

Parish Visitor

Belfield Lutheran Church · Daglum Lutheran Church · Medora Lutheran Church

God's Army on Earth

by Jerry D. Ousley

I've often been asked, "If God is a God of love, why did He have the Israeli people kill all the inhabitants occupying the land He promised to them? If He is such a loving God, why is the Old Testament so full of violence?" First of all, we have to realize that violence and war filled the Earth because man sinned in the Garden of Eden. We want to blame it on God, when in reality, it's our own fault. We also have to keep in mind that the Old Testament, in a nut shell, was God's way of teaching us how far we fall short of pleasing God. In ourselves we simply cannot do it. The Old Testament proved to mankind that he had to have a Savior – Someone to intervene for him. That's where the New Testament and Jesus Christ comes in.

However, in the Old Testament, and especially while enroute to the promised land, God instructed Moses to set up an extremely organized army for Israel. You can read about the order, how they marched, and how they were strategically placed, in Numbers 2:1-34. As they traveled from one camp to another, God had them lead off with the strongest three tribal armies so that the front ranks were the toughest. Then followed the Levites with the tabernacle and all the furniture and fixtures. On each side of the Levites were two more groups of three tribes, followed by the last three, bringing up the rear-ward guard in case of attack from behind. It was a mighty army, and was even stronger because God went with them.

God still has an army, only, it isn't a physical one, but one that is much stronger. It is made up of all believers in Jesus Christ. Yes, all of us who have committed our lives to Jesus Christ are not only members of God's Church but we are each also integral parts of His army on Earth. We aren't called to fight with our fists or tangible weapons, because we don't fight against flesh and blood (see Ephesians 6:12) but against principalities, powers, rulers of darkness, and spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places. In other words, our battles are spiritual. We fight against the evil spirits that proceed from the devil.

The Apostle Paul wrote about the spiritual armor we have access to. You can read the full details in Ephesians 6:10-18. When he wrote the letter to the Ephesians, he was a prisoner in Rome. I can imagine him sitting between soldiers as he wrote his letter. As he gazed upon their attire, he may have thought about the armor the soldiers wore, and how it compared to the spiritual armor God has given his "soldiers." He first told us to "put on the whole armor of God, so that we would be able to stand against the attacks of the devil." (verse 11). We don't just put on a piece hoping that it will be enough. No, we must put on the entire suit of armor.

Then he said that we put it on so that we can stand. He added that after we have done all we can, that we simply stand. Stand still and watch God work. We put on the following items: the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of the preparation of the gospel of peace, taking the shield of faith, putting on the helmet of salvation, and wielding the sword of the Spirit (which is the word of God).

Of course, this armor is all spiritual, but think about it, there's nothing better to hold your pants up than the truth. Jesus said, "And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:17). Standing with the truth makes for a powerful witness.

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Mid-Week Lenten Services
- Council Members
- Extravaganza Thank You



God, may your light guide my day, and your spirit bring me peace. Amen



Then there's the breastplate of righteousness. The ancient soldiers wore a breastplate, just as modern day police officers wear a bullet-proof vest. It was to ward off arrows, spears and knives, protecting their vital organs. Just so, Jesus Christ becomes our breastplate. That is because our righteousness is like filthy rags (see Isaiah 64:6) – no protection there! But when our righteousness is that of Jesus Christ Himself, then we have a shiny breastplate that will stop all the weapons of the devil.

We also wear the shoes of the preparation of the good news of peace. Our feet take us places. We walk. We also have a spiritual walk that takes us places. Those places must begin with peace. Putting on the shoes that go with our spiritual armor prepares us to speak peace. Note that sometimes peace can bring conflict because it must come with truth. But as we carry the truth around us as we go, then we can promote true and lasting peace – showing others how to have peace with God.

We carry the shield of faith. Our faith is our belief in God. Not just believing – oh we have to believe in order to be a part of Christ's Church, but that belief grows in trust; trust in our Lord regardless the outcome. It is a trust or a faith that grows from being exercised. The shield of faith is our knowing that whatever the outcome, Christ is with us. Whether good or bad, we trust in Jesus to know what is best, and He will bring upon us the best in the end. This shield will be able to quench, or block all the fiery arrows the devil may shoot at us.

We cover our heads with the helmet of salvation. Our brain is perhaps our most vital of organs. Without our brains we cannot function and we cannot live very long. Our very lives are covered with the salvation given by Jesus Christ. He is our helmet of salvation.

“Even now,” declares the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.” - Joel 2:12-13

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Tami Elefson
Deane Rodne
Sue Mosser
Carol Kostka

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Heidi Kukowski, Donna Sandvik
Kim Howie, Dean Rodne,
Scott Wagner, Carol Kostka



Join us for
“Whose Cross is it Anyway”
 at Belfield Lutheran Church
Lenten Mid-Week Worship & Readers
Theatre
Wednesday Soup Suppers 5:30-6:00
Worship 6:15 PM
Starting February 25th, 2025

Belfield Lutheran Altar Guild

Thank you to Linda Weiss and Sherri O'Brien for serving in February
Serving in March Darnyl Malkowski & Alexis Malkowski
Anyone Can Join the Altar Guild! See Jean Franklin for details.

2026 PARISH Extravaganza

I want to sincerely extend a personal thank you to all who helped with the Extravaganza event. There was a lot of hard work & time put in to make this event happen. To those who sold or purchased raffle tickets, donated to the raffle & silent auction, decorated, baked bars, and /or showed up to share fellowship during the meal - THANK YOU! This could not have been done without your help and support. People stepped up in the way that worked for them - whether they could help a little or a lot through physical labor or financially, it all played a part in making this event a success. You are greatly appreciated! A great big thank you goes out to Heidi Kukowski who organized and managed the kitchen! Lastly, to those of you who made the soups - WOW! Thank you for contributing your efforts to provide delicious soups to share - cooking in bulk is a huge undertaking. Again, thanks to all!



127 People Served

Free Will Offering = \$4,475; Silent Auction = \$1,245; Raffle Ticket Sales: \$8,880

Total \$14,600 earned for 2026 Parish Fundraiser

~Darnyl Malkowski, Parish President

"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

-Psalm 51:10-12

In our ongoing prayers...

Remembering those in our prayers:

The family of Lela Schiwal, Family of Duane Tessier, Doris Urban, Brian Ott, Barbara Hurt, Lants Hurt, Joey Berger, Harold Hugelen, Donald Suomala, Kevin Kuntz, Diedra Hlibichuk, Sherri O'Brien, Rick Baxter, Kris Hastings, Debbie Baca, Bonnie Streitz, Robin Sandaker, Barb Newton, Sandy Simmioniw, Tom Adams, Rick Wolfgram, Randy Wolfgram, Emma Hlibichuk, Denise Tibbs, Christine Perrin, Shirley Olson, Gerry Suomala, JoAnne Suomala, Mary Knotts, Dolores Roy, Cord Kessel, Halle Blain, Marilyn Oyhus, Craig McLaughlin, Lincoln Lee Johnson, Mindy O'Brien, Josephine Shykoski-Thompson

Please continue to pray for those who have lost their jobs, those with mental illness, those seeking Sobriety, those struggling with infertility, all troops and their families & those working for peace in our world.

Please help us keep this prayer list active.

To add a loved one to the prayer list for next month's issue, please fill out a prayer request slip during worship, making sure to indicate your desire to have the request published in the newsletter, and place it in the offering basket or email us at newsletter@belfieldlutheran.org



Finally, we have only one weapon of attack. Notice that all the other pieces of our spiritual armor are for protection. And we certainly need that. But our assault weapon is none other than the word of God. Jesus used it against the devil in the wilderness when He was being attacked at His weakest point – right after a forty day fast. But He used the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God and defeated His foe. So can we. We learn and know the word of God. When we do, then we can also cut down our enemy, not with flesh and blood weapons but with the spiritual weapon – God’s word – what God has said. It will never fail and it will always stand. But remember this; we use the word of God as a weapon against the devil, not against our fellow man. The Bible is to be shared as truth to our fellow man. It is a tool to encourage him or her to come to God, not as a sword to beat them down with. Yes, we must tell them the truth of the Gospel. We must expose sin for what it is. But we are not to brow-beat with the word.

Finally, we always pray. We talk to our Captain. We consult with our God Who is in command. We just don’t pray for ourselves, but we intercede (supplication) for our fellow soldiers. We aren’t in this alone. We have those with whom we are called to serve. Serving together is very important.

This is God’s army on Earth. Those who are Christians. Those who have chosen to put on the whole armor of God. We are His army doing a greater battle than that of any physical soldier. Because, after all, the sum of all our conflicts is at heart, spiritual.

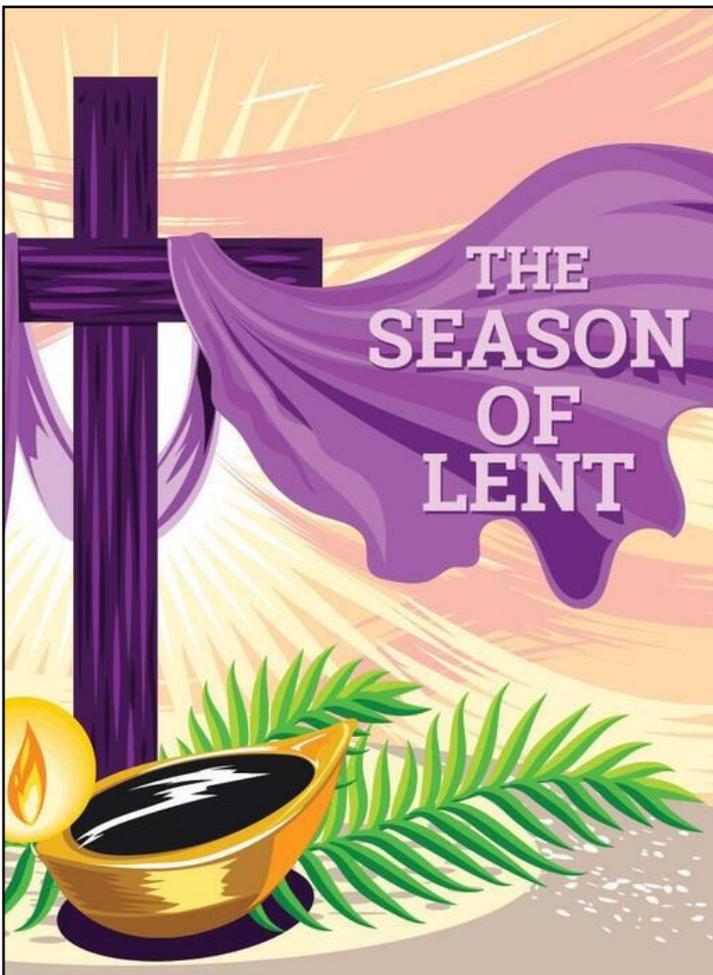
Jerry D. Ousley is the author of "Soul Challenge", "Soul Journey", "Ordeal", "The Spirit Bread Daily Devotional" and his first novel "The Shoe Tree." Newer books include "Finality" and "Dividing God's Church." Visit our website at spiritbread.com to download these and more completely free of charge

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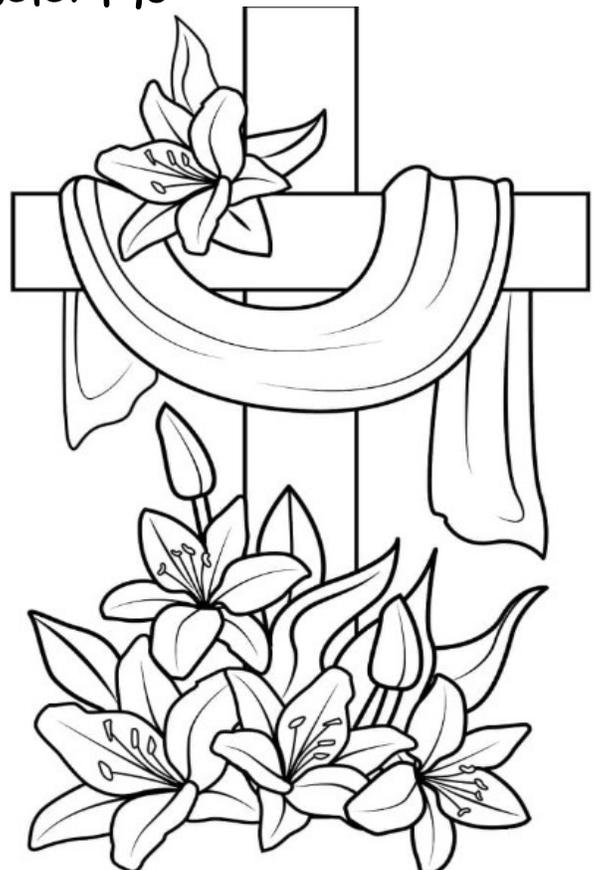
Lent Prayer for Protection

Lord God, heavenly Father, you know that we are set in the midst of so many and great dangers, that by reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright: Grant us such strength and protection, to support us in all danger, and carry us through all temptations; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Source: Martin Luther, the German Litany



Color Me



March 2026

Sunday		Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday		Saturday	
1 Worship 8:30 am – Medora 9:00 am - Choir Practice 10:00 am – Belfield 11:45 am - Daglum	2		3 8:00 pm – AA Meeting @ Belfield Lutheran Church	4 3:30 pm - Wednesday School @ Medora Lutheran Church 5:30 pm - Soup Supper @ Belfield Lutheran Church 6:15 pm - Mid-week Lenten Readers Theater @ Belfield Lutheran Church	5 7:00 pm – Bible Study @ Belfield Lutheran Church	6	7						
8 Worship 8:30 am – Medora 9:00 am - Choir Practice 10:00 am – Belfield	9		10 8:00 pm – AA Meeting @ Belfield Lutheran Church	11 3:30 pm - Wednesday School @ Medora Lutheran Church 5:30 pm - Soup Supper @ Belfield Lutheran Church 6:15 pm - Mid-week Lenten Readers Theater @ Belfield Lutheran Church	12 7:00 pm – Bible Study @ Belfield Lutheran Church	13	14						
15 Worship 8:30 am – Medora 9:00 am - Choir Practice 10:00 am – Belfield 11:45 am - Daglum	16	6:30 pm – Belfield Council Meeting @ Belfield Lutheran	17 8:00 pm – AA Meeting @ Belfield Lutheran Church	18 3:30 pm - Wednesday School @ Medora Lutheran Church 5:30 pm - Soup Supper @ Belfield Lutheran Church 6:15 pm - Mid-week Lenten Readers Theater @ Belfield Lutheran Church	19 7:00 pm – Bible Study @ Belfield Lutheran Church	20	21						
22 Worship 8:30 am – Medora 9:00 am - Choir Practice 10:00 am – Belfield	23		24 8:00 pm – AA Meeting @ Belfield Lutheran Church	25 3:30 pm - Wednesday School @ Medora Lutheran Church 5:30 pm - Soup Supper @ Belfield Lutheran Church 6:15 pm - Mid-week Lenten Readers Theater @ Belfield Lutheran Church	26 7:00 pm – Bible Study @ Belfield Lutheran Church	27	28						
29 Worship 8:30 am – Medora 9:00 am - Choir Practice 10:00 am – Belfield	30		31 8:00 pm – AA Meeting @ Belfield Lutheran Church										

Belfield Lutheran Church
www.belfieldlutheran.org
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March 2026

TO:

**March 2026
Worship Schedule**

1	8:30 a.m. 10:00 a.m. 11:45 a.m.	Medora Worship Belfield Worship Daglum Worship
8	8:30 a.m. 10:00 a.m.	Medora Worship Belfield Worship
15	8:30 a.m. 10:00 a.m. 11:45 a.m.	Medora Worship Belfield Worship Daglum Worship
22	8:30 a.m. 10:00 a.m.	Medora Worship Belfield Worship
29	8:30 a.m. 10:00 a.m.	Medora Worship Belfield Worship

If you can't join us in person, please join us online.
You can find us on the Medora Lutheran or Belfield Lutheran Facebook Pages.



Belfield WELCA

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