

Benton & Willow Creek Lutheran Churches
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Address Service Requested

March Newsletter 2026



Benton & Willow Creek Lutheran Churches

Newsletter—March 2026

Note from Vicar Kendra Kappler

What if the opposite of being bound is not just being free, but being whole? We are now in the season of Lent, and we began our Wednesday night journey together with a series called “Unbound: Longing for Wholeness.” Lent is a season of repentance and reflection, but it is also a season of honest longing. We have routines, responsibilities, and even spiritual practices, but underneath all of it lies a longing to be made whole. Our world is full of things that bind us, and while some are visible, others are quietly carried, such as fear that keeps us from stepping forward, shame that whispers we are not good enough, anxiety that robs us of rest, guilt that lingers, business that distracts us from what matters most, or wounds that still shape our present. All of these things can hold us captive in ways we may hardly notice, slowly convincing us that this is simply how life is meant to be.

Yet, throughout the Gospels, we see Jesus encounter people who are bound by illness, isolation, sin, oppression, and social rejection. Again and again, Jesus meets them not with condemnation, but with compassion. He sees their need, and he hears their longing. Jesus restores them, not only physically, but fully. They are drawn into wholeness. These ordinary people had their lives interrupted by an encounter with Jesus, and may we recognize our own stories within theirs. Maybe you long for peace in the middle of anxiety or healing in a relationship that feels strained. Maybe you long to be free from regret or to believe more deeply that you are forgiven. Lent gives us space to name those longings honestly, and it invites us to stop pretending that we are fine and instead bring our whole selves before God. This season is not about self-improvement. It is about drawing near to Jesus. It is about allowing him to meet us in the very places where we feel most stuck. It is about trusting that the One who healed, forgave, restored, and made people whole still does that work today.

For our Lent series, we will be going through the story of Joseph in Genesis. It is a story of betrayal, injustice, waiting, temptation, suffering, and ultimately restoration and forgiveness. It is also a story about the things that can bind the human heart, but how God works towards wholeness even in the middle of brokenness. Joseph’s life unravels quickly. He was betrayed by his brothers, stripped of his robe, thrown into a pit, and sold into slavery. Joseph experiences the kind of wounds that could easily define a person forever. Later, he is falsely accused and imprisoned. Over and over again, his circumstances seem to close in around him. And yet, beneath the injustice and suffering, God is at work. Again and again, Scripture tells us, “The Lord was with Joseph.” Even in the pit. Even in slavery. Even in prison.

Joseph’s journey invites us to reflect on our own lives. Where have we been wounded? Where have we felt forgotten or unfairly treated? What bitterness, fear, or disappointment might still be binding our hearts? And where might God be quietly at work, even now, shaping something we cannot yet see? In the end, Joseph speaks words that echo with hope: what others intended for harm, God used for good. Lent is a season for naming what binds us, but it is also a season for trusting that God is not finished with us. The same God who was with Joseph is with us. The same God who brought reconciliation out of betrayal and provision out of famine is still at work in our stories. In our Lutheran tradition, we speak plainly about bondage, and we say that apart from Christ, we are bound to sin and cannot free ourselves. But, we also proclaim the good news that Christ has come to unbind us. Through his cross and resurrection, he breaks what holds us captive. Wholeness is not something we achieve by trying harder; rather, it is something we receive as a gift. We invite you to join us on Wednesday nights as we walk with Joseph from the pit to the palace, from betrayal to forgiveness, from brokenness toward wholeness. May this Lenten journey draw us closer to the God who is always working to unbind us and make us whole.

God Bless You! Vicar Kendra ☺
605-951-8841 kappler2002@gmail.com

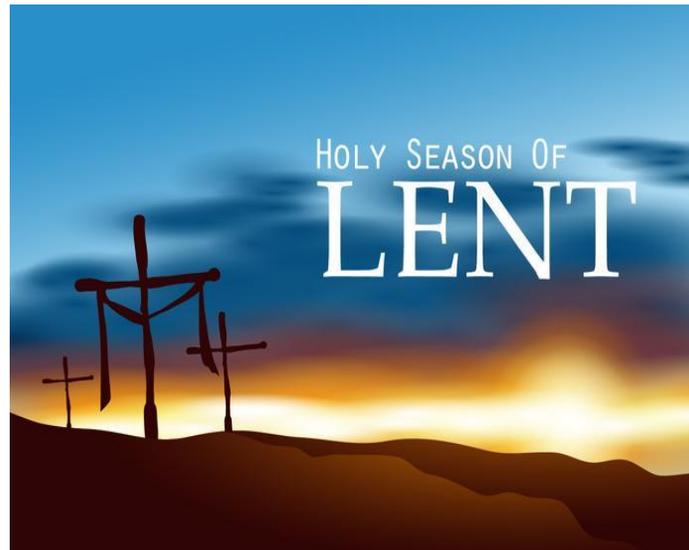
“PARISH NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS”

**COME
WORSHIP**
with us!



Willow Creek Worship – Sundays, 9:00am Worship,
Sunday School, coffee, treats and fellowship to follow worship

Benton Worship- Sundays, 10:45am Worship, 9:30-10:30am Sunday School
Coffee, treats and fellowship during Sunday School



“Lenten Worship Schedule”

Due to the large number of attendees last year, each Wed. we will have two services.

*4:30pm worship
5:30pm meal
6:30 pm worship*

**March 4th, Willow Creek
March 11th, Benton
March 18th, West Nidaros
March 25th, Willow Creek**

“Holy Week”

**March 29th, Palm Sunday – both churches, regular times
April 2nd, Maundy Thursday, Benton, 6:30pm
April 3rd, Good Friday, Willow Creek, 6:30pm
April 5th, Easter Sunday, Benton Sunrise Service at 6:30am
Willow Creek Service at 9:00am**

CONFIRMATION



Confirmation will continue after Easter.
Keep an eye out for info in the bulletin and April newsletter.



Youth Group – March 15th, TobyMac Concert, 6:30pm at the Denny Sanford Premier Center. If you want to attend, please let Kendra or Maria Kendle know (as soon as possible) so tickets can be purchased.

REMINDER!!! ANNOUNCEMENTS/NEWS: All Willow Creek & Benton Announcements for the weekly bulletin should be **emailed by Tuesday at Noon** each week

Newsletter Announcements by the 15th of each month. Thank you! (bentonwillowoffice@gmail.com)



OFFERINGS - WAYS TO GIVE:

If you are unable to attend services but would like to give, we have made some convenient ways to continue your offerings. We appreciate your faithfulness, Thank you.

MAIL : Benton PO Box 706 Crooks, SD 57020

Willow Creek 24795 470th Ave Dell Rapids, SD 57022

ELECTRONIC GIVING Check the websites giving image.

www.wclcdellrapids.org & www.bentonelca.org

BENTON'S 'TEXT TO GIVE'

1: Text "give" to the number **1-605-205-7789**. The automated response will direct you to the webpage. Once the system has your number stored, this will be a simple way to give right during the offering time!

2: The donations webpage through your browser is

<https://bentonchurch.breezechms.com/give/online>

Benton, Vanco - Here is the site link for your online giving tiles.

<https://secure.myvanco.com/L-ZEX9>

Vanco users- you may have to create a new account. If you don't want to do that, you may email Dennis Aker with your changes, daker@alliancecom.net

March Dates to Remember-

3/8 - Site Ministry meeting after worship

3/15 – First Communion Class for 5th graders after worship

3/15 – TobyMac Concert, 6:30pm at Denny Sanford Premier Center – Youth

3/22- Crossroads Conference, 2pm at Augustana Lutheran

Baltic Food Bank Needs List:

Hearty soups, crackers, sugar (white, brown, powdered), oil, juice, tea or coffee, cereal, breakfast bars, canned fruit, ramen, chicken/tuna helper, condiments (mayo or miracle whip, ketchup, barbeque sauce), salad dressings, pancake mix and syrup, pasta or rice sides, spaghetti sauce, pasta, jell-o and pudding, cake/brownie/muffin mixes, dish soap, laundry soap, personal hygiene products (tissues, bar soap or body wash, toothpaste, toothbrushes, dental picks or floss).

The Baltic Food Bank, 550 3rd Street, is open to all residents of Baltic and Crooks. It is open the second Wednesday of every month from 6:30-7:30 p.m., as well as the fourth Sunday of every month from 10:30-11:30 a.m., as well as by emergency appointment by calling 605-529-5032. Food donations can be dropped off at: Baltic School Commons, Baltic City Hall, Baltic Lutheran Church, East Nidaros Lutheran Church, or West Nidaros Lutheran Church. Monetary donations can be sent to: PO Box 244, Baltic, SD 57003.

Thank you for supporting families in your community!



If you are out and about and would like to visit with some great people, the following Church Members would love to have a call, visitors or both!

Bernie Opland & Bonnie Pinnerud
24635 470th Ave
Dell Rapids, SD 57022
605-310-0329

Russ & Irene Middlen
#302 Bernadine Place
Hartford, SD 57033
605-370-7368

Keith & Caroline Halverson
26026 469th Ave
Sioux Falls, SD 57107
605-332-6201

Maureen Eide
Orchard Hills
200 W 10th St
Dell Rapids, SD 57022
605-940-0315

“BENTON NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS”

Benton Church Council Members 2026

President- Wade Mulder

Vice President- Gary Jongewaard

Secretary- Julie Person

Treasurer- Dave Vinzant

Other Members- Amanda Schuette, Jennifer Mohr, Natalie Lind, Roger Person, Russ Schmidt, Nate Strochein

Financial Secretary- Dennis Aker, Natalie Lind

Parish Council- Wade Mulder, Gary Jongewaard, Russ Schmidt

Committees:

Mission- Natalie Lind, Maria Kendle, Lynda Fonder, Cheryl Aker, Larry Person

Education- Amanda Schuette, Jennifer Mohr, Jackie Foster

Worship – Russ Schmidt, Linda Person, Cheryl Schoer

Stewardship – Julie Person

Evangelism- Roger Person, Wade Mulder, Angie Mulder

Cemetery- Kenny Benson, Dave Rogness, Scott Mews

Building & Property – Gary Jongewaard, Nate Strochein



Palm Sunday – Sunday School Kids will be singing during worship.



Every Sunday at Benton, coffee and treats are served before worship, 9:30am (during Sunday School).

Bring your kids to Sunday School and enjoy treats and fellowship.

If you don't have Sunday School kiddos – you are still very much welcome!

If no Sunday School, coffee/treats start at 10am.



Notice from the Benton Cemetery Committee: Starting May 1st, 2026, a single lot at the Benton Lutheran Cemetery will be changing. Member Price will be \$300.00 per single lot, Non-Member price \$600.00 per single lot. Contact Kenny Benson (605-366-3513) for any questions.

BENTON WORSHIP TEAMS FOR 2026 (team leaders are listed)

Mar. 1st First Team – Doug & Sandy, Communion

Mar. 8th Second Team – Roger & Linda, Communion, **potluck dinner**

Mar. 15th Third Team – Cheryl & Connie, Communion

Mar. 22nd Fourth Team, Butch & Lori, Communion

Mar. 29th, Fifth Team, Russ & Becky Schmidt, **Palm Sunday**, Communion

BENTON WORSHIP TEAMS – updated 12/1/2025

Below is a list of the members of each Worship Team. It may look like we always have enough help but due to everyone being so busy, often not enough people show up to help. As you can see each Sunday there is quite a bit of responsibility. Please try to help us out with your assignment. If you are not assigned a Sunday, please call the church office so we can add you. You will never be alone on your Sunday; there is always someone to help.

First Sunday – Leaders – Doug and Sandy Larson: Wade & Angie Mulder, Garrison Mulder, Bryant & Lori Filler, Nate & Kim Strosheim, Shannon Lofswold, Dave Phelps, Dave & Dixie Rogness, Chantel Olson, Dan & Laura Larson (Dawson & Dominick), Joe & Jayna Backus (Boston, & Brystal), Jordan Person, Tammy Person (Justin & Jessalynn), Edna Haase, Rocky & Jackie Foster (Marin, Hadlee, Payson & Conlin)

Second Sunday - Leaders Roger & Linda Person: Jolene Izadaness, Keith & Lisa Johnson (Tyler & Trey), Patty Mork, Gary & Rhonda Jongewaard (Gabrielle, Nash), Dave & Faye Gilderhus, Dennis & Cheryl Aker, Todd & Maria Kendle & Brittany (Braylynn & Nora), Lynda Fonder, Kari Vosburg, Bob & Sandi Schuette, Eric & Amanda Schuette (Ethan & Audrey), Lee & Julie Person (Connor), Gwyn & Joyce Reiners

Third Sunday- Leaders Connie Foster & Cheryl Schoer: Jim & Jackie Johnson, Ashton Benson (Riley), Kenny & Linda Benson, Judy Bernards, Susie Schmidt (Nolan, Blake & Logan), Scott & Bonnie Mews, Tom & Barb Lanning, Pat & Noel Ahl, Darryll & Jan Lason, Ryan McNamara & Lacie Foster (Bridger, Sutton & Leighton), Kay Peterson, Evan & Lenae Schnaidt (Elliot, Elizabeth)

Fourth Sunday –Leaders Butch & Lori Oseby: Larry Person, Dale & Pat Benson, Derry & Jan Benson, Tyler & Melissa Klein (Blakeley, Cooper, & Shiloh), Ron & Judi Person, Ronae Foster (Dalton & Tori), Jamen & Jackie Benson (Trevor & Brady), John & Jenny Mohr (Landon, Lilli, Jaxton & Jace), Trevor & Annie Freudenthal (Jace, Rhett & Liam), Christopher & Sara Rokeh (Kipton, London)

Fifth Sunday – Leaders Russ & Becky Schmidt, Matt & Amy Schmidt (Emmitt), Scott & Natalie Lind, Cam & Sharon Lind, Jeremy & Taylor Hubers (Ava and Liam)

Volunteers are needed when we have special services (Lent, Maundy Thursday, Christmas Eve...)

BENTON WORSHIP SERVICE DUTIES EACH SUNDAY

-Unlock doors, turn on lights- Open doors by 9:15 am for Sunday School

-Winter-clear snow if needed from the walkway.

-Make Coffee & Snacks for fellowship before worship, clean up

-Greeter at main door

-Hand out bulletins

-Reader – first and second lesson

-Ushers- turn on sound system, remove covering from piano, count all people present during service and record on, communion, collect offering...

-Light Candles before service, extinguish at end of service, turn on Altar Lights

-Update Hymn board with hymn numbers if needed (if not already completed)

-Camera & AV people - one to record service for Facebook, second to run the screen for the service,

-Need two to help with communion (usually a child and an adult)

-Count how many parishioners are in attendance and record (adults & kids)

-Make sure **all** doors are locked when leaving (all outside doors), check basement as kids have been playing down there

-Shut off all lights – check basement



MEN'S COFFEE- Join us Saturdays at 8:30am at Willow Creek for food, coffee, and fellowship.



QUILTING LADIES - Join us on Mondays at 9am as we enjoy quilting and fellowship at Willow Creek.



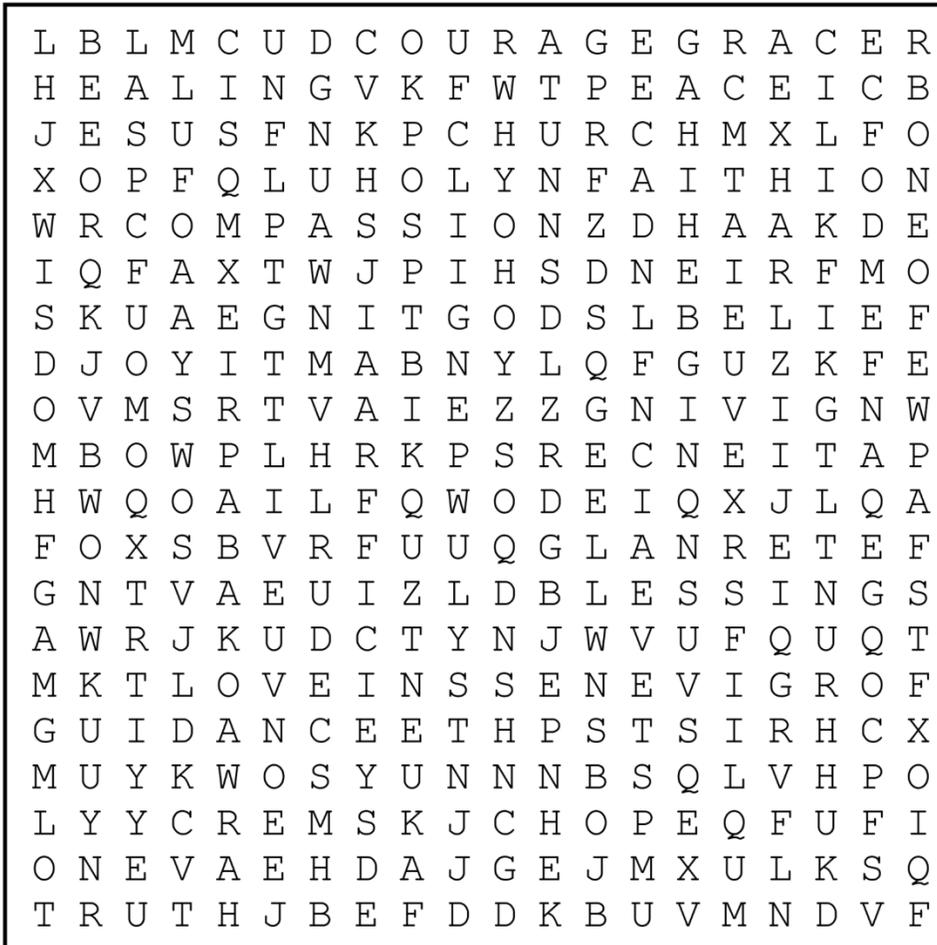
March Birthdays 2026

| | | | |
|----|------------------|----|------------------|
| 1 | Dave Vinzant | 13 | Emmitt Schmidt |
| 2 | Ann Sunderman | 13 | Steven Tokheim |
| 2 | Flyn Houck | 13 | Kaydence Keogh |
| 3 | Terry Anderson | 16 | Logan Koopman |
| 4 | Victoria O'Toole | 17 | Shane Warne |
| 4 | Judy Bernards | 23 | Wade Mulder |
| 5 | Joe Backus | 24 | Brady Benson |
| 5 | Derry Benson | 26 | Conrad Siemonsma |
| 6 | Shelby Schmidt | 28 | Ashley Blake |
| 7 | Lindsay Koepp | 31 | Jamen Benson |
| 8 | Jinny Hines | | |
| 10 | Scott Lind | | |
| 10 | Hadlee Foster | | |
| 11 | Dan Larson | | |
| 12 | Deb Burggraff | | |
| 12 | Braelynn Long | | |

If your birthday is not listed, please let the church office know. (month,day,year)

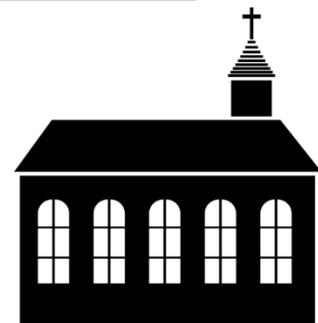
Church is Fun

Word Search



Word list:

- | | | |
|--------------|------------|-----------|
| BELIEF | FRIENDSHIP | JOY |
| BLESSINGS | GIVING | LOVE |
| CHRIST | GOD | MERCY |
| CHURCH | GRACE | OBEDIENCE |
| COMPASSION | GUIDANCE | PATIENCE |
| COURAGE | HEALING | PEACE |
| ETERNAL | HEAVEN | SALVATION |
| FAITH | HOLY | SPIRIT |
| FAITHFULNESS | HOPE | TRUTH |
| FORGIVENESS | JESUS | WISDOM |



MARCH 2026

BENTON AND WILLOW CREEK CHURCHES

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| COMMUNION 9AM WILLOW CREEK WORSHIP, team 2, Sunday School to follow worship Benton FAMILY Sunday School, 9:30am 10:45AM BENTON WORSHIP, Doug & Sandy | 9am Quilting at Willow | Bulletin Announcements due by noon in Church office. | Lenten Worship, Willow Creek, 4:30 Worship, 5:30 Meal, 6:30 Worship | | | 8:30am Mens Coffee at Willow |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| COMMUNION 9AM WILLOW CREEK WORSHIP, team 3, Sunday School to follow worship Benton Sunday School, 9:30am 10:45AM BENTON WORSHIP, Potluck Dinner - Roger & Linda Site Minsitry Mtg. following worship | 9am Quilting at Willow | Bulletin Announcements due by noon in Church office. Parish Council/Church Council, 6:30pm | Lenten Worship, Benton 4:30 Worship, 5:30 Meal, 6:30 Worship | | | 8:30am Mens Coffee at Willow |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| COMMUNION 9AM WILLOW CREEK WORSHIP, team 4 Sunday School to follow worship Benton Sunday School 9:30am 10:45AM BENTON WORSHIP, Cheryl & Connie 1st Communion Class, 5th graders, after worship TobyMac concert, 6:30pm- YOUTH | 9am Quilting at Willow Newsletter info due to church office by noon. | Bulletin Announcements due by noon in Church office. | Lenten Worship, West Nidaros, 4:30 Worship, 5:30 Meal, 6:30 Worship | | | 8:30am Mens Coffee at Willow |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| COMMUNION 9AM WILLOW CREEK WORSHIP, team 5, Sunday School to follow worship Benton Sunday School 9:30am 10:45AM BENTON WORSHIP, Butch & Lori Crossroads Conf. 2pm at Augustana Luth. | 9am Quilting at Willow | Bulletin Announcements due by noon in Church office. | Lenten Worship, Willow Creek, 4:30 Worship, 5:30 Meal, 6:30 Worship | | | 8:30am Mens Coffee at Willow |
| 29 | 30 | 31 | 1-Apr | 2-Apr | 3-Apr | 4-Apr |
| PALM SUNDAY - COMMUNION 9AM WILLOW CREEK WORSHIP, team 1, Sunday School to follow worship Benton Sunday School 9:30am 10:45AM BENTON WORSHIP, Russ & Becky Sunday School Kids sing at Benton | 9am Quilting at Willow | Bulletin Announcements due by noon in Church office. | | Maundy Thursday Worship, Benton, 6:30pm, Communion, 5th Graders First Communion | Good Friday Worship at Willow Creek, 6:30pm | |

