

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

**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
Laura Hollister Brian Jaekel
Sarah Schmalz Wietse Schaafsma
Al Wheeler

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

www.lebanonlutheranchurch.com

**Facebook: Lebanon Lutheran Church
(ELCA)**

Instagram—Twitter : #llesignsofgrace

THE LIGHT



Pastor's Notes

March 2024

Several members and friends of members have experienced the death of a dog or cat, an animal member of the family. In our family we have always had dogs, and have two healthy English labs now who have a privileged place on the bed at night, and the couch during the day. We take a walk in the woods nearly every day. Like everyone though, we've had the experience that it seems harder to grieve over the loss of a pet than it is a person. I think we steel ourselves it's a person, and we don't when we tell ourselves it's "just a dog". Dogs also don't grow up and move away, so there aren't those "stages of separation" that make up human life.

Monica and I got our first family dog when we finished school – I had had a dog and cat when I was a kid, Monica was exclusively a cat person. Sasha was a Siberian husky I met when I was on my way to Cincinnati to lead an ELCA Youth Gathering event. I allowed a lot of time to find where I was going, and arrived too early, so I stopped at a place that had a sign, "Husky puppies for sale." We had no idea what to name her, but leafed through a copy of War and Peace all the way in the car until we found the name we liked. She made the move to Michigan with me, while Monica, Allie and all our furniture were still in Ohio.

"Kidney failure due to old age" the vet said. I held her head, petted her; she had this way of pushing the top of her head against me whenever she was upset. One of our labs does the same thing and I think of Sasha whenever he does. She went to sleep, we buried her, Stephen and I, in the woods behind our Michigan house, along with her dish, her collar, and her brush. It was a good place, near where we walked, where we would ski, where she pulled Allie and Stephen in a small sled. Finn and Poe, the English labs, walk and ski there now with me. Poe has taken a strong interest in his bird feeder lately.

Our long attachment to pets that are with us for short times when counting in people years might be the first death a child experiences. Strong feeling of love, loyalty, the eagerness they show when we come home from work or school, as if they feared we might never come home again. These feelings deserve to be honored, especially in children, but also in adults. It isn't "just a dog" – it is a companion that's always been there. They worm their way into our hearts, grateful and excited for every cup of food, reminding us of our duty to open the door.

Continued on Page 3



March 2024
Fund of the Month
Good Gifts



March 10, 2024

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

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.





Lenten Conversations 2024

Wednesdays from 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m.

This interdenominational observance of Lent is open to all.

*Come and share a light meal and a brief message
at different host churches each week of Lent.*

Wednesday, February 21

St. Peters by the Lake, 8451 N. Old Channel Trail, Montague
Pastor Donna Morton of White Lake Congregational, speaker

Wednesday, February 28

Ferry Memorial Church, 4687 Church St, Montague
Pastor Leighton Seys of Ferry Memorial Church, speaker

Wednesday, March 6

White Lake Congregational Church, 1809 S. Mears, Whitehall
Pastor Tim Dibble of WL United Methodist Church, speaker

Wednesday, March 13

White Lake Methodist Church - Whitehall Campus
117 S. Division Street
Pastor Beth Wohlford of Ferry Memorial Church, speaker

Wednesday, March 20

St. James Catholic Church - 5149 Dowling St, Montague
Pastor David Meyer of St. Peter's By-the-Lake, speaker

A free will offering will be taken at each luncheon and donated to the White Lake Area Food Pantry located at the Lebanon Lutheran Church in Whitehall and the United Methodist Free Store of Whitehall.

Pastor's Notes

(Continued from Page 1)

Do dogs go to heaven? Sometimes I imagine that all dogs go to heaven, and they get to invite their people as their guests. Not biblical, I know. Somehow we've transcended over thousands of years the differences in species, maybe by more grace and forgiveness on the on the dog's part than the human's, but we know it's possible, and it gives me hope that the differences we cling to among warring humans could someday we transcended as well.

If you've experienced to loss of a pet, you know it's mysteriously hard. It's good to mark the place with a stone, say a prayer, tell the story. Maggie now has a place next to Sasha, honoring her decade or so as a member of the household. These are a part too of the art of dying, which enrich the art of living. There was a time when we "protected" children by not bringing them to a person's funeral, but I personally think it's better to acknowledge their place in the family event, talk about it, pray, cry, and participate. Children might see it as the first step in how to handle the loss of a person they love, and how to honor the life, do the grief, learn to let go, and live again.

THRIVENT MEMBERS: Don't forget to direct Choice Dollars by March 31, 2024

Just a reminder, it is CHOICE DOLLARS time again! Eligible Thrivent members who have 2023 Choice Dollars have until the end of March 2024 to direct them. Through the Thrivent Choice charitable grant program, you can contribute to organizations and causes you care about, including helping to support your church. Don't let your 2023 Choice Dollars expire!

You can direct them by going online to Thrivent.com/thriventchoice and click on Direct Choice Dollars OR by calling the Thrivent home office at 800-847-4836 and say "Thrivent Choice" after the prompt. Press 1 and a representative will work with you. It's wise to plan ahead with Easter being on March 31st this year.

For any financial questions, needs or concerns, please call Marci Bentz at the Whitehall Office at 231-894-8886, text 231-760-8246, or email whitehalloffice@thrivent.com.

May your Easter be richly blessed !

Sunday, March 24, 2024
Worship at 10:15am



Easter Sunday
March 31, 2024
Worship at 10:15am

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

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

Helen Bartlett, at daughter Carol Roods' home now.

Mary Bernhardt, at Robinswood Assisted Living #115 (Kay Snell)

Marlene Holmstrom, at home

Ken Kolb, with health issues

Sandy Kolb, hip replacement surgery

Elaine Liska, at White Lake Assisted Living - Whitehall

Phyllis Monte, at Legacy of Caring - Whitehall

Ruth Nurmi, with health concerns

Barb Smith, at Legacy of Caring - Whitehall

Marty Windbacher, At Poppin House

Special Prayer Concerns:

Brianne Beekman, (Terry & Mary Beekman's granddaughter) diagnosed with multiple brain tumors.

Anita Benes, ("oboe sister" of Michele Wheeler), battling leukemia

Lucas Carlson, (Terry and Mary Beekmans grandson) for new treatment.

Dan Crouch, (Curt Crouch's brother), battling cancer

Sheila Fretty, re-occurring cancer.

Elin Frietsch, diagnosed with Lymphoma

Margaret Fountain, (Mary Koenen's sister) diagnosed with multiple myeloma

Dave Gross, (Kathy Keller's brother) hospitalized in Canada

Frank Hollister, with health concerns

John Lewallen, (Mary Lewallen's brother-in-law) liver cancer

Mary Lewallen, with home & pet issues

Dwight Mead (Paula Moreau's brother-in-law), non-hodgkin lymphoma mantel type (stage four).

Lois Szczerbinski, with health issues

Deb Peabody (Statz), knee replacement January 18

Pastor Sarah Samuelson, recently diagnosed with colorectal cancer

Wendy Shalifoe, Surgery in December, now cancer free



Worship Notes

Sunday, March 3 - Lent 3
Worship - 10:15am

Color: Purple

Musician:
Monica Ogden

Readings

Today we pray for:

Exodus 20:1-17
Psalm 19
1 Corinthians 1:18-25
John 2:13-22

Prayer of the Day

Holy God, through your Son you have called us to live faithfully and act courageously. Keep us steadfast in your covenant of grace, and teach us the wisdom that comes only through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Sunday, March 10 - Lent 4
Worship - 10:15am

Color: Purple

Musician:
Monica Ogden

Readings

Today we pray for:

Numbers 21:4-9
Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22
Ephesians 2:1-10
John 3:14-21

Prayer of the Day

O God, rich in mercy, by the humiliation of your Son you lifted up this fallen world and rescued us from the hopelessness of death. Lead us into your light, that all our deeds may reflect your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Sunday, March 17 - Lent 5
Worship - 10:15am

Color: Purple

Readings

Musician:
Monica Ogden

Jeremiah 31:31-34
Psalm 51:1-12
Hebrews 5:5-10
John 12:20-33

Today we pray for:

Prayer of the Day

O God, with steadfast love you draw us to yourself, and in mercy you receive our prayers. Strengthen us to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, that through life and death we may live in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Sunday, March 24 - Palm Sunday
Worship - 10:15 am

Color: Purple

Today we pray for:

Readings

Musician:
Monica Ogden

Isaiah 50:4-9a
Psalm 31:9-16
Philippians 2:5-11
Mark 14:1-15:47

Prayer of the Day

Sovereign God, you have established your rule in the human heart through the servanthood of Jesus Christ. By your Spirit, keep us in the joyful procession of those who with their tongues confess Jesus as Lord and with their lives praise him as Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Sunday, March 31 - Easter
Worship - 10:15 am

Color: White

Today we pray for:

Readings

Musician:
Monica Ogden

Acts 10:34-43
Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24
1 Corinthians 15:1-11
Mark 16:1-8

Prayer of the Day

O God, you gave your only Son to suffer death on the cross for our redemption, and by his glorious resurrection you delivered us from the power of death. Make us die every day to sin, that we may live with him forever in the joy of the resurrection, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

March 2024



3/1	Sheila Fretty	3/18	Tricia Lamiman
3/1	Samantha Jo Hendrixon	3/19	Louis Hosticka
3/1	Roger Silk	3/19	Heather Moss
3/3	Karen Baker	3/23	Braxton Murphy
3/3	Lee Swenson	3/23	Bryce Murphy
3/4	Dakota King	3/23	Charles Schmalz
3/5	Mary Lewallen	3/25	Mallory Crouch Lothschutz
3/8	Kelsey Fretty	3/25	Anna Gaiser
3/10	James Will	3/26	Brittney Roesler
3/11	Tim DeMumbrum	3/29	Marty DeNicolo
3/13	Ethan Reynolds	3/29	Donna Knoth
3/14	Sandy Robbins	3/29	Chuck Miller
3/15	Tom Palmer	3/30	Jane Blyth
3/17	Karl Glass	3/31	Eric Plewka

Samaritas Health Kit Schedule

March 6 - Toothpaste

March 13 - Tooth brushes

March 20 - bar soap

March 27 - bags arrive - shop

Week of April 7 - Kit assembly @ 9:00 am



Any Cash donations we receive will be used to purchase any items that are needed to make the kits come out even.

Baptism Anniversaries



3/10 Beverly Statz
3/10 David Hendrixon
3/17 Irene Parks
3/18 Tricia Lamiman
4/18 Charles Peabody
3/20 John Wahr
3/21 Mitchell Clark

3/23 Braxton Murphy
3/23 Bryce Murphy
3/24 Tom Palmer
3/25 Denise Rumsey
3/25 David Rumsey
3/25 Nicole Rumsey
3/28 Eric Plewka

3/29 Traci Murphy

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.”



DONATE RIGHT FROM YOUR SMARTPHONE

Giving through our Vanco Mobile app is an easy and convenient way to donate to our church. It only takes a moment to set up and account:

1. Download the free Vanco Mobile app from the App store or Google Play.
2. Find our Church by searching for our Church name:
Lebanon Lutheran Church
3. Donate: to the General Fund

Thank you for your generosity

This is the new version of the GivePlus app, and must be downloaded again from your App Store.



North/West Lower Michigan Synod
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In this Issue:
 Continuing to Learn About Racism
 2024 Synod Assembly
 Black History Month
 Attracting Young Families
 Upcoming Events
 Congregations in Transition

Continuing to Learn About Racism

In the fall of 2021, I spent time following parts of the Alabama Civil Rights Trail. Arriving in Birmingham, I found myself excited but also a little apprehensive. I was excited to visit places I had never been, but also apprehensive to hear and relive the hard truths about those places. As I prepared to head out for the day, I opened the Alabama Civil Rights Trail app on my phone and planned my route.

My first stop was Bethel Baptist Church, which was the headquarters for the Alabama Christian Movement for Civil Rights from 1958 to 1961. There was a historical marker and some banners outside the church, but no one around. There are no longer any signs of the three different times this African-American Church was bombed during those years. I sat in the car for a moment thinking, "this will be easy," just drive by and look.

I then headed downtown to Kelly Ingram Park. This was the site of many gatherings for protest marches on City Hall, especially in 1963. Now the park stands as a memorial to those who gave their lives fighting for equality. The park is bordered on one side by 16th Street and right on the corner is the 16th Street Baptist Church. On the other corner is the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute. Freedom Walk, the path through the park, is lined with sculptures. As I walked through, I was surrounded by sculptures of policemen with clubs and snarling dogs—close enough to feel what it would have been like to have their breath on my face and their teeth in my skin. I came face to face with water cannons powered by fire trucks that were used to hinder the protesters, children behind bars in jail, a trio of praying pastors, a statue of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and the "Four Spirits" statue commemorating the four girls who died in the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church. The statute depicts them playing joyfully, a stark contrast to the way that they died. The park is a powerful place as each sculpture comes alive with the horrors of racism and the bravery of African Americans who stood up to white supremacy and hatred. I sat there for a long time. I prayed for the eradication of the racism that still exists within me. I prayed that someday "we shall overcome."



After gathering my thoughts and prayers, I walked across the street and found that the Alabama Civil Rights Institute was just opening. The Institute is part of the Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument and an affiliate of the Smithsonian Museums. It offers a self-guided experience through six galleries, each of which offers a unique experience in the history of civil rights. The last gallery champions civil rights movements around the world. As I moved through the Institute, I was overwhelmed with the information, the method of presentation, and the feelings it roused in me. Leaving the Institute, I walked back across the street to the park thinking about the civil rights events that happened in my lifetime. I remembered the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the protests shown on the TV news, and my own experience of segregation in the city schools I attended in Columbus, Ohio.

Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1

Crossing the street, I headed to the 16th Street Baptist Church. The congregation was founded in 1873 and the present church building was completed in 1911. It has been the center of Black community life in Birmingham for more than a century. It was a gathering place for protests, worship services, and prayer vigils for an end to racism. It is also known for the bombing that happened on September 15, 1963 when four young girls were killed and many more injured. I walked around the building to get a sense of the place and found no sign of the damage done in the bombing. Each stop on the Alabama Civil Rights Trail invoked a wealth of feelings, but I found the feeling at the 16th Street Baptist Church to be very powerful.

A man appeared from the building and greeted me. I told him I did not have a reservation for the tour but was studying the history of civil rights. He invited me in and directed me to a group of ladies who were the welcoming committee. I found out later that this kind man who welcomed me in was Senior Pastor Arthur Price, Jr. The ladies welcomed me and directed me to the picture gallery that told the story of the church. They said that a group of high school students was due to arrive and I would be welcome to tag along in the back for their orientation and tour. Their presentation was powerful as she described the depth of the hatred and violence that they and their ancestors had experienced in the history of the church. I vividly remember coming home from church that Sunday, September 15th, and listening to the news and seeing the pictures of the devastation of the church building. Even at the age of eight, I pondered where the depth of this kind of hatred could come from. I reflect even more on that as I get older.



After the tour, I visited the Birmingham Jail memorial plaque, which commemorates the place where Dr. King wrote "Letter from Birmingham Jail." One of the most important documents in the civil rights movement, Dr. King's letter challenged local churches to take action against "unjust laws" and not sit idly by waiting for justice to come. I finished my day with an inspiring visit to Rickwood Field, America's oldest professional ballpark still in operation. There was a maintenance man there and he gave me an incredible private tour. Rickwood Field was the home of the Birmingham Black Barons of the Negro Baseball League and hosted famous players like Babe Ruth, Dizzy Dean, Mickey Mantle, Joe DiMaggio, Ted Williams, Satchel Paige, Willie Mays, and Hank Aaron. It was a powerful day filled with grace, grief, and hope.

Reflecting on my time in Birmingham reminds me how important it is for us to continue studying and celebrating Black History, especially as this month is Black History Month. Studying Black History makes us aware of the history of our country and the way racism has influenced our society. It also shows us that racism still exists in our world. As a church and as a synod, we continue our work of countering racism with the study of history and work to reform the ways we treat people who are different than us. We strive to work together to counter the effects of racism in our church and in the world.

As part of our continuing anti-racism work, our synod is looking at offering trips to learn more about the history of racism both in Michigan and across the country. This would include traveling to historic sites in our state and a portion of the U.S. Civil Rights Trail in Nashville and Birmingham. More information will be available in the coming months, but if this is something that interests you, please let us know here: <https://forms.gle/2XJe8R4j18DcaABb8>.

The Rev. David E. Sprang
Assistant to the Bishop and Director for Evangelical Mission

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Every February, the U.S. honors the contributions and sacrifices of Black Americans who have helped shape the nation. Black History Month celebrates the rich cultural heritage, triumphs and adversities that are an indelible part of our country's history.

African Descent Ministries of the ELCA celebrates Black History Month with "Talks at the Desk," a four-part video series that explores diverse expressions of the church. A new video premieres each Wednesday in February at 8:30pm ET. Watch at <https://elca.org/ADM>



Lebanon Lutheran Church

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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*)



2024