

TO BRING GOD'S GRACE AND LOVE TO EACH OTHER
AND TO THE WORLD

THE LIGHT



Pastor's Notes

December 2022

Lebanon Evangelical Lutheran Church

*A Congregation of the North/West Lower
Michigan Synod, of the ELCA
Craig Satterlee, Bishop
Elizabeth Eaton, Presiding Bishop*

1101 S. Mears Avenue
Whitehall, MI 49461
(231) 893-5745

Rev. Douglas M. Ogden

Sunday Morning Worship
10:15 am in person
YouTube Worship on the Web

Office Hours
Please contact the church office for
current hours

Newsletter Editor &
Bulletin Announcements
Margaret Everling

Church Council

Meg Eaton	Cheri Crouch
Brian Jaekel	Scott Keller
Laura Hollister	Sarah Schmalz
Wietse Schaafsma	

**"We are baptized members of God's
Church, forgiven and set free by grace
through faith.**

www.lebanonlutheranchurch.com

Facebook: Lebanon Lutheran Church
(ELCA)

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ADVENT

"The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee"

On December 7, the hopes and fears of Ambrose, Bishop of Milan are remembered : Ambrose was born in Trier, Germany in 340 AD, declared a Bishop in 374 AD, but first they had to baptize him; to escape the task, he had for a week!

On December 14, the hopes and fears of John of the Cross are remembered . Born in Spain : John wrote of "the dark night of the soul," in which God is experienced most profoundly

"let my eyes see your face
you are the only light."

On December 21, one day after her commemoration day, the hopes and fears of Katharina Von Bora Luther are remembered. Born in 1499 in Germany, she entered a convent at 10 years old, but once freed, and thanks to her skills at managing Luther's extensive household in Wittenberg, part farm, part hotel, part brewery, art seminary, Katy made the Reformation possible.

We remember these hopes and fears on Wednesdays during Advent Vespers at 7:15pm. I hope you'll be able to join us. Just in case you can't, you can remember these, and all the hopes and fears we all share, that are met in Advent.

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors
in many and various ways,
but now in these days God has
spoken to us by a Son.

Hebrews 1:1

The 2nd reading of Christmas Eve

Saturday, December 24 at 6:30 pm.

Pastor Ogden



December 2022
Fund of the Month
Worship and Music

THE Wonder OF CHRISTMAS

Websites of Interest

www.lebanonlutheranchurch.com

www.mittensynod.org

www.elca.org

www.whitelakescouting.com

www.whitelakechorale.com

www.hopescarves.org

LivingLutheran.org.

www.samaritas.org

Suicide Hotline 1-800-273TALK.org
[www.co.muskegon.mi.us/cmh suicide_prevention](http://www.co.muskegon.mi.us/cmh_suicide_prevention)

Every Woman's Place 231-722-3333 or
www.everywomansplace.org

The Trevor Project 1-866-488-7386

The Trevor Project is the world's largest suicide prevention and crisis intervention organization for LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning) young people.



**North/West Lower
Michigan Synod**

**P.O. Box 517
Dewitt, MI 48820**

**517-321-5066
mittensynod.org**

In this Issue:

Ten Things the Bishop Cannot Do for You

Grants for Mission and Ministry

Adult Theological Education

Upcoming Events

Congregations in Transition

Ten Things the Bishop Cannot Do for You

It's nothing personal, but there are just some things I cannot do for you. Since I'm asked a lot, here are ten of the most common ones. So, please, stop asking! 🙏

1. I cannot close your church. Closing a congregation requires a 2/3 vote of the congregation at a legally called congregational meeting. Of course, I also cannot save your church. I do not have the authority or resources to keep congregations going perpetually.
2. I cannot order a congregation to partner with your church. Been there, done that. Doesn't work. I can advise, recommend, cajole, predict, even beg. But partnering is the congregation's decision. We have found that most congregations would rather die than partner because of deep hurts and long histories that pre-date my time in this synod.
3. I cannot take a congregation's assets, including the building. As long as the congregation is a congregation, they determine what happens with their things. Of course, if the congregation ceases to exist or is unwilling or unable to dispose of its assets, that responsibility falls to the Synod. The bishop also has a responsibility to warn the congregation if they are disposing their assets in ways that are inappropriate or unlawful. For example, the 15 remaining members cannot divide the congregation's remaining \$200,000 among themselves and take it home—not without telling the IRS. Money given for the ministry of Jesus should be used for the ministry of Jesus.
4. I cannot force a congregation to take a pastor. And pastors, I cannot force a congregation to take you, no matter how much the Holy Spirit has told you you're supposed to be there. Pastors are called by a 2/3 vote of the congregation at a legally called meeting of the congregation. The bishop's role is to facilitate a call process and attest that the congregation has followed a legitimate call process. This means, for example, that three members of a congregation cannot hire their cousin to be their pastor.
5. I cannot order a pastor to go to your church. Some of us remember a time when there were more pastors than calls and we pretty much went where we were told. The Church has endeavored to become more sensitive to pastors' preferences and the number of available full-time calls gives pastors plenty of available options. Despite what you may think, I do not have a waiting room full of pastors ready to be sent where I send them.
6. I cannot fire a pastor. Pastors are not at-will employees. Terminating a pastoral call requires a 2/3 vote of the congregation at a legally called congregational meeting after a consulting process with the bishop. Oh, and Bishop Eaton cannot fire me.
7. I cannot ordain someone just because I like them. I can only ordain people who have fulfilled a whole bunch of criteria (ask a seminarian) including earning a Master of Divinity degree, successfully completing a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education and a year of internship, being recommended for ordination by a seminary faculty and approved for ordination by the Synod Candidacy Committee, and receiving and accepting a call from a congregation. Even Synodically Authorized Ministry has changed.

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Rather than *ministers*, the focus is on *ministries* (congregations that cannot secure a pastor and are either ethnically specific, distant from another ELCA congregation or full communion partner, or are so vital to their community that the community would be diminished if they were not there). Ministers serve in one specific place for as long as there is a need, normally one year, after which they are strongly encouraged to enter into candidacy and seek ordination. I have not implemented these changes out of respect for our SAMs; however, the time will come when this Synod will need to align with the Church and I do not believe it faithful on my part to leave that work to the next bishop.

8. I cannot give a congregation money just because they ask and I want to. Some of us joke about the mythical safe in the Synod Office containing the millions of dollars raised for the Center for Mission and Ministry. While it would be nice, it doesn't exist. The Synod Council recommends and the Synod Assembly approves the budget. I lack both the latitude and the inclination to steal from Peter to pay Paul. Besides, I suspect Rebecca Bossenbroek, Dan Carter, Sandy Schlesinger, and our auditors would have something to say if I tried.
9. I cannot unilaterally undo Synod Assembly resolutions and ELCA Social Statements. In fact, I'm to take them seriously. For example, when the Assembly passed a resolution about climate change and reducing our carbon footprint, the Synod is required to take this work seriously, and that has very real implications for our ministry. Additionally, I cannot make our Church either pro-life or pro-choice; neither can Bishop Eaton. Since I represent the Church, my personal convictions get subordinated to the Church's teachings. However, I recently learned that although I am the presiding officer at a synod assembly, I can speak to resolutions that I believe conflict with things like the Lutheran Confessions because I am the Synod's pastor. So you can expect me to find ways to do this in the future, though not from the podium.
10. I cannot stop loving you, praying for you, forgiving you, and trying my best to help you, regardless of what you think of me. It comes with the job. When I was installed as your bishop, I was asked, "Will you love, serve, and pray for God's people, ...?" I said I would and I asked God to help me. Truth be told, I am not always pleased with where loving, serving, and praying for you gets me. But I will not stop.

Please watch for my Thanksgiving greeting on Thanksgiving Day!

The Rev. Craig Alan Satterlee, Ph.D., Bishop

Prayer Concerns

It is an important part of our ministry to be praying constantly for one another. We add names to the prayer list with consent in order to maintain privacy and confidentiality. This month in your prayers, please remember:



Prayers for those who are homebound:

Our Minister

Helen Bartlett, at home
Mary Bernhardt, at Robinswood Assisted Living #115 (Kay Snell)
Erma Hinze, with health concerns
Marlene Holmstrom, at home
Elaine Liska, at White Lake Assisted Living - Whitehall
Ruth Nurmi, with health concerns
Nancy Peterson, at Heartland , Room #405 B
Bernie Weidner, at Sanctuary of the Oaks. (Danielle Jacobs)
Marty Windbacher, at home

Special Prayer Concerns:

Cindy Albert, with health concerns
Jennifer Snowden Bossi, 34, (Ardy Bulthouse's granddaughter) diagnosed with a rare form of cancer.
Lucas Carlson, (Terry and Mary Beekmans grandson) for new treatment.
Diane, (friend of Cheri Crouch) diagnosed with cancer.
Cora Hendrick, (Curt Crouch's mother) diagnosed with cancer
Donna Jacobs, (Don Jacobs mother) with kidney and heart issues
Lauren Kerkstra, (Darrel and Jeanette Otto's granddaughter), recovering slowly, able to walk and take commands. Remains non-verbal .
Donna Knoth, with heart issues.
Jeff Knoth, recently diagnosed with cancer
Amy Jean Knorr, (Brian Holmblades aunt in Tucson) turns 106 years old on November 28.
Judy Kurtz, with health concerns
Mary, (Meg Eatons mother) with health concerns.
Dwight Mead (Paula Moreau's brother-in-law), non-hodgkin lymphoma mantel type (stage four).
Shirley, (friend of Barb Aardema) had stem cell replacement in early May and is working through the healing process
Bob Palmatter (Cindy Albert's brother), with breathing difficulties.
Renee, (friend of Barb Aardema)
Roger Silk, with health issues.
Ron, (Friend of Doug Aardema), with health concerns.
Jan Troeger, (Cindy Albert's sister), suffered a stroke.

For our partners in faith, our companion synods in Salud para la Vida in San Pedro Sula, Honduras for their mission and ministry in their place as we fulfill our mission in our place; for all the churches of the Lutheran World Federation, for people of the gospel throughout the world



Worship Notes

Sunday, December 4 - Advent 2

Color: Blue

Worship - 10:15am

Musician:
Monica Ogden

Readings

Isaiah 11:1-10
Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19
Romans 15:4-13
Matthew 3:1-12

Today we pray for:
Don & Kim Nelson

Prayer of the Day

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Sunday, December 11 - Advent 3

Color: Blue

Worship - 10:15am

Musician:
Monica Ogden

Readings

Isaiah 35:1-10
Psalm 146:5-10
James 5:7-10
Matthew 11:2-11

Today we pray for:
Alaina & Megan Leo

Prayer of the Day

Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**



Sunday, December 18 - Advent 4
Worship - 10:15am

Color: Blue

Readings

Musician:
Monica Ogden

Isaiah 7:10-16
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
Romans 1:1-7
Matthew 1:18-25

Today we pray for:
Kristine Jordahl

Prayer of the Day

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Sunday, December 25 - Nativity of Our Lord
Worship - 10:15 am

Color: White

Readings

Musician:
Monica Ogden

Isaiah 52:7-10
Psalm 98
Hebrews 1:1-4 [5-12]
John 1:1-4

Today we pray for:
Nicole & Chris Farrar

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you gave us your only Son to take on our human nature and to illumine the world with your light. By your grace adopt us as your children and enlighten us with your Spirit, through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**



December



12/1 Fransica Holmblade
12/1 David Hosticka
12/2 Amy DeBolt
12/3 Michaelanne Hendrixon
12/4 Jerry Lewallen
12/7 Jacob Brackmann
12/10 Gary Holmstrom
12/11 Jon DeMumbrum
12/11 Gretchen Lane
12/14 Holli Nichols
12/15 Scott Keller
12/15 Melanie Schaafsma
12/19 David Hendrixon
12/19 Courtney Mares
12/20 Ruth Ann Nurmi
12/20 Hannah Romain
12/21 Hilda Branstrom
12/21 Celia Vihtelic
12/21 Joni Will

12/22 Bradley Carlson
12/22 Sharon Ziske
12/23 Todd Groessl
12/23 Drew DeWeerd
12/24 Larry Foster
12/24 Timothy Kesteloot
12/25 Lisa Robertson
12/25 Alan Stevens
12/25 Sharon Gribas
12/27 Ray Lathrop
12/27 Sue Plewka
12/27 Dean Roesler
12/27 Wietse Schaafsma
12/28 Holly Hughes
12/28 Monica Szczerbinski
12/29 Mardi Otto
12/29 Molly Thompson
12/29 Katherine Thompson
12/31 Elly Hendrixon



Happy Anniversary



12/27/68
12/29/73

Art & Sue Plewka
John & Chris Parman



Congratulations to Dakota King and Ginny Wilkin
on their recent wedding (November 22, 2022)
in Florida.

Baptism Anniversaries



12/1 Kara Jaekel	12/19 Logan Montgomery	12/25 Elaine Stevens
12/3 Tom Foster	12/20 Paul Brogren	12/26 Bill Hosticka
12/3 Mary Bernhardt	12/20 Bob Ackerman	12/26 Hilda Branstrom
12/4 Jodi Emms	12/21 Emma Stanhope	12/26 Katie Stacy VandeBunte
12/4 Jennie Shalifoe	12/23 Curt Crouch	12/26 Becky Stacy Chynoweth
12/11 Dustin King	12/23 Jon DeMumbrum	12/27 Jeff Holmstrom
12/12 Patti Ferguson	12/24 Hannah Berry	12/27 Julie Tyler
12/14 Sandra Morris	12/24 Brian Hosticka	12/27 Dustin Roesler
12/15 Kate Scarbrough	12/24 Sophia Walters	12/28 George Stanhope
12/15 Stephen Ogden	12/25 David Civis	12/29 Diane Eastman
12/15 Terry Kesteloot	12/25 Jeffrey Civis	12/29 Jed Emms
12/15 Tim Kesteloot	12/25 David Hosticka	
12/17 Tylor Raymond Ramsey	12/25 Mary Ellen Larson	
12/18 Karen Hosticka	12/25 Linda Schenten	

Celebrate your baptism anniversary with a candle a meal or this prayer:

“Stir up within me the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and joy, on this day when I give thanks for my baptism in to Christ.”

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Lebanon Lutheran Church
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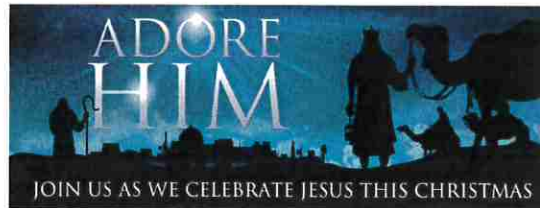
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Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Worship

Christmas Eve - 6:30 pm

Christmas Day—10:15 am

Congratulations to Hannah Bowen on her baptism on November 27th at Lebanon, with Pastor Megan Crouch. Welcome to the Lebanon Family Hannah!



White Lake Chorale presents its traditional Christmas concert on Saturday, December 10, at 4 p.m. in the MAPS Center for the Arts at Montague High School, 4900 Stanton Boulevard. Admission is free, but freewill donations will be accepted.

An Evening of Joy reflects the Chorale members' feelings about finally being together again since the Chorale's 2020 spring concert was canceled due to the COVID-19 shutdown. Many new voices have joined the group, including several singers from the same families.

Cindy Moore is again on the director's podium, leading more than 50 singers through familiar carols and intriguing holiday pieces from other lands. *Jingle All the Way* presents a host of favorites in medley format. Watch for *The Holiday Tango*, a *Jamaican Noel* and a lovely version of the 16th-century French carol, *Bring a Torch*, on this year's program. Moore has directed public school choirs for over 30 years, and has brought her infectious enthusiasm to the Chorale since 2016.

White Lake Chorale consists of volunteers who hail from the White Lake area, Ottawa and Oceana counties. It's open to anyone of high school age or older who can carry a tune and loves to sing. The Chorale offers two concerts each year. Come to the Christmas concert, check us out, and consider joining us for the spring session! Watch Facebook for updates.



Lebanon Lutheran Church

1101 South Mears Avenue
Whitehall, MI 49461

Living in God's Amazing Grace

The Light is published monthly by Lebanon Lutheran Church, 1101 S. Mears Avenue, Whitehall, MI 49461. Submissions are accepted through the 15th of each month. Submissions **MUST** include your name and a way to contact you in case of questions.

2 ways to submit your information:

- yellow folder in Margaret's office
(*better*)
- office@lebanonlutheranchurch.com
(*best*)



December 2022

