

**Encounter Christ    Grow in faith    Love as Christ loved    Tell the Story**

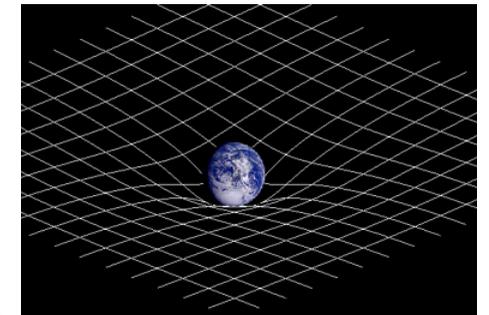
***The God of the Universe***



This image is the first ever captured of a black hole in space. You've probably heard of black holes, although before 1967 they were called dark stars.

Albert Einstein's General Theory of Relativity explained gravity as a curve in spacetime created by large masses. To picture it in your head, imagine a croquet ball placed in the center of a stretchy sheet.

Here's an image:



All objects, including light, follow the curve inward. Without adequate velocity, objects will curve into the center mass. A rocket ship can achieve escape velocity from earth's mass, and the right velocity can keep something orbiting the center mass.

Einstein's theory predicted that there could be a mass so large that it would cause so much curve that nothing, including light, could escape. This would create a black hole.

Scientists have been able to see evidence that black holes existed for decades. But for the first time, an actual photo of a black hole was captured. Well, sort of anyway. You still can't see anything in the actual hole because no light can escape from it.

So, why am I doing a mini-science lesson in a church newsletter?

I love science, and one of the things I find most frustrating and sad about too many Christians is that they believe you either have to believe the Bible or believe science. In their mind, to be a Christian you essentially have to reject all the amazing things we've learned about this staggeringly beautiful and fascinating universe.

I don't believe that at all. I think the creation stories are beautiful stories of a majestic God who speaks a whole universe into being, and who gets down in the dirt to create a human being and then lovingly breathes life into that human.

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If you have ideas or items for the newsletter, please let me know. I'd be glad to put in things of importance to you and your family, to our congregation and in the community around us. I'm also happy to put in soup recipes!



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I sort of imagine God's breath, or a wind from God, blowing into the expanding and evolving universe. But the Bible isn't science. It really wasn't meant to be. The creation stories from the Bible are towering, poetic accounts of God's creative work, told in a way an ancient people could grasp with their limited tools to observe that creation.

I've read the science of the big bang and the evolution of the universe and life within it. I've read works from those who study science and theology and works from theologians who write of a cosmic Christ who is woven into every aspect of creation. What scientists have learned about creation is every bit as awe-inspiring as the creation stories from Genesis.

I think every time we learn something new about the universe God bursts with delight. Scientists hope to one day find the elusive unified theory of everything. And I suspect when they do, there we will somehow see God...who was always there all along the way.

In Christ,

*Pastor Kris*

### ***May Helpers***

Lector—Janna Harsch  
Communion Assistant—open  
Ushers—Peter Mills; Jon Mumgaard  
Cleaners—Wk 1/2—Clint and Janna Harsch  
Wk 3/4—Rhonda Madsen  
Altar—Jerri Daughterty

### **May Calendar**

May 5	9:15 am—All Congregation Sunday school 10:30 am—Worship with Holy Communion Recognition of Graduating Seniors—Sophia Olson and Alexandria Mumgaard 11:30—youth group meeting
May 6	6:30 pm—Women's group at Theresa's
May 8	10:00 am—Quilting at Saunders Care Center 6:45 pm—Confirmation
May 12	10:30 am—Guitar Worship; Ministry Appreciation
May 15	6:45 pm—Confirmation—dinner, review, rehearsal
May 19	10:30— am—Worship with Holy Communion Affirmation of Baptism—Connor Nielsen, Jace Lickliter, Carlos Olson 11:30—Cake and drinks to celebrate Affirmation of Baptism
May 26	10:30 am—Worship at Saunders Care Center. <b>No worship at Bethlehem</b>

### ***Faith Formation Changes***

May 5 will be the last day of Sunday school for this year, and for the foreseeable future. With just two younger children, it's not feasible to continue, at least for now. While there is no doubt some sadness in this, everything has its season and we're entering a different season. We at Bethlehem are enormously grateful for the work and dedication of the different Sunday school teachers who have contributed their time and talent over the years. They have worked very hard to build community and build faith for our kids.

When our two younger kids are ready for confirmation, they will join the kids at Zion. That's what we have done when both congregations have had confirmation aged kids in the past, so that's not new.

This does present some new opportunities. Next year there will be five middle school and high school boys, so we will try a youth group again. The parents and kids are meeting with Pastor Kris on the 5th to make some plans for this.

It also gives us a chance to think about what ministering to kids in our communities might look like, whether they're a part of our congregation or not.

And it gives us an opportunity to delve a bit more into adult faith formation. I'm still working out some of the details for this, but it will probably be a series of 3-4 week studies. May 12 there will be a questionnaire to get some thoughts about what topics you'd like to cover. It's my hope that everyone will be involved in at least one.