



Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Buffalo Center, IA 50424

Oh, Bethlehem!

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

GREETERS & USHERS

NOVEMBER

- *3 Wyatt Olson Family and Riley Price Family
- *10 Khloe Wubben Family and Shirley Hagenson
- 17 Leighton Lawson Family and Jen McGrady
- 24 Laurie Sapp & Andy Buchs & Aurora Pentico Family

DECEMBER

- 1 Aubri Wubben Family(c) and Beckett Jensen Family(c)
- *8 Elsa Adams Family(c) and Derek Thilges Family
- 15 Grant Jacobs Family and Josh Mathahs Family
- 22 Julian Ernster Family(c) & Rita Ellsworth
- *24 Jesse Bosma Family & Jen McGrady
- 29 Billy Jensvold Family and Randy & Jill Melz

CALENDAR of EVENTS

Please see the monthly calendar on **page 9** for all church activities this month.

**Bethlehem Lutheran
Turkey Dinner
Sunday, Nov 24
11:00 am—1:00 pm**

**Smoked Turkey, Vegetable,
Salad Bar, Dessert, Beverages**

Freewill Donation

Prayers for our Members & Friends

Jaya Fever
 Brian Bashans
 Christina Coughlin
 Ashley Cox
 Roger Burnside
 Emmagene Silber
 Virginia Cooper

Carolyn Bartz
 Karen Buss
 Deloris Steffensen
 Claire Rustemier-Hinz
 Joy Albert
 Darlene Hofbauer

**General Fund
Annual Giving
(As of 10.28.24):**

Actual: **\$112,445**

Budgeted: **\$126,506**

Year to Date
 Deficit: **-\$14,061**

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!

November Food Bank Needs...

Dressing mix, green beans, cream of mushroom soup, onion rings, white cake mix, pudding mix, Cool Whip, instant potatoes, turkey gravy mix, and biscuits.

All donations can be dropped off in the church narthex.

THANK YOU!



SCAN ME!



I attended another amazing LCMC Annual Gathering this year. We are so blessed to be doing ministry in this association with these brothers and sisters in Christ. Every year I attend these Gatherings, I am blessed and return energized for the ministry in which God has placed me. The following is a summary of the 24th LCMC Annual Gathering. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

(1) We met at FaithLife Church (formerly known as St Mark's Lutheran Church) in Marion IA – Sunday, Sept 29 – Wednesday Oct 2.

(2) The 25th Annual Gathering is Oct 5 – 8, 2025 at Hosanna Church in Lakeville, MN (the site of the 23rd Annual Gathering). LCMC began with 26 churches and now we are at 1,001 congregations worldwide (16 countries). There are 813 US congregations in 39 states and territories.

(3) This year's theme: "*Engaging Your Cultural Moment*". This theme comes out of what is called LCMC 3.0. As we face a looming clergy shortage, how do we face the challenges that are coming? Also, LCMC is growing fast, so that presents some other exciting opportunities. Instead of adding more staff (currently our association only employs SIX full-time staff), Districts and Fellowships are going to be asked to take on more of a leadership role in the association. This makes perfect sense being that we know our context and culture better than anyone else.

During the gathering, we asked questions like, "*What is going on in the community around us?*", but also, "*What is going on inside yourself?*" We were encouraged to not be afraid of our weaknesses, but rather embrace them and trust in the One who gives strength to face your cultural moment. Weaknesses do not disqualify you, rather they point you to your dependance on God. Our cultural moment is to NOT be like our culture. We are to stand apart from the culture and trust in God's power.

(4) Some thoughts I had coming home are: What is going on in Buffalo Center? What is OUR cultural moment? How is God calling us to meet this moment? Who are the preachers here at Bethlehem? Who are the worship leaders? Are they willing to be trained? What is our biggest fear as a congregation? How does that hold us back?

(5) From our business meeting and other information:
~ 505 congregation supported LCMC (up from 453)
~ Average contribution was \$2,112 annually



- ~ Contribution range: \$50 – \$53,500
- ~ Income, \$1,316,626 and expenses, \$1,208,853
- ~ Budget increase of 1.4% was approved
- ~ 646 registered participants at the Gathering
- ~ 40+ newly certified pastors in 2024

(6) We heard from Lutheran Disaster Assistance (LDA)

- ~ Zero Administrative cost (100% is given out)
- ~ Three types of grants:
 - A. *Repair and Replace*: Up to \$20,000/grant x 2 per disaster
 - B. *Services*: Sending volunteers to a natural disaster area (up to \$10,000 sent to Eight Days of Hope for 10 volunteers)
 - C. *Pastor's Benevolence Emergency Fund*: Created in 2020, with the onset of Covid. For LCMC pastors impacted by situations of personal disaster (up to \$3,000).

(7) LCMC also has a Church Planting Fund. At the Gathering, they gave three grants. And there are still other church plants in the process in our association.

(8) Other notes

- ~ I was blessed to reconnect with friends, colleagues, and met some NEW colleagues.
- ~ Had many conversations
- ~ Great worship. The opening worship was led by the host congregation's youth praise band.
- ~ The keynote speakers were top-notch, very engaging.
- ~ Breakout sessions were very informative: "*Healthy Leaders*", "*Re-Engaging the Disenfranchised Christian*", and "*LCMC Board Talk*".

Thank you for sending me to this gathering. Keep praying for this association, that we may continue being faithful and advancing God's Kingdom. All glory be to God through Christ Jesus our Lord, Amen.

Council Committees

PROPERTY

The circuit panel replacement project is nearing completion. We are just waiting on one panel to arrive and be installed. Hopefully this will be completed within the next month.

The boiler has been turned on so that I can make sure things are running smoothly before the

cold sets in.

Three light bulbs were replaced in the soffit fixtures that aim at the cross on the east side of the church. These light fixtures are in tough shape and even missing one light socket and globe. I would like to get these lights replaced in the near future.

The switch and photocell on

the flag light are not working correctly so they are next on my list of things to get fixed.

If you see anything around the property that needs attention, please let me know!

Thanks,
Larry

TREASURER

We are 78.9% of the way through the year and currently at 76.6% of our budget. This excludes the grant and fundraising done for the electrical panel project. We are starting to get back on track to meet the budget this year. In the last few months, we were falling behind. We have had some unplanned bigger expenses this last year, like the electrical panels, or the AC unit at the Per-

sonage. We are blessed to have been able to raise money and cover these expenses, and I thank all who have donated or helped in anyway. While we have been able to cover those expenses, we have been tight on our day to day operations. It is important that we can continue to fulfill this as we cannot do what we do without it. BLC is doing a lot of great things and leading a

path in the community. I thank all those who help the church in whatever way they can. We cannot do it without you. I hope everyone has a great start to the holiday season.

Thomas Blodgett
Treasurer

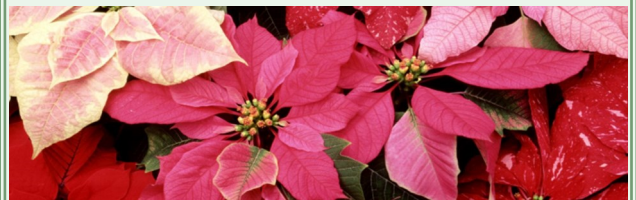
December Dates to Remember

Dec 1—Hanging of the Greens Service,
9:30 am

Dec 8—Buffalo Center Tour of Lights,
5:00 – 7:00 pm

Dec 15—Sunday School Christmas
Program, 9:30 am

Hanging of the Greens service is right around the corner! We will be ordering poinsettias to decorate our church for Christmas. Please let Susan know if you would like to contribute to the poinsettia fund in memory of loved ones. The deadline is November 24. Thank you!



Church Council Agenda

October 14, 2024

Meeting Room

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

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

Absent: Teresa, Darryl, and Susan

The meeting was called to order at 6:07 pm

Open with devotion and prayer.

Secretary's Report

- September minutes approved via email. Motion to approve by Derek; seconded by Larry.
- Christmas in a bag fundraiser. Start advertising right away. Take orders through November 10. Kits will be ready for pick up at the church by November 21.

President's report

- Discussed next year's council members. Derek, Lisa, and Teresa's terms are up. The executive council will meet the end of November.
- Discussed making sure a council member is available after church every Sunday to count offering. We will start sending communication via text message to make sure someone will be there.

Treasurer's Report

Savings Account: \$50

Checking Account: \$9,247.48

Youth: \$2,528.01

Line of Credit: \$3,000

Special Projects Account: \$20,042.82

Motion to approve made by Kelsey, seconded by Larry.

Committee Reports

Technology

- Anyone interested in helping with service technology can contact Thomas Blodgett.
- Sound system: Goal is to have speakers installed before Thanksgiving.

Property

- Circuit for the outside lights is still in process. Larry is planning on borrowing a lift to investigate.
- Electrical panel project is nearly complete, and we requested an invoice.
- Remodeling of the bathrooms in the parsonage have been put on hold due to water leaking into the parsonage from the door. Plan is to pick a weekend to work on this and let council members know so we can help. Many hands make light work!

Worship

- Communion Server sign-up sheet is complete through October and November.

- The worship committee discussed how things went on Rally Sunday and upcoming confirmation of current students.
- Sunday School kids will sing October 22nd.
- In October, Worship committee will begin making plans for Hanging of the Greens Sunday.
- Accompanist schedules were updated.

Stewardship

- Cookbook fundraiser is pending.
- Soup Supper on October 20, 4:30-6:30.

Education

- Sunday School is off to a good start.
- Discussing and finalizing the Christmas program. The kids will start practicing November 17th.
- Council members will serve during fellowship on Confirmation Sunday, October 27. Working on getting everything ordered and ready to go!

Fellowship/Evangelism

- Fellowship time in the social hall will continue. We're always looking for volunteers to provide refreshments for adults.
- We've heard positive and negative comments about the new rotation for fellowship time. The council think it's a great idea and we are going to try it out! Please consider joining council next year so we can hear additional ideas!
- Men's turkey dinner will be November 24th 11 am – 1 pm.
- Initiating a Men's Bible study is still in the works for Saturday morning breakfast.

Pastor's Report

Pastor Eric shared about the LCMC Annual Gathering!

Education

- Confirmation: started the 10 Commandments last week. Everything is going great with the group. Looking forward to Confirmation Sunday on October 27th. Susan and Pastor are working on the details.
- IG: Numbers are down in the elementary program. About 22 kids each week which is a more manageable number for current leadership to handle. More is not always better.
- Bible study: Pastor will be finishing the book of Galatians with the women's Bible study next month. December will have a Christmas focus and then in January they will begin a new series.

Worship

- Susan is doing a great job with PowerPoint slides, bulletins, and other worship details she handles.
- Pastor Eric just finished a two-week series on marriage, based on Mark 10:1-17 and Genesis 2:18-25.
- Wedding for Isaac and Allison Paul was on September 21.

LCMC Iowa District

- Our District's Annual Gathering is coming up on Saturday, November 16 at Faith Lutheran in Spencer, IA. Pastor is working on finalizing the schedule and other details for that event.
- Pastor is also trying to get a Leadership Event scheduled and planned for our District. That usually takes place in February. They have a good idea that they're working on and a couple possible speakers lined up.

- Pastor Eric is completing a two-year term for someone and now is eligible for his first three-year term in November. Pastor plans to stay on the district council but has not decided whether he will remain as president.

Community

- Community Thanksgiving Eve worship service is scheduled for Wednesday, November 27 at First Reformed Church, 7 pm. Pastor Eric will be participating.
- Treats on the Street. Anyone interested in helping with this? Pastor Eric isn't sure on his availability since its Malachi's birthday!

Other stuff

- Someone suggested to Susan and Pastor that a church brochure be created. The brochure will have information to give visitors and those new to town.
- Things are slowing down for Pastor Eric's family since soccer is done for now.

Office Report:

- Everything in the office is going well.
- The council continue to hear wonderful things about the work Susan and Pastor Eric are doing!

New Business

October Mission – LCMC– (The regular rotation is LCMC, global, local) Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (lcmc.net). September mission was Single Moms In Loving Environment (SMILE). October mission will be LCMC. Motion made by Thomas, Darla seconded.

Next meeting: Monday, November 11 at 6:00 pm

Newsletter deadline: October 24. Continuing rotation for committees to include information in the Newsletter. The rotation this month is Property and Treasurer.

Motion to Adjourn made by Kelsey, seconded by Larry.

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 pm

Close with the Lord's Prayer.



All are welcome at the LCMC Iowa District Annual Gathering. It will be hosted at one of the churches in Spencer that was ravished by flooding. They are excited to open up their church to us! Scan the QR code to register or talk to Susan and she can get you registered. The cost is \$20 per attendee.

FALL 2024
Iowa District Annual Gathering
CULTIVATING LEADERSHIP
Saturday, Nov 16 - 9:30 am - 3 pm
Faith Lutheran Church, Spencer





Confirmation Corner

We are six weeks into this confirmation year. Included in this journey are twenty students and five adult leaders (including myself). Our primary focus, so far, has been on the Ten Commandments. It has been a joy to teach this class and be part of their faith journey. On Sunday, October 27, Reformation Sunday, we witnessed five tenth grade students go through the Affirmation of Baptism service, confirming their faith. We laid hands on and prayer over Kevin Hagen, Alex Olson, Brooklyn Price, Braden Ullmann and Carter Wubben. We also honored and confirmed Brian Bashans. He was a confirmation leader for four years, including with the aforementioned students. Thank you for your continued prayers and support as we walk together with these young people, training and raising them up in the faith for the glory of God.



****Don't forget about the kids in your life! This is a fun way to celebrate the Advent Season!****

Bethlehem Lutheran presents

Christmas In a Bag

Orders due November 10th.

This Christmas, help the kids remember the real reason for the season! Order your Elf on the Shelf kits now!

Send a Facebook message to Bethlehem Lutheran or stop by the church office!

Kits will be assembled and ready for pick up at the church November 21st. Also able to ship!

Bethlehem Lutheran is providing three purchase options! Payment is by cash or check.

01

\$40

- Jesus doll included
- 24 Devotions
- Kit activity supplies

02

\$30

- Already have an elf or doll you want to use? This option is for you!
- 24 Devotions
- Kit activity supplies

03

\$20

- Are your kids too old for "Elf on the Shelf"? Do you prefer not to have an elf?
- This option only includes the 24 Devotions.

Bethlehem Lutheran - NOVEMBER 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2 Set your clocks back before going to bed on Saturday night!
3 Worship with Communion, 9:30 am All Saints' Sunday SS, 10:45 am Worship @ TMNH w/ Pastor, 1:30 pm	4	5 Election Day Bible Study with Pastor, 2:00 pm Scouts—Tiger Den Meeting 7:30 pm	6 Community Bible Study, 10:00 am Confirmation 6:45 pm treats, 7:15 class starts	7	8	9
10 Worship with Communion, 9:30 am SS, 10:45 am	11 MOMS2MOMS, 3:30 - 5:00 pm Church Council Meeting, 6:00 pm	12 Quilting, 1:00 pm	13 Community Bible Study, 10:00 am Confirmation 6:45 pm treats, 7:15 class starts	14	15	16 LCMC Iowa District Gathering in Spencer
17 Worship, 9:30 am SS Kids sing, 3rd graders receive Bibles SS, 10:45 am	18	19 Worship Committee Meeting @ 8:30 am Scouts—Tiger Den Meeting 7:30 pm	20 Community Bible Study, 10:00 am Confirmation 6:45 pm treats, 7:15 class starts	21	22	23
24 Worship, 9:30 am SS, 10:45 am Turkey Dinner, 11:00 am - 1:00 pm	25 MOMS2MOMS, 3:30 - 5:00 pm	26 Quilting, 1:00 pm Scouts—Pack Meeting, 7:00 pm	27 Community Bible Study, 10:00 am Thanksgiving Eve Service at First Reformed, 7:00 pm	28 Thanksgiving Day	29	30

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
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Phone
641-562-2552 — office
641-562-2553 — Pastor Eric



We're on the web!

<https://bethlehemlutheranbc.com>



**BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH
And
BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN SUNDAY
SCHOOL**

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.

