



THE BETHANIA BLADE

May/June 2025

Dear People of Bethania,

As May begins, we continue with two strong ministries: the **Meal Site** on Sunday, May 4, and **Thread-by-Thread** on the first and third Wednesdays, May 7 and 21. It's important to continue to support these efforts which respond to Jesus's parable in Matthew 25 – 'I was hungry and you fed me, naked and you clothed me.' Check out the announcements elsewhere in this newsletter to plan your participation.

We also are embarking on **two new ministries** at Bethania. One is a formalizing of something that's been building in recent years: cooperation between five of our ELCA congregations in Racine: Bethania, Journey in Faith, Living Faith, Redeemer, and United. We've shared midweek Lenten worship. This year we extended it to Holy Week worship. Several of the congregations have been doing Confirmation education together. We are now going to build on those efforts, meeting quarterly to plan joint efforts at ministry, continuing and extending what has been happening. We are talking about, for example, adding elementary age education to the Confirmation programming. We are calling ourselves the **Racine Collective**. We meet this month; stay tuned for more information!

The second new ministry is one that we've been exploring and planning for a year or so. At the Annual Meeting in January, we voted overwhelming to embark on it: the **Reconciling in Christ** process of evaluating the quality of Bethania's welcoming spirit, especially to groups who have not always felt welcome at church, such as LGBTQ people.

This past Sunday (April 27) I preached on the importance of undergoing this process for the church's continuing journey to get out from under the influence of the nationalistic thinking that has plagued us for more than a thousand years. When I say "nationalistic thinking," I'm talking about the habit of always seeing our human relationships in terms of good and bad, us and them – the thinking, in short, that keeps humanity mired in violent, deadly divisions. This thinking is so much of a habit that we have lost sight of some basic insights of the Gospel. The Reconciling in Christ process is vital to nothing less than living more faithfully into the Gospel message.

An example I used on Sunday involves how our habit of thinking in nationalistic terms of Us-vs-Them can even unwittingly influence our translation of the Bible. The NRSV translates John 20:23 as, "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." This incorrect translation leaves the door open to the consequences of our Us-vs-Them habit of thinking. We forgive the many sins common to most of us. And the supposed sins we

choose to retain are those of only a certain group of people, who become one of “Them.” This is what we’ve done with LGBTQ people, singling out their supposed ‘sins’ relating to sexual orientation and gender experience. Instead of listening to their experience of having been created by God on the diverse spectrum of God’s good creation, we retain their ‘sins,’ thus creating one of the Them-groups that *sinfully* maintains our sense of order in terms of Us-vs-Them.

When we translate John 20:23 correctly, within the whole of the New Testament Gospel message, we come to see that the big sin involved with the church’s thinking about LGBTQ people has been *our* sin of Us-vs-Them thinking. A more correct translation of John 20:23 is, “Of whomever you forgive sins, they are forgiven them; whomever you hold fast are held fast.” There’s no retaining of sins that leaves the door open to our Us-vs-Them games that have had such hurtful and even deadly consequences. There’s only holding each other fast in this Gospel community, where God is creating one new humanity in place of all the divisions we *sinfully* rely on (Eph 2:15). We are baptized into the oneness of a community where the old means of divisiveness no longer divide us (Gal 3:27-28). We are able to follow God’s own lead in ceasing to hold (‘retain’) sins against each other, living into a Ministry of Reconciliation, because God in Christ is reconciling the whole world (2 Cor 5:17-19). Dear friends in Christ, embarking on the Reconciling in Christ process can be

a key to purging the last of our Us-vs-Them nationalistic thinking and to thus more faithfully living into the Ministry of Reconciliation to which we are called.

Please prayerfully consider how you will participate in this vital Reconciling in Christ process.
Peace, Pastor Paul

Date	Communion Assistant	Reader	Building host, offering & cross	Coffee Hour	Altar Flowers
May 4	John & Robin Barnes	John Barnes	John Barnes		
May 11	Julie Hansen & Vicki Thiery	Julie Hansen	Ed Young	Altar Guild	
May 18	Kelly Imhoff & Jerod Alderson	Kelly Imhoff	Kelly Imhoff		
May 26	Brad Larsen & Jeff Alderson	Brad Larsen	Brad Larsen		
June 1	Jeff Alderson & Brad Larsen	Anne Woodward	Jeff Alderson		
June 8	John & Robin Barnes	Robin Barnes	John Barnes	Altar Guild	Jane Spencer
June 15	Julie Hansen & Vicki Thiery	Vicki Thiery	Ed Young		
June 22	Kelly Imhoff & Jerod Alderson	Jerod Alderson	Kelly Imhoff		
June 29	Brad Larsen & Jeff Alderson	Anita Nielsen	Brad Larsen		

May & June Readings

Date	First Reading	Second Reading	Gospel
May 4	Acts 9: 1-20	Revelation 5: 11-14	John 21: 1-19
May 11	Acts 9:36-43	Revelation 7:9-17	John 10: 22-30
May 18	Acts 11:1-18	Revelation 21:1-5	John 13:31-35
May 26	Acts 16:9-15	Revelation 21:10 -22:5	John 14: 23-29
June 1	Acts 16:16-34	Revelation 22:12-21	John 17:20-26
June 8	Acts 2:1-21	Romans 8: 14-17	John 14: 8-17, 25-27
June 15	Proverbs 8: 1-4, 22-31	Romans 5:1-5	John 16:12-15
June 22	Isaiah 65:1-9	Galatians 3:23-29	Luke 8:26-39
June 29	1 Kings 19:15-16, 19-21	Galatians 5:1, 13-25	Luke 9:51-62

JUNE 8 IS PENTECOST SUNDAY

WEAR RED!



May Birthdays

3- Kyle Webster
4- Cassandra Dittmer
5- Mitchell Rybarik
8 -Mike Imhoff
9 -Zach Barnes
11 – Debra O'Connor
12 – Aaron Kechter
16 – William Mueller
19 -Donna Meldgaard
20 -Jarod Alderson
29-Karen Fernandez
31 -Grete Loschenkohl

June Birthdays

5 -Sharon Leger
7-Bronn Dittmer
11 -Dennise Munch
13 -Ingaborg Staursbol
26 -Dan Hagermann
26 – Magnus McGaughey
28 – Anita Nielsen
30 – Shelly Alderson



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

May Anniversaries

10 – Jason & Jessica
Kechter

22 – Mike & Kelly Imhoff

25- Zach & Savannah
Barnes

June Anniversaries

9 -Don & Julie Hansen

12 – Don & Lisa Rybarik

14 – John & Robin Barnes

19 – Ed & Jacci Young

20 – Rick & Vicki
McGaughey

21 – Bill & Liz Krause

Bethania Lutheran Church

4120 Wright Avenue

Racine, WI 53405

262-632-7267

bethania@wi.twcbc.com

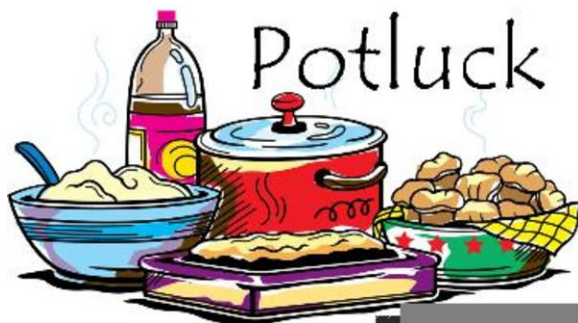
Reverend Paul Nuechterlein, Pastor
Cathi Webster, Administrative Assistant
William Mueller, Church Musician

Council: Jeff Alderson (President), Kelly
Imhoff (Vice President), Ed Young
(Treasurer), Cathi Webster (Secretary),
Brad Larsen (Property), Shelly Alderson,
and John Barnes





Do you have a 2025 Graduate in your family? Please let the church office know so we can recognize them on Sunday June 29th.



Join Us **Sunday, June 29th** following worship for a Potluck. Please bring a dish to pass. **The church will provide drinks, plates, napkins and silverware.**



**BETHANIA HOSTS THE COMMUNITY MEAL ON
SUNDAY MAY 4, 2025 AT LIVING FAITH LUTHERAN
CHURCH, 2915 Wright Avenue, Racine.**

Please see Jeff or Shelly Alderson if you can help.

2025 LACE SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS ARE
CURRENTLY AVAILABLE. The deadline to return them is
May 31, 2025 at 4:00 p.m.

The poster is decorated with various floral illustrations. At the top, there are pink and purple blossoms on branches. On the left and right sides, there are clusters of pink, orange, and white daisies with green leaves. At the bottom, there are more pink and purple blossoms on branches.

Spring Rummage SALE

Living Faith 2915 Wright Avenue
(please use south entrance)
Handicapped Accessible to Fellowship Hall

MAY 15TH, 9AM-3PM
WITH NACHOS

MAY 16TH, 9AM-6PM
BAKE SALE & HOT DOGS/SLOPPY JOE'S

MAY 17TH, 9AM-NOON
1/2 PRICE DAY & CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE: COLLECTIBLES, HOME DECOR AND
HOUSEHOLD GALORE, FURNITURE, TOYS, BOOKS, GARAGE TREASURES INCLUDING
A SNOW BLOWER, CLOTHING FOR THE FAMILY, SHOES, PURSES, JEWELRY AND MORE!

"Your Trash is someone Else's Treasure"
AND WE HAVE IT ALL!

THE EASTER FLOWERS DECORATING THE CHANCEL ON EASTER WERE:

In Loving Memory of:

Jaime & Sue by Bonnie Jensen

Our Parents Scott and Pam Kechter by Vicki & Tom
Thiery

Our grandparents Alan & Irma Anderson by Erick &
Annika Nielsen

My parents, Jim & Shirley Woodward by Anne
Woodward

Family Members by Erik & Grete Hansen

Loved Ones by Jeff & Shelly Alderson

Family & Friends by Cathi Webster

My dad, mom and Baby by Brad Larsen

In Honor of:

My children, Kim and Tom by Anita Nielsen

By Debra Beavers



RECONCILED IN CHRIST

Reconciled to Christ refers to being restored to a state of harmony and friendship with God through Jesus Christ, as described in 2 Corinthians 5:18-21 and other biblical passages. This reconciliation involves the restoration of a broken relationship and the forgiveness of sins, achieved through Christ's sacrifice.

Key aspects of being reconciled to Christ:

- **Divine Initiative:**

God initiated the reconciliation, sending Christ to atone for humanity's sins.

- **Christ's Sacrifice:**

Jesus' death and resurrection provided the basis for reconciliation, bridging the gap between humanity and God.

- **Forgiveness of Sins:**

Through Christ, God forgives the sins of those who believe and are reconciled.

- **New Relationship:**

Reconciliation establishes a new relationship with God, characterized by peace, forgiveness, and a restored fellowship.

- **Ministry of Reconciliation:**

Those who are reconciled to Christ are called to share the message of reconciliation with others.

Scriptural References:

- **2 Corinthians 5:18-21:**

Describes God's reconciliation through Christ and the ministry of reconciliation entrusted to believers.

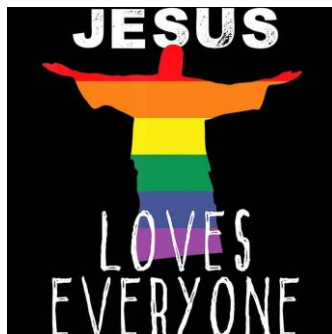
- **Ephesians 2:16:**

Mentions the cross as the instrument of reconciliation, bringing together humanity and God.

- **Colossians 1:20:**

States that through Christ, all things in heaven and earth are reconciled to God.

In essence, being reconciled to Christ means being restored to a loving, harmonious relationship with God through the forgiveness and redemption offered by Jesus Christ.





*Jeff O., Bonnie Jensen, Anita Nielsen, Grete
Loschenkohl, Bettie Liston, Jean Dragan,
Brad Larsen, Tom Nielsen, Cathi Webster,
Jim & Sharon Leger, Melanie Webster,
Heather Toshi*



Thank you to Sharon Leger and
Jacque Majeed for picking up and arranging the Easter
Flowers.

Thank you to Erik Hansen for repairing baseboards in
the fellowship hall.

Thank you to Jeff and Shelly for printing the bulletins
during March and April.

CARE AND CONCERN LIST

Please consider sending a sending a note of encouragement to someone on this list. These are people who are dealing with challenges of health, mobility and other challenges.

JOYCE THOMSEN

2935 Old Mill Drive
Racine, WI 53405

262-632-5678

MARILYN PETERSON

Pleasant Pointe
Assisted Living

8500 Corporate Dr.

#403

GRETE LOSCHENKOHL

Unknown

Racine, WI 53406

262-898-3239

TOM NIELSEN

Prospect Heights

2015 Prospect St.

Racine, WI 53404



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2 8-3 RUSD -Hall	3
4 9:30 Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour	5	6	7 10-2 Txt OPEN	8	9 8-3 RUSD -Hall	10
11 9:30 Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour	12	13	14	15	16 8-3 RUSD -Hall	17
18 9:30 Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour	19	20	21 10-2 Txt OPEN	22	23 8-3 RUSD -Hall	24
25 9:30 Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour	26 Memorial Day	27	28	29	30 8-3 RUSD -Hall	31

June 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9:30 Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour	2	3	4 10-2 T&T OPEN	5	6	7
8 Pentecost 9:30 Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour	9	10	11	12	13	14
15 9:30 Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour	16	17	18 10-2 T&T OPEN	19	20	21
22 9:30 Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour	23	24	25	26	27	28
29 9:30 Worship 10:30 Potluck	30					

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