

# The Bethlehem Star



## Why Be Afraid??

So they went out quickly and fled from the tomb, for they trembled and were amazed. And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid. — Mark 16:8, NKJV

One of the more puzzling aspects of St. Mark's Gospel is his ending. Chapter 16, verse 8, seems out of place for Easter Morning. The women stand around in fear of what is going on. Still, the other Gospels show all the disciples, including the Apostles, to be confused and fearful at what was happening. This is not totally surprising. All Sabbath Day they were in their homes, by themselves, trying to make sense of Jesus' death. As Cleopas and his friend told Jesus when walking to Emmaus, "we were hoping He was the Christ." But His crucifixion seemed to have dashed their hopes.

So when Easter morning came, the fears and doubts they harbored in their homes that Saturday spilled over into Sunday. The problem: they looked to themselves to explain what they saw, felt, and experienced, rather than looking to God in His Word, especially Christ's Words which He had preached and taught. Looking inside their own hearts, minds, and intellects they saw only fear and doubt. Had they instead recalled Jesus' promises, those fears would have vanished.

This was not the first time in Mark's Gospel that Jesus' followers, both women and men, had been afraid when they saw things happening. The first time was after Jesus had liberated the man possessed by Legion across the Sea of Galilee:

Then they came to Jesus, and saw the one who had been demon-possessed and had the legion, sitting and clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. (Mark 5:15)

Shortly thereafter, Christ had been asked to save a little girl near death. Mark tells us that

While [Jesus] was still speaking, some came from the ruler of the synagogue's house who said, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?" As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, He said to the ruler of the synagogue, "Do not be afraid; only believe." — Mark 5:35-36, NKJV

Their fear could only be calmed through believing and trusting Jesus. The same held true later when Jesus proved His power by calming the raging sea:

And when they saw Him walking on the sea, they supposed it was a ghost, and cried out; for they all saw Him and were troubled. But immediately He talked with them and said to them, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid." — Mark 6:49-51, NKJV

Once more, if they had only discounted their own faulty reason and trusted Christ, their fears would have disappeared. **Continued on page 2 >>**

## April 2024 Baptisms

- 4/1 - Donna Ebken
- 4/1 - Mary Ratliff
- 4/4 - Ryan McCoy
- 4/6 - Dorothy Morgan
- 4/7 - Sheila McCoy
- 4/8 - Linda Chalmers
- 4/8 - Cheryl Yager
- 4/10 - Daniel Jordan
- 4/10 - Allen Ruppel
- 4/10 - Lisa Walter
- 4/11 - Eleanor Laughton
- 4/11 - Randa Thomas
- 4/11 - Jana Winkelmann
- 4/12 - Paige McCaskill
- 4/14 - Chloe Gross
- 4/14 - Winfred Heyen
- 4/15 - Camren McCoy
- 4/16 - Nathan Frost
- 4/16 - Gretchen Lampe
- 4/16 - Hermina Stier
- 4/17 - Kayla Brown
- 4/17 - Pauline Koch
- 4/17 - Roderick Koch
- 4/20 - Dan Fricke
- 4/23 - Mackenzie Dennis
- 4/23 - Lauren Harrison
- 4/24 - Joy Harris
- 4/25 - Brett McCoy
- 4/25 - Erica Shimkus
- 4/25 - Brian McCoy
- 4/27 - LeAnne Fricke
- 4/28 - Mark Fricke
- 4/30 - Oakley Marie Masten
- 4/30 - Cory Wood

## April 2024 Birthdays

- 4/1 - Amber Stier
- 4/1 - Mark Jordan
- 4/2 - Karen Steinkruger
- 4/3 - Chloe Gross
- 4/3 - Abigail Hammitt
- 4/3 - Duran Rademaker
- 4/5 - Bonnie Fricke
- 4/7 - Tim Stroisch
- 4/10 - Andrew Adams
- 4/12 - Jesslyn Valles
- 4/13 - Jaden Sanderfield
- 4/14 - Rodney Harrison
- 4/15 - Jeff Yager
- 4/17 - Stefanie Fricke
- 4/17 - Lori Verhulst
- 4/18 - Erin Goodman
- 4/21 - Ella Ruppel
- 4/21 - Amy Turasky
- 4/24 - Olivia Bohannon
- 4/24 - Magnolia Heriford
- 4/24 - Victor Newman
- 4/25 - Bart Leinberger
- 4/29 - Alexis Kaecker

## April 2024

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Upon the Mount of Transfiguration, Peter, James, and John would have been better off just listening to what Jesus had to say. We can obviously excuse their fear at God's Almighty appearance, but even then simple trust in what Jesus was saying would have calmed them: Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah"—because he did not know what to say, for they were greatly afraid. — Mark 9:5-6, NKJV

Next, the disciples were naturally afraid not only for Christ's life, but their own. Yet again, just trusting Jesus' words, "He will rise the third day," should have calmed them. Instead of "overthinking" what Christ was saying, they should just have believed what He was saying:

For He taught His disciples and said to them, "The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him. And after He is killed, He will rise the third day." But they did not understand this saying, and were afraid to ask Him. — Mark 9:31-32, NKJV

Again fear came to all, women & men, Palm Sunday when they drew nearer Jesus' rendezvous with the Cross: Now they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed. And as they followed they were afraid. — Mark 10:32

So the women's fear on Easter came from using reason and senses, apart from the Word of God, to make sense of the world. Modern man is unnecessarily proud of his intellect and reason. This is really nothing new, though. Already in the Garden of Eden one temptation of eating the fruit was that it came from "a tree desirable to make one wise." To this Day, humanity arrogantly takes sinful pride in being 'intelligent', pretending to be able to figure out life apart from what God says.

So also the women of Mark 16:8. Their temporary fear at seeing Roman guards frozen in fear, the tomb with the stone rolled away, and "a young man clothed in a long white robe sitting on the right side," which Mark also tells us made them "alarmed," was just not easily explained by reason and senses. Just like Peter and John when they arrived at the tomb, they had "not yet known the Scripture that He must rise again from the dead." If they had sooner let God's Word tell them the meaning of what they beheld with their eyes, their fears would have sooner been turned to joy in Christ.

If you are fearful of anything in life, try first looking to God's Word to explain life. His Word explains why our world is so corrupt and chaotic. His Word tells us what God is doing to protect and rescue us. Mainly, His Word gives us the sure and certain hope that since Christ is Risen, our eternal life has begun in Him. Even more, His Word tells us we need not fear, though our World descends deeper into sin and insanity. God's Word assures us we shall be rescued by our Risen Savior, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen!

— Pastor Gross <>

## ANNIVERSARIES THIS MONTH

### April 2024 Wedding Anniversaries

4/11 - Larry & Bonnie Fricke (32)

4/15 - Ron & Kathy Ruppel (46)

4/18 - Duran & Mackenzie Rademaker (15)

4/29 - Ray & Cheri Zanni (29)

### Ladies Aid & Fellowship News

Our Ladies Aid Society meets next on Thursday, April 18, **at 7:00 p.m.** Leading our Program will be **Don Tucker** who will tell us about his Missionary Journey to Spain. Our monthly Project donation will go to the New Salem Lincoln League. Our servers will be **Jan Morgan & Hermina Stier**. As always, all the Ladies of our Community are welcome to attend every meeting! We will get you home by 9:00 p.m., so this will be a great way to retire at night doing the Lord's Missionary Work.

MICRO-PANTRY: Thank you for your ongoing support for the local Micro-Pantry. Your donations are greatly appreciated. All non-perishable items can be dropped off in the Pantry Box in our Church entryway.

### SECRET SISTERS REVEAL PARTY

Think you have figured out who your Secret Sister is? The Secret Sister Reveal Party Will be held on April 20 at 11:30 a.m. in the Church Basement. The exciting reveal day will include Lunch, Games and Activities. You may bring your April exchange item for you Secret Sister to the party if you wish. If you have any questions about the Reveal Party contact **Sheila McCoy** at 217-632-7142. Hope to see all those participating in the Secret Sisters Program at the Party.

Kindness Hearts: Thanks to all who donated Sewing Supplies, and to our talented Ladies that made the Hearts. We had 130 Hearts completed. Hearts have been mailed along with Easter Cards to shut-in's and the other will be handed out to the Nursing Home Residents before Easter.

Fun Day Sunday Game Day was a wonderful day of Fellowship, Fun and Great Food. We had several games to chose to play. Most played Bingo or Bag Toss and enjoyed Popcorn, Hot Dogs, Chips, Snacks and Cookies. Attendees won donated game and door prizes.

Our next Card Committee Meeting is 4:00 p.m. May 9 in the Fellowship Room. Lots of shut-ins are blessed by being remembered. They also enjoy Evelyn Stengel's stamps on the envelopes. More volunteers are welcome!

## Parish News

**Easter Breakfast Set-Up** is Saturday March 30 at 10:00 a.m. Folks who've promised coffee cakes and such can bring their baked goods this Saturday, or when you arrive for the Breakfast Sunday morning (8:00 to 10:00 a.m.) If you're able to help, please let Bob Griffin or Pastor Gross know, or just show up and volunteer Easter Morning. Thanks!

**Camp CILCA** Spring Clean-Up day is Saturday, March 30 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 Noon. Lunch is provided for all volunteers. We could use your help to get the campground ready for the outdoor season! Thanks!

**Camp CILCA Annual Banquet** is Sunday, April 14 in the Camp Dining Hall. This year's speaker, Mary Kate Zander, Exec. Director of Illinois Right to Life, speaks from 5:00 to 5:30 p.m.. Tickets are \$40 include a catered dinner, homemade fudge, live music, and an update on Camp CILCA. Tickets must be reserved by calling or emailing by Wednesday, April 10, at 217-487-7497 or [director@cilca.org](mailto:director@cilca.org).

**Monday Night Book Club** is reading Katie Schuermann's "The Saints of Whistle Grove" on Monday evenings at 7:00 p.m. Everyone is welcome for discussion, refreshments, and building up one another in love!

**Church Council** meets on Tuesday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>. If you have any topics for Council to discuss, please contact **Chairman Mike Fricke**.

**Spring Voters Assembly** convenes after Service on Sunday, April 14. Participation of all Voters is greatly helpful. If you have topics that you would like on the Voters Agenda please see **Chairman Mike Fricke** before April 2nd Church Council.

### **Cancer Care Bags**

We are still needing a few items to complete our first 10 Cancer Bags:

**Fuzzy Socks**

**Small Bags of Hard Candy**

**Small Containers of Lotion**

There is a box in the Church Fellowship Room for your donations. Thank you for your help with the project. If you know someone that would benefit from one of these Cancer Bags please contact **Sheila McCoy, Nancy Ortman** or **Pam Gross**.

## Easter Lillies

Again this year we've been blessed by donors with Easter Lillies to beautify the chancel and sanctuary for Easter Morning Services. Our donors this year are:

Charlie & Jan Morgan

Janet & Larry Lyons

Eva Walker

Marilyn Baum

Hermina Stier

Ruth Ann Heyen

Jim & Darlene Urban



We also thank Darlene Urban for her help in purchasing and getting the lillies safely into the building. Donors are of course welcome to take their flowers home Easter Morning. God Bless!

**The March for Life** to protect both pre-natal babies and vulnerable senior citizens, and to promote pro-Life personal and social ethics will be Wednesday, April 17 in downtown Springfield. 10:00 a.m. Matins will be held at Trinity—LCMS across from the State Capitol followed by Lunch at State House Inn, 11:00 a.m. (where parking will be available, though car-pooling is strongly encouraged). The Rally at Lincoln Statue begins at 12:00 Noon, with the March around Capitol beginning at 1:00 p.m. Pray to our Lord that more people will "Choose Life."

**Boiler Update:** \$ 18,390 has been received as of March 24th, including our Saints Fund's matching grant. Donations may still be designated to Building Fund, Boiler Repair, etc., through the end of April. Latest word that Collins had on the repairs is that the original boiler manufacturer will fabricate a new condensation tank hopefully by the end of May. Fortunately, the Lord blessed us with repairs that kept the building warm during the coldest part of winter. Thanks to everyone for their patience, and for the blessed donations you have provided. God Bless!

**Painters** are about done in the Fellowship Hall and beginning work on the downstairs hallway as of press time. Thanks to a gift from **Barb Ogden's** family in her memory, a painting crew has been in the building through the last two weeks of March to re-paint and repair the walls of the whole Fellowship Wing. We thank everyone for putting up with the inconvenience of having entrances closed, paint equipment being stored in unusual places, and for having schedules and meeting areas disrupted. We'll be glad to see the like-new walls & rooms. Thanks!

## Service Helpers, April 2024

Sat. April 6

Elder - Mike Fricke

Usher - Ben Gross

Sun. April 7

Deacon - Jake Lord

Usher - Brian Hollenkamp

Sat. April 13

Usher - Ray Jordan

Usher - Grace Fricke

Sun. April 14

Deacon - Larry Fricke

Usher - Trent Kruse

Sat. April 20

Elder - John Leinberger

Usher - Ben Gross

Sun. April 21

Deacon - Matt Fricke

Usher - Brian Hollenkamp

Sat. April 27

Usher - Ray Jordan

Usher - Nancy Ortman

Sun. April 28

Deacon - Bob Griffin

Usher - Chris Griffin



**Camp CILCA** is seeking a food service manager/head cook. This position will be part-time and include planning and preparing meals for campers at weekend retreats, outdoor education, and the summer program. Applicants should be willing to obtain an Illinois Food Service Manager license, which the camp will pay for. To get more information, or to apply, contact Pastor Theilen at 217-487-7497 or [director@cilca.org](mailto:director@cilca.org).

**Many Thanks to all our Lenten Supper Volunteers!** We had dozens of helpers, cooks, dish washers, bakers, and servers that made our six Lenten pre-Service suppers a great success! Not only did this provide those in attendance with a tasty supper, but gave us fellowship time with one another, and most importantly improved attendance at all the Wednesday night Lenten Services. May God bless each of you for your kind donation of food, service, and time for your fellow members!

Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning,  
the women who'd followed Jesus from Galilee,  
and certain other women with them,  
came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared.

But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb.  
Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.

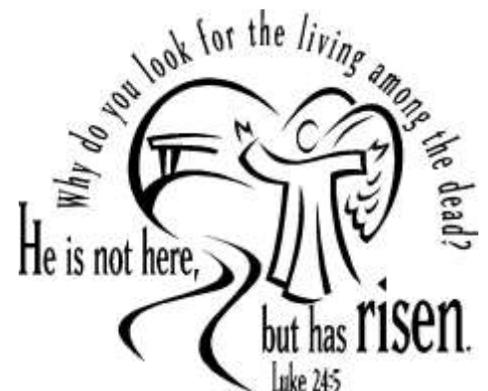
And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this,  
that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments.  
Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth,  
they said to them,

"Why do you seek the Living One among the dead?  
He is not here, but is risen!

Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, saying,

'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men,  
and be crucified, and the third day rise again.' "

— The Easter Gospel, according to St. Luke, 24th Chapter (NKJV)





## LWML Servant Events

Friday, April 26<sup>th</sup>

1:00—4:00 p.m.

Immanuel Lutheran Church  
3300 -24<sup>th</sup> Street, Rock Island

### Activities include -

**Knotting quilts**

**Making 'Witness Bracelets'**

**Crocheting finger puppets**

**Marking Bibles** (to be used at the Lutheran Hour Ministries booth at the Illinois State Fair)

**Shelving Items at Milan Christian Food Pantry** (*limited to first 10 requests received*)

*Snacks and drinks will be provided by the ladies of the church.*

## Gifts from the Heart Ingathering

Collection of items is on Saturday, April 27th ONLY!!!

Unloading between 7:30—8:30 a.m. (No earlier drop off)

Immanuel Lutheran Church, 3300 – 24<sup>th</sup> St., Rock Island, IL



**PLEASE—USE BOXES, NO PLASTIC BAGS**

**PLEASE – MARK ON BOXES WITH HEAVY MARKER WHERE YOU WANT IT TO GO.**

**PLEASE— bring a list of items being donated and hand to volunteers as they unload.**

### **Christian Family Care Center** (*Provides shelter, support, and resources to the homeless in the QC area*)

All purpose cleaners (like Pine-sol, Mr. Clean) Paper Towels

Toilet bowl cleaner Toilet Paper

33 & 39 gallon and kitchen size trash bags Sanitary products for women's shelter (Martha's House)

Coffee Monetary Checks made to Christian Family Care Center

Canned fruit and vegetables

### **Pregnancy Resources**

Diapers - Newborn and size 5-6 Newborn clothing, boy and girl

Diaper wipes Larger toddler clothing – 2T and 3T, boy and girl

New baby bottles Burp cloths

New pacifiers Receiving blankets

Baby shampoo & lotion (no powder or oil) Small baby toys (teethers, etc.)

Baby bath towels Monetary Checks made to Pregnancy Resources

Baby washcloths

### **Milan Christian Food Pantry**

Peanut Butter Hamburger Helper Shampoo

Jelly Soup Toothpaste

Cereal Toilet Paper Monetary Checks made to Milan Christian Food Pantry

### **MOST Ministries** (*Mission Opportunities Short Term*)

Eyeglasses

Eye glass cases

# April 2024, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Petersburg, Illinois

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>7</p> <p>Sun. School 9:00 am Communion 10 am Confirmation 5:00 pm Second Sunday of Easter</p>	<p>1</p> <p>Piece-Maker Quilters 1:00 pm Book Club, 7:00 pm Easter Monday</p>	<p>2</p> <p>FB Bible Study 10 am Church Council 7 pm Menard Co Singers 7 pm Easter Tuesday</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Pastor's Day Off</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Pastor's Day Off</p>	<p>5</p> <p>LWML Garage Sale 9:00 am - 1:00 pm and 4:00 - 7:00 pm Pastor Gross @ Zion 11:00 to 12 Noon</p>	<p>6</p> <p>LWML Garage Sale 9:00 am - 1:00 pm Communion 6 pm</p>
<p>14</p> <p>Sun. School 9:00 am Communion 10 am <b>Voters 11:00 am</b> Confirmation 5:00 pm</p>	<p>8</p> <p><b>Full Solar Eclipse 1:30 to 2:30 pm</b> Book Club, 7:00 pm</p>	<p>9</p> <p>FB Bible Study 10 am Hymn Planning mtg. 1:30 pm Menard Co Singers 7 pm</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Sunny Acres 10 am</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Countryside BC 10 am</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Pastor Check-up 11 am Pastor @ Zion 1-2 pm</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Vespers 6:00 pm</p>
<p>21</p> <p>Sun. School 9:00 am Communion 10 am Confirmation 5:00 pm Fourth Sunday of Easter</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Book Club, 7:00 pm  CLD Pastor's Conference</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Concordia Village LCMS Communion 1:30 pm Menard Co Singers 7 pm</p>	<p>17</p> <p><b>March for Life, Springfield</b> Sunny Acres 10 am</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Countryside BC 10 am Ladies Aid 7 pm</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Pastor Day Off</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Secret Sister Reveal Luncheon, 11:30 am to 1 pm Communion 6 pm</p>
<p>28</p> <p>Sun. School 9:00 am Communion 10 am Confirmation 5:00 pm Fifth Sunday of Easter</p>	<p>22</p> <p><b>Star articles 10 am</b> Book Club, 7:00 pm Dart Ball @ Immanuel, Springfield, 7:00 pm</p>	<p>23</p> <p>FB Bible Study 10 am St. Louis Call Service, 7 pm Menard Co Singers 7 pm</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Sunny Acres 10 am Ft. Wayne Call Svc, 6 pm</p>	<p>25</p> <p>St. Mark, Evangelist</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Pr. Matt Schneider, Guest Preacher / Liturgist Vespers 6:00 pm</p>
<p>28</p> <p>Sun. School 9:00 am Communion 10 am Confirmation 5:00 pm Fifth Sunday of Easter</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Book Club, 7:00 pm</p>	<p>30</p> <p>FB Bible Study 10 am Menard Co Singers 7 pm</p>	LWML District Convention, Immanuel, Rock Island			

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# May 2024, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Petersburg, Illinois

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<p>5</p> <p>Confirmation Sunday Sun. School 9:00 am Communion 10 am Sixth Sunday of Easter</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Piece-Maker Quilters 1:00 pm Book Club, 7:00 pm</p>	<p>7</p> <p>FB Bible Study 10 am Church Council 7 pm Menard Co Singers 7 pm</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Mt. Pelee, 1902 Sunny Acres 10 am</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Ascension Day Countryside BC 10 am Holy Communion 7:00 pm</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Pastor Gross @ Zion 11:00 to 12 Noon</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Vespers 6:00 pm</p>																																																																																																		
<p>12</p> <p>Sun. School 9:00 am Communion 10 am RITE of Confirmation Seventh Sunday of Easter Mothers' Day</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Book Club, 7:00 pm</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Circuit Pastors meet @ Immanuel Riverton 9:30 am Menard Co Singers 7 pm</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Sunny Acres 10 am</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Countryside BC 10 am Zion Elders, 5:30 pm Ladies Aid 7 pm</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Pastor Gross @ Zion 11:00 to 12 Noon</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Pentecost Eve Communion 6 pm</p>																																																																																																		
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# Easter Breakfast



## Easter Breakfast

**Breakfast will be served** from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., after 7:00 a.m. “Easter Dawn” Service on Sunday, March 31, 2024. There will be a sign-up sheet on the Fellowship Room Table for donations of Coffee Cakes or Muffins for the Breakfast. Those donations can be dropped off at Church on Saturday, March 30, between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

### **Holy Week Special Service Schedule:**

- Thursday, March 28 (Maundy Thursday) Holy Communion, Divine Service 4 — 7:00 p.m.
- Friday, March 29 (Good Friday) Order of Vespers — 7:00 p.m.
- Sunday, March 31 (Easter Dawn) Holy Communion, DS3 / AGPS — 7:00 a.m.
- Sunday, March 31 (Easter Festival w/ “The Band”) Holy Communion, DS3 / AGPS — 10:15 a.m.



Pastor: (217) 416-4729 / Office: (217) 632-2453

Office e-mail: [blcpburgil@gmail.com](mailto:blcpburgil@gmail.com)

**Pastor’s e-mail:** [bethrev2@att.net](mailto:bethrev2@att.net)

Lutheran Hour Broadcasts: [www.lhm.org](http://www.lhm.org) and Sundays at 7:30 a.m. on WTIM, 870 AM

Service live on Facebook, Sunday — 10:00 a.m.

Saturday Evening Service — 6:00 p.m.

Sunday School for Children — 9:00 a.m.

Sunday Divine Service — 10:00 a.m.

Facebook Bible Study — Tuesdays, 10:00 a.m.

Countryside Bible Study — Thursdays, 10:00 a.m.

**[www.bethlehempetersburg.org](http://www.bethlehempetersburg.org)**

Bethlehem Lutheran Church  
120 West Monroe  
Petersburg, IL 62675

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED