

MAKING SENSE OF THE CROSS

WEDNESDAY

BIBLE STUDY

Have you ever wondered why Jesus had to die in order to fulfill God's purposes for him? And why such a horrific death of crucifixion? The scriptures contain different perspectives and answers to these questions. In this Bible study, each study session will begin with a short video presentation by David J. Lose, pastor and former seminary professor, followed by our own conversation and explorations. As we journey through Lent toward Jesus' death and resurrection, join us as we make sense of the cross together.


A Six Week Study During Lent

February 22 through March 29

At 10:00 AM

DAY	TIME	
WEDNESDAYS	10:00 AM	Bethel Lutheran Church

YOU'RE INVITED TO FOLLOW ALONG
WITH US DURING LENT
WITH THE SCRIPTURE READINGS EACH WEEK
ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES



LENT AT A GLANCE

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper and Message in the narthex. See sign-up sheet. Freewill Offering

6:00 - 7:00 PM

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22

Ash Wednesday Service in the sanctuary. Distribution of ashes and communion.

7:00 - 8:00 PM

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Join Pastor Lynne and others for a Bible study "Making Sense of the Cross" Wednesdays of Lent

10:00 - 11:00 AM

SATURDAY, MARCH 18

Spring Cleaning Day at Bethel! Come have breakfast with the Men's Group at 9:00 AM and then help us spruce up the church for Easter! See sign up sheet to help us be better prepared.

9:00 - 12:00 PM

THURSDAY, APRIL 6

Maundy Thursday Meal, Communion, and Foot Washing service in the narthex. A simple meal will prepared for you. See the sign up sheet to help us be better prepared.

7:00 - 8:00 PM

FRIDAY, APRIL 7

Good Friday Service in the sanctuary.

7:00 - 8:00 PM

SUNDAY, APRIL 9

Easter Sunday Worship
(Livestream available at 10:00 AM)

8:00 AM and 10:00 AM

SUNDAY, APRIL 9

Easter Sunday Continental Brunch

Between the services

Facebook @ bethelfamilyministry

Instagram @ blcfamily

Bethe's website @ bethelbrushprairie.org

Bethel's Mid-Week E-News

February 26, 2023

The First Week of Lent

*Jesus sees
the human condition.*



This Sunday's gospel tells of Jesus' temptation in the desert. His forty-day fast becomes the basis of our Lenten pilgrimage. In the early church Lent was a time of intense preparation for those to be baptized at the Easter Vigil. This catechetical focus on the meaning of faith is at the heart of our Lenten journey to the baptismal waters of Easter. Hungry for God's mercy, we receive the bread of life to nourish us for the days ahead.

Readings and Psalm

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

Eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil

Psalm 32

Mercy embraces those who trust in the Lord (Ps. 32:10)

Romans 5:12-19

Death came through one; life comes through one

Matthew 4:1-11

The temptation of Jesus in the wilderness for forty days

Children's Focus—The First Sin

Scripture Reference: Genesis 3:1-24

Spark Story Bible pages 14-19

Spark Bible pages 4-5

Lesson Focus: We all need God's love and forgiveness.



**When you see a yummy fruit, thank God for
creating it and loving you.**



March 5, 2023



The Second Sunday of Lent **I see God**

During Lent we journey with all those around the world who will be baptized at the Easter Vigil. In this week's gospel Jesus tells Nicodemus that he must be born of water and Spirit. At the font we are given a new birth as children of God. As God made a covenant with Abraham, in baptism God promises to raise us up with Christ to new life. From worship we are sent forth to proclaim God's love for all the world.

Readings and Psalm

Genesis 12:1-4a

The blessing of God upon Abram

Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the hills; my help comes from the Lord. (Ps. 121:1, 2)

Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

The promise to those who share Abraham's faith

John 3:1-17

The mission of Christ: to save the world

Children's Focus—Abram's Call

Spark Story Bible pages 26-29

Spark Bible page 13

Scripture Reference: Genesis 12:1-9

Lesson Focus: We can say thanks to God.



Look for others who are working hard and try to see how you might help.



March 12, 2023

The Third Week of Lent

God Sees Us

In this week's gospel the Samaritan woman asks Jesus for water, an image of our thirst for God. Jesus offers living water, a sign of God's grace flowing from the waters of baptism. The early church used this gospel and those of the next two Sundays to deepen baptismal reflection during the final days of preparation before baptism at Easter. As we journey to the resurrection feast, Christ comes among us in word, bath, and meal—offering us the life-giving water of God's mercy and forgiveness.

Readings and Psalm

Exodus 17:1-7

Water from the rock in the wilderness

Psalm 95

Let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation (Ps. 95:1)

Romans 5:1-11

Reconciled to God by Christ's death

John 4:5-42

Baptismal image: the woman at the well

Children's Focus—Woman at the Well

Scripture Reference: John 4:5-42

Spark Story Bible pages 420-425

Spark Bible pages 1175-1176

Lesson Focus: Jesus teaches about God's love.



Think about someone who doesn't have many friends. Maybe they are old or sick or just shy. Find a way to connect with that person this week.





March 19, 2023

The Fourth Week of Lent

We See The World

Baptism is sometimes called enlightenment. The gospel for this week is the story of the man born blind healed by Christ. “I was blind, now I see,” declares the man. In baptism God opens our eyes to see the truth of who we are: God’s beloved children. As David was anointed king of Israel, in baptism God anoints our head with oil, and calls us to bear witness to the light of Christ in our daily lives.

Readings and Psalm

1 Samuel 16:1-13

David is chosen and anointed

Psalm 23

You anoint my head with oil. (Ps. 23:5)

Ephesians 5:8-14

Awake from sleep, live as children of light

John 9:1-41

Baptismal image: the man born blind

Children’s Focus—Pool of Siloam

Scripture Reference: John 9:1-41

Spark Story Bible pages 432-435

Spark Bible pages 1183-1185

Lesson Focus: Jesus' love lights up my life.



When you see a pond, lake, or river, remember the blind man at the pool. Move your hands over your eyes, as if you are washing them. Say, “Jesus, help me to see you better.”

March 26, 2023

The Fifth Week of Lent

We See New Life



In this week's gospel Jesus reveals his power over death by raising Lazarus from the dead. The prophet Ezekiel prophesies God breathing new life into dry bones. To those in exile or living in the shadows of death, these stories proclaim God's promise of resurrection. In baptism we die with Christ that we might also be raised with him to new life. At the Easter Vigil we will welcome the newly baptized as we remember God's unfailing promise in our baptism.

Readings and Psalm

Ezekiel 37:1-14

The dry bones of Israel brought to life

Psalm 130

I wait for you, O Lord; in your word is my hope. (Ps. 130:5)

Romans 8:6-11

Life in the Spirit

John 11:1-45

Baptismal image: the raising of Lazarus

Children's Focus—Lazarus

Scripture Reference: John 11:1-45

Spark Story Bible pages 440-443

Spark Bible pages 1186-1187

Lesson Focus: Jesus loved his friends.



Look for smiling faces all around. When you see a happy face. Smile at that person to share the love of Jesus.



April 2, 2023



Palm Sunday

*Preparing my heart
for Holy Week*

This week, we encounter the paradox that defines our faith: Jesus Christ is glorified king and humiliated servant. We too are full of paradox: like Peter, we fervently desire to follow Christ, but find ourselves afraid, denying God. We wave palms in celebration today as Christ comes into our midst, and we follow with trepidation as his path leads to death on the cross. Amid it all we are invited into this paradoxical promise of life through Christ's broken body and outpoured love in a meal of bread and wine. We begin this week that stands at the center of the church year, anticipating the completion of God's astounding work.

Readings and Psalm

Matthew 21:1-11—The Passion Story

Isaiah 50:4-9a

The servant of the Lord submits to suffering

Psalm 31:9-16

Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit. (Ps. 31:5)

Philippians 2:5-11

Humbled to the point of death on a cross

Matthew 27:11-54

The passion of the Lord

Children's Focus—Palm Sunday

Spark NRSV Bible

Matthew 21:1-11 (page 1084)

Spark Story Bible

Palm Sunday (pages 454–459)



There are crosses all around us every day. You can see them in jewelry, buildings, and on signs. This week, look for crosses. Each time you see one, remember that Jesus died on a cross for you.



April 6, 7:00 PM

Mauudy Thursday Meal, Communion, and Foot Washing

On this evening our Lenten observance comes to an end, and we gather with Christians around the world to celebrate the Three Days of Jesus' death and resurrection. Tonight we remember Christ's last meal with his disciples, but the central focus is his commandment that we live out the promise embodied in this meal. As Jesus washed his disciples' feet, so we are called to give and receive love in humble service to one another. Formed into a new body in Christ through this holy meal, we are transformed by the mercy we have received and carry it into the world. Departing worship in solemn silence, we anticipate the coming days.

Readings and Psalm

Exodus 12:1-4 [5-10] 11-14

The Passover of the Lord

Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19

I will lift the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord. (Ps. 116:13)

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Proclaim the Lord's death until he comes

John 13:1-17, 31b-35

The service of Christ: foot washing and meal

Children's Focus—Jesus washes the Disciples' Feet

Spark NRSV Bible

John 13:1-17 (page 1190)

Spark Story Bible (pages 462-467)



Jesus showed love to his disciples by washing their feet. What can you do for someone this week to show you love them? When you do that act of love, tell them, "God loves you and so do I!"



April 7, 7:00 PM

Good Friday

Life and death stand side by side as we enter into Good Friday. In John's passion account, Jesus reveals the power and glory of God, even as he is put on trial and sentenced to death. Standing with the disciples at the foot of the cross, we pray for the whole world in the ancient bidding prayer, as Christ's death offers life to all. We gather in solemn devotion, but always with the promise that the tree around which we assemble is indeed a tree of life. We depart silently, and we anticipate Christ's resurrection on Easter Sunday.

Readings and Psalm

Isaiah 52:13--53:12

The suffering servant

Psalm 22

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? (Ps. 22:1)

Hebrews 10:16-25

The way to God is opened by Jesus' death

Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9 (alternate)

Jesus is our merciful high priest

John 18:1--19:42

The passion and death of Christ

Children's Focus: Good Friday

Spark NRSV Bible

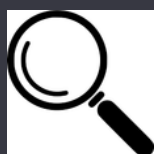
Matthew 27:11-31 (pages 1095-1096)

Matthew 27:32-66 (pages 1096-1097)

Spark Story Bible

Christ the King (pages 474-475)

The Day Jesus Died (pages 476-481)



Hearing about someone dying can bring feelings of worry, fear, or sadness. Talk about feelings you have when you read about Jesus' death. We know that Jesus' death isn't the end. How does that make you feel?



April 9, 2023

Happy Easter

Easter Worship at 10 AM
Continental Breakfast
Following Worship

This is the day the Lord has made! Christ is risen, and through him all creation is made new! Indeed, “God shows no partiality” (Acts 10:34): Christ’s resurrection truly brings life to everyone. We sing hymns of praise, gather around sacred words, and proclaim God’s faithfulness, power, and love in the feast of holy communion. With the women at the tomb, we are astonished, elated, and grateful. We depart with joy to proclaim the good news of God’s endless love.

Readings and Psalm

Acts 10:34-43

God raised Jesus on the third day

Jeremiah 31:1-6 (alternate)

Joy at the restoration of God’s people

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. (Ps. 118:24)

Colossians 3:1-4

Raised with Christ to seek the higher things

Acts 10:34-43 (alternate)

God raised Jesus on the third day

John 20:1-18 (alternate)

Seeing the risen Christ



Children’s Focus: Easter Sunday

Spark NRSV Bible

Matthew 28:1-10 (page 1097)

Spark Story Bible

The Empty Tomb (pages 482–487)



The Easter event shows us how God creates life, even when that seems impossible! Look for signs of new plants growing, a baby being born, or butterflies that have attached from their cocoons