



Pastor Kris—402-499-4993

krisbo90@gmail.com

Church Website—bethlehemdavey.org



Bethlehem Lutheran Church - Davey

Remember to bring cookies for Matt Talbot prior to the second Monday of the month.



February Helpers

Lector—Dave Nielsen

Communion Assistant—Dave Nielsen

Cleaners Week 1/2—Jeff and Laurie Atkinson

Week 3/4—Charlie and Karen Brown

Usher—Randy Giebenrath

Altar—Rhonda Madsen

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
PO Box 96
Davey, NE 68336

Faith and Current Events

Over the next four months we will have a series of adult education sessions centered around faith and the events impacting our world right now. When I realized that doing some adult education sessions this year would be possible, I asked people what they wanted to talk about. Faith and current events was by far and away the leader, so here we are.

Yes, that means mixing faith and politics. Jesus did, Paul did and so must we. Christ cares deeply and is intimately connected with everything that goes on in creation, including our politics.

I'm hoping all will attend at least the first two sessions. The first is Politics and Christian Belief. We live in a nation in which government is bound to no religion and government cannot infringe on the practice of religion.

That doesn't mean that our faith as Christians shouldn't have an impact on our own participation in the political process. Christians themselves have fallen into the same polarization that our politics have. Too many Christians try to make Christianity fit with their political views. That's backwards.

Our primary governing document in the United States is the Constitution, not the Bible. But that doesn't mean we as Christians shouldn't use the Bible, and especially the Jesus revealed in the Bible, to form our own political opinions and act on them.

In our first session, we'll go over some scripture, primarily from the teachings of Jesus, that might help us build the foundation. Our goal in these is to let Christ shape our viewpoints. These sessions won't give us hard and fast rules that are always clear-cut. Scripture doesn't work that way. But it will hopefully give us a decent foundation from which to have conversations and form opinions about issues as Christians.

What will happen

Each session will begin with a time of "Dwelling in the Word" and prayer to center us

We'll go over some ground rules

The first part of the session will be a presentation by Pastor Kris, or for some topics possibly another speaker. This will include relevant scripture, historical and social information, possibly videos, and a brief intro to the different perspectives.

We will include info about progress on the different issues – the "good news" that sometimes gets missed. What has God already done?

The above two parts may be made recorded a podcast.

Guided discussion – we want to allow a space where all feel free to express their views and ask without judgment. We won't always agree but respectful listening needs to be key. No discussion will be included on any podcast that gets published. It would be cool to do a discussion podcast at some point, but we're on baby steps here.

We will end with a period of silent reflection and prayer

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What we will not do

Any expression of disdain for another viewpoint

At least for this go-round, debate about the President or other government leaders personally, or any other presidential, state, or local candidate – we will focus on the *issues* that affect God’s world and try to examine objectively where different leaders and politicians stand

Discussion of the impeachment, again at least for this go-round

Here are the proposed dates and topics:

- February 16—Politics and Christian Belief
- March 1—Truth: How do We Know?
- March 15—Race and Racism
- March 22—Immigration
- May 3—Economics, Health Care, and Poverty

The last three are somewhat tentative—if there’s a compelling reason that the group would like to deal with a different topic, we can change. If people find these helpful, we can go beyond May.

Lent Notes

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday. I am moving the service times up a bit from what we’ve done in the past. If 6:00 pm is too early for you, you are welcome to go to Zion’s Ash Wednesday service at 7:30.

As in previous years, we will have Lent Midweek meals and worship beginning the Wednesday after Ash Wednesday. The consensus is that it’s time to do something different. We will not plan to do Holden Evening Prayer and will remain in the fellowship hall. We will work worship and whatever discussion/learning we have into the meal time.

It is my intention to make this work for kids as well as adults. If you have ideas, please let me know.

There will be more detail in the March newsletter.

February Calendar

February 2 10:30 am—Worship with Holy Communion
“Souper Bowl” following worship

February 9 10:30 am—Guitar Worship
11:30—Council

Pastor Kris will be gone February 7—February 13. Pastor James Sells will cover for pastoral
Emergencies—his number is 402 759-6347

February 16 10:30 am—Worship with Holy Communion
11:30—Adult Education—Politics and Christian Belief

February 23 10:30 am—Worship
11:30—Youth Group

February 26 6:00 pm—Ash Wednesday Service with Communion and Imposition of Ashes

Lutheran Family Services

Diapers!

Most of you know that when I celebrated my 60th birthday, I asked people to consider making a donation to Lutheran Family Services in lieu of any kind of gift. I wrote a check for \$70 to bring the total to \$500—that’s awesome! That total doesn’t include those who told me they donated online. Thank you to all who donated!

This donation got me a call from Joel Stoltenow, Lutheran Family Services’ Development Director. He invited me to LFS for a tour and to learn more about what they do. I already had a pretty good idea what they do, but the tour impressed me all over again. Lutheran Family Services represents some of the best work the church does in our state.

The facility in Lincoln offers what they call Health 360. Through partnerships with the Community Health Endowment, Bluestem Health, and the Community Action Partnership of Saunders and Lancaster County, they care for people from womb to grave. They offer primary health care including lab and X-ray. There is dental care and behavioral health for children, families, and adults. They have special programs for veterans. They have an inhouse pharmacy. They also do refugee resettlement, foster care and adoption services, and pregnancy counseling. AND...they have a Head Start pre-school. All of that is under one roof. Whew! That’s a lot. And that’s just in Lincoln!

On March 5 they have a fundraising event to help support the LFS programs that impact children and families. Talk to me if you’re interested in either attending or donating an auction item.

But they’re also asking churches to donate diapers for the event. The diapers are in essence auctioned off to donors. The money goes to LFS programs throughout the state and the diapers then go to the Healthy Family Centers in Fremont and in the Metro Omaha area. Between now and Ash Wednesday we will be collecting diapers for the event. They can go in the big wooden box under that alcove table.