

JUNE 2024



Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Buffalo Center, IA 50424

Oh, Bethlehem!

Faith, hope, and love make us available
for our neighbors near and far

CALENDAR of EVENTS

- June 2 Worship @ 9:30am
- June 2 Congregational Meeting & Vote after Worship
- June 4 Bible Study @ 2:00pm
- June 4 - Fundraiser meal in south park 6-7 pm
- June 9 Worship @ 9:30am
- June 10 Church Council 6:00pm
- June 16 Outdoor Worship @ 9:30 am
- June 16 Father's Day!
- June 18 Worship Committee @ 8:30am
- June 23 Worship @ 9:30 am
- June 30 Worship @ 9:30 am
- Community Bible Study meets on Wednesdays @ 10:00 am in the Meeting Room

GREETERS & USHERS

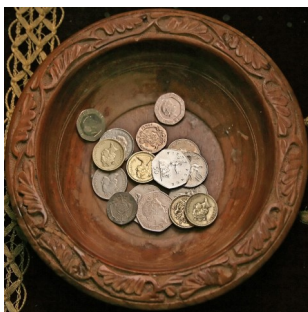
JUNE

*2 Chris Berggren Family and David & Renae Sachs
*9 Irvén & Mary Ann Olsen and Rita Ellsworth
16 Duane Cooper Family and Linda Berhow
23 Harlan Melz and Randy & Jill Melz Family
30 Laurie & Andy Sapp and Glenda Sapp

JULY

* 7 Denny & Dawn Meinders and Kyle Winter Family
*14 Mike Baumann Family and Cheryl Baumann
21 Dave & Kate Kakacek and Rande & Mary Giesking
28 Bison Days - Ecumenical Worship Service in Post Office Park

Electrical Project Update



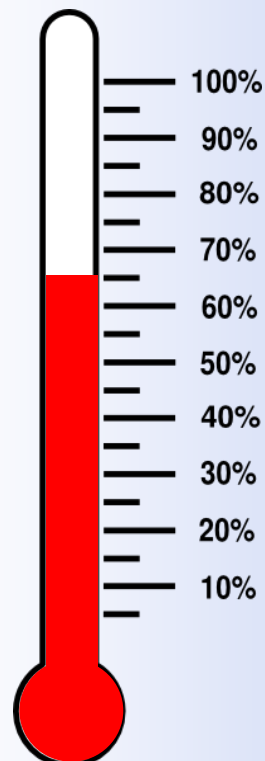
General Fund
Annual Giving
(As of 05.26.24):

Actual: \$55,751

Budgeted: \$61,788

Year to Date
Deficit: **\$6,037**

Thank you for continuing to give towards the project fund. We are getting closer to our goal each week. Your generous giving has been greatly appreciated. *Oh Bethlehem...* we can do anything we set our mind out to do.



Prayers for our Members and friends

Deloris Steffensen
Brian Bashans
Christina Coughlin
Dawn Jensvold
Clarice Stonebreaker
Vince Johnson

Jaya Fever
Claire Hinz
Carolyn Bartz
Debbie Jacobs
Ivan Heidecker





School is done. Summer is here. And many of you are taking advantage of the increased family time opportunities, which is great. We should take every opportunity we get to spend time with loved ones. But typically, this time of the year, we see a drop off in worship attendance and thus our offerings go down dramatically.

Oh no, here goes the Pastor. Run for the hills!

It's not that bad, so please hang with me for a bit.

We all know that Sunday school, confirmation and 1G are not in session. A lot of church activities are slowing down for the summer, but ministry is still happening. Our church building is still open. Our staff are still available to serve the needs of our congregation and community. God's Kingdom is still "open for business".

During this summer season, I encourage you to remember this congregation, God's church. If you are not here on a Sunday, offerings can always be dropped off during the week. And then there is the online option, Vanco. This allows you to have automatic withdrawals taken out at whatever intervals you desire. This way, you will never miss an opportunity to express your faith through giving.

Please know, though, this is not a desperate plea from the Pastor for money. Simply see this as a gentle reminder to continue living your faith no matter where you are, whether at the lake or campground or wherever. You can always make a difference and help expand the Kingdom of God 24/7, 365 days a year.

Enjoy your summer and I hope I get to see you soon ☺



Confirmation Class News

Confirmation is done for the summer. On Mother's Day weekend, we enjoyed a great confirmation retreat. The weather was perfect, so we got plenty of outside time. We all enjoyed a fun canoeing adventure, and the kids (and some adults) even got some swimming time in the lake. On Friday night, after our campfire, we were blessed by God with a beautiful northern lights display. Our weekend theme was focused on prayer which was a delight to teach. I hope and pray this awesome privilege was instilled in our youth. And lastly, thank you for your support. Your generous contributions at our fundraisers fully funded our retreat this year. What a blessing that was. And so, as I close, here are a couple pictures from our weekend together.



Making ourselves available...

FOOD BANK NEEDS

JUNE 2024

- Margarine 1# pkg
- Boxed cereal
- Pancake syrup
- Lunch meat
- Pasta
- Jam
- Peanut butter

All donations can be dropped off in the church Narthex.

THANK YOU!

*"Rejoice always,
pray continually,
give thanks in all
circumstances;
for this is God's will
for you in Christ Jesus."
1 Thessalonians
5:16-18:*

We have a few options for your giving here at Bethlehem. If you are a Thrivent member, you can direct your dollars to the church. We also have a very easy and simple way with our online giving. This QR code will access our website and take you to the Vanco giving page. Thank you!



SCAN ME!

Council Committee

EDUCATION

Hello, Everyone!!

We finished our Sunday School year on May 12th with all the children singing in church, as well as handing out flowers to all the moms. It was a beautiful day to celebrate the end of the year by playing games outside! I've said it before and I will say it again, we are beyond blessed to have such a wonderful group of teachers, along with the large group of children that make that necessary! With that being said, we are al-

ready preparing for the 2024-2025 Sunday School year. We are looking for a 7th/8th grader that can consistently help Cassie with crafts in the Pre-school/Kindergarten room. If you are a 7th/8th grader, this could be your chance to earn silver cord hours for community service! Otherwise, if you or anybody you know would like to be on our substitute teaching list, we would love to have you.

Our community-wide Vacation Bible School will be taking place Sunday, July 28th

through Thursday, August 1st at the United Methodist Church. Any children entering K-Prep/Kindergarten (no younger than age 5) through 6th grade are welcome to attend. The committee is looking for K-prep/Kindergarten teacher and a leader for crafts/science. If you are interested, please reach out to Kelsey Bosma or attend the next meeting on June 9th.

Council Committee

FELLOWSHIP

We are planning to get a Men's Bible Study group started. More details coming soon.

Our fellowship time will continue after Sunday Worship in the summer. Please

join us for coffee and treats.

We are reaching out to others in our community and volunteering to provide some of the meals, for the summer school students and teachers, at North Iowa. If you

have not been contacted by a work group, please reach out to see how you can help.



3rd & 4th Grade Sunday School Students

The third and fourth grade Sunday School class discussed prayer. God isn't on the phone. He doesn't send emails. All you need to do to talk to God is pray!

Everyday is a battle of good vs evil. A fight to do what's right. Everyday we need to "pray" on the armor of God.

They decorated cookies in the armor of God.

- Helmet to protect our thoughts.
- Shield to protect us from the devil's lies.
- Sword to help us use God's word to stop the enemy.



5th & 6th Grade Girls Sunday School

The 5th & 6th grade girls put on their walking shoes & headed outside for Sunday School. They walked & talked (and maybe stopped for a slushy). Discovering and recognizing God's love, joy & patience in nature.



*"Nature is the
ART
of GOD"*

thank you!

I am writing to thank you for the generous \$500 scholarship. I was very happy to learn that I had been selected as the recipient for this award, and I would like to express my sincere gratitude to you for providing this generous award.

- Brogyn Greensky

Preschool/Kindergarten Sunday School



Church Council Minutes

May 13, 2024

Meeting Room

Faith, hope, and love make us available for our neighbors near and far.

Members present: Lisa, Derek, Pastor Eric, Darla, Courtney, Kelsey and Darryl

Absent: Thomas, Teresa, and Larry

The meeting was called to order at 6:06 pm.

1. Open with devotion and prayer.

2. **Secretary's Report**

- April minutes approved via email. Motion to approve by Darla; seconded by Lisa

3. **President's report**

- We will continue to discuss and review our process for new members. The constitution will be amended accordingly. Plan to discuss at next council meeting.

4. **Treasurer's Report** – No report

- Savings Account: \$100
- Checking Account: \$3,644.53
- Youth: \$3,237.54
- Line of Credit: \$2,000
- Special Projects Account: \$17,610.05

Will discuss google form for vouchers that was created by Thomas at next council meeting.

5. **Committee Reports**

Technology

- Anyone interested in helping with service technology can contact Thomas Blodgett. Discussed possible church members that would be great at helping with service technology.
- Sound system update. Still working on installing new speakers?

Property

- No update on circuit for the outside lights.
- Emergency shut off for boiler was completed.
- No updates on remodeling of the bathrooms in the parsonage.
- Grant wasn't approved for electrical panels. We are searching for more grants to apply for.
- Furnace and AC in the parsonage are working at this time.

Worship

- Communion Server sign-up sheet was passed around.
- Activity bags need to be checked, there are 10-12 bags. Two church members have offered to help with the bags.
- The next worship committee meeting is May 21 at 8:30 am.
- Duty sheet will be updated so greeters know what they're supposed to do regarding offering.
- Candle lighters were replaced.
- July 28th will be an ecumenical service outdoors.
- Accompanist schedule was updated for May

Stewardship

- Update on the cookbook. The deadline for the cookbook was May 1st to submit recipes. 45 pre-order cookbooks. Barb Murra offered to sell cookbooks at the grocery store.
- Motion was made in March to start a Kitchen savings fund. Half of the cookbook profit will go toward this fund. Fellowship offering will go toward the Kitchen fund. Is this still in the works after the grant was denied? Still discussing.
- Music and Mingle update. Waiting to hear back from music entertainers before setting a date.
- Kelsey is organizing a vertical garden through Green Stock company.

- Meal will be available for free will donation during June 4th coach pitch and T-ball games at the south side park.

Education

- Discussed end of the year education.

Fellowship/Evangelism

- Fellowship time in the social hall will continue. We're always looking for volunteers to provide refreshments for adults. Please consider signing up to serve. Teresa is working on the "sign up" sheet.
- Darryl is initiating a Men's Bible Study.

6. Pastor's Report

IG wrapped up on April 15th. The kids sang for the residents at Timely Mission, enjoyed time at the school playground, and then enjoyed a yummy indoor picnic. Many thanks to all the leaders for their ministry throughout the year. Pastor Eric is finalizing the plan for 2024-25. The kids will be studying the 10 Commandments for the first half of the year and then close with the Lord's Prayer during the second half. Pastor will be getting the final schedule out to the 1G leaders soon for final approval. After that, Pastor will be working on the lesson plans over the summer. Middle school 1G will take place on Mondays with the school providing transportation. Pastors Sue and Janelle will be working with superintendent Joe Erickson on the details.

Confirmation wrapped up the year on Sunday May 12 with the end of the retreat. It has been a fantastic year. Pastor Eric has requirements laid out for the students to complete, but what is more important to him than checkmarks on a requirement spreadsheet, is seeing growth. Pastor has seen growth in many of our students. It has been fun to see the change in these kids from the first month of our year.

The confirmation class lead worship on April 28 and did a fantastic job. A big shout out to the adult leaders (Susan, Rachel, Jen, Brian, and Matt). They did a fantastic job working with these kids, coaching, and encouraging them. Bethlehem is truly blessed with the amazing adult leadership we have.

The annual year-end retreat was a great success. The weather was perfect. Retreat details came together beautifully. Students got to see the northern lights. The discussions about prayer were great. The adult leaders made everything go smoothly.

To-dos

- IG planning. Pastor's goal is to have lesson plans done for at least the first half of the year.
- Iowa District: Still in search of a District Coordinator. Ideas have been floating around to kick start the process.
- Confirmation: Pastor will be working on the details for the coming year. Pastor will have a three year program set up and therefore will be working on lesson plans to get things off and running in September.
- Bison days ecumenical worship service. The service will take place on Sunday, July 28 at 9:30 am. Pastor Larry Gruis will be preaching and Pastor Eric will be presiding with any other pastor that is available.

Vacation

June 7-9 - Darla is preaching June 9.

June 23-July 6 - Darla is preaching June 30.

Pastoral acts

Baptism July 7: Tate Corporon and Skyler Hansen's child

Wedding September 21: Allison Almelen and Isaac Paul

7. **Office Report** New hire: Susan Jensen! Start date is 5/14. Office hours to be determined.

8. New Business

- May Mission- Global (The regular rotation is LCMC, global, local) Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (lcmc.net). May mission will go to St. Paul Lutheran church in Kodiak Alaska. Motioned by Darryl and seconded by Darla.
- Discussed calling Pastor Mark Neumann as a deployed pastor from Bethlehem. Motioned by Darla and seconded by Lisa. Discuss with the congregation on May 19th. Vote will take place on June 2.

Next meeting: June 10th

Newsletter deadline: May 30th. Continuing rotation for committees to include information in the Newsletter. The rotation this month is Fellowship (Darryl) and Education (Lisa).

Motion to Adjourn made by Lisa, seconded by Darla. The meeting adjourned at 7:31 pm.
Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

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Please feel free to reach out to us.

*If you have any questions or need assistance, don't hesitate to ask.
Our church community is here to support you.*

Our Mission Statement:

*Faith, hope, and love make us available
to our neighbors near and far.*

We're HERE for YOU!

We're on the web!

<https://bethlehemlutheranbc.com>



BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH
And
BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN SUNDAY SCHOOL

To GOD be the GLORY!

