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[Bethlehem Lutheran Church - Davey](#)

Log in for Lent Midweek—Wednesdays at 6:30 pm

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88661883348?pwd=eTg5eFJK1ldHdLd2JGRWgxc2FvUT09>

Meeting ID: 886 6188 3348

Passcode: 164572

Phone: 312-626-6799

Log in for worship Sunday at 10 am

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81041105173?pwd=MXVtc2RRckxUY3JLLzRGdFcxVGZzd09>

Meeting ID: 810 4110 5173

Passcode: 349445

Phone : 312 626 6799

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
PO Box 96
Davey, NE 68336

Bethlehem Star



March 2021

Colorblindness

Ephesians 6

“¹²For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. “

As you likely know, several of us have been participating in an anti-racist book study group. Every now and then I want to offer a little review of what we’re learning.

Sometimes I’ll see or hear comments that basically say the reason racism is an issue is because we are talking about it too much. Typically, the comments come from white people who with all their heart don’t want to be racist and truly believe they’re not. They profess to be colorblind.

Saying you’re colorblind might come from a place of good intention. People are people so it goes. Skin color doesn’t matter. And if we just stopped talking about the races and racism, it would all be fine...racism would go away.

If you have had an honest conversation with an African American about this, you will know that not having to think or talk about racism is a privilege granted only to white people. Black and Brown people are not only forced to think about it, they live it every day.

Racism will not go away if we stop talking about it, and color-blindness isn’t the goal. The goal is equality...plain and simple.

The reason we can’t stop talking about racism is that right now equality does not exist.

Here is a partial list of the inequalities—for the most part, African American families fare the worst in all categories, but Native Americans and Hispanics also fare worse than whites.

- Median net worth for White families in 2019—\$188,200; Black families—\$24,100. Almost 8 times less!
- 72% White home ownership in 2017 versus 42% Black.
- Infant mortality rates for Black babies are more than double that for White babies.
- People of color are incarcerated at anywhere from 5– 10 times as often as whites. This has narrowed some as we’ve recognized the grave error of the “war on crime” and the “war on drugs,” but it’s still staggering
- Covid has affected and killed more people of color than whites.
- Because of the pre-existing inequality in financial reserves and over-representation in the service industries hardest hit in the pandemic, economic recovery will likely be much slower for people of color.

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When faced with those facts, you have a few options. You can decide it's all because of some inherent deficiency in Black people and Natives and Latinx people. That's blatantly racist. You can decide since it doesn't affect you and you want to be colorblind, you don't have to think about it. But then you are also blind to the injustice and can play no part in it's undoing. Or, you can begin to question the system and wonder what laws and policies over the centuries created and continue to perpetuate the inequality. Then you can ask yourself what you might do to help.

So, in a church in a rural area with almost no people of color, among people who are certain they're not racist, why do I keep talking about it? Because you vote...because you have political conversations with others...because you participate in social media...because this is a problem that white people will have to solve...because doing nothing just keeps the old system going.

And because you are Christian. Paul wrote that our struggle is against the rulers and authorities that cause evil and the cosmic powers that back them. An entire system of laws and authority was put into place in this country to oppress Black bodies and deprive them of the life God wants. Satan is the cosmic power behind racism. Neutrality isn't an option. Whose side do you want to be on?

Paul writes this in Ephesians:

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."

Time to put on our armor.

Christ's peace,

Pastor Kris

Lent Service Project Options

The insert has more information about the Lent projects.

- Rally4Kids—we will collect money at in person worship on the 7th at Zion or the 14th at Bethlehem. You can also send your donation to Mike. If you write a check, put LFS Rally4Kids on the memo line.
- LWR Personal Hygiene kits—we will collect these on Maundy Thursday at in person worship at Bethlehem. You can also take them to church at any in person service prior to that. I like won't ship them until after Easter so you could bring them then, but I'm not 100% sure where we'll be.
- Or, you can buy grocery gift cards or non-perishable food for the Little Free Pantry.

Calendar

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|-----------------|---|
| March 3 | 6:30 pm—Lent Midweek on Zoom— <i>The Character of God: Compassion</i> |
| March 7 | 10:00 am—Worship on Zoom with Communion 11:30 am—In person worship at Zion with Communion |
| March 10 | 6:30 pm—Lent Midweek on Zoom— <i>The Character of God: Grace</i> |
| March 14 | 10:00 am—Zoom Worship 11:30 am—In person worship at Bethlehem with Communion |
| March 17 | 6:30 pm—Lent Midweek on Zoom— <i>The Character of God: Slow to Anger</i> |
| March 21 | 10:00 am—Worship on Zoom with Communion 11:30 am—In person worship at Zion |
| March 24 | 6:30 pm—Lent Midweek on Zoom— <i>The Character of God: Steadfast Love and Faithfulness</i> |
| March 28 | 10:00 am—Zoom worship—Palm Sunday 11:30 am—in person at Bethlehem—possibly outside, weather permitting |
| April 1 | 7:00 pm—Maundy Thursday, in person at Bethlehem with Zoom option |
| April 2 | Good Friday—tba |
| April 4 | Easter—see below |

Transition to In Person Worship

As the Covid situation improves, it's time to make the transition to something more normal. March will be a transition month with in person worship following each Zoom worship, alternating between the two churches. The in person service will be the same as Zoom, minus the singing. If you consider it safe for yourself, I'd encourage you to attend at least one in person worship to get back in the groove a little bit. Masks are still required.

Easter—we don't really have this completely determined. What I really hope is that we can have a big celebratory combined worship, outdoors, with singing and the whole bit. It may well be the last time the two congregations will meet together for awhile, so I'm hoping it can be something special. Because Easter tends to be attended in higher numbers, I'm not sure we can safely distance indoors. If vaccine administration really picks up steam, we can readdress this.

After Easter I'm hoping to return to our old schedule with two separate in person services—9:00 at Zion and 10:30 at Bethlehem. I'm also hoping we can sing then, but likely masks will continue to be required for a bit. Both will be on Zoom as well.

As always, this is all dependent on Covid. Get your vaccine if and when you can. It is the number one key to getting this under control. And, as always, be prepared to be flexible.

Lent Projects

There are two options for our Lent projects. I'm hoping we can make a significant contribution to both, but if you're not able to do both, pick whichever one works best for you.

Option 1—Lutheran World Relief Personal Hygiene Kits

Lutheran World Relief sent out a request for Personal Hygiene kits. Given the pandemic and multiple natural disasters, their shelves are bare. Instructions for the kits are on the back of the insert. These kits are sent globally. Make your kit at home and there will be opportunities to bring the kits to church for boxing and shipping. If you're able to pitch in a few bucks for shipping that would be swell.

Option 2—Lutheran Family Service Rally 4 Kids

This is a Nebraska option. Lutheran Family Service in Nebraska provides a variety of services to families in need throughout the state...health care, mental health services including addiction treatment, diapers, help for those suffering from abuse and neglect, poverty, foster care and adoption, and immigration and refugee services.

Usually the rally is a one day event, but this year it's a weeklong drive from March 7 to March 11. If you come to in person worship at Zion on March 7, you can bring a contribution then. Or you can mail it to Mike. If we can raise \$600, we qualify as a church sponsor. If you write a check, make it out to the church with LFS or Rally 4 Kids in the memo line.

If you want to look at all the programs LFS has to offer, here's the link:

<https://www.lfsneb.org/>



LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF



PERSONAL CARE KITS

SOME IMPORTANT GUIDELINES TO REMEMBER

- Be sure to shop for light- or medium-weight towels, which are easier for Kit recipients to hand wash and air dry, take up less storage space and are considerably less expensive than the fluffier towels we may prefer to use.
- Bath towels vary in size. The 52" X 27" size listed in the guidelines is the maximum size. 20" x 40" is a good guideline for a minimum size.
- Please give new items only.
- Please do not donate items with any religious symbols, messages or your group's name.
- Please do not donate any items decorated with a U.S. flag, patriotic or military symbols, or references to the armed forces, including camouflage.
- Do not add other items or leave out any of the items listed.
- All items should be new and in good condition.
- Do not enclose the Kit or any of its contents in plastic bags.

INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING IN EACH PERSONAL CARE KIT

- ONE** light-weight bath-size towel (between 20" x 40" and 52" x 27"), dark color recommended
- TWO** or three bath-size bars of soap equaling 8 to 9 oz., any brand, in original wrapping
- ONE** adult-size toothbrush in it's original packaging*
- ONE** sturdy comb, remove packaging
- ONE** metal nail clippers (attached file optional), remove packaging

* Toothbrush multi-packs may be used by sealing an individual toothbrush in a business-size envelope; no plastic bags or wrap

HOW TO PACK YOUR PROJECT PROMISE KITS

- Fold the towel in half. Place the rest of the items in the towel, fold and roll so nothing falls out, and secure with yarn, ribbon, string or rubber bands.
- Pack completed Kits, like items together, in boxes. Label contents in LARGE, BLOCK LETTERS on the outside of the boxes.
- Use strong cartons secured with packing tape, not to exceed 40 pounds.
- Do not use plastic or paper bags to pack donations.
- Include the name and address of your group or congregation on each box and label the contents