

VACANCY PASTOR'S PAGE

Shortly after this article is printed absentee voting by will have already begun in Wisconsin. What a great gift God has given to us in allowing us to consider and choose for ourselves who will lead us in our governments. He gave this gift to the Israelites for their local governments in Deuteronomy 1:13: **“Choose some wise, understanding and respected men from each of your tribes, and I will set them over you.”**

As sinful human beings we don't always choose the wisest and best to lead us. We often choose people who are unable or unwilling to fill their duties. When we have had good and honest leaders who are willing to serve the people this country has thrived.

Proverbs 14:34: “Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin condemns any people.”

Proverbs 29:2: “When the righteous thrive, the people rejoice; when the wicked rule, the people groan.”

Even the best of leaders though are still sinners. The Lord warned the Israelites to not ask for a King because he would love power and wealth and take more and more for himself. There is a natural inclination on our part to love ourselves first and our neighbors less and to exalt ourselves over others. Even when they are enacting policy or law for the best of intentions it often goes awry.

Missouri Synod Lutherans especially have always been very wary of the State. Our existence as a Synod can be traced to Governmental intrusion on matters of faith. On September 27th, 1817, King Ferdinand William III ordered the Lutheran liturgy of communion to be abandoned in favor of the Reformed to force the two church bodies into one church. If any Lutheran pastors were caught using the Lutheran liturgy they were imprisoned and defrocked. Seeing this as too much to bear and violating their conscience the Lutherans set sail for Perry County Missouri so that they could worship God the way their conscience said was right and to train their children to do the same.

The “Brief Statement of doctrinal position” of 1932 says this: **We condemn the policy of those who would have the power of the State employed "in the interest of the Church" and who thus turn the Church into a secular dominion; as also of those who, aiming to govern the State by the Word of God, seek to turn the State into a Church.**

As Christians we have a King who reigns over us and all the earth. He gives us what we need for this body and life through the governments of our homes where father and mother provide for the house and the state to keep the peace and allow people to live in peace and quietness.

The church is given to us by God to preach God's Word that sinners would be saved. The church has not been given to us by God to be the state and wherever the church lays aside the preaching and Sacraments to try to be the state she almost always ends up in error. Faith can never be imposed on a person by force of might. It is to be believed.

Likewise, the State should never try to impose any doctrine on people with the power of laws and the police. We may like the idea of the Bible being taught in schools but who will teach it? How will they teach it? Are we to have a Buddhist teaching the Bible to our children? Or should we leave the teaching to the Church? The state should stay out of all matters of religion so that the Gospel may be freely preached to sinners to free them from the tyranny of sin, death, and the devil. Only by preaching are consciences given peace with God. The state cannot impose forgiveness, nor should it impose any doctrine that robs our consciences of that peace.

Also, the state should not impose any teaching that is contrary to our ability to lead peaceful lives with integrity. We don't want to be told we have to conform to laws that are against God and His will. Daniel lived in a society that was clearly against God and he had to suffer for his faithfulness. If it were to come to that so would we willingly suffer as we commend our lives to God and not to an earthly kingdom or man. We would remember that the church has spent a large part of her existence worshipping not on padded pews but in catacombs to escape governmental intrusion.

So, if you have read all of this to get to the point where I tell you who to vote for, sorry, I am not going to do that. All the candidates share one defining trait, they are all sinners. They all see government as the solution to our problem but none of them will save us or deliver us what we really need. We have One King who rules overall and He is bringing us home to be with Him forever. None of the candidates will give us that. So, vote freely with your conscience as your guide and rest.

Pastor Johnson

ADULT BIBLE STUDY

The Prophecy of Isaiah: Herald of the Messiah – Led by Pastor Johnson

*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given,
and the government will be on His shoulders.
And He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of
His government and peace there will be no end.
He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it with justice and
righteousness from that time on and forever.
The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.*

Isaiah 9:6-7



The prophet Isaiah was called to deliver God's Word in a very difficult time for the nation of Israel. She had suffered for many years under Kings who were actively attempting to lead people away from God. They set up false priests, false idols, false altars and false worship. Many of the people turned away from God and followed where the leaders of Israel told them to go. God is raising up enemies of Israel to humble them and bring them to repentance. God is sending Isaiah to warn the Israelites to turn from their evil, but he is also going to bring them the promise of the Messiah to save them.

Isaiah's prophecy is filled with warning but also hope and deliverance. It tells us of the Christ child and shows us how he will suffer and through his suffering brings us out of sin and the shadow of death into a glorious future.

This fall we will engage ourselves with this book of prophecy in our study time. We will hear of the warnings of God that still apply to us today and we will be reminded of the wonderful work of Jesus for us. We will answer questions and grow together in faith and hope. Please join us as much as you can.

**At Bethany Tuesday mornings at 10am starting September 12
(will not meet on the first Thursday of the month)**



CATECHISM/CONFIRMATION CLASS 2024-25

The new year of catechism is about to start. Catechism is the way that we teach the young people how to confess their own faith. It is a time of spiritual growth in faith, hope, and love. It is a binding time for the children and pastor as he learns about their lives and answers their questions.

Pastor Johnson will be switching from a two-year class to a three-year class to allow time to learn more topics and to get deeper into God's Word together. While he serves as Bethany's vacancy Pastor, he will combine his Immanuel students with any Bethany children that would like to participate. The first class is a parent information night and acolyte training that will be on **September 11th at 4:30pm** in the school building education room at Immanuel Lutheran Church (enter through the school doors on Illinois Ave.). At this meeting we will introduce ourselves and go over the teaching plan for the years.

This class is for children ages 11-14 who have not yet been confirmed and is open to anyone who needs to learn more about Jesus and what it means to be a Christian who is Lutheran. If you know someone who should be included, (i.e. grandchildren, nieces, nephews, neighbors, etc.) please let Pastor Johnson know and he will gladly include them.

NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

September will soon be here, and all you parents know what that means...the new school year begins! As we look forward to sending our kids back to school, I hope all the families with school age children in our congregation will consider sending their children to Sunday School this fall, which begins on September 8th. Learning the Bible stories and sharing the message of Jesus with our young ones is important to setting the groundwork for lifelong faith. Our teachers always have a great program. If you're interested in helping, that would be great! Talk to Gina if you are interested. I hope to see a full classroom this year! Those of you with grandkids...bring them, too! Any and all children are welcome!

I'd like to extend my sincere thanks to those of you who took the time to fill out the congregational self-study survey for the call committee. This will provide valuable feedback and give us a good guideline on what we should be looking for in a new pastor. The next step is to compile the results and provide some thoughtful answers to the questions within the survey. We plan to have that done by September 9th, at which time the call committee will use the compiled answers to prepare the final paperwork that we send to synod. The plan is to have that sent in before September 30. After that, we wait for them to provide us with a list of pastors that we are able to call.

Just to set some fair expectations for our new pastor...no pastor is likely going to miraculously increase our membership by double digit percentages in the next one, three, or maybe even five years and do it alone. Outreach is everyone's responsibility to get the word out by inviting family, friends, and neighbors to our church services. If we want to see our membership grow, it starts with all of us.

Yours in Christ,
Andy Fibiger

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

9-04: Kathy Goldman
9-05: Kathryn Miller
Sue Sholten
9-07: Doug Luecke
9-11: Steve Hazen
9-13: Marc Luecke
9-14: Lisa Kraus
9-16: Bob Wuerzberger



9-17: Gerry Luebke
9-20: Dane Madson
9-23: Andy Fibiger
Lee Gumm
9-26: Shelby Werner
Tamra O'Keefe
9-27: Gary Froh

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

9-14: John & Lisa Willadsen
9-15: Dan & Summer Menzer
9-19: Bruce & Cindy Fisher
9-21: Gerry & Lynn Luebke
9-30: Shua & KaoKalia Yang



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.



SUNDAY SCHOOL

All children ages 3 years – 8th grade are invited to join our Sunday School. We meet every Sunday at 8:45am beginning on Sunday, September 8th. You do not need to be a member of the church to attend. All are welcome. This year we will be studying the "Wonderous Words of Water". Isaiah 43:2 says, "When you pass

through the waters, I will be with you". We will spend this year studying the many water stories of the Bible with crafts, science experiments, and games, all while learning about God's love for us.

Please fill out the below registration form and drop it off in the church office, in the Sunday School Superintendent mailbox in the communication room at church or you can email it to info@blckohler.com.

2024-25 Bethany Sunday School Registration

Child's Name: _____

Child's Grade: _____

Child's Birthdate: _____

Does your child have any allergies? If so, please list: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone (if applicable): _____

Mother's Name: _____

Mother's Cell Phone: _____

Father's Name: _____

Father's Cell Phone: _____

Primary Email Address (can be more than one)
(Used for important reminders and occasional updates)

Do you give permission for your child to be photographed/filmed? (photos may be used for educational and promotional purposes or publicly distributed printed materials (ie. Bethany brochures), within Bethany's facility (ie. Bulletin boards and narthex tv), or online including our Website or Facebook page. Understand that global access to the internet does not allow us to control who may access the photos but know that names will NEVER be used.

Yes

No



SUNDAY SCHOOL KICK OFF COFFEE FELLOWSHIP

To celebrate the start of a new year, the Sunday School will be hosting a coffee fellowship table after the service on September 8th. A free will offering will be collected and will go towards the Sunday School mission "Operation Christmas Child".

SEPTEMBER ADOPT-A-BAG FOOD DRIVE

Shopping bags will be available soon in the lower narthex for you to take and fill with food for the Sheboygan Falls Area Food Pantry. Bring your filled bag back to church any time during the month of September. The Food Pantry serves Sheboygan Falls, Kohler, Howards Grove and Oostburg. Thank you for your support!



SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER MISSION OF THE MONTH Good News Jail & Prison Ministry

During the months of September and October, any money received in your "Designated Offering" contribution envelope, will go to **Good News Jail and Prison Ministry** – Transforming lives behind bars here and around the world. By bringing the Holy Gospel to inmates, they are reaching those others may have forgotten. To learn more about Good News, visit their website at www.goodnewsjail.org



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!

What: Bingo!

Where: Bethany Fellowship Hall

When: Sunday, October 6

Time: 11:00am (following the church service)

Cost: A free will offering will be collected and given to a local charity.

Details: Head down to the fellowship hall after church for a light lunch followed by Bingo! Win prizes and enjoy fun and fellowship. Everyone is welcome and bring a friend!

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

Sunday, September 1

10:00 a.m.

w/Holy Communion

Elder:	Gerry Luebke
Ushers:	Steve & Diane Marotz
Altar Guild:	Sue & Dave Prange
Scripture Reader:	Mary Ann Fibiger
Door Locker:	Ken Thompson
Streaming:	Todd Matte

Sunday, September 8

10:00 a.m.

Elder:	Steve Hazen
Ushers:	Ken Thompson, Bob Kuehlman
Altar Guild:	Julie Steele, Rachel Johnson
Scripture Reader:	Todd Matte
Door Locker:	Andy Fibiger
Streaming:	Noah Fibiger

Sunday, September 15

10:00 a.m.

w/Holy Communion

Elder:	Andy Fibiger
Ushers:	Jerry Sabrowsky, Dan Fibiger
Altar Guild:	Liz & Ken Buesing
Scripture Reader:	Steve Hazen
Door Locker:	Dan Fibiger
Streaming:	Steve Perry

Sunday, September 22

10:00 a.m.

Elder:	Shua Yang
Ushers:	Fibigers
Altar Guild:	Shirley & Ray Ottman
Scripture Reader:	Sharon Werner
Door Locker:	Diane Marotz
Streaming:	Madison Fibiger

Sunday, September 29

10:00 a.m.

w/Holy Communion

Elder:	Steve Hazen
Ushers:	Ray & Shirley Ottman
Altar Guild:	Lynn & Gerry Luebke
Scripture Reader:	Mary Ann Fibiger
Door Locker:	Ryan Brooks
Streaming:	Andy Fibiger

SEPTEMBER 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
01 10am Worship w/HC (Pastor Scheblein)	02 Office Closed Labor Day	03	04	05	06	07
08 8:45am Sunday School 10am Worship (Pastor King) 11am Coffee Fellowship	09	10 6pm Elders 7pm Council	11	12 10am Bible Study	13	14
15 8:45am Sunday School 10am Worship w/HC (Pastor King)	16	17	18	19 10am Bible Study	20	21
22 8:45am Sunday School 10am Worship (Pastor Krause)	23	24	25	26 10am Bible Study	27	28
29 8:45am Sunday School 10am Worship w/HC (Pastor Schaetzle)	30					