



THE BANNER

February 2021

Hoping for New Life

A Sermon for the Feast of The Presentation of Our Lord (Luke 2: 22-40)

As I sit down to write this, it is five days before Groundhog Day, February 2. This day also marks 40 days since we celebrated Christmas. It is a day for those who enjoy trying to figure out how much more winter we are supposed to endure. This depends on whether or not a groundhog sees his shadow. If his shadow were not seen would bring some hope in those suffering through the winter blahs with spring "just around the corner." Who does not look forward to the warmth and new life that spring brings? I know I do, and it is my hunch that you too are in this camp as well.

Winter is not the only thing that get us down. This past year of 2020 was indeed quite a challenge to put it mildly. The Virus pandemic affected every one of our lives and continue to do so in some ways. It certainly altered our worship here at church. The summer turmoil in this country was something with the riots made us all feel a bit uneasy and left many of us wondering how to respond. Some of the answers from the political class had many of us wondering what they have been drinking. We have just come off a presidential election that still has many questions in the minds of many in our country. Many are asking, "Can we trust the system and those in charge?" At the same time many are thrilled how things turned out. Then the nation's capital was invaded by those who had no intention of peaceful protest and were properly called out by both sides of the political spectrum. And there is movement to silence dissenting voices from those who do not hold the majority. I continue to pray that our government leaders will take a

step back and listen to all voices and remember they in place to serve and not to be served. Somebody told me, "Good luck with that." But I still hope.

Having been through a strange year, putting away Christmas for another year, and beginning to see the realities of what the new administration will do in the coming year and following I continue to pray. With Ground Hog Day coming and the predictions that things I hope for the renewal that a "spring" can bring.

If you were to follow the Biblical narrative according to Saint Luke, chapter 2, 40 days after Christmas marks another day, the commemoration of the Presentation of the Lord. It was a day full of hope for Simeon, a Priest who had been hoping for Israel's redemption. God had promised Simeon that he would not die before seeing God's.

Messiah. On this day Simeon's hope was fulfilled. Mary and Joseph bring the baby Jesus to the Temple to fulfill their duties as parents according to law to present their first born to the Lord. They bring with them the offering for the poor, two turtle doves. This would also serve as Mary's purification which would take 40 days after giving birth.

When Simeon, guided by the Holy Spirit, sees Mary and Joseph holding the baby he takes the baby Jesus in his arms and blesses and praises God.

"Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory of your people Israel." Luke 2:29-32

When Simeon said, "Lord you are now letting your servant depart in peace," it was not that his shift at the Temple was ending and he was ready to go home after another hard day's work. Simeon was now ready to die. That is what he meant when he said 'depart.' The God's promise to Simeon had been fulfilled. And there he was, with Mary and Joseph holding the 40-day old baby in his arms. This was the promised one, the promised seed of Eve and Abraham. The root of Jesse. A King yet an infant. The Savior yet the suffering servant. The conqueror by shedding his own blood. The Light of the World resting in the arms of one of God's servants, Simeon.

Simeon knew he could die in peace knowing that God is faithful. The baby in his arms would die. That is what he was born to do, "for the rising and falling of many in Israel. And Mary, Jesus' mother would feel the pain like a sword piercing her soul too. So Jesus fulfilled the law that day for Simeon and for all of us. Jesus will fulfill the law on the cross so that we who cling to faith in his promise can depart in peace too.

Every night before going to sleep I recite those words of Simeon as part of my bedtime devotion. It helps me reflect on places where I have sensed Christ's presence in my life. What were those places where I saw, touched, and felt God's gift of Salvation in Jesus the Messiah? Having done that we may depart in peace. I may go to sleep (in a sense going to sleep is a kind of giving up) trusting that I am in God's tender care, knowing that because of Jesus the old Adam is put to death. And in dying to sin we live in the newness of life empowered by the Holy Spirit. It is a great mystery that Simeon teaches us. In the death of this child Jesus we receive life. By his death and burial and resurrection means our burial is not final. We too shall rise.

That was Simeon's Hope. It is our hope too. It is hope that is sure and certain because it grounded in God's promises. As the psalmist prayed, "Do not put your trust in princes, in mortal men, who cannot save. When their spirit departs, they return to the ground, on that day their plans come to nothing" (Psalm 146:3-4). Trust in God, the same God who kept His promise to Simeon. it is a hope that springs eternal with new life. May your days in the coming year be filled hope and the freshness of new life.

Pastor David Klappenbach

Bible Reading Plan for the Disciples of Bethany

...standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel...
Philippians 1:27b

Monday February 1 st	Mark 7:24-31
Tuesday February 2 nd	Luke 2:22-40 The presentation of Our Lord to the Temple
Wednesday February 3 rd	Mark 8:1:26
Thursday February 4 th	Mark 8:27-9:1
Friday February 5 th	Mark 9:2-13
Saturday February 6 th	Mark 9:14-29
Sunday February 7 th	John 7:37-46 Fifth Sunday after Epiphany
Monday February 8 th	Mark 9:30-41
Tuesday February 9 th	Mark 9:42-50
Wednesday February 10 th	Mark 10:1-16
Thursday February 11 th	Mark 10:17-31
Friday February 12 th	Mark 10:32-45
Saturday February 13 th	2 Timothy 4:1-8
Sunday February 14 th	John 12:27-36a The Transfiguration Of Our Lord-Last Sunday after Epiphany
Monday February 15 th	Deuteronomy 6:1-15
Tuesday February 16 th	Deuteronomy 6:16-25
Wednesday February 17 th	Jonah 3:1-41 Ash Wednesday

Thursday February 18 th	Deuteronomy 7:6-11
Friday February 19 th	Deuteronomy 7:12-16
Saturday February 20 th	Deuteronomy 7:17-26
Sunday February 21 st	1 Corinthians 1:18-31 First Sunday In Lent
Monday February 22 nd	Deuteronomy 8:1-20
Tuesday February 23 rd	Deuteronomy 9:1-21 Polycarp Bishop of Smyrna, Martyr, 156
Wednesday February 24 th	Acts 1:15-26
Thursday February 25 th	Deuteronomy 9:23-10:5
Friday February 26 th	Deuteronomy 10:12-22
Saturday February 27 th	Deuteronomy 11:18-8
Sunday February 28	1 Corinthians 3:11-23 Second Sunday in Lent



Request to Provide Altar Flowers for 2021

If you wish to provide altar flowers for church during 2021, please complete this form. Please place it in the offering plate or mail it to: Shirley McKiernan, 313 2nd St., Laurens, IA 50554 *Thank you.*

Name of person providing flowers: _____

Date desired: _____

Do you want to provide flowers on this same date from year to year? yes no

Information needed for Sunday bulletin:

Altar Flowers in Loving Memory of: _____

From: _____

Or Altar Flowers

From: _____

Please contact Shirley McKiernan, 841-2637, if you have any questions.



In case of emergency contact
Pastor David Klappenbach
712-841-2181 (Office)
712-841-2532 Home)
419-603-8350 (Cell)

Services are currently being live streamed on Facebook

Visit us @ <https://www.bethanylutheran-laurens.org>

Laurens Community Youth Group Board Meeting January 17, 2021

Present. Angie C., Tammy O., Pastor David K., and Linda B.

The Treasury has \$6000.00 in it. Angie C would like to return her paychecks,
But we did not have a quorum to discuss this matter.

The Youth Group will resume February 14th, 2021 from 5:00 -6:30PM with a Valentines pizza and craft party for both high school and junior high students.

Masks will be required, and social distancing will be observed. We ask students not to come if they have a cough or fever or exposure to the virus. Temperatures will be checked on arrival. We plan to meet on the second and fourth Sundays of the month. The month of February will be at the Lutheran Church.

The spaghetti dinner will be drive through in February.

Next meeting of the Board will be Sunday March 14th at 4PM.

Birthdays& Anniversaries

Name	Marriage	February	
Runneberg, John & Marci	2-05		
Pedersen, Scott		2-07	
Edge, Robert		2-14	
Van Sickle, Jim		2-16	
Runneberg, Cole		2-17	
Runneberg, Brooke		2-17	
Runneberg, Ethan		2-17	
Roling, Katy		2-20	


Ushers

February 7 Jim Hodgell

February 21 Myles Pedersen

Altar Guild for February 2021 Jan Hersom & Pat Boughey

February 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 4:00PM W/M Meeting	2 8:30AM Prayer Group 9:30AM Coffee @ BLC	3	4	5	6
7 10:30 Worship w/ Holy Communion	8	9 8:30AM Prayer Group 9:30AM Coffee @ BLC	10 7:00PM Council Mtg	11	12	13
14 Transfiguration of Our Lord 10:30 Worship 5-6:30PM-Youth Group	15	16 8:30AM Prayer Group 9:30AM Coffee @ BLC	17 7:00PM Ash Wednesday Communion Service	18	19	20
21 10:30 Worship w/ Holy Communion 5-6:30PM-Youth Group	22	23 8:30AM Prayer Group 9:30AM Coffee @ BLC	24 7:00PM Lenten Worship Service	25	26	27
28 10:30-Worship 5-6:30PM-Youth Group		<div> Bethany Lutheran Church Adult SS- 9:15 Youth SS- 9:30 Worship-1030 </div>				

Council Meeting
Bethany Lutheran Church
December 9, 2020
7:00 PM

Present:

Tom Anderson
Dean Armstrong
Rich Ehlers
Jim Hodgell
Pastor Klappenbach
Mark Raasch
Myles Pedersen
Linda Galbraith

Others in attendance: Marilyn Ehlers, Shirley Pedersen

Tom Anderson called the meeting to order and noted that we had a quorum.

Shirley Pedersen provided a devotion.

Jim Hodgell moved to accept the minutes of the previous meeting. Myles made a second.
Motion Carried.

Financial report:

Shirley Pedersen reported that there is nothing new in the financial report, that the potluck balance is still \$1405.50.

Marilyn Ehlers reported the balance at the end of October was \$2985.43 and November \$251.36 and the balance as of December 9, 2020 was \$1141.05. She also reported that since April 2020 there have been 3 checks to the Laurens Ministerial Association have not been cashed and that Pastor Franks will get them cashed asap.

Jim Hodgell moved to approve the Financial Reports. Rich Ehlers made the second.
Motion carried.

Pastors Report

Pastor Klappenbach reported he drove 96 miles, did 9 services, 1 funeral, 4 meetings and 6 classes. He has been granted entry into the Pocahontas Hospital. He provided devotion to the Women of the NALC and provided chaplain duties at the STS November 30-Dec1. Michele G is progressing well in her Catechism class.

Pastor Klappenbach and family will be going on vacation December 25, 2020 to January 5, 2021.

Rich Ehlers moved to accept the Pastors Report and Jim Hodgell made a second. Motion Carried.

Old Business

1. John Runneberg will try to fix the hole in the parsonage wall while the Pastor is on vacation.

New Business

1. Rich Ehlers move that the Annual Meeting be set for January 24, 2021 and all the reports for the Annual Meeting be into the office by January 5, 2021. Dean Armstrong made a second to the motion. Motion carried.
2. There are two amendments to the NALC Constitution that need to be ratified by the Congregation and will be sent in the letter to the Congregation.
 - a. The Executive Council shall apportion additional lay delegates based on the baptized membership of congregations so there is approximately an equal number of lay and clergy delegates to the Convocation.
 - b. A Convocation of the NALC shall be held biennially.
3. The proposed 2021 budget was presented to the council and discussed. Jim Hodgell moved, and Rich Ehlers made a second that we present this budget to the Congregation at the Annual Meeting.

Committee Reports

1. Christian Education-No Report
2. Growth and Sharing-Thirteen gift boxes were donated to Samaritans Purse Project and delivered to Storm Lake in late November. The Upper Des Moines Adopt-a-Family gifts for Pocahontas county families were taken to UDMO in Pocahontas On December 8th. There were 2 families and 7 children. Currently the socks, mittens, stocking caps & gloves tree is in place, and collection continues until January 5, 2021. This allows shopping time, clearance sales & COVID-19 for L-M Community School children. Thank You for your generous support.

3. Tech committee-No Report
4. Stewardship-Rich Ehlers reported that 20 cards were returned to the chest
5. Property & Farm-See Old Business
6. Worship & Music-
 - Ecumenical Service-Hopefully next week pastor will let us know,
 - Poinsettias-same as last year
 - The start of Advent, the Advent reading “Waiting for the Shepherd & Decorate for Christmas on November 29th.
 - December-Communion 1st & 3rd Sundays and Christmas Eve. With Communion guideline in place.
 - Hopefully youth Christmas program will be on December 13th.
 - Worship & Music decided that the Christmas Eve Service will not be a candlelight service because of the pandemic and mask usage and the service will be the same as last years.
 - Working on 2021 lists
 - Briefly looked at January and February
 - We will take down Christmas Decorations on January 3rd
 - Picked hymns
 - Next meeting will be January 4th, 2021
7. Memorial-No reported

Jim Hodgell moved to adjourn with the Lords Prayer. The second to the motion was made by Linda Galbraith.

Next Meeting January 13th, 2021.

Dean Armstrong
Recording Secretary