

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](http://www.lebanonlutheranchurch.com)**

**Facebook: Lebanon Lutheran Church  
(ELCA)  
Instagram—Twitter : #lcsignsofgrace**

**THE LIGHT**



**Pastor's Notes**

**February 2025**

Thank you to everyone who participated in Lebanon's Annual Meeting January 25, 2025.

Thank you especially to those who completed their terms as Church council members Brian Jaekel and Meg Eaton completed their terms on Church Council, and for their work and their time, we are grateful. They each have served for six years.

Church Council members are elected to two-year terms, and can serve a maximum of three terms, for six years total. We adopted this model when we began to hear from some people that signing on for a three-year term was too much, without knowing if they'd actually like being on council, and without knowing what might happen in life three years out.

Thank you to those who agreed to lead in 2026:

Dave Dusenberry and Amy Swope were elected to the Church Council. Cheri Crouch and Al Wheeler were re-elected. The Council meets the third Tuesday of each month, so the first meeting for them will be February 18 at 6 pm. The council will elect officers at that meeting, so the installation of council members and officers is scheduled for February 23 at the 10:15 am worship. (Schedules and plans are always subject to change!)

Frank Hollister and Kara Jaekel were elected to be our voting members at the Assembly of the Northwest Lower Michigan Synod assembly Sunday through Tuesday, May 18-20 at the Comfort inns and Suites in Mt. Pleasant.

Becky Wahr and Sarah Schmalz are added to our endowment committee; Michele Wheeler continues to direct the altar guild with an excellent team; John Parks, Terry Beekman, Jim King will continue to welcome people at the door, and attend to worship details; these are positions on our ballot, and we are grateful for their volunteering and the grace with which they do it.

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**Websites of Interest**

[www.lebanonlutheranchurch.com](http://www.lebanonlutheranchurch.com)

[www.mittensynod.org](http://www.mittensynod.org)

[www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org)

[www.whitelakescouting.com](http://www.whitelakescouting.com)

[www.whitelakechorale.com](http://www.whitelakechorale.com)

[www.hopescarves.org](http://www.hopescarves.org)

[LivingLutheran.org](http://LivingLutheran.org)

[www.samaritas.org](http://www.samaritas.org)

**Suicide Hotline** [1-800-273TALK.org](http://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](http://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](http://mittensynod.org)**

## **In this Issue:**

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Unity

2025 Synod Assembly

Upcoming Events

Congregations in Transition

## **Synod: Way Together**

The origin of the word *synod* is the combination of two Greek words: *syn* (together) and *hodos* (way, path or road, direction, manner of life, journey). *Synod* means way or road together. In the gospels, "the way" is shorthand for the way of discipleship, the way of the cross, and Jesus as the way that leads to life.

In May, we come to the regular fork in our road together, or the regular pause in our way together, that is a bishop election. We get to consider our direction and manner of life in terms of Jesus, the cross, abundant life, and discipleship. And we get to call a bishop to lead and accompany us for the next leg of the journey.

Regardless of how well orchestrated they are, changes in bishops, like changes in pastors, are disruptive. Expectation and anxiety rise as relationships change, ministry slows, at least for a time, and some aspects of our life and journey together stop. This time of transition can be especially unsettling for the staff, synod leadership, congregations in the call process, and rostered ministers seeking calls.

When we last came to this fork in the road in 2019, I endeavored to maintain our momentum and reduce anxiety by announcing my openness to continue to serve as bishop. To my regret, some received my announcement as blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (Mark 3:29) because I was perceived as attempting to prevent the one the Holy Spirit wanted to serve as bishop from running. So I haven't said much about the bishop election this time. Now some ask about my openness to serving another term; others express the opinion that the time has come for a change. I am not a fan of whispering to some thoughts that might impact us all. So what should I do?

Allow me to share my three hopes for our synod assembly. First, I want the assembly to be a positive, good, even holy experience. I remain committed to direction I received from Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson that the bishop's role and responsibility at an assembly is to help the voting members do their work. Second, I do not want to tie myself up in emotional or spiritual knots over a bishop election. So I have worked and am working to be at peace whatever the outcome. I will either get to continue doing some things I love as bishop or I won't have to do some things I really don't love as bishop. Third, as I indicated in the June newsletter, I want to protect Cathy, Chelsey, and our staff from derision, both derision about me and derision directed at them. I hope Synod Council will lead us in honoring people's right to critique without dishonoring the Eighth Commandment and Luther's interpretation of it. I am bolstered by people who have promised that they will not allow derision to happen or will call a halt to it if it does.

As for the election and my openness to serving, I will do as I did in 2013 and be guided by the results of the ballots. Right after the speeches in 2013, Cathy, Chelsey, and I decided to leave the assembly and head home to Chicago. On our way out the door, the results of the third ballot turned us around. I have attended enough bishop elections in the last 12 years to trust that the triune God is at work in the process; we do well to treat it as a holy thing.

Allow me also to respond to some of the scuttlebutt floating around. I am not constitutionally prohibited from serving another term. I am neither exhausted by nor uninterested in the work. Quite the opposite. I remain energized and committed because I continue to encounter and be encountered by Jesus in my service as bishop. I am invigorated by Pastor Bright coming alongside as Assistant to the Bishop. I am profoundly grateful that Ann Stavros, Rebecca Bossenbroek, Lynn Kriser, Chelsey Satterlee, and Cathy Satterlee continue to journey with me and with our synod. I am inspired by Sandy Schlesinger's partnership and leadership of Synod Council. I am eager for our synod to call our next Director for Evangelical Mission.

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### *Bishop - Continued from Page 3*

As for the road ahead, I am excited by the opportunities I anticipate we will encounter, particularly when we share the story of Jesus in word and deed for no reason other than that it is such good news. I am undaunted by the challenging landscape that lies ahead, including retirements, call processes, and congregations that will need to face their sustainability and decide what, if anything, they want to do about it. All of this in a changing denomination and a changing world. And, as the pandemic taught us, the only thing certain about the next leg of the journey, for the church and for the world, is the certainty of God's love in Jesus Christ. So the most important thing we do is proclaim Christ crucified and risen as the power and wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 1:23-24).

And my openness to serving and my vision of the road ahead are secondary to the synod's call. When I was installed as bishop, I was asked, "Will you commit yourself to this new trust and responsibility in the confidence that it comes from God through the call of the church?" This is the same question pastors and deacons are asked when they are installed in the confidence that it comes from God through the call of the church. In the course of my life and ministry, I have known times when I was convinced that God was calling me to a specific trust and responsibility, only to have the church call someone else. In retrospect, I am grateful that God through the church did not call me. And I have been blessed beyond measure when God through the church has called me. So my question is not about my openness to serve, but about whether God through the church, meeting as a synod assembly, is calling me to serve.

If you call me, I will happily and gratefully serve. If you call someone else, I will help to prepare you for the next leg of the journey and then, grateful for the privilege of leading and accompanying you for a time, wave goodbye as I watch you head down one fork in the road and I turn to head down the other, confident that Jesus is leading us both to our common destination of discipleship, the cross, and abundant life.

So, I invite you to join me in holy waiting and fervent prayer. Pray for our synod and our way together. Pray for those who are planning and will lead our assembly and bishop election. Pray for the one whom we will call to serve as bishop. Pray especially for those who will open themselves to serve and not be called. And please remember that we do not pause on our journey until May and that we still have traveling to do as we follow in the way together.

May the peace of Christ be with us all!

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



Kids Hooked on Fishing Event by the White Lake Area Sportsfishing Association will take place at Lebanon on Saturday, February 8, 2025 beginning at 9am.

## 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 daughter Carol Roods' home now.

5337 W. McMillan, N. Muskegon 49445

**Mary Bernhardt**, at Robinswood Assisted Living #115 (Kay Snell) 2650 Ruddiman, N. Muskegon 49445

**Jane Blyth**, 28801 Jefferson Ave., Apt. 332; Saint Clair Shores, MI 48081

**Chris Claus**, American House - 17383 174th Avenue, Spring Lake, MI 49456

**Karl Glass**, @ Edison Christian Health Care Center, 1000 Edison St., Grand Rapids, MI 49504. Room #382.

**Shirley Glass**, with health concerns, 3232 Richmond NW, Walker, MI 49534

**Marlene Holmstrom**, at home. 2643 Benston Road, Whitehall, 49461

**Ken & Sandy Kolb**, with health issues - 6755 W. Old Channel Trail; Montague 49437

**Elaine Liska**, Sunrise Senior Living—Sunrise of Troy; 6870 Crooks Road, Troy, MI 48098-1704.  
Elaine Liska—Room 130.

**Phyllis Monte**, at Legacy of Caring - Whitehall—1302 Warner Street, Whitehall 49461

**Ruth Nurmi**, with health concerns—308 E. Dayton Street, Fremont, 49412

**Barb Smith**, at Legacy of Caring - Whitehall—1302 Warner Street, Whitehall 49461

### Special Prayer Concerns:

**Cindy Albert**, implant surgery for sleep apnea

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

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

**Sheila Fretty**, re-occurring cancer.

**Elin Frietsch**, diagnosed with Lymphoma

**Margaret Fountain**, (Mary Koenen's sister) diagnosed with multiple myeloma suffered a relapse and waiting on new treatments. Prayers are urgently needed.

**Lon Grover**, (Lucinda Grover's brother) with health concerns.

**Frank Hollister**, for continued healing

**Dottie Holmblade**, (Brian Holmblade's sister) for no side effects from chemotherapy restarted for cancer diagnosis

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

**Pastor Sarah Samuelson**, at home, diagnosed with colorectal cancer

**Harry & Yolanta Swiatek**; Harry uses a wheelchair and is in a nursing home between Pentwater and Ludington. Yolanta is at the Medilodge of Ludington, 1000 E. Tinkham Ave., Ludington, MI 49431 after a fall resulted in hip & femur fractures.

**Linda Umstead**, (Carol Norwick's sister), with health issues

**Paul Vos**, (Ken and Sandy Kolb's son-in-law) hearing issues



## Worship Notes

**Sunday, February 2 - Epiphany 4**  
**Worship - 10:15am**

**Color: Green**

**Musician:**

**Readings**

**Today we pray for:**  
**Virginia Foster**

**Jeremiah 1:4-10**  
**Psalm 71:1-6**  
**1 Corinthians 13:1-13**  
**Luke 4:21-30**

**Prayer of the Day**

Almighty and ever-living God, increase in us the gifts of faith, hope, and love; and that we may obtain what you promise, make us love what you command, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

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**Sunday, February 9 - Epiphany 5**  
**Worship - 10:15am**

**Color: Green**

**Musician:**

**Readings**

**Today we pray for:**  
**Tom & Sheila Fretty**

**Isaiah 6:1-8 [9-13]**  
**Psalm 138**  
**1 Corinthians 15:1-11**  
**Luke 5:1-11**

**Prayer of the Day**

Most holy God, the earth is filled with your glory, and before you angels and saints stand in awe. Enlarge our vision to see your power at work in the world, and by your grace make us heralds of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

**Sunday, February 16 - Epiphany 6**  
**Worship - 10:15am**

**Color: Green**

**Readings**

**Musician:**

**Isaiah 62:1-5**  
**Psalm 36:5-10**  
**1 Corinthians 12:1-11**  
**John 2:1-11**

**Today we pray for:**  
**Zachery & Megan Fretty**

**Prayer of the Day**

Living God, in Christ you make all things new. Transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of your grace, and in the renewal of our lives make known your glory, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

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**Sunday, February 23 - Epiphany 7**  
**Worship - 10:15 am**

**Color: Green**

**Readings**

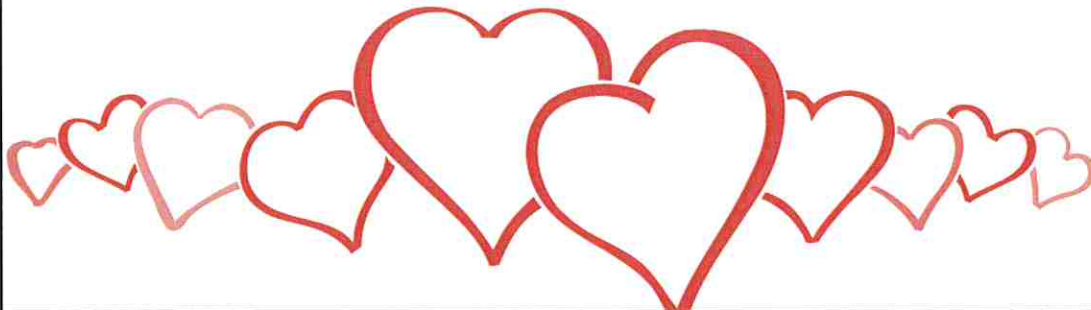
**Musician:**

**Genesis 45:3-11,15**  
**Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40**  
**1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50**  
**Luke 6:27-38**

**Today we pray for:**  
**David & Emma Greenwood**

**Prayer of the Day**

O Lord Jesus, make us instruments of your peace, that where there is hatred, we may sow love, where there is injury, pardon, and where there is despair, hope. Grant, O divine master, that we may seek to console, to understand, and to love in your name, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**



# Birthdays



2/2 Sharon Ackerman	2/19 Dustin King
2/3 Barb Dusenberry	2/22 Jeanne Berry
2/2 Karl Holmstrom	2/22 John Wahr
2/2 Isaac Otterman	2/23 Molly DeBolt Mooren
2/7 Wendy Shalifoe	2/23 Daniel Stanhope
2/9 Toni Schillaci	2/24 Krysten Hosticka
2/10 Saige Phelps	2/25 Dawn Brackmann
2/10 Holly Sorensen	2/26 Frank Hollister
2/12 Ray Veeder	2/26 Allie Ogden
2/13 Tiffany Barnes	
2/13 Marilyn Schmucker	
2/14 Beverly Statz	
2/15 Trevin Bernhardt	
2/17 Lori Skinner	
2/17 Ethan Wendell	
2/19 Gregory Civis	



2/10/10	Scott & Rebecca Veeder
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## Baptism Anniversaries



2/2 Amy DeBolt	2/14 Suzanne Troy	2/26 Barb Aardema
2/8 Elly Hendrixon	2/16 Brian Peterson	2/26 Brian Holmblade
2/9 Austin Decker	2/16 Joni Will	2/26 Bruce Holmblade
2/10 Larry Holmstrom	2/19 Nichole Page Farrar	2/27 Stephanie Honoré
2/11 Julie Holmstrom	2/21 Brenton Will	
2/14 Franci Chamberlain	2/24 Steve Albert	

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

### **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.*

### **Thoughts on Financial Confidence from Marci Bentz – Thrivent Whitehall Office**

Losing sleep over your finances? If so, you're not alone. According to a study by the Ramsey Solutions research team, 40% of Americans say their financial situation has caused them to lose sleep in the past month. If that's you, it's time to make a change. Take the first step and take control of your finances by signing up for Thrivent's free money coaching service, Money Canvas. These 3-part virtual coaching sessions will help give you confidence and control over everyday money decisions. And, of course, I'm always here to answer your questions and get you on the path to live and leave your unique legacy.

Your free sessions (and better sleep!) start whenever you're ready: [bit.ly/moneycanvas](http://bit.ly/moneycanvas)

**For financial questions, needs or concerns, please contact Marci Bentz, your Financial Advisor, Whitehall Thrivent Office at 231-894-8886, cell 231-760-8246 or email [whitehalloffice@thrivent.com](mailto:whitehalloffice@thrivent.com).**

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*Thank You!*

**Thank You to Wietse and Melanie Schaafsma for spearheading the purchase of new lounge sofas. If you haven't seen them yet, they are beautiful and very comfortable.**



**Looking for a volunteer (or several) to cover the church office on Monday, March 31, April 1, 2, 3 while Margaret is on vacation. Anyone interested, please let Margaret know. Thank You!**

*Pastor's Notes continued from Page 1*

There are many other non-elected position that will make 2025 a great year – our Kids Klub team under Amy Swope and Toni Schillaci, our ever-increasing food pantry team, our scout leaders, the kitchen team, Marsha and Chuck who change the sign, sometimes in horrible weather; the property team under Glenn Eaton, our finance teams of counters, including Curt and Cheri Crouch, Mike Schmalz on the video, Monica on the piano, Margaret and Sue in the office and on the phones, Jenna already working on the backpack event, and many others we will acknowledge in future newsletters.

Now thank we all our God, with heart and hand and voice; who wondrous things has done, in whom this world rejoices; who from our mothers' arms has blest us on our way with countless gifts of love which still are ours today.

*Pastor Ogden*



## 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](mailto:office@lebanonlutheranchurch.com)  
(best)

