

Bethany Lutheran Church

25430 Bison Road

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Cushing, MN 56443

May 2021



Contact Information:

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www.bethanylutherancushing.org

Nothing New

What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done; there is nothing new under the sun. – Ecclesiastes 1:9

Over this last year or more, many of us have felt we are out of our element. We keep hearing – “*We are in new territory.*” I don’t know about you, but I am sick of “new.” I want old. I want what once was. Maybe you have had to spend the last year working from home, while your children are doing distance learning. Or vacations you had planned have been put on hold multiple times. The cruise was cancelled, or the trip to Europe was thwarted by Covid. Or worse, you have been unable to see your parents because they moved into a nursing home last year and they aren’t allowing visitors right now. Basically, all of life for what seems like eternity has been change, which we don’t handle well anyways, continues to strike us in the gut like a firehose of anxiety.

I think that is why I have continued to turn to Ecclesiastes. It is a harsh book written by King Solomon of Israel, and in it he bemoans the fact that he has everything and nothing. He has all the wealth, all the power, all the women, all the parties, all the freedom, but his fears and anxieties around the frailty of life caused him sleepless nights. In the opening chapter he makes the point of telling us that we are naïve. What was old is new again, what has been will be, and that there is nothing original happening today. He sees life as a cycle of forgetfulness, where one generation looks down on the other for one reason or another, only to find themselves in the same boat just a few years down the road.

My family is being hit hard with this right now, as many of you experienced before us. Our daughter is heading off to college this summer, and we don’t know what that will be like. We keep asking, “*Are we ready for our baby to leave?*” Our son will be starting high school next year, in a new school district, and he is already taller than me at the age of 13. I don’t like that he is growing up. His voice is deeper. I had to teach him how to shave. He can do more pullups than me now! “*O, the travesty*”, I tell myself. Yet, I think of all the change that hit us this last year. I think of all the directions our lives have had to go in order to make it through one of the most difficult times for many of us, and you know what I realize? God has been with me, with you, this whole time. The world can fall apart around me. Jobs can end. Houses can be sold. My grandma can die. My children can grow up and not need me anymore, but God is still God. He is that One that is “*nothing new under the sun.*” He is that One who stays the same, always. He is the constant of all our everchanging futures. He is the Rock and refuge of our souls and the foundation of all that is good in our lives and in the world, both now and to come. He is “*the fullness of the one who fills all things in every way.*” (Ephesians 1:23) That in every tragedy or joy that came this last 14 months, and will come this remainder of 2021, God stands as the Lord of all. He is yours and you are his, always.

Solomon doesn't leave us with some woe-is-me tale at the end of Ecclesiastes. Yes...he has his moments, but his closing verses speak volumes to us – *“When all has been heard, the conclusion of the matter is this: fear God and keep his commands, because this is for all humanity.”* (Ecclesiastes 12:13) So, Church, wherever you may be in life, hold onto God. Hold him tight. That is what it means to fear him. Not cowering or trembling as much as a desperate reverence in which nothing else matters but him being yours and you being his. Because troubles will come and life will be hard. Risk is the nature of this mortal world. But thanks be to God that he has overcome the world, that when old becomes new again, I pray that God remains your constant desire and hope. May he guide you and lead you down life's path so that when all seems lost, you won't be, because he holds you as much as you hold onto him.

In his peace,
Pastor Smee

May 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 9:00 AM Worship w/Holy Communion 10:00 AM Fellowship Pastor Smee	3	4 9:00 AM Quilting & Prayer Shawls	6 6:00 PM Bible Study	6	7	8
9 9:00 AM Worship w/Holy Communion 10:00 AM Fellowship/ Confirmation Class Pastor Larson	10	11 9:00 AM Quilting & Prayer Shawls	12 6:00 PM Bible Study	13	14	15
16 9:00 AM Worship 10:00 AM Fellowship Pastor Smee	17	18 9:00 AM Quilting & Prayer Shawls 6:00 PM Council Meeting	19 6:00 PM Bible Study	20	21	22
23 9:00 AM Worship with Confirmation 10:00 AM Fellowship Pastor Larson	24	25 9:00 AM Quilting & Prayer Shawls	26 6:00 PM Bible Study	27	28	29
30 9:00 AM Worship 10:00 AM Fellowship Pastor Smee Food Shelf Sunday	31 Memorial Day					

May 2021

Team Sandbakken: Wade & Kayla Sandbakken, Bill & Linda Bates, Marilyn Mueller, David & Maggie Peterson, Dave & Sharon Cina, Kathy Wray, Doug & Jackie Wiherski, Jim & Elizabeth Oberton, Gary & Tracy Statema

June 2021

Team Flicek: Roxie Flicek, Ken & Judy Shorter, Lonnie & Shauna Stokes, Pete & Louise Hanson, Cory & Tracy Natvig, Charlie & Anna Hansen, John & Phyllis Nelson, Don & Heddie Wolbeck



May 29th Gary & Tracy Statema

May 1st Gary Oberton
May 4th Kortnee Olson
May 10th Sharon Cina
May 12th Bill Bates
May 13th Diana Vaverek
May 13th Monte Bramstedt
May 14th Linda Bates
May 15th Patricia Crawford
May 18th Alex Houle
May 19th Lonnie Stokes
May 20th Chloe Houle
May 20th Carl Larson
May 24th Shauna Stokes
May 26th Betty Anderson
May 27th Benjamin Hansen
May 27th Doug Wiherski
May 29th Cory Hansen

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:

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Roxie Flicek 320-749-2026

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

Youth Garage Sale: Bethany will be having a sale on June 25-26, 2021. If you have items you would like to donate, please bring them to the church. We will put them in the end Sunday School room. If you have any questions, please contact Amanda or Wendy.

Cushing Days: Cushing will be having a car show on Saturday, July 31. Bethany will have a Free Will Pancake Breakfast that morning. We will be looking for members to help out as the date gets closer.

Thrivent Financial: Thrivent representative, Alicia Kapus, will be worshipping with us on May 16th. She will explain the use and availability of Thrivent Action Grants to the congregation and will be available to answer your questions.

Landscaping: Bethany needs someone to take over the landscaping maintenance. If you are interested, please let Wendy know.

Update from the Call Committee: The Ministry Site Profile for Faith Lutheran has been approved by the Synod and we are ready to accept names of Pastors whom you think would be a good addition as an Associate Pastor to our congregations. If you have any names, please notify Call Committee Chair, Margaret Grondahl, at margaret.grondahl4@gmail.com or any of the other call committee members: from Faith- Deb Sing, Linda Heier, Carol Edinger Kert or Britney Bursch or from Bethany-Roxie Flicek or Jim Oberton.