



# THE BETHANIA BLADE

"As a called people of God and as members of Bethania,  
we will grow in our faith and share it with others"

January/February 2024

It is the Christmas season as I write this. At Bethania, we have been aware that the Christmas season does not always bring happy memories and joy to everyone. We have observed Blue Christmas services in the past. We even mentioned praying for those that Christmas brings memories of loss and sadness to in a recent service. As a person, I understood how this could happen, but I had not experienced such feelings around Christmas until this year.

My family has cats. We took two in eight years ago that had been dumped by our house. The little female of the two was a very interesting cat. She had health issues, little frustrations here and there, but my family resolved that we would care for her as best we could. She was pretty intelligent for a cat which made up for some of her disabilities. During COVID when we were locked in the house, the cat took to me more than before and we became very close. She would seek me out when I sat on the couch and curl up in

my lap. She would jump on the bed when I dressed to begin the day. When I sat on the top of the stairs, she would lay under my legs to play with my shoelaces as I tied my shoes. Then, like a dog, she would heel by my side and walk with me to the kitchen. I would kid that she was my COVID therapy pet.

She took ill just before Thanksgiving and we had to put her down two weeks later. I knew I was going to take it hard after how close we had become in our routines. In the days that followed I found that my grief was way beyond what I had expected. Shelly saw it and was checking on me. As I was taking care of some final things with the loss of the cat, I received some brochures on grief. I read them closely helping me to understand that my grief was normal, that grief does not follow any particular sequence or stages. My grief was just that and not depression.

I bring this up to share one thought that crossed my mind as I grieved. The thought was: If I had been the one who passed, would anyone grieve like this for me. The honest answer that came to me

Continued on Page 9

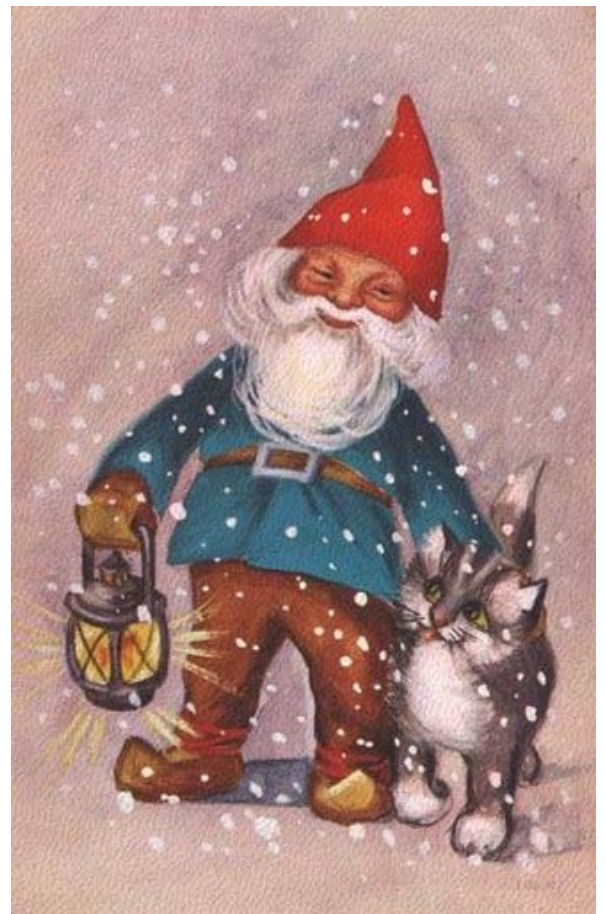
was No. There would not be someone like that. I say this because my cat was as innocent as a child and could do no wrong. I on the other hand am not perfect. I say the wrong things. I do things that disappoint others. I leave things undone that should be done. I am human with all its faults and shortfalls.

The point to make is not that: "Jeff, you are not as good as a cat." I can't deny this, especially compared to the pet I lost. The point I have been grabbing on to is that I have a lot of work to do to be a better person than I am now. I need to be more aware of my family and friends to do better by them in all kinds of ways. I need to work harder on all my relationships to better demonstrate my feelings for others. I need to do more for others, even strangers, to ease their pains or hungers. I need to follow the teachings of Christ more closely in order to do all this and more. And I am not doing all this because I am worried about the length of my eulogy when I am gone. I am doing this to demonstrate my belief in the teachings of Jesus and my desire to live according to his word as best I can.

I hope sharing this recent change in my life motivates you to take a small inventory of your life and identify those things that you can do to better live out Christ's word. Christ's love for us can be seen in all things, even the companionship of a pet. We all have to work hard to demonstrate that same kind of love for each other.

Your obedient servant in Christ.

*Jeff Alderson*





Please change Marilyn's information in your directory to:

Marilyn Petersen  
Pleasant Point Assisted Living  
8500 Corporate Drive #403  
Racine, WI 53406  
262-402-7149



The Alderson Family at High Tea.



"Grandma" McGaughey and her grandchildren making Christmas Cookies.







### OUR SYMPATHY

to Mike & Kelly  
Imhoff and fam-  
ily on the loss of  
Mike's mother,

Evelyn Rose Imhoff, who passed  
away on Wednesday, December  
13, 2023 at St. Monica's Senior  
Living Home. Her funeral was  
held on Wednesday, December  
20, 2023 at Wilson Funeral  
home.

### ADMITTED TO THE HOSPITAL??

Please notify the church or have a family member notify the church at 262-632-7267. If no one answers please leave a voicemail, Cathi will be notified of the voicemail as soon as you leave it. Since 2019 the hospitals no longer notify the churches of hospital stays. Since Covid visitors are limited to close family and pastors/deacons of the church. We can bring communion to the hospital and approve it with the hospital staff, if it is



### SECRET PRAYER PARTNERS

It's a new year! Time to sign up for a new prayer partner. The box will be on the back table in the church beginning January 7 for anyone who would like to take part in the prayer partner program. We will draw names on February 4, 2024. The reveal will be in December 2024.



Your Secret Prayer Partner Leader

# Celebrations



1/1—Rob Borgardt  
 1/5—Richard McGaughey  
 1/7—Jacob Hansen  
 1/13 –Deb Munch  
 1/14—Olivia Weaseman  
 1/21—Jim Leger  
 1/27—Jakob Jensen  
 1/31—Kim Drasen



2/1—Bettie Liston  
 2/3—Jacque Majeed  
 2/5 –Thomas Thiery  
 2/18 -Melanie Brabbit  
 2/18 -Carolyn Luetgen  
 2/23—Lauryn Berger  
 2/26 - Krista Berger

*(Please let us know if there are any changes or missed birthdays or anniversaries. Thank You!)*



HAPPY 16th BIRTHDAY RYAN!

Ryan Hagerman turned 16 on December 21!





## Care and Concern List:

Please consider sending a note of encouragement to someone on this list.

### Carolyn Luetzen

Parkview Gardens  
Assisted Living  
5321 Douglas Avenue  
Apt. 1164  
Racine, WI 53402

### Grete Loschenkohl

819 Indiana Street  
Racine, WI 53405  
Phone - 262-633-6095

### Joyce Thomsen

2935 Old Mill Drive  
Racine, WI 53405

### Marilyn Peterson

Pleasant Point  
Assisted Living  
8500 Corporate Drive  
#403  
Racine, WI 53406-3791



If you have anyone you would like to have added to the prayer chain **please contact Kelly Imhoff at 262-554-1558, the church office 262-632-7267 or by email: [bethaniaprayerchain@wi.twcbc.com](mailto:bethaniaprayerchain@wi.twcbc.com)**

## Prayer List



Pat Nelson,  
Jeff & Sue O.,  
Anita Nielsen,  
Grete Loschenkohl,  
Glenn Loschenkohl,  
Bonnie Jensen  
Heather Joshi  
Brad Larsen

*Please note: People on the prayer list are there only for 2-4 weeks if no updates are given.*



# WAYS TO HELP!



## 2023 LACE Grant Awarded

On Sunday December 17, 2023 Jeff presented the 2023 LACE Grant to Bob Reinders of the Racine Mission Cluster for the Community Meal program. The grant will be used to help with the 2024 program needs.

## Bethania Giving Tree

Thank you so much to everyone who took tags from the tree for the children at Bethany Apartments. Bethania members are so generous! All the gifts were brought to church and I was able to organize them so Ed could get them delivered the next day. Ed and I wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! We hope to see you at the Christmas Eve services.

Jacci Young

## Did You Notice??

The green food barrels are gone and in their place is are cardboard totes for you to place your food donations in. It was felt that the green barrels were too cumbersome and hard to place items. There has also been a change in the delivery volunteer. For many years Karl Ernst has been taking the food donations over to the Holy Communion Food Pantry for Bethania and now he has decided to take a step back. Jacci Young has volunteered to do the deliveries now. Thank you Karl and Thank you Jacci!



**Thanks  
giving  
Basket  
Thank  
you!**

A huge thanks goes out to everyone who donated food

items and money for the Thanksgiving Baskets again this year. With the help of Jane and Julie were able to put together ten baskets for the Bethany Apartment residents including two requested ones from Bethania members for families in need. It warms my heart that Bethania members are always here to help.

Jacci Young

### Cans FOR K-9's



We are still collecting aluminum cans to help support the Racine County K-9 program.

### COFFEE HOUR HOSTS NEEDED

Please consider hosting coffee hour. The coffee will be started by the building opener. Treats may be store bought or homemade.

Sign up sheet is on the bulletin board outside Pastor's office.

### EMPTYES FOR CASH

*"one persons junk is another persons treasure"*

- ★ Bring in your empty inkjet cartridges—black or color.
  - ★ Do not put any tape on the cartridge.
  - ★ Place your empty cartridge in a zip type plastic bag. (ex: zip lock)
- Bethania will receive \$2 per cartridge.

**NO Toners please.**

Remember the food pantry. Suggested items: Canned dinners, Peanut butter, toilet paper, hygiene items, soup, and pastas.





# CHURCH BUSINESS

Date	In Person	Facebook	Giving
November 5	21	36	\$1,363.40
November 12	25	27	\$1,489.00
November 19	20	30	\$ 285.00
November 26	30	29	\$1,973.00
December 3	24	25	\$1,869.00
December 10	25	39	\$ 971.55
December 17	22	20	\$ 581.00
December 24 3 pm	46	27	\$ 622.00
December 24 7 pm	28	19	\$1,011.74
December 31	12	No Stream	\$ 400.00



ANNUAL REPORTS ARE DUE TO  
THE CHURCH OFFICE BY JANU-  
ARY 10

-

ANNUAL REPORT PACKETS WILL  
BE AVAILABLE FOR  
CONGREGATIONAL  
DISTRIBUTION BEGINNING  
SUNDAY, JANUARY 14.



## ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

SUNDAY, January 28, 2024

Following worship

# Church Contacts

## **Bethania Lutheran Church**

**4120 Wright Avenue**

**Racine, WI 53405**

**262-632-7267**

**Church Email: [Bethania@wi.twcbc.com](mailto:Bethania@wi.twcbc.com)**

**Website: [www.bethanialutheran.org](http://www.bethanialutheran.org)**

**Office Hours: Monday through Friday 7:30 to 9:30 a.m.**

**Emergencies: Call (262) 909-5369**

*(Please note: There may not be a car in the parking  
lot but the office is open.)*

**Cathi Webster, Administrative Assistant**

**William Mueller, Church Musician**

**Mike Imhoff, Maintenance**

### **COUNCIL**

**Jeff Alderson, President**

**Kelly Imhoff, Vice President**

**Cathi Webster, Secretary**

**Ed Young, Treasurer**

**Shelly Alderson**

**Brad Larsen, Property**

**John Barnes**

# Follow The Star

By Abide & Seek.com – Following Jesus together.

*” Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.”*

*” When they heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. <sup>1</sup>And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.” Matthew 2: 1-2 and 9-11*

I have often thought about the Wise Men from the East, and the true meaning of following The Star to worship and seek The Lord.

It is easy for us to lose sight of The Star in such a dark world. Every time we turn on the news there is something to discourage us and make us feel like The Star is lost for good. That is why the faith of the weary traveler is the most beautiful, and it shines the brightest in the darkest skies.

You may often find yourself at a crossroads when you are seeking The Lord. You may be searching the sky for the North Star and believe that Bethlehem is a million miles away. You may find that the search is too dangerous, and that the price to seek The Lord is far too much.

Let me share with you my story about how I became a wise seeker of The Star.

## The Star

The star can come to you in many different ways, and it often takes one of the darkest

moments in your life to notice it.

For me The Star came several times throughout my life. It came when I was a child and my innocent heart was yearning for a Heavenly Father to show me how to navigate a scary and cruel world.

My world as you know, was filled with some hardships from an early age, but it wasn't my entire world. I didn't sit in the darkness and feel hopeless all the time. There were moments throughout my childhood that I saw that star.

The brightness of the star is something that fills you with joy, love, hope and peace that no one can explain. It is a brightness that the Holy Spirit thrusts upon you when you need it the most.

It is why that song “Breathe of Heaven” by Amy Grant has reached so many souls. It reached mine from a young age. It talks about the searching and fear of the unknown, but the simple joy of knowing that Jesus Christ the Savior is born.

It is why several Christmas Hymns were written many years ago, so that people could put into words the meaning of the star. It has guided people seeking to know The Lord for centuries.

The Star can be many things, a song, a person, a story, a verse, a kind act, and an actual star in the sky.

For me, it has been all these things and much much more. It has been a friendly smile from a stranger, a kind word from a friend, an embrace from a family member, and a song in my heart.

## The Seeker

Once you have seen The Star it will keep appearing to you throughout your lifetime. It will come to you in the night, early rays of the day, or even in a kind word spoken from a stranger.

We often wonder as we see The Star in our darkest moments why it keeps showing itself. Why would the star go through all the trouble to help us find our way? Why does



it seek us just as much as we seek it?

The Star is the sign that the Holy Spirit continues to guide us through all of our journeys. It refuses to give up its shine and will make us remember that child-like innocence that brings us closer to The Lord.

When I was in college, I really felt The Star hit me where it counts. I was so lost at that point in my life that I didn't think I could ever be found again.

I soon felt like a failure and that I should just give up. I have often felt this way, but it got worse when I was in college. I put a lot of expectation on my shoulders, and sometimes the weight was too much. The thing is that when you come from nothing you are constantly trying to be something. You are constantly pushing yourself to be better and do better despite the exhaustion and fear of failure.

I know I am not alone in any of this, but at the time I sure felt like I was. I think, that is the whole point of depression. It locks you up in a dark room, and you can't seem to get out until a small light bursts through.

So, it was in college that The Star really began to shine. I was sitting in the student study quad, and it was a very dark day. I had lost all hope for my future.

A woman I never saw before sat down next to me, and she began to tell me she was a missionary who had the privilege of going to other countries and helping those who needed it most.

She proceeded to tell me that it was my purpose to write the heart and soul of the world. I found that profound since this woman didn't know I was a Journalism Major. She told me about how in the least likely places you will find the true meaning of God, and His love can be found in the darkest places.

I really took this as a sign that The Star was not done with me yet. A few weeks later I was really down again, and some of my teachers had made me feel hopeless. I really didn't think I would amount to much in the world of journalism.

Again, as I sat in the student study quad the same woman sat down next to me. She told me that I would do amazing things for God. She

told me that my stories would matter, and that they would touch many lives.

I took it as a sign that not only was I to keep seeking The Star, but I was also meant to be a writer. I was meant to write the heart and the soul of the world. It was in this way that my star would guide me to the place I needed to be.

## Finding Faith

It is important that on the path to The Lord you don't lose sight of The Star. You don't want to get lost along the way.

Fear not my fellow wise and weary travelers since The Star never goes away for long. It will often appear to you when you need it most. When you are hanging by the edge of a cliff, submerged in a storm, or even in a dark room. It will always find a way to brighten the way and guide you to the Heavenly Father.

For on that day so long ago, The Star sent wise men to worship and seek The Lord. Jesus Christ Our Savior was born to save the world from darkness. He is the brightest star you will ever need. He will never leave you. He will never forsake you. Once you keep your eyes on Him the faith of the light will get you home. It will get you on the right path. Faith of the seeker is the most beautiful thing. Our Lord Almighty knows that as long as you stay on that journey you will find Him. You will always seek Him. You will always have obstacles in the path. Do not be discouraged by the darkness, because it is in that darkness that The Star shines brightest.

I have been a writer for a few years now in the professional sense, and a writer in my heart for most of my life. It comes from the deepest depths of my soul, and these words are how I will do my part in changing the world.

I still look for The Star to this day. I still look for those moments of pure bright light that make me feel like I am not forgotten. Although the darkness remains a battle I must fight often I know it can not win. I am a child of the Most High. I am a child of God. I know that even in my darkest trials I can always find my way home.

# JANUARY /FEBRUARY SERVICE LEADERS

Date	Worship Leader	Communion Assistant	Reader	Acolyte & Offering Presenter	Building Host	Coffee Hour	Altar Flowers
January 7 Epiphany	Pastor Paul Nuechterlein	Julie Hansen Vicki Thiery	Anne Woodward	John Barnes	John Barnes		
January 14	Pastor Paul Nuechterlein	Kelly Imhoff Jerod Alderson	Jerod Alderson	Kelly Imhoff	Kelly Imhoff	Altar Guild	
January 21	Pastor Paul Nuechterlein	Brad Larsen Anita Nielsen	Brad Larsen	Brad Larsen	Brad Larsen		
January 28	Pastor Paul Nuechterlein	Jeff Alderson Calaway Alderson	Jeff Alderson	Jeff Alderson	Jeff Alderson		
February 4	TBD	John Barnes Robin Barnes	Anne Woodward	John Barnes	John Barnes	Altar Guild	
February 11	TBD	Julie Hansen Vicki Thiery	Julie Hansen	Ed Young	Ed Young		
February 18	TBD	Kelly Imhoff Jerod Alderson	Kelly Imhoff	Kelly Imhoff	Kelly Imhoff		
February 25	TBD	Brad Larsen Anita Nielsen	Anita Nielsen	Brad Larsen	Brad Larsen		



Lent is the forty-day season (excluding Sundays) of penitence and preparation for the Three Days of Holy Week and Easter.

#### A Very Brief History:

The term “Lent” originally comes from the Anglo-Saxon word “lencten” which means “spring.” This is the time, in the Northern Hemisphere, when the days are lengthening. The season began as period of fasting leading up to the Vigil of Easter. Catechumens, those preparing for baptism at Easter, would fast and spend days in intense preparation. For those that were already baptized, Lent was a period to be renewed in their faith by studying the Bible, the Creed and the Lord’s Prayer.

Although it was originally only a two-day period of preparation, Lent became a three-week preparatory period in the middle of the fourth century and then this was further expanded into six-weeks, or forty days. By the end of the fifth century, there was a desire to exclude Sundays from Lent since Sundays are always celebrated as feasts of the Resurrection. Thus Lent begins not on Sunday, but on Ash Wednesday.

The current practice of forty days of Lent recall Jesus’ forty-day fast in the wilderness after his Baptism (Matthew 4:2, Luke 4:1-2) as well as Moses’ forty-day fast on Mount Sinai (Exodus 34:28).

#### A Few Notes on Current Practice

- The appointed liturgical color for Lent is purple because purple has long been associated with royalty. In this case, Christ reigns from a cross.
- Currently, the ancient understanding of Lent as both a time for baptismal preparation and baptismal renewal is being rediscovered in Lutheran rites and practice. Many congregations hold mid-week services during Lent and a baptismal renewal theme is particularly appropriate for these.

Many congregations refrain from speaking or singing the word “alleluia” during Lent. “Burying” the alleluia occurs at the conclusion of worship on Transfiguration Sunday and it is restored at either the Vigil of Easter or Easter Sunday. A Lenten acclamation replaces the alleluia verse in preparation for hearing the Gospel.





THE POINSETTIAS DECORATING THE CHURCH  
ON CHRISTMAS EVE WERE GIVEN :

In Memory of :

My husband Erik, who passed away 9  
years ago today by Anita.

My Parents, Jim & Shirley Woodward by  
Anne Woodward

Jamie Oberholtzer and Wayne Thoen by  
Bonnie Jensen

Our grandparents, Alan & Irma Anderson  
by Erick & Annika

My Baby daughter, Helen by Brad

My Parents by Brad

My husband, Keith by Cathi

My parents and my grandchildren, Grace  
& Clarence by Cathi

Family Members by Erik & Grete Hansen



## FAT SUNDAY AEBLSKIVER BUNCH

Sunday, February 11, 2023

Following worship

~Free will Offering~


Aebleskivers, Medisterpølse fruit coffee Juice & Milk

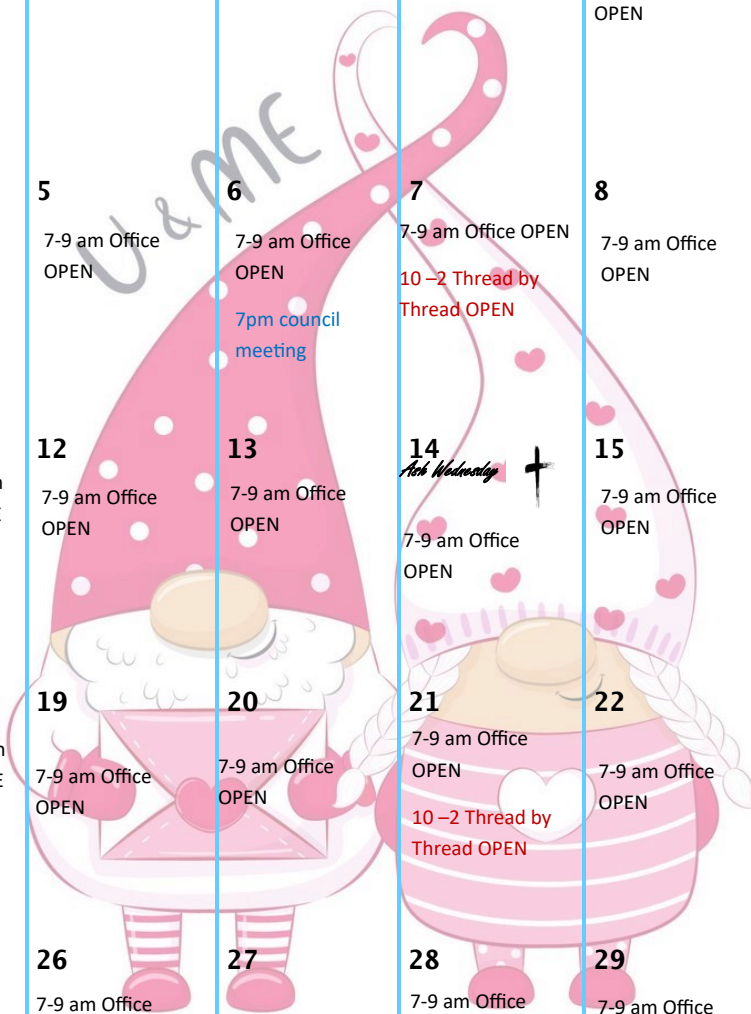
# January 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<b>1</b> <i>Happy</i>	<b>2</b> 7-9 am Office OPEN	<b>3</b> 7-9 am Office	<b>4</b> 7-9 am Office OPEN 7pm council mtg.	<b>5</b> 7-9 am Office OPEN 8 am - 3 pm RUSD Transition class	<b>6</b>
	Office closed					
<b>7</b> 9:30 Worship In person & ONLINE	<b>8</b> 7-9 am Office OPEN	<b>9</b> 7-9 am Office OPEN 7p m council meeting	<b>10</b> 7-9 am Office OPEN	<b>11</b> 7-9 am Office OPEN	<b>12</b> 7-9 am Office OPEN 8 am - 3 pm RUSD Transition class	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> 9:30 Wor- ship In person & ONLINE 10:30 a.	<b>15</b> 7-9 am Office OPEN	<b>16</b> 7-9 am Office OPEN	<b>17</b> 7-9 am Office OPEN 10-2 Thread by Thread OPEN	<b>18</b> 7-9 am Office OPEN	<b>19</b> 7-9 am Office OPEN 8 am - 3 pm RUSD Transition class	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> 9:30 Worship In person & ONLINE 10:30 am	<b>22</b> 7-9 am Office OPEN	<b>23</b> 7-9 am Office OPEN	<b>24</b> 7-9 am Office OPEN	<b>25</b> 7-9 am Office OPEN	<b>26</b> 7-9 am Office OPEN	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> 9:30 Worship In person & ONLINE 10:30 a. Congrega- tional Meeting /	<b>29</b> 7-9 am Office OPEN	<b>30</b> 7-9 am Office OPEN	<b>31</b> 7-9 am Office OPEN			

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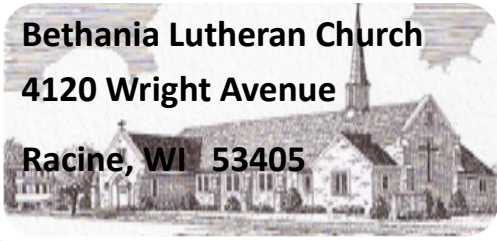
# February 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 7-9 am Office OPEN	2 7-9 am Office OPEN  8a.m. to 3p.m. RUSD Transition class	3
4 9:30 Worship In person & ONLINE  10:30 a. m Coffee hour	5 7-9 am Office OPEN	6 7-9 am Office OPEN  7pm council meeting	7 7-9 am Office OPEN  10-2 Thread by Thread OPEN	8 7-9 am Office OPEN	9 7-9 am Office OPEN –  8a.m. to 3p.m. RUSD Transition class	10
11 9:30 Worship In person & ONLINE  10:30 a. m Coffee hour	12 7-9 am Office OPEN	13 7-9 am Office OPEN	14 <i>Ash Wednesday</i>  7-9 am Office OPEN	15 7-9 am Office OPEN	16 7-9 am Office OPEN  8a.m. to 3p.m. RUSD Transition class	17
18 9:30 Worship In person & ONLINE  10:30 a. m Coffee Hour	19 7-9 am Office OPEN	20 7-9 am Office OPEN	21 7-9 am Office OPEN  10-2 Thread by Thread OPEN	22 7-9 am Office OPEN	23 7-9 am Office OPEN  8a.m. to 3p.m. RUSD Transition class	24
25 9:30 Worship In person & ONLINE  10:30 a. m Coffee hour	26 7-9 am Office OPEN	27 7-9 am Office OPEN	28 7-9 am Office OPEN	29 7-9 am Office OPEN		





**Bethania Lutheran Church**  
**4120 Wright Avenue**  
**Racine, WI 53405**



*Place Stamps  
here*

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