

Bethany Lutheran Church

25430 Bison Road

PO Box 37

Cushing, MN 56443

March 2021



Contact Information:

Church phone 320-749-2140

Pastor Carl Larson 605-924-1121

Pastor Carl's email is

flcstaplespastor@gmail.com

Pastor Carlton Smee 952-215-7474

Pastor Carlton Smee's email is

pastorsmee@gmail.com

Wendy R. (secretary) 320-360-1981

Wendy's email is

wendy.richmond23@yahoo.com

Bethany's Website:

www.bethanylutherancushing.org

Down in the Gutter

Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. - James 5:16

In the TV show, *Better Call Saul*, Mike Ehrmantraut is a retired police officer from Philadelphia who has moved to New Mexico to be close to his daughter-in-law and granddaughter. At one point you learn that his son, also a police officer, was killed because he was not wanting to join in the corruption that was rampant in his Philadelphia precinct. Prior to his son's death, Mike confronted his son. He warned him not to go to Internal Affairs. He said, "If you even look like you are going to talk, you're dead." But Matt, Mike's son, is stubborn and strong.

So, Mike confesses. He thinks it is the only way to save his son. He tells his son that he has been on the take. That he is just like the other cops, just getting by. He does what he can to talk his son down. He loves him. He wants to protect him. He knows the sins of his fellow cops. He knows what they are capable of, and so he confesses. He diminishes himself in front of his son so he might save him. This moment of failure crushes Mike and doesn't do much to help his son. "He put me up on a pedestal," Mike says, "and I had to show him I was down in the gutter with the rest of them." It broke his son, and it broke Mike. Matt took the money, but it did not save him. He still was killed by the cops he despised.

As parents and as Christians, we spend quite a bit of our time playing the hero. We don't speak of our failures in front of our children because we like being on the pedestal. Maybe it is the god-complex that came with the Fall in the Garden of Eden, or maybe it is our own fears that if people knew who we really are, they would hate us, leave us, and never speak to us. All of this is true. It's the way of things in the world of sin in which we live – sinners despising one another's sins, because we hope theirs are worse than ours.

What if this ended with you and with me? What if we held to this Lenten discipline of confession and made sure our kids were raised in a house and life to know that we are a people who confess our sins? A people who have a low anthropology, meaning that we don't walk around assuming the good in people, but know that one day we will meet each other in that gutter? That is the way to Calvary. That is where we kneel together beside our child, our neighbor, and even our pastor, knowing that we are broken, but there is One who searches the gutters, the garbage heaps, and outhouses for all the guests for his feast because the invited one's thought themselves too good to eat with him. (*Luke 14:15-24*)

So, confess your sins to your children. Help them to know you for who you are, not the trophy dad or mom whose life is golden roads and rainbows, but the sinner saved by grace. Because it is in our confession to one another that we then see fit to make sure they know of the One who forgives us all our sins through his blood shed on the cross. That is the purpose of confession, the forgiveness that follows. Because when we fall, and they know it, they are prepared for the day when the same happens to them. And when the tears are dry and the wounds bandaged, they know of Jesus Christ, the Incarnate God of history, who hears their confession, and always stands to forgive.

Blessed Lent,
Pastor Smee

March 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 6:00 PM Zoom Bible Study	2 9:00 AM Quilting/Prayer Shawls	3 6:30 PM Joint Lenten Svc at Bethany	4	5	6
7 9:00 AM Worship Svc w/Holy Communion Youth Sunday Pastor Smee	8 6:00 PM Zoom Bible Study	9 9:00 AM Quilting/Prayer Shawls	10 6:30 PM Joint Lenten Svc at Faith Lutheran Church in Staples	11	12	13
14 9:00 AM Worship Svc w/Holy Communion Pastor Carl	15	16 9:00 AM Quilting/Prayer Shawls 6:00 PM Church Council Mtg	17 6:30 PM Joint Lenten Svc at Bethany	18	19	20
21 9:00 AM Worship Svc Pastor Smee	22	23 9:00 AM Quilting/Prayer Shawls	24 6:30 PM Joint Lenten Svc at Faith Lutheran Church in Staples	25	26	27
28 9:00 AM Worship Svc Palm Sunday Food Shelf Sunday Pastor Carl	29	30	31	April 1 6:30 PM Joint Maunday Thursday at Faith Lutheran Church in Staples	April 2 6:30 PM Joint Good Friday Service at Bethany	

March 2021

Team Ford: Bruce Ford, Norb & Jan Bueckers, Leone Johnson, Diana Vaverek, Kim Schultz, Gary & Susan Oberton, Tom & Sandy Bjorge, Glen & Theresa Welters, Norma Pantzke

April 2021

Team LuConic: Mike LuConic, Wendy Richmond, Darline Molde, Chuck & Char Stockman, Randy & Janet Beinhorn, Joinie Miller, Steve Ahlrich & Barb Anderson, Bob Miller & Becky Wetch, Dorothy Radke



March 29 Wade & Kayla Sandbakken

March 2	Randy Beinhorn
March 2	David Petersen
March 8	Kim Schultz
March 10	Judy Shorter
March 11	Heather Culuris
March 15	Addison Miller
March 16	Rachel Hansen
March 17	Gary Kratzke
March 19	Ashley Statema
March 21	Augustus Hendrickson
March 25	Ethan Olson
March 25	Liesl Smee
March 27	Dennis Dalquist
March 31	Riley Scherping

Congratulations - the mortgage for Bethany Lutheran Church has been **PAID IN FULL**. All funds received for and deposited to the Building Fund were used for the intended purpose of moving Bethany towards our goal of being **debt free**. Thank you and, again, congratulations!

We have opted to keep the building fund account open at the Mission Investment Fund for major building-related outlays down the road such as a new roof, carpet, etc., and future designations will be deposited to that account. As in the past, please note on your offering envelope if you wish to have some of your giving directed to the Building Fund. Thank you for your generosity.

Online Daily Meditation - Join Pastor Smee on the church Facebook page, his website, or his podcast, as we look at the texts for the upcoming Sunday. Each day will be a different one of our appointed prayers or readings, trying to see where God is speaking to us as we seek to hear the Gospel when we gather together each week. You can go to: www.facebook.com/FLCStaples, www.facebook.com/CushingBeth, or www.treadweary.com/sounds.html. Or search "The Treadweary Podcast" on your podcast provider.

Contact any Council Member if you have specific needs:

Mike LuConic 651-249-9540
Amanda Bramstedt 507-259-0411
Wendy Richmond 320-360-1981
Cindy Zetah 218-522-0075

Wade Sandbakken 320-749-2311
Bruce Ford 218-575-2335
Harvey Bloom 320-749-2929

Financials for February:

Weekly goal for general offering: \$1,500.00
Received February 7, 2021: \$917.65
Received February 14, 2021: \$1,340.01
Received February 21, 2021: \$1,110.00
Received February 28, 2021: \$570.00
Avg YTD Weekly Giving: \$984.42
Food Shelf: \$65.00

Attendance at Worship: February 7, 2021: 24
February 14, 2021: 21
February 17, 2021 (Ash Wed): 24
February 21, 2021: 24
February 28, 2021: 28

Obituary for Vernon A. Radke

Vernon A Radke passed away peacefully at home January 29, 2021. A memorial service will be held at 1:30PM on Saturday, February 6, 2021 at Bethany Lutheran Church in Cushing. Pastor Carleton Smee will officiate, and burial will be Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery at a later date. Visitation will be one hour prior to services on Saturday at the church in Cushing.

Vernon was born May 28, 1929 at Halls Hospital in Little Falls, MN to Fred and Matilda Radke. He grew up with the entire Pine Grove Park as his backyard. He graduated from Little Falls High School in 1947 and for the next 3.5 years worked in Minnesota, North Dakota and Montana at various farms, ranches and packing plants. On January 4, 1951 Vernon enlisted in the U.S. Airforce and was stationed in Texas, Boston, Massachusetts for technical training, Chanute AFB in Illinois, Sewart AFB in Tennessee and Shaw AFB in South Carolina. While serving at Sewart AFB Vernon met and married the love of his life, Dorothy Vick. They were united in Holy Matrimony on October 30, 1953. Upon Vernon's honorable discharge from the Air Force in December 1954, they moved back to Minnesota where they purchased the farm where they currently reside. Vernon and Dorothy loved to travel and visited many states and countries around the world. Some of their favorite trips included: Australia, New Zealand, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Liechtenstein and numerous U.S States. They spent a number of winters in Weslaco, Texas where they made a number of good friends.

He is survived by his loving wife of 67 years Dorothy; son, Leonard (Randall, MN); daughter, Vickie (Fargo, ND); son, David (Randall, MN); and son, Wayne & Debra (Perley, MN) and numerous family. Vernon is preceded in death by his parents, Fred & Matilda Radke; brother, Leonard; sister, Agatha; and brother-in-law, Richard Berndt; sister, Irene; and brother-in-law, Harold Johnson; and nephew, Arlen Berndt.

In lieu of flowers memorials can be made to Hospice.