76. The Mite Box itself has changed its design from the first one in 1942 to 2017. The beauty of each box is unique but the deeper beauty lies inside the box; funds to share the Gospel with all people in the world. If you'd like a small box to collect your "mites" throughout the month, they can be found on the table in the back of church next to the large Mite Box display on the last day of each month. Feel free to take one to collect your coins. Thank you for your support!

We thought you might enjoy some stories behind the Mite Box. An unusual contribution was found in a Mite Box in the 1970's: A 5-dollar gold piece, dated 1901! A coin dealer bought it for \$75, illustrating how LWML cherishes each and every dollar! In 1982, the home of an Arkansas woman was damaged in a tornado. Her Mite Box, although soaked with rain and collapsed around the coins, was still in the same place on her dresser. Not a penny was lost!

MITTEN TREE UPDATE

Bethany's Salvation Army Mitten Tree was again filled with mittens, gloves, hats, scarves, socks, jackets, and blankets for the less fortunate in our community. Together we collected 39 hats, 13 scarves, 18 pairs of gloves, 10 pairs of mittens, 4 pairs of slipper socks, 5 coats, and 6 blankets. Thank you to all who brought these gifts of love and concern for the needy. When they were dropped off at the Salvation Army they expressed their sincerest gratitude for these items that will help so many!

Mittens for next year: it has been discussed that we should donate the mittens earlier in the year so those in need can receive the items when it starts to get cold out. Because of that, we have decided to have a mitten "basket" instead of a tree and the basket will go out much earlier in the year (probably September or October). So, watch for mittens, hats, scarves etc. to go on sale at the end of this winter season! It's a great time to stock up! If you don't want to hang on to them until the end of the year, you are welcome to bring them to church and give to the church secretary to hold onto until we put the basket out. Thank you for your support!

THRIVENT CHOICE DOLLARS

As a Thrivent member with qualifying products, you are eligible to direct "Thrivent Choice Dollars" to Bethany Lutheran Church.

Thank you very much to those of you who have already directed funds to Bethany.

YOU STILL HAVE UNTIL MARCH 31, 2018 TO DIRECT YOUR CHOICE DOLLARS FOR 2017, OTHERWISE THESE FUNDS WILL BE LOST.

There are cards on the shelf near Pastor's office that will help you to direct Choice Dollars. You may call Thrivent at 1-800-847-4836 to check if you have Thrivent Choice funds available.

Any questions??? Please contact Karl Kaepler, Lynn Luebke, Mary Madden or Dave Prange.

THOSE SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE THE MONTH OF JANUARY 2018

Sunday, January 7

10:00 a.m.

w/Holy Communion

Elders: Gerry Luebke, Brian Faucher
Ushers: Group 2 – John Keller, Aiden Faucher,
Brian Faucher, Dan Fibiger
Acolyte: Grace Matte
Scripture Reader: Gale Litt
Altar Guild: Sue Prange, Cheryl Prepster, Lois Schmideler
Bulletin Folder: Joanie Schnettler

Sunday, January 14

10:00 a.m.

Elders: Steve Hazen, Nic Collins
Ushers: Group 3 – Doug Luecke, Ken Thompson,
Karl Rademacher, Ron Hummitzsch
Acolyte: Luke Matte
Scripture Reader: Lee Gumm
Altar Guild: Marilyn Kirchenwitz, Lynn Luebke
Bulletin Folder: Joanie Schnettler

Sunday, January 21

10:00 a.m.

w/Holy Communion

Elders: Todd Matte, Steve Hazen
Ushers: Group 4 – Dave & Sue Prange, Lexie Matte
Acolyte: Noah Fibiger
Scripture Reader: Sharon Werner
Altar Guild: Gale & Lynn Litt
Bulletin Folder: Joanie Schnettler

Sunday, January 28

10:00 a.m.

Elders: Gerry Luebke, Jim Madden
Ushers: Group 5 – Lee Gumm, Steve Marotz,
Victor Hazen
Acolyte: Thomas Yang
Scripture Reader: Barbara Strenger
Altar Guild: Shirley & Ray Ottman
Bulletin Folder: Joanie Schnettler

January 2018

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	<p>1</p> <p><i>HAPPY New Year</i> ★2018★</p>	2	3	<p>4</p> <p>7:15pm Dartball St. Paul, Sheb. @ Bethany</p>	5	6
<p>7</p> <p>8:45am Bible Study Sunday School</p> <p>10am Worship w/HC</p>	<p>8</p> <p>3:30pm Confirmation 5/6 grade</p> <p>6:30 Elders</p>	<p>9</p> <p>6pm Jubilate Ringers</p>	<p>10</p> <p>6pm Joy Choir</p>	11	12	13
<p>14</p> <p>8:45am Bible Study Sunday School</p> <p>10am Worship</p>	<p>15</p> <p>3:30pm Confirmation 5/6 grade</p> <p>5:45pm Bd of Ed 6:15pm Finance 7pm Council</p>	<p>16</p> <p>6pm Jubilate Ringers</p>	<p>17</p> <p>3:15pm Confirmation 6/7 grade</p> <p>6pm Joy Choir</p>	<p>18</p> <p>7:15pm Dartball Good Shepherd @ Bethany</p>	19	20
<p>21</p> <p>8:45am Bible Study Sunday School</p> <p>10am Worship w/HC</p>	<p>22</p> <p>3:30pm Confirmation 5/6 grade</p>	<p>23</p> <p>6pm Jubilate Ringers</p>	<p>24</p> <p>3:15pm Confirmation 6/7 grade</p> <p>6pm Joy Choir</p>	<p>25</p> <p>7:15pm Dartball St. Andrew @ Bethany</p>	26	27
<p>28</p> <p>8:45am Bible Study Sunday School</p> <p>10am Worship</p>	<p>29</p> <p>3:30pm Confirmation 5/6 grade</p>	<p>30</p> <p>6pm Jubilate Ringers</p>	<p>31</p> <p>3:15pm Confirmation 6/7 grade</p> <p>6pm Joy Choir</p>			