



# Bethesda News

February 2017

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Bethesda Lutheran Church: a congregation of S.W.I.M  
South West Iowa Ministries, Western Iowa Synod, ELCA  
2475 140<sup>th</sup> St., Clarinda, IA 51632

<http://swimwebsite.weebly.com>

Sunday School @ 10:00 a.m.

Fellowship Coffee @ 10:15 a.m.

Worship @ 11:00 a.m.



Marietta Nelson Bittle ~ Phone: 712-890-9882 email: [swiministries@gmail.com](mailto:swiministries@gmail.com)

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## ***A message from Marietta***

Hello!

I am so looking forward to meeting you all and getting to know everyone. My name is Marietta Nelson-Bittle. I am a student at Wartburg Seminary in Dubuque and will begin this month to serve Bethesda, Strand and Tabor Lutheran churches in a pastoral role. And I'm pretty excited about it! I hope you all are, too.

I have been married to my husband, Brad, for 25 years. We have three children, Ian, 22, Maeve, 18, and Caroline, 16. Ian and Maeve are college students. Caroline is a junior at Glenwood Community High School. We've lived in Glenwood for four years. Prior to that, Brad served 21 years on active duty as an engineer in the US Navy.

I grew up in the Reformed Church and became a Lutheran in 1995 when we moved to the Seattle area. I was drawn to Luther's understanding of grace, the beautiful worship liturgy, weekly communion and community that truly understood caring for the neighbor. I attended two years of the Western Iowa Synod's Lay School and took online courses through Wartburg as I discerned a call to ministry. This summer, as I turned 46, I applied for candidacy through the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and also to be a seminary student at Wartburg. After many interviews, essays and paperwork, I was approved for both. The program I am enrolled in allows me to serve in a pastoral role as I attend school. I am particularly excited by this, as I am a "learn by doing" type of person.

And speaking of doing ... I am anxious to get started! I officially begin work on Feb. 1. I will see the folks at Tabor and Bethesda on Feb. 5 for worship and Strand on Feb. 12 for worship. You can get in touch me at [swiministries@gmail.com](mailto:swiministries@gmail.com) or my cell, 712 890 9882.

Thank you so much for this opportunity to serve the Lord alongside you.

Marietta



The February meeting for the Bethesda Women of the ELCA will be a Work Day on Tuesday, February 14th beginning at 9:00 A.M. The Executive Committee will be in charge of activities. Call Rogene if you are willing to furnish soup or dessert.



In recognition of the 500 year Anniversary of the Reformation we will learn about our faith in a new class. (see attached flyer & return signup sheet to Shelly Warner's church mail box or email [Shellyvw@mediacombb.net](mailto:Shellyvw@mediacombb.net)) Sign up By Jan. 29, 2017 for this Bethesda Adult Education to be held before Church during coffee at 10 a.m. We will order books for all who sign up. Classes will continue each Sunday until we have covered the material (Hopefully before Summer) Classes begin first Sunday in February.

January and February are "DIPES and WIPES" months at Bethesda. We will be collecting Diapers and Baby Wipes to donate to Southwest Iowa Families' Stork Nest Program. Items may be left in the basement on the "Collection Table" or donate money in the offering plate, or give to Lori Lastine. Please put it in an envelope marked "DIPES and WIPES"! Stay tuned for more information about the Storks Nest program at SWI Families. We will be sharing tidbits each Sunday during announcements.



*Thank You*

***Pastor Ann will be ordained soon and will serve St. John's and Fremont Lutheran churches. We appreciate her time at Bethesda and wish her well as she continues her ministry.***

***Thank you to Sheila Freed and Stanley Johnson for continuing to serve on the church council and to Mark Lund for continuing to be our SWIM representative.***

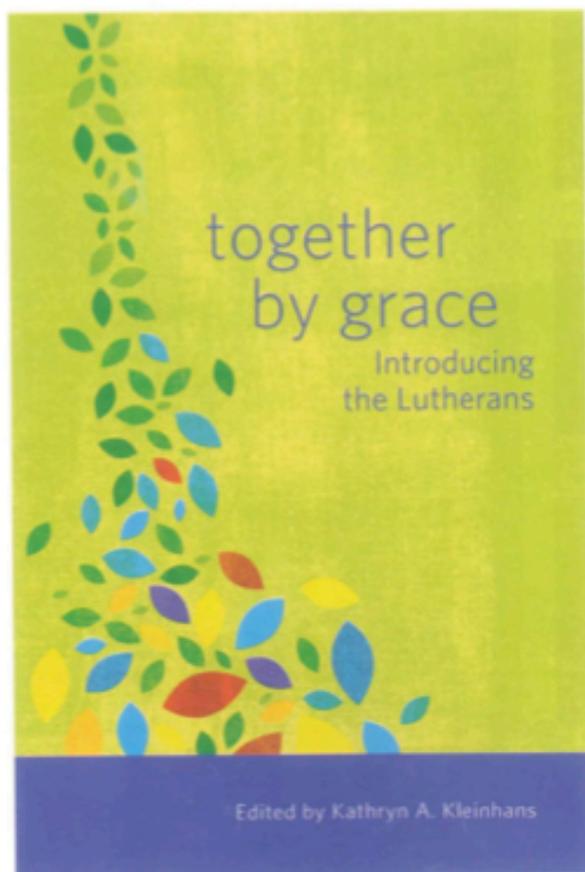


We are having a soup dinner following church services on February 19th to welcome Marietta and get to know her. Soup will be provided and members asked to bring deserts. Lori Lastine is in charge so more details will be forth coming. Also, the basement windows on the parsonage have now been installed.

*Martin Luther quote on Serving Others...*

"To find Christ in such poverty, and what his swaddling clothes and manger signify, are explained ... that his poverty teaches how we should find him in our neighbors, the lowliest and the most needy; and his swaddling clothes are the holy Scriptures; that in actual life we should incline to the needy; and in our studies and contemplative life only to the Scriptures; in order that Christ alone may become the man of both lives and that he may everywhere stand before us."

Who are the Lutherans? Engage the Reformation today with a colorful new study for adults about Lutheran faith and mission



## Together by Grace: Introducing the Lutherans

Kathryn A. Kleinhans, editor

Who are the Lutherans, and what are they all about, both historically and around the world today? Some of our most gifted pastors, scholars, and writers here offer a glimpse at Lutheran faith, worship, and mission. An online leader guide is also available for use with groups.

### Table of Contents excerpt

- Part 1: The Faith We Confess
- Part 2: From the Sixteenth Century to Today
- Part 3: Worship and the Arts
- Part 4: Faith Active in Love
- Part 5: Being Lutheran Together in a Wider World
- Part 6: Voices and Places—Stories from the Global Lutheran Family

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## *A letter from Pastor Tera*

Greetings to you all in the name of Jesus Christ,

As I write this, I look forward to going out to shovel the drifted snow from in front of the house and garage door. Predictions for a colder and snowier winter in the Dakotas were right. Actually, they were probably a bit low. Before Christmas, I was saying, "It is beginning to look a lot like the UP around here." By the end of the Christmas blizzard, we had passed up the snow total around where I grew up, and the regularity of sub-zero temps have become normal.

Next week I'm taking a personal retreat at Spirit in the Desert Retreat Center in Arizona, and hope that the week will feed my spirit as well as provide some warmth that will carry me through to Spring. I'm really investing a lot of hope in the coming of Spring, and looking forward to a trip down to south-west Iowa! My plan is to be there from April 21-24, and hope that I can connect with some of you while I'm there. So mark your calendars!

As it does for all of us at some point, my life has taken an unexpected turn. After being with you back in 2013-14, I returned to seminary, and during that last year, I went to Jamaica to visit. That visit didn't go very well, and I knew there were many issues in the relationship that needed to be attended to.

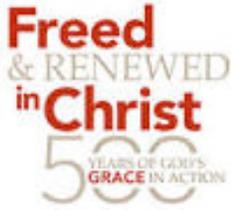
I felt like things were moving forward, but by the time I moved to South Dakota, I had some worries. Believing they were issues we could overcome, I made arrangements with an immigration attorney to begin the process of bringing them to the States after my June visit. As we continued to talk about our issues, I again thought we were moving in a positive direction. However, during my visit last June, my worries were justified. I have since filed for divorce, which should be granted in February or March.

This last seven months has been a very difficult time, but I am blessed to be surrounded by a supportive community here in Bison, as well as family and friends near and far who continue to support and pray for me. I appreciate your prayers as I learn to live with this loss and the changes it brings.

While this has been a trial, I've decided to make some changes and improvements in my life so that I can better care for myself and the people I serve. I've changed my eating habits, and practiced better self-care, including making the best use of my time off. I've used this time to find ways to connect with friends who shine the Light of Christ into my life. I've also used the time to participate in activities that show me God's love.

I was blessed to be able to go see the Minneapolis Art Institute's exhibit on Martin Luther and the Reformation in light of the coming of the Reformation's 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. While the weather didn't cooperate on the way there and back, the exhibit was well worth the stress of the drive. I've been leading discussion on Luther's Large Catechism, and have found that very interesting and filled with grace. If you have a chance, I would suggest it. I pray that you are doing well, and that we will see each other in April!

Blessings,  
Pastor Tera Lowe



**Morning Worship @ 11:00 A.M.**  
**Sunday School @ 10:00 A.M.**  
**Fellowship Coffee @ 10:15 A.M.**  
**Communion first and last Sunday of the month**

**Preaching Schedule at Bethesda**

Feb. 5 Marietta Nelson Bittle  
Feb. 12 Pastor Gordon Scott  
Feb. 19 Marietta Nelson Bittle  
Feb. 26 Pastor Gordon Scott

**Worship assistants in February**

Greeters Todd & Nikki Carlson  
Reader Lori Lastine  
Communion Asst. Greg Wallin  
Ushers Todd & Nikki Carlson  
Dwight Sederburg  
Dennis Meier, Daniel Meier  
Altar Guild Diane & Chris Campbell

**Coffee Servers**

Feb. 5  
Feb. 12  
Feb 19  
Feb 26

**February Birthdays**

7 Trisha Johnson  
11 Andrea Nelson  
14 Sara Camilli  
20 Steve Johnson  
23 Nikki Carlson  
23 Anthony Carr  
23 Darwin Hanson  
23 Emma Jimmerson  
27 Yvonne Johnson  
28 Joan Warner  
29 Alex Campbell

**Feb. 5<sup>th</sup> Superbowl Party at Freeds.**

Sandwiches and drinks provided.  
Please bring snacks.

*Upcoming Events*

February 5 10:00 a.m. Together By Grace class  
February 5 Superbowl party at Freeds  
February 8 7:00 p.m. Church council  
February 14 Soup dinner following worship  
February 21 9:00 a.m. WELCA workday  
Feb. 25 March newsletter items are due. Send to Yvonne ([johnsony@myfmtc.com](mailto:johnsony@myfmtc.com))



**Happy Valentine's Day from LSI!**  
*"We love because he first loved us." 1 John 4:19*

Lutheran Services in Iowa's (LSI) mission is about love: responding to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. We give thanks for all the ministry partners of both individuals and congregations who help share this love for Iowa children, families, and adults!

We see this love in newly adopted children and their families, in teens who learn to trade self-harm for self-worth, in refugee farmers who share their love of the land with the Des Moines community, in struggling parents who learn positive ways to build love and trust with their children and in so many other moments of hope every day. Thank you for the love you share and create through LSI.

Happy Valentine's Day!

*Our Mission: Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at [www.LSIowa.org](http://www.LSIowa.org) and [www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa](https://www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa).*

### **Building Brighter Futures**

Learning new things can always be difficult. Especially when you're learning to be a first-time parent.

Sarah's first son, Mark, was a happy baby. But as he grew into his toddler years, Sarah was unsure how to handle his behavioral changes. When he started acting out at home, she felt herself growing more frustrated.

Sarah knew she needed help. That's when she turned to LSI's Parents as Teachers program. Parents as Teachers provides free and voluntary parent education and support for families in Boone and Story County, with children up to age 5.

The program was with Sarah every step of the way, providing home visits, introducing her to community support groups, and teaching her how to adjust to Mark's developmental stages.

"With help from Parents as Teachers, I learned his behavior was just a phase, and they told me it was normal," Sarah says. "Before, I thought there was a problem with me, or that I wasn't a good parent."

Mark, now 3, entered preschool last fall, and Sarah is proud to see how much progress he has made. He's meeting new friends and at home, he's become the best big brother to his baby sister, Hannah.

Learning how to handle Mark's developmental stages has made Sarah more confident in raising Hannah. She knows what to expect as Hannah grows up, and she's ready to face each day and create the brightest future for her children.

"Parents as Teachers helped me so much with my parenting," Sarah says. "The program is the best thing I have."