

PASTOR'S PAGE

Dear Christian Friends,

Over 30 years ago, God called me from data system engineering into the holy ministry. My best childhood friend, Jim Moschel, also a systems engineer, entered into police work. In the spring of 1993, he entered the Michigan State's Police Academy. At the time he was 15-17 years older than any of his fellow cadets. Upon graduation he worked for the Bloomfield Township Police Department. After being promoted to detective he was loaned out to the FBI's Financial Fraud division. There he worked until his retirement in May of this year. Every time he sees a retired serviceman, he always thanks him for their service.

The following letter that Jim wrote to me is one such encounter.

Hi Bob,

After this morning's 9:30 church service (12/10/2023) we were at our usual restaurant for breakfast when an elderly gentleman very slowly walked by with assistance. The gentleman was wearing a marine veteran cap. As he went by, I thanked him for his service. It was obvious he had difficulty speaking but he handed me the attached letter. After reading it, I asked his permission to photograph it. I was impressed by his testimony and thought I'd share it. ~Jim

"My name is Randall Gathman. In 1980 I enlisted in the U.S. Marines. I was sent to South Korea and participated in Team Spirit. At that time, I really thought I was a big and bad Marine who had it going on! But then at the age of twenty years old, I was involved in a terrible jeep accident which changed my life forever.

The jeep flipped over, end over end, four times and I was thrown out and very seriously injured. I was told the two Marines riding in the front seat were killed. I ended up going to four different Military hospitals including: South Korea, Philippines, Bethesda, Maryland, and St. Louis, Missouri. I was in a coma for four months and I came very close to death. My weight dropped to seventy pounds, and they told me my eyes were open and pupils were as big as a silver dollar. I was also told that many people never come out of this condition and stay in a vegetative state after that. But I believe that God Almighty spared me that existence.

As a result of the coma, I had to relearn everything all over again, such as how to walk, read, write, and feed myself. I was in a wheelchair for one year until I was able to walk again, but I never gave up hope of my future recovery.

I thank God every new day for the ability to walk with a cane, see with a partially blind eye, and to speak even though my vocal cords are partially paralyzed. I think it is so awesome how God pulls us through even the greatest tragedies and sets us on higher ground. Without Him life would be so hopeless. But with Him in my life each new day is a new opportunity to know the one and only true God the Father, His Son Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit of Truth and Righteousness and the many Heavenly Angels! Amen"

What a beautiful testimony! Though his body is mangled, partially blind, and partially mute. He shares the love of God through Christ. Randal sees every day as a new opportunity to share the Gospel. God the Holy Spirit has placed this man on the Rock of our Salvation, the Chief Cornerstone, the Chief capstone, Jesus Christ, this man's Savior. As we enter this New Year, I encourage you not to belittle your testimony to those around you. Be aware God is always working to bring those who don't know Him into His presence.

Take note, God is using you to bring others to Christ.

Have a blessed New Year,
Pastor Steele

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

1-4: Patrick Johnson
1-8: Audrey Nikisch
1-10: John Willadsen
1-11: Kandice Brooks
Kelly Paltzer

1-21: Brian Welsh
1-24: Mary Madden
1-26: Alicia Barthels
1-29: Zakary Willadsen



January Anniversaries

1-24: Tim & Megan Fibiger

Blessings to all that are celebrating this month!

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

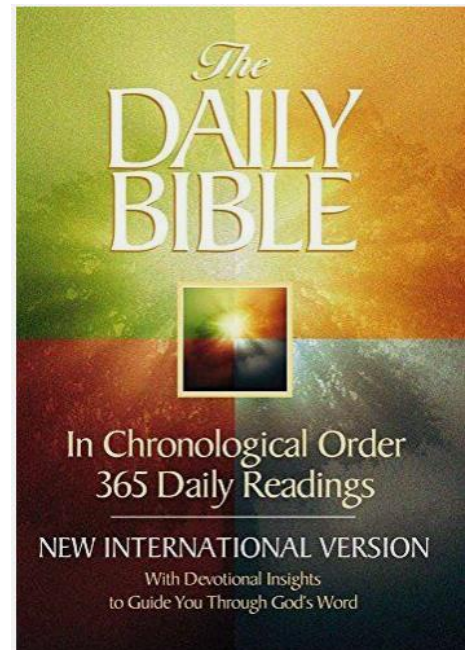


A 6-week Bible Study on the book of Esther will begin on January 3. The times offered will be Wednesdays at 6:00pm and Thursdays at 10:00am.

NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings and a blessed Christmas to you all! As I write this, I am winding down my last week of work for the year and looking ahead to the week off between Christmas and New Year's Day, when I get to spend time with family and friends, celebrating the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ. As I look back on 2023 and reflect on it, I appreciate all the blessings in my life, too many of which to count.

Many of us also look ahead and try to think of what we want to do different in the coming year. Some of us maybe even make a "New Year's resolution". I'll admit, I'm not one for making resolutions, like eating better, getting more exercise, etc. because it never goes farther than a few weeks. However, I'd like to share the resolution I made for 2023, which I *did* follow through on (probably for the first time in my life!). I read the Bible from cover to cover. What made it easy is that I did it using "The Daily Bible", which breaks it down into a short, daily reading that takes maybe 15 minutes a day. I'll be the first to admit, I am not a reader, at all, which made this accomplishment even more of a miracle. With the help of God, I stuck with it and made it through! Anyway, if you've always wanted to read it, but found it too overwhelming to get started, I would highly recommend this version! It's a great way to reaffirm your faith every day and grow closer to our loving Lord.



I hope you all have a safe and happy new year!

Yours in Christ,
Andy Fibiger

2024 BOARD MEMBERS

President: Andy Fibiger

Vice President: Todd Matte

Council Secretary: Julie Steele

Board of Elders: Shua Yang, Gerry Luebke, Lee Gumm, Steve Hazen

Board of Trustees: David Hasler, Dan Fibiger

Board of Finance: Steve Marotz, Derek MacKenzie

Board of Education: Dori Matte, Gina Fibiger, Megan Fibiger

Financial Secretary: Mary Ann Fibiger

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Thank you to all who serve Bethany!

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.ogt.org

CHARITIES OF THE MONTH FOR 2024

January/February – Orphan Grain Train

March/April – Lutheran Bible Translators

May/June - Vernacular Video Mission International (VMI)

July/August – Lutheran Deaf Mission Society

September/October - Good News Jail and Prison Ministry

November/December - Lutheran World Relief

CHARITY
OF THE
MONTH

To give to these charities, you can use your “Designated Offering” contribution envelopes.

Thank you for supporting these missions.



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. Any cancellations will also be announced on Facebook as well as our church website www.bethanylutherankohler.org



LOVE INC DISCOVERY BIBLE STUDY

Love INC is holding a 4-week Bible Study open to the public on Thursdays from 6-7pm starting on January 11. Discovery Bible Study is an opportunity to discover and understand God right where you are in your faith journey. Bible knowledge is not necessary. It is a question driven study which is what gives it its name, Discovery Bible Study. This type of Bible study is designed to educate and encourage seekers and believers to actively engage with God's Word in all ways. Ultimately, it offers an opportunity to contemplate the lessons from Bible passages so that you can find practical ways to apply them to your own life and circumstances. For more information or to register, call 920-783-6701 option 2 or visit loveincsheboygancounty.org

Can You Help Us Fill Blessing Bags?

Bethany is collecting items to fill Blessing Bags that will be given to the Community Café to be handed out to the homeless and those in need from our community.



About our Community Café

Sheboygan County Food Bank works with community partners to coordinate the Herb Kohler and Natalie Black Community Café at St. Luke United Methodist Church in Sheboygan over the lunch hours, Monday – Saturday. Anyone is welcome to stop by and enjoy a warm meal, coffee, and conversations with other community members.

What is a Blessing Bag?

Blessings Bags are gallon Ziploc bags filled with items that can be handed to a homeless person or a person that is in need that comes into the cafe. Below is a list of item suggestions that we are collecting to fill the bags. We are also looking for volunteers to help assemble the bags in February. Let Gina know if you are interested in helping. All donations can be placed in the basket in the lower narthex until February 11. Thank you for your support!

Blessing Bag Item Ideas

(travel sized items work best to fit into a gallon Ziploc bag):

- Thermal socks
- Gloves
- Hand warmers
- Toothpaste
- Toothbrush
- Deodorant
- Wipes
- Beef sticks
- Snack sized bags of crackers
- Granola bars
- Chapstick
- Bottled water



THOSE SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE THE MONTH OF JANUARY 2024

Sunday, January 7

10:00 a.m.

w/Holy Communion

Elder:	Steve Hazen
Ushers:	Ray & Shirley Ottman
Altar Guild:	Gina & Madison Fibiger
Scripture Reader:	Mary Ann Fibiger
Door Locker:	Patrick Johnson
Streaming:	Austin Fibiger

Sunday, January 14

10:00 a.m.

Elder:	Gerry Luebke
Ushers:	Hazen
Altar Guild:	Barb & Lee Gumm
Scripture Reader:	Steve Hazen
Door Locker:	Ken Thompson
Streaming:	Grace Matte

Sunday, January 21

10:00 a.m.

w/Holy Communion

Elder:	Lee Gumm
Ushers:	Matte
Acolyte:	Katelynn Regutis
Altar Guild:	Lynn & Gerry Luebke
Scripture Reader:	Sharon Werner
Door Locker:	Andy Fibiger
Streaming:	Madison Fibiger

Sunday, January 28

10:00 a.m.

Elder:	Shua Yang
Ushers:	Steve & Diane Marotz
Altar Guild:	Barb & Karl Kaepler
Scripture Reader:	Lee Gumm
Door Locker:	Dan Fibiger
Streaming:	Noah Fibiger



JANUARY 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	01	02 6:30pm Elders	03 7pm Bible Study	04 10am Bible Study 7:15pm Dartball (away)	05	06
07 8:45am Sunday School & Confirmation 10am Worship w/HC	08 6:15pm Finance 7pm Council	09	10 7pm Bible Study	11 10am Bible Study 7:15pm Dartball (away)	12	13
14 8:45am Sunday School & Confirmation 10am Worship	15	16	17 7pm Bible Study	18 10am Bible Study 7:15pm Dartball (away)	19	20
21 8:45am Sunday School & Confirmation 10am Worship w/HC	22	23	24 7pm Bible Study	25 10am Bible Study	26	27
28 8:45am Sunday School & Confirmation 10am Worship	29	30	31 7pm Bible Study			