

## PASTOR'S PAGE

### Promises Made Promises Kept

*Genesis 22:1ff "After these things God tested Abraham and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."*

We are entering the political season. A famous phrase used by incumbents are "Promise Made Promise Kept!" However, the challenger begins to list all the promises made that weren't kept...Many who make promises are sincere in their desire to keep them. But, whether in government, business, or any other enterprise, almost all human beings have failed to deliver on promises at one time or another. There is plenty of blame for failing to keep promises—something unexpected happens, an unforeseen obstacle is encountered, a delivery is not made on time, there is an accident, the power fails, or other things happen that are out of our control, making it difficult or impossible to keep the promise we made.

From our text, we understand how one holds to the promise God establishes. We see in Abraham that He holds to God's promise. "...God tested Abraham and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." The promised one is to be sacrificed. First impression, God is going to break His promise.

God made a promise to Abraham while living in Haran. "Your name will be great, a great nation will come from you, and you will be a blessing for the entire world. (Gen. 12:1-3)" You need an heir. Mind you Abraham was 75 years of age and Sarah was 65 years of age. Physically and biologically, both were beyond their years...God is the "Promise Keeper."

It took 25 years for God's promise to be kept. Through those years Abraham and Sarah failed miserably in believing in that promise. Then when Abraham was 100 and Sarah 90, God fulfilled His promise in the birth of Isaac. Promises made...Promise kept. God never fails.

Now God's test...take your son your only son and sacrifice him in the region of Moriah. After a 3-day journey, Abraham sees his final destination. He orders the men with him to stay behind. Abraham makes this statement. "Stay here with the donkey; I and the boy will go over there and worship and come again to you." As Abraham and Isaac go on...Isaac speaks up: "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." He said, "Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" Abraham said, "God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son." So, they both went together. What does Abraham trust in?

In the very moment that Abraham raises his knife to strike...What does Abraham believe. God's promises will be fulfilled through Isaac. But he's going to kill Isaac...Again, what does Abraham believe...He believes in the "Promise Keeper". He believes this: "By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son, of whom it was said, "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named." He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back. (Hebrews 11:17-19)"

We are terrible "Promise Keepers." Marriages used to be the bedrock of our society. Now over 50% end in divorce. The marriage vow is our biggest promise that we make. Today many avoid marriage because of making and keeping that promise. We make many smaller, but important promises, and we break them. Promises are broken between siblings, friends, and co-workers. We are very unfaithful as "Promise Keepers". But God made a promise to every one of us. It is seen in the "Promise Kept" with Abraham.

Abraham's test is a foreshadowing of what our Heavenly Father does through Christ. During lent we relive again that God promised from the seed of the woman, Satan will be crushed. Yes, God's Son, His only Son, would be pierced by Satan's fangs, receive sins poison, die by crucifixion, and be buried in a garden's tomb. However, 3 days later, He would rise from the dead. Sin, eternal death, and Satan were destroyed at the cross and through the empty tomb. God's promise: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him..." Our gracious God is a God of fulfillment. He's the perfect "Promise Keeper." Promises made...Promises Kept.

God makes a promise to all His baptized children. Yes, you've failed in keeping promises and other sins, but God's one and only Son, Jesus, has paid for all the broken promises. Throughout our lives we will continue to break promises. However, by God keeping His promise, we have a remedy. It is found in Jesus life, passion, death and Easter resurrection.

Lord's Blessing on your Lenten Journey  
Pastor Steele

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## **NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT**

I hope everyone is enjoying this unseasonably warm weather lately, I sure am! This is quite a change from last year's weather, when we had a snowstorm that caused us to miss our Ash Wednesday service and first soup supper for the Lenten season. Thankfully, we've been able to kick off this year's Lenten season with a delicious soup supper and Ash Wednesday service. I encourage everyone to attend the Wednesday evening Lent activities, starting with the soup suppers that begin at 5:00 pm and the services to follow at 6:00 pm. I'd like to extend my sincere thanks to those who have volunteered to help with the suppers and for the delicious soups that they prepared for us all to enjoy. They've all been very good!

In other news, there is going to be a personnel change on the church council. Our appointed treasurer, Tim Fibiger, has requested assistance with doing the weekly bookkeeping and payroll duties, as it turned out to be a much bigger time commitment than anticipated, which was creating an unhealthy work-life balance for him. That said, the council voted to increase the treasurer budget by \$3,900 to allow for hiring an outside accountant to do our payroll and bookkeeping. The new accountant's name is Renee Mitchell and she is a CPA that runs her own business called RCM Consulting, LLC. She has a lot of experience with churches and is currently doing this same work for a couple of other churches in the area, so we felt she would be a great fit. Her price was very competitive as well. I'd like to welcome Renee as well as thank Tim for his time and dedication in helping learn our accounting system so quickly and ensuring a seamless transition between him and Kelly. Tim will continue to serve on the council as the treasurer in a volunteer capacity to continue to report to the council and analyze our finances with the reports that Renee will provide. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns about this, but I am confident we will be in very good hands with Renee.

Yours in Christ,  
Andy Fibiger

## **MARCH BIRTHDAYS**

3-1: Joanne Stangel  
Milly Menzer  
3-8: Ivan Hazen  
Alaric Hazen  
3-09: Elanore Faucher  
3-11: William Paltzer



3-20: Joanie Schnettler  
3-22: Shirley Ottman  
3-23: Jerry Sabrowsky  
3-24: Barbara Vogt  
3-25: Katelyn Regutis

3-26: Vicki Lindstrom  
3-29: Rev Robert Steele

## **MARCH ANNIVERSARIES**

3-03: Bill & Judi Strenger



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.

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## **\*\*\*DEADLINE TO DIRECT THRIVENT CHOICE DOLLARS\*\*\***

**MARCH 31st IS THE DEADLINE TO DIRECT YOUR CHOICE DOLLARS FROM 2023, OTHERWISE THESE FUNDS WILL BE LOST.**

All Thrivent members at Bethany please remember to direct your "Thrivent Choice Dollars" to Bethany Lutheran Church if you have not already done so.

Thrivent cards on the shelf near Pastors office will help guide you. If you are unsure if you have funds available to direct just call 1-800-847-4836 to check.

Thanks to those who have already directed their dollars. These dollars help fund programs, events and missions for Bethany.



## **MARCH/APRIL CHARITY OF THE MONTH**

Use your Designated Offering envelopes during the months of March and April to support **Lutheran Bible Translators**. The mission of Lutheran Bible Translators is to help bring people to faith in Jesus Christ by making the Word of God available to those who do not yet have it in the language of their hearts. To learn more about LBT, visit their website at [www.lbt.org](http://www.lbt.org)



## **DON'T BE LATE FOR CHURCH!!**

Daylight Savings is Sunday, March 10.  
Don't forget to change your clock one hour ahead on Saturday night.

## LENT AND HOLY WEEK WORSHIP

We continue our Lenten Pulpit exchange in March with Holy Week following. The remaining schedule is as follows:

### Midweek Services

March 6 – Pastor Jim Schulz (Our Savior, Sheb.)  
March 13 – Pastor Bryan Osladil (Our Redeemer, Sheb.)  
March 20 – Pastor Matthew Shive (St. Paul, Sheb.)

### Holy Week

March 24 – Palm Sunday at 10:00am  
March 28 – Maundy Thursday at 6:00pm w/Holy Communion  
March 29 – Good Friday at 1:00pm and 6:00pm  
March 31 – Easter Worship at 10:00am w/Holy Communion



## LENTEN SOUP SUPPERS

Please join us prior to each Midweek Lenten Service beginning at 5:00pm for our Lenten Soup Suppers. Enjoy homemade soups and fellowship. A free will offering will be taken each week to benefit a different cause.

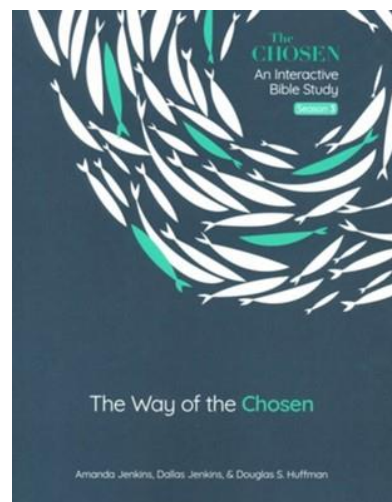


### HELP NEEDED!

Please take a look at the sign-up sheets in the back of church and consider helping. We are in need of people to help serve, clean up, and donate desserts. Thank you to those who have already volunteered to help!

## SPRING BIBLE STUDY BEGINNING IN APRIL

Pastor Steele will be leading a Bible Study on The Chosen Season 3. The times will be Wednesdays at 6:30pm and Thursdays at 10:00am. It will begin on April 17/18 and run for 8 weeks. If you'd like to purchase the DVD and Bible Study book, they are available on Amazon.com. The Chosen Season 3 DVD - \$13.99 and The Way of the Chosen (Volume 3) Bible Study Series - \$15.98. The Chosen series 3 is also available to watch for free on Amazon Prime Video if you subscribe to that as well as online at: <https://watch.thechosen.tv/> If you have any questions, please call the church office.



## THOSE SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE THE MONTH OF MARCH 2024

**Sunday, March 3**  
**10:00 a.m.**  
w/Holy Communion

Elder:  
Ushers:  
Altar Guild:  
Scripture Reader:  
Door Locker:  
Streaming:

Gerry Luebke  
Steve & Diane Marotz  
Gina & Madison Fibiger  
Lee Gumm  
Ken Thompson  
Fibigers

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**Wednesday, March 6**  
**6:00 p.m.**

Elder:  
Ushers:  
Streaming:

Andy Fibiger  
Ken Thompson & Bob Kuehlmann  
Todd Matte

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**Sunday, March 10**  
**10:00 a.m.**

Elder:  
Ushers:  
Altar Guild:  
Scripture Reader:  
Door Locker:  
Streaming:

Todd Matte  
Dave & Sue Prange  
Lynn & Gerry Luebke  
Mary Ann Fibiger  
Andy Fibiger  
Fibigers

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**Wednesday, March 13**  
**6:00 p.m.**

Elder:  
Ushers:  
Streaming:

Lee Gumm  
Jerry Sabrowsky, Dan Fibiger  
Fibigers

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**Sunday, March 17**  
**10:00 a.m.**  
w/Holy Communion

Elder:  
Ushers:  
Altar Guild:  
Scripture Reader:  
Door Locker:  
Streaming:

Shua Yang  
Fibigers  
Barb & Lee Gumm  
Thomas Yang  
Dan Fibiger  
Thomas Yang

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**Wednesday, March 20**  
**6:00 p.m.**

Elder:  
Ushers:  
Streaming:

Steve Hazen  
Ray & Shirley Ottman  
Fibigers

**Sunday, March 24**  
**10:00 a.m.**

Elder:  
Ushers:  
Altar Guild:  
Scripture Reader:  
Door Locker:  
Streaming:

Andy Fibiger  
Mattes  
Rachel Johnson & Julie Steele  
Sharon Werner  
Diane Marotz  
Grace Matte

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**Maundy Thurs, March 28**  
**6:00 p.m.**  
w/Holy Communion

Elder:  
Ushers:  
Altar Guild:  
Streaming:

Gerry Luebke  
Steve & Alaric Hazen  
Sue & Dave Prange

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**Good Friday, March 29**  
**1:00p.m. and 6:00 p.m.**

Elder  
Ushers:  
Streaming:

1:00pm – Todd Matte  
6:00pm – Lee Gumm  
1:00pm – Steve & Diane Marotz  
6:00pm – Thompson & Kuehlmann  
1:00pm – Grace Matte  
6:00pm – Fibigers

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**Easter Sun, March 31**  
**10:00 a.m.**  
w/Holy Communion

Elder:  
Ushers:  
Acolyte:  
Altar Guild:  
Scripture Reader:  
Door Locker:  
Streaming:

Shua Yang  
Jerry Sabrowsky & Dan Fibiger  
Katelyn Regutis  
Shirley & Ray Ottman  
Steve Hazen  
Ryan Brooks  
Thomas Yang



# MARCH 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					01	02
03 8:45am Sunday School & Confirmation 10am Worship w/HC	04 6:30pm Elders	05	06 5pm Soup Supper 6pm Midweek Lent Service	07	08	09  <b>Daylight Savings</b>
10 8:45am Sunday School & Confirmation 10am Worship	11 6:15pm Finance 7pm Council	12	13 5pm Soup Supper 6pm Midweek Lent Service	14	15	16
17 8:45am Sunday School & Confirmation 10am Worship w/HC	18	19	20 5pm Soup Supper 6pm Midweek Lent Service	21	22	23
24 8:45am Sunday School & Confirmation 10am Worship <b>Palm Sunday</b>	25	26	27	28 6pm Maundy Thursday Service w/HC	29 1pm & 6pm Good Friday Service	30
31 10am Easter Worship w/HC						