



# Bethesda News

March 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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## Weather, Identity and Lent

Isn't the weather weird? I'm looking out my window this afternoon (late February) and there are little green tufts poking up through the dead grass in my lawn. It's been near 70 degrees over the last week, and today rain has "greened up" everything. Perhaps when this newsletter lands in your hands (or your inbox), our winter will be back to normal and we'll be able to complain about the cold and ice again.

Speaking of weather, few weeks ago during a Bible study we got a little off topic (OK, a lot off topic) and began to talk about how weather is so important in our lives here in Iowa. So much so that we talk about it a lot, probably much more than people who live in other places. It has such a large influence on our lives, our livelihoods and what we can and can't do, so we tend to focus on it. It shapes our identity and gives us a sense of belonging, even when we tend to complain about it and worry over it.

Speaking of identity ... you may remember that during my children's sermons on Feb. 5, I taught the kids about their identity in Christ. I taught them something I like to do with my own children and with the children and teens at churches I've worked with over the years. As you make the sign of the cross on another person's forehead, you look them in the eyes and say, "you are a blessed and beloved child of God." This affirmation of their identity as a named and claimed child of God is a powerful statement. We might be farmers, weather watchers, moms, uncles, daughters, teachers, florists, grandmas, carpenters, brothers and friends. But above all, we are children of God and together we are the people of God. This would make a great Lenten practice. Make a point for the next 40 days of reminding yourself daily of your identity in Christ or perhaps someone near to you - a sibling, a spouse, a friend or a co-worker.

Speaking of Lent .. it is beginning! Remember Ash Wednesday service on March 1 at 7 p.m. Barbara and Stanley Johnson will be leading this service and throughout Lent on Wednesdays. They are using an excellent ELCA resource called Into the Wild. Please plan to join together each Wednesday as we journey through Lent.

Peace,  
Marietta

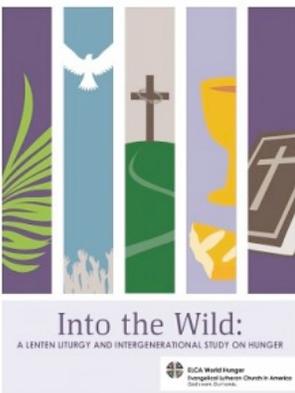


**The Lydia Circle** will meet at the home of Connie Freed on Thursday, March 16<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m. Marietta Nelson-Bittle will lead the Bible Study from the *March Gather* magazine.

**On March 30** the Bethesda Women of the ELCA will visit our Friends at The Stanton Care Center at 2:30 p.m. Mary Ann Vanderholm will greet the folks and Marietta Nelson-Bittle will give devotions. Yvonne Johnson will add *A Musical Touch*. We are looking forward to visiting Nita Lind and other residents at the Care Center.

**During the month of March** it is time to replenish our kitchen supplies at the church. Please help us by bringing any of the following needs; paper towels, small paper plates, Kleenex, 8 oz. Styrofoam cups, decaf. coffee, or any other items that you would like to give to this Kitchen Shower.

Bethesda Women of the ELCA are taking a chili and dessert break during Work Day on February 14<sup>th</sup>. Two fleece quilts were made for Lutheran World Relief, cards were cut and the pastor's office was cleaned.



Everyone is invited to join in the beginning celebration of the season of Lent by attending the Ash Wednesday Service at 7:00 PM March 1st. Worship will include the Imposition of Ashes and an introduction to the theme for the five Wednesday night Lenten Services "Into the Wild".

This five week series builds around Luke 4:1-21, and will reflect on baptism, hunger, power, faith and the good news Jesus proclaims to the poor, oppressed and the captive. This series is accessibility for all generations, so children and young adults are encouraged to attend.



A large number of people enjoyed soup, salad and dessert after morning worship, February 19<sup>th</sup> to welcome our new pastor, Mariette Nelson Bittle.

Pictured are Sheila Freed, Chris Adcock, Mariette and the clean up crew Christie Vanderholm, Brian and Laura Kirchert.





## Special Prayer Request for LSI's Refugee Community Services

As our nation stands divided by differing stances and opinions, we unite as brothers and sisters in Christ who believe in his love for all people. This week, we ask that you join with us in prayer for our refugee brothers and sisters in Iowa and across the world.

--Please ask God to give strength, encouragement, and perseverance to newly arrived refugees as they settle into a new community.

--Please pray that God would provide neighbors, co-workers, and friends who would encourage and befriend the refugees in our communities.

--Please pray for our nation to remain a welcoming place to those who are fleeing violence and persecution.

--Finally, please keep our LSI staff members in your prayers, as well – that God would encourage their hearts and continue to give them great joy as they serve our communities across Iowa.

*'For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.'* Matthew 25:35-36

If you have any questions, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI's director of philanthropy and church relations. She may be reached at 563-676-2065 or [deborah.whitford@lsiowa.org](mailto:deborah.whitford@lsiowa.org).

### *Martin Luther quotes on music...*

*"I have no use for cranks who despise music, because it is a gift of God. Next after Word of God, I give to music the highest place and the greatest honor."*



*"The devil, the originator of sorrowful anxieties and restless troubles, flees before the sound of music almost as much as before the Word of God... Music is a gift and grace of God, not an invention of men. Thus it drives out the devil and makes people cheerful. Then one forgets all wrath, impurity, and other devices."*

*"Music is the art of the prophets and the gift of God."*

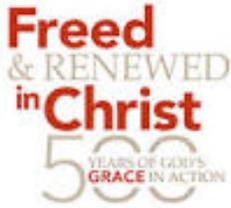


There are several good reasons to listen quietly to the prelude. It provides a quiet time to leave the busyness of our world outside the sanctuary and prepare to meet God. It also respects those who have prepared the music and those who want to listen. Now that we are video taping the service, your conversation will be heard by everyone who watches the tape!



**Food  
Collection**

The Bethesda will again be collecting food for the needy during Lent. Check your bulletin for more information.



**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**

March 5 Marietta Nelson Bittle  
March 12 Pastor Gordon Scott  
March 19 Marietta Nelson Bittle  
March 26 Pastor Gordon Scott

### **Worship assistants in March**

Greeters Chris & Diane Campbell  
Reader Mike Freed  
Communion Asst. Christie Vanderholm  
Ushers Dennis Boger & David Jones  
Chris & Christie Vanderholm  
Altar Guild Sally Lund, Karen Morrow

### **Coffee Servers**

March 5 Daniel & Jackie Meier  
March 12 Todd & Nikki Carlson  
March 19 Brian & Laura Kirchert  
March 26 Deb Wagoner & Joni Sunderman

### **March Birthdays**

2 Greg Wallin  
8 Robin Wright  
9 Margaret Johnson  
14 Chris Vanderholm  
15 Lincoln Lewellen  
26 Laine Wright  
31 David Jones

### **March Anniversaries**

1 Mike & Sheila Freed  
25 Matt & Carla Erickson  
27 Matt & Mary Fritz  
30 Darwin & Miriam Hanson

## *Upcoming Events*

Sundays 10:00 a.m. Together By Grace class  
March 1 7:00 p.m. Ash Wednesday service  
March 8, 15, 22, 29 7:00 p.m. Lenten services  
March 8 Church council following the Lenten service  
March 16 2:00 p.m. Lydia Circle at the home of Connie Freed  
March 25 April newsletter items are due. Send to Yvonne ([johnsony@myfmtc.com](mailto:johnsony@myfmtc.com))  
March 30 2:30 p.m. WELCA meeting at the Stanton Care Center

## **March 2017, LSI Bulletin/Newsletter Article and Story**

### **March is National Professional Social Work Month**

March is National Professional Social Workers Month, a time to recognize social workers and thank them for all they do. At Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI), we're grateful for our many social workers who have dedicated their lives to serving their communities!

Maybe you've never had a social worker involved in your life. Yet, whether you realize it or not, you've had the benefit of their behind-the-scenes work in your community. Social workers help people help themselves in overcoming life's most difficult circumstances or managing challenges of everyday living: poverty, abuse, mental illness, depression, addiction, disability and many other situations.

Thank you to all of Iowa's social workers, especially those at LSI. We're proud of you.

*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).*

### **Finding Calm**

Nine-year-old JD lost track of how many days he was removed from school.

He would throw things in the classroom, or rip up his papers. Almost every day, he was separated from his classmates and taken to the "Intervention Room," an empty classroom where children have the opportunity to calm down and refocus. But nothing worked.

That's when JD's dad, Jerry, turned to LSI. With his team of LSI therapists and caseworkers, JD has found an interesting way to control his anger: his rock collection.

He's always had a love of gathering "cool, unique-looking" rocks, and AriAnna, his LSI therapist, has incorporated that into their sessions together.

"Rocks can be used as great relaxation tools, and he spent a lot of time pouring over the rocks I had in my office," AriAnna said.

JD started his rock collection with AriAnna and began bringing it to school with him. He carries his favorites in his "positive choice pouch."

"When I hold them in my hand and breathe, it calms me down," says JD.

Jerry says LSI's help has been life-changing for his son. "He's making better choices now. I'm really proud of him," he says.

This year, JD has been removed from class only once, and for only 15 minutes.

"He has a different identity at school now," AriAnna says. "He's creative and insightful. Now, he knows what he sees in himself, and he wants to share that with others."