

Bethany Free Lutheran Church Newsletter SEPTEMBER 2020

See the Light Shining in the Darkness

Some things you don't notice till the lights are off. I had that experience once when I was visiting some relatives and they let me stay in the bedroom of one of the kids. When I turned off the lights I discovered a lot of little glow-in-the-dark things were pasted to the ceiling. A moon, some stars and planets were all glowing above me. They were only seen when the room got dark.

In a similar way, in life some good things are only seen when it gets dark. Trials and troubles can be dark and scary times, but they can also be opportunities to see the light of Jesus' love.

Our country and world has been going through some dark days with the pandemic, protests, unrest, injustice, violence, economic troubles and sharp divisions. Many are also suffering through the darkness of isolation and depression. In spite of all the darkness, however, light can be seen, if we have eyes to see it.

In a loving congregation, when one person is sick, others in the congregation rise up and serve. "If one part suffers, every part suffers with it" (I Corinthians 12:26). People pray, they call, they send emails, they bring food. I've appreciated seeing the light of service in Jesus' name shining through the darkness of trials.

The challenges we have encountered in meeting together during the pandemic has felt dark at times, but light has been shining through the darkness. It has been good to see the longing many have to be in worship and the sincere desire to be in God's Word.

When the opportunity to worship with others comes again after you haven't been able to do it for a time, the light shines all the brighter.

Times of isolation from others can be hard. Those times, though, can help us appreciate how good it is that we get to be part of God's family. After some isolation that might seem a little dark, the joy of being able to be with others shines bright and beautiful.

"The light shines in the darkness" (John 1:5). The light of Jesus' love and grace shines in this dark world. No matter how dark it gets, nothing can put out the light. Jesus promised, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12).

Even though there is much darkness around us, we don't have to walk in darkness. The light of Jesus can shine in our lives. Our home is not the darkness but the light.

It has been said, "It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness." It is tempting to spend much time cursing the darkness; talking about how bad things are and how far into darkness the world has fallen. It is better to shine the light of Jesus. Shine His light by showing people grace, serving others in love, and letting people know how good and great is our God.

Ask God to give you eyes to see the good things He is doing in the midst of this dark world. The light of God's grace and mercy and love is shining all around us. Blessed are the eyes that see.

—Pastor Craig

Worship With Us

Our 11:00 a.m. in building Worship Services continue. To comply with the state regulations regarding COVID-19, everybody is asked to wear a facial covering and observe social distancing by sitting six feet apart from other families while in the pews. Free masks are available on the entryway table.

We are also continuing to live stream our 11:00 a.m. Sunday worship services on Facebook Live. Devotional videos are also posted on our congregation's YouTube channel. Links to both of those sites can be found on our website: bethanyfree.com.

Men's Breakfast Saturday, Sept. 5 at 8:00 a.m.

Missionary Michael Rokenbrodt will be with us that morning and will be sharing about the work in Uganda.



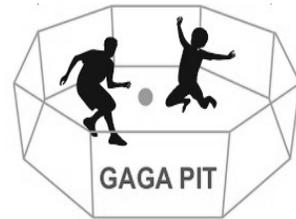
Meet Missionary Michael Rokenbrodt

AFLC Missionary to Uganda, Michael Rokenbrodt, will be

with us on Sunday, Sept. 6. He has been involved in a ministry of teaching the Bible, building up congregations and encouraging people in their relationship with Jesus. At 9:30 a.m. that Sunday Michael will share pictures and information about the work in Uganda. You're encouraged to come to this special opportunity to learn about good work God is doing in Africa. He'll also share from God's Word during the 11:00 a.m. worship service.

Youth Group Sunday Sept. 13 at 6:00 p.m.

We'll meet outside in the Gaga Ball court next to the church building. We'll also play some Frisbee Golf. Bring a Frisbee and join in the fun!



Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS)

MOPS is an opportunity for moms to get together to pray and support one another. It will start meeting at Bethany again on Monday Sept. 14 at 6:30 p.m. and on Monday Sept. 28 at 6:30 p.m. All mothers of preschoolers are welcome.

Prayer Time

On Wed. Sept 16 at 7 p.m. we'll have a prayer time at the church. We'll pray for the start of a new school year and for other needs in our community, country and world. Everyone is invited to join in and pray.

Confirmation Will Begin Soon

Confirmation is two years of instruction in the basics of the Bible. All those who are 6th grade and above are welcome to be part of the class.



The class meets once a week for an hour during the school year. Let Pastor Craig know if you're interested.

Coming This Month...

September 5 Men's Breakfast

*September 6 Meet Missionary
Michael Rokenbrodt*

September 8 Deacons & Trustees Meeting

September 13 Youth Group

September 14 & 28 Mothers of Preschoolers

September 16 Prayer Time

