

# Bethany Beacon

FEBRUARY 2021



## Lent 2021: Return to the Lord

“Return to the LORD your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and He relents over disaster” (Joel 2:13). God’s invitation and promise finds its fullness in Jesus Christ, who personified and accomplishes all that God declares. Follow different events during the Passion, specifically focusing on the people that followed Christ, to see how God calls His people to return to Him this Lenten season.

**See more information about the Lenten series on page 7**



**Bethany**  
Lutheran Church

*Living and Sharing God's Love*

Greetings to all of you in the Name of our Lord, Jesus Christ:

In some ways this article is the one that I wanted to write for last month's *Beacon*. As we were closing out 2020 last month I thought that it would be nice to look back at the year, mention the ways Bethany has been blessed, and use these blessings as encouragement to move forward into 2021. However, if you read last month's *Beacon* you know that I did not do this. When I sat down to write, it just seemed that too much had taken place to summarize in one page.

Since then, we have had our annual Voters' Meeting where the Annual Report was presented to the congregation. And as I was listening to the reports from the various officers and committees last Sunday, I kept thinking to myself – we have been very blessed! And talking to some members after the meeting, we all agreed that the congregation needs to know this.

So, not wanting to make the mistake I feared last month, I won't go into too many details right now, but I do want to mention two things. And they are that the baptized membership at Bethany increased by 17 souls in 2020 and that our congregation brought in almost \$116,000 more than our expenses were for the year. Now, numbers alone cannot tell us if we are *Living and Sharing God's Love*. Nor are they the final say on whether or not we are doing what our Lord wants. Also, I'm well aware that the devil prowls around like a roaring lion and only God knows what the future holds for us. But having said all of that, if you would have told me back in March of 2020 when we began cancelling services because of the pandemic that our budget and membership would look the way it does now, I simply would not have believed it.

Of course, being in such a position by these measures is no accident. It has come about by the hard work of Bethany's staff, but also the work and faithfulness of our lay leaders and all our members. We simply could not have done all that we did in 2020 without us all *Living and Sharing God's Love* together in Jesus's name. Therefore, let us work to-

gether in 2021 to be good stewards of these gifts that we have been given.

For those of you who know me, you also know that I don't like focusing too much on numbers and statistics for the ministry of the congregation. However, I point out the information above for two reasons. First, it has been a challenging 10 months for most of us. We all have seen so many areas of our lives suffer because of the pandemic and the derecho. And seeing all of this can be, quite frankly, depressing for even the most faithful among us. And again, while numbers never tell the whole story, looking at them and many other things at Bethany, we can rejoice that our congregation is doing well. We shouldn't be surprised that the Lord has blessed us in these ways, but they should be cause for rejoicing, even during these dark times.

Secondly, I want to make clear the current status of the congregation as we move forward into 2021. As I mentioned above, at the beginning of the pandemic I was not only worried about our members and friends, but also about Bethany as a congregation. Of course, many individuals have suffered over the year and some continue to do so. Yet as a congregation, by God's grace my fears have proven to be mostly unfounded. As we continue to *Live and Share God's Love* in 2021, I still worry about the congregation. (i.e. When will we be able to sing again? Will people come back to Sunday worship services and Bible studies? How will we minister to and serve our youth in the post-Covid world?) But as I worry about these things (and others), and perhaps as you do as well, I remember how God has taken care of our worries in 2020. Last year He had blessed us in more ways than we could have ever imagined and therefore, we have every reason to believe that if we are doing His will, He will continue to bless us for many years to come.

God bless you all and I look forward to serving our risen Lord with all of you in 2021!

✠ Pastor Erickson

**Thanksgiving:**

Church officers installed on 1/10

Joe (relative of \*Bonnie Bubke)- Recovering after medical issues

Judy (niece of \*Bonnie Bubke)- Recovering after surgery

**Illness, injuries, health issues:**

\*Elaine Cook - surgery on 2/10

Jill (sister of \*Bridget Rinderknecht) - health issues

Kenny (friend of \*Bonnie Bubke)- recovering after surgery

Dan (relative of \*Bonnie Bubke)- recovering after shoulder injury

Robert (father of \*Chris Knudson)- Hospitalization

Andrew (grandson of \*Schumacher)- Recovering after surgery

Jane (daughter of \*Bonnie Bubke)- Recovering after surgery

Hazel (granddaughter of \*Kim Neuhaus)- health issues

Gene (husband of \*Nancy Owens)- Recovering after surgery

Wilson (infant son of Luke Viertel)- health issues

Donald (brother of \*Carol Edwards)- recovering after COVID-19

Rev. Dr. Brian Saunders (IDE President)- health issues

Those affected by COVID-19 and the derecho storm

Nancy (mother of Carolyn Sternowski)- recovering after broken hip

Alyse (granddaughter of \*Janelle Dunbar)- brain tumor

Ron (brother of \*Gloria Schumacher)- Health issues

LoAnn (relative of \*Bonnie Bubke)- Recovering after broken leg

Agnes (friend of \*Siebenmanns)- Health issues

Gene (husband of \*K. Schmidt)- Recovering after surgery

Andrew (relative of \*B Heims)- Recovering after surgery

Mary Lou (mother of \*Becky Thur)- Recovering after surgery

Carolyn (mother of Mary Vezina)- Recovering from shingles

Jennifer (daughter of \*Pat Krekeler)- Life challenges

Jeff Mellgren (former member)- Recovering after stroke

Hayden (relative of \*Bonnie Bubke)- Brain disorder

Gwendolyn- (friend of \*Karen Swanson)- Terminal illness

Pastor Renfro (Trinity)- Health issues

Steve (friend of \*Pete Larson)- Recovering after stroke

John (nephew of \*Bonnie Bubke)- Health issues

Ruth (friend of \*Velma Ziesemer)- Health issues

David (relative of \*Melissa Loney)- Health issues

Rod (nephew of \*Bonnie Bubke)- Parkinson's Disease

**Safety:**

Taylor & Charlie (grandsons of \*Kim Neuhaus)- Deployed

Harrison (son of \*Siecks)- serving in the military

**Homebound members of Bethany:**

\*Wayne Schilling- at home

Candi Engel- at Garnett Place

\*Nadine Wax- at home

\*Del Block- Summit Pointe, Marion

\*Larry & \*Sharon Easler- Summit Pointe, Marion

\*Dee Rose- hospice care at Meth-Wick

\*Darlene Eckert- recovering after broken leg

**Cancer:**

Noelle (relative of \*Larsons)- cancer

Darrel (father of \*Janet Hoech)- cancer treatment

Marcia (relative of \*Brenda Heims)- cancer

Oz (father of \*Dathan Hinrichs & \*Josie Hester)- cancer treatment

Pat (niece of \*Bonnie Bubke)- cancer

Jerry (father of Missy Gingrich)- cancer treatment

Glen (brother of \*Rob Sieck)- cancer

Jim (friend of \*Sheryl Knutson)- cancer surgery

Tony (friend of \*Mike Thomas)- cancer

David (relative of \*Hasses)- cancer

Julie (friend of \*Brenda Heims)- cancer

Janet (friend of \*Brenda Heims)-cancer

Judy (godmother of \*Jim Novitch)- cancer treatment

Chad (son of \*Vicki Huschka)- leukemia

Rita (friend of \*Shirley Kellogg)- cancer

**Grief, family and friends of:**

\*Ann Meyer- Died 1/23

Ramona (mother of Rick Heller)- Died 1/14

Bud (father of \*Leisa Knudson)- Died 12/17

\*Dee Block (wife of \*Del Block)- Died 12/16

Doug (friend of \*Linda Patten)- Died 12/11

Janet (sister-in-law of \*Ronda Anderson)- Died 12/11

\*Bernie Rehnstrom- Died 11/25

Ray (uncle of \*Karen Pfeffer)- Died 11/7

**Local/National/World:**

Local, state, and national leaders

Victims of floods, hurricanes, fires and disasters

**Bethany Prayers**

Do you have prayer requests? Let us know if you would like your request added to the prayer list, the email prayer chain, or both. Call 364-6026 or email requests to nurse.bethanycr@gmail.com.

## Monday, February 1

10:00 am Women's Group - Zoom & FLC  
6:00 pm Trustees Meeting - Zoom

## Tuesday, February 2

6:00 pm Evangelism Committee - Zoom  
6:30 pm Handbell Practice

## Wednesday, February 3

6:00 am Men's Bible Study - Zoom  
6:00 pm Confirmation - FLC  
7:00 pm Confirmation - FLC

## Thursday, February 4

6:00 pm Human Care Meeting - Zoom

## Sunday, February 7

1:00 pm Communion

## Monday, February 8

10:00 am Women's Group - Zoom & FLC

## Tuesday, February 9

6:30 pm Handbell Practice  
7:00 pm Council Meeting - Zoom

## Wednesday, February 10

6:00 am Men's Bible Study - Zoom  
6:00 pm Confirmation - FLC  
7:00 pm Confirmation - FLC

## Monday, February 15

10:00 am Women's Group - Zoom & FLC

## Tuesday, February 16

6:30 pm Handbell Practice

## Wednesday, February 17

6:00 am Men's Bible Study - Zoom  
6:00 pm Confirmation - FLC  
7:00 pm Ash Wednesday Service

## Sunday, February 21

Baby Bottle Boomerang return

## Monday, February 22

10:00 am Women's Group - Zoom & FLC

## Tuesday, February 23

6:30 pm Handbell Practice

## Wednesday, February 24

6:00 am Men's Bible Study - Zoom  
6:00 pm Confirmation - FLC  
7:00 pm Lenten Service

## Saturday, February 27

8:00 am LERT Training - King of Kings

## FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

**2/1** Joel Conrad  
David Jasper  
**2/2** Mason Corey  
**2/4** Melinda Crow  
**2/7** Porter Brink  
**2/10** Joan Mosel  
Nancy Owens  
**2/12** Erin Crawford  
Larry Kroemer  
**2/13** Andy Gates

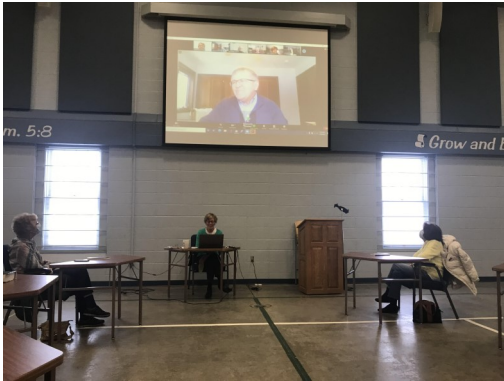
**2/14** Sarah Gates  
Rita Tiedt  
Lucas Volden  
**2/16** Jada McGinnis  
**2/17** Betty Hein  
**2/18** Robby Russman  
**2/19** Aaron Elias  
**2/20** Jeff Gebert  
Mark Ranbarger  
Ellie Smith

**2/21** Michael Prohaska  
**2/23** Mike Raymon  
**2/24** Kelly Frampton  
Dee Rose  
**2/25** Andrea Russman  
Sawyer Stepanek  
**2/27** Kyle Gates  
**2/28** Dave Karsten

## FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

**2/21** Arlen and Bonnie Breiholz

**2/24** Nancy and Gene Owens

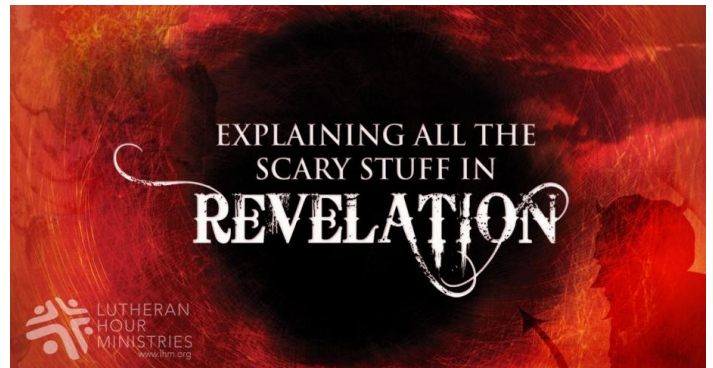


## Women's Small Group

The Monday morning women's group started a new study on January 18. The group is reading the book "Flowing from the Cross" by Daniel Paavola. Discussions of the book take place on Mondays at 10:00 a.m. in a hybrid format (you may choose to join in-person at Bethany or online via Zoom). On January 18, the group had the opportunity to meet the author of the book via a Zoom meeting. Contact Nurse Ronda to join this group.

## Men's Bible Study

Men meet on Zoom on Wednesdays at 6:00 a.m. On January 13, the group started the series "Explaining All the Scary Stuff in Revelation," a study from Lutheran Hour Ministries. All men are welcome to join this Bible study. Contact the church office if you would like to attend.



## Family Promise

Bethany was scheduled to provide meals for Family Promise the week of February 14-20. There is no longer a need for that week. Please stay tuned for future opportunities to participate in Family Promise.

## Bethany's Mission: Living and Sharing God's Love

How have you been "Living and Sharing God's Love"? In a year when we have spent so much time apart, it is especially important to reach out and connect with people. Consider sending a card or calling a friend to let them know God loves them. If you would like to share a message of God's love, you could share a link to our Sunday sermons, which are posted online every weekend at [bethanycr.org](http://bethanycr.org).

How have you found ways to live out our mission statement in 2020? Please contact the church office at [office.bethanycr@gmail.com](mailto:office.bethanycr@gmail.com) or call 364-6026 if you would like to share your story!



## Joy's Journal

Joy is a golden retriever who will ultimately be a comfort dog for our church. She's just a puppy, so for now Joy is currently in training through King's Creatures Animal Training. Cindy Goerdts is Joy's primary caretaker. Comfort dogs provide joy, peace, and support in many situations, and we look forward to the ways Joy will serve in our outreach ministry at Bethany. As she grows, check for "Joy's Journal" updates in the Beacon to keep up with her progress. Here's Joy's first journal submission:

Hi Bethany Friends! On January 1<sup>st</sup> I moved in with the Goerdt's. My PAWrents say I'm pretty smart and I'm growing fast. I've been receiving training from my friend Laura at King's Creatures Animal Training to learn to be Bethany's comfort dog. So far my training has taught me to sit, down, knowing place (my kennel), and now I'm working on walking on a leash. I can't wait to meet all of you some day when I learn to be calm and not use my puppy teeth on everything in sight! Please follow me on Facebook (Joy the Comfort Dog) and Instagram (@joy\_thecomfortdog) to see more pictures of my cute self. FURwell for now!

 Joy





## Lenten Services

Midweek Lenten services will be held at Bethany on Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. starting on February 17. For those who wish to worship from home, sermon videos will be available at [bethanycr.org/sermons](http://bethanycr.org/sermons) or on DVD for those without internet access.

### Midweek Lenten Service Themes

- Feb. 17** A Call to Return (Ash Wednesday)
- Feb. 24** Return to Prayer
- March 3** Return from Betrayal
- March 10** Return from False Witness
- March 17** Return from Denial
- March 24** Return from the Kingdom of God

### Holy Week Service Themes

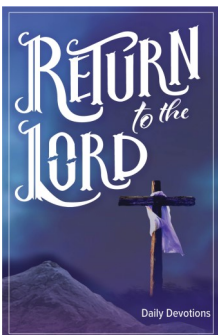
- April 1** Return to the Table (Maundy Thursday)
- April 2** Return to the Truth (Good Friday)
- April 4** Return and See (Easter Sunday)

### Ash Wednesday



Service with communion will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Ash Wednesday (February 17).

Ashes will be made available to pick up on Sundays February 7 & 14 for home use. Socially distanced imposition of ashes will take place at the 7:00 p.m. Ash Wednesday service.



## Devotion Booklets Available

Spend daily time reflecting inwardly on yourself this Lent with *Return to the Lord: Daily Devotions*. See how God is calling you back to Him, and where you might have turned away from Him without noticing it. Each devotion includes a verse to read, a verse to reflect on, one-page devotion, and short prayer.



## Baby Bottle Boomerang for Bridgehaven

How can you show your support for life? By filling a bottle, you are recognizing the beautiful lives that have been touched and saved through the ministry of Bridgehaven. Money raised in a baby bottle campaign supports the life-changing work of meeting the physical and spiritual needs of men and women who find themselves facing an unplanned pregnancy.

You are helping to reach thousands of students through our education programs; making abortion recovery counseling available to all; providing pregnancy testing and ultrasounds to our clients; and making it possible for mothers, fathers, and children to get material support and education through Bridgehaven's "Earn While You Learn" program.



1

**Pick up a bottle from Bethany on January 31.**

2

**Use the bottle as a reminder to pray for Bridgehaven. Fill the bottle with change, bills, or a check.**

3

**Return the bottle to Bethany by February 21.**

## Lutheran Early Response Team (LERT) Training

When disaster strikes, lives are turned upside down. Survivors often need food, clothing, shelter and spiritual care as they begin to cope with tragedy and loss. Responding to these hurting people is a vital part of who we are as members of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). We show mercy and love to our communities because of the great grace and love that God has first shown to us.

### Iowa District East LERT Training

Saturday, February 27

8:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Cost: Free

King of Kings Lutheran Church  
3275 N Center Point Rd.  
Cedar Rapids, IA 52411



**Register for this training at [www.lcmside.org/lert-training](http://www.lcmside.org/lert-training)**





## Stephen Ministry

Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ (Galatians 6:2, NRSV).

Stephen Ministry offers a proven and effective way to organize, equip, and supervise a team of congregation members—called Stephen Ministers—to provide high-quality, one-to-one, Christ-centered care to people in the congregation and the community experiencing life difficulties.

Bethany Lutheran is expanding the Stephen Ministry program! Kay Karsten completed Stephen Leader training during Summer 2020. The Stephen Leaders guide and oversee the Stephen Ministry program within the congregation. The Stephen Ministers are trained to provide one-on-one Christian caregiving, walking alongside a person facing a life challenge or crisis.

In January 2021, we kicked off a new Stephen Ministry training class of five members: Ed & Gloria Schumacher, Kelly Frampton, Donice McDonald, and Angela Sturtz. They are meeting weekly via Zoom for fifty hours of training from the Stephen Leaders. They have pre-class reading to do in preparing for each class. We are so thankful for the technology support we are getting from Deb Mills and Mark Holt.

God is the cure giver; we are the care giver is at the core of Stephen Ministry. If you are in need of Christian caregiving, please contact Pastor Erickson or Nurse Ronda at the church office.

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(Continued from page 8)... Join this Lutheran Early Response Team (LERT) training event to learn how congregations and even individual members like you can be better prepared to show Christ's love to the community when a disaster strikes. Attendees will receive training in the following areas:

- The LCMS Disaster Response Program
- Christian Care in Times of Disaster
- Congregation Preparedness
- Engaging in Community Response
- The LERT Program
- Safety and Equipment
- General Volunteer Opportunities



Attendees also will receive an LCMS Disaster Response credential that will give them credibility as they enter disaster zones in a coordinated and collaborative effort to assist those in need. **The cost is free, and lunch is provided, but you are welcome to bring your own lunch.**



## Communion Schedule

If you would prefer receiving communion in a small group at Bethany, you may sign up to receive communion in the afternoon on the first Sunday of each month. The next one will be on February 7.

Time slots will be limited to one family group at a time. To sign up for a 15-minute slot, call the church office at 364-6026 or use the link sent to your email.

# Sunday Morning Education

## Sunday Morning Adult Bible Study

On Sundays Pastor Erickson leads Bible study at 9:45 a.m.

There is a link on the email sent to the congregation each Saturday or you can go to the church website under Resources/Bible Study. On Zoom just enter the following ID and passcode:

Meeting ID: 857 1656 9719

Passcode: 660091

Those who wish to attend in-person may join Pastor Erickson in the Family Life Center. If you attend in person, please wear a face mask.



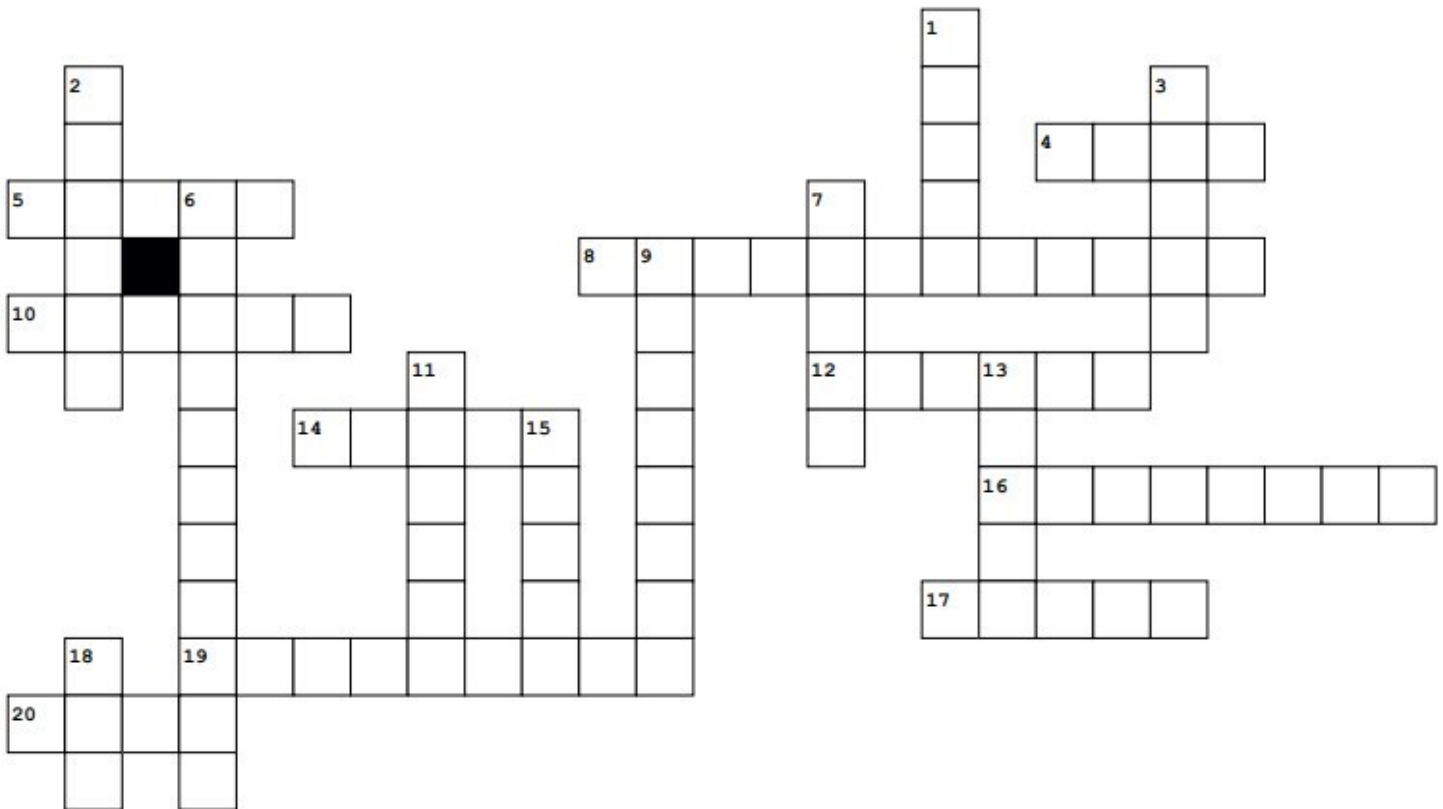
## Sunday School

Sunday School has been meeting online via Zoom on Sunday mornings from 10-10:30 am. Sunday school is for preschool through grade 12.

This year Sunday School is doing an overview of the Old Testament.

## Pastor's Puzzle

Look up the Bible verses from this month's Gospel lessons to find the answers to the questions below. A few answers may be found in this month's issue of the Bethany Beacon!



### Across

4. It won't put you to shame (Romans 5:5)
5. Jesus' title in Mark 9:5
8. February 17 (two words)
10. Sin's "mother" (James 1:15)
12. Appeared with Jesus and Moses (Mark 9:4)
14. Pick yours up to follow Jesus
16. Stephen \_\_\_\_\_
17. Abraham's would-be sacrifice (Genesis 22:2)
19. February 14th's martyr
20. The Spirit's form (Mark 1:10)

### Down

1. Jesus' tempter in Mark 1:13
2. Where Elijah went in II Kings 2:11
3. Jesus would not let demon do this (Mark 1:34)
6. Baby Bottle Boomerang beneficiary
7. Simon's mother-in-law's illness (Mark 1:30)
9. Where sand is found (Genesis 22:17)
11. Jesus' baptismal river (Mark 1:9)
13. Peter and John's fellow disciple in Mark 9:2
15. The old Sarah (Genesis 17:15)
18. Bethany's Comfort Dog

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED




*Living and Sharing God's Love*

**WORSHIP WITH US**

**Sunday Mornings**

8:30 am	Traditional Service
9:45 am	Education Hour
11:00 am	Contemporary Service

**CONNECT WITH US**

Website	<a href="http://www.bethanycr.org">www.bethanycr.org</a>
Email	<a href="mailto:office.bethanycr@gmail.com">office.bethanycr@gmail.com</a>
Phone	319-364-6026
	<a href="https://facebook.com/bethanycria">facebook.com/bethanycria</a>